

Fire & !! Rescue NSW

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9 February 2016

Mr Simon Hattrefl

Dear Simon

I refer to your email of 25 January 2016 and our subsequent telephone conversation on 5 February concerning Canadair (Bombardier) CL 415 firefighting aircraft.

As indicated to you, I am familiar with these aircraft and have personally researched their use in France, Spain, Canada, and Los Angeles County in the USA. I was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 1995 to examine the use of large aerial tankers, and subsequently, in 1997, was part of a national evaluation team when Bombardier provided a CL 415 for Australian trials.

I concur with you that these aircraft are very effective, provided there are suitable bodies of water or calm ocean waters within a reasonable distance of a fire.

I have advocated the use of these aircraft for years, with little support. As I explained to you this has primarily been due to cost and funding constraints. In the last two years Large Aerial Tankers (LATs) have been used very effectively in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and New South Wales. During the 2015/16 bushfire season, NSW also contracted a Very Large Aerial Tanker (VLAN, a modified DC10 jet airliner that carries 45,000 litres of water or retardant. It has been used in NSW, Victoria, SA and WA.

I am encouraged by these developments as they have broadened thinking in the industry. I believe that the CL 415 aircraft would be a very beneficial addition to Australia's bushfire fighting arsenal, and I will continue to advocate for their introduction.

Thank you for your interest in this matter.

Yours sincerely



Greg Mullins AFSM
Commissioner

