



IGNITE

TE HIRINGA O TE TANGATA

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Ignite is the official magazine for Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

**Te Hiringa o te Tangata –
To have drive, zest, determination.
To have heart and soul.**

Ignite represents the voices of the people across the country who dedicate themselves to protecting life, the environment and property in their communities.

It is produced by the Fire and Emergency Communications Team, National Headquarters, Level 12, 80 The Terrace, Wellington, 6140.

Contributions to Ignite

Contributions to be considered for publication are welcome and may be submitted to: communications@fireandemergency.nz.

Photos need to be at least 1MB.

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fireandemergency.nz/news-and-media

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KIA ORA KOUTOU

This year continues to deliver many challenges to our people and the communities we serve.

The way you have continued to provide such a high level of support to New Zealanders during this long tail of the COVID-19 pandemic makes me immensely proud. You have adapted to shifting goalposts, and showed high levels of respect, innovation and determination throughout this time.

Despite these challenges we continue to find ways to connect with our communities and bring positive changes to our organisation.

In this issue of Ignite you'll read about how technology is helping our Kaupapa Māori Liaison team to deliver their work in new ways (page 5).

The passion our people have for Fire and Emergency and their roles is also a strong feature of this issue. You'll read about how our National Commander, Kerry Gregory, recently challenged himself to complete his physical competency test (page 3) and how Peter Walker realised his dream by retraining as a career firefighter with our latest recruits, after 14 years in other roles (page 4).

You'll also find inspiration reading about Erin Tahau from Hastings Brigade being honoured as one of six finalists in this year's Government Health and Safety Lead Health and Safety Representatives' Awards (page 14). Renee Potae, recently appointed Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer for Wairarapa, also shares her story (page 15).

Last issue we brought you several heart-warming stories about whānau connections within Fire and Emergency, which prompted you to send us more examples – thank you. In this issue we feature the Cockburn family's career and volunteer firefighters and Mangatangi Brigade's multiple father-child connections (pages 8 and 9).

Thank you all for continuing to give our communities your absolute best during this difficult time and for demonstrating the manaakitanga essential to Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

**Noro ora mai
Rhys Jones, Chief Executive**

NATIONAL COMMANDER PASSES PCA

Every two years, our career firefighters put their athletic abilities to the test as part of their physical competency assessment (PCA) to ensure they continue to have the right skills to respond to incidents.

National Commander, Kerry Gregory is no exception and last month, he took his PCA at Balmoral Fire Station in Auckland. We had a quick korero with him to see how he went.

How often do you, as a National Commander, complete your PCA?

Like everyone else, I do my PCA every two years.

How much practice / training did you do to prepare?

Not as much as I intended to! But before COVID my wife and I were training up to do the Camino Trail in Spain, so we were doing lots of long walks to build up our endurance but then, of course, we had to cancel the trip.

Was it hard? If so, what did you find most challenging?

I didn't find it hard as such, but I was a bit worried about my hip. I've had a hip operation in the past two years and I wasn't sure if it would hold up, particularly during the part where you have to drag the dummy. But it was fine, which was good.

Did you pass?

Yes! I had a personal target of completing it under seven minutes and I did it in six minutes and 50 seconds!

Has the PCA changed over the years since you first did it? For example, are you tested on different competencies now?

No still the same competencies but that's the good thing about the PCA, it allows you to monitor your levels of fitness over time and ensure that you maintain a good baseline of fitness.

Any tips for those who might be gearing up to do their PCA for the first time?

Make sure you do the practice days. Regardless of your fitness, the practice days are a good way to familiarise yourself with the right techniques.

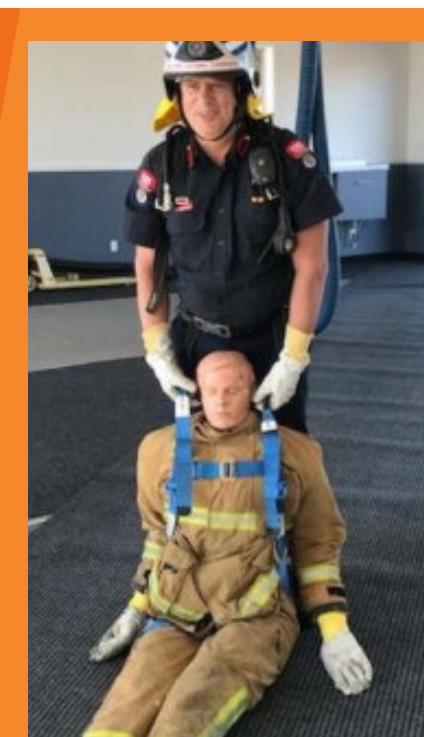
Lastly, why do you think it's important to take the PCA as the National Commander?

From my perspective, it's important for me to regularly take the PCA not only to test and understand my own level of fitness but also to maintain an understanding of the assessment that our firefighters have to do, so I can ensure it continues to be pitched at the right level.

The PCA is a vital part of ensuring we are operationally fit to respond to incidents so we can be there when our communities need us.



Kerry Gregory, National Commander at Waitangi



Kerry undertakes his PCA

NEVER GIVING UP ON THE DREAM

Peter Walker has spent 14 years in rural fire, seven years as a volunteer firefighter and the last seven years as a Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer (DPRFO) for the Wellington Area, but he still had a firefighting goal he wanted to achieve.

From an early age he'd dreamed of being a career firefighter and had tried three times in his twenties to make the cut but failed. This year, at age 49, he was accepted as a recruit.

"I've always been passionate about firefighting and have loved the rural involvement, but in my role as DPRFO I had a taste of the urban experience as we worked side by side. I knew the only way I could learn that role was to become a recruit and this year, with support from my colleagues, I finally made it," he said.

Peter graduated in September from the National Training Centre with 27 other recruits and is proud and thankful to have achieved his dream.

"I'm deeply grateful for the training and experiences I've had with Fire and Emergency and in the service before that. When I was asked on the course what my biggest accomplishment had been, I didn't hesitate. I said it was standing there, in front of them, learning to be a career firefighter."



Peter (second to the right), with the other recruits.



NEW APP MAKES MARAE VISITS MORE MEANINGFUL

The efficiency of a new app is expanding the advice our Kaupapa Māori team can share with marae around New Zealand, meaning less time doing admin and more time for people.

"Every time our team would visit a marae, all of the field work was basically done on paper. We thought there must be a more stream-lined way of doing things by using technology," said Kereama Katu, part of Fire and Emergency's Kaupapa Māori Liaison team.

He saw an opportunity to help speed up the collection of data, which had to be handwritten and then collated manually once back in the office. This is so the team can spend more time having meaningful conversations about the programmes and services that the organisation can provide. Carrying a tablet, Kereama and the team can now capture

key fire safety data and promote other programmes, including the Kohanga Reo programme, as many Kohanga Reo are based on a marae.

"The app will enable the team to work both on-line and off-line as some of these communities are in isolated areas where there's no Wi Fi or broadband.

"This app will make a huge difference for the team and I would like to acknowledge the hard work and effort that both Andrew Dibble and Chris Knight, ICT Business Solutions Analysts, have done to support this kaupapa and bring it to life."



Ehara taku toa i te toa taki tahi, engari he toa taki tini.

One person's success should not be bestowed onto one person alone, as it was not individual success but success of a collective.

GAS DETECTION NEWS

The Gas Detection project is about to go to market for the best fit for purpose gas detection device to ensure our firefighters' jobs are as safe and as easy as possible.

It will take time to select the best device. In the meantime, we are rolling out survey detectors – MultiRae lites – to replace the ImpactPros that are at the end of their lives and need replacing. This is an interim measure and will be leased for two to three years until we can source the best unit available.

Around mid-2021 we will begin a pilot of the Personal Gas Monitors we have selected from the market. We will supply these to our 115 busiest fire appliances to gather data and assess the level of risk nationally.

These Personal Gas Monitors will also be issued to our fire investigators who need to replace their ageing QRAE II survey detectors.

NEW PROTECTIVE HOODS REACH STATIONS

Fire and Emergency and TotalCare have completed the rollout of 5000 new protective hoods. The rollout began in August, with new hoods distributed to firefighters at our 100 busiest stations, as measured by structure fire response.

The hoods protect our firefighters from carcinogen exposure at structural fires. The rollout is part of the procurement process for a replacement hood suitable for issue to all breathing apparatus wearers, which will happen over the next 18 months and will include a full trial.

Brendan Nally, DCE People says Fire and Emergency has worked in partnership with the New Zealand Professional Firefighters' Union.

"We really appreciate the support and advocacy the New Zealand Professional Firefighters' Union has shown in getting the rollout across the line. Working together has ensured this success," said Brendan.

All recruits at the National Training Centre will be issued with one hood per set during their training and a small pool of reserve hoods will be held in reserve.

Paraparaumu Station recently received their new protective hoods.

"They arrived on station really quickly, and we issued them and gathered up the old ones as per the instructions," says Station Officer, Craig Gold.

"They feel a lot thicker and give you the impression they will really make you sweat, however my crew have had the opportunity to wear them in a search and rescue training exercise and did not notice any significant difference, it's hot sweaty work anyway."

Firefighters who've received the new hoods should return their current hoods to TotalCare via area managers.



PROFILE: GWEN TEPANIA-PALMER, BOARD MEMBER

Our Board member Gwen Tepania-Palmer has held several key leadership roles in the health sector, championing Māori health initiatives and the development of essential health services. She was appointed to the Board of Fire and Emergency New Zealand in November 2019.

"Joining the Fire and Emergency Board I immediately made connections with my experiences in the health sector. In both spaces our focus is on service to our people.

There's a sense of belonging and whakapapa here. I got my first experience of that when I attended a career recruit graduation ceremony at the National Training Centre in Rotorua. This gave me such a good insight into those we are training and the environment they were in. The recruits and their trainers were so committed and supportive of each other – and the pride the whānau of those graduating felt was very special. Over the months I've seen that same commitment and support wherever I go – it's in our communications centres, our offices and with our amazing career and volunteer firefighters.

This sense of manaakitanga, of looking after each other, is really important and will help us shape our future. In our next phase of Fire and Emergency's development, I'd like to see us build on our values as an important foundation for change.

We need to be agile and responsive to changes in the world around us. Part of that is encouraging cultural inclusiveness and supporting women to thrive and achieve.

Being appointed as chair of the Board subcommittee to establish the Local Advisory Committees (LACs) has given me a good insight into what's happening across the country, the roles and responsibilities our people have in working with communities, and the services we provide now and need to shape for the future.

It takes all hands to make a difference and behind all our people are whānau and friends who support them. We're lucky to have talented people right across the organisation who work together to help us succeed."

Outside of her governance role with Fire and Emergency, Gwen also sits on several health sector boards including the Auckland District Health Board and National Health Committee. Her tribal affiliations are Te Aupouri, Ngāti Kahu and Ngāti Pāoa Rainui.



James (on the right), with family members, Tony (brother), Kelly (mum), Shane (dad), Glenn (uncle), Tamara (wife) and two sons, Wyatt and Beau.



KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY (AND ON THE RUGBY FIELD)

We're lucky to have several families in our organisation with strong generational ties to the fire service, but when your grandfather is actually born in the station house, it takes it to a whole new level.

James Cockburn is a Qualified Firefighter in Newtown, Wellington and while his working life started in rugby and building, the Cockburn family ties to firefighting soon saw him change direction.

James' great grandfather was Chief Fire Officer in paid service in Dunedin. As many firefighters did at the time, he lived on station, which saw James' grandfather born at the Roslyn fire station. James' uncle was a firefighter in the army and became a volunteer firefighter in Rolleston for 50+ years. His uncle's son, James' cousin Mike Cockburn, has been a firefighter in Christchurch for 20 years.

"Right now we have three family members in career firefighting and four volunteer firefighters – it's definitely in the blood," said James.

It was James' brother Tony who finally got him across the line.

"Tony and I were both in trades at the time and he was keen to go firefighting and gave me the nudge. We both graduated in 2018 and haven't looked back.

"There are definitely characteristics in our family that line up with firefighting. We work together as a team – we had to with five kids in our family! We're hands on, and like supporting our communities."

Before working in construction and becoming a firefighter, James played semi-professional rugby in the Netherlands and Scotland. In August this year he secured a chance at reigniting his rugby career by winning TV3's 2nd Chance Charlie, where he competed against four other players to earn a 12-week training stint with the Hurricanes.

"I can't wait to get stuck into training in December. Rugby's like firefighting – you've got to do your job and trust the guy beside you to do his. So I'll give it all I've got and see what happens – I'd love a crack at a Mitre 10 start."

When asked the biggest question of all, 'would you rather be an All Black or a firefighter?', James was clear.

"A firefighting All Black for sure."

FOLLOWING THEIR FATHERS IN MANGATANGI

Mangatangi is in the mighty Waikato about 25 kilometres east of Pukekohe. It might be small in size, but it's huge on family commitment to volunteer firefighting, with three sets of fathers and children in the brigade.

Kurt Pogson, Tayla-Rose Maxwell and Jayden Anderson all joined up at 16, following their fathers into the Mangatangi brigade.

Kurt had a slight head start, helping out from age 14 as part of his Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which recognises young adults service to their communities.

"I was in there washing the fire truck and cleaning the station and got the bug. My Dad Steve's just clocked up 25 years, so he's been a big inspiration for me," said Kurt.

"It's cool working alongside him. As Chief Fire Officer he's teaching me a lot about leadership and we all think it's important to help our communities. I've got three kids now and I'd certainly encourage them to be volunteers if they were keen."

As a child Tayla-Rose admired her father Bill's dedication to the brigade and community.

"We both think it's important to help people in need. We used to butt heads before I became a volunteer, but now we get along really well. It's great father daughter bonding time and my little brother's getting a bit jealous. He can't wait to join up in two years," she said.

Jayden works alongside his father Craig every day on their dairy farm and his children are very supportive of them both and keen to become volunteers when they turn 16.

"My Dad's been a volunteer for 16 years now and his dedication to helping people certainly inspired me. We're a small community where everyone knows each other. In fact my sister is married to Kurt so when we're all together at a combined family celebration and the pagers go off, four of us have to leave immediately! Bit of a party spoiler but it's all worth it," Jayden said.

All three say their greatest motivation is to help people in need, especially in such a small community and volunteering with their fathers makes it even more special.



Jayden, Kurt and Tayla-Rose pictured with their dads.

SENIOR STATION OFFICER PAUL LYALL SAYS GOODBYE AFTER 56 YEARS' SERVICE

Senior Station Officer Paul Lyall said goodbye to Fire and Emergency New Zealand last month after a career spanning 56 years.

On his last day, firefighters from around the Wellington region, including Paul's son Aaron, gathered at Thorndon fire station for a final parade.

Before his departure, Paul had been Senior Station Officer at Thorndon for six years. While he served as a volunteer in Paraparaumu in the early 1960s, his firefighting career started in 1965 when he joined up at Central fire station in Oriental Bay.

Paul says it wasn't difficult to join.

"If you stopped to tie your shoelaces outside the station, you would get dragged inside and asked if you wanted a job. There was a basic test of dictation, maths, and general knowledge plus a medical."

Paul spent time at the fire stations in Miramar and Kilbirnie during a time when firefighters and their families lived on site.

One callout he particularly remembers was when he was called to an explosion at the Miramar gasworks which fed gas into the town's mains.

"It was 10am and we were having 'smoko' when a blast shook the windows of the station. During a maintenance check at the gasworks, they had failed to turn off the gas supply and it ignited and blew out the gasworks building's windows. Three of us attended the call and I had to go in and shut down the valves not knowing if there would be another explosion."

Paul received a Queen's Service Medal in 2017 for his contribution to the fire service and a Double Gold Star in 2014 to mark 50 years of service.

"All of us are put on earth to perform some duty and this has been mine. I have enjoyed the comradeship and looking after people in their hour of need."

The last word goes to one of Paul's crew at Thorndon station, Qualified firefighter Corey Fairbairn.

"After 56 years on the job, very few people would have the skill, experience and knowledge that Paul has amassed. You always knew that with Paul as your boss, he had your back 100%."



Photo L to R: SO Brett Burrows, SFF John Flavin, SSO Paul Lyall, SFF Chis Kenard, SFF Stuart Filo. Also in his crew but not pictured were SFF Grant Ingham, QFF Corey Fairbairn, and FF Tony Coburn.



HAVING A PLAN CAN SAVE A LIFE

Did you know that only 62% of New Zealand households have escape plans? Even more surprising, research shows many of those who don't have a plan in place are confident that in the event of a fire they'll be able to escape by simply walking out the door.

The reality as we all know is very different. House fires give you no warning and within a matter of minutes can stop you and your loved ones from having any chance of getting out safely. Smoke incapacitates you, reducing your ability to see, breathe and think clearly. If you're lucky enough to be conscious, without a plan that you've practised, there'll be next to no time to escape.

To help increase the public's understanding and awareness of the risks every year we run a national education campaign.

We're about to launch our annual campaign encouraging Kiwis to create an escape plan, directing them to our online tool, www.escapemyhouse.co.nz

Users create a plan by answering a set of simple questions. The tool has also been updated with further guidance relating to apartments and multi-level homes and is available in Te Reo Māori or English.

Last financial year 21,287 escape plans were completed on our tool and we're aiming for a further 25,000 New Zealand households to complete their escape plans using our tool over the current financial year.



Hon. Paul Swain, Hon. Tracey Martin and CE Rhys Jones.

OUR PROUD EMPLOYER MARK HAS BEEN LAUNCHED!

Many New Zealanders aren't aware just how much our country relies on our volunteers, let alone the significant contribution businesses and organisations make by allowing and supporting our volunteers to attend incidents. We want to change that.

We've started a 'new tradition' with a Proud Employer mark to help New Zealanders recognise that businesses and organisations that support us, are a vital part of our support crew.

From September, brigades will receive new packs to distribute to self-employed volunteers' and employers who are signed up to our employer recognition programme. These include Proud Employer stickers for shopfront windows and vehicles. Digital versions are also available for email signatures and digital channels.

Portfolio Coordinator, Rosie Chote says a campaign promoting the Proud Employer mark kicks off in November.

"We're relying on volunteer's employers and self-employed volunteers to display the new mark and make themselves known, so they can benefit from the advertising campaign," Rosie says.

It's easy to join the programme, just register on our website: fireandemergency.nz/join-our-support-crew.

If you have a story about awesome volunteer employers to share, or would like Proud Employer mark digital files, or have a question, give Rosie Chote a call on (04) 496 3600 or email: employers@fireandemergency.nz.

PARTNERING TO FIT SMART ALARMS IN MARAE

Fire and Emergency is partnering with Crown Infrastructure Partners (CIP) to install smart alarms into marae throughout the country, as part of the Government's Marae Digital Connectivity programme.

Funded by the Provincial Growth Fund, we will work alongside the Provincial Development Unit in partnership with Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) to improve digital connectivity at marae, including delivering smoke alarms. The alarms will be installed by Fire and Emergency's regional Māori Liaison Officers.

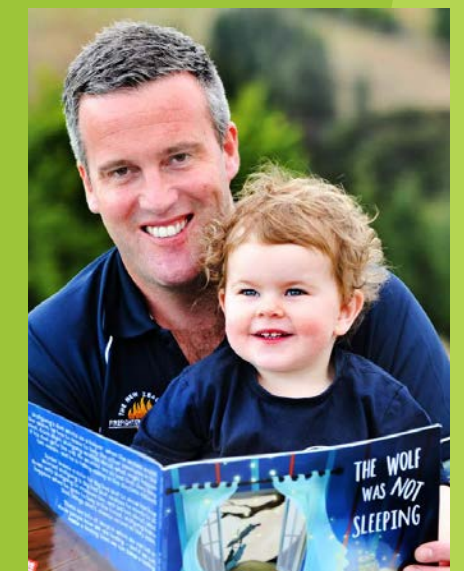
Our Pou Herenga Māori (National Manager Kaupapa Māori), Piki Thomas said it's another important fire safety initiative to protect marae and their members, especially in isolated communities.

"These alarms will offer advanced safety with interconnectivity between buildings, instant alarm

notifications through smartphones, early voice warnings and are powered by long life batteries. Marae are important hubs in our communities and this high-level alarm system is a great way to keep our property and people safer," he said.

Piki and his team have already completed a successful trial of the new system at the Kohunui Marae in the Wairarapa and are now waiting for more alarms to arrive in the country.

"We're aiming to fit alarms into approximately 800 marae all across Aotearoa. We'll also offer a fire safety survey for marae that haven't already had one, checking structures, behaviours and storage of flammable substances, helping them stay fire safe and well-prepared."



Kris with daughter, Sophie.
Photo: Otago Daily Times

NEW BOOK KICKSTARTS CONVERSATIONS ABOUT WELLBEING

Triggered by research into trauma prevention and recovery, Kris Kennett, a Senior Station Officer based in Dunedin, is the driving force behind a new book designed at helping children cope with anxiety, when their parents are first responders working within stressful environments. Kris is also a regional representative with the New Zealand Firefighters Welfare Society.

The new book, *The Wolf Was Not Sleeping* (written by Avril MacDonald) is a passion project for Kris who grew up in a small community with a father who was a volunteer firefighter.

"I understand and appreciate the support I receive from my wife, looking after our young daughter whilst I am on night shift and while this is not uncommon, it still needs to be acknowledged and appreciated.

"Research showed although lots of literature has been produced explaining the tasks or roles we have when we respond, nothing had been produced that addressed the effect a first responder's role may have on the family network," Kris explains.

The Wolf Was Not Sleeping is intended to kickstart wellbeing conversations within the family. Preliminary results show the book has added real value to families of Fire and Emergency personnel.

Scott Lanauze, a Fire Risk Manager Officer from East Otago, says the book has provided reassurance to his children around what we do.

"At the age of three, Ivan is aware of his Dad running out the door when the pager goes off, sometimes he even calls out to say, there is a fire Dad!

"We talked through the various conversation threads and the biggest change is Ivan now realises there are a team of people who respond to incidents with his Dad, and everyone pitches in to help support each other at the job."

For Kris, a firefighter himself for 12 years, this is the exact situation he's envisioned.

"My passion for wanting to help others comes from the fact I am people focused," he says.

This focus is now benefiting all first responders. *The Wolf Was Not Sleeping* can be ordered via your Station Manager, OIC, BSCs, VSOs or DPRFOs.



UNIFIED UNIFORM A STEP CLOSER

We're now a step closer to a Unified Uniform, with the initial rollout of jackets and hats later this year and the National Wearer trials starting for two garments.

All Fire and Emergency operational personnel, including volunteers, operational support and brigade support will receive a soft-shell jacket and baseball cap or bucket hat to wear on station, in the office, at training or on community visits.

Non-operational and corporate personnel will also have a choice of the Fire and Emergency bucket hat or baseball cap in this first part of the rollout.

Sizing kits of the jackets and hats have been sent to stations/brigades to ensure you get the best size and fit. These initial items are not PPE for wearing to incidents but are designed for us to proudly represent Fire and Emergency when we're out and about in the community.

National Wearer trials for trousers, short sleeve shirts and polo shirt uniform items has begun. If you see some of your colleagues looking different – don't be alarmed – they are testing the form, fit and function of the new uniform.

The feedback from these wearer trials will determine the final design, followed by ensemble testing and manufacturing of the final garments. Release of the uniform to operational personnel is planned for May 2022.

More information is available on the Portal or by emailing unifieduniform@fireandemergency.nz



TYPE 3 APPLIANCES – WE ARE NOW IN THE MARKET

Fire and Emergency is now in the market for the next generation of our Type 3 appliances. We published a Request for Proposal (RFP) on the government tendering service GETS on 27 August, where it will stay for three months.

We're asking the market to propose two variants of the Type 3 – a pump and pump rescue tender. Our requirements are based on 'user stories' which were developed after the project working group talked to nearly 1000 operational personnel from across the country to better understand what they needed from a fire appliance.

Following the RFP stage, we will evaluate the responses to initially select up to five preferred suppliers and then short list two suppliers who will provide up to four appliances. These will be trialled across the regions, with feedback from operational users helping to determine the preferred appliance at the end of the evaluation period. It will take time to reach this point as we want to make sure the selected model works for our firefighters and New Zealand's conditions, now and in the future.

KEEPING OUR PEOPLE FIRE FIT

Hastings Brigade member Erin Tahau is driven by a passion to help others, whether that's promoting fitness, resilience, or wellbeing in the community. She's just received an award that recognises these initiatives, honoured as one of six finalists in this year's Government Health and Safety Lead (GHSL) Health and Safety Representatives' Awards.

Erin's been a firefighter for six years now, but while she was still a recruit, she became involved in running business and coaching classes. This experience led to developing Fire Fit, which promotes wellbeing for firefighters based in Hawke's Bay.

As a rookie, she was handed the job as social club events organiser, where the main event was a 'Biggest Loser' competition. Erin began sharing advice and nutritional information during the competition, which triggered the idea for Fire Fit.

"I wanted to see firefighters go from rest to work without resulting in injury, which means less injury at jobs and less time off."

Fire Fit has helped change the mindset around diet and staying healthy, by promoting wellbeing activities that also help build relationships between crew members.

"Our overall wellbeing is becoming more and more compromised due to the jobs we attend, so making wellbeing a priority means we have more to give when it comes to helping our community."

Erin is proud to receive the award on behalf of a group of firefighters who have put a lot of time and energy into Fire Fit.



Erin (middle), with Hastings Brigade members.

ENCOURAGING WOMEN TO 'GO FOR IT'

Renee Potae, an experienced and well-respected firefighter, has just been appointed Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer (DPRFO) for Wairarapa. She is one of only a small number of women at Fire and Emergency who hold operational positions at this level.

Renee has held a number of previous roles, including station officer at Turangi Volunteer Fire Brigade and Deputy Chair of Region Women's Advisory Committee. Renee is looking forward to supporting the Wairarapa rural brigades through a period of change.

"There's a lot of great work being done in the Wairarapa and I'm excited to assist the team in preparing for the fire season and supporting the collective work to strengthen and implement the four R's – reduction, readiness, response and recovery," she said.

Renee is keen to encourage more women into leadership roles.

"I'm really proud to carry on what many women have already begun in the organisation, but we still need more capable women to apply for these positions. Although this particular role will be disestablished, I hope to be a role model for anyone, especially women, who considers applying for leadership opportunities.

"We need more women to go for it, and if they miss out, ask what they can do to improve for next time and then go for it again," she said.



Renee on deployment to the Australian bushfires.





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