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The Fire Commissioners,
Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales,
and Australian Capital Territory.



YOUR REF AND DATE

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DATE

Thursday, 20 Septem., 2007

Leddin's

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: NEW Russian Firefighting Aircraft and Other Firefighting
Innovations as Demonstrated in Recent Fires in GREECE.

This DVD - R is a compilation of 27 segments recorded from telecasts from Greece and Russia, live television, during the **devastating** bush fires in Greece, 28th July to early September, with a viewing time of about 66 minutes.

The fires killed over 64 people; numerous villages and over 270,000 hectares of land were burnt.

Following an appeal by the Greek Government to the Russian Government for assistance to fight their bush fires with specialised Russian aircraft, both nations' media provided coverage from each one's aspect.

AUSTRALIA'S NEED FOR A STANDING FLEET OF SPECIALISED FIREFIGHTING AIRCRAFT.

Upon the screening of their firefighting aircraft, including a new amphibian - 'BE 200', in action in Greece, water bombing fires, it immediately occurred to the writer of the suitability of such aircraft serving our nation.

It is apparent that our nation needs at least two of the BE - 200 amphibian multi-purpose, firefighting jet aircraft, together with a number of the larger water-carrying helicopters, and to be regarded as a vital component in safe-guarding our nation's common wealth.

PURCHASE COST AS AN APPROPRIATION FROM THE FEDERAL GOV'T'S. NATIONAL DEFENSE AND EMERGENCY BUDGET.

It is the writer's hope that in providing States' Fire Commissioners with this information of such aircraft, that a consensus could be achieved and decision made to lobby both major political parties for commitments to fund purchase, and operational expense, during the 2007 election campaign, for a fleet of such aircraft. Global warming and mega-size fires now demand NO LESS!

N Additional DVD-R
O copies are available
T Yours sincerely,
E upon request.

Jeff Leddin (Accountant Ret'd.,
Chartered Coy. Sec'y.)

Postal Address: P.O.Box 280, GEEVESTON, Tasmania, Australia 7116

Phone: (61 3) 03 6297 0085

Mobile: 0412 494 860

Fax : (61 3) 03 6297 0095

INCORPORATED IN NEW SOUTH WALES

FAX

TO: Mr. JOHN HAYNES Fax: 03 9262 8744

Country Fire Authority
MELBOURNE, Victoria, Australia

Also: Attention: Mr. BRUCE ESPLIN,
Commissioner, Emergency Services.

FROM:

JEFF LEDDIN,
P.O. Box 280,

GEEVESTON, Tasmania 7116

* Sunday, 1st March, 2009 ←

Circa 11 p.m.

Fax No: 03 6297 0095 (Phone: -0085)

Dear Sirs,

Re: Fighting Victorian Fires with Russia's Emergency Ministry's
Fixed-Wing, Fire-fighting Aircraft.

Having learnt this evening via local TV News of the potential danger for horrendous conditions facing the State of Victoria on this Tuesday, I am supplying the following information now, rather than holding for inclusion with my submission to the Royal Commission with much other intelligence, as a concerned fellow Australian, with the hope, that if acted upon immediately, will reduce the danger to lives and property - our common wealth ?

The following, large water and fire-retardant carrying capacity aircraft are on standby in Russia:

1. ILUSHYN 76 - a 4-engined jet, airfield/airport-based
Capacity: 42 metric tonnes of water
2. IRKUT BE-200 - a 2-engined amphibian, multi-purpose, landing on water or land.
Capacity: 12 tonnes of water scooped up in 18 seconds.

The officials-in-charge at Russia's Emergency - EMERCOM - are:

SERGEY SHOIGU and EVGENY ERSHOV

and may be contacted through International Directory Assistance, other modern, computerised means (?), or through Russia's overseas television service, RUSSIA TODAY, by Phone: +7 (495) 540 2840
Fax : +7 (495) 540 2841
E-mail: contact_us@rttv.ru

We have a satellite dish on the roof of our home to receive free-to-air channels from the Optus D2 satellite service, and have learnt of the above.

Now is not the time to consider help from 'Western World's' sources solely, hold an enquiry, set up a panel to investigate and report, and "fiddle while Victoria burns". Elvis helicopter buckets are only "thimble-sized" for a 'man-sized job', excellent for small fires, in comparison with the need for large capacity aircraft for Victoria's grandmother of all conflagrations. I would recommend at least 1 x ILUYSHIN 76 and 2 x IRKUT BE-200 be sent immediately.

FAX

TO: MR. JOHN HAYNES/MR. BRUCE ESPLIN

FROM: JEFF LEDDIN.

Two IRKUT BE-200 could be deployed on a shuttle, Berlin Airlift-style basis, scooping water ex Port Phillip Bay, Lake Eildon etc.

Trusting the above information, offered constructively, may help to lessen the danger to lives and property.

Yours sincerely,



Jeff Leddin.

(Accountant/Chartered Company Secretary)

attention: Mr. John Haynes / Mr. B. Esplin

Monday, 2 March, 2009

Circa 2 am.

P.S. If trouble with R.T.'s phone & fax numbers, try their web-site:

www.russiatoday.com

and e-mail, as you wish.

I tried Russia Today's phone & fax numbers, didn't get through, & was referred to Telstra's 1225.

We don't have a computer in our home.

With kind regards, Jeff Leddin

MONDAY, 2 MARCH, 2009

F A X

To: MR. JOHN HAYNES
COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY
MELBOURNE, VIC

From: JEFF LEDDIN
GEEVESTON
TAS, 7116

Phone: 03 6297 0085

Fax No: 03 9262 8744

Fax No: 03 6297 0095

ALSO: ATTENTION: MR. BRUCE ESPLIN

COMMISSIONER

VIC. EMERGENCY SERVICES

URGENT-URGENT

PLEASE GO TO:

www.russiatoday.com

CLICK ON/FIND: INTERVIEWS

Date:

THURSDAY, 26 FEBRUARY, 2009

INTERVIEW: OF SERGEY SHOIGU,

RUSSIA'S EMERGENCY SERVICES
MINISTER,

By: Ms. SOPHIE SHEVARDNADZE.

With kind regards, Jeff Leddin

MONDAY 2 MARCH, 2009

F A X

TO: MR. JOHN HAYNES
COUNTRY FIRE AUTH.
MELBOURNE.VIC

FROM: JEFF LEDDIN
GEESTON
TAS. 7116

Fax No: 03 9262 8744

Phone: 03 6297 0085

Fax No: 03 6297 0095

ALSO: ATTENTION: MR. BRUCE ESPIN, COMMISSIONER
VIC. EMERGENCY SERVICES

VERY URGENT.

INTERVIEW OF SERGEY SHOIGU, MINISTER
RUSSIA'S EMERGENCY SERVICES

By: MS. SOPHIE SHEVARDNADZE

AT: WWW.RUSSIA TODAY.COM

Date: Thursday, 26 FEBRUARY, 2009

Duration: 13 minutes

SHOWS: IRKUT BE-200 AMPHIBIAN WATER-
BOMBING FIRE-FIGHTING AIRCRAFT,
SCOOPS 12 tonnes OF WATER IN
18 SECONDS, IN ACTION, DURING
INTERVIEW.

With kind regards, Jeff Leddin

FAX

TO: The Management,
RUSSIA TODAY, Moscow, Russia

649 8979

Fax No: +7 (495) 540-2841

FROM: Jeff Leddin
P.O. Box 280,
GEEVESTON, Tasmania, Australia 7116

Fax No: +61 3 6297 0095 (Phone:-0085)

Found R.T.'s new fax no. today → Tuesday 3 March 2009

MEMO: In good faith, we forward the following information.

Your overseas television service is excellent, and enjoy learning about your immense country, from every aspect presented.

It has helped also in identifying some opportunities which our two nations could benefit from, such as trade etc.

With particular reference to the subject matter of our fax to you in which I have taken the liberty of informing the Victorian Government's Fire and Emergency Authorities, of Russian Fire-fighting aircraft and Russia's Emergencies Ministry, was the co-incidental interview of Mr.Sergey Shoigu by Ms. Sophie Shevardnadze on Thursday, 26 February, 2009, the Ministry's chief.

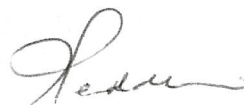
I shall be contacting the President of Irkut Corporation, Mr. Oleg Demchenko, who was Mr.Gurnov's guest on Thursday, 18 October, 2007.

(Please - may I offer the following comment, constructively ?)

What a delight to view each of Mr.Gurnov's SPOTLIGHT programmes in the previous studio setting - a most relaxing, absorbing and enjoyable experience, allowing the viewer full concentration without the continuous bombardment of the bluish, revolving kaliedoscope in the lower part of the screen, and the constantly changing background behind Mr. Gurnov ! Both constantly moving lower and rear props are wholly distracting from the dialogue taking place between interviewer and interviewee.

R.T.'s other interview programmes are more enjoyable viewing, because there are no other competing, moving scenic props to distract. e.g. Exclusive Interview, and Ms. Shevardnadze's interviews.

Thank you, yours sincerely,



Jeff Leddin

(Geeveston, a timber town of 900 population, 45 minutes driving time south of Hobart, in the Huon River Valley.)

① of 2

Australia's defence budget is more than adequate

14/01/2013

Opinion

Alan Stephens

It's not America's business how much we decide to spend, ALAN STEPHENS writes

Email article Print

Australia's 2012-13 federal budget was released in May, and among other things flagged a reduction in defence spending from the equivalent of 1.8 per cent of GDP the previous year to 1.56 per cent, the smallest ratio for some 70 years.

The defence allocation has since been criticised by a range of senior serving and former US officials, including the commander of Pacific Command, Admiral Samuel Lockyear, and the second Bush administration's deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage. Lockyear stated that Australia's defence spending had fallen below the level the US expected of its allies, while Armitage called the new allocation "inadequate" and accused Australia of wanting a "free ride" on the US.

Australians who would prefer a more independent national posture might think that how much we choose to spend on defence is no one else's business. They might also think it presumptuous for US officials to define Australian defence policy solely in terms of its worth to the (American) alliance. Neither Lockyear nor Armitage chose to acknowledge that Australia has spent in the order of \$1.3 billion a year for the past 10 years, for little apparent gain, supporting the US's ill-considered and badly-run invasion of Afghanistan. And it is not possible to place a cost on the deaths of the 33 Australian soldiers who have been killed on operations there. Nor did the two American officials mention that the US's major ally in the Pacific, Japan, spends only 1 per cent of its GDP on national defence.

The fact is, like many statistics, GDP ratios are no more than a useful guide to what's actually happening, and to the true value of various government-funded activities.

Budget cuts notwithstanding, Australia will still outlay some \$27 billion on defence in each of the next five or so years, a very large amount that ranks in the top dozen in the world in terms of gross defence expenditure. If directed carefully and sensibly towards the key capabilities the Australian Defence Force needs to control and to protect in our region - as opposed to making largely token contributions to reckless adventures on the other side of the world - it will be more than adequate.

Those key capabilities are high-quality people; and the weapons systems needed for sea and air control, and for ISR (Intelligence-Surveillance-Reconnaissance). In that context, it is noteworthy that the ADF already has the most powerful maritime - air and sea - capabilities in south-east Asia; and that that dominance will not be challenged for the next decade at least. Australia's military network of information systems, command and control centres, very long-range radars, strike/fighter aircraft, early warning aircraft, aerial tankers, submarines, air warfare destroyers, advanced weapons





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There are still issues associated with the eventual shape of the navy's submarine force (studies to replace the Collins class boats are under way), and with the air force's strike/fighter fleet (some uncertainty surrounds the future of the preferred F-35 Joint Strike Fighter). There should be no doubt, however, that regardless of the platforms selected they will continue to be the best in the region, and that an annual budget of \$27 billion will be more than ample to buy enough of both. The global economy remains extremely fragile and there is no reason for any country to feel complacent. Still, it is a truism that everything is relative.

According to the OECD, Australia's economy is one of the most resilient in the world, with a comparatively strong growth rate and a low public debt to GDP ratio. By contrast, the US remains in a "debt crisis", with publicly held debt likely to reach 70 per cent of GDP by September.

Coincidentally, like Australia's current defence spending percentage, the US has not experienced those kinds of numbers for 70 years.

In the past decade, US politicians have managed to turn the budget surplus of the final Clinton years into a disturbingly large deficit. A major factor has been the \$1.4 trillion squandered on the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. And the bills for those disastrous wars of choice have only just started to come in.

According to a recent edition of *The Economist*, by 2014 the US Department of Defence's annual bill for ex-servicemen's pay and benefits will exceed that for the active force, and by 2038 it will "absorb the entire defence budget".

In short, it's not necessarily how much you spend on defence, but how and where you spend it. More attention to events at home and less gratuitous advice might be in order within the alliance.

Dr Alan Stephens is a visiting fellow at University of NSW, ADFA.

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