

**Kirra Vanzetti**

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**From:** Mathew Kneebone [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Sunday, 2 July 2017 3:45 PM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

**INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017**

I am Senior Station Officer Mathew Kneebone having served 16.5 years as a career firefighter, 3 years as a project firefighter with what was the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and 1 year as a retained firefighter with NSWFB in Albury. In total I have over 20 years combined firefighting experience in both an urban and forrest environment. I hold a Certificate IV in Firefighting Operations along with specialist qualifications such as Road Accident Rescue, High Angle Rescue Technician, Confined Space, Trench Rescue, Urban Search and Rescue, Hydraulic Ladder Platform (42m) and Teleboom operator. I have received the following awards

- National Emergency Medal
- Valor Medal
- 10 year service medal (due for 15 year service)

I live in Barwon Heads and work at Geelong City Fire Brigade (CFA).

I am an active member in my community where I have volunteered over several years as a Junior Football and Basketball coach, Surf Lifesaving, and volunteer roles with the local primary school.

**I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons:**

As a Senior Station Officer I am currently forced to manage emergency incidents with less than the internationally safe standard of 7 firefighters. The current model consistently has a pumper from Geelong City with three firefighters supporting volunteer brigades that consistently are either unable to get a fire truck turned out or with insufficient crew or skill sets (such as BA operators). This puts firefighters lives at risk as there is not always a backup for crews who carry out internal fire attacks and primary searches. I believe that it is important to have guaranteed backup - guaranteed that two trucks with at least 7 firefighters will be dispatched within 8 minutes. This increases the safety of all firefighters and also provides a better service to the community. Please don't forget that fire grows exponentially and that the sooner that firefighters arrive, the better the survival rate of victims, and less damage to buildings and property.

Another advantage I see is that the many specialist response vehicles, such as Heavy Rescue Units, Aerial appliances, Hazmat appliances, BA Support etc can be utilised where needed regardless of current boundaries. An example recently was where Geelong was left without a Ladder Platform as it was called to a large structure fire at Werribee South when there was a closer MFB Ladder Platform that could have been utilised. While committed at Werribee there was an incident in Geelong where a crane fell requiring two of the operators to be rescued. While the two men were rescued, this was less than ideal as one of them had a badly broken hand and he was forced to climb down the ladder of a teleboom. If MFB and CFA integrated station were to be the one agency then there would be far better management of resources better serving the community.

Yours sincerely



**Mathew Kneebone Senior Station Officer**  
Geelong City Fire Station – 69 McKillop St Geelong 3220



Protecting lives and property



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