

# IGNITE

Te Hiringa o te Tangata | Issue 38 | June 2026

INVOLVING TIKANGA IN  
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

SAVED BY THE PLAN:  
GET FIREWISE IN ACTION

STRENGTHENING OUR PEOPLE  
LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY



## 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 our people across the motu who dedicate themselves to protecting life, the environment and property in their communities.

It is produced by the Fire and Emergency Communications and Engagement Team, National Headquarters, Spark Central, 42–52 Willis Street, Wellington 6011.

### Contributions to Ignite





Contributions to be considered for publication are welcome and may be submitted to: [strategiccomms@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:strategiccomms@fireandemergency.nz)  
Photos need to be at least 1MB.

### Read Ignite online

[fireandemergency.nz/news-and-media](http://fireandemergency.nz/news-and-media)

This document is printed on 'FSC Mix Certified environmentally responsible paper, manufactured from ECF Pulp. It is produced under strict ISO14001 Environment Management'.

**All material in Ignite is copyrighted and may not be reproduced without permission.**

-  **Kia tika** | We do the right thing
-  **Manaakitanga** | We serve and support
-  **Whanaungatanga** | We are better together
-  **Auahatanga** | We strive to improve



# Kia ora koutou

**E mihi nui kia koutou, welcome to the June issue of Ignite.**

Since the last issue of Ignite in March, New Zealand has continued to see challenging weather events across the country. In April we were faced with the challenge of ex-tropical Cyclone Vaianu and we were fortunate that the effects of the cyclone did not eventuate as seriously as initially thought. Then the following week severe rain hit parts of the country causing excessive flooding.

Our crews have done amazing work this year in particular responding to thousands of weather-related callouts across the country, and we have also been pre-positioning specialist resources, including teams with enhanced rescue and water response capability to these events.

I'd like to thank everyone involved in responding or supporting the response to these events. Despite many of our people in a period of uncertainty, we continue to deliver our services right across the country. Watching people continue to put their communities first and living our value of manaakitanga is inspiring.

The increasing responses to severe weather highlight the importance of engaging and strengthening relationships, awareness and resilience in the diverse ranges of communities right across the country. Whether it's our Pou Takawaenga roopu, Community Risk teams, District management, or frontline personnel, engaging the collective effort makes a real difference. It is no surprise that we have again maintained our position with the highest reputation score in Verian's annual Public Sector Reputation Index across all four categories of Trust, Leadership, Social Responsibility, and Fairness.



Fire and Emergency, and formerly, the New Zealand Fire Service have held this top position for more than ten years. Well done to everyone and thank you for your continued commitment to putting our communities first.

We have yet another full issue of Ignite for you. While we bid farewell to our current Board Chair with our new Board Chair Raveen Jaduram taking over, we also have the opportunity to learn more about our new Deputy Chief Executive Prevention, Stephen Hunt, who joined us in March. We have spotlighted the work on the Volunteer Engagement Model and have a strong focus on supporting our people with a range of initiatives in progress, including Level 2 Personal Protective Clothing, National Volunteer Week and strengthening our people leadership capability.

There's also a mix of the usual heartwarming stories, including Karl who was reunited with the crew who saved his life, and a whānau that survived a house fire after the younger children completed the Get Firewise programme in Term 4 last year. This brings to life why we do what we do and what remains our core purpose – serving communities together.

I trust you enjoy the read. Noho ora mai.

**Kerry Gregory**  
**Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive**  
**Toihau a-Motu | National Commander**

# Ngā ihirangi Contents

- 4 Message from the Minister
- 5 Goodbye and thank you
- 6 A warm welcome to our new DCE Prevention Stephen Hunt
- 7 New Code of Conduct and training: what you need to know
- 8 Fire and Emergency personnel presented with New Year Royal Honours
- 9 Saved by the plan: Get Firewise in action
- 10 How should volunteers, brigades, and Fire and Emergency work together in the future?
- 11 Fire and Emergency crews join 48-hour exercise at Ellis Basin cave
- 12 Meet the Core Response Capability team
- 14 What's happening with...  
Level 2 Personal Protective Clothing – correct fit is critical to safety  
Respiratory protection for all with face fit testing



- 16 Wellington District leadership deepens cultural capability through Sites of Significance kaupapa
- 17 Kōrero with Te Rehia Papesch, Waikato Local Advisory Committee Chair
- 18 Strengthening our people leadership capability at Fire and Emergency
- 19 New Code of Practice for Firefighting Water Supplies
- 20 Footballer Karl reunited with emergency crews who saved his life
- 22 Involving tikanga in emergency response
- 22 National Volunteer Week
- 24 Fire and Emergency and FECA reach agreement strengthening leadership and community outcomes
- 25 The lowdown on our unions and associations
- 26 Ngāruawāhia Chief Fire Officer strikes gold at World Clay Target Championship
- 26 Introduction of 10-year re-vetting

# MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Hon Brooke van Velden — Minister of Internal Affairs

It has been a busy first half of the year, and inspiring to see the dedication, professionalism and commitment of the people at Fire and Emergency through these last few months.

Recent significant weather events across parts of the North Island have again highlighted the critical role Fire and Emergency personnel play in supporting communities through challenging circumstances. Whether responding to emergencies, assisting with recovery, or providing reassurance during uncertain times, firefighters have continued to stand alongside New Zealanders when they are needed most.

For the 2026 New Year Honours, a number of Fire and Emergency personnel were recognised for their outstanding service. These honours are a fitting tribute to individuals whose dedication and leadership have made a lasting difference. It was a pleasure to be a part of the Royal Honours Luncheon event in May to celebrate the recipients and see their service formally recognised.

In May we also celebrated International Firefighters' Day which provided an opportunity to recognise and thank firefighters in New Zealand and around the world. It was a moment to reflect on the courage, professionalism and compassion shown every day by paid and volunteer firefighters alike. Across every community, your willingness



to step forward in times of need is deeply valued.

Now, as we mark National Volunteer Week, we rightly recognise the thousands of volunteers who are such an essential part of Fire and Emergency. Volunteers give their time, energy and expertise in service of others, often alongside work and family commitments. Their contribution is extraordinary and deeply appreciated.

I am also pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Raveen Jaduram as Chair of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Board. Mr Jaduram brings extensive

governance and leadership experience and will succeed Rebecca Keoghan MNZM. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Ms Keoghan's service as a member and Deputy Chair since June 2019, and subsequently as Chair from June 2021, and I wish her well for her future endeavours.

To every member of Fire and Emergency—paid, volunteer and support personnel—thank you for all that you do to help keep New Zealanders safe.

**Hon Brooke van Velden**

# MĀ TE WĀ, ME NGĀ MIHI GOODBYE AND THANK YOU

From Rebecca Keoghan MNZM, Chair, Fire and Emergency New Zealand Board



As my time as Board Chair comes to an end, I want to take this opportunity to say thank you.

With long-standing ties to volunteer firefighters on the West Coast, serving on the Board of Fire and Emergency for three terms—two of them as Chair—has been one of the greatest privileges of my professional life.

As I reflect on my time, I am struck not only by the scale of what has been asked of this organisation, but by the extraordinary way its people have continued to rise to every challenge. Time and again, through moments of immense pressure, uncertainty, and tragedy, you have responded with courage, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to service. Your resilience, dedication, and care for others have been constant, and it is that steadfast spirit, more than any milestone or achievement, that has left the deepest impression on me.

I am proud of the work undertaken to strengthen Fire and Emergency's culture to ensure a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment, while progressing greater financial sustainability to support communities

now and into the future. I am equally proud of the continued focus on building and maintaining strong relationships to support effective engagement, representation, and collaboration with stakeholders. I am pleased of what has been achieved during my time on the Board—strategically, operationally, and culturally. But more than any reform, milestone, or decision, I am most proud of the people who make up Fire and Emergency.

Thank you for the extraordinary work you do, for the care you show your communities and one another, and for the commitment you bring each day. Fire and Emergency is not defined by its hardest days, but by how its people respond to them—with courage, professionalism, compassion, and resolve.

It has been an honour to serve alongside you. I leave this role with deep respect, enduring gratitude, and every confidence in the future of this remarkable organisation.





Stephen joined Fire and Emergency in March this year. He came to us from MetService New Zealand where he was the Chief Executive.

Stephen brings to his new role extensive expertise in strategy, business transformation, commercial growth, international collaboration, organisational resilience, and guiding teams through complex strategic and operational change.

He has been a pilot and, as a mountaineer, has climbed some extremely challenging terrain, including frozen waterfalls.



## HE MIHI MATAKUIKUI KI A STEPHEN HUNT, TŌ TĀTOU TUMU WHAKARAE TUARUA HOU O TE TAUĀRAITANGA

# A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW DCE PREVENTION STEPHEN HUNT

**Ignite: Welcome to Fire and Emergency, Stephen, thank you for your time today.**

**Can you talk us through what brought you to the role of DCE Prevention?**

I'm attracted to purposeful work that helps people stay safe. All my work has been for organisations that make a difference to people and communities every day.

I had left MetService and taken a short break when I saw this role at Fire and Emergency. The timing was perfect.

**What would you most like to achieve in your new role?**

I am pleased that the main challenges I see in my Branch are what the organisation has determined are main priorities.

The priorities for Prevention Branch are:

- The way we train and develop our firefighters and support them in growing their skills and competencies throughout their careers.
- How we engage across New Zealand to understand the risk in our communities and the actions we need to take to improve safety in them.
- The ways we apply our rules and regulations to not only create safe fire behaviour but to take effective and deliberate action to be safe when unwanted fires occur.

**Is there anything at Fire and Emergency that surprised you, so far?**

I didn't understand the long-standing deep impacts of the integration of Fire and Emergency in 2017. There is a lot of history to comprehend when understanding the true causes of the challenges we are facing today.

When you have deep systemic causes, you can't just pounce on a fast solution, it all comes down to people, trust, mutual commitment, systems-thinking and good old hard work.

**A large part of your career has been in aviation and aerospace. How has that operational background helped you with challenges you have faced?**

I have had a long career in frontline air operations where risks are real, the team is tight, and every day is different; it is an environment I am comfortable in, and whether it is a squadron or a fire station, I feel at home.

All my roles have included a very high degree of technical difficulty, physical challenge, and the need to be comfortable in very threatening and uncertain situations. You rely heavily on your colleagues to live and thrive, work in very tight knit groups and have very clearly defined accountability to make good decisions on your feet when time is pressing and threats are real.

The qualities and attributes that I have seen with my colleagues over the years are the same ones that I see when I speak with our firefighters and my operational peers at National Headquarters.

**Do you have any key lessons from being a mountaineer that you take through your life today?**

My experience in the mountains is a very strong metaphor for mutual trust and commitment to each other.

My climbing moved from pure rock climbing to alpine climbing, then to Himalayan climbing and I ended up on some big expeditions to 8000 metre peaks

including the north face of Everest. I was very fortunate to make the first ascent by a New Zealander of Gasherbrum 1 (8086m) in Pakistan.

In those expeditions you are in a small totally interdependent team that is dreadfully exposed and in an extraordinarily hostile environment. It is that utter reliance on one another, whether it's just you and your direct climbing partner sharing a cramped tent on a steep face, your team, or the whole expedition. You are invested in the safety and wellbeing of that one person at the end of your rope as much as you are in yourself.

Mountaineering can help you be resilient, attuned to high risk, determined, level-headed and patient. It also encourages you to be aware of how your behaviour can impact others. Living intensely close with someone weeks on end in threatening conditions, brings out the best and the worst of our natures, inevitably it builds total trust.



**What's the best piece of advice you've ever received, and who gave it to you?**

When in Defence, I worked in an operational unit with many complex safety challenges. I was action-orientated, felt responsible and tried to fix everything. My boss, who later advanced to lead the Defence Force, gave me the simple advice 'pick your battles'. The wisdom of that simple statement has stayed with me and still guides me today. It helps you let go and focus on the most important things that will make the biggest difference – in other words, don't sweat the small stuff!

**What do you like to spend time on outside of work?**

I have a 1956 series Land Rover that I renovated some time ago. It is a nice tactile thing to work on, with simple mechanics and classic engineering, and a real handful to drive well off road. I keep fit, read a lot and collect art. Most of all I love adventurous holidays with my family.

I am also interested in film photography. I have moved away from digital, back to film photography; you have to take your time with each photograph, and you don't get the instant result and gratification you have with digital, so it's a very mindful process.

**Is there anything else you would like to say to those who work across the organisation?**

Everyone has been incredibly welcoming, and I am working hard to discover and understand the true realities of the challenges we face. I am looking forward to building relationships, meeting our people around the motu, and having some frank and honest conversations.

If you are in NHQ or visiting, come and say hello and introduce yourself, I would love to hear about what you do.

**Thank you for your time, best wishes for your new role.**

# NGĀ TIKANGA WHANONGA HOU ME TE WHAKANGUNGU: NGĀ MEA ME MĀTUA MŌHIO KOE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT AND TRAINING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**On 30 March, Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (PSC) launched its new Code of Conduct for the public sector. As public servants, we are all required to meet the standards of integrity and conduct set out in this Code.**

The Code is incorporated into Fire and Emergency's own Code of Conduct. This ensures all personnel can easily access, in one place, information on the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of them as an employee or volunteer with Fire and Emergency.

This aligns with one of the recommendations of the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission review into Fire and Emergency's Culture and Complaints Handling Practices, which recommended one stand-alone Code of Conduct applying to all Fire and Emergency personnel.

The Public Service Commission has also launched a mandatory online training module which we are all required to complete. It will help public servants understand and comply with the Code and complements Fire and Emergency's existing Code of Conduct online learning module. Collectively they form a suite of compulsory modules for all personnel to ensure they understand and can apply the standards of behaviour and conduct expected of them as members of Fire and Emergency, and the public service.

In addition to the Code of Conduct learning module, the Public Service Commission has developed required online learning on the general election to help public servants understand their unique obligations ahead of the general election. It includes topics such as public service principles and values, political neutrality, conflicts of interest, and fraud and corruption, and includes a self-assessment.



Learn more

Fire and Emergency personnel need to complete the new Code of Conduct modules by 30 September 2026. Simply log in to your Learning Station with your usual Fire and Emergency credentials and the required modules will show up on your home screen. If you have any questions about the revised Code of Conduct or the learning modules, please reach out to your team leader or manager.

# KUA WHAKAWHIWHIA NGĀ KAIMAHI A TE WHAKARATONGA IWI KI NGĀ TOHU HŌNORE O TE TAU HOU FIRE AND EMERGENCY PERSONNEL PRESENTED WITH NEW YEAR ROYAL HONOURS

On 21 May Fire and Emergency personnel from across New Zealand gathered at Government House in Wellington to be presented with New Year Royal Honours by the Governor-General, the Rt Hon Dame Cindy Kiro.



Also present at the ceremony were the whānau of recipients, Fire and Emergency Board Chair, Rebecca Keogh, and Chief Executive Kerry Gregory.

**Rebecca said: 'These recipients have dedicated decades to supporting their communities to become stronger, safer, and more resilient through their roles with Fire and Emergency and through their many other community contributions. It was wonderful to see their efforts recognised.'**

The investiture ceremony at Government House was followed by a luncheon in Parliament. The Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon Brooke van Velden, joined recipients to mark the occasion.

Ms van Velden said: 'New Zealand relies on people like this. People who don't wait to be told what to do. People who take initiative. People who take responsibility for their community. The honours being recognised are important, but what they represent is even more important. They reflect a lifetime of contribution, a commitment to others, and a willingness to step up when it counts.'

Congratulations to all recipients, and thank you for your outstanding service.



Recipients left to right: Lloyd Clausen, Paul Harris, Patrick O'Rourke, Paul Toms, Donald Geddes and Stanley (Don) Scott.

## The recipients this year were:

### Donald (Don) Geddes (Mid Canterbury)

Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Land Search and Rescue, and the community

### Lloyd Clausen (Leeston)

King's Service Medal (KSM) for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and the community

### Paul Harris (Waipara)

King's Service Medal (KSM) for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and the community

### Patrick O'Rourke (Rissington)

King's Service Medal (KSM) for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and the community

### Stanley (Don) Scott (served across multiple regions)

King's Service Medal (KSM) for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and civil defence

### Paul "Tomsie" Toms (Te Aroha)

King's Service Medal (KSM) for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and football

### Henry Wheeler (Rongotea)

King's Service Medal (KSM) for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and the community

Ngā Tai ki te Puku

# KUA WHAKAORAHIA E TE MAHERE: TE WHAKATINANATANGA O GET FIREWISE SAVED BY THE PLAN: GET FIREWISE IN ACTION

**In the early hours of a February morning, the Paeroa Volunteer Fire Brigade responded to a structure fire caused by unattended cooking. With the whole family at home at the time, it could have ended in tragedy. Instead, it's a story about what went right.**

The younger children attend a local primary school that completed the Get Firewise programme in Term 4 last year. As part of their homework, they created a family escape plan and chose their letterbox as their safe meeting place. When the fire broke out, that plan swung into action. Every member of the large whānau made it out safely.

Their grandad had also recently checked that the smoke alarms were working – another small but critical step that made a big difference.

This is a whānau we may not have reached through Home Fire Safety Visits or other community programmes. Yet through the school-based Get Firewise, the safety messages landed exactly where they needed to.

When Fire and Emergency followed up with the school principal a few days later, she admitted that fitting Get Firewise into an already busy curriculum had felt like a stretch, and she wasn't sure how much the children would absorb.

Now, she has no doubts.

'My students are safe because of Get Firewise and your visit was fantastic – they actually sat and listened!'

The principal also shared an unexpected bonus: since the Get Firewise visit, the school has had no issues with older students setting off the school fire alarms – something that had previously been a challenge.

Michelle Hinton, Waikato Advisor Community Readiness and Recovery, says the outcome highlights that the work in schools goes beyond delivering Get Firewise. It's about building relationships and addressing local issues, such as unwanted alarms.

Although the family home was sadly a total loss, the most important outcome is clear – everyone survived because they had a plan and knew what to do.

To close the loop, the Paeroa brigade returned to the school with the fire truck, creating a powerful full-circle.

Michelle hopes the story inspires others to keep championing the programme. 'Building relationships can be challenging, but the result can be truly lifesaving.' Daryl Trim, Waikato District Commander, agrees, adding this is 'a great example of the good outcomes we can achieve when our Community Readiness and Recovery Team, brigades and the Community Programmes Team all work together.'

With the eastern part of the Waikato District served entirely by volunteers, they use a brigade community champion model to promote Get Firewise. 'It helps us ensure we have the right people – those who are passionate about education – creating positive, lasting relationships with schools. It certainly helps us achieve our Get Firewise targets and keep our tamariki safe.'

GET FIREWISE



Michelle Hinton, Advisor Community Readiness and Recovery, delivering Get Firewise to local school.

Get Firewise, Fire and Emergency's fire safety education programme for year 1 and 2 students, teaches valuable fire safety lessons like recognising fire danger, what to do in a fire and not playing with lighters or matches.

The fun and engaging programme has been developed alongside educators and teachers and aligns with the New Zealand Curriculum. It's designed to be delivered by teachers and includes a visit by firefighters to summarise and reinforce learning outcomes.

Get Firewise has equipped hundreds of thousands of children with essential fire safety knowledge, giving them the confidence to act in emergencies and protect their whānau. From understanding fire risks to creating escape plans, this programme has played a pivotal role in shaping safer communities across Aotearoa.

Find out more at [fireandemergency.nz/teachers-and-schools/get-firewise/](https://fireandemergency.nz/teachers-and-schools/get-firewise/), or scan the QR code.



Te Aroha Volunteer Fire Brigade visiting Manawaru School.



ME PĒHEA NGĀ KAITŪAO,  
NGĀ RŌPŪ TINEI AHI ME  
WHAKARATONGA IWI E  
MAHI TAHI AI I MURI NEI?

# HOW SHOULD VOLUNTEERS, BRIGADES, AND FIRE AND EMERGENCY WORK TOGETHER IN THE FUTURE?

The Volunteer Engagement Model  
is your chance to help shape that.

We need everyone – regardless of rank, role or length of service – to take part in the Volunteer Engagement Model (VEM) consultation. Your experiences and insights are essential to making sure the final documents reflect the realities of volunteering and support you to serve your community.

View the proposed documents and share your feedback on the Portal at [portal.fireandemergency.nz/VEM](http://portal.fireandemergency.nz/VEM) or using the QR code.

## Why this matters

Many current agreements no longer reflect how brigades operate today. Outdated or inconsistent arrangements can make it harder to access support and create challenges across the country.

The VEM project, co-designed by Fire and Emergency and the United Fire Brigades Association, proposes updated agreements to better recognise and support the vital role of volunteers and volunteer brigades in keeping communities safe.

## What's being proposed

- Individual Volunteer and Fire and Emergency Agreement
- Brigade and Fire and Emergency Agreement
- Schedule 1: Brigade Rules

Together, these documents define how we work together to serve our communities.

## Volunteer Engagement Model



View the proposed documents and share your feedback here

## Have your say

You can contribute in a way that suits you, individually or as a brigade:

- Join an online or in-person session
- Comment on the documents via the consultation website
- Complete a short survey
- Email the project team

Further background, all three proposed documents, and feedback methods are available at [portal.fireandemergency.nz/VEM](http://portal.fireandemergency.nz/VEM) and accessible via mobile.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the project team at [vem@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:vem@fireandemergency.nz) or [connect@ufba.org.nz](mailto:connect@ufba.org.nz) with any questions, or if there is anything we can do to ensure your voice is heard.

We need to get these documents right for volunteers, brigades, and Fire and Emergency. Your voice is crucial to making that happen.



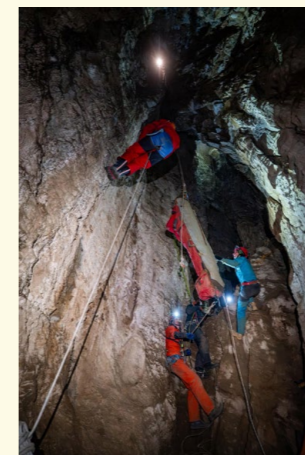
# KA TŪHONO NGĀ KAIMAHI WHAKARATONGA IWI KI TE KORI TINANA 48-HAORA KI ELLIS BASIN CAVE FIRE AND EMERGENCY CREWS JOIN 48-HOUR EXERCISE AT ELLIS BASIN CAVE

The Ellis Basin cave in Kahurangi National Park, a cave system of 30 kilometres, reaching a depth of 1,026 metres, was recently home to a 48-hour multi-agency exercise. This was the first time the cave had even been entered in more than 10 years.

The exercise included approximately 100 people from Fire and Emergency, NZ Police (as lead agency), LandSAR, CaveSAR (including Australian Cave Rescuers as this is a more specialised discipline) and Nelson Helicharter, as well as support personnel.

Kevin O'Connor, Senior Station Officer in Nelson, says, 'This was a vital experience for Fire and Emergency Incident Command Unit (ICU) personnel, providing greater understanding of how Command and Control and the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) operates in a multi-agency environment.'

Fire and Emergency's role was above ground across three bases SAR Base (ICU), Safe Forward Point (Ellis Hut) and the



Entry Control Point at the cave entrance, plus helicopter radio communications. Underground communications, via a long thin wire that special phones can clip into, and a Cavelink text system, were managed by CaveSAR. There was also a role in supporting the IMT, such as transcribing crucial messages, handling tasking sheets, and managing ICU infrastructure in a remote location.

Kevin explains the challenges of cave rescues: 'In this environment, one hour travel by an able-bodied caver can be up to 12 hours for a stretcher rescue recovery. Multiple riggings, counterbalances etc. are required. There were 10 pitches that required navigation, but in addition to these the rescuers had to rig hauls and safety ropes on steep angles that cavers would normally free climb. There was also a long tracking line installed to aid the stretcher carriers. Around 20 ropes of between 20 and 80 metres long were used and later cleaned using the Nelson Fire Station hose washing facility.'



'This type of event is invaluable to ICU Operators as it is vastly different to Fire and Emergency operations. Although CaveSAR use the same Co-ordinated Incident Management System, they use different software, their radio communications aren't as precise and articulated as ours, and of course they use caving terms.'

'The three Operators who hadn't participated in either a multi-agency incident or exercise in the past were justifiably surprised, appreciative, and exhausted by the end of their shift. They adapted and excelled in a high-pressure environment.'

Thank you to everyone who participated in the exercise and made it such a success. If you'd like to know more, get in touch with Kevin at [kevin.oconnor@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:kevin.oconnor@fireandemergency.nz).



# TŪTAKI MAI KI TE KĀHUI MĀTAU URUPARE MĀTĀMUA MEET THE CORE RESPONSE CAPABILITY TEAM

**The Response Capability Directorate leads capability development across critical response functions that ensure Fire and Emergency is prepared to respond to a wide range of incidents, nationally and internationally.**

The Directorate focuses on building, supporting, and improving the capabilities our frontline need to manage anything from day-to-day response through to large scale disasters, extreme weather and international deployments.

The teams are structured into five specialised portfolio areas to ensure our frontline personnel are equipped and supported, with a strong focus on constantly improving our response.

One of those specialised portfolio areas is the Core Response Capability team which is responsible for developing and enhancing the core capabilities of Fire and Emergency's frontline operations – ensuring they are safe, effective, and consistently applied across the country.

**The team is responsible for:**

- Operational policies and procedures
- Core firefighting tactics and capabilities
- Uniform and personal protective clothing
- Carcinogen exposure reduction
- Respiratory Protection Safety Programme
- Standards



**Rachael Utumapu**  
Team Manager

Rachael is responsible for developing and enhancing the core capabilities of our frontline operations to ensure they are safe, effective, and consistent nationally. This involves collaborating across branches to adopt a future-ready approach that strengthens our core capabilities through continuous innovation and improvement. Rachael leads efforts to identify and implement best practices that improve the safety and effectiveness of our frontline operations.

In this role, she also enables the successful implementation of the operational capability framework and establishment of efficient methods for developing operational doctrine. Using the expertise and experience of our people in the Districts, Rachael ensures that our operational practices are both practical and innovative, continuously evolving to meet the highest safety standards. Rachael says 'After 15 years on the trucks and many more spent working across the organisation in a range of roles, I've had the chance to see what makes this place tick. I'm proud to be part of a great team that has a real impact on operational response, particularly when it comes to supporting and keeping our firefighters safe'.



**Kristina Farwell**  
National Advisor Operations, Uniform and PPE

Kristina leads and advises on requirements for all our uniform and PPE standards and takes the lead in technical discussions and advice on operational aspects of PPE and Uniform. She is secretariat and co-chair of the National Uniform Advisory Group (NUAG) and works closely with WorkWear Group and Procurement, including providing operational advice.

Kristina says she 'loves the variety of the role and that I can make a difference to someone's safety and wellbeing'.



**David Campbell**  
National Advisor for Standards and Requirements

In his role, David collaborates closely with a wide range of stakeholders within the Fire and Emergency network, ensuring consistent understanding and application of Standards within our daily work.

David also represents Fire and Emergency at the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Standards groups, reviewing draft Standards and proposing alterations at both the editorial and technical level.

David says the best thing about his role is that it is directly related to the safety of our firefighters. 'My work on Standards committees alongside international fire services, manufacturers, and other interested parties provides a unique perspective on the design, manufacture, testing, and use of Personal Protective Clothing internationally.

Another key area is the sharing of information and learning from the experiences of other agencies within the AFAC framework to raise capability and awareness of new and emerging hazards, the risks that are developing from these hazards, and what agencies are doing to manage these risks'.



**Alec Asquith**  
National Senior Operational Guideline Specialist

Before he moved into his role, Alec spent more than 15 years on the frontline as a career firefighter. Since moving into Response Capability, he has contributed to the development of numerous operational documents that enhance the safety and efficiency of firefighters nationwide.

Examples include response to deliberate high threat incidents and changes in national terrorism threat levels, working near civil disturbances, driving at Fire and Emergency, working near railway tracks, and creating the Incident Response Guide. Alec is also an active member of the Neurodiversity Network.

Alec says 'after 15 years on the trucks, I realised there was potential for me to make a bigger impact at system level. I enjoy turning experience into practical guidance that helps keep firefighters safe'.



**Jonny Anderson**  
Senior Advisor and Senior Firefighter

Senior Firefighter Jonny Anderson is seconded into the team as Senior Advisor Core Response Capability.

Jonny's role is primarily responsible for leading the improvement of the respiratory protection programme, with a particular focus on face fit testing. He is involved in the development and implementation of supporting doctrine, systems, and processes, as well as contributing to pilot initiatives and the eventual rollout of improvements across Fire and Emergency.

He also supports the Core Response Capability team by providing operational advice on the development and maintenance of operational policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines.

Jonny says, 'after 10 years as an operational firefighter, I am enjoying the chance to contribute to Fire and Emergency in a meaningful way, doing something that has a tangible impact for all our personnel'.



**Phill Andersen**  
Senior Advisor

Phill Andersen is a senior advisor looking after the operational policy and procedure document suite for the core response capability team. The team is working through the bookshelf to refresh all of the existing documents to make sure they are fit for purpose and up to date.

Phill was involved in finishing off the IS1 Operational Safety documents published recently. Phil says 'I like being in a position where my work can have an impact across the organisation as a whole, but also can help keep individuals safe as they are out there doing the mahi to serve our communities'.



**Mark Boere**  
Senior Capability Development Specialist.

His role is to provide for the development, implementation, maintenance, and continuous improvement of our operational capability. This is done by monitoring and evaluating current operational capability frameworks (including policies, procedures and guidelines) and looking at opportunities for improvement. Mark does research into national and international best practice trends for operational response. He also provides expertise in operational areas to other branches and external organisations.

Recent work includes being part of the Fire and Emergency Working Party and New Zealand Standards Committee Member for the Code of Practice for Fire Fighting Water Supplies (COPFFWS) review and a review of pilot AFAC training packages for Electric Vehicle Response, Hydrogen Safety Awareness, and Advanced Hydrogen Training for emergency responders.

Mark said he 'enjoys the opportunity to work in areas at a national level that support our operational personnel'.

# E AHA ANA TE... WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH...



TAUMATA 2 KĀKAHU  
PĀKAI TINANA –  
ME URU TIKA E  
HAUMARU AIN

## LEVEL 2 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING – CORRECT FIT IS CRITICAL TO SAFETY



**We established the Fit for All Level 2 Personal Protective Clothing Project to ensure every built environment firefighter, regardless of body type, size, or gender, is equipped with L2 Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) that fits correctly when issued, continues to fit throughout their service, and performs as designed under operational conditions.**

A key focus of the Project's recent activity has been reinforcing that correct fit of L2PPC is critical to firefighter safety and operational performance. Fit checking is not simply a matter of comfort – it is an operational responsibility.

Through our engagement to date, we are consistently seeing that approximately 20–30 percent of personnel who undertake a fit check require some form of adjustment. This reinforces the importance of all operational personnel regularly checking the fit of their kit and taking action where required.

Recognising long-standing challenges for fit faced by many female firefighters, using measurement data and insights from female firefighters across the country, the L2PPC manufacturer designed a more fitted KIWI prototype to trial. We have named this the Alternate Fit (TUI) and we have held sessions across the motu in which firefighters could view, try-on, and provide feedback on the new fit. Firefighters described the jacket fit as a 'game changer', with equally strong responses to the trousers.

### Engagement and fit-check activity

We have also completed Volunteer Support Officer (VSO) hui in Ngā Tai ki te Puku and Te Ūpoko, supporting our VSOs (primary fitters) with hands-on guidance and building capability to ensure consistent fitting practices.

### National support and on-the-ground expertise

We continue to bring national expertise directly to our people. VSO Champion Lee-Anne Kruger, alongside subject matter expert and National Advisor Operations, Requirements and Standards, Dave Campbell,

travelled to VSO hui and stations in Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill to provide hands-on support.

Lee-Anne, who is also a Senior Firefighter at Feilding Volunteer Fire Brigade, has been strongly involved in and has committed a lot of time to the project.

Lee-Anne says this has included working directly with firefighters to assess the fit of their current Level 2 PPC, guiding them through correct fit-check processes, and supporting adjustments where required.



Lee-Anne Kruger, Volunteer Support Officer, Te Ūpoko

'I have also been involved in introducing and supporting the Alternate Fit during sessions, ensuring our people have the opportunity to try it on and provide real-time feedback. I was also fortunate to have been involved in the production of the new online learning modules that help our measurers and wearers to understand how to ensure their garments are fitting correctly.'

**'In addition, I have assisted in building capability within the VSO network by sharing consistent fitting practices and reinforcing the importance of correct fit as a critical component of firefighter safety and operational performance.'**

Lee-Anne says the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

'Our people have been highly engaged, open to the process, and genuinely interested in ensuring their kit fits correctly. The try-on sessions have created a really constructive environment where firefighters feel comfortable providing honest feedback, and there has been strong interest in the Alternate Fit.'

'What has stood out is that the enthusiasm is not limited to one group. While the Alternate Fit was initially developed to address specific fit challenges, it is clearly resonating with a much broader range of body types. Firefighters are recognising the benefits in comfort, mobility, and overall balance, which has driven strong engagement and positive conversations across both volunteer and career crews.'

When asked what a key takeaway has been for her, Lee-Anne says it has been reinforcing that fit checking is an operational responsibility, not just a one-off task or a matter of style and comfort.

**'Seeing a reasonable number of personnel require some form of adjustment highlights how important it is that we continue this focus beyond the life of the project. We all have a part to play in not only our safety, but the safety of our colleagues working alongside us.'**

'The work being done through Fit for All is setting a strong foundation for the future not only in providing better fitting PPC, but also in building awareness, capability, and consistency across the organisation. Ultimately, this contributes directly to safer, more effective firefighters on the fireground.'

### Alternate Fit (KIWI TUI) – Station Trials

We are now awaiting the arrival of 50 Alternate Fit (KIWI TUI) ensembles. These will be used in upcoming Station Trials commencing in July 2026. The trials will involve a selected cohort of firefighters representing a range of body types and operational roles and will provide structured insights into operational performance, durability, and wearer comfort over time.

## TE TIAKI I NGĀ ARAHAU O TE KATOA MĀ TE WHAKAMĀTAUTAU WHAKAMAU KI TE KANOHI RESPIRATORY PROTECTION FOR ALL WITH FACE FIT TESTING



**Fire and Emergency is developing a consistent and sustainable fit testing programme for respiratory protection across the organisation. We want to make sure that our people are wearing respiratory protection that is a suitable size and fit for them.**

Senior Advisor Core Response Capability, Jonny Anderson says we have 10 new AccuFit 9000 Pro testing machines which will replace our current Portacount machines and allow us to fit test disposable masks as well. A process is also in place with an external supplier for ongoing calibration and maintenance.



**'We intend to stand up this capability in stages to ensure we can accurately capture any lessons learned and improvements along the way. Our three training centres will be the first to begin face fit testing with new equipment and training. A District-based trial will follow in which we can test the programme in the real world.'**

'We've reviewed current practices, clarified roles and responsibilities, and engaged a qualified senior trainer (NZOHS-recognised) to co-design and deliver a standardised national training package. This is being

developed alongside our Learning and Development team to ensure it is fit for purpose.

'To strengthen capability and support delivery resilience, Fire and Emergency has invested in the Commit2Fit Respirator Fit Testing Training programme being held over May/June 2026. This programme will provide additional externally qualified fit testers.'

'Finally, all our insights and discoveries will be used to develop a national model so we can reach all our people.'

Jonny says this work touches on many aspects of Fire and Emergency, from Equipment and Logistics, Response Capability, Training, Learning and Development, through to Records management and Application Support.



Hami Love, Thorndon Station Officer and Te Āti Awa representative (front left), guiding the Wellington District Leadership Team through local sites of significance narratives.



Wellington District Leadership Team in front of Nuku Tewhatewha.

Led by Gareth Hughes, Wellington District Commander, the kaupapa focused on strengthening authentic relationships with mana whenua and embedding cultural understanding into leadership practice.

‘From a strategic perspective, this is about building a leadership system that is connected to the communities we serve,’ says Gareth. ‘If we want to be effective in complex environments, we need to understand not just the physical landscape, but the cultural landscape as well. This initiative helps us lead with greater awareness, stronger relationships, and ultimately better outcomes for our communities.’

Delivered by Hami Love, Te Āti Awa representative and Thorndon Station Officer, the programme immersed leaders in culturally significant sites across the rohe, including Honiana Te Puni Reserve, Te Puni Urupā, Korokoro Urupā, and Nuku Tewhatewha. Participants engaged with iwi history, wāhi tapu, and tikanga, gaining deeper insight into the significance of these spaces.

‘It was a privilege to share the rich history within our rohe (District) and give our DLT an understanding of why these spaces matter,’ says Hami. ‘When our people can stand on the whenua, hear the stories, and understand the significance of these sites, it gives them a deeper context for the spaces they work in and can help with operational decision-making.’

‘Recent events have also shown the importance of having a relationship with iwi and marae during large-scale incidents. This was a step towards strengthening those connections.’

A key strength was linking cultural concepts like tapu and noa to operational practice.

Aidan Crawford, Te Ūpoko Pou Takawaenga Māori Matua says, ‘Understanding concepts like tapu and noa through an operational lens helps bridge the gap between culture and practice. It gives our leaders the confidence to act appropriately and respectfully in environments that carry deep significance.’

The initiative has strengthened relationships, increased cultural capability, and sparked future opportunities, including wider rollout and new partnerships. Gareth reflects:

‘This is not a one-off experience. It’s the beginning of a shift in how we think about leadership capability. Embedding cultural understanding into our leadership practice strengthens our organisation and ensures we are better equipped to serve all our communities.’

KA WHAKARĒTŌTIA TE MĀTAU Ā-AHUREA E NGĀ KAIHAUTŪ O TE ROHE O TE WHANGANUI-A-TARA MĀ NGĀ TŪTOHU WHENUA HIRA

# WELLINGTON DISTRICT LEADERSHIP DEEPENS CULTURAL CAPABILITY THROUGH SITES OF SIGNIFICANCE KAUPAPA

Earlier this year, the Wellington District Leadership Team (DLT) took part in a Sites of Significance Kaupapa – a place-based wānanga grounded in lived experience, relationships, and cultural understanding, to support our vision of building “stronger, more resilient Māori communities”.



Te Rehia Papesch, Chair of the Waikato Local Advisory Committee

**Te Rehia Papesch is Chair of the Waikato Local Advisory Committee (LAC) and was awarded the Queen’s Service Medal in 2021 for her services to the community and public service. Of Waikato-Maniapoto, Ngāti Porou, and Ngāti Whakaue descent, Te Rehia spent more than 22 years as Regional Commissioner for the Ministry of Social Development in the Waikato.**

### What inspired you to join the Waikato LAC?

I worked closely with Fire and Emergency in my previous role as Regional Commissioner for the Public Service, particularly during the pandemic. That gave me a strong understanding of the work you do in

our communities. So, when a colleague encouraged me to apply, it felt like a natural extension of the relationships I’d built over more than two decades across government, iwi, and diverse communities. I’m a strong advocate for community voice - listening carefully and not making assumptions - and this role allows me to continue that mahi.

### What are your committee’s priorities?

Volunteer sustainability is critical, as is strengthening connections with our brigades. Attending the Volunteer Leaders Conference in Rotorua last year was a highlight, hearing directly from brigade leaders about their experiences and aspirations.

We’re also focused on identifying risks and opportunities and supporting Fire and Emergency to understand our communities and bridge any gaps between them and Fire and Emergency. We’re always asking: what are the blind spots we haven’t yet seen?

### What keeps you busy outside of the LAC?

Although I retired in 2023, I’m busier than ever. Retirement gives you the freedom to choose where you put your time and energy. I’m involved in several trusts, mainly relating to Māori land, and I coach and mentor Māori and Pasifika men and women in senior management roles - work I find incredibly rewarding.

HE KŌRERO TAHI KI A TE REHIA PAPESCH, TE UPOKO O TE KOMITI TOHUTOHU O WAIKATO

# KŌRERO WITH TE REHIA PAPESCH, WAIKATO LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR

### How do you balance this role with your other mahi?

It comes down to prioritisation and teamwork. I’m part of a committee, not working alone. Each member brings valuable expertise, and delivering good work is a shared responsibility.

We have robust conversations and work collaboratively to get things done. There’s a strong culture of learning as well - people are open to sharing ideas and insights. Not just in our committee, but across other LACs too.

### Any advice for those considering joining an LAC?

It’s a stimulating and rewarding experience, offering real insight into emergency response in our communities.

There’s also a strong sense of whanaungatanga. I experienced this firsthand when our marae in Hamilton caught fire. Fire and Emergency’s Pou Takawaenga team and fire investigators supported us not just on the day, but in the weeks that followed. Their support was constant and genuine, and it made a huge difference.

If you’re interested, reach out to your local committee and have a kōrero - it’s a great way to represent your community and ensure its voice is heard.

# TE WHAKAPAKARI I TE MĀTAU O NGĀ KAIHAUTŪ KI TE WHAKARATONGA IWI

## STRENGTHENING OUR PEOPLE LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY AT FIRE AND EMERGENCY

At Fire and Emergency, we strive to be an organisation where our people are supported and empowered to better serve their communities and each other.

The Eke Taumata Programme is supporting Fire and Emergency to achieve this goal and create an environment where people feel they belong. The programme's mahi is guided by our four culture outcomes (pou).

This issue of Ignite highlights some of the work underway to support and strengthen our people leadership capability.

### OUR FOUR CULTURE OUTCOMES (POU)



Building trust and increasing opportunities for engagement and influence



Strengthening our people leadership capability



Providing a safe, positive and inclusive environment



Raising the bar on acceptable standards of conduct and behaviour

### Building confidence through the Volunteer Brigade Leader course

'This was the first time I have come away from a course truly recognising how proud I am of myself.' That is how Megan (Megsy) Glasson described feeling after completing the Volunteer Brigade Leader (formerly Volunteer Executive Officer) course in June 2025.

When she was first offered the opportunity to attend the revised course, Megsy was not fully confident in some of her interpersonal leadership skills as a Station Officer with Leeston Volunteer Fire Brigade.

However, throughout the duration of the course, she felt supported both by the trainers and her fellow attendees. She reflected on her leadership style and gained a stronger understanding of her triggers so that she could better respond in challenging situations. The course also gave attendees practical tools around communication, inclusion, planning, and managing conflict that boosted her confidence.

'Since completing the course, I am much more aware of how I communicate with the team, and I try to lead in a way that keeps everyone engaged and working

Megan Glasson of Leeston Volunteer Fire Brigade has become the Brigade's first female Deputy Chief Fire Officer since attending the Volunteer Brigade Leader course.



collectively,' Megsy says. 'I am also more aware of how I respond under pressure and how I handle different people and situations.'

Now one year later, Megsy credits the course with having a significant impact on her growth as a leader. She has since stepped into a new role as her Brigade's first female Deputy Chief Fire Officer and has taken the skills and knowledge she gained during the course to lead with more confidence.

If you would like to learn more about the Volunteer Brigade Leader course, please contact your local Senior Advisor Leadership Development for more information.

Scan the QR code for Senior Advisor contact information:



Megan Glasson (front row, fourth from left) gained confidence around her leadership skills during the Volunteer Brigade Leader course.



### Building stronger leaders through mastering difficult conversations

Creating a workplace that's safe, positive and inclusive doesn't happen by accident. It takes leaders who are willing to step up when things aren't right.

The Mastering Difficult Conversations training equips leaders at Fire and Emergency with the skills to communicate effectively, resolve conflict, and better manage inappropriate behaviour. But did you know that the face-to-face Mastering Difficult Conversations workshop is only one way that leaders can learn these skills?

'Once we saw just how well-received the workshops were, we knew we needed to give as many leaders as possible the opportunity to get this training,' says Sue Turnbull, National Manager Organisational Development. 'We often hear from participants how valuable it has been to build these skills and how they feel more prepared to have difficult conversations with their teams.'

The skills covered in our Mastering Difficult Conversations training is now being delivered as part of Lead Teams, Lead Leaders, and the reworked Volunteer Brigade Leader Course. Leadership Development also continues to run in-person workshops, and anyone can build these skills via the Learning Station e-module.

'I use the skills I learned in this course all the time when interacting with others and thinking about what I say. As a station leader, I also encourage others to consider how they interact and what is appropriate or not. I would recommend this workshop to all in Fire and Emergency at all levels.' – Bruce Botherway (Senior Station Officer, Napier Station)

'Since taking the course, I've tried to use the skills regularly in both formal and informal settings. The training has helped me slow conversations down, listen more deliberately, and approach discussions with curiosity rather than assumptions.' – Jack Zorab (Chief Fire Officer, Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade)

Whether you're a seasoned leader or preparing to step into your first management role, these are skills that can make a real difference.

If you'd like to learn more about Mastering Difficult Conversations, scan the QR code here.



## NGĀ TIKANGA PAEREWĀ HOU MŌ TE WHAKARATONGA WAI PATUAHI NEW CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FIREFIGHTING WATER SUPPLIES

Aotearoa New Zealand is working towards a new Code of Practice for Firefighting Water Supplies (the Code).

The Code is used nationwide to guide how firefighting water is planned and provided in both urban and rural areas. The Code sets out what constitutes a sufficient minimum supply of water pressure and volume for firefighting in structures and guidance on options for establishing water supplies to provide intervention opportunities for wildfires.

Fire and Emergency is required to develop and publish an approved Code of Practice for Firefighting Water Supplies under the Fire and Emergency Act 2017.

The current Code has been a core reference document for many years. Changes in urban development, infrastructure capability, climate risk, and operational practice have created increasing inconsistency in how it is interpreted and applied. These cumulative shifts have driven the

need for a modern, clearer, and more resilient Code.

In partnership with Standards New Zealand, Fire and Emergency has undertaken a full revision of the Code.

We took the Code out for public consultation between 18 March and 29 April. We also consulted with our Local Advisory Committees.

The Standards New Zealand technical committee that developed the draft Code has reviewed the feedback and are incorporating it into the draft where relevant. Standards New Zealand will then edit and design the final document which will then be returned to us. Following an internal approval process, we will send it to our Minister, who will present it to Parliament, after which it will be published.

A lot of hard work was done to inform the drafting of the Code drawing on Fire and Emergency subject matter experts from operational, risk, engineering, wildfire, response capability, and GIS expertise.



Pictured left to right, Karl's team of rescuers: Maua and Cory (from Fire and Emergency), John (from Fergs Wellington who used the Shed 6 AED and took over CPR), Wellington Free Paramedic Sam, Karl, Josh (from Wellington Indoor Sports who did the first CPR), Jo (Karl's colleague who dialled 111) and Wellington Free Paramedics Keita and Mark.

# KUA TŪHONO ANŌ TE KAITĀKARO NEI A KARL KI TE HUNGA NĀ RĀTAU IA I WHAKAORA FOOTBALLER KARL REUNITED WITH EMERGENCY CREWS WHO SAVED HIS LIFE

You can often find Karl on Wellington's waterfront, playing indoor football at Wellington's Indoor Sports Shed One. While his teammates were chatting and reflecting on the game they had just played, they turned around and saw Karl lying on his back, gasping for breath and changing colour – they knew they had to act, and fast.

'The last thing I remember, was thinking, "I don't want to fall and hit my head on the concrete floor". I got down on my hands and knees and was looking at the floor. It was the last thing I remember seeing.'

Karl didn't know it yet, but he was having a sudden cardiac arrest. Each week, an average of four to five people has a sudden cardiac across Greater Wellington and Wairarapa, and Fire and Emergency is often one of the first on the scene.

Quick thinking by a nearby Shed One staff member who knew how to perform CPR, an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and a call to 111, saved Karl's life. The AED was installed by Wellington Free Ambulance – only two days prior to Karl's cardiac arrest. It has gone on to save two more lives all within 12 months.

Once Karl had recovered from his cardiac arrest, he was determined to thank those who saved him. Two of those people were Corey Fairbairn, Qualified Firefighter and Maua Maora, Senior Firefighter, from Thorndon Station.

'Being able to meet Karl after his ordeal and hear his thank you reinforced why we do what we do – we want to help people,' says Corey.

Maua echoes Corey, 'It's always heartwarming when you save a life and get to meet the person afterwards.'

As part of Stryker Forward Hearts Programme, a programme that allows a cardiac arrest survivor to pay it forward by donating an AED, Karl has placed an AED at the Village Hall in Paekākāriki. This ensures 24/7 access to this life saving device for anyone in the community and surrounds.

He also hasn't given up on the big game either. 'In my third game of 11-a-side outdoor back in the famous Paekākāriki Central Cosmic Unicorns (yes, that is the correct name of his football team), I scored four goals. I cried running back to halfway. I was ecstatic and over the moon and it just broke it for me that, "yeah, you're back".'



## Privacy matters

How the Privacy Act 2020 applies to Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Member of the public

Fire and Emergency response



When we had the fire at our flat, I was the one who called 111 to get the fire brigade to come round. I want a copy of that phone call! I'm going to ring the Brigade and ask them for it – they should give it to me no sweat.

All information requests, including those for personal information, should go through your VSO or your Regional Headquarters so they can manage the request appropriately. Alternatively, you can contact the team at NHQ: [officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz)

➔ Personal information must be handled properly as there is a risk of information being used or disclosed when it shouldn't be.

Brigade member

Fire and Emergency response



I've just taken a call at the station from a local resident who needs information about their recent chimney fire for the insurance company. What should I tell them?

If the insurance company wants information, they will need to contact the information requests team: [officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:officialinformationrequests@fireandemergency.nz) They can ensure the request is managed in accordance with our obligations.

➔ Personal information must be handled properly as there is a risk of information being used or disclosed when it shouldn't be. This may result in harm to affected individuals or to Fire and Emergency's reputation.



# TE WHAKAURU I TE TIKANGA KI NGĀ URUPARE OHOTATA INVOLVING TIKANGA IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Tikanga or Māori practices were applied following a landslide that struck Mauao (Mount Manganui) earlier this year tragically taking six lives.

Mauao holds deep cultural significance as the sacred tūpuna (ancestor) of local Tauranga moana iwi.

Iwi leaders Jack Thatcher and Ngairo Eruera supported the incident by providing tikanga or Māori practices throughout the response. This included leading twice daily karakia, caring for tūpāpaku (the deceased), and victims' whānau through



Night-shift recovery

karakia and waiata, blessing trucks, providing advice around the removal of any matter from the site, and facilitating a Whakanoa (rebalancing of tapu) for Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and the Police.

The Whakanoa, led by Ngairo, prepared for a safe departure from the site. Together, the crew stood in shallow water and were led in karakia.

Daryl Trim, Assistant District Commander said, 'I could personally feel a cleansing ... within a week we were at another weather event so having that reset was important to be sharp.'

Despite the tragedy at Mauao, there was growth in cultural capability for our USAR whānau, and opportunities for future collaboration on fire risk reduction activities with iwi which aligns with our Rautaki Māori and commitment to working with Māori as tāngata whenua.

'Our role is to set a protocol that allows people to leave their pain here before going home. Our maunga took those people so it's our obligation to help people move through this.' — Iwi representative

National

## ME WHAKANUI TĀTOU I TE WIKI KAITŪAO Ā-MOTU WE'RE CELEBRATING NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

With National Volunteer Week just around the corner from 14-20 June, Fire and Emergency will join in the celebrations by recognising all those who give up their time to volunteer, raising awareness of the contribution our volunteers make to their communities.

This National Volunteer Week we'll be checking in with our volunteers and thanking them for all they do and the difference they make in their local community. We have developed resources to support our employees with acknowledging and thanking our volunteers.

We will also have resources available for our volunteers to thank those who support them to volunteer. Resources include thank you notes, social media tiles and many more. All resources will be available very soon, so please keep a look out; you will find the resources on the Portal or scan the QR code.

The Volunteerism Team is here to offer advice and answer questions as you plan your activities for National Volunteer Week. You can reach out to one of the team at [volunteer@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:volunteer@fireandemergency.nz).



Resources

Here's to your local volunteers responding from 590 brigades across Aotearoa New Zealand

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK 2023



## Are you unhappy with the outcome of a Fire and Emergency complaint?

### Fire and Emergency Dispute Resolution Scheme

The Fire and Emergency Scheme is available, at no cost, to volunteers to dispute our actions or decisions.

If you have lodged a complaint with Fire and Emergency and are not happy with the outcome or believe it is taking too long to respond to your complaint, you can use the Independent Complaint and Review Authority's (ICRA) facilitation, mediation, or adjudication processes to resolve your dispute. In some cases, you can apply to the Dispute Resolution Scheme without trying to resolve it with Fire and Emergency first.

The Fire and Emergency Scheme is independent and delivered with respect for all involved.

Head to our website or contact our friendly case management team to learn more about how our independent, fair, and accessible dispute resolution can enable you to resolve disputes with Fire and Emergency or Fire and Emergency personnel.

Email [casemanager@icra.co.nz](mailto:casemanager@icra.co.nz), phone 0508 ICRA REVIEW (427 273), or visit [www.icra.co.nz](http://www.icra.co.nz) to learn more.



INDEPENDENT COMPLAINT AND REVIEW AUTHORITY

Te Umanga Arotake Amuamu Motuhake



For more information and to join online visit [firefighters.org.nz](http://firefighters.org.nz) or call 0800 653 473



KUA WHAKAAE TAHI A TE WHAKARATONGA IWI ME FECA KI TE WHAKAPAKARI I TE HAUTŪTANGA ME NGĀ PUTANGA Ā-HAPORI

# FIRE AND EMERGENCY AND FECA REACH AGREEMENT STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

In March Fire and Emergency welcomed the successful ratification of the collective employment agreement with Fire and Emergency Commanders Association (FECA) covering operational firefighting management, District Commanders and Assistant District Commanders, and senior specialist positions.

The collective employment agreement was ratified by FECA members on 2 March 2026, following 14 days of negotiations and an Offer to Settle made on 23 February 2026.

Kerry Gregory, Fire and Emergency Chief Executive, said the agreement reflects a mature and constructive relationship between the two organisations.

**‘This agreement is about strengthening leadership across Fire and Emergency so we can deliver the best possible outcomes for our communities,’** Kerry said.

‘Securing a new agreement is critical to our leadership capability, operational stability, and our ability to deliver on our strategic



Pictured left to right: Ken Cooper, National Manager Response Capability, Des Irving, Canterbury Assistant District Commander, Kerry Gregory, Chief Executive, and Brad Mosby, Te Ihu Region Manager.

direction. Just as importantly, it ensures our frontline leaders are aligned, supported, and empowered to perform at their best.’

Geoff Purcell, FECA President, said the agreement recognises the vital role Fire and Emergency’s operational leaders play across Aotearoa New Zealand.

‘Our members command, lead, manage, and support career and volunteer firefighters at operational incidents across the motu. This agreement acknowledges their professionalism, their national responsibilities, and their commitment to serving communities,’ Geoff said.

‘We’re particularly pleased to see the Strategic Relationship Panel formalised, providing a structured and collaborative forum where

operational leaders can work closely with Fire and Emergency on issues that matter most.’

Kerry added the settlement enables the organisation to focus squarely on its core mission.

**‘We acknowledge and thank FECA for their constructive approach to reaching a settlement. With this agreement in place, we can concentrate on what matters most — supporting our people and delivering safer, stronger communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.’**

National

# NGĀ WHAKAMAHUKI O Ā MĀTOU ŪNIANA ME NGĀ TŌPŪTANGA THE LOWDOWN ON OUR UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

We have four main unions and associations representing our people at Fire and Emergency.



The **New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union (NZPFU)** represent those who serve their communities to protect and preserve life, property and the environment. Through reducing the likelihood of unwanted fires, reducing consequences from emergencies and helping build resilient communities they contribute to a safer environment for New Zealanders.

NZPFU members serve their communities to protect and preserve life, property, and the environment. Their representatives are based on all career fire stations. There are also 19 Union Locals in the major metropolitan and principal centres where career firefighters are employed.

Find out more: [nzpfu.org.nz](http://nzpfu.org.nz)



Fire and Emergency works closely with the **United Fire Brigades’ Association** through two important formal agreements; the Strategic Relationship and the Conditional Grant Agreement, which together support our legal responsibilities under the Fire and Emergency Act 2017 and help recognise the important role of volunteers across New Zealand. These agreements reflect our long-standing partnership and focus on improving emergency response, volunteer wellbeing, advocacy, and positive change across the sector.

Since 2017, we’ve provided an annual grant to the UFBA so they can independently support and advocate for volunteers, as well as contributing funding to service recognition, operating costs, national conferences, challenge events, and training such as leadership, secretary, treasurer, and Xero courses.

If your work or project involves or affects volunteers, brigades, and/or the UFBA, there is help available for your planning, communications, engagement, and consultation. To connect with the UFBA about your work or project, please use this email address: [ufbafenzconnect@ufba.org.nz](mailto:ufbafenzconnect@ufba.org.nz). Otherwise, please contact the Manager Strategic Relationships with your query [Lisa.Holgate@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:Lisa.Holgate@fireandemergency.nz).

Find out more: [ufba.org.nz](http://ufba.org.nz)



The **Fire and Emergency Commanders Association (FECA)** is a professional body that represents the interests of operational firefighting management, District Commanders and Assistant District Commanders, and senior specialist positions. Its members lead and manage career and volunteer firefighters throughout the motu.

Find out more: [tinyurl.com/FECA-NZ](http://tinyurl.com/FECA-NZ)



The **Public Service Association Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi** represents many of Fire and Emergency’s non-operational staff as well as some operational roles. It represents and supports more than 95,000 workers across central government, state-owned enterprises, local councils, Health, and community groups within New Zealand.

Find out more: [psa.org.nz](http://psa.org.nz)

# I WHIWHI KŌURA TE KAIPATUAHI MATUA O NGĀRUAWĀHIA I TE WHAKATAETAE CLAY TARGET O TE AO NGĀRUAWĀHIA CHIEF FIRE OFFICER STRIKES GOLD AT WORLD CLAY TARGET CHAMPIONSHIP



Karl with his gold medal for the Open Teams event

**Karl Lapwood, Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Ngāruawāhia Volunteer Fire Brigade, has made both New Zealand and his Brigade proud after bringing home a gold medal for the Open Teams event at the International Clay Target Shooting Federation (ICTSF) 2026 World Down the Line (DTL) Championship.**

Karl was in the NZ Open One Team along with Steven Luke, Jonny Beddis, Lukas Nicholl, and Toby Nicholl in March, hosted at the Canterbury Clay Target Club in Christchurch. Karl has only been shooting for around four-and-a-half years, so this was a remarkable achievement for him.

**'I got into clay pigeon shooting through ex Deputy Chief Fire Officer and life member of Ngāruawāhia Volunteer Fire Brigade, Bill Head. We competed in the Whitianga clay bird shoot, which was my first real introduction to the sport,' says Karl.**

'Winning the DTL Championship is the pinnacle of team shooting, so I was very proud to be part of the team. My next goal is to compete in the next DTL World Championship in Ireland in 2028 and win the individual world championship.'

Karl has been a volunteer firefighter for 32 years, as a member of both Huntly and Ngāruawāhia Brigades. He has been the CFO since 2015.

Congratulations to Karl and his team, and best of luck for the next target in 2028!



Karl and his team brought home the gold at the 16th ICTSF World Down the Line Championship

## TE KUHUNGA MAI O NGĀ MĀTAI-RUA TANGATA I IA 10-TAU

# INTRODUCTION OF 10-YEAR RE-VETTING

'The introduction of 10-year re-vetting for our first group – those in Tier 1-4 roles, including Senior Executive Leaders and their direct reports, District Commanders, Assistant District Commanders, Volunteer Brigade Leaders, and Ahikura Practitioners, is an important milestone in rolling out our Vetting Policy. It reflects our on-going commitment to making Fire and Emergency a safe, positive, and inclusive place for everyone', says Janine Hearn, Deputy Chief Executive People.

'People in this first group will be contacted when they are due for re-vetting. We'll ask for their consent before undertaking the appropriate checks – Police re-vetting for those in frontline or operational roles and a Ministry of Justice criminal record check for those in all other roles.

'The 10-year timeframe is based on continuous service, whether in a career or volunteer capacity. This means people will be due for re-vetting 10 years from the date of their initial appointment, or from their most recent vetting. Service years carried over from urban and rural fire services, that unified to form Fire and Emergency, will be included if this applies and where it is known and recorded in HRIS.

'The phased approach to rolling out the Vetting Policy helps everyone understand the processes and what's expected of them, while also allowing us to manage the process effectively', Janine adds.



To keep updated visit the Vetting Policy and Processes page on the Portal or scan the code.

Not all convictions are a barrier to working or volunteering with Fire and Emergency.

Any convictions or charges not considered in previous vetting will be assessed to see if further action is needed, using the process set out in the Vetting Guideline.



# Speak Safe @ Fair Way

Got a concern or feel like something is off?

External Independent Confidential

I HAVE AN ISSUE WITH ONE OF MY TEAMMATES BUT IT'S NOT A MAJOR AND I DON'T WANT TO MAKE IT WORSE...

I WANT TO SPEAK UP ABOUT BAD BEHAVIOUR, WHERE DO I START?

I FEEL LIKE I AM BEING SINGLED OUT, IS THIS BULLYING?

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO APPROACH THIS SITUATION...

HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY TEAM TO WORK THROUGH THEIR DIFFERENCES?



kia tau YOUR EXPERTS IN DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Get in touch today:

Freephone 0800 677 697 or email: speaksafe@fairwayresolution.com

Use your phone to access the service with the QR code

**INSTALL  
SMOKE  
ALARMS  
WHERE  
YOU SLEEP**