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Alan Thompson

By email: fyi-request-10445-e3bc4de5@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Alan

Information Request – Tasman Fires

On 4 June 2019, you requested the following information for Rabbit Island, Walters Bluff and Moutere Fires:

- a breakdown of the costs incurred by FENZ to control and extinguish each fire;
- the size in hectares of each fire; and
- a copy of the ComCen log for each fire above, and the Pigeon Valley fire.

On 2 July 2019 we provided you with a comprehensive response while undertaking to provide you with a copy of the Walters Bluff SMS incident report by 19 July 2019.

A copy of that report is now attached for your information. Some information has been redacted to protect the privacy of individuals identified in the report.

You also responded to our letter of 3 July 2019 with the following comments and questions about the Pigeon Valley report:

1. *The list of attending appliances appears to be incorrect. I am aware (for example) that trucks from Wainui Bush Fire, Newlands, Lake Okareka, Tauranga and many more other locations were sent to Nelson. I cannot find these trucks or any comms traffic relating to them in the report.*
2. *The log times from Day 3 (7th Feb) are all incorrect and simply show as a time period from 09:41 - 09:43. Clearly this is something to do with when these messages were transferred into the log, not when they occurred. This make the report very difficult to read after Day 2.*
3. *The report does not seem to cover the full period of the incident (ie 5th Feb to the 19th Feb). Indeed, notwithstanding the confusion of the time, the Notifications stop after the 8th of Feb and only recommence on the 19th.*
4. *There are very few messages in the log identifying where the command point was and who (truck or person) was in command. There are no messages in the log to or from the IMT located at the EOC. The log continually seems to suggest that NELS2118 (identified as Pigeon Command) was calling to shots.*

I believe you will find similar concerns with the Walters Bluff report.

In response, I am advised that appliances that attend an incident outside their area do not usually use their assigned call sign during that away event. Instead, the appliance is attached to an event using a spare call sign in the area or is swapped into an active call sign as relief.

A mix of the size of the event and an update to our system caused our incident reporting system to crash on multiple occasions. We attempted a work around which caused issues with the log times and repetition within the Pigeon Valley and Walters Bluff reports. There are no plans to take action to try to correct these, or any other reports affected at the time.

The incident log contains messages and commentary that passes through ComCen. If the Incident Management Team and the Emergency Operation Centre communicate directly, their communications are not recorded by ComCen. NELS2118 is the call sign for a Nelson command unit and was used by the Officer in Charge.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Note also that this response (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Fire and Emergency website.

Yours sincerely



Raewyn Bleakley
Deputy Chief Executive, Office of the Chief Executive

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