

Fire and Rescue Commanders Association  
*Newsletter - May 2016*

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**President:** Roy Breeze **Secretary:** Des Irving

**Committee members:** Dave Stackhouse, Paul Henderson, Greg Crawford, Peter Dempsey, Geoff Purcell

**Holy Smoke!** all of sudden we are in May 2016, time does fly by.

Last year we developed a strategic plan with a vision that ”Staff would aspire to the role of Fire Commander” and a mission of ”Continually enhance the role of Commander to be professional rewarding and safe”.

This was then broken down to four goals. So where are we on our Journey?

**Goal 1: Provide support and advocacy to members.**

Our Collective Employment agreement is now signed and will take us into the new organisation of ‘Fire and Emergency NZ.

We are pretty happy with the agreement and how well the whole process went. So I would like to say thanks to the Fire Service negotiation team and our committee for the well planned and efficient meetings that took place.

The focus of the agreement was on long term fixes related to challenges that have caused reactionary work and effort to resolve:

* such as inconsistency and national transparency in our ‘Position in Range’ (PIR).
* setting professional parameters around entry to the commander’s role, ACL levels and the associated validation, revalidation and OSM.

This week we meet with HR and Operations to start planning the workshops and meetings required to making these a reality. The aim is getting this work done within 4 months of signing.

The **advantages** of this phase of our journey is that we have a pretty good employment agreement and thus have a more “..professional, rewarding and safe” environment.

The agreement process was like the first step in ‘Maslow’s hierarchy of needs’, where you need to sort the basics of your environment before you can move to the next phase. Thus the Agreement now provides more clarity and transparency in what is required to become a Commander, the progression steps and ‘on call’ parameters, among other things. This we hope is one step closer to inspiring more qualified staff to apply for the role of Commander .

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The **disadvantage** of this phase is the ‘perspective’ that our focus has only been on employment related factors, thus the Fire Service (FS) and other stakeholders, may see our Association purely as a Union. The reality is a lot of time was put into the employment negotiations and so it is understandable and predictable, that a Union perspective would be prominent in this phase.

One component of our Association is, what could be perceived as Union orientated is Goal 1 (above) but there are 3 other goals that make us an **Association** that has a higher focus of striving for Emergency management excellence.

Hopefully as we move to this next phase, all the good work that has been happening behind the scenes will present a more positive and proactive image.

**Goal 2: Increase the respect of the Associations both internally and externally.**

The committee has received some very positive feedback from many of you on how we going, in relation to what we have achieved so far and communicating back to everyone, so appreciate your positive feedback, thank you.

A few people have provided their thoughts and advice on what our focus should be and we appreciate that. The reality is we cannot do everything or please everyone in a short time period, but we do promise you that we take on board your suggestions and requests and will address them in due time.

We have numerous representatives on a wide range of projects throughout the country which shows we are recognised as a key stakeholder in the NZFS. Thank you to all those representatives.

Externally we have meet with many external stakeholders and are continuing to do so.

**Future meetings over the next few months are:**

* Developing the agreement clauses around entry, progression, OSM etc. in the ‘Commanders’ Role. Over next 4 months.
* Quarterly meeting with the Fire Service team: the Deputy National Commander, National HR manager and Assistant National Commander. June 30th
* Video conferences with the HR team. Monthly
* Committee meeting with the NZFS Board Chair Paul Swain July 1st .
  + who we are and where we think we can play an integral role in the new organisation and
  + get an overview of the amalgamation and transition into Fire and Emergency NZ
* Our quarterly Committee planning meetings, which are planned to coincide with the above meetings to keep cost to a minimum. I can assure you Des is watching your money!

So if you have any ideas that you think are appropriate for the above meetings, please send them to Des and I for the committee to consider**.**

**Goal 3: Support the Fire Service 2020 vision**

We are in a critical phase now to make sure our Association is able to be closely involved with amalgamation planning towards the new ‘Fire and Emergency New Zealand’(FENZ).

We have made plans and will be developing them in more detail at our quarterly meeting. This will be around how we can ‘support’ the design, amalgamation and transition of FENZ from the strategic level to the coal face.

**Goal 4 Focus on leadership.**

It is important that we are all out and about communicating what we know in a proactive and positive way to our paid and volunteer staff and external stakeholders. There is no better time to be out there practicing your leadership skills, so get out there and do it, and don’t stress your emails will still be there when you get back.

**AGM 2016**

Need to start planning for a AGM around July - August so be proactive and send us your thoughts or remits that need to be discussed.

**Our Website, www.Firerescuecommanders.org.nz**

We will be revamping it a bit, to make it more user friendly following some comments.

Things you can do to make it more useful

* If you forgot your password get in contact with Paul Henderson.
* Comment on or even start your own blog on a subject
* Send Paul any interesting articles that you think colleagues would be interested in.

**Vehicle Policy**

The final policy has not been signed off yet. Steve Kennedy is working with the Fire Service on the All-wheel drive (AWD) option for the 10 percenters, which has been agreed. If you are due for a car change the organisation is extending your lease until this is policy/agreement is signed off by OLT as there may be other changes.

**Effectiveness Project**

Of the 5 planned projects only project one, the personal development PEP course is near complete. Over all a good turn out and good feedback so it is a step in the right direction.

Still waiting on Project 5 “Business support’ or “now Business services” report to come out.

The other effectiveness projects will be a key topic of our meetings with the Fire Service.

**Things to ponder on;**

**Word of Month**

**“METATHESIOPHOBIA**”: “A fear of change. Often irrationally coupled with fear of things staying the same”.

So see, you can’t please everyone.

# Understand there are “No No” Pengiuns out there!

# 10 -15 percent of the world is made up of “No No” Penguins. Read the book “Our Iceberg is melting” by John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber. Its quick and easy cartoon type story book about change. Check with the FS library if they have it.

**The best leadership book ever written is over 2000 years old.**

The **“Art of War” by Sun Tzu**. It presents 13 categories of preparing for and fighting wars. The key message is; the more you know about and are seen preparing for war, the less likelihood you will ever have to go to war, which is the ultimate goal.

Apply just some of the theories and it is amazing how it reduces your reactionary work. Get the “Thomas Cleary” translation as there are many versions and I found his an easier read.

Regards

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