



## New Zealand Fire Service

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31 October 2014

Alan Thompson  
Lower Hutt

By email [www.fyi.org.nz](http://www.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Thompson

### Official Information Request

I refer to your email request of 23rd October 2014 to the NZ Fire Service Commission for further information on the international fire deployment by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) Victoria to the British Columbia Forest Service, Canada.

In response to your specific request around an email from the DEPI to NRFA Manager Gary Lockyer on the 4th August 2014 at 11:05hrs EST and your repeated question as to why New Zealand (NZ) firefighters did not deploy with the DEPI fire fighting resources to British Columbia Forests we advise:

1. DEPI have provided a copy of that email as attached.
2. Mr Lockyer has no recollection of having received the email on the 4th August 2014. At the time the email was sent (11:05EST) and the teleconference was held (13:30EST) he was travelling by road.
3. The DEPI have confirmed that Mr Lockyer neither responded to the email nor did he participate in the teleconference.
4. The email is not addressed to Mr Lockyer as the sole intended recipient as the email header you supplied suggested, nor is it addressed to the NZ NRFA.
5. The email clearly refers to a British Columbia request for Australian resources, not NZ resources.
6. The teleconference call number provided is for Australian callers only.

In response to your question as to why NZ firefighters were not part of this deployment, the position is:

7. The deployment in August 2014 was a DEPI Victoria to British Columbia Forests Canada fire fighting deployment undertaken by arrangement between those separate agencies through their own individual agreement. This is very clear in all the information we have provided.

[www.fire.org.nz](http://www.fire.org.nz)

8. New Zealand (through NRFA) has an International Agreement for mutual aid with the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), the federal coordination agency for wildland fire management across all Canada.
9. The coordinating authority for the Canadian participants is the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. (CIFFC) and the coordinating authority for New Zealand is the National Rural Fire Authority (NRFA).
10. The agreement requires all requests for assistance to be carried out through the countries' respective coordinating authority with all requests for assistance from Canada for New Zealand firefighters to be placed by CIFFC.
11. A key step as part of a formal request is for a NRFA liaison officer representing NZ to travel ahead to be onsite and liaise with the requesting agency to assess the request, the required competencies, qualifications, and ability for NZ firefighters to safely and effectively respond before such resources are deployed.
12. NZ NRFA did not receive a request from CIFFC in respect of deploying any NZ firefighters to assist with the fires in British Columbia Forests in August 2014.
13. The Commission's firm position is that the NRFA will only coordinate NZ firefighters going to Canada under the formal Canada International Agreement and only when a formal request is received from CIFFC.

The Commission strongly refutes your suggestion that "the Commission has continued to withhold this email and continued to state that it does not exist". I reiterate our position that we have no other documents in our possession relating to this request. The specific email you referenced was sourced by us from the DEPI.

Thank you for your correspondence.

Yours sincerely



Rob Pope  
Director, Office of the Chief Executive

encl

--- Forwarded by Rachel M Hoult/DSE/VICGOV1 on 28/10/2014 12:30 PM ---

From: Darrin McKenzie/DSE/VICGOV1  
To: [andrew.gravstone@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:andrew.gravstone@parks.vic.gov.au), [Adrian.Pyrke@parks.tas.gov.au](mailto:Adrian.Pyrke@parks.tas.gov.au), [Alan.Goodwin@depi.vic.gov.au](mailto:Alan.Goodwin@depi.vic.gov.au), [briensen@doc.govt.nz](mailto:briensen@doc.govt.nz), [cook.justin@forestrysa.com.au](mailto:cook.justin@forestrysa.com.au), [Craigie.Brown@melbournewater.com.au](mailto:Craigie.Brown@melbournewater.com.au), [Darrin.McKenzie@depi.vic.gov.au](mailto:Darrin.McKenzie@depi.vic.gov.au), [Dean.Sheehan@forestrytas.com.au](mailto:Dean.Sheehan@forestrytas.com.au), [Gary.Lockyer@fire.org.nz](mailto:Gary.Lockyer@fire.org.nz), [Murray.Carter@dpaw.wa.gov.au](mailto:Murray.Carter@dpaw.wa.gov.au), [Naomi.Stephens@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Naomi.Stephens@environment.nsw.gov.au), [Neil.Cooper@act.gov.au](mailto:Neil.Cooper@act.gov.au), [Peter.Leeson@nprsr.qld.gov.au](mailto:Peter.Leeson@nprsr.qld.gov.au), [Shane.Wiseman@sa.gov.au](mailto:Shane.Wiseman@sa.gov.au), [Tim.McGuffog@fcns.wa.gov.au](mailto:Tim.McGuffog@fcns.wa.gov.au), "David Nugent" <[david.nugent@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:david.nugent@parks.vic.gov.au)>, "Tony Blanks" <[dyvnyrme@intemode.on.net](mailto:dyvnyrme@intemode.on.net)>  
Cc: [gavin.freeman@fire.tas.gov.au](mailto:gavin.freeman@fire.tas.gov.au)  
Date: 04/08/2014 11:05 AM  
Subject: British Columbia - Resource Request Teleconference

Good morning

As you may be aware British Columbia have made a resource request to Australia for resources to assist in ongoing fire operations.


The request is for 2 x Type 1 IMTs and 59 single resources to be in Canada to commence shift on 12 August for a 5 week period.

Please find below dial in details for a tele-conference later today in order to provide addition information and obtain a preliminary indication of agency resource availability.

Time 1330 EST

Dial in numbers ; 1800 766 715, code 1522 312 634

Thank you.

DEPI	<b>Darrin McKenzie   Deputy Chief Fire Officer   Office of the Chief Fire Officer</b> Land, Fire and Environment   Department of Environment and Primary Industries Level 3, 8 Nicholson St, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002 T: 03 9637 8481   M: 0428 343 996   E: <a href="mailto:darrin.mckenzie@depi.vic.gov.au">darrin.mckenzie@depi.vic.gov.au</a>	
	    <a href="http://www.depi.vic.gov.au">www.depi.vic.gov.au</a>	

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