

From: tynong train
 To: LCSC [REDACTED]
 Subject: Fire Services Reform
 Date: Thursday 6 July 2017 8:40:50 PM

Attention the Fire Services Bill Select Committee

Dear Committee Members,

I take this opportunity to raise some of my concerns about the Fire Services Reform Legislation.

My name is Paul Jenkins, I am the 1st Lieutenant and Training Officer at the Tynong Fire Brigade. Firstly, I'd like to say how deeply disappointed I am at how the whole reform has been handled from the very start.

I'd like to say that I have the utmost respect for the former Chief Officer, CEO, CFA Board members and Emergency Services Minister, all have which have conducted themselves with the utmost integrity & honesty at the start of this sorry saga, and all of whom had the volunteers welfare and well-being in the forefront of their minds.

I'd like to mention some of my concerns about the reform below

- One of which is that the Presumptive Rights (Cancer) legislation does not treat paid and volunteer firefighters equally. Under this new legislation, a paid firefighter with one of the 12 prescribed / listed / nominated cancers will automatically get access to treatment and compensation. A volunteer firefighter will have to be "considered" by an unspecified panel and then may be granted treatment / compensation. The Bill should be split to separate presumptive rights compensation from the aspects relating to structural changes to Victoria's Fire Services.

- Splitting the CFA for no reason other than to drive an EBA through is irresponsible and short sighted.

- I have concerns about the United Firefighters Union's ultimate plans for CFA volunteers in the future.

- Claiming it helps address service growth when it provides even less flexibility for CFA to grow resources to match risk compared to the current model.

- The proposed Presumptive Legislation discriminates against volunteers.

- It strips control of CFA resources away from the CFA. They claim it gets the EBA interference out of CFA but it does not - all it does is block CFA from having a say in the EBA that will ultimately determine how key CFA resources work.

- CFA's "briefings" leaves everyone with more questions than answers - and it is clear CFA leaders are just crossing their fingers and hoping that it will all work out. What a way to drive and lead reform for an emergency services organisation!

- The unsubstantiated claim of 8 reviews as creating a need for change - the only consistent themes in previous reviews was a strong disagreement over the EBA veto's, treatment of vol's and loss of CFA management decision making.

- Clear lack of process to allow engagement and rational consideration of options. To hold meetings and briefings AFTER they table their legislation in Parliament and dress these up as consultation is as insulting as it is disingenuous.

- Irreparably damages the sense of worth of CFA vol's - the thin edge of the wedge to devaluing service and commitment. This overt, partisan and capricious political interference over our service will have a lasting impact and is doing great damage to our morale and confidence in Government and CFA.

- CFA hamstrung to employ its own staff. All our OM's and OO's and Training Instructors are to be hired and managed by FRV and then contracted (seconded) back to CFA. CFA loses all control over its future management culture.

- The inability of the CFA Chief Officer to employ trained firefighting staff for non-firefighting roles except via FRV - really limits the ability for the long term establishment of culture and networks.

- No real consideration of how the operation of integrated stations will operate (with / without vol's) both ways - particularly in stations like Pakenham, Traralgon, Shepparton, Mildura, Warrnambool, Wangarata, Portland and Wodonga - they have no quick support except from CFA vol's.

- The impact of FRV stations on neighboring brigades - turnouts and first to scene etc, there will be a halo effect around the integrated stations.

- No consideration of the loss of the integrated stations as centers of excellence and training for surrounding districts.

Yours Faithfully,

Paul Jenkins
 Brigade Training Officer
 Tynong Fire Brigade
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