

Kirra Vanzetti

From: THOMPSON, Bradley [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 July 2017 10:15 PM
To: LCSC
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fire Services Reform-Brad Thompson

To whom it may concern,

My name is Bradley Thompson and I am a fire fighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, stationed as Ascot Vale (station 50).

I wish to make a submission regarding the Fire Services Reform as I feel it does not only impact on me as a fire fighter, however also as a council rate payer and Victorian.

I understand that the Fire Services Reform Bill has gain a great amount of attention from the general public and trepidation amongst career and volunteer fire fighters. However I feel that quite often the important fact of safety of life and property is being overlooked. Some individuals feel it more important to discuss the lack of consultation or what allowances are attached to the bill rather than what a modernised fire service could provide.

All Victorians have a right to know that when they call for assistance from the fire service, two fire trucks will initially be dispatched with no less than seven qualified fire fighters soon arriving. This provides the ability to launch internal attacks to save lives and property before it is too late. In no way does this stop volunteers from responding to such calls, it simply guarantees that there will be two appliances and seven fire fighters arriving. The fact that this is still being consulted upon boggles the mind. I find it heartbreaking to speak with family in urban rural areas explaining that there is a possibility that their local fire rescue may not be able to conduct internal searches due to a lack of personnel or breathing apparatus qualifications.

In no way am I criticising volunteers. Volunteers make great sacrifices to protect their communities. However the position in itself means to volunteer when possible. Fire does not wait for an appropriate time. The commitments of family and employment can often impede the response of a volunteer. As a result the Victorian fire service must be prepared for any possible circumstance.

Another element of the Fire Services Reform is the idea of presumptive legislation. This appears to be supported by all, which I am glad to hear. I feel reassured that in the event of a terminal illness caused due to exposure during fire calls, heaven forbid, my wife and future family will be cared for. I believe this should be extended to all fire fighting personnel (career and volunteer staff). Yet I understand that it would be nothing short of a logistical nightmare, so would encourage those individuals frequently exposed to be addressed first. This would allow a thorough process and support for all involved.

I understand that some members of parliament feel that the presumptive legislation should be separated from the Fire Services Reform. However that would then mean more of tax payers dollars spent for separate committee reviews and a greater time taken to consider all outcomes all while brave fire fighters pass on leaving little support for their families.

In conclusion, the issue of Fire Services Reform can become clouded with the different groups having interest in the outcome. However I strongly urge the committee to look past the political

gains, personal alliances, historical traditions of those involved and ask themselves what would provide the best outcome for all Victorians (including that of your family members) safety.

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission,

Regards,

Fire Fighter Bradley Thompson | Operations | Metropolitan Fire Brigade
Ascot Vale Fire Station, 258 Union Road, Moonee Pond 3039



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