

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Ben Tobin [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 July 2017 8:12 AM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire Services Reform

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

Inquiry into the firefighters' presumptive rights compensation and fire services legislation amendment (reform) bill 2017

I am Firefighter Ben Tobin I have been a career Firefighter in The CFA for two years. I live in Tecoma in the Dandenong Ranges and work at Boronia in the municipality of Knox. Prior to moving to Australia and joining CFA I was a career Firefighter for eight years in the London Fire Brigade.

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

In the two years I have served with CFA I have received the highest levels of Firefighter training of my 10 years in the job. I also think it is scandalous how the public and firefighters have been left exposed to a high level of risk in the outer metropolitan areas of Melbourne because of an outdated system that has no place in the 21st century.

I have witnessed on a number of occasions instances of being called to an incident or fire where we have had very limited or no support from surrounding brigades. At Boronia we are surrounded by Scoresby, Bayswater, The Basin and Ferntree Gully who quite often fail to respond or arrive on scene in vehicles inadequate for the job with people who are not qualified for structural firefighting and cannot wear breathing apparatus. It is common practice for volunteer brigades to respond a car to a structure fire with people wearing bushfire protective clothing. This poses a serious risk to the safety of my colleagues and I at these often dangerous situations.

I have also witnessed on a number of occasions volunteer brigades informing Vicfire over the radio that they are turning out to a job only to drive passed their station whilst on the same call and see that they are still in station waiting for more people to arrive. This is placing the communities that we serve in danger.

Having one professional service means we will be able respond to an incident with the knowledge that another truck with professional qualified Firefighters will be en route as well to support us. It will not effect volunteers getting to turn out as it only affects the 35 integrated stations response areas. Having two fire appliances crewed by full time staff responding in 90 seconds is essential for public safety.

I have only lived here for five years and in that time I have seen how rapidly Melbourne is expanding. I am one of a large amount for people that have moved to Victoria and the fire Service needs to evolve with that.

Yours sincerely

Ben Tobin
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Sent from my iPad