

**Kirra Vanzetti**

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**From:** Arielen [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 4 July 2017 8:09 AM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** Fire Services Reform submission for Select Committee

3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017

Assistant Clerk Committees  
Department of the Legislative Council  
Fire Services Bill Select Committee  
Parliament House,  
Spring Street  
East Melbourne VIC 3002  
[LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Members of the Fire Services Bill Select Committee,

I write to express my support for the proposed reform of the fire services. I have been a professional MFB firefighter for more than 38 years - currently based at Keilor Fire Station.

I have worked in the Western Suburbs for most of my career and have seen enormous change over that time frame. In my early days as a firefighter, a great percentage of our turnouts were for running grass fires in open paddocks. Now those very same paddock areas are filled with streets and streets of houses and large industrial complexes. Obviously the nature of firefighting has changed significantly for these areas.

Victoria's fire services boundaries have had very little change in 60 years. Many outer suburbs are still considered 'country' when they clearly haven't been so for many years. In the west and north-west, these include suburbs such as Wyndham Vale, Caroline Springs, Craigieburn, Melton and Point Cook. On the other side of Melbourne, even long established suburbs such as Springvale and Boronia, although highly urbanised, are deemed rural. These areas require a guaranteed 24 hour fire service, fully trained and able to respond on road in under 90 seconds. The firefighters themselves also need the certainty that the next

crew will be on scene within minutes and has the same training and capacity to back up. This is not the case under the present system.

Reform of our fire services will ensure the safety of your constituents and all communities who are part of our state's rapidly growing population. The 2016 census provides figures showing Victoria's population increasing at a rate of 1,800+ per week. Most of this growth is in ever-expanding Melbourne or larger regional cities. In time, it is predicted Melbourne will overtake Sydney as Australia's largest city. Our fire services need to change in line with this growth.

I have lived in rural Victoria for 40 years and rely upon CFA volunteer brigades for fire protection. As part of the reform process is essential that the country brigades continue to be adequately funded and supported with modern equipment and up to date training for their various roles in country areas.

Reform would improve the safety of all firefighters and remove the ever increasing and unrealistic demands being placed on volunteer firefighters due to enormous urban growth and increased emergency calls in outer Melbourne and larger regional centres.

The CFA is always supported by other fire agencies including DELWP, Parks Victoria and MFB when required. The Hazelwood mine fire is an example which I attended for 2 days and 5 nights as an MFB teleboom operator. This support will not change with reform to FRV and CFA.

So many reviews, over time, have recommended changes to Victoria's fire services to make it the most progressive and safest it can be for all firefighters and the communities they serve. It's time to be proactive rather than reactive. Yourselves as politicians now have the ability to make it happen.

Yours faithfully,

Adrian Slee

Leading Fire Fighter,

Keilor Fire Station No 51 MFB