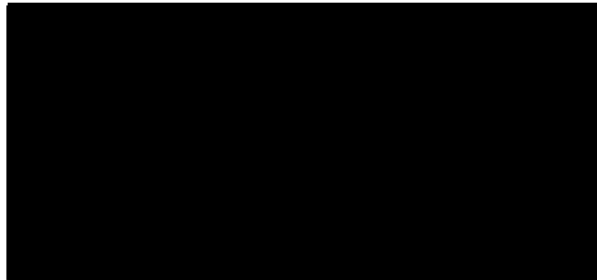




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30 August 2018



Information Request – How many FENZ personnel in Southland have accessed counselling services between 01.04.2012 and 31.03.2018

I refer to your official information request dated 17 July 2018 asking for the following information:

How many Fire and Emergency New Zealand personnel in Southland have accessed counselling services between April 1, 2012 and March 31, 2018?

The safety, health and wellbeing of our people is of paramount importance to us. Every person within Fire and Emergency New Zealand has a right to work in a healthy and safe way, within healthy and safe environments, and be able to go home safely and well.

We know the nature of our work means our staff encounter a wide range of risks to their physical safety, work-related health or psychological wellbeing. To address this, we provide support services that cater for different levels of need in our personnel. The provision of funded counselling services is one of these support services as we are aware that staff who are supported in this way respond to, and recover better from, exposure to critical incidents.

From the establishment of Fire and Emergency on 1 July 2017, external independent confidential counselling and support services were opened up to all personnel, and their immediate families, at no cost to them. These services can be accessed for both work-related and non-work-related issues.

Uptake of counselling and other support services has increased in Region 5 (which incorporates the Southland area) since the sudden deaths last year of two Fire and Emergency personnel in unconnected incidents. Fire and Emergency is pleased personnel and their families are accessing the support that is available.

The following table shows the use of counselling in Region 5 in the past six calendar years, through to 31 March 2018. The figures shown include Southland, Dunedin, Invercargill, Queenstown and Central Otago.

Calendar Year	EAP Services	Referrals to psychologists	Total by year
2012	3	Not recorded	3
2013	6	3	9
2014	7	12	19
2015	5	11	16
2016	14	12	26
2017	47	21	68
2018 *	12	37	49

*includes information for period 1 January to 31.March 2018.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602. Note also that this response (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Fire and Emergency website.

Yours sincerely



Leigh Deuchars
Director, Office of the Chief Executive