

Hi All

*FYI Rhys reply to our email related to the consultation newsletter.*

Dear Roy and Des,

Thank you very much for your email – I greatly appreciate the positive spirit in which it is written. As you indicate, it's important that we continue to maintain and build trust with all our personnel, and your email is a valuable contribution to that.

I appreciate that you have taken the time to clarify the respective roles of our team during the Tasman fires. I may clarify some of what you have written at a later time, but I acknowledge the key point that I believe you are making - about the need to reflect the respective contribution of everyone involved. I will seek to ensure that future communications do meet this standard.

I will say, however, that your email reflects a view of the Tasman fires response being, in effect, two responses - an urban and a rural response. This is why I believe we need to continue towards unification. As far as the community, and our partners, understand it, we had one response – and that is exactly how it should operate in practice. I believe that we largely achieved this in Tasman, and I congratulate everyone for their part in that, including Mark and Grant.

I note that your members perceive our rural and contractor personnel are receiving greater recognition for their command and control skills. I can assure you that it is not my intent to diminish the skills of urban personnel, or FECA members, in any way. I can also assure you that our rural and contractor colleagues have expressed a similar, if reversed, perception – that their skills are not as well recognised.

As you indicate, I am of course seeking to recognise the skills and experience of all of our people – including volunteer and career, urban and rural, in response, work across the 4Rs, and non-operational roles, and our partners, including contractors. I am certainly not intending that our communications emphasise one set of skills or experience, over another.

While we have yet to consult and make decisions about the proposals, if we do progress with recruitment, I can assure you the selection process would be transparent and fair. A range of selection tools would be used. Selection panels would comprise of appropriate people to ensure both subject matter expertise and objectivity.

The proposed approach to advertising, selection methods and selection criteria will be included in the consultation proposals, so that they are visible to all and feedback can be provided.

Thank you again for your email.

**Rhys Jones**  
Chief Executive

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