

IGNITE

Te Hiringa o te Tangata | Issue 36 | December 2025

PARTNERING TO PROTECT
OLDER COMMUNITIES

25 YEARS OF HELPING
KEEP TAMARIKI SAFE

BUILDING TRUST AND INCREASING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT



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
Photos need to be at least 1MB.

Read Ignite online

fireandemergency.nz/news-and-media

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-  **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

Welcome to our final issue of Ignite for 2025. I know we say it every year, but 2025 has really flown by!

This year has once again demonstrated the strength of Fire and Emergency and our people. Just some of the key events include sending five contingents to Canada to help with fires covering 8.8 million hectares, severe weather across the motu in October and, as this Ignite is being prepared to go to print, our people are battling a 3000-hectare fire in Tongariro. As always, you responded to these and other events with dedication and commitment.

The stories we include in each issue of Ignite are a reflection on the passion and commitment you all have to ensuring the communities you serve are as safe and prepared as possible. I'm proud that we have been able to recognise many of these actions recently, and you can read more about our people who received Royal Honours, Fire and Emergency New Zealand Awards, and New South Wales State Emergency Service Citations in this issue.

As we are celebrating our people at our Ngā Tohu Raukura Celebrating Our Success Awards, I'm reflecting on the fact that rewarding and recognising our people is one of the key focus areas of our Whanaungatanga Programme. Being a first responder is a selfless job which often involves putting the needs of others above yours. That makes it even more important to ensure we're celebrating those who deserve it.

One of the key achievements for me this year has been the stand up of our Strategic Implementation Programme, or SIP.

Since our last issue of Ignite, our new leadership structure has come into effect in alignment with Our Strategic Direction, the guiding document that will oversee the next five years. The new structure seeks to complement the goals outlined in Our Strategic Direction by focusing our efforts into those key areas that matter most for our organisation and the people of Aotearoa New Zealand that we serve.

Throughout this issue you can read about some of the incredible mahi happening in Te Kei, the Region we are spotlighting in this Ignite. From the chilly Southland winters to the balmy Otago summers, Te Kei is a rich tapestry of geography which poses its own set of challenges. I trust the stories in this issue give you an idea of the inspiring range of mahi that has been going on in our southern-most Region.

I hope you all have a chance to get some time off to relax after what has been a busy year and so much uncertainty for many of our people. To those of you who are continuing to crew the station and control rooms, turning out when the siren goes off and staying on call to support our people over this time, thank you for your dedicated service.

I am proud of what we have achieved this year and look forward to what 2026 will bring.

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



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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Hon Brooke van Velden — Minister of Internal

As we near the end of another busy year, I am once again reflecting on the deep appreciation I have for the work that the staff and volunteers at Fire and Emergency do.

I was fortunate to attend a Royal Honours Luncheon hosted by Fire and Emergency this year and meet four Fire and Emergency volunteers being presented their Royal Honours. The four recipients, Ron, Marius, Gavin and Alan are all wonderful ambassadors for Fire and Emergency and have each dedicated significant amounts of time to both this organisation and their communities.

Speaking to these men, I was struck by the level of commitment they have given to their communities. From gumboot throwing to training search and rescue dogs, it's clear there's a strong passion to be present in their

community and serve and help, expecting nothing in return.

This is also reflected in the responses to major incidents such as Cyclone Gabrielle, severe weather events in the North Island, wildfires, and as recently as October this year when New Zealand experienced extreme wind, rain, and fire. Many of you continued to respond even though your homes and families were impacted by the weather event. During these times there is also extra pressure on Fire and Emergency's Communication Centre people who also go above and beyond.



Fire and Emergency crews have been working hard to protect the beautiful Canadian environment from devastating wildfires.



The 2025 King's Birthday Royal Honours recipients with Minister van Velden, Deputy Board Chair Danny Tuato'o, Chief Executive Kerry Gregory and UFBA Board Chair Hon. Peter Dunne.



Minister van Velden with Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit Ron Ealam.

On the international stage, it was great to see four deployments of Fire and Emergency and partner agency personnel travel to Canada to support those affected by devastating fires.

The willingness of firefighters and incident management team specialists to step up to help those in need even when it means long weeks away from their home and families is admirable. It is a real example of the dedication and care firefighters have to protecting those in need. As well as benefitting the Canadian crews, these deployments also provide invaluable experience for specialist personnel at Fire and Emergency. This international relationship is so important, and I know our Canadian colleagues will be there for us when New Zealand needs it.

HE KŌRERO WHAKAHŌU MŌ TE KAUPAPA WHAKAMAHI RAUTAKI UPDATE ON THE STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME

Change is a constant backdrop for all organisations. To be successful, organisations need effective responses to that change. Fire and Emergency is no different. We are seeing shifts in the communities we serve, changes in climate, and technological advancements. And all of this is reshaping both what we need to respond to and how we need to respond to it.

Tā Mātou Ahunga Rautaki, Our Strategic Direction, which came into effect on 1 July 2025, is about making sure as an organisation, we are ready for the challenges coming our way.

Our Strategic Direction is our shared plan. It shapes how we lead, what we focus on, and what work gets funded and delivered. It will also help us decide what we will not be doing.

We have been doing a lot of work to ensure we can deliver the outcomes and impacts outlined for us in the strategy and make the key shifts for Fire and Emergency and for the communities we serve.

There are around 70 initiatives now included in the Strategic Implementation Programme (SIP). These initiatives were identified

through the business planning process and a comprehensive and thorough shortlisting process. They are included in the programme because they will help us to deliver the strategic shifts outlined in Our Strategic Direction.

One of those initiatives is structure change. We are aligning our organisation to ensure our teams and structures can support us to deliver our strategic priorities with the right capabilities in place. It will help Fire and Emergency respond to the challenges and changes we are facing, sustainably and effectively.

Structure change is just one of the initiatives we are working on to move the dial over the next five years. Some other initiatives

that are now part of the SIP are Eke Taumata, Te Tomokanga the HRIS and Payroll Replacement project, and determining and implementing an Operational Capability Model (formerly known as FOC). You can find out more about the initiatives in SIP on the Portal.

We now also have a programme team to help connect our collective efforts across branches and to support and monitor delivery against our strategic outcomes. This sets us up for success while also making sure we know the impact we are having and can be accountable for our direction and our results.

Find out more about the Strategic Implementation Programme pages on the Portal using the QR code below.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

You will be involved. We know the best solutions come from working together. That's why you can expect:

- opportunities to shape future changes that impact you
- honest, open communication throughout the process
- clear, relevant information shared with those impacted
- genuine opportunity to give feedback and have it considered before final decisions are made
- your input to be carefully considered.



STAYING INVOLVED AND INFORMED VIA THE PORTAL PAGE

We've created dedicated pages for the Strategic Implementation Programme on the Portal, which we'll keep updated.

The Portal is the "one source of truth" for all updates.

You can find background information on why this work is needed. You can also register for the next monthly CE Town Hall, an open, 30-minute session hosted on Microsoft Teams where you can hear directly from leadership, ask questions, and stay connected. Recordings and Q&A summaries will be available for those who can't attend live.



Visit the Strategic Implementation Programme page on the Portal



SUPPORT FOR YOU AND YOUR TEAM

If you have concerns, start by speaking with your manager. There are also several support options available:

- Peer support network
- Kāpehu coaching through Speak Safe @ Fair Way
- Vitae 24/7 counselling
- Wellbeing resources on the Portal.

We talk a lot about culture, and for good reason. Now, more than ever, it's important that we honour the trust our communities place in us by living our values every day. That means looking out for each other, being inclusive, showing respect, uplifting those around us, and focusing on the future by finding ways to make things better.

The way we act, together, must be the foundation for how we move through this change to build a stronger, more sustainable Fire and Emergency.

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

KAHUPAPA FLEET

**New Volvo all-wheel
drives have landed**



Three new Volvo Euro 6 all-wheel drive Type 1 appliances are getting ready to be deployed to brigades at Ohakune, Queenstown, and Lake Tekapo.

Bruce Crosbie, Vehicle Development Engineer, says the Volvo is a 'very well-balanced fire appliance'.

'It is a very nice chassis to build on with many features that are desirable for a good fire appliance. These include the drivability – it is very sure-footed both on the open road and on tight winding terrain, along with great handling on gravel roads.'

'The cab is very roomy particularly in the rear, and the doors are robust with solid hinges that open up to 90 degrees to the cab. This appliance can go into low ratio all-wheel drive so it can better climb and descend steep gradients on low traction terrain. This feature is useful in places like ski-field access roads and sandy or muddy environments.'

Other features include more ground clearance to provide a higher wading depth through water and a pump pressure governing system which automates some functions that are currently done manually, which is easier to operate.

Coming downhill, the appliance can maintain very slow speed with minimal foot braking, which is really reassuring in slippery conditions.



Progress on our Type 5 medium aerals

This photo was taken on a recent trip to Frasers Engineering in Lower Hutt showing progress on our three Type 5 medium aerial appliances.

National



Newly established Wellington Local Advisory Committee

KA AHU WHAKAMUA NGĀ KOMITI TOHUTOHU Ā-ROHE FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

**This year marks a major milestone
for Local Advisory Committees (LACs).**

Since 2020, when the first seven LACs were set up in Northland, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay, Marlborough, West Coast, Chatham Islands and Otago, a huge amount of mahi has gone into learning and working together in a new way.



In 2024, new committees were established in Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Taranaki, Manawatu-Whanganui, Nelson-Tasman and Southland. Then in 2025, the Fire and Emergency Board stood up LACs in Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury – completing the nationwide rollout.

LACs ensure communities' voices and priorities are reflected in Fire and Emergency's planning and provide independent advice on what their communities value, their needs, and the risks they face.

That's sixteen LACs across Aotearoa New Zealand, working with local leaders, helping shape the future of Fire and Emergency by deepening our understanding of what matters to communities – now and in the years ahead. This means we can better support them to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.



Find out more about
Local Advisory
Committees

Since their establishment, LACs have already made a real difference – from supporting Hawke's Bay communities after Cyclone Gabrielle, to delivering Home Fire Safety Visits in the Chatham Islands, working with volunteers in Otago, and reducing false alarms in Marlborough. And now, with all sixteen committees up and running, their reach and collective impact will only continue to grow.

Te Hiku Te Upoko

TE ARAHANGA MĀIA: HE TIROHANGA KI TE HŌTAKA MANUTAKI A WHAKARATONGA IWI LEADING WITH INTENT: INSIDE FIRE AND EMERGENCY'S LEAD LEADERS PROGRAMME

Two leaders, one lesson — Growth never stops.

Phil Larcombe Group Manager Te Hiku and Marcel Roux, Central Communication Centre Manager share how the Lead Leaders Programme has shaped their leadership.

Phil Larcombe joined Fire and Emergency to lead with purpose and help others thrive. He took part in Lead Leaders to reflect on his leadership style, strengthen strategic thinking, and learn from peers across the organisation.

'Lead Leaders helped me shift from operational to strategic leadership,' says Phil.

'It has helped me step back from the day-to-day and focus on being a more strategic, people-centred leader.'

'I've learned to listen more, empower others, and lead with clarity and empathy.'



Phil Larcombe

For **Marcel Roux**, Communication Centre Manager in Central ComCen, the programme arrived at exactly the right time. Leading a team of leaders for the first time, he wanted fresh tools and perspectives. The Deeper Signals and 360-degree feedback process gave him a clear view of his strengths, potential pitfalls, and how his team sees him.

'I even hold regular 'leadership meetings' with myself now,' says Marcel.

'The programme showed me how powerful it is to ask the right questions, be fully present, and even show a bit of vulnerability. It builds trust and helps teams thrive.'

Both leaders walked away with the same realisation: leadership isn't about having all the answers – it's about influence, relationships, and creating an environment where others can succeed.

Phil calls Lead Leaders 'intentional leadership grounded in proven principles.' Marcel sums it up as 'insightful, encouraging, and challenging' – a catalyst for lasting growth across Fire and Emergency.



Marcel Roux

Quick tips for aspiring leaders

- **Start early** – leadership growth takes time.
- **Be authentic** and model the behaviours you expect.
- **You don't need all the answers** – focus on building trust.

If you're interested in this programme or any other programme run by the Leadership Development team, please contact us at Leadership.Development@fireandemergency.nz



L to R: Kerry Gregory, Fire and Emergency Chief Executive; Hon Mark Mitchell, Minister of Police, Mike Pannett, Assistant Commissioner, NZ Police.

HE 'TAIHURINGA' TE RATONGA WHATUNGA HAUMARU TŪMATANUI HOU NEW PUBLIC SAFETY NETWORK SERVICE A 'GAME CHANGER'

Fire and Emergency hosted the launch of the Public Safety Network Cellular Network Visibility Service (NVS) at our National Coordination Centre in September.

Police Minister Hon Mark Mitchell, who launched the service, said it would be a 'game changer' for emergency services.

NVS combines data from New Zealand's two biggest mobile network providers, Spark and One NZ, enabling emergency services to quickly see whether mobile network outages will impact their ability to stay connected while using their devices in near real time and two weeks into the future.



Read about the Network Visibility Service pilot during Cyclone Tam.



Minister Mitchell said emergency services rely on their mobile phones and other digital devices every day to do their job.

'Access to cellular networks and fast reliable data is not only vital, but essential. The new service will show our emergency operations centres and planners when and where their operations will be impacted by network outages so they can plan around it.'

Speaking at the launch, Fire and Emergency Chief Executive, Kerry Gregory, said NVS will give our people better situational awareness during emergencies so they can plan and implement safe, effective operations.

'We have seen through the many severe weather events in the past few years that having this situational awareness of cell

coverage is critical. Accessing real-time data helps our people make faster, smarter decisions which leads to positive outcomes for our people and the communities they serve. And our people can focus on action rather than information gathering.'

The Network Visibility Service supported Fire and Emergency's operations during Cyclone Tam when the service was piloted. You can read more about this via the QR code.

The NVS also plays a key role in how we will deploy PSN Cellular Deployable units – mobile units that provide temporary cellular coverage in areas experiencing outages. These units are part of the Public Safety Network product suite, and work is underway to develop operational use cases for their deployment.

KA ĀWHINA TE RATONGA MĀTAU WHATUNGA I A WHAKARATONGA IWI KI TE WHAKAMAHERE I NGĀ ĀPUTA, KIA ATAMAI AKE TE URUPARE NETWORK VISIBILITY SERVICE HELPS FIRE AND EMERGENCY MAP THE GAPS AND RESPOND SMARTER

When Cyclone Tam hit Northland in April, Fire and Emergency needed answers fast.

The storm's 100 kilometres per hour winds wreaked havoc on cellular infrastructure and, with it, the ability to alert and mobilise volunteers through their Availability and Messaging System (AMS).

It was a real-time challenge for Craig Bedford, our Telecommunications Manager, and one that called for a new, smarter tool.

That's when the newly developed Network Visibility Service (NVS) proved its value during a trial of the service.

Both the Auckland Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) and the National Coordination Centre (NCC) were asking for updates on the status of One NZ and Spark networks.

Up until then, Craig says, Fire and Emergency would be in touch with contacts at Spark and One NZ or vice versa for that information.

But NVS removed the middleman, providing a clear visual of the networks' status directly.

'It gave me the ability to provide coverage maps for the RCC and NCC so they could see what was down and what wasn't, meaning we had information on demand.'

And, Craig says, NVS isn't just for reacting. It could soon support proactive planning, including the deployment of portable cell sites.

'We're not going to have hundreds of deployable towers, but we might pre-position a few in areas we expect to be hit. NVS can help us decide where they should go.'

'It's another tool in the kit that gives us real-time information, that we used to get slowly and manually, allowing us to act on it faster.'

KA ĀWHINA TE TAPUTAPU WHAKAMAHERE HOU I TE IWI KIA TAKATŪ MŌ NGĀ AHINIWHA NEW PLANNING TOOL HELPS KIWIS PREPARE FOR WILDFIRES

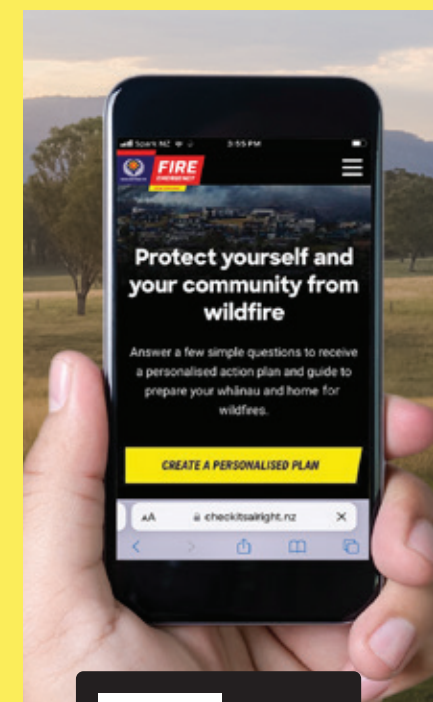
The risk and impact of wildfire is increasing in Aotearoa New Zealand due to climate change, where and how we are living. The frequency and number of wildfires are also on the rise – with many happening in the shoulder months as well as the typical higher risk summer period.

Ahead of the coming wildfire season, Fire and Emergency has launched its new online Prepare for Wildfire planning tool, to support communities across Aotearoa New Zealand to get ready for wildfires.

Developed in partnership with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM), the online tool asks people a series of questions and creates a tailored action plan to help prepare their home and whānau for wildfires. Actions are prioritised so users can focus on the most important tasks first.

The tool is designed primarily for rural properties, encouraging communities to connect and plan for wildfire emergencies together. And while it has a wildfire focus, the tool takes an all-hazards approach, focusing on reducing the impacts rather than specific types of emergencies.

The tool also offers contacts to local CDEM groups and Fire and Emergency teams if communities need additional help. Fire and Emergency personnel can use the tool to start a conversation about preparedness with their communities.



The Prepare for Wildfire planning tool is available now



25 TAU O TE TIAKI HAUMARU I NGĀ TAMARIKI 25 YEARS OF HELPING KEEP TAMARIKI SAFE

For a quarter century, Get Firewise has empowered children with life-saving fire safety skills, shaping safer communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.



At the heart of Get Firewise are dedicated firefighters who help consolidate classroom learning through interactive visits, bringing fire safety education to life.

Their commitment, alongside teachers delivering engaging lessons, has instilled confidence and practical knowledge in young learners.

Thanks to their passion and dedication, hundreds of thousands of children have been through the programme. And importantly, they take their learning back home to their whānau to share their knowledge.

'The programme has been part of the fabric of growing up in Aotearoa New Zealand and it's still going strong', says Megan Dromgool, Community Programmes Manager.

'Fire and Emergency provides over 2,000 teacher kits and delivers around 1,090 firefighter visits per year to reinforce what they've learned in the classroom'.

A big thank you to our people and the kaiako who, together, worked to deliver the Get Firewise programme over the last 25 years.

'Your dedication and hard mahi have helped to keep our tamariki safe', says Megan.



Meet Get Firewise champion, Shane Bromley, Waikato Group Manager.

Q: How long have you been involved in delivering Get Firewise?

I started back in 1997, when it wasn't officially Get Firewise yet, while in my role as a Volunteer Support Officer at Thames Volunteer Fire Brigade, and finished up 24 years later, in 2021.

Shout out to Michelle Hinton, Advisor Community Readiness and Recovery in Waikato, who has been carrying this mahi on.

Q: What made you want to get involved?

I thought it was a great programme to deliver to our tamariki. My motto is 'children are our future, and we need to invest in them'. Several of the children I've taught ended up saving their whānau.

One noticed the smoke alarm wasn't installed on the ceiling, and she insisted her father put it up. That night, it saved their lives, when their home caught fire at 2am.

After learning about calling 111, another young boy saved his baby sister's life when she was choking. It's stories like this that make it rewarding.

Q: What would you say to our people who may want to get involved in delivering Get Firewise?

Whatever you put into it, is what the kids get out of it. So, if you're considering it, train up, so when you're in that classroom, you're doing your best for the kids.



Meet Get Firewise champion, Sally Chesterfield, Southland Community Readiness and Recovery Advisor.

Q: How long have you been involved in delivering Get Firewise?

I have been coordinating Get Firewise for Southland for three years, helping the local brigades if they're unable to get involved.

Q: What made you want to get involved?

Helping our tamariki understand fire safety is a great way to help our communities be safer for everyone. It has been fantastic getting involved in this programme and seeing kids connect with firefighters.

Young students have a sense of pride and ownership when a firefighter who they know visits their school, and many kids in rural communities will have a friend or relative in a brigade.

The firefighters themselves come away energised by the interaction with local youngsters, so much so that every brigade that has participated so far has been keen to deliver the programme again in future.

Since 2023, 3,847 students have completed the programme here in Southland.

Q: What would you say to our people who may want to get involved in delivering Get Firewise?

You'd be surprised how much you will get out of it. All the firefighters I know who've delivered Get Firewise have come away buzzing from the experience.

I think we get as much out of it as the children. And it's lovely to see their excitement, it makes your day!



Launching Get Firewise in 2000

ARONGA Ā-ROHE:
REGION FOCUS:
TE KEI

Phil Marsh,
Te Kei Acting Region Manager



From snow-covered peaks to windswept coastlines, and from tight-knit rural towns to growing multicultural centres, our Te Kei Region is as diverse as it is resilient. Covering Otago and Southland, Te Kei stands apart — not just for its complex risk environment, but for the strength and variety of our people.

A Region of contrasting risks

What makes Te Kei truly unique is its geographic and climatic diversity. The Region spans everything from remote alpine ranges to farmland plains and urban centres. As a result, we are prepared to respond to an extraordinary range of situations: from large-scale vegetation fires and snowstorms in drought-prone inland areas to coastal storms, blizzards in the high country, earthquakes in most places and flooding everywhere.

Urban centres like Dunedin, Invercargill, and Queenstown bring a different set of risks. The University, a deep-water container port, two international airports and the tourist magnets of Queenstown and Milford Sound each create their own challenges for us. Meanwhile, isolated rural communities may depend solely on volunteer brigades who operate kilometres from the nearest town — often in extreme or rapidly changing conditions.

For us, this means one thing: there is no “standard” response in Te Kei.

Communities that reflect the land

The Region's strength doesn't just come from how we manage natural hazards — it's also rooted in our people.

Te Kei's communities are just as diverse as our landscapes. They include Iwi with strong ties to whenua, farming families who have lived on the land for generations, Pasifika and Filipino workers in agriculture and tourism, and international migrants and transients drawn to Queenstown Lakes District.

This variety is mirrored in the crews who serve in volunteer brigades, the backbone of rural emergency response, which includes people of all ages, backgrounds, and professions. In some towns, multiple languages are spoken at stations. That diversity isn't just accepted — we value it. It builds stronger connections with the communities we serve and ensures communication, trust, and understanding during high-pressure moments.

More than emergency response

What makes Te Kei exceptional isn't just our readiness — it's the way we blend technical capability with human connection. Local knowledge, cultural awareness, and community trust are just as vital as hoses and helmets.

In a Region shaped by extremes — of weather, terrain, and people — our people prove that diversity is not a challenge to overcome, but a strength to embrace. Our Region truly reflects the communities it protects.



NGĀ TUKANGA KAIHAUTŪ OPE TŪAO
- TE KAWA I TE MĀNUKA KI TAPANUI
VOLUNTEER BRIGADE
LEADER PROCESSES —
TAKING IT ON IN TAPANUI

When the previous chief of the Tapanui Volunteer Fire Brigade stepped down after 21 years earlier this year, Mark Eales was appointed to Chief Fire Officer. Timing meant his appointment followed the newly launched Volunteer Brigade Leader Development and Review processes.



Mark Eales, Tapanui Volunteer Fire Brigade Chief Fire Officer (right) and Justin Wafer, Otago District Group Manager (left).

Mark initially thought that taking over the role would be daunting. But the changes in leadership at his brigade mean that other members have stepped up, and he hopes to foster a culture of continuous improvement during his five-year renewable term.

‘The last thing you want is for your brigade to be sitting still,’ Mark said. ‘You want it to be building and growing all the time so things don't get stale.’

Justin Wafer, Dunedin District Group Manager has gotten to know Mark through the new leader induction process, and the two of them worked together to build Mark's development plan over the next five years.

‘Mark places high importance on whanaungatanga, and the brigade has developed a solid values-based system that reflects this,’ Justin remarked.

‘Mark has also placed strong focus on succession planning, with the overall health of the brigade front of mind. His leadership approach centres on people, and he is committed to ensuring that every member of the brigade is given the opportunity to reach their full potential.’

‘It's not just about me stepping up to be Chief. Everyone else is stepping up as well,’ Mark says. ‘We're building the future for our brigade.’

About the Volunteer Brigade Leader Development and Review processes

The Volunteer Brigade Leader Development and Review processes have been created in consultation with volunteers to better support those in volunteer leadership roles, which in turn helps to maintain stronger brigades. The process covers recruitment, onboarding, ongoing support and development in the role, and tools to support succession planning for future leaders.

The process includes simpler application forms that allow applicants to demonstrate their strengths, brigade input in the selection of their leaders, values and skills-based selection criteria, position descriptions that align across all volunteer brigade leader roles, a five-year term for all newly appointed brigade leaders and deputies, annual development planning with group managers, and the option for volunteer leaders to renew their term if they meet expectations, wish to continue, and the brigade is performing well.

Ready to get started?

Succession planning is a great first step. Search “**succession planning**” on **Learning Station** (desktop only) and complete the **e-module**; it will help you to start or improve your brigade's succession planning journey and better prepare you for any future leadership changes.



Want to know more?
Check out the Portal
(no log in required)

MAI I NGĀ MOEMOEĀ TARAWHITI I PUKEKOHE KI TE WHAKATAETAE MĀTAOTAO I TĀHUNA FROM HOOP DREAMS IN PUKEKOHE TO COLD COMPETITION IN QUEENSTOWN



Competitive grade winners Tapu Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Over the past few months, our people have been lacing up their trainers and donning their winter woollies to showcase their athletic abilities across the motu.

Hoopheads from across the North Island descended upon Pukekohe to demonstrate their skills and sportsmanship on court at the Fire and Emergency National Basketball Competition.

Hosted by the Pukekohe Volunteer Fire Brigade, the weekend-long competition brought together thirteen brigade and station teams from Wellington to Papatoetoe for games across two grades.



Marty Jillings, Senior Advisor Community Readiness and Recovery Otago - 1st Banked Slalom - Ski, 1st Giant Slalom - Ski, 1st Overall skier and Scotty Dugan, Avalon Station - 1st place Banked Slalom - Snowboarding, 2nd Giant Slalom - Snowboarding, 1st Overall Snowboarder.

Games were played at the Franklin Pool and Leisure Centre and refereed by the Franklin Bulls and Franklin Basketball.

Congratulations Tāpu Volunteer Fire Brigade for taking out the win in the competitive grade, and Wellington Fire Station for coming out on top in the social grade. Both teams showed exceptional skill and teamwork.

John Robinson, Pukekohe Volunteer Fire Brigade CFO says the brigade was proud to host the event and welcome all the players, and supporters who took part.

At the other end of the motu, our friends at Police invited us to participate in their Winter Games in beautiful Queenstown in August, and we were thrilled to answer the call.

We had sixteen exceptional athletes attend, and it was an incredible couple of days filled with fun, excitement, and an unforgettable atmosphere.

Set against the stunning winter backdrop of Queenstown, the games featured a wide array of events from netball, football, skiing, snowboarding and more.

It was more than just a sporting event, it was a display of dedication, discipline, and resilience



L to R: Carmen Purvis, Senior Firefighter Mangere Station, Ady McKenzie, 1st place Master Wāhine Cross Country, Richard Chambers, Commissioner of Police, Sela Corbett, 2nd place Masters Wāhine Cross Country, Sonia Evers, Senior Firefighter Dunedin City Station.

of the men and women who serve the community every day.

‘All the competitors from Police were fun, outgoing, and fierce competitors, off the court they were so friendly and hospitable,’ says Chris Lindop who competed in Squash and is a Station Officer at Queenstown Volunteer Fire Brigade.

A huge thank you to all of the competitors, organisers and supporters who made both competitions so successful. Now, time to start training for next year!

TE TĪMA ŌTĀKOU KI TE RĀWHITI, E WHITI ANA I NGĀ WHAKATAETAE WHAKORA TUTUKINGA RORI O TE AO KI KOROĀTIA EAST OTAGO TEAM SHINES AT WORLD ROAD CRASH RESCUE CHAMPIONSHIPS IN CROATIA

East Otago proudly represented New Zealand at the World Rescue Extrication Challenge and the World Trauma Challenge in Croatia in September. The six-man team, formed just four years ago, is drawn from six volunteer and career brigades and includes two medics. They qualified by securing the national title at the UFBA National Road Crash Rescue Challenge last year.

While the East Otago team isn't the first from New Zealand to compete internationally, they are the first to take part in both the road crash rescue competition and the trauma challenge, placing midway through the field in both events. The pace and pressure were intense, with an extraction and a trauma scenario each day for three days.

Will Hall, from the Port Chalmers Volunteer Fire Brigade, says he and fellow medic Jody Williams, from Waitati Volunteer Fire Brigade, were paired with the Croatian home team for the mass casualty module of the trauma challenge, working together to deal with eight patients. The other two trauma scenarios involved a single patient trauma and a dual patient case.

‘They were all live patients – no dummies,’ Will says. ‘We were up against paramedics and intensive care nurses and doctors from all over the world, so we were very pleased with how we did.’

The extrication scenarios each involved two patients and had to be completed in 25 minutes – a significant step-up in pressure



The full East Otago team is:

- Will Hall** – Station Officer Port Chalmers Volunteer Fire Brigade (day job with St John)
- Hamish Hesselin (team leader)** – Palmerston
- Ryan Griffiths** – Waikouaiti Volunteer Fire Brigade
- Jody Williams** – Waitati Volunteer Fire Brigade
- Justin Reid** – Willowbank Station
- Simon Greenall** – Mosgiel Station

from the New Zealand competition where teams must extricate one patient in half an hour.

Being paired with the host team added another dimension for the kiwis, who had travelled the furthest to compete. ‘We got on really well,’ Will says. ‘One of the great things about the whole competition was getting to know people, finding out what we had in common and learning about different approaches.’

The team's fundraising efforts kicked off in January, with local sponsors helping to pay the \$6000 entry fee, followed by further efforts to raise the money for travel and gear. Fortunately, all the technical equipment needed for the competition was provided but the team appreciated support from Fire Rescue Safety NZ, which loaned them similar equipment to train on. As a bonus, while en route to Croatia, the team spent a day training at Holmatro Rescue World in the Netherlands where some of Europe's most advanced road crash rescue equipment is produced.

Being a composite team has meant that their experiences are having a wide influence at home, Will says. ‘East Otago is made up of lots of small brigades so putting together a



team from one brigade would have depleted their response capability to have people away for a fortnight. This way, multiple brigades benefit from having a member training to a higher level. It's all about doing what we do better when we are on the road.’

The team aims to defend its national title next year and aspires to attend another World Championships – if not in Rio next year, then perhaps Dubai in 2027. At the same time, the team plans to start integrating new members, with some of the veterans stepping back to coach and mentor the next generation.

I WHAKANUIA NGĀ KAIMAHI A WHAKARATONGA IWI KI NGĀ TOHU FIRE AND EMERGENCY PERSONNEL HONoured WITH AWARDS

Several Fire and Emergency personnel were recently recognised for their selfless and dedicated actions both at home and abroad. This included 43 personnel awarded special issue Fire and Emergency New Zealand Awards, four long-serving personnel recognised with Royal Honours, and 44 personnel who were awarded the New South Wales State Emergency Service Commissioner's Unit Citation.



L to R: Marius Bron of Fox Glacier, Alan (Curly) Troon of Taihape, Gavin Dennis of Matatā and Ron Ealam of Oxford.



Members of the 2022 deployment to New South Wales

The Fire and Emergency New Zealand Awards are one of six types of recognition that the organisation presents to personnel in acknowledgement of their service and contribution.

Those who received special issue Fire and Emergency New Zealand Awards were recognised for their unwavering commitment to the organisation and their communities. These awards acknowledged specific actions of personnel during some of the most difficult events in recent memory including Loafers Lodge and the 2023 North Island Severe Weather Events.

The New South Wales State Emergency Service Commissioner's Unit Citation is a high-level award given to those who have displayed the utmost professionalism in their emergency response.

Our people received it in recognition of the incident management support they provided during the 2022 New South Wales flood response operations.

Another of Fire and Emergency's recognitions is the awarding of a Royal Honour which are presented biannually. In this year's King's Birthday Honours, four Fire and Emergency personnel were honoured; Ron Ealam, Marius Bron, Gavin Dennis and Alan (Curly) Troon.

In a much-anticipated tradition at Fire and Emergency, all four recipients were presented with their Royal Honours at Government House by the Governor-General The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro before attending a luncheon attended by their whānau, Minister of Internal Affairs Hon Brooke van Velden and members of our Board and Executive and Region leadership teams.

The design that appears on the Citation and Commendation awards was specially commissioned for Fire and Emergency by Piki Thomas, Pou Arahi Kaupapa Māori and Cultural Communities. It is the same design that can be found on the panelling in national headquarters.

It tells the story of Māui and Mahuika, the goddess of fire. Mahuika is the key depiction in the kōwhaiwhai and you can see her eyes, nose and mouth in the top left-hand corner and her hands and fingernails fill the rest of the frame. Māui is represented appearing from the right.

On the Citation, the words 'He Tohu Kairangi' appear. This name was also gifted to us and denotes a recognition of supreme achievement, acknowledging the outstanding contribution these recipients have made to Fire and Emergency and their communities.

Right: Māui and Mahuika panel design which appears on the Citation and Commendation awards.



KO TĀ TE OPE TŪAO O GREERTON HE WHAKAPIKI I TE MŌHIO KI TE AHUREA MĀORI GREERTON VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE IMPROVING THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF MĀORI CULTURE

Greerton Volunteer Fire Brigade with Pou Takawaenga Māori Matua Hori Mana

In August, the Tauranga Fire Brigade Social Club gathered at the Tauranga Yacht Club to celebrate their Gold Star Honours Night and honour recent accomplishments of their local firefighters.

Among those being celebrated were volunteers from Greerton Volunteer Fire Brigade, who were each awarded a Tohu - a wearable pin displaying a commitment to working in partnership with Māori as tangata whenua and dedication to progressing knowledge and understanding of Māori culture.

The Tohu is awarded upon successfully completing the He Timatanga Kōrero online module - an introductory guide to Kaupapa Māori designed specifically for Fire and Emergency.

David McLaughlan, Officer in Charge, spearheaded his brigade's effort to collectively attain the Tohu after being introduced to a range of resources aimed at uplifting knowledge of Māori culture at

the Ngā Tai ki te Puku Volunteer Leadership Conference. The brigade completed the module during one training night.

'By completing He Timatanga Kōrero it has helped our brigade understand and apply Kaupapa Māori principles, making us stronger volunteers,' David says.

Hōri Mana, Pou Takawaenga Matua (Māori Liaison Officer) for Ngā Tai ki te Puku, made the trip from Rotorua to personally present the brigade with their Tohu. He reflected on the gifting of Tohu to the Brigade.

'This opportunity is not limited to our career firefighters - it is also available to our volunteers,' Hori said.

'That's why it was especially meaningful to see the Greerton Volunteer Fire Brigade awarded their Tohu at the annual Tauranga Brigade Honours and Awards dinner. This moment beautifully reflects our whakataukī -

Ko te manu e kai ana i te miro, nōna te ngahere.

Ko te manu e kai ana i te mātauranga, nōna te ao.

To the bird that feasts on the miro berry, theirs is the forest.

To the bird that feasts on knowledge, theirs is the world.'

'By embracing mātauranga and honouring the contributions of all our people, we continue to build a stronger, more inclusive Fire and Emergency - one that truly reflects our values.'

A key pou (pillar) of Fire and Emergency's Rautaki Māori (Māori strategy) is Ngā Tāngata - growing the capability of our people. The Pou Whirinaki and Pou Takawaenga Directorates are here to support your local brigade with cultural capability training.

If your brigade is interested in replicating the efforts of Greerton Volunteer Fire Brigade, tēnā whakapā mai - get in touch via teahotapu@fireandemergency.nz!

Our Pou Whirinaki Team can supply you with the resources you need to do this together.



NWAC with our wāhine leaders (absent: Renee Pōtae, Anna Gordon and Carrie Swanson)

TE WHAKAMĀNAWA I Ō TĀTOU WĀHINE CHAMPIONING OUR WĀHINE

Our National Women's Advisory Committee (NWAC) is a proactive voice dedicated to championing women across all of Fire and Emergency.

Siobhan Flanigan, Advisor Women's Development, says NWAC – which meets quarterly – is here to celebrate and elevate the unique contributions of our wāhine toa, and to provide advice and support the participation in opportunities that will help attract, retain, and develop our wāhine.

'We recognise the dedication and hard work our people bring every day, and this renewed focus is all about ensuring they have the support and resources they need to not just succeed, but to thrive.'

'To further strengthen our collective voice, we have aligned with the People Led Networks (PLNs). This collaboration ensures that our diverse voices and perspectives are working together more effectively to influence positive change.'

Siobhan says there has been a recent focus on ensuring wāhine have positions on regional working groups to ensure a diverse lens at these forums.

A two-day hui at held at national headquarters recently – which wāhine Group Managers and

District Managers attended – saw NWAC discuss a variety of hot topics such as understanding Women's Development national programme updates and organisational developments to align regional mahi, deepening awareness of Rautaki Māori and cultural capability initiatives, and workshoping and co-designing strategic communications priorities for the network.

Siobhan says a quote that was discussed at the hui was a great reminder of the destination NWAC is helping shape for the future for our next generation of firefighters and personnel.

'The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now. We are planting trees today so that everyone can enjoy the shade tomorrow.'

The committee is dedicated to supporting and participating in programmes of work to develop a safe, positive, and inclusive environment and we encourage people to reach out to any of our members directly via their Fire and Emergency email addresses, or through woman@fireandemergency.nz.

There are 15 members on NWAC from all parts of the organisation and across the motu:

Aimee Taylor, Anna Gordon, Anthea Kirby, Emma Carey, Jean Barr, Leanne Cryer, Mary Harding, Helen Sinclair and Mitch Mullooly.
Pou Tuarongo (male champions),
Julian Tohiariki and Bruce Stubbs.

Debbie Tse – External Chairperson

Kaye AhSam – Manager Women's Development

Siobhan Flanigan – Advisor Women's Development

Tehniat Qureshi – Coordinator Women's Development (acting as Secretariat)

Representative Members (including Pou Tuarongo)



TE WHAKAWĀTEA I NGĀ IRIRANGI: E KOKE WHAKAMUA ANA TE WHAKAHOU I NGĀ WAEREHI IGC CLEARING THE AIRWAVES: IGC RADIO SWAP PROGRESSING WELL

Fire and Emergency has reached a major milestone in our journey toward the new Public Safety Network (PSN).

To enable all emergency agencies to migrate to the PSN's digital Land Mobile Radio (LMR) network, we are releasing frequency spectrum currently used by our Incident Ground Communication (IGC) radios.

This critical step involves reprogramming all yellow and green IGC handheld radios nationwide, including repeaters, tactical radios, and command units. The swap-over ensures that the spectrum can be repurposed for the PSN, supporting a more modern, secure, and interoperable communications platform.

Kate Hill, Operations Advisor and our IGC Spectrum Refarming Project Manager, says so far, the IGC radio swap has been successfully completed in the following Districts: Mid-South Canterbury, Canterbury, Nelson/Marlborough, West Coast, Otago, Southland and Wellington.

'In total, 3,229 IGC radios across 262 fire stations have been reprogrammed – an impressive achievement that keeps the project on track

to release the spectrum needed for PSN migration.

'This is a significant step forward for us. Releasing the spectrum is essential to ensure the PSN rollout can proceed smoothly across the country.'

Why it matters

Once a District's frequency spectrum is released, it must not be used again. Continued use of old IGC radios not collected during swap-over, and the frequencies they use, can cause interference with new PSN users, potentially disrupting critical communications.

Also, unauthorised use of retired frequencies could lead to reputational damage or even legal consequences for Fire and Emergency.

Looking ahead

With the South Island complete and spectrum released, attention now turns to the remaining Districts in the North Island.

If you would like to find out when your District IGC swap over is scheduled, check out the Portal's Public Safety Network IGC page for upcoming dates, resources and monthly updates.



TE WHAKAATU I Ā MĀTOU MAHI AFAC 2025 SHOWCASING OUR MAHI AT AFAC 2025

At the end of August, nine representatives from Fire and Emergency attended the AFAC conference in Perth.

This included Chief Executive Kerry Gregory, Piki Thomas, Pou Arahi Kaupapa Māori and Cultural Communities and members of our Volunteerism, Wellbeing, Marketing, Response Capability, Eke Taumata and Fire Engineering teams.

AFAC is the region's largest and most comprehensive emergency management event and is a chance for emergency management professionals, industry leaders, and innovators to explore the latest advancements in the sector. Our people were lucky to hear from some extremely knowledgeable international speakers including a keynote address about the Grenfell Tower Fire public enquiry.

Fire and Emergency were selected to give three presentations and display three posters showcasing the mahi we are doing around preventing mental ill-health, delivering our Rautaki Māori, amplifying the voices of our volunteers, positive culture change, deploying gas monitors, and how we use our Fire Season and Fire Danger data.

Fire and Emergency were also invited to participate in the welcome ceremony which included Kerry and Piki presenting our mauri stone which sat on stage for the duration of the conference.

Our people were great ambassadors for our organisation and have returned with some new perspectives and ideas which they can apply to their mahi.



The Fire and Emergency contingent with the mauri stone at the AFAC 2025 opening ceremony.

TE WHAKAPIKI I TE WHAKAPONO ME NGĀ ARAWĀTEA WHAI WĀHI KI A WHAKARATONGA IWI BUILDING TRUST AND INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT AT FIRE AND EMERGENCY

At Fire and Emergency, our goal is to be a place where people feel they belong. We want to be an organisation that is safe, positive, and inclusive, 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 improve the experience for all personnel, with mahi guided by our four culture outcomes (pou).

In this issue of Ignite, we're highlighting some examples of how we're building trust and increasing opportunities for engagement and influence.

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**

Do you have a story that you'd like to share? We'd love to hear about any initiatives or programmes of work at Fire and Emergency that are helping to create a culture that enables all of us to better serve our communities and each other.

Big or small, share your story with us via the **Eke Taumata Story Line.**



Volunteers deepen community safety knowledge in-person and virtually

Canterbury volunteers now have more knowledge and tools to deliver important safety messages in their communities, thanks to regular online sessions and in-person training days delivered by the Canterbury Community Risk Management (CRM) team.

Following the success of in-person training days in 2023 and 2025, the Canterbury CRM team has established monthly online learning sessions to keep the momentum going. These webinars are popular with volunteers and cover a wide range of topics, from how to prepare for earthquakes to Get Firewise and often feature guest speakers from partner agencies and organisations.

'Chiefs and deputies have told us how excited they are about these virtual trainings,' says Kerri Pring, Advisor Community Readiness and Recovery.

'There are even people from outside our District who attend these sessions.'

The most recent in-person event brought together 35 volunteers from 20 brigades across the District.

Emma Hay, Advisor Community Readiness and Recovery for Canterbury District, said the idea came from seeing a similar initiative at Counties Manukau.

'I saw how effective their training day was and thought, "we can do this too".



It has been great to see our volunteers really embrace the opportunity to learn,' Emma says.

The benefit of mixing online with in-person training days means that volunteers can get hands-on experience that they otherwise wouldn't get virtually. For example, kitchen trailer sessions give volunteers the tools to safely deliver cooking fire demonstrations locally.

With growing demand, the team plans to continue offering opportunities for volunteers to build their skills and keep their communities safer.



Eke Taumata Internal Advisory Rōpū

For Katie Pocock, Group Manager with Waitematā District, and Kyle Silcock, Senior Station Officer with Motueka Volunteer Fire Brigade, being part of the Eke Taumata Internal Advisory Rōpū has been a unique chance to help shape the future of Fire and Emergency.

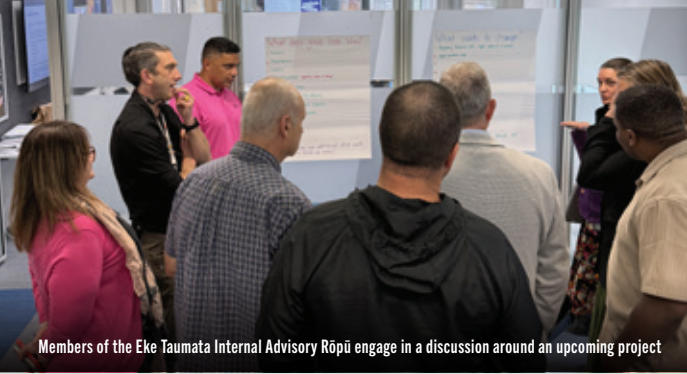
The Rōpū was set up as part of the Eke Taumata programme, which focuses on strengthening our culture. It brings together people in all parts of the organisation from across the motu to share perspectives, test ideas and provide feedback on key projects.

'Having this group means we can check our thinking with the people who are living the reality of our organisation every day,' says Becs Gray, Eke Taumata Programme Manager. 'Their advice helps us make sure that our work is effective and grounded in what matters most to our people.'

Members meet regularly to discuss projects and share insights. While the Rōpū doesn't make decisions, their feedback helps make plans practical and realistic to enable meaningful change.

Katie appreciates the amount of focus given to this mahi and found this experience to be very rewarding when feedback or recommendations are reflected in the finalised work. 'The group is wildly varied, and while our perspectives often collide on this complicated and intersected work, we're united by a common goal. That diversity brings richness to the work,' she says.

For Kyle, the most exciting part was the opportunity to improve Fire and Emergency's support for developing people leaders, not just incident leaders. 'I'm one of a number of reps chosen by the United Fire Brigades' Association (UFBA) to give a volunteer perspective. Regardless of rank and role, paid or volunteer, everyone has an equal voice,' he said. 'It was really clear right from the start that Fire and Emergency genuinely wanted our input, and I've felt that my voice has made an impact.'



Volunteer Voice Network

Volunteer voices shape new Volunteer Voice Network

The Volunteer Voice Network (VVN) was recently established to connect volunteers with teams across the organisation who need volunteer representation or insights to inform their work.

'Our almost 12,000 volunteers all have unique perspectives, skills and experience,' says Ryley Webster, Manager Volunteerism.

'Involving volunteers in the projects, initiatives, and decisions that impact them makes sense and is the right thing to do – kia tika.'

For the team who led this piece of work, making sure that the volunteer voice was part of shaping what the VVN looks like wasn't just a no-brainer, it was the key to the network's success.

Volunteers were involved at every stage of the design process, from initial ideas to testing the developed processes and materials. An advisory group was set up at the beginning of the project to better understand the challenges, and a volunteer-only working group, including UFBA representation, was involved in developing the proposal for the VVN. Consultation with the wider volunteer community followed, and a small subset of previous working group members helped with final testing to make sure the process was fit-for-purpose.

Mathew Bannister, Crew Leader for Eastland Rural Fire Brigade, found it rewarding to be involved as a member of the working group.

'I appreciated having the opportunity to collaborate with the rest of the working group to find solutions to improve the initiative,' he said. 'It really showed how project teams can effectively use the VVN to get the best outcomes.'

As the Volunteer Voice Network rolls out, it will help Fire and Emergency build stronger connections with volunteers and make sure decisions are informed by their real-world experiences.

'It's exciting that we are maturing our approach and that we already have so many volunteers and national-level teams signed up to make this a reality,' said Ryley. 'The more the merrier!'



Learn more about the Volunteer Voice Network here

TŌ MĀTOU POKAPŪ RURUKU Ā-MOTU: TE TAUTOKO ME TE WHAKARATO OUR NATIONAL COORDINATION CENTRE: SUPPORTING AND SERVING

The end of our deployment to Canada in September this year marked the 29th international deployment by Fire and Emergency since we were formed in 2017.

Most of these have been to wildfires but also include Urban Search and Rescue deployments to the Pacific Islands or further afield. We have agreements with Australia, Canada, and the USA that they can call on us for support during the often devastating wildfires that they experience.

Significant events and incidents, and national and international deployments, are supported by our National Coordination Centre (NCC).

The NCC coordinates resources and expertise from the whole of Fire and Emergency while ensuring day-to-day response capability is maintained. Its role is also to ensure our Executive Leadership, Operational Response teams and interested Ministers are updated. Regions implement their own plans and make use of their own resources, however when they do need something additional, the NCC is the coordinating mechanism between the Regions to move people and equipment around.

The NCC also links to the National Crisis Management Centre under the Beehive. When this is activated Fire and Emergency will have at least one liaison officer there to maintain a direct and immediate link with government and other agencies.

Some of the major domestic incidents over recent years that have seen NCC stood up include the Pigeon Valley fire, Mosque shootings, and Whakaari White Island eruption in 2019; the COVID-19 response in 2020; the Waiharara fire in 2021; Cyclone Gabrielle and severe weather events in 2023, and in late October/early November 2025 which led to 759 weather-related callouts.

International deployments over the last few years have included the 'Black Summer' fires in New South Wales and Queensland in 2019; New South Wales floods in 2022; and wildfires in Canada and the USA in 2024 and 2025.

This calendar year alone, the NCC has stood up for 19 different events, not all requiring deployments but still requiring monitoring.



L to R: Ilan, Matt, Claire, Glenn

Meet the team

Ilan Duncan
Manager

My role is to lead the coordination of national and regional incident and emergency management capabilities. This involves ensuring the alignment of Fire and Emergency's systems, processes, and improvement programmes with that of the overall New Zealand emergency management system. This work includes capability building, exercising and transitioning to recovery at all levels of response and coordination.

During the last six months we have run a multi-agency wildfire Simex, that ran almost immediately into a deployment of six people to New South Wales flooding, followed swiftly by planning to deploy personnel to Canada for their wildfires at the same time as domestic flooding and deployments to Nelson.

Claire Brown
Senior Advisor Deployments

As Senior Advisor Deployments, my role centres on coordinating and supporting international deployments, ensuring our personnel are well prepared, well supported, and able to deliver effectively in complex environments. I work closely with operational teams, partner agencies, and the NCC to maintain readiness and ensure seamless integration across deployments.

Incident and Emergency Management team

Our NCC is managed by our Incident and Emergency Management team which falls within the Response Capability Directorate. Response Capability also includes our Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), national and international deployments, hazardous substances, medical response, specialist response, and emergency planning.

The Incident and Emergency Management team is responsible for the national and regional coordination of incident and emergency management across Fire and Emergency.

The team works to ensure a consistent and effective response to all incidents – safeguarding lives, property, and the environment. This includes planning, preparing for, and managing both routine and large-scale events through a coordinated national and regional approach.

Glenn Thompson
Principal Advisor Emergency Management

As Principal Advisor Emergency Management, I lead the development and improvement of Fire and Emergency's national emergency management capability. This includes strengthening our Coordination Centres, ensuring national consistency in how we activate, escalate and manage incidents, and embedding clear policies and procedures that support our role as both a lead and support agency.

Ben Fairweather
Senior Advisor Operational Intelligence

I am involved in a wide range of projects, document creation, meetings and conversations to positively influence our organisational ability to make data-led decisions. I drive projects, that enhance our Intel Capabilities, and I provide ongoing Operational Intel with the National Commanders Group and National Response Coordinators, to ensure we are proactively handling upcoming known events.



Matthew Wheble
Senior Advisor Incident and Emergency Management

My role is to support the development and delivery of safe, consistent and future-ready incident and emergency capabilities across Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes developing national frameworks, doctrine, and response plans as well as enhancing operational readiness through exercises. As a new member to the team, I am excited to start contributing to this crucial mahi.



TE OPE HAERE KI KANATA: TE AHUREA ME TE TŪHONOTANGA CANADA DEPLOYMENT: CULTURE AND CONNECTION

Between July and September, we deployed five contingents of 59 skilled people to support the firefighting efforts in Canada during their wildfire season.

By mid-September, 8.8 million hectares had burnt across the country. That's almost a third of Aotearoa New Zealand, and the second highest amount of land burnt on the Canadian records.

Our people were mostly based in Cross Lake, Manitoba, our third contingent was based in Alberta, and we had an overall Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia deployment lead based in Winnipeg, Manitoba for the final stretch. They supported the efforts as part of incident management teams and through arduous on the ground firefighting.

The hard mahi of our people didn't go unnoticed by our friends in Canada. When local Cree First Nations people learnt about our mauri stone, they shared with us their tradition of smudging to cleanse a person, space, or object of negative energy.



Counties Manukau Group Manager Thomas Harre participating in a smudge ceremony in Canada.

Our people were also invited to a First Nation pow wow – a traditional welcome involving dancing and a cultural drum circle. Here, the whole audience stood to thank and shake the hands of our crews.

'It was a very humbling experience,' said Scott Marchant, Waitematā Group Manager, who was one of the deployment's Agency Representatives.

With these cultural offerings, thousands of comments of support on social media, and their general generosity, it's safe to say the people of Canada looked after our crews while they were so far from home.

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 ICRA's 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, phone 0508 ICRA REVIEW (427 273), or visit www.icra.co.nz to learn more.

WHEN YOU NEED A HAND WE ARE RIGHT HERE

Firefighters helping Firefighters

Support for you and your family when times are tough

Low Cost Partnership

Covers yourself, your partner and children up to the age of 19

Affordable holiday homes

Scholarships

Benefits to support you and your whānau

For more information and to join online visit www.firefighters.org.nz



E TŪRAKI ANA TE POKAPŪ WHAKANGUNGU O WOOLSTON I NGĀ TAUĀRAI WOOLSTON TRAINING CENTRE BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Not long before Woodville Volunteer Fire Brigade's Luane Studd was due to go on her recruit course, she fell pregnant with her daughter Emery.

While figuring out when to enrol in the course after Emery was born, Luane quickly realised that having a nursing newborn meant it was going to be hard to find the right time.

The course was looking unlikely for at least a year, but Luane was determined. So, she spoke to the trainers at Woolston Training Centre and they presented a solution: bring your whānau with you!

With six-month-old Emery and husband Charlie in tow, Luane successfully completed her seven-day recruit course. While Luane was practising hose drills, ladder skills, and breathing apparatus training, Emery and Charlie were supporting from the sidelines.

'A few years back, I don't think this would've been an option, but everyone was so helpful and understanding about my situation,' Luane says.

'All the barriers I expected there to be were removed.'

At the end of the course, Luane held the official rank of Firefighter and Emery was even presented with her own certificate – we may have a future firefighter on our hands!



Luane is second from the right in the front row and Charlie and Emery are second from the right in the back row.



TE MAHI RANGAPŪ HEI TIAKI I Ō NGĀ HAPORI PAKEKE PARTNERING TO PROTECT OLDER COMMUNITIES

Tragically, in the past five years, nine people aged 60 and over have died in house fires across the Wellington District where no working smoke alarms were present. Older adults remain one of our most at-risk groups, and the Wellington Community Risk Team has been working hard to change that – by teaming up with local organisations who already have trusted connections with the people we want to reach.



One exciting partnership is with Tū Ora Compass Health, which supports 58 GP clinics in Wellington. So far, eight clinics have introduced a simple prompt in their systems, reminding healthcare practitioners to offer our free Home Fire Safety Visits to patients who may need them. It's a small step with huge potential to connect more vulnerable people with life-saving advice and smoke alarms.

The Wellington Community Risk Team has also teamed up with Wellington Free Ambulance. Their paramedics and patient transfer crews are now adding smoke alarm checks into their home visits where possible. On top of that, they're now sharing fire safety tips through their internal podcast – reaching their own staff with key messages they can take home to their whānau.

And over in the Wairarapa, a pilot is underway with Driving Miss Daisy, a companion driving service for older adults. Drivers are starting conversations with clients about smoke alarms and Home Fire Safety Visits, supported by posters in vehicles with QR codes linking straight to the Home Fire Safety Visit referral form. If the pilot goes well, the initiative will be rolled out across other Districts.



Find out more about how you and your whānau can be fire safe at home.

As Phil Soal, Wellington Community Risk Manager, puts it: 'This is a no-brainer. By working with partners who already connect with the people we want to reach, we can protect more of our older communities and make a real difference.'

Don't let it simmer over summer



Speak Safe @ Fair Way's Kāpehu is an independent, confidential, informal and impartial coaching service that you can use as often as you need.

But how does Kāpehu work? We talk with one of our Kāpehu Coaches on what they do:

Is something simmering away in the background or growing into an issue?

Take practical steps to resolve conflict on your terms with Kāpehu.

0800 677 697

Q&A With a Kāpehu Coach Tanya Cosgrove Associate member of AMINZ

Who are the Kāpehu Coaches?

Kāpehu Coaches are different to what people may expect. Often people think we're counsellors, and although talking through difficulties compassionately is part of Kāpehu, we're more specialised in working with people to resolve and prevent conflict.

While we are all trained and accredited mediators and facilitators, we come from different backgrounds and beginnings in the dispute resolution space. Our team's experience consists of qualified lawyers, commercial contract negotiators, educators and medical professionals. So, we're a pretty varied group!

It isn't often a career you just start in; you're almost drawn to it from experience in some way from working with people

What can you discuss in a Kāpehu call?

You can talk to us about anything that's of concern to you about your work or volunteering at Fire and Emergency New Zealand. You come with a problem, we'll make sure you leave with a plan.

Where Kāpehu shines is helping you manage and solve issues that arise in interpersonal relationships. We help you soundboard the issue, look at steps you can take and identify the risks and benefits of each option.

Nothing is too big or small to discuss with us. Even small things can simmer away, building into conflict that then becomes a real problem later.

'I've had some good discussions with my team and my leader about the issues we spoke about, and they are aware of how I am feeling so I think great progress has been made... I'm feeling good about how things are.' — Kāpehu user

What does confidential, informal and impartial mean?

We take confidentiality very seriously! No notes or calls are recorded in our systems, a name (or a made-up name) and contact details are taken only to organise the call and then are deleted. The trust and effectiveness of Kāpehu hinges on it being confidential and independent.

When we say informal and impartial this refers to how we operate. Informal means that it's entirely self-directed, you're not setting any formal process in motion, and nothing happens without your explicit consent.

Impartiality is both internal and external. We're here to give you expert help, but not to tell you what to do. You make the decisions, we provide you the practical tools, information and a space to practice your solution whatever it looks like. Impartiality also means independence from the other services we provide through Speak Safe @ Fair Way — there's no overlap with complaints or investigations.

UFBA Benevolent Fund

The UFBA Benevolent Fund was established by the Association in 1990 to provide assistance in time of need to enrolled members of fire brigades which were members of the Association.

WHO DO WE HELP?

The UFBA Benevolent Fund is available to enrolled members including:

- Volunteer
- Career
- Airport
- Industrial
- Communication Centres
- FENZ personnel.

WHAT DO WE HELP WITH?

Examples of where the Benevolent Fund can help are:

- Funds for travel or accommodation for family members following a severe injury or illness
- Provision of grocery vouchers to ensure there is food on the table for families facing expected job losses
- Accommodation, food and clothing needed immediately after a fire, flood or earthquake.

HOW TO MAKE AN APPLICATION

Applications are made on the application form www.ufba.org.nz/advocacy-and-support/benevolent-fund

We cannot accept applications from intended recipients. All applications must be signed by the Chief Fire Officer or Officer-in-Charge.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

- The Fund does not accept applications from possible recipients.
- The Fund does not accept applications that are retrospective, nor retrospectively for an event that has already taken place.
- The process can happen in as little as one working day where there is an extreme need.
- In the application, be clear around what has happened and the challenges that are being faced e.g., expenses associated with serious illness. Does the brigade member have the financial resources to cope with what has happened? Is there any other assistance available e.g., from government departments, insurance policies, savings etc. The level of support given will vary depending on the circumstances.
- The Secretary may ask for more details before circulating the application to the Benevolent Fund Trustees for consideration.
- The Trustees forward their recommendations to the Chairman of the Benevolent Fund who makes the final decision.
- The UFBA will let the OIC/CFO know the outcome of their application.
- Approved payments are made directly to the family. The Benevolent Fund does not give to fundraising websites such as Givealittle.

Further information can be found on our website www.ufba.org.nz/advocacy-and-support/benevolent-fund or contact Jane Davie by phone 0274 428 655 or email benevolentfund@ufba.org.nz

WHO MANAGES THE FUND?

Details of all applications are kept strictly confidential to respect individuals' privacy. Each application is assessed by the Benevolent Fund's Board of Trustees:

- Chairman Alan Burgess MNZM
— UFBA Past President, LHM Ashburton VFB
- Trustee Graeme Booth MNZM
— UFBA Past President, LHM Laingholm VFB
- Trustee Bryan Styles QSM
— UFBA Past President, LHM Carterton VFB
- Trustee Amber Hollis
— UFBA Past President, Rural Crew Leader Dunstan VFB
- Trustee Ross Ditmer QSM
— UFBA Past President, LHM Rangiora VFB
- Ex-Officio Member George Verry LHM UFBA
- CEO of the UFBA (Secretary)
- President of the UFBA
- Vice President of the UFBA



FIND OUT MORE ON OUR WEBSITE

**COOKING ON AN
UNSTABLE SURFACE IS
A WILDFIRE RISK**

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STOP WILDFIRE**

CHECKITSAIRIGHT.NZ

