Presidents thoughts

Hi All

I hope you are all enjoying the last of the spring and looking forward to the transition to summer.

Similar to this seasonal change, our role as commanders could potentially see some change soon. The difference between us and the seasonal change is, we can have some influence by being proactive during this review phase.

I believe that, particularly over the next few months, there is the greatest potential we will ever see in our careers, to steer how our role will look in the future, for ourselves and those that follow. There are two main components to this, the Executive Officers effectiveness projects and the Fire Service review.

You are all no doubt familiar with the business model called “Above the line”. When people are ‘below the line’ they lack ownership and blame everyone else for the issues around them. The most damaging aspect is where a manager/leader is below the line as it sets the culture for all those around them.

‘Above the line’ is about ownership, being positive and proactive about everything we do and so ‘now’ is the most important time we all need to be ‘above the line’, taking ownership of our role and proactive in supporting the projects and review.

**EOs Effectiveness projects.**

These 5 projects look at everything from our role clarity, the training needs that may result from this clarification, our personal management and the business support to the Executive officers.

There is a complex linking between all the above projects and other work going on, being the 2015/16 contract agreements re the ‘entry and progression criteria of the EO role’ and there is also a national call roster policy coming out for consultation

See Des’s update below to see where these projects are.

Although some of these projects took a while to get off the ground I would like to compliment the fire service allocating a high priority to these projects, given the mass of other work going on in the organisation. Everyone is busy, not just us.

**Fire Service Review.**

Stu Rooney along with DIA communications keeps us well informed of the progress of the review and we link relevant documents on the website. Personally I am very keen on seeing this review become reality. Hopefully it will resolve the many challenges we face managing the outdated legislation plus the brigades and communities expectations. As we will have a major role in implementing future changes, we need to have some influence in the development process of the new Service so that new challenges are not created.

**What do we/you need to do to be proactive.**

To be proactive:

1. Complete the questionnaire/s that will come out related to the projects. Lets go for a 100% return
2. Some of you will or have been approached to be reps of the EOs in workshops across the 5 projects. You are being picked to provide a range of Urban and Rural diversity and busyness etc. Some of these workshops will happen very soon. Give them 100%
3. May or have been interviewed by a project team.
4. Use the ‘Forums’ on our new website, very important. We are at [www.firerescuecommanders.org.nz](http://www.firerescuecommanders.org.nz), and can even been found via a simple search on the google, excellent! Forums are in the secure member’s area, so only the members of the FRCA see them. We have limited opportunity to network amongst us EOs so the forums are the answer. Make comments, ask questions or start your own thread. Paul Henderson is doing a great job managing the website so if you need a hand registering or getting on the forums give him a call.
5. Follow the Fire Service Review. Make comment, tell us what you think so we can collate our thoughts. Share your thoughts in the forums.

**Performance assessments and movements within the range.**

The process used to add superannuation to our remuneration package can be a little confusing, especially if you were still moving towards 100%, as now there are 2 factors in this stepping process. From a progression perspective you should have done three steps to reach 100%, or if not have a development plan in place with your manager. With the Super aspect it should be a 3 year step process starting from July 2014 back to the 100% mark.

Note, if you are not in the **super scheme** you are likely losing between $12,000 - $16,000 per year. Join or restart the payments if you had previously frozen them.

You should all have **your performance assessment** and movement in the range letters by now and if concerned or confused, discuss with your manager and let us know. Des has sent a survey out to you asking to provide your change in the 'Position in Range' (PIR). Please support this as already there are questions coming back with members confused about their PIR and we need a big picture view to see if there is a consistent and fair process.

Regards

Roy

**Secretary’s update**

**Effectiveness Project**

**work stream 1 – personal development for Executive Officers in workload management**

Currently going to market to secure provider to deliver personal effectiveness development.  Roy Breeze will be part of the selection panel, to ensure the provider can work with a range of capabilities and offers flexible delivery to minimise impact to Areas.

**work stream 2 – business process improvement**

 Business case recently went for approval at OLT, but has not been approved in its present form.

At the time of writing this newsletter we don't know why, but are assuming its is more about the processes and cost within the business case and that there is still a will to keep this project moving. However this will cause delays to getting tangible outcomes so we will keep you informed as information comes available.

**work stream 3** – **role clarity**

Same as work stream 2.

**work stream 4** – to be developed, dependant on work stream 3 to deliver first.

**Work stream 5**

The review of Area and Region Business Support which considers the capability and capacity of this function to support Executive Officer Effectiveness is now well advanced.  Analysis of the data is now underway, with some key themes emerging; there is significant variance nationally in how Business Support individuals are utilised to support the effective running of Areas, where as Region Business Support roles are more comparable. The review has also documented that at a number of locations current Business Support individuals skills are not a match for the role requirements.

Executive Officers are signalling the need for more support in the form of an Executive Assistant as well as support or  development to help them get the best out of their non-operational personnel.

Roy meet with Police who have recently done a similar project assessing the business support role and provided a summary to the project team. Similar findings emerged re varying work loads and tasks dependant on locations , management expectations, etc, however Police showed a higher PA type function for some of the executive ranks.

Other

         The metro paper has been signed off by the organisation

         We are still waiting for the second draft of the new vehicle policy (this is contractual) we are happy at this stage of the discussion that has taken place, a verbal yes was given to AWD vehicles as per the AOG list for limited use users

         Meeting held with DNC and Hamish, productive meeting where by we discussed clause 27 of the contract (appointments). We expressed our concern that some staff on ACL1 are jumping to acting positions holding ACL3 and that for S&W reasons there should be a more robust process to manage this.

         National on call roster policy is about to be released in draft form for consultation

         Draft OSM for Executive Officers is been discussed. We have stated that OSM will be a negotiation item. Once we have agreed on the skill set it will be placed onto our website

         Bargaining notice will be issued first week on November. A key factor will be the executive on call roster

         We are still waiting for the auditor to finish last year’s accounts

         Next video conference call with H/R first service bargaining team this month

Regards

Des

www.firerescuecommanders.org.nz