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5 August 2025

Ref: 18083

Tēnā koe

We refer to your request of 19 May 2025, to Fire and Emergency New Zealand, requesting information relating to Board meeting minutes and attachments on culture change, bullying and harassment complaints and processes. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) and our response is below. Please note, the order of the questions differ to the order you asked them in your initial request.

1. *In response OIA request 16626 on 6th March 2025, you released copies of the minutes of Board meetings from 1 March 2022 to 19 December 2024. Further to that request, please could you publish copies of the minutes of Board meetings from 20 December 2024 to the current date.*

Please find attached, as **Appendix One** to this response, a copy of the requested information. Some information has been withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons.
- 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- 9(2)(j), to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

Please note that on page 5 a bullet point has been highlighted because despite the minute being approved, Fair Way considers that the statement was not an accurate reflection of what was discussed in that meeting. Their view of the messaging conveyed to the Board regarding the cost of investigations was as follows:

- To help ensure that investigations maintain a cost-effective lens, Fair Way review investigation costs to ensure they are as efficient as possible.

- Fair Way is conscious that investigations can be expensive and time consuming; we have examples of escalated cases where the investigator has questioned the benefit of continuing through an investigation process.
 - If during the triage a case doesn't meet the criteria for an investigation they are passed back, with complainant approval, to Fire and Emergency to be resolved through other pathways, which are usually more cost-effective and faster than the investigation process.
2. *Copies of the People and Culture sub-committee papers referred to in action point 2 of item 4 of the Board meeting minutes of 28 April 2023.*

Please find attached, as **Appendix Two** to this response, a copy of the requested information. Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(h) of the OIA, to maintain legal professional privilege.

3. *Meeting minutes of the People and Culture Committee where the "complaints management workstream" or Eke Taumata has been discussed (including the meeting referred to by point 3 of item 2 at the Board meeting on 28 July 2023), with any related attachments.*

Please find attached, as **Appendix Three** to this response, a copy of the requested information. Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, to protect the privacy of natural persons. Some information embedded within our release to you is outside the of scope of your request and does not relate to the requested information. Where this has occurred, it has been labelled as *out of scope*. Where full pages of documents have been assessed as out of scope, the page has been removed.

Please note:

- The Eke Taumata six-month report for June 2023 was included in the document bundle for the People and Culture Committee Paper dated 7 August 2023. However, we are refusing this portion of your request under section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information requested is publicly available on our [website](#).
 - The People and Culture Committee minute on page 47 states the date of the meeting was 14 February 2025, unfortunately this is incorrect. The date of this meeting was 4 November 2024.
4. *Copies of the data referred to in the Management Actions of section 2.2, point 2 of the Board meeting on 1 Dec 2023*

Please find attached, as **Appendix Four** to this response, a copy of the requested information. Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, to protect the privacy of natural persons. Some information that is embedded within our release to you is outside the scope of your request and does not relate to the requested information. Where this has occurred, it has been labelled as *out of scope*. Where full pages of documents have been assessed as out of scope, the page has been removed.

In making these decisions, we have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA.

5. *Copies of relevant sections of all attachment papers provided to the Board meetings from 1 March 2022 to the current date, that contain any information relating to:*

- a) the Behaviour and Conduct Office (e.g. Chief Executive's Reports, other relevant reports by DCEs)*
- b) updates on the Positive Workplace Culture programme and its successor, Eke Taumata*
- c) the PSC review into bullying and harassment and complaints handling processes*
- d) the replacement scheme for the Behaviour and Conduct Office, operated by Fairway. (including any presentation or reports given by Fairway at the Feb 2025 Board meeting, referenced in point 10.1 of the meeting minutes for 29 Nov 2024)*
- e) complaint statistics and performance reporting provided for cases handled by the Behaviour and Conduct Office, its successor independent scheme, and data on any cases of bullying, harassment or sexual harm not managed by the BCO or its successor scheme (e.g. cases managed directly by People Branch)*

Thank you for agreeing on 3 June 2025 to refine your request to *'updates and Board documents where the Board were asked to endorse, approve or note, that contain information related to the criteria you have laid out in'*.

In line with our obligations under the OIA, we have decided to grant this aspect of your request; however, due to the significant quantity of information captured, we require more time to prepare the information for release. We will send you the information, where possible, no later than 29 August 2025.

Some information will be withheld or refused under the following sections of the OIA:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons.
- 9(2)(b)(ii), to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.
- 9(2)(ba)(i), to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.
- 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.
- 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty.

- 9(2)(h), to maintain legal professional privilege.
- 9(2)(j), to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations); and
- 18(d), as the information requested is publicly available.

As with the previous questions, some information that will be embedded within the release to you will be outside the of scope of your request and will not relate to the requested information. Where this occurs, it will be labelled as *out of scope*. Where full pages of documents are assessed as out of scope, the page will be removed.

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.

We trust that the information being provided is of assistance. If you require further information, please email officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz

Please note that because of the identified public interest in the information that you have requested, we intend to publish this response (with your personal details removed) on our website.

Nāku noa, nā



Aidan Saunders
Manager, Information Requests

