

**Kirra Vanzetti**

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**From:** SMITH, Ross [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 July 2017 9:51 AM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** Professional/Career Fire Service

Dear Ministers/Representatives

My name is Ross Smith, and I have been a professional career fire-fighter with the MFB for over 29 years. I am currently based at the Box Hill Fire Station (O.I.C. of A Platoon).

I wish to express my support for the proposed fire services reform.

- ***In my current Operational role I have attained the rank of Senior Station Officer (SSO). At a majority of fires/incidents I attend, I am generally the Incident Controller or Operations Officer and have seen firsthand what can happen when we respond to Emergencies with CFA Volunteer's in an "Urban/Built-Up" area. This can often result in a complete lack of regard for fire ground accountability and the established operational protocols' utilised by career fire services.***
- ***Depending on the type of emergency we are dispatched to there is often a shortage of suitably trained personnel available to "Turn-Out" from some of the Volunteer Stations (often volunteers are not trained in Structural Firefighting, Breathing Apparatus, Confined Space Fire Behaviour Training & Emergency Medical Response). (Some cannot drive the Fire Trucks or operate the Pump). This compromises the public's safety and regularly puts professional Fire-fighters at risk as well.***
- ***Victoria's fire services boundaries have not changed significantly in over 60 years. Under this out-dated system, there are many areas which are wrongly zoned as 'outer urban or rural', despite the rapid increase in industrial and residential zoned areas with a denser population. Many of these areas surround the current MFB boundary and include such suburbs as Frankston, Cranbourne, Hallam, Dandenong, Springvale, Boronia, Eltham, Sth. Morang, Craigieburn, Greenvale, Sunbury, Caroline Springs, Melton, Ballarat and Geelong as well as many other regional town centres throughout Victoria.***
- ***These areas are highly urbanised and need to be modernised as part of the reform of the fire service. A rapid 8 minute response, with 7 career fire-fighters dispatched to each fire on two fire trucks is world's best practise and should be the minimum standard required to ensure people, property and the environment are provided with the necessary 24/7 fire coverage that the local community deserve.***
- ***All Victorian fire-fighters both career or volunteer, as well as the community deserve a modern fire service that meets the needs of our growing communities. This will require additional funding, however the preservation of life and property cannot always be measured with a dollar value. Career fire fighters are highly trained specialists that can be mobilised throughout the State to a vast array of emergency events in a moment's notice.***

To ensure the safety of all Victorians - including myself and my family, I ask you to please consider supporting the proposed fire services reform.

I also respectfully petition that you give “due” consideration to the introduction of presumptive legislation laws to protect fire service employees. This needs to be endorsed and implemented by Parliament before the commencement of the fire season. The passing of this legislation is very important to me and my colleagues.

Reform of our fire services will ensure the safety of your constituents, and all communities in our growing state. Additionally, it will stop an ever increasing and unrealistic demand being placed on volunteer fire-fighters because of the enormous urban growth resulting in increased emergency calls.

I would also welcome the opportunity to meet with you in person and discuss my personal experiences as a professional fire-fighter and why this reform is so important.

Kind regards

Senior Station Officer Ross Smith | Operations  
Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board

1052 Maroondah Highway, Box Hill, VIC. 3058

T: [REDACTED] | E: [REDACTED]

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