Minutes

Southland Local Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday 13 May 2025 **Time:** 9.30am – 12.30pm

Venue: Invercargill Fire Station

Present:

Tracey Wright-Tawha	LAC Chair
Gary Tong	LAC Deputy Chair
Tracy Hicks	LAC Member
Beryl Wilcox	LAC Member
Alastair McKenzie	LAC Member
Carla Harper	LAC Member
Chris Dillon	LAC Member
Himani Galbraith	LAC Member

In Attendance:

Julian Tohiariki	District Manager, Southland
Delia Riley	Community Risk Manager, Southland
Leanne Hay	Senior Advisor, Local Advisory Committees

Apologies:

John Twiddle	LAC Member

Welcome

The meeting was opened with a karakia tīmatanga by the District Manager, followed by a welcome by the Chair.

Committee operations

The minutes from the previous meeting were amended and confirmed. There were no changes to the Interests Register for this meeting. Actions from the previous meeting were updated.

Chairs Update

The Chair noted she would be attending the Chairs Hui on the 17 July.

District update

The District Manager (DM) gave an update on the new Strategic Direction for Fire and Emergency 2025-2030. The District is currently drafting its strategic plan for the next year, and this will consider the strategic direction set by the Fire and Emergency Board. Improving the organisations culture continues to underpin all aspects of the strategy.

Southland is experiencing a resurgence in interest in becoming a volunteer but are aware of challenges ahead to retain and make the journey easier for volunteers.

The DM gave an update on the Future Operating Capability Project which will enable the organisation to look more holistically at resourcing and the operating model to achieve greater efficiencies. It is anticipated that the LAC will be able to have input at the planning stage to apply local knowledge of any gaps in the data.

The Community Risk Manager updated the LAC on a recent initiative, including educational visits to prisons, pocket flyers for people effected by fires and educational programmes for young persons who light fires.

LAC engagement review and analysis

The committee discussed recent engagement reports submitted by LAC members, analysed findings from engagements and determined where follow up engagement was needed. Recent engagements include with were undertaken with local Runaka, South Invercargill Community Groups, Fire and Emergency volunteers via the Leadership Conference, representatives from migrant communities and forestry.

Some initial insights from these engagements include:

- Local Māori/iwi would like to ensure that the Fire and Emergency culture is safe organisation for them to engage with. This is something the LAC will explore further, along with a platform for Māori specific voice via a combined Runaka forum.
- Initial contact with community groups has highlighted an issue with substandard housing for migrants and seasonal workers, and a lack of knowledge around fire safety in these communities. Further communities will be engaged with to see if this is a wider issue. The LAC wondered Fire and Emergency takes into consideration translation issues with fire safety documentation (i.e. are they translated into different languages) and is the education component of fire safety reflective of different community groups.
- Engagement with South Invercargill communities has shown that in the older demographic, there is a fear around emergencies, and a general unpreparedness for a fire or other disaster. Issues raised included a lack of knowledge around accessing services. The LAC will engage further in the community and endeavour to access a wider demographic for comparison.
- In attending the Volunteer Leadership Conference, the LAC found in general there was a lack of knowledge about LACs. Several brigades indicated they would be interested to hear more about the LAC and its purpose.
- The LAC wondered if training and support for volunteers for rural brigades is fit for purpose? This will be followed up with more visits to brigades.

Follow up actions:

- Further engagement with Runaka, forestry, South Invercargill communities and other communities as identified
- Following a discussion with the Marlborough LAC, the LAC has initiated an after five event though the Chamber of Commerce to educate businesses on false alarms. Marlborough has done some work in this area.
- Determine a schedule for visiting volunteer brigades – promote LACs/ Draft sample questions to ask volunteers.
- Items to follow up with DM and CRM:

- What plans are in place when engaging with iwi from Fire and Emergency perspective
- Canvas what groups Fire and Emergency currently engage. Note areas of concern to discuss further from LAC are older communities/forestry/schools/seasonal workers/migrant communities and changing demographics – i.e. do Fire and Emergency track new developments/changing land use for forestry etc.
- Initial contact with forestry representatives indicates that they would like a Fire and Emergency person to attend.

Annual Insights Report

The LAC discussed and completed its annual insights report to the Board from its establishment in February of this year.

General Business

The committee undertook further engagement planning for the next period.

The Senior Advisor gave a further update on the Future Operating Capability Project timelines. Also noted is that the Volunteering Team would be undertaking engagement with volunteers through the Volunteer Engagement Model project. This project is centred around modernising volunteer agreements to better reflect the role of volunteers to keep our communities safe. More information on this is included in the next LAC pānui.

Next meeting:

The LAC will be consulted on meeting dates for 2025/26 from the LAC coordinator.

Closing

The meeting closed at 12.30pm with a karakia whakamutunga.

Action Log

Date	Action	Responsible	Due	Status
13 May	Follow up with DM on initial findings from engagement as noted in the follow up actions	Chair/Deputy	Post meeting	In progress
13 May	Draft template for brigade visits by LAC members	Chair/Senior Advisor	Post meeting	In progress
13 May	Comms template for engaging with brigades	Chair/Beryl	Post meeting	In progress
13 May	Find standard questions and send to LAC	Senior Advisor	Post meeting	In progress
4 Feb 2025	Invite committee to meet the Board when they visit Southland on 27th March.	Region Manager	Early March	Completed
4 Feb 2025	Invite committee to the Southland Leaders Forum in June (Group Managers Workshop)	District Manager –	T3 meeting May 13th	The Chair will follow up-with DM

4 Feb 2025	Draft a template of questions for members to use when engaging with communities, relevant to the LAC area of focus.	Chair	Following the meeting	Completed
4 Feb 2025	Complete draft of Southland Engagement Plan, including planned engagements for review	Senior Advisor	11 February	Completed