

**From:**

**Sent:** None

**To:** AFAC REVIEW.

**Subject:** SUPPLEMENTARY Submission to the Cronstedt Review of the Management of the Bushfires in Tasmania during the 2018-19 Fire Season.

Supplementary Submission from Jeff Leddin -- AFAC Review.

Re: "Terms of Reference" --

#6.

Russia and the United States of America are the only two nations offering for lease or through other arrangements, aerial firefighting bombers, both fixed wing and rotary aircraft, capable of loading and delivering water and retardant to extinguish wildfires internationally.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Aircraft leased for deployment from the USA since 2003 and seen in Australia's skies or through the media, fighting our annual wildfires, may be viewed in detail by 'Googling' the Annual Reports of the "National Aerial Firefighting Centre" (NAFC) year by year.

Australia, as a 'Western' nation and one of the 'five eyes' group, appears to demonstrate an understandable bias through its sole choice of the USA to source its range of aircraft in leasing deals year-after-year through the NAFC.

The NAFC's scope for its duty to protect Australia and its citizenry from and during our wildfire seasons is governed/limited by the NAFC's annual grant from the Auditor-General (A-G).

Annual grants commenced in 2003 with approximately \$5 million (after the establishment of the NAFC following the devastating Canberra bushfires), rising to approximately \$15 million currently. The NAFC Annual Reports advise that the A-G's annual grant is matched by the states. (Not discernible in the NAFC's Annual Reports' accounts).

Question:

It is now timely to ask, "Is Australia aware of Russia's ability to provide aerial firefighting assistance; how and on what basis; and for how long has it known?"

RUSSIA.

"The Be-200ChS efficient operation abroad has demonstrated the potential customers its advantages and primarily its firefighting capabilities.

"In 2007 the Irkut Corporation . . . . negotiations on leasing these firefighters for the summer season are under way with Portugal, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Algeria, Malaysia, Australia, USA and other countries." ( The IRKUT Corporation :: The Be-200 Multipurpose Amphibious Aircraft -- 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2007 )

EMERCOM - 'Ministry of Emergency Situations of Russia'.

( Full name -- 'The Ministry for the Affairs of Civil Defence, Emergency Situations and Disaster Relief' ).

This Ministry has available for year-to-year lease 12 – 15 Be-200ChS multi-purpose, firefighting amphibians.

This writer's first attempt to alert Australia's fire and emergency services that additional/extra aerial firefighting water bomber relief was available from Russia's EMERCOM, came during Victoria's devastating bushfires of February-March, 2009, when faxes were sent Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> March

and Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March to Mr. John Haynes, Victoria's Country Fire Authority and Mr. Bruce Esplin, Commissioner, Emergency Services.

This writer has subsequently 'broadcast' knowledge of the availability of EMERCOM'S BE-200ChS water bombers for annual lease many times, as evidenced in our submission.

Two more Questions:

1. "How many Australian lives, livelihoods, forests, wilderness, World Heritage Areas' hectares, infrastructure, stock and other wildlife dumb creatures could have been spared during wildfires since 2007, if Civil Defence aerial firefighting budgeting been otherwise organised; and
2. "If, as our own sovereign Nation, we had not applied an "All the way with LBJ" principle ?", which has prevented Australia from securing the recognised 'as-the-best' aerial firefighting water- bombers available today, for the protection of our common wealth from the annual visit of our 'wildfire terrorist' ? "

ASSESSMENT.

Australia's fire and emergency authorities should have had a standing order for the annual lease of at least two of EMERCOM's Be-200 firefighting amphibians, funded from the Dep't. of Defence's annual \$30 Billion budget, from circa 2009, supplementing NAFC's annual motley collection of excuses for appropriate aerial firefighting aircraft. These are hardly commensurate for the massive task of combatting our annual wildfire terrorist.

Officials of and from America's national parks and forestry interests have assessed Russia's Be-200 firefighting amphibian as being the best currently available in the world, and likely will remain for some years yet. They know that their own nation has not provided any purposely-designed water bombing aircraft, let alone of multi-purpose amphibious build.

These same officials decry the retro-fitted retired Hercules C-130 and retired, obsolete passenger aircraft offered by aircraft re-purposers, who retro-fit such aircraft with water tanks. These retros are known as death traps, and have been so described through the deaths from their numerous mishaps and accidents.

( The USA hasn't manufactured any replacement for the venerable Catalina amphibian nor the Martin Mars. Fact check invited ).

#7.

In answer to this term of reference, the Cronstedt Reviewers are invited to look beyond the shores of Australia, in order to identify the various satisfactory types of aircraft that have been deployed to combat major wild bushfires in other non-Western countries over the past decade or so.

They will find that aerial firefighting contributions have been made principally by the Bombardier, formerly Canadair CL-215, and latterly CL-415 amphibian aircraft, and the Beriev-Irkut Be-200 amphibian.

Manufacturers of purpose-designed water-bombing amphibians:

1. Western nations.

Until 2015, Canada was the only Western nation manufacturing such aircraft. The above-named company made circa 92 x CL-415s over 3-4 decades or more. Bombardier was taken over 2014, and production ceased under the new ownership in 2015.

A decision will be made by the end of 2019 whether to begin production of a remodelled amphibian, possibly to be named CL – 515.

Western nations have vacated the market in manufacturing firefighting, multi-purpose amphibians.

Specifications: CL-415 6,000 litres capacity/ Speed 330km/hr/

2. Non-Western nations.

Three nations -- Japan, China, and Russia.

Aircraft specifications:	Engine power	Water capacity	Cruise speed	Range/full ferry range.	
Japan's ShinMaywa US-2	4 x turbo-Prop	N/A litres	480 km/hr	4,700 kms	
( No firefighting configuration specs. available )					
China's AG600*	ditto	12,000 litres	500 km/hr	4,500 kms	
Russia's Be-200ChS Multi-purpose	Twin jets	12,000 litres	560 km/hr	2,100/ 3,300 km/hr	kms.

( \*China's AG600 is still in development, and won't be in full production until 2022 ).

NOTE:

Two DVDs accompany and comprise our submission.

They are in support of and demonstrate the value and effectiveness of amphibious firefighting multi-purpose aircraft over purely land-based, 'large fixed-wing aerial water tankers'.

Both Bombardier's CL-415 and Russia's Be-200ChS may be observed combatting wildfires in Greece and elsewhere.

Their use internationally demonstrate their popularity through hard-won success and effectiveness carrying out their designed duty in the field of combat against wildfires.

[ Wildfires are "terrorists" to every nation's population, including Australia's.

They have to be met and fought with every resource that is available to us, in the same way that no expenditure is spared to combat terrorism externally..

Very sadly, this has NOT happened, nor been the experience to date, for all whose lives have perished through the Federal Government's neglect in its duty of care towards its tax-paying citizens.

This ongoing situation is caused by insufficient funding of only \$15 million for this area of Australia's internal Civil Defence's funding requirement, compared with combatting external enemies with circa \$30 Billion EACH YEAR. ]

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