

SUBMISSION OF GLENN MITCHELL

1. I, Glenn Mitchell, Leading Firefighter (**LFF**), with the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (**MFB**), [REDACTED], in the State of Victoria, say as follows:
2. I have been employed by the MFB for 4 years 5 months. I currently hold the rank of LFF and I have held that rank for 3 weeks.
3. As well as holding the rank of LFF I hold the following qualifications/memberships:
 - i. Diploma of Outdoor Recreation
 - ii. Diploma of Logistics Management
 - iii. Diploma of Personnel and Operations Management
 - iv. Diploma of Government (Management)
 - v. Certificate III in Public Safety (Firefighting and Emergency Operations)
 - vi. Fire Rescue Emergency Medical Response Certification
 - vii. Mark IV & V Pumper and Pumper Tanker Certified
4. I have also received the following Awards:
 - Commander Joint Task Force 633 Medallion,
 - Australian Active Service Medal with Class ICAT,
 - Afghanistan Campaign Medal,
 - Australian Service Medal with Class Timor Leste,
 - Australian Defence Medal,
 - Timor Leste Solidarity Medal,
 - NATO non article 5 medal with class ISAF.

Morale at Work

5. As a Leading Firefighter, I feel that the morale at work has decreased during the Napthine Government (2010-2014). The direct attack against firefighters played on my mind and many others. It created uncertainty around the future of our jobs and my ability to support my family and created a heightened level of distrust with the MFB hierarchy.
6. I feel that the morale at work also decreased because of the MFB's attempt to set aside the Enterprise Agreement due to the reasons mentioned.

Equipment and Staffing

7. The standard of equipment and operational response (including staffing) has decreased during the Napthine Government. As a direct result of their cut-backs, equipment has not improved in the manner it should have during this period. At times, we have had limited spare appliances and damaged equipment that did not allow us to protect the community as well as we should have.

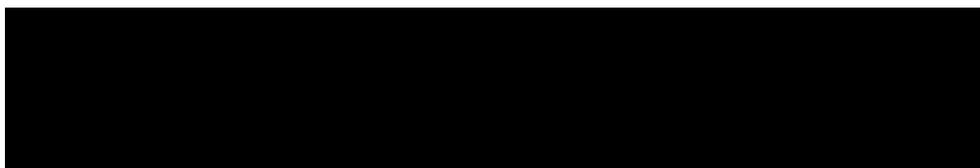
8. Occasionally, we had pumpers in lieu of pumper tankers at certain stations due to insufficient in service appliances.
9. Staffing levels are currently also not adequate to protect the Victorian Community and firefighters. With changes to procedures and the workload expected of firefighters, it is inadequate to have primary appliances crewed by three firefighters when a fourth firefighter will allow for safer operations in protection of the community and our staff.

Interoperability

10. I have experienced issues arising from the lack of interoperability between the CFA and MFB. In my experiences along the urban fringe of Melbourne, I have seen a real clear “us” and “them” mentally between the CFA volunteers and CFA professional firefighters. There is also a clear lack of permanent full-time professional firefighters on the urban fringe (CFA areas) of Melbourne.
11. I would like to see increased interoperability achieved by inter-agency training in fringe areas. Bringing together tactics, techniques and procedures between the CFA and MFB will ensure mutual support is provided to each other and the community.

Senior Management

12. There has been a disconnect between Senior Management in the fire services and their employees. In the statements provided on behalf of the MFB in the Termination Case it was evident that senior management does not have the interest of firefighters at heart, particularly with the attacking of our conditions.
13. I believe that as a result of the matters mentioned, I have lost trust and confidence in senior management. As mentioned previously, senior management attempted to strip us (the firefighters) of our conditions. Once the firefighters union was deemed as successful in defending our conditions, senior management tried to befriend us to say it was all in the past. However, the firefighters lost trust and confidence in the personnel at senior management level and do not believe they have our best interests at heart. Whilst attempts have been made to repair the relationship, I do not believe it can be repaired. The attack on our conditions have severely impacted on morale, that there is no trust in the relationship.



.....
Glenn Mitchell

Date: 10 August 2015