FIXING THE SYSTEM – NOT FIXING THE WOMEN

Noreen Krusel
ABOUT AFAC

AFAC is the Australian and New Zealand National Council for fire and emergency services.

Working for our members to build safer, more resilient communities.

‘We are here for you’
5 GENDER EQUALITY
WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

YOUR RIGHTS & ENTITLEMENTS
Homogeneous groups result in homogeneous solutions. A homogeneous group, even a very smart one, cannot offer insights outside the collective realm of its experience, and because the members all resemble each other in the way they think, they don’t even know What they don’t know.
CORE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

**Model**
- Models ethics, inclusiveness and good governance
- Creates effective background conditions to build confident and capable teams and engaged stakeholders
- Applies effective decision-making

**Think**
- Pursues sense-making and encourages in others
- Practices planning and strategic thinking
- Enables consequence management

**Self-Aware**
- Monitors and manages self for symptoms of stress and fatigue
- Displays resilience and agility
- Recognises own strengths and limitations

Hazard Context Capabilities

**Hazard**
Specialist understanding of the risks, consequence and behaviours of hazards.

**Technical**
Solid understanding and application of policies, systems and doctrine and their strengths and limitations.
Answering the call
national survey

Beyond Blue’s National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services – Executive summary
Harassment training for the #MeToo era

- Nuanced scenarios
- Insightful survey questions
- Anonymous reporting
WORTHY CAREER
Believe most tasks are mundane & repetitive
Improving knowledge

GAINS CONFIDENCE
Learning life skills
Shift time = less time with family/partner
Keeping fit

STRONG PURPOSE
Difficult to fit in and be respected
Passing physical test is hard and rate of failure high

“People would look down on me because I am female and I am tiny.”

DO NOT SEE THEMSELVES AS FIREFIGHTERS
Makes them attractive to women
Hyper-masculine

Serving the community
Has a boys club culture

FEEL THEY WOULD NEED TO PROVE THEMSELVES MORE
Assume women work on the front desk, answering phones and not on the front line
Fears the weight of the PPE as it weigh them down and impact their effectiveness
BACKLASH & BUY-IN
RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY
My Leadership Shadow

What I say

What I prioritise

How I act

How I measure

Disciplines, routines, interactions
- Engage senior leaders directly
- Play a strong role in key recruitment and promotion decisions
- Champion flexibility for men and women

Values, context setting, message repetition and emphasis
- Deliver a compelling case for gender balance
- Provide regular updates and celebrate progress

Rewards, recognition, accountability
- Understand the numbers and levers; set targets
- Hold yourself and your team to account
- Get feedback on your own leadership shadow

Behaviours, symbols, relationships
- Be a role model for an inclusive culture
- Build a top team with a critical mass of women
- Call out behaviours and decisions that are not consistent with an inclusive culture
Fire and Emergency Priorities for Action

- Inclusive Leadership
- Flexible Workplaces
- Talent Development
- Communications
- Community Engagement
- Systems
- Reporting
GROWTH-FOCUSED
Challenges accepted practices and incorporates different perspectives into how business is done.

FLEXIBLE & AGILE
Is flexible about, and responsive to, a diversity of people and perspectives.

OPEN & CURIOUS
Is curious about and open to new and different perspectives from a diversity of people.

RELATIONAL
Creates teams and networks in which a diversity of people feel they belong, and are valued, and respected.

IDENTITY-AWARE
Believes diversity can significantly improve organisational performance, and so learns about their own and others’ identities (e.g. age, gender).
The Recruitment Process

1. Information and Practice Day
2. Online Application
3. Shortlisting
4. Cognitive Testing
5. Psychometric Assessment
6. Physical Testing
7. Practical Assessment
8. Formal Interview
9. Background Checks
10. Final Acceptance
First ever gender representation across the sector

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* Excludes police and emergency services. ** Excludes volunteer organizations.

** Male Champions of Change** - A Leader in Emergency (MCI) Report 2019
Women’s Representation 17/18 – 18/19

• slight increase in women’s representation to 24%, up 2.3% from 2018

• 64% of organisations have achieved or improved in overall women’s representation since last year

• But still below critical mass (30%)
THE PIPELINE
NO SIMPLE ANSWER

The Long Road, Young et al 2018