



# IGNITE

**TE HIRINGA O TE TANGATA**

ISSUE 26 / SUMMER 2022 / RAUMATI 2022

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Connecting at the  
UFBA Conference

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Fighting fires  
on ice

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New recruits make  
their mark





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

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

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

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

**Contributions to Ignite**

Contributions to be considered for publication are welcome and may be submitted to: [communications@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:communications@fireandemergency.nz).

Photos need to be at least 1MB.

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

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## KIA ORA KOUTOU

Welcome to the final issue of Ignite for 2022.

Looking back on the year, I'm thrilled to see us build upon the strong foundations we've put in place since Fire and Emergency was established and deliver on our priority areas: intelligence-driven decision making, training and development, health, safety, wellbeing and people support, Kaupapa Māori and stronger alignment.

The stand up of the Kaupapa Māori and Cultural Communities branch has been one of the real highlights of the year for me and is a true reflection of the organisation's commitment to working with Māori as tangata whenua. Get to know our new Deputy Chief Executive Piki Thomas on page 6.

Climate change is already altering the nature of our mahi and the launch of our Climate Response Strategy, covered on page 8, helps us meet our responsibility to look after our environment and demonstrates our commitment to the national response on climate change under the Carbon Neutral Government Programme.

Reading Ignite, I am always reminded about the incredible mahi our people do and how proud that makes me feel to lead this organisation, and it's no different this time. In this edition, you can read about our people's efforts in the Marlborough Tasman communities during the devastating floods earlier this year. We also highlight our Community Readiness and

Recovery team's mahi delivering Home Fire Safety Visits in households in Northland and on the Chatham Islands.

Our risk reduction and community readiness efforts become more important than ever during the festive summer season, and it's encouraging to see the innovative, data and intelligence-driven initiatives coming together in this space. On page 8, read about our campaign aiming to get the New Zealand public and at-risk communities to prepare for this wildfire season.

It's been a busy year. I am proud of what we have achieved and the way all of you have contributed to the vital mahi of Fire and Emergency. As we prepare for 2023, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge you, our extraordinary team of dedicated and passionate people serving our communities every day across the motu.

I hope everyone gets the opportunity to unwind, recharge and spend well-deserved time with friends and whānau at some point over the summer. I know this will be a busy period for many of our people though, so if you're one of those working to keep us all safe, thank you.

Meri Kirihimete

**Kerry Gregory,**  
**Tumu Whakarae Chief Executive**

## I'VE NEVER LET MY DISABILITIES DEFINE MY ABILITIES

James Marks is a volunteer firefighter with the Waikuku Beach Volunteer Fire Brigade. He is also determined, talented and neurodiverse, having been diagnosed with High-Functioning Autism and mild Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. He's a man on a mission and there's no stopping him.

As a young boy, James struggled to keep up in class until his diagnosis at eight years old, and then everything changed.

'When I understood what was going on, it all clicked. I understood why I had trouble retaining things, so I developed strategies on how to remember information. I still use those same strategies today,' said James.

Firefighting has always sparked James' interest. His very first memory is from pre-school when he sat in the cab of a visiting fire truck. His uncle was a volunteer so from age five, James would shadow him at weekly training, cleaning the truck and soaking it all in. It was when he became old enough to join that the doubts started creeping in.

'I thought to myself, 'I have autism – I can't do this' and my first experience wasn't that great. But then I talked to the Fire Chief at Waikuku. I told him I had autism and he said that didn't worry him'.

Eight years later, James is working on his Rural Crew Leader qualifications and mapping out a career progression plan to achieve his ultimate goal of attaining the rank of Chief Fire Officer. He is helping create a Diversity and Inclusion work group with the Canterbury District and has been appointed to Kia Toipoto Advisory Group.



**'I've always wanted to have an active role helping in the community. I hope if others out there who are neurodiverse see that I can do it, they'll believe they can do it too. The neurodiverse community is full of talent that's been undervalued for quite a while. I really hope more people like me join our organisation'.**

'Fire and Emergency is working hard to be a place where you are accepted and I'm proud to be part of the organisation, helping that to happen. I thought I couldn't do this, but I persevered and worked through my goals, with the amazing support of my girlfriend, family, friends and the Brigade. Eight years down the track, I'm on my way to where I want to be'.

Neurodiversity is still a relatively new term, but not one we should be scared of. It's really about the way people's brains work, and everyone's brain works differently, which is great as it means we all bring different skills and strengths to the table. Someone in your own whānau or crew may be neurodiverse, or you may be neurodiverse yourself.

These links will help you build a better understanding about what it all means.

[www.altogetherautism.org.nz](https://www.altogetherautism.org.nz)

[www.chadd.org](https://www.chadd.org)

[www.adhd.org.nz](https://www.adhd.org.nz)

[www.autismnz.org.nz](https://www.autismnz.org.nz)

**James' advice for those with neurodiversity looking to volunteer**

- **Persevere and back yourself**
- **Find ways of learning that work for you**
- **Email your local brigade, have a conversation and watch them train**
- **Ask questions**
- **Seek the support of family and friends**
- **If you're keen – just do it!**







## COMING TOGETHER FOR CHATHAM ISLANDS COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY WEEK

In the first week of September, Wellington District's Community Risk Management team worked alongside the Chatham Islands Volunteer Fire Brigade and the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to shine a spotlight on fire safety in the communities living on the Chatham Islands, as part of their local Community Fire Safety Week.

**'This mahi is so important for such a remote and resource-limited place like Chatham Islands where risk reduction and community readiness play a key role in helping to keep people and communities safe,' said Phil Soal, Wellington Community Risk Manager.**

The week kickstarted with a Community Fire Safety Evening followed by the completion of free Home Fire Safety Visits for around 55 percent of households on Chatham Island and three Firewise school/kōhanga visits. Families were also encouraged to create their own 3-step Escape Plans and local residents were supported to be fire safe in their homes and surrounding properties.

'Many thanks to the Chatham Islands Volunteer Fire Brigade and the team, so appreciate all you guys did to keep our homes safe' – Chatham Islands resident.



From left to right: Kaingaroa School Principal Philip Graydon, Wellington SACRR Mirren Allen, Chatham Islands Volunteer Fire Brigade CFO Steve Joyce, Poutakawaenga Māori Paki Johnston at Kaingaroa School.

## SPRING HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS A HIT

When the clocks went forward at the start of daylight saving in September, Te Hiku brigades took time out from their daylight saving weekend to visit hundreds of at-risk homes to check smoke alarms and share the Saving Daylight Saving Lives campaign message.

In Northland, twenty brigades from Tinopai to Houhora – and plenty of places in between – took part in the three-hour exercise, which saw hundreds of homes visited with quality fire safety advice and education, and more than 500 smoke alarms being installed where needed.

The high uptake of the visits was the result of a successful community campaign run by the Northland District Community Risk Management team, which used social media, local newspapers and a robust relationship with Neighbourhood Support to encourage whānau to register for a Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV).

In Waitematā District, the Ahuroa Volunteer Fire Brigade also had great success with home fire safety visits the same weekend, reporting excellent engagement with the rural community and additional sign-ups for visits well after the event.

Coinciding with the Saving Daylight Saving Lives campaign (which was a Northland CRM team-designed initiative), the National Community Readiness and Recovery Directorate is currently looking at how Community Readiness and Recovery teams can improve the way they deliver, target and measure home fire safety visits.

Northland CRR Senior Advisor Michael Champtaloup says his team found the campaign a great way to pilot new approaches to how they complete HFSVs and to collect information on common fire risks, which will help them better protect their communities.

**'On behalf of the residents of Baylys Beach, thank you. We really needed that.'**

Baylys beach resident



Kaitiaki Volunteer Fire Brigade with volunteers, friends and whānau prepping for their home fire safety visits



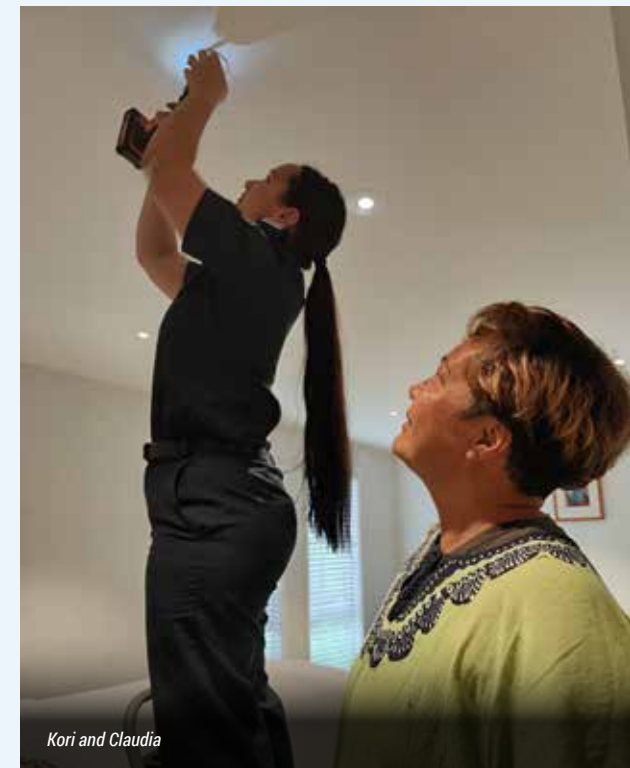
Karikari Volunteer Fire Brigade firefighter Phil Rako with volunteers from Neighbourhood Support.



The Sillich family in Northland

**'Awesome day. Definitely rewarding to know you're helping whānau in need.'**

Volunteer Firefighter



Kori and Claudia



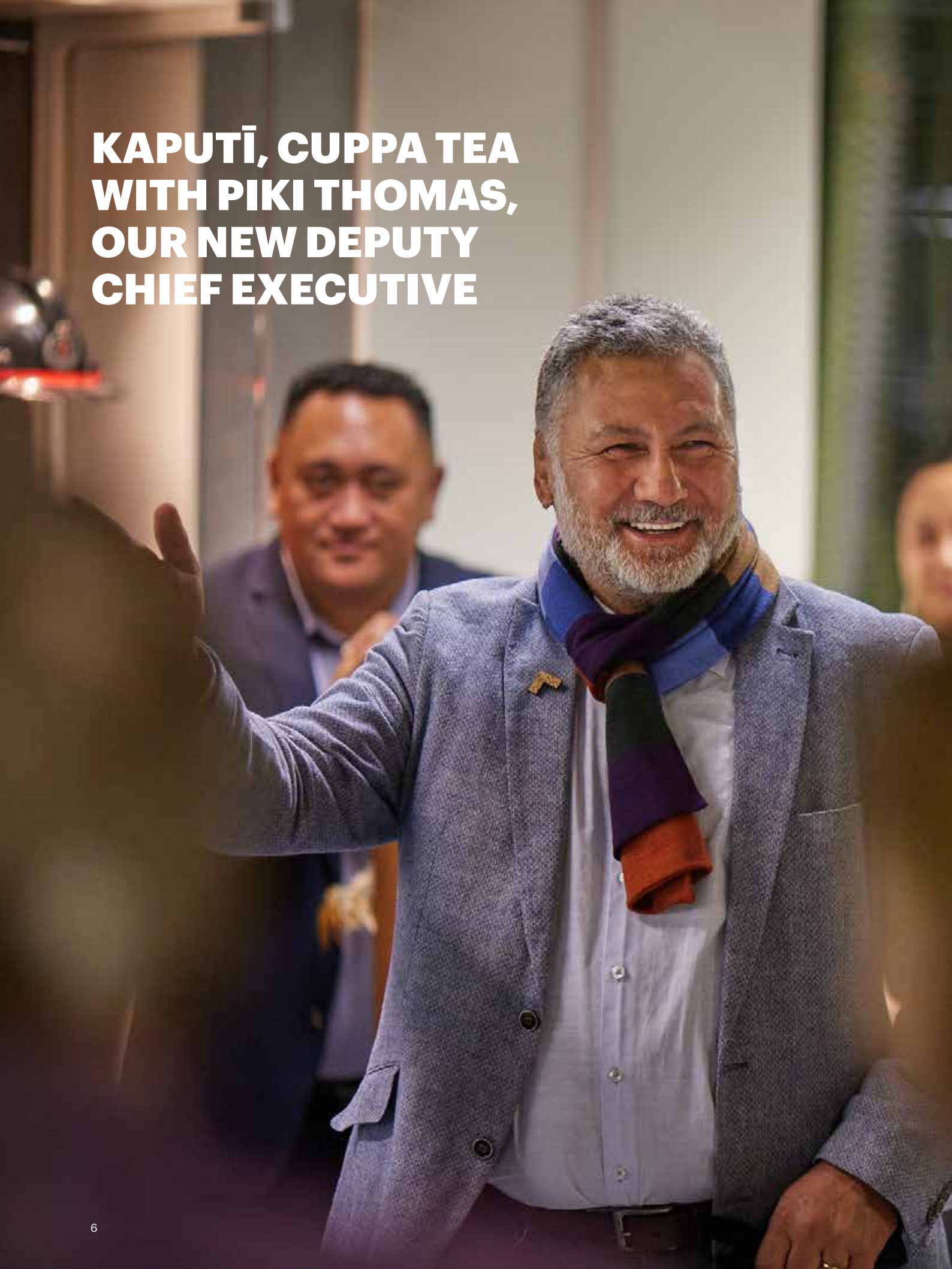
A couple of satisfied HFSV customers in Northland.

**'At the end of the day I was buzzing! It's such a feel-good thing to do.'**

Volunteer Firefighter



# KAPUTĪ, CUPPA TEA WITH PIKI THOMAS, OUR NEW DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE



He uri tēnei nō Te Arawa.  
Nō reira ko Matawhaura me Ngongotahā ngā maunga  
Ko Te Rotoiti me Rotorua ngā moana  
Ko Ōkere me Te Utuhina ngā awa.  
Ko Ngāti Pikiao me Ngāti Whakaue ngā Iwi.  
Tihei mauriora!

**‘I’m proud to be in the organisation at this time, to witness the collective energy that kaupapa Māori now has’.**

Piki Thomas has seen our organisation come a long way since he was a recruit firefighter in Tāmaki Makaurau, let’s just say a wee while ago! After becoming our first Pou Takawaenga Māori | Māori Liaison Officer in 1995 and then spending the last 19 years as the National Manager Kaupapa Māori, Piki has been appointed as our first Deputy Chief Executive for the Kaupapa Māori and Cultural Communities branch. The branch was created shortly after Kerry Gregory announced Kaupapa Māori as one of the top focus areas for the organisation.

**‘For a long time kaupapa Māori initiatives have been driven by a small but highly effective team, but to build the future we want, this can no longer be the way’.**

Piki sees the formation of the Kaupapa Māori and Cultural Communities branch as a true reflection and alignment of the organisation’s commitment to working with Māori as tangata whenua. ‘At the end of the day, we need safer and more resilient Māori communities and by default other cultural communities imperiled by unwanted fires. The mahi that comes from this branch will ensure that we’re doing our best to create better outcomes not just for Māori but for everyone,’ says Piki.

We caught up with Piki for a kaputī to find out more about our new DCE.

**What made you want to be a firefighter?**

I was feeling pretty hōhā (fed up) and uninspired with my job at the time and by chance I heard sirens outside my office window. I looked out and saw a fire appliance and thought ‘That looks like an interesting job’. I later saw an ad for firefighters in the classified section of the Herald, so I applied. So, no real child desire to one day become a firefighter or anything like that. In fact, I didn’t know any firefighters!

## QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS:

**Watch it at home or go to the venue?** (Sport, movies, etc)  
Watch at home.

**Cats or dogs?** Cats.

**Morning person or evening person?** Morning.

**Movie or book?** Movie.

**Coffee or tea?** Tea.

**City or country/rural?**  
A bit of both to be honest

**Summer or winter?**  
Definitely summer.

**Do you have a particular experience that stands out for you during your career so far?**

Probably the day we signed the commitment to work with Māori as tangata whenua back in 2018. It was a watershed moment for our organisation. We didn’t have to do it, but it was tika – the right thing to do. It was an important day for me, and for Māori in our community.

**What do you think has helped you get to where you are now?**

Maintaining strong relationships and making every encounter a positive experience has really set the foundation to bring people along the journey with me or to at least have people interested in kaupapa Māori. Once our people see the value and connection between what we do and kaupapa Māori, then things make sense.

**What do you do to relax/unwind?**

Anything around home really. Spending time with whānau and getting out on the boat, of course.

**What will you be focusing on during your time as DCE Kaupapa Māori and Cultural Communities?**

There’s plenty to do. I want to see a continuation of the momentum of kaupapa Māori within the organisation and build on the great work that has been done to date. I’m also keen to see how we can identify and better serve and connect with the other diverse communities that make up Aotearoa.

**What can we do to support this kaupapa?**

It’s so important to keep taking those steps, no matter how small, to improve your knowledge of a culture different from your own. By improving your understanding, you will be able to better serve and connect with everyone in your community. The next time you’re on the Portal, search ‘Kaupapa Māori’ to access the directory of information and resources to help you improve your knowledge of Māori culture.



# FIRE AND EMERGENCY'S CLIMATE RESPONSE EARNS FINALIST NOD

Fire and Emergency's climate response has been recognised after the organisation was named as a finalist at the Toitū Brighter Future Awards.

Fire and Emergency was one of five finalists for Climate Action (biggest reduction) in the Large Organisation category. Since 2018/19, Fire and Emergency has reduced its emissions by 20.7 percent, including another drop in emissions in the last financial year.

Toitū Envirocare runs the awards and is a subsidiary of Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, a Government-owned Crown Research Institute. Its aim is to help companies and Government agencies reduce their environmental footprint.

Fire and Emergency has been able to reduce its carbon emissions in each of the last three years, but the work is far from over and the organisation recently launched its first Climate Response Strategy (2022–2030).

The Strategy is Fire and Emergency's road map: it describes the organisation's focus areas to respond to climate change.

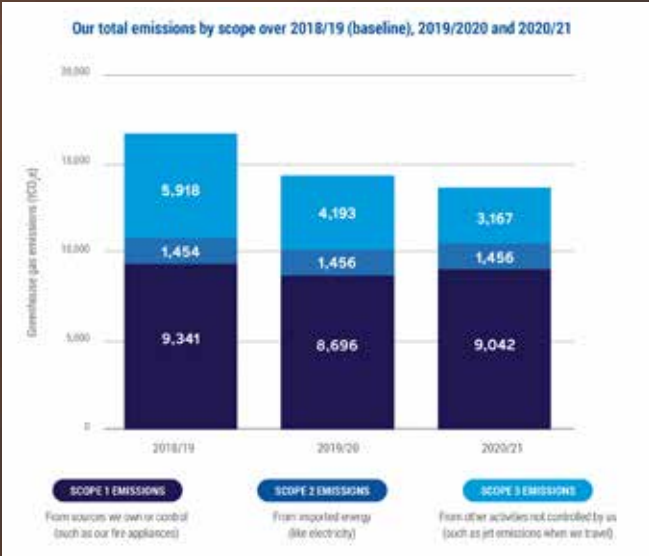
Deputy Chief Executive Organisational Capability and Strategy Development Cathryn Moriarty said the Strategy is an important piece of mahi that supports Fire and Emergency's strategic intent, and commitment to the national response under the Government's Carbon Neutral Government Programme.

'We have a responsibility to protect the environment. It's a key part of our purpose and extends to taking action on climate change. To respond well, we must reduce emissions to mitigate our own contribution to climate change and anticipate and adapt to the changes that are coming'.

Data shows the environment in New Zealand is changing, and the impacts of climate change are expected to affect Fire and Emergency's operations. Wildfires are occurring earlier during the warmer months, and there are an increasing number of extreme weather events causing flooding and storm damage. These events are expected to become more common and more damaging with rising temperatures.

While reducing the organisation's emissions is important, Fire and Emergency must transition in a balanced way that does not compromise our ability to respond to the needs of our communities and does not conflict with our financial and health and safety requirements.

If you would like to know more or be involved in the mahi supporting the Strategy, you can contact the Sustainability team: [sustainability@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:sustainability@fireandemergency.nz)



The Strategy is available on both our external website and the Portal.

# ENDANGERED SNAILS RESCUED DURING FLOODS

Rescuing endangered snails during the Nelson/Marlborough floods in August was one of the more unusual roles carried out by our Southern USAR team.

Timaru-based Senior Firefighter and USAR member, Sam Turpin, says while the team was doing Rapid Disaster Assessments (RDAs) in the region, a call came from the Emergency Operations Centre requesting 'an unusual rescue' in Nelson on behalf of some scientists.

'We had been there for about five days walking the streets in the red zone area when we got the call. The snails were in a fridge in a vacant house that was

being renovated. The homeowner, who was a scientist, was worried the power would be cut off as the snails needed to be kept cold.

**'The house was in the path of a landslip and was red-stickered. We went in and did a full assessment of the house and decided it was safe, so we escorted the homeowner in to retrieve the snails and some blood specimens'.**

Sam said the scientist was 'ecstatic' the snails were still alive.

'It was a great feeling to be able to help. These people have spent a lot of their lifetime work researching and protecting these endangered snails'.



Powelliphanta snail



Sam Turpin with blood specimens and snails

The snails were Powelliphanta snails, which are among the largest in the world and among our most threatened invertebrates. The largest species is Powelliphanta superba prouseorum, found in Kahurangi National Park, measuring about 9 cm across and weighing in at 90 g.

# FIREFIGHTERS WELFARE SOCIETY

Did you know? For a small fortnightly contribution amount, you can belong to an independent organisation that will look after you and your family if the need arises.

In the 1980s, whilst talking around the mess table, a group of firefighters wanted to do something to help their colleagues and their families when times were tough. Each week money was put into a biscuit tin to help those in need. This is how the New Zealand Firefighters Welfare Society was born. To this day the underlying ethos is 'Firefighters helping firefighters and their families'.

The Society now has over 3,000 members. The membership base is comprised of volunteer and career firefighters, including anyone who has an emergency service association.

The organisation provides many benefits that will support you and your family – a full list is available on the website [firefighters.org.nz](http://firefighters.org.nz).

Members can also join the Mutual Health Fund as an extra cost – Healthcare 99. This affordable healthcare fund has two options of support available.

In future issues of Ignite, the Society will outline some of the many benefits that are available, along with how you can be involved to look after your colleagues, so watch this space.

Did you know?

**WE ARE FIRE EMERGENCY**

**Firefighters**

**helping firefighters & their families**

Awhi atu awhi mai o ratou whānau

Another great reason to belong

New Zealand Firefighters Welfare Society

In the meantime, want to join or know more?

Visit the website [www.firefighters.org.nz](http://www.firefighters.org.nz) or contact the office: **0800 653 473**





## CONNECTING AT THE UFBA CONFERENCE 2022

Connection was the name of the game as more than 500 volunteers descended on Wellington's Michael Fowler Centre in October to take part in the 144th United Fire Brigades' Association AGM and Conference.

This event is a fantastic opportunity for brigade members from all over the motu to gather, learn from inspirational speakers, catch up, meet new people and hear the latest from Fire and Emergency. This year was particularly special as it was the UFBA's first chance to gather with representatives in person after three years of disruption.

From the Far North to the deep South, delegates came from all over the motu. There was even a delegate from the Cook Islands, demonstrating the expanded reach the UFBA has beyond New Zealand.

Speakers covered a variety of subjects, such as technological advancements in emergency services, psychological wellbeing, and leadership. Standout keynote speakers were Lance Burdett, talking about communicating in high-stress situations, Dr Tom Mulholland, discussing personal wellbeing and Melissa Clark-Reynolds, a last-minute change to the programme, discussing leadership.

Fire and Emergency also contributed to the event, with Board Chair Rebecca Keoghan giving an opening address alongside the Hon Peter Dunne. Rebecca thanked volunteers and their

whānau for their ongoing commitment to their communities and discussed the importance of volunteerism in New Zealand's society.

Rather than a formal address from the CE, Kerry Gregory sat down with MC Mike McRoberts for an interview, giving an overview of his career leading up to becoming Chief Executive, and discussing his priorities and focus for the organisation. He was joined later by the rest of the Executive Leadership Team for a panel session to discuss the different branches of Fire and Emergency and provide an opportunity for some audience questions and answers.

To round off Fire and Emergency's contribution for the day, the team gave a series of presentations on three different topics – the changing nature of response, training, and our



volunteer lifecycle research. This was a tremendous opportunity to outline what's happening in these areas and encourage delegates to understand more.

In addition to the conference speakers, an exhibition space ran throughout the event, featuring stalls from a wide range of organisations in the fire industry. Fire and Emergency had a sizeable presence, with representatives from Whiria te Tāngata, Hiwa-i-te-Rangi, Risk Reduction, Community Readiness and Recovery, Volunteerism, Property and more. It was a joint effort between teams, with everyone living our value of whanaungatanga and putting in hard mahi to create a welcoming and informative space for the delegates. The teams provided information to volunteers on recent projects and initiatives that will help their brigades and their communities. There were giveaways and prizes and the Fire and Emergency stalls were busy all weekend long.

In all, the conference was a great weekend, with lots of conversation, connection and camaraderie. For Fire and Emergency, it was fantastic to engage with UFBA members again and make the most of the chance to connect with volunteers. If you have any questions about the conference, please get in touch at [engagement@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:engagement@fireandemergency.nz).







## HOKITIKA VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE IMPROVING ITS KNOWLEDGE OF MĀORI CULTURE

Located in the heart of the West Coast of Te Wai Pounamu (South Island) is the Hokitika Volunteer Fire Brigade, made up of 29 volunteer firefighters who are passionate about serving and supporting their community.

On Tuesday 18 October, each member of the Brigade was congratulated in person by Chief Executive Kerry Gregory and Deputy Chief Executive Kaupapa Māori and Cultural Communities Piki Thomas for being one of the first brigades in the country where everyone earned their wearable Tohu after completing the cultural competency resource, He Timatanga Kōrero.

‘The significance of your collective achievement is not lost on anyone,’ said Piki Thomas.

It all started a few months back when firefighter and Senior Advisor Community Readiness and Recovery, Zak Neale, walked onto the station wearing his Tohu proudly. After a few questions about how he attained the pin, Zak reached out to Paki Johnson, Pou Takawaenga Māori (Māori Liaison Officer) for Te Wai Pounamu, to get support in running the Brigade through He Timatanga Kōrero. Paki saw how beneficial this extra training night would be, so he travelled to Hokitika to support Zak with the kaupapa.

**‘I was expecting maybe half the Brigade at most to come because it was another night of training on top of our usual night, so I was blown away when I saw them all there. It’s a huge credit to them,’ commented Zak Neale.**



During the presentation of Te Tohu, both Kerry and Piki took time to mihi to the Brigade.

Piki let the firefighters know that the work of his team comes to life when brigades and individuals like them pick it up and run with it.

Kerry spoke about the importance of their role as kaitiaki, guardians of our environment and how progressing their

understanding of Māori culture will improve their ability to protect what matters to us most.

Zak said the Brigade is motivated to continue learning about different cultures in order to better understand the community they serve.

Te Tohu is a wearable pin awarded to anyone at Fire and Emergency who passes an online knowledge check after reading He Timatanga Kōrero. Te Tohu is made of recycled rimu sourced from the West Coast, making it extra special for the Brigade, as the material was coming back home.

The achievement of the Hokitika Volunteer Fire Brigade was highlighted at the most recent UFBA Conference in Pōneke, to encourage other brigades to do the same. A total of 57 brigades signed up for He Timatanga Kōrero to be sent to them.

He Timatanga Kōrero and Te Tohu launched in July 2021 as part of the Hiwa-i-te-rangi programme. So far, over 1,800 of our people have read the resource and achieved their Tohu. Simply search ‘He Timatanga Kōrero’ on the Portal to download a copy or email [hiwa-i-te-rangi@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:hiwa-i-te-rangi@fireandemergency.nz) for physical copies to be sent to your Brigade.

## COUNTDOWN IS ON FOR REMOVAL OF ALL CLASS B PFAS FOAM

The Fluorine Free Foam Transition Project has nearly finished distributing new Class B fluorine-free foam, collecting old Class B PFAS foam, and undertaking an audit of stocks of foam-making equipment (quantities and condition) and AFFF fire extinguishers. Class B PFAS foam is being collected for central storage until its eventual disposal by a third-party provider.

The Firefighting Chemicals Group Standard administered by the Environmental Protection Authority mandates the withdrawal of all Class B PFAS firefighting foams in New Zealand by the end of December, so when you receive your new foam, make sure you have any Class B PFAS foam ready to be collected. Please note that under our Flammable Liquids Strategy, a targeted approach to distribution has been agreed at a regional level and not all foam will be replaced.

If there are any empty Class B pails/drums on your site, these will be collected at the same time that fluorine-free foam is delivered to your site and your current PFAS Class B foam is removed.

**If your foam has not yet been swapped out, please contact the project team at [FluorineFreeFoam@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:FluorineFreeFoam@fireandemergency.nz) and one of the team will be able to give you more information on what is happening in your Region or District.**



## FOAM TRAINING ON THE CHATHAMS

Meanwhile, the Project’s Senior Trainer Paul Doughty was recently in the Chatham Islands giving Brigade members face-to-face training on the new foam and foam-making equipment.

Paul says he ran the Brigade through the rollout training presentation, and provided technical information, foam basics, and the newly developed material for incidents involving flammable liquid fires and spills.

‘The training went really well, and the Brigade members asked lots of questions. We used the new training foam concentrate to demonstrate practical application of all the techniques using the new equipment (in-line inductor and AWG nozzle). The new training foam concentrate also allowed training with medium-expansion foam, something that we couldn’t achieve with the old foam concentrates.

**‘CFO Steve Joyce and team on the Chathams now feel confident in their abilities to deal with these incidents, and having the ability to actually train with foam is a real winner’.**



Senior Trainer Paul Doughty in the Chatham Islands training with new foam





## AUSTRALIAN AWARD HONOURS FOR OUR PERSONNEL

During the devastating Australian bushfires of the 2019/20 summer, Fire and Emergency, our partner agencies and the New Zealand Defence Force deployed personnel to help battle fires across three states. To honour that assistance, the Australian Government has awarded the National Emergency Medal with Bushfires 19/20 clasp to those who responded.

The medal is awarded for sustained and significant service during national emergencies in Australia. This is the first time the medal has been awarded to people in New Zealand emergency services.

**‘This is a huge honour for our people’ said Kerry Gregory, Chief Executive.**

**‘Personnel from New Zealand showed outstanding commitment and courage in gruelling conditions and it’s a great example of living our organisation’s values’.**

As the coordinating authority for New Zealand, Fire and Emergency deployed 208 people, including firefighters

from partner agencies such as the Department of Conservation and 11 forestry companies.

The National Emergency Medals have been presented at a number of ceremonies over the last two months by the Australian High Commissioner, Her Excellency Ms Harinder Sidhu, representing the Australian Government.



## TACKLING COOKING UNDER THE INFLUENCE IN TIME FOR THE SILLY SEASON

Fire and Emergency’s new disruptive campaign, ‘You’re Cooked’, aims to prevent house fires by encouraging people cooking while impaired by either drugs or alcohol to ‘stay off the stove’.

Unattended cooking is the number one cause of house fires, and the number one cause of injury from fires that we attend. Our segmentation data tells us that the ‘Disengaged’ audience – representing 20 percent of the population – are much more likely to leave their cooking unattended or cook under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

This audience is hard to reach with traditional messages and channels. They don’t like being told what to do, don’t recognise fire safety as an issue and any perceived lack of authenticity is an immediate turn off.

We know through research they’re going to cook whether impaired or not, so we will encourage them to do so safely by helping them to ‘Stay off the stove’.

The campaign kicked off with two elements: a suite of recipes and content from an on-street test kitchen. We designed recipes catered specifically for drunk chefs. Simple, delicious and requiring absolutely no stovetop frying (or oven use). Our recipes are the backbone of our campaign – living online and in a physical cookbook. We also created our own mobile test kitchen and took it for a night out in Auckland where we engaged real punters and showed them they can forget about the stove for their late-night feed, gathering plenty of video content we can use to amplify our campaign – and our message – over time.

The concept is evidence-based, has been tested with the target audience and our people, and is designed to become a long-term platform to deliver our unattended cooking messages.

Check out [fireandemergency.nz/yourecooked](https://www.fireandemergency.nz/yourecooked)







## READY FOR WILDFIRE SEASON

The risk and impact of wildfires in Aotearoa are increasing. Climate change, as well as how and where we are living, are some of the factors driving this increase.

The increase in the frequency and severity of large wildfires in New Zealand over the last three to four years has resulted in a significant impact to our land and tragic losses (think Port Hills, Lake Ōhau and Waiharara, among others). In addition, many of these wildfires are happening in the shoulder months rather than the typical higher-risk summer period.

Increasing our communities' preparedness and preventing wildfires continues to be the focus of our messaging in spring, throughout summer, and into early autumn. This season's wildfire campaign aims to get people living on or near open land to prepare for the current, and future, wildfire season. It will also continue to guide the public to check their local fire danger before lighting any kind of fire or doing anything that can generate heat or sparks, using our Can I Light a Fire? tool.

We are continuing to use our much-loved feathered ambassadors to highlight fire danger, and New Zealand rugby player, Samuel Whitelock, to help educate rural and semi-rural communities about simple ways they can keep themselves and their property safe. We're also bringing

fire danger front of mind with our ongoing partnership with MetService and NIWA, delivering timely and localised fire danger level information across many different digital channels, all driving to our [checkitsalright.nz](https://checkitsalright.nz) hub with plenty of practical and useful tips to stay fire safe.



## WILDFIRE TRAINING WITH DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION FIREFIGHTERS

A recent two-day wildfire training workshop in Murihiku Southland, working alongside our Te Papa Atawhai Department of Conservation partners, was a first of its kind.

Manager, Region Training, Projects, Dale Wilhelm said the aim of the workshop was to increase firefighter safety and build connections among firefighters from Te Papa Atawhai and Fire and Emergency.

'The workshop was split into a day of theory and a day of practical exercises and covered both core skills (like using high pressure, low-volume pumps and hand tools) and some new techniques and equipment.

**'The training used a mentorship model, where skilled people from DOC and Fire and Emergency facilitated the training, provided advice, and gave feedback so firefighters could improve their technique in a controlled environment'.**

Dale says the training took place at Awarua-Waituna wetlands, where there was a large fire in April this year.

'On the second day before we started the exercises, we first acknowledged Papatūānuku (the land) and then had a whakamoemiti – a thanksgiving and recognition of the damage suffered during the fire. The ceremony, led by mana whenua, also acknowledged the work of many to put the fire out. This was very special and made it a recovery ground instead of an incident ground.

'Then it was into the field for a practice scenario where water was pumped from a water source into a dam and then on to the staged fire, replicating the type of situation firefighters might encounter if a fire does break out on private conservation land'.

Dale said the workshop had a great social and team-building element.

'Our people got to know their fellow DOC firefighters and some local Fire and Emergency firefighters better, which will result in working better together when responding to a real fire'.

National Fire Advisor Scott Bowie said the workshops are a great chance for

firefighters to build relationships with each other.

**'The fire ground can be dangerous and changes quickly, and it's important firefighters know and trust who they're working with, so they can respond effectively and stay safe'.**

Just after the Southland workshop, another one was run in Thames. The workshop will be rolled out nationwide over the next year.







## WELCOME TO MUSEUM OF FIRES PAST

On 9 October we opened the doors to Museum of Fires Past, an exhibition of burnt items inspired by real house fires and real people's stories.

The exhibit highlights the destructive power of a house fire and provides a potent reminder that while smoke alarms might not save your belongings, they could save your life or the lives of your whānau. Museum of Fires Past features a burnt teddy bear, a melted prized gaming controller and a pair of scorched sneakers.

The range of objects and scenarios show how the heat and smoke can affect different belongings and items, reinforcing just how important it is to have working smoke alarms in the right places.

The exhibits were installed in three consecutive bus shelters along the busy Oriental Parade in Wellington, for maximum exposure.

The visually confronting campaign was aimed at New Zealanders aged 18–54, with a specific focus on homeowners and landlords – targeted via digital banners using TradeMe data – and featured on outdoor posters and in social channels, supported by radio advertising.



Images: Motion Sickness



## UP, DOWN OR SIDeways THE TE KEI LINES RESCUE TEAM IS READY TO RESCUE

Members of Te Kei's specialist Level 3 Lines Rescue Team completed their annual revalidation with a series of exercises in Dunedin during October.

The team is drawn from all five career stations in the city and is deployed across Otago and Southland to support brigades with more complex incidents than their firefighters are equipped or trained to deal with. That includes the use of a basket to rescue people from building sites, lower them from cranes or raise them from the holds of ships, as well as extracting them from vehicles that have crashed down steep banks, says Senior Station Officer Simon Smith from Dunedin Station.

**'Basically, we can get people down, up or across if they are injured or incapacitated in some way and can't get out of a situation themselves'.**

Firefighters trained to Level 2 were able to provide the first response in many situations, including giving first aid and stabilising patients with injuries.



They were not trained to use the basket stretchers or to carry out the more complex extractions, which needed the higher skills of the Level 3 team.

Members of the Dunedin team also train with Police negotiators so they can assist with getting the negotiators to hard-to-access places or help them bring someone in distress safely back to ground level.

The rope rescue team is also called on occasionally to retrieve dogs that have fallen down cliffs.

The recent revalidation exercise in one of Dunedin's reserves was the culmination of 40–60 hours of regular training and exercising.





## FIGHTING FIRES ON ICE

Antarctica hosts the coldest, driest, windiest, and harshest environment in the world. Any fire here is potentially catastrophic.

There is no doubt that if a fire were to start, or an incident were to occur, they would need trained personnel to get in and do the job.

Since 2015, Fire and Emergency Trainer Rob Millener has been involved with the annual Antarctica New Zealand training, making sure Scott Base's seasonal staff are trained and well-equipped to deal with fighting fires.

Before the summer and winter seasons start, a group of Fire and Emergency trainers from around the country train the Antarctica New Zealand workers who support the scientists and activities at Scott Base.

**'This summer season we trained 30 staff, including the chefs, cleaners, carpenters, mechanics, engineers and electricians,' says Rob.**

The training began in Methven, followed up with three days of intensive training at the Woolston Training Centre in Christchurch. Then they all headed to Antarctica for two weeks to test their newfound firefighting skills.

The seasonal staff are trained to provide a specific firefighting response in Scott Base – how to extinguish fires,

provide basic medical response, stretcher recovery, and confined space entry training.

**'We train for situations the Antarctica New Zealand staff could find themselves in,' Rob says.**

These Antarctica NZ staff make up the summer's three Scott Base fire crews, led by a Fire Crew Chief, who operate on a roster rotation every three weeks.

This summer season, one of the three fire chiefs appointed is Steph 'Steve' Gates. Steph has fond memories of her training, but it was at times mentally and physically challenging.

'It definitely made me appreciate firefighters and what they do, they're so impressive,' she says.

When Steph finished her Christchurch training, she was able to put her newly developed skills to the test in Antarctica, taking part in two more weeks of firefighting drills with Fire and Emergency trainers. For Steph, spending this time with the firefighters in the Antarctic conditions was crucial.

'They do a great job in Christchurch of setting up the training centre to feel like you're in Antarctica,' she says.

Rob Millener works with Region Training Coordinator, Ian Wakeley, to arrange the training for Antarctica New Zealand in September each year.

**'There are opportunities for Region trainers to rotate through the programme, as we need a mix of experienced and new trainers,' Rob says.**

Expressions of interest should be sent by email to either **Rob.Millener@fireandemergency.nz** or **Ian.Wakeley@fireandemergency.nz**.

'Antarctica is like a whole other world. It's nothing like you will see anywhere else,' says Rob.



## LARGE GROUP OF GRADUATES MAKE THEIR MARK

The largest group of recruits since the mid-1990s, and one of our most diverse, graduated from the National Training Centre (NTC) in September, with 29 new graduates now serving their communities around the motu.

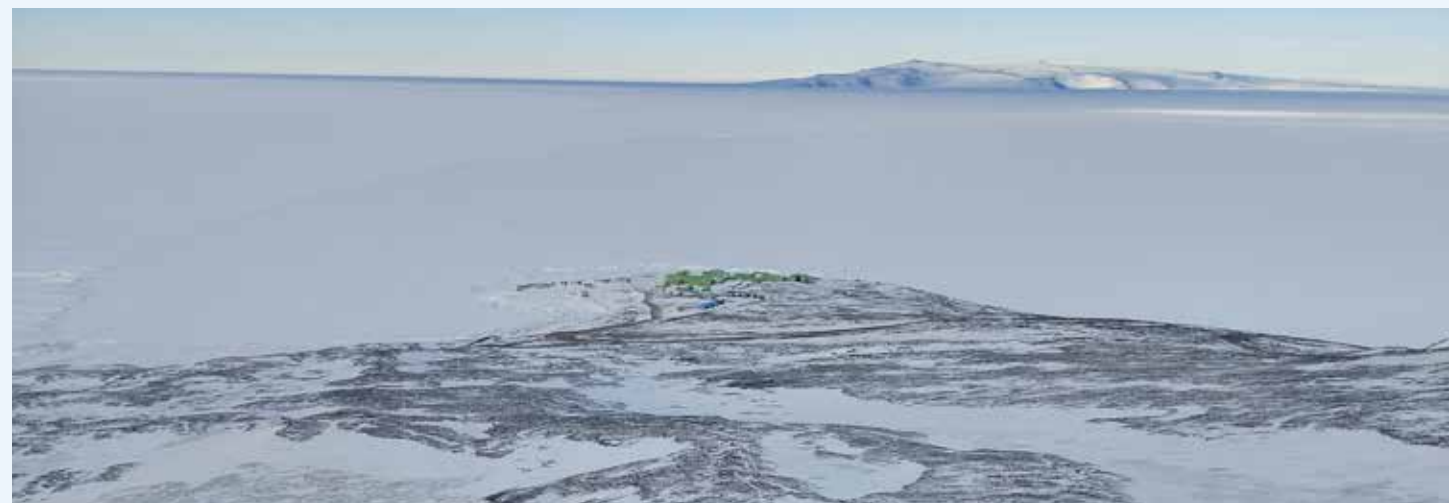
The demanding 12-week course threw up an added challenge, with COVID-19 making an uninvited appearance on Day Two. Extra trainers and additional weekends ensured the course was completed.

Congratulations to Zoe Feau from Tāmaki Makaurau, who won the Top Recruit Award. Zoe left an office role to take on a career in firefighting.

'I wanted a career with more action and I certainly got it! It was amazing training with a group of like-minded people from around the country,' said Zoe.

Mike Thomson, Senior Trainer at NTC, said the recruits were impressive.

'They make immense sacrifices being away from family and friends, but the rewards are indescribable,' he said.







## SCIENTIST MAKING FIREFIGHTING SAFER RECOGNISED

A Christchurch scientist has been recognised for research that makes firefighting safer for rural firefighters.

Dr Richard Parker says being a volunteer firefighter himself over the last 10 years has given him a hands-on understanding of rural firefighting.

He says his research has been helped by 'carrying heavy gear up steep hills, mopping up for hours on end, working in the heat (or cold!), and working with great people'.

Scion, a Crown Research Institute for the forestry and other biomaterial sectors, acknowledged Dr Parker in its recent staff awards with the Roger Newman Award for Science or Engineering Excellence in recognition of his 30 years' work.



As a human factors researcher at Scion, Dr Parker specialises in developing work practices that improve safety in dangerous occupations such as rural firefighting.

His research has looked at ways to record and measure rural firefighters' activity at fires to see which are the most physically hard tasks. This involves workers wearing video cameras, GPS and heart rate monitors.

'We found that firefighters in our studies were exposed to the most carbon monoxide from their fire pump [a portable motorised pump connecting hoses to a water source], rather than from the fire itself,' he says.

Other technology projects include a temperature probe that monitors piles of forestry debris for heat and alerts the landowner if the material is likely to burst into flame, and a prototype robot to cut down small trees to help reduce fire intensity.

'It is really good to become immersed in the rural fire environment and understand the pressures and rewards of being a rural firefighter. There is time to ask other firefighters how to make the job better, safer or easier,' he says.

He started his fire research before being encouraged to become a volunteer firefighter by his colleagues.

'The Canterbury High Country Fire Team were really supportive, gave great training and answered all my questions about what was happening on the fire ground. I really rely on and value their frank and honest opinion of potential technological solutions or ideas for projects'.

# SOCIAL MEDIA 2022 WRAP UP

**Fire and Emergency NZ**  
26 January · 🌐

KiwiRail had a special passenger on Tuesday at their Westfield depot in Auckland - a seal pup. Shout out to the career firefighters from Ōtāhuhu fire station, along with Department of Conservation and KiwiRail, for helping rescue this wee pup from a sticky situation. Firefighters cooled the seal with water and managed to persuade the seal out from under the train. They then herded it into a holding area until DOC arrived.



**Fire and Emergency NZ**  
22 June · 🌐

The Feilding and Manawatu Volunteer Fire Brigades work in a way only a few other brigades do in NZ, co-locating at the Feilding Fire Station since 2017. Manawatu specialises in wildfires and Feilding in structural fires. Between the two brigades, they attend around 400 callouts each year. Chief Fire Officer Bradley Shanks says it made sense to share a station since Manawatu and Feilding both had a common goal and direction. There are seven people that volunteer for both brigades, which the brigade leaders say is a compliment to both teams.

"It feels like a family, everyone's there to support one another, we all work really well together. Especially coming in as a newbie it was super welcoming," says Manawatu volunteer firefighter Lucy.

In February this year, Feilding was hit by heavy rain causing localised flooding around the town. Both brigades have their own skills and abilities, which their leaders utilised during the incident. "The two brigades were really able to complement each other. Everyone pitched in where they could. Not everyone can get away from work or their families for the whole time, so we took shifts over the two days" says Rural Controller Nick West.



**Fire and Emergency NZ**  
22 November at 14:55 · 🌐

We don't want to cut you out of your car, but we will.

When it comes to motor vehicle incidents, our firefighters are highly skilled at cutting open vehicles to help safely extract you and your loved ones.

Our crews do regular training with real-life scenarios so they are ready to respond when the worst happens on our roads. Here you can see Brighton Volunteer Fire Brigade running a training exercise to simulate how they would respond in a real-life extraction.

Speed matters to us because we see the results. Slow down.



**Fire and Emergency NZ is at Sky Tower.**  
4 May · Auckland · 🌐

#InternationalFirefightersDay



**Fire and Emergency NZ**  
1 May · 🌐

Awesome to see five of our women firefighters on duty together at Nelson Station last week!





# YOU'RE COOKED!

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