



Draft Minutes

Otago Local Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 27 March 2025

Time: 9.00am - 2.00pm

Venue: Wanaka Fire Station

Present:

Megan McPherson	LAC Chair
Helen Algar	LAC Deputy Chair
Hilary McNab	LAC Member
Mandy Mayhem-Bullock	LAC Member
Des Minehan	LAC Member
Vanessa van Uden	LAC Member
Rachel Cooper	LAC Member
Neil Gillespie	LAC Member

In Attendance:

Phil Marsh	Acting Region Manager, Te Kei
Craig Geddes	Acting District Manager, Otago
James Knapp (online)	Community Risk Manager
David Ready	Pou Takawaenga Māori Matua
Leanne Hay (online)	Senior Advisor, Local Advisory Committees
Chris Lind (online)	National Advisor Future Operational Capability Project
Jon Kneebone (online)	Senior Advisor, Volunteerism

Apologies:

Mike Grant	Region Manager, Te Kei
Lucy Chamberlain	National Manager, Local Advisory Committees

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was opened with a karakia and introductions.

Committee operations

The minutes of the LAC meeting on 19 November 2024 were reviewed and confirmed.

Chairs Update

The Chair attended a 2-day workshop on the Future Operating Capability Project run in Otago by the National Office. The work being undertaken by this team is important to Fire and Emergency's future planning and very relevant to Local Advisory Committees.

The Chair also met with Bryan Dunne, Deputy Chief Executive, Office of the Chief Executive while he was in Dunedin. Discussion focused largely on the Fire and Emergency's new strategy. The strategy

has a focus on sustainability of the organisation, looking long term with clearer priorities. It looks to keep the organisation safe, with an emphasis on training for health and safety, partnerships and effective regulation.

Engagement updates

The LAC discussed recent engagements and member updates. These included:

- Positive feedback has been received from the Mt Iron community on messaging around closures as a recreational facility due to fire risk. The community is supportive of closures to support and protect the area.
- The Wanaka community responded well to a *Get Ready Emergency Preparedness* event held recently at Mitre 10. The Wanaka Community Response group also recently undertook a month-long awareness campaign which was well received by the community.
- There was discussion on the number of recent fatal accidents Fire and Emergency has responded to in the last few months. Of note were incidents where a family member was involved and the toll it took on the volunteers. The community has been very supportive and District staff noted they kept a close eye that appropriate support was available when needed. Also discussed was the impact on volunteers' families.
- Noted was a current shortage of volunteers in Clinton, the Regional Manager noted that they were currently evaluating what the brigade needs and will monitor the situation.
- An update was provided for the Otago cycleway, that track markers were now in place so people could be quickly located in an emergency. Also updated were the movements of several Port Chalmers community groups.
- An update was provided on the Otago University O-week, which for a first time finished with no fires. The University was continuing to work on problem flats. Also noted was an emerging problem of hundreds of Lincoln University students coming into Dunedin for parties.
- Work with migrant communities was still needed around risks to fire. It was suggested that this would be a good opportunity to link community groups working in this space with the Community Risk Manager (CRM) from Fire and Emergency.
- Noted to be passed on for the Future Operating Capacity Project was that some of the census data did not seem to reflect the actual makeup of the communities. This could be picked up by local planning.

District Update

The District team gave an update on significant events and incident numbers. The movements of District Staff was noted. Phil Marsh is Acting Region Manger and Craig Geddes is Acting District Manager. One Group Manager is retiring, and recruitment is underway for that position.

Also noted was the number of incidents affecting staff, including families and the impact this is having. The District noted the support brigade members receive following an incident. Lessons learned around the significant Otago landslip in 2024, were also discussed, these have now been incorporated into the learning module.

A task team from Otago and Invercargill has been set up to develop a support plan for 'Out of Scale Incidents' in the South Island.

An update was given to the LAC on the current fiscal landscape of Fire and Emergency and what this will mean for the organisation in the future.

Community Risk Manager

The Community Risk Manager (CRM) gave an update of current projects and milestones for the CRM team. There have been several positive outcomes from working with the community, and it appears that the community has been taking heed of key messaging around reducing unwanted fires.

The team is currently working on new signs for fire restrictions, and further work on incidents relating to fireworks. The use of technology such as targeted messaging to visitors via their phones has been particularly successful.

Key challenges facing the team, include gaps in the regulation covering buildings where they are not being used for their intended purpose. False alarms continue to be an issue. The CRM team would be keen to work with the LAC on shared messaging on this issue.

Pou Takawaenga Māori Matua

The Pou Takawaenga Māori Matua gave an update on KPMCC current activities and specifically in the Te Kei District. Noted was the Fire and Emergency Rautaki Māori roll out, this was a soft launch last year, and the team is now running workshops in each region.

Particular areas of focus include working with the CRM on pepeha and karakia workshops and connecting with Māori services in Dunedin. Of note was the current Ngāi Tahu restructure in which the Emergency Response team has been disestablished. Fire and Emergency is considering how this gap can be filled.

Update on Future Operating Capability Project

Chris Lind gave an update on the Future Operational Capability project, looking at the Local Planning aspect and how LACs can input into the project. At this stage they are seeking the LAC views on the project, and in the future, they will be seeking input on any local risks and areas of importance Fire and Emergency may have missed. The next steps are to provide the LACs a Framework to review for the project.

The LAC will consider having an out of cycle online meeting when the Framework comes through to review.

Update from the National Volunteering Team

The Senior Advisor from the National Volunteering Team gave an update on progress against the Volunteering strategy, and projects being undertaken by the team. These include the Volunteer Voice Project and the Volunteer Engagement Model. He noted that they are a small team with a mandate to empower the organisation to look at all work and projects through a volunteer lens.

The LAC discussed several issues including support for volunteers and how this has changed and increased over time and how issues have affected more than just the volunteer, but also whānau and community. There was open discussion around support at local levels, and whether there should be wider support on training for volunteers to deal with community response around incidents (i.e. grief, anger etc).

Also discussed was volunteer selection, and how each Brigade can tailor selection to their needs.

NLAC Updates

The Senior Advisor provided an update on the Whāriki engagement reporting tool rollout, guidance for members when invoicing and the Community Perceptions Research Project.

Board Updates

- The LAC would like to pass onto the Board that there was positive feedback on support for volunteers attending mental health incidents, from both the organisation and the community.
- There appears to be a gap around protecting volunteers from the community response to an incident. The Board could consider training for volunteers to deal with community response around grief and anger responses to an incident at a National level, with a particular focus around mental health incidents including suicide.
- The LAC would like the board to consider if there is an opportunity to work with other agencies to provide wrap around support to volunteers who attend mental health incidents.
- Fireworks continue to be an issue in several communities, and the LAC has committed to monitoring community response and feedback on this issue.
- The LAC would also like to pass on feedback that the campaign against unwanted fires has been very successful in Te Kei. This is largely down to the CRM team messaging, which included using electronic updates and alerts via phones.
- Positive feedback was also given for the Whāriki engagement reporting tool developed and rolled out by NLAC.
- The LAC appreciated the update from on the Future Operating Capability Project and the opportunity to provide feedback. It was good to note LACs will have the opportunity to contribute to local planning going forward.
- The LAC flagged that there is ongoing concern for Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) workers and other vulnerable communities that we don't immediately have visibility over, in relation to prevention of unwanted fires.
- Lithium-Ion batteries continue to be an issue, but the LAC acknowledged the communication from Fire and Emergency on this issue had greatly improved.
- The Otago LAC would like to invite the Board, or members of the Board to their next meeting on June 19th in Dunedin.

2024-25 LAC meeting schedule

The following dates were confirmed for 2025 Trimester meetings:

- T3: 19 June 2025 – Dunedin Fire Station coincides with Matariki celebration.

Meeting concluded at 2.00pm

Action Log

Date	Action	Responsible	Due	Status
27/03/2025	CRM to work on a draft for shared messaging around false alarms	CRM	Post meeting	In progress
27/03/2025	Public consultation on wilding conifer control around Bob's Peak in Queenstown – most likely FENZ will make a submission – CRM to advise LAC if they can support the submission	CRM	Post meeting	In progress
19/11/2024	Follow up on information on CDEM website on fire and wildfire – did not appear that FENZ had input into the website	Region and District Manager	Post meeting	Check progress
27/03/2025	Follow up on members signing petition for ACC and report back.	SA	Immediately post meeting	Completed – LAC members can sign as individuals
19/11/2024	Lithium batteries – for next information campaign include what devices can have lithium batteries in them	District noted and Senior Advisor to HQ comms	Post meeting	Completed
19/11/24	Follow up on thank you letter to the Red Zone transport provider – was it sent	Senior Advisor	Post meeting	<i>Email sent 5/12/2023 to tour provider</i>
22/08/24 19/11/2024	Confirm whether recently vacated role on Otago LAC will be replaced Updated – SA will note to NLAC risk of not having iwi representation on the LAC	Senior Advisor	post meeting	Complete – recruitment will not be undertaken until later in 2025
19/11/2024	Add Senior Advisor to distribution list for fortnightly Regional Pānui (to forward to LAC members)	District Manager	Post meeting	Completed
19/11/2024	LAC will complete its first draft of the 24-25 Engagement plan and circulate. For review at Q2 meeting	Chair	Q2 LAC meeting	Completed
19/11/2024	Add Senior Advisor to distribution list for fortnightly Regional Pānui (to forward to LAC members)	District Manager	Post meeting	Completed