


11 January 2018

Ms Elizabeth A Trevan AM., BEM
Coordinator
Lismore Citizens' Review Group
22 City View Drive
LISMORE NSW 2017

Dear Ms Trevan 

Thank you for your correspondence dated 17th December 2017.

Firstly, can I also acknowledge that the recent addition of Mark Somers to our team of Region Controllers has added significant value by virtue of the knowledge, skill and experience he brings from his previous emergency management background.

Whilst I have had some initial discussions with Mark around his career aspirations, my understanding from Mark is that he is keen to settle and embed himself into the community within the Richmond Tweed area. Having been with us for a little over 3 months, I expect that it may take some time for Mark to assimilate himself into our organisation and adjust to the political and legislative vagaries of an interstate move.

Unfortunately, I cannot provide guarantees around tenure, albeit Mark expects to build his presence and capability within the Richmond Tweed area in the coming months and years. Like any dedicated and talented employee, some entertain moving into positions with greater challenges and higher accountability to 'make a difference' at the higher strategic levels. I trust Mark will commence building redundancy into his leadership team immediately, to ensure there is sufficient succession planning in place for the future.

As we have indicated to you and your group, the NSW SES has introduced a number of initiatives to address issues raised in the Owens Report. These include:

1. Introduction of Incident Management Team training for all members (both staff and volunteers) to increase the local capacity in incident management. This includes training in the integration of local knowledge into the intelligence function in our Incident Control Centres.

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2. Reviewing the content and format of warning including evacuation orders.
3. Local initiatives to improve media relationships to encourage early engagement with the incident Public Information Unit.
4. Investigation of various integrated information sharing platforms for emergency management of incidents.

The Richmond Tweed Region team has been active in recruiting new members under the Volunteering Reimagined program for incident management and for other SES operational functions and continues to do so. I am aware that Mark is actively following up on your information with respect to potential members. Your support of this program is welcomed and we look forward to your members becoming a part of this program.

Regards



Mark Smethurst DSC, AM
Commissioner