



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



Ms Elspeth Dyer
Committee Manager
Legislative Assembly, Committee on Law and Safety
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Your reference LAC16/326

06 DEC 2016

Dear Ms Dyer

Inquiry into Violence Against Emergency Services Personnel

I refer to my appearance before the Committee on Law and Safety on Monday 14 November 2016 to give evidence concerning the above Inquiry.

As requested I have reviewed the transcript of my oral evidence and require no amendments.

In reference to the questions taken on notice, as per the highlighted section of the transcript, I provide the following clarification.

For more than 20 years, the NSW Rural Fire Service has provided a comprehensive range of support services for its members including: Counselling and Support Unit; Critical Incident Support Services; Employee Assistance Programme; and Chaplaincy & Family Support programmes.

In addition, the NSW RFS incorporates a range of other mental health initiatives such as those offered by the Blackdog Institute and beyondblue to strengthen awareness, to promote healthy lifestyles and to encourage help or support seeking behaviour.

The NSW RFS also provides a full and thorough range of early and crisis intervention strategies and programmes that promote awareness of various effective coping strategies to address stress, critical incident stress and trauma and to encourage help and support seeking behaviour. This in turn encourages members to adopt a resistance and resilience building approach to maintaining good mental health care.

Presentations on mental health issues have been provided to NSW RFS staff, and mental health first aid training has been provided to the Service's Peer Support Officers.

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The NSW RFS works collaboratively with the NSW Mental Health Commission and other emergency service agencies to develop an over-arching mental health strategy for first responders' framework and a communication strategy to enhance and promote effective mental health support services to emergency services workers. This initiative has been promoted throughout the NSW RFS.

The NSW RFS also addresses how to deal with members of the community in various situations in a number of our volunteer training programmes such as Crew Leader and Community Safety Facilitator.

For further clarification in relation to my appearance or explanation above, please do not hesitate to call me on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Rob Rogers AFSM
Deputy Commissioner
Executive Director Operations