



WHAKARATONGA IWI

**FIRE**  
**EMERGENCY**

NEW ZEALAND

# EKE TAUMATA PROGRESS REPORT

1 July – 31 December 2025

# Introduction

This report details our progress to create a safe, positive and inclusive environment for all Fire and Emergency people in the period from 1 July to 31 December 2025.

We use data, metrics and case studies to demonstrate our progress and its impact, including:

- on the 20 recommendations in the Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho review into Fire and Emergency's culture and complaints handling practices
- against our four culture outcomes
- on Eke Taumata Programme initiatives
- on our Organisational Culture Plan.

This is the final report under Recommendation 4, to report to the Minister on a six-monthly basis for three years on progress to implement the Review recommendations.

# Key highlights this reporting period

- Fire and Emergency's new **Vetting Policy** and processes started coming into effect from 3 November as part of a phased launch approach. This milestone marked the completion of Recommendation 12.
- Fire and Emergency has now completed all its requirements relating to the 20 recommendations in the 2022 **Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission review** into the organisation's culture and complaints handling practices. Work to embed the initiatives and keep improving culture continues.
- We established a comprehensive **Leaders' Change Toolkit** to support our leaders to access up to date guidance, practical tools and information to help them lead confidently through the phases of our structural change.
- In late August we showcased an overview of Eke Taumata via a poster at **AFAC25**, the annual conference for the Australian and New Zealand Council for Fire and Emergency Services. It also provided an opportunity to connect with other Australasian agencies progressing similar initiatives and to learn from their experiences.
- We highlighted a number of key initiatives at the **United Fire Brigades Association conference** in November, including a presentation on our new Vetting policy and processes; information stands also showcased Eke Taumata initiatives, Code of Conduct learning materials and the Volunteer Brigade Leader 5-year term.

**Progress to deliver Public Service Commission |  
Te Kawa Mataaho recommendations**

# Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho review recommendations update

This section reports progress to deliver the 20 recommendations in the Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho review (2022), including the alignment between recommendations and culture outcome areas.



## Culture Outcomes:

**Outcome 1:** Building Trust and Increasing Opportunities for Engagement and Influence

**Outcome 2:** Strengthening Our People Leadership Capability

**Outcome 3:** Providing a Safe, Positive and Inclusive Environment

**Outcome 4:** Raising the Bar on Acceptable Standards of Conduct and Behaviour

Activity	Status	Comments	Culture Outcome
<b>Rec 1:</b> Performance Expectations for leaders	COMPLETE	Performance expectations for all newly appointed volunteer leaders are now defined and monitored as part of the Volunteer Brigade Leader Development and Review processes rolled out in response to Recommendation 6.	
<b>Rec 2:</b> Clear culture plan and a way to measure success	COMPLETE	The Fire and Emergency Culture Plan, approved in June 2025, outlines the vision for our desired organisational culture, priority actions for the ELT, and defines how the organisation will continuously improve its culture. It incorporates aspects from 2025/26 Branch culture plans and details how cultural outcomes will be monitored and measured. See Culture Outcomes Reporting section for further detail.	
<b>Rec 3, 4, 5:</b> Reporting on progress	COMPLETE	Progress reports are regularly published at the agreed times.	
<b>Rec 6:</b> All new CFO appointments to be 5-year terms	COMPLETE	Since November 2024, all new Volunteer Brigade Leaders (80 to date) have been appointed on a 5-year term. Embedding this work continues as an 2025/26 Eke Taumata Programme initiative.	
<b>Rec 7:</b> Revision of Volunteer Executive Officer Course	COMPLETE	The revised Volunteer Executive Officer course, now called the Volunteer Brigade Leader course, launched in June 2025 with a stronger focus on developing leadership and behaviour management skills amongst all those in volunteer leadership roles.	
<b>Rec 8:</b> Establishment of Independent Advisory Committee	COMPLETE	An Independent Advisory Committee was established with representation from across government, emergency service organisations and private sector.	

# Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho review recommendations update








## Culture Outcomes:

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Activity	Status	Comments	Culture Outcome
<b>Rec 9:</b> Single code of conduct for all FENZ personnel	COMPLETE	Our Code of Conduct   Te Tikanga Whanonga launched mid-2024 as a key foundation of our work to create a safe, more positive and inclusive environment for all our people. Embedding this work continues via development of learning and refresher resources in 2025/26.	
<b>Rec 10:</b> Zero tolerance policy for bullying and harassment	COMPLETE	Launched July 2024 alongside the Code of Conduct.	
<b>Rec 11:</b> Remove authorisation to respond when serious misconduct occurs	COMPLETE	Incorporated into all relevant policies and processes including the Code of Conduct, Complaints Management process, and the Managing Inappropriate Behaviour and Conduct policy.	
<b>Rec 12:</b> Criminal conviction vetting	COMPLETE	The phased launch of the new Vetting Policy began in November 2025 following consultation in September 2024. Work to implement the new policy continues as a 2025/26 Eke Taumata Programme initiative.	
<b>Rec 13:</b> Policy on standdown when charged with criminal offence	COMPLETE	Launched the Managing Inappropriate Behaviour and Conduct Policy in December 2024. Clear policy statements included in new Code of Conduct.	
<b>Rec 14:</b> Independent investigation of conduct complaints	COMPLETE	New complaints management system, Speak Safe @ Fair Way, launched April 2024. See Complaints Management Dashboard (page 24) for the latest reporting.	
<b>Rec 15:</b> Development of clear complaint handling policies	COMPLETE	Developed as part of Speak Safe @ Fairway stand up. An independent evaluation began in August 2025 to assess how well the complaints management system is meeting its objectives to support continuous improvement.	

# Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho review recommendations update






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Activity	Status	Comments	Culture Outcome
<b>Rec 16:</b> Safe-guarding the wellbeing and safety of complainants	COMPLETE	Safety and wellbeing have been factored into the design of the complaints management system, Speak Safe @ Fair Way. Opportunities for improvement are explored via engagement with unions, associations and our people.	
<b>Rec 17:</b> Comprehensive 10-year diversity plan	COMPLETE	Fire and Emergency's route to become a more diverse and inclusive organisation is guided by our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2034 and Diversity and Inclusion Framework. Work to deliver key initiatives is progressing in 2025/26.	
<b>Rec 18:</b> Enhanced selection and promotion of leadership roles	COMPLETE	Since August 2024 panel members for all people leader roles are expected to complete the suite of selection panel e-learning modules.	
<b>Rec 19:</b> Comprehensive training for people leaders	COMPLETE	The Mastering Difficult Conversations workshop and complementary e-learning module equip leaders with skills to manage difficult conversations effectively, help them identify, address and stop inappropriate behaviour, and ultimately improve team dynamics and foster a supportive, respectful and inclusive environment. Workshops continue to be delivered in 2025/26.	
<b>Rec 20:</b> Work with UFBA to prioritise capability development	COMPLETE	An external evaluation of the services provided by the UFBA through the Conditional Grant Agreement has been undertaken, with the draft findings received in December 2025. The findings will be used to inform a joined-up approach which complements our continued efforts to support the capability development for volunteers.	

# Progress on Eke Taumata Programme initiatives

# Eke Taumata Programme initiative updates

We have started to create the kind of culture that our people want, need and expect, however, we still have a long way to go. We are progressing multiple initiatives to keep improving our culture, to support delivery of Our Strategic Direction | Tā Mātou Ahunga Rautaki 2025-2030, as well as to embed work completed to deliver the Public Service Commission review recommendations.

This section reports our progress to deliver the initiatives we are focused on in the 2025/26 year, including their alignment with the culture outcome areas.

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Activity	Status	Comments	Culture Outcome
Authorising and Decision-Making Framework	IN PROGRESS	Work is underway to develop a framework that supports effective decision-making at the right levels across the organisation. Once complete, it will enable people to make decisions quickly and confidently, while ensuring consistency, alignment with priorities, and sound risk management. It will be delivered, in phases, during 2026. During this reporting period the project scope was developed, a project team established, and a dedicated working group established, with its first meeting held.	● ● ● ●
Engagement, Consultation and Change Management Approach	IN PROGRESS	We're developing an overarching approach to the way Fire and Emergency undertakes internal engagement, consultation, and change for new ways of working or introducing new processes or policies. This will include developing new tools and materials to complement current resources. This work, to be delivered in phases during 2026, will enable leaders to build trust within their teams and strengthen our internal culture. During this reporting period the project scope was developed, an environmental scan of current change practices completed, and a project team established.	● ● ●
Talent and Succession Planning	IN PROGRESS	Work is progressing to design and implement a nationally consistent, structured approach to talent management and succession planning, enabling us to identify, nurture, and support our people and leadership talent at all levels. It will be delivered in phases in accordance with the organisation's needs. It will help us to enhance our peoples' overall experience, plan to address future workforce needs, and mitigate leadership shortages or capability gaps. This is a key initiative in our 25/26 Statement of Performance Expectations. During this reporting period the project scope was developed, a project team established, and expressions of interest requested for a working group.	● ●

# Eke Taumata Programme initiative updates





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Activity	Status	Comments	Culture Outcome
Co-design toolkit and workshops	IN PROGRESS	We're developing a co-design toolkit and workshops to support people who are designing/re-designing ways of working, systems, policies, practices and services. This initiative will create a consistent definition of what co-design means for Fire and Emergency, and when and how it should be used, to make sure the voices of those impacted are heard in decision-making processes. It will be delivered, in phases, during 2026. During this reporting period the project scope was developed and project team identified.	
Leader-led Engagement Toolkit	IN PROGRESS	Visible, engaged people leaders, who put their people at the centre and provide a positive, engaging and safe environment, significantly shape the positive experiences people have at Fire and Emergency. We're working to develop and embed a leader-led engagement toolkit to support our leaders to own and drive engagement and communication with their people. This mahi is closely aligned with the engagement, consultation and change management approach project and will be delivered mid-2026. During this reporting period the project scope was developed and a project team identified.	
Diversity and Inclusion Targets	IN PROGRESS	One of four organisational (system level) shifts outlined in our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-34 is exploring recruitment targets. This initiative continues work started in the last financial year addressing Recommendation 17 in the 2022 Review. We are investigating the need for, and impact of, targets for recruitment of female and ethnic minority career firefighters, to address the under-representation of these groups in our operational roles and to support a more diverse and inclusive organisation. Initial targets have been developed however effective implementation requires completed outcomes from the Recruitment Review and therefore the targets will be tabled to ELT for consideration with that initiative's broader recommendations.	
Recruitment Review - Career	IN PROGRESS	We are completing a review of the career firefighter and Communication Centre dispatcher recruitment process including attraction, application, selection and testing approaches to identify any potential areas of bias, and/or barriers to attraction and selection of a diverse range of candidates. We aim to have a recruitment process that is modern, inclusive and fit for purpose, to ensure we are attracting and selecting appropriately skilled people from a range of backgrounds. A number of quick wins identified through the early stages of the review are being implemented while we continue to develop the review's broader recommendations. We are connecting with Australian Fire agencies to understand insights and learnings from their reviews.	

# Eke Taumata Programme initiative updates





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Activity	Status	Comments	Culture Outcome
Impairment Policy	IN PROGRESS	Impairment of any Fire and Emergency person, while at work or volunteering, could have severe consequences on the safety of our people, communities, and sites. To address this risk, we are developing an impairment policy, plus supporting guidance, education, training, processes, and procedures. Feedback on a proposed policy will be invited from all personnel, and the unions and associations. During this reporting period the project scope was developed, a project team established, expressions of interest requested for a working group, and extensive research undertaken into related work at Fire and Emergency and similar agencies.	
Our Code of Conduct/Te Tikanga Whanonga refresher	IN PROGRESS	We are continuing to embed our Code of Conduct, launched mid-2024 as a key foundation of our work to create a safer, more positive and inclusive organisation. This work includes maintaining visibility and understanding of the Code's expected standards of behaviour and conduct through promotion of the compulsory Code e-learning module and launch of the Brigade Culture Training Pack. The training pack was launched in September 2025 as alternative to the e-module for volunteer brigades. An annual online refresher and a suite of materials to support leader-led discussion will also be developed in 2026.	
Vetting Policy Implementation	IN PROGRESS	Regular vetting and re-vetting of all our personnel will help Fire and Emergency to keep our people safe, build a trusted and positive organisational environment, and maintain the high levels of trust the public has in us. The first phase of our new Vetting Policy came into effect from early November 2025, following development and consultation on the draft policy. This work supports the delivery of Recommendation 12. Further phases will be implemented through 2026 for event-based vetting and to begin regular 10-year re-vetting cycles.	
Supporting guidance for managers (inappropriate behaviour and conduct)	IN PROGRESS	We have launched a number of policies and documents to support the new standards of behaviour and conduct expected of all personnel as outlined in our Code of Conduct. We're now developing further guidance, and an education programme, to better enable people leaders to appropriately respond to and address inappropriate behaviour and conduct, and to be our strongest upstanders. Delivery is planned for mid-2026. During this reporting period the project scope was developed.	

# Eke Taumata Programme initiative updates

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Activity	Status	Comments	Culture Outcome
Scarlatti Qualitative Research	IN PROGRESS	We are measuring how the initiatives we are introducing are improving our culture, and where we need still to improve, by working with independent research and evaluation firm, Scarlatti, to gather qualitative data. Scarlatti will conduct this qualitative research over three years, starting in 2025, using online interviews and small focus groups. A summary of insights from the first year’s research was included in the last 6-monthly report; the first research report was shared during this reporting period. Planning is underway for the next research round in 2026, taking learnings from the initial work, to ensure the findings are impactful in helping us to shape our work in the future.	● ● ● ●
Volunteer Brigade Leader Support and Review System	IN PROGRESS	Since November 2024, all newly appointed Volunteer Brigade Leaders have started on a five-year term (embedding Recommendation 6), with the right to renew if the leader is meeting brigade leadership expectations, they want to stay in that role, and their brigade is functioning well. We are continuing to embed the new processes by developing new resources and guidance for Volunteer Leaders and Group Managers.	● ●

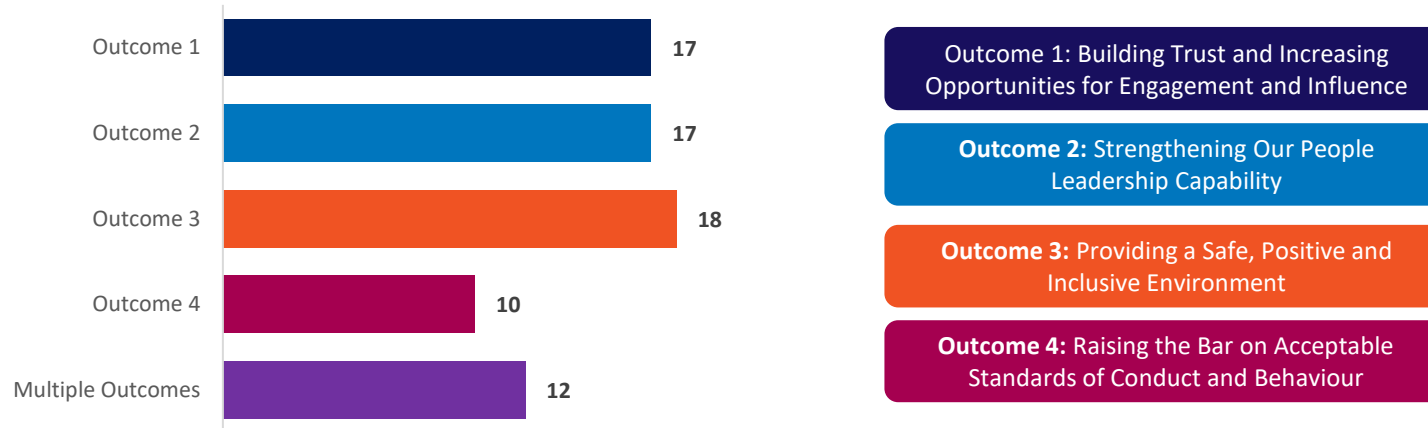
# Organisation Culture Plan progress

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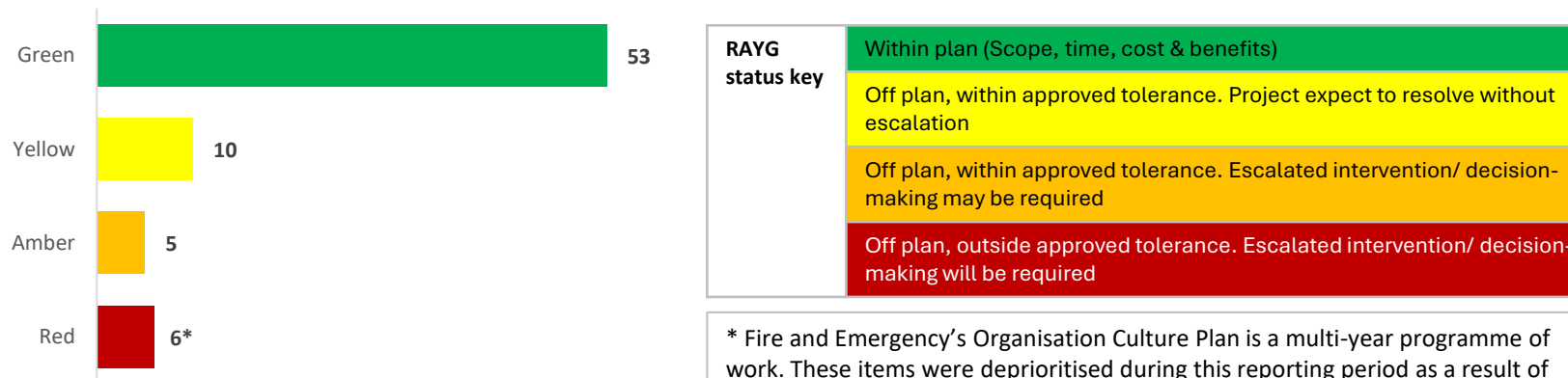
Improving our organisation’s culture requires a whole-of-organisation effort.

Fire and Emergency’s Organisation Culture Plan was developed in response to Recommendation 2 in the 2022 Public Service Commission review.

Fire and Emergency Culture Plan actions by culture outcome



Fire and Emergency Culture Plan actions by delivery RAYG status



\* Fire and Emergency’s Organisation Culture Plan is a multi-year programme of work. These items were deprioritised during this reporting period as a result of limited resourcing and the organisation’s structural change. They will be reassessed in the 2026-27 financial year.

## Examples of actions underway or completed from Organisation Culture Plan

**Vetting policy launched** in phases from 3 November 2025. Regular vetting and re-vetting of all our personnel will help Fire and Emergency to keep our people safe, build a trusted organisational environment, and maintain the public’s trust.



**Incident Management Capability (incl. Emergency Management Programme)** Significant progress has been made to strengthen national emergency management leadership capability. Professional development programmes have been developed and delivered for the National Commanders Group and National Response Coordinators. Work also continues to improve Coordination Centre capability including the completion of a Standard Operating Procedure review, competency mapping and workforce development sessions to support operational readiness.



**Whanaungatanga Programme 2023 – 2027** Work has progressed across several key areas, including the onboarding of the University of Canterbury as new research partner and the ongoing embedding of interventions in Te Hiku and across our three Communication Centres. An initiative has been the start of a customised leadership programme for the ComCen leadership team, which will continue across the next two quarters. (See case study page 19)



# Culture outcomes reporting

Organisational culture is driven from many places, so we use a range of different data sources to measure our people's experience of working and volunteering at Fire and Emergency and the progress we are making to improve that experience. This section highlights achievements through case studies and metrics against our four culture outcomes.

## People metrics – Entry surveys

### OUTCOME 1

# Building trust and increasing opportunities for engagement and influence

## Context

The 'Your Say' onboarding survey is sent to employees (excluding firefighters) three months after they start.

The 'Your Say' exit survey is sent to employees and volunteers.

The information provided here is from respondents to the surveys conducted between July to December 2025.

### Key Metrics December 2025

66%

of respondents would recommend FENZ as a great place to work

81%

of respondents enjoy working at FENZ

94%

of respondents felt welcomed on their first day

97%

of respondents indicated they were provided with an opportunity to learn what Te Tikanga Whanonga: Our Code of Conduct means for them in their role

32 respondents

## Key insights

Induction is an important part of settling into any new role, so it is positive that almost three quarters of respondents indicated that they experienced a structured and planned approach to their induction.

Responses highlighted that generally, people felt welcomed and supported, and that the onboarding process was positive. 91 percent indicated that the person they reported to gave them direction and guidance to be successful in their new role; the same percentage felt their skills and experience were valued by Fire and Emergency.

However, others felt the onboarding process was an area that could be improved, along with their leader's preparedness to support that process.

“

Team was gathered together from the spread-out locations around the country to welcome me and let me get to know them face-to-face. That made me feel very welcome and valued.

## People metrics – Exit surveys

### Key Metrics

62%

of respondents would recommend FENZ as a great place to work or volunteer<sup>1</sup>

79%

of respondents enjoyed working or volunteering at FENZ<sup>2</sup>

64%

of respondents indicated their experience working or volunteering at FENZ matched their initial expectations<sup>3</sup>

67%

of respondents indicated their team or brigade environment was safe, positive and inclusive<sup>4</sup>

87 respondents

## Key insights

Of the 87 people surveyed during the period, 43 percent of employees and 47 percent of volunteers indicated Fire and Emergency could have done more to retain them. Common reasons given included improved leadership, and improved training or development.

'What we do well' generated different responses across employee and volunteer surveys. 'Positive culture' was the highest theme amongst employees; 'training' and 'purpose' scored highly amongst volunteers.

'Training' was also a top theme in relation to 'What we can do better' for exiting volunteers, along with 'culture – poor behaviours' and 'leadership'. Employees called out 'systems/processes' in this section.

## Building trust and increasing opportunities for engagement and influence

### Case studies

#### Volunteer Voice Network

At Fire and Emergency, it is vital that our volunteers can provide input on the policies and initiatives that impact them. The newly launched Volunteer Voice Network (VVN) is creating that opportunity by connecting projects and teams across the organisation directly with volunteers to seek insights and feedback.

The VVN is a database of volunteer representatives with specific areas of expertise and interest. It was established to connect projects and teams with volunteers in a way that is more inclusive, efficient, and consistent. It complements existing feedback channels, such as formal consultations, surveys, and advocacy work by the United Fire Brigade Association (UFBA).

Over a phased rollout, the network will continue to improve and evolve, with the aim of becoming a standard process for involving volunteers in any decision-making activities that impact them.

##### This reporting period:

- The Volunteer Voice Network launched in August 2025.
- 273 volunteers (59 rural/214 urban) from 225 brigades had become members by 31 December 2025.
- Four projects used the Volunteer Voice Network to gather feedback from volunteers, with four additional projects indicating interest in using the network.
- The average response rate across all engagements has been 42.8 percent.

#### Fit for All Level 2 Personal Protective Clothing

Engaging directly with frontline personnel of different sizes, shapes, ages and gender is providing the Fit for All Level 2 Personal Protective Clothing (L2PPC) Project with data and insights to ensure the new level 2 ensemble is “fit for all”.

The project was established to improve the safety of frontline personnel by ensuring their L2PPC fits correctly from first issue and throughout its lifespan, is being donned correctly, and remains within an acceptable level of wear and tear.

The project is also focused on ensuring that L2PPC is an appropriate fit for all personnel regardless of body type or size, age, gender, and body measurement differences.

##### This reporting period:

- A working group with representatives from NZPFU, UFBA, FECA, and Women’s Development was established.
- A dedicated Female Fit Subgroup was created to address stakeholder feedback and ensure the needs of female firefighters are met.
- Data collected via Body Measurement Research with career and volunteer firefighters helped to create a prototype that addresses alternate body fit issues.
- A field trial of the new L2PPC with people of different body types and sizes identified areas of mis-fit.
- A survey to assess fit, comfort, mobility, and functional performance of the new L2PPC helped to identify further improvements.
- A measurement taking and L2PPC fitting session took place to upskill National Training Centre trainers, Volunteer Support Officers and others.

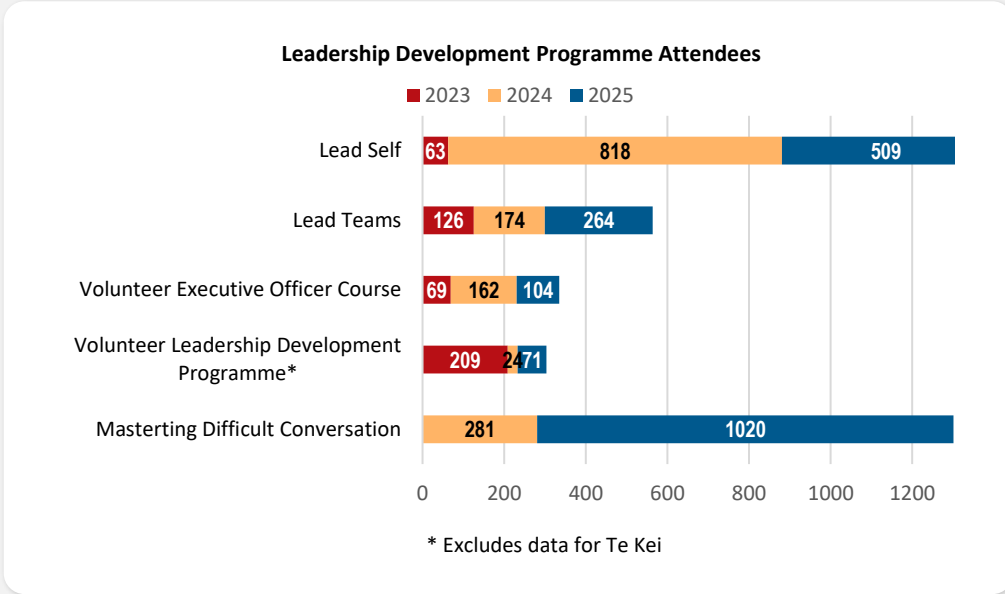
# Strengthening our people leadership capability

“ I learned so much from Lead Leaders that I’m able to use in this role [District Manager]. I’ve found that managing people is the key to being an effective leader, so learning skills on how to manage performance efficiently has been really useful.

“ An absolutely invaluable workshop for the development of people management and leadership skills within our organisation. [Mastering Difficult Conversations]

“ It’s not just about me stepping up to be Chief. Everyone else is stepping up as well. [By having these processes in place,] We’re building the future for our brigade. [Volunteer Brigade Leader support and development]

## Leadership Development Programmes



## Key insights

Leadership development continues to embed strongly across the organisation, with the successful delivery of the pilot Lead Leaders programme and widespread rollout of Lead Self and Lead Teams.

More than 24 percent of personnel have now completed a Deeper Signals profile, enabling them to build greater self-awareness and foster understanding of themselves and others. The Mastering Difficult Conversations workshop is being delivered nationwide via a workshop and complementary e-module, and included in lead Teams, Lead Leaders and the Volunteer Brigade Leaders programmes.

Leadership development is also now integrated into key operational training pathways, with full incorporation across remaining TAPs courses planned for 2026.

## Key initiatives and progress

During this reporting period:

### Lead Self Programme

- Integrated into the Career Qualified Fire Fighter Course, (August 2025).
- Pilot for the Comms Centre Recruit Call Taker Course (September 2025) will now be integrated into all future courses.
- Almost 1,400 personnel have now completed the programme.

### Lead Teams Programme

- 11 cohorts now complete with 264 participants in 2025.

### Lead Leaders Programme

- Pilot cohort completed with 20 participants.

### Volunteer Brigade Leader course (previously called Volunteer Executive Officer course)

- 79 Volunteer Brigade Leaders have taken the revised course since June 2025.

### Volunteer Brigade Leader support and development

- More than 100 newly appointed Volunteer leaders are now on a five-year term.

### Mastering Difficult Conversations

- Integrated into existing leadership programmes.
- 115 workshops have been delivered to 1,300+ participants nationwide.

### Deeper Signals

- More than 24 percent of the organisation (3422+ participants) have completed their profile since 2023.

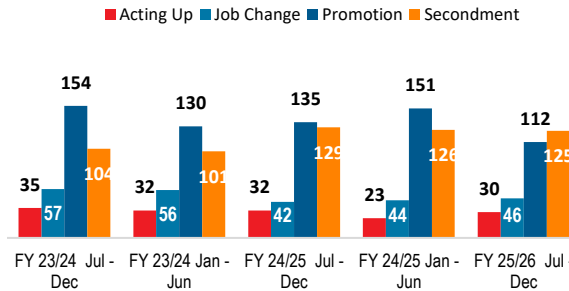
# Strengthening our people leadership capability

## Talent flow

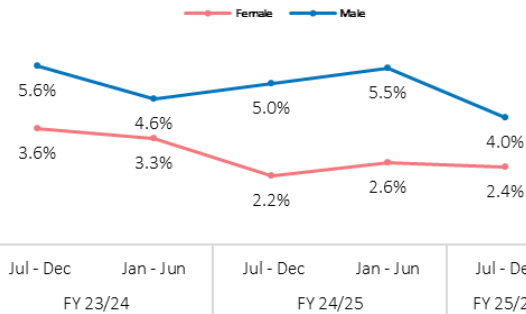
Our leadership development framework includes development beyond formal training, with on-the-job experience ideally accounting for 70 percent of professional development. One way to measure this is through opportunities to act up, promotion and secondments.

## Employees

Permanent/Fixed Term Internal Movements by Appointment Type



Promotion Rate by Gender



## Key insights

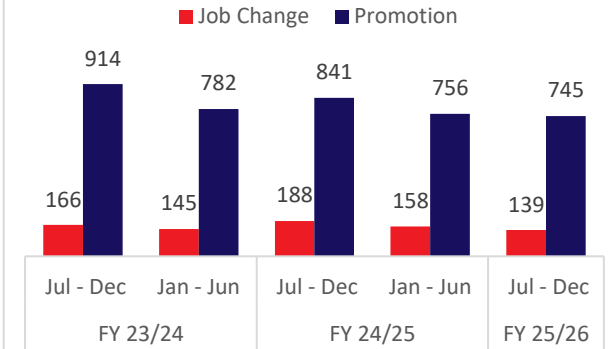
Internal movement remains a consistent mechanism for developing capability, with promotions representing the most common form of progression across reporting periods.

Secondments remain a significant development pathway (125 in the latest period), supporting increased breadth of experience and organisational agility. Acting-up is used frequently and continues to provide opportunities for targeted stretch development.

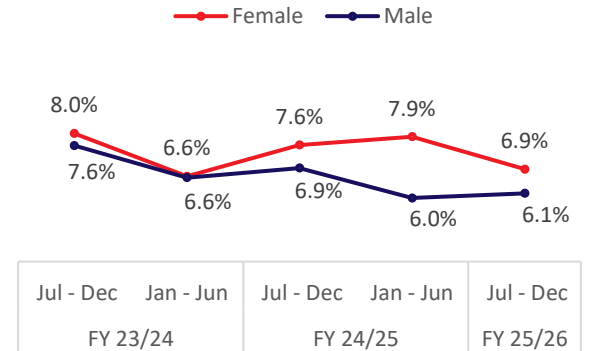
A sustained gender gap remains in employee promotion rates. In the latest period, promotion rates were 4.0% for men and 2.4% for women. This gap has been evident across reporting periods and requires continued focus to understand structural and operational barriers to progression.

## Volunteers

Volunteer Internal Movements by Appointment Type



Promotion Rate by Gender



## Key insights

Volunteer internal movement remains high, with 745 movements in the latest period. While lower than the same period last year, promotions continue to significantly outnumber job changes.

Female volunteer promotion rates remain slightly higher than male rates; 6.9% compared with 6.1% in the latest period. While the current position is positive, continued monitoring is required to ensure equitable access to development and leadership pathways stay available.

## Strengthening our people leadership capability

### Case studies

### Volunteer Brigade Leadership course

The revised Volunteer Executive Officer course, now called the Volunteer Brigade Leader course, has a stronger focus on developing leadership and behaviour management skills amongst those in volunteer leadership roles – recognising their pivotal role in setting the tone and expectations for brigade culture.

The new course balances operational skills with leadership development, covering topics such as behaviour management, conflict resolution, people leadership, and addressing long-standing cultural challenges.

Participants have described the revised course as relevant and practical, and confidence-building in areas of communication, leadership, having difficult conversations and managing conflict. It has helped attendees to build a greater awareness of themselves and understand their strengths including how they can influence and support effectively those that they lead.

#### This reporting period:

- Since it launched in June 2025, 79 volunteer brigade leaders have taken the revised course via six sessions held regionally and at the National Training Centre.



*Volunteer brigade leaders from across the West Coast attended a course in Greymouth in early December 2025.*

### Leadership Development for ComCen

In response to insights gathered via the Whanaungatanga Wellbeing Survey (March 2024), that people working our National Communication Centres (ComCen) would benefit from leadership development training, ComCen leaders and staff are encouraged to participate in our Lead Teams and Lead Self programmes.

To address specific topics highlighted through the research findings, Leadership Development is also delivering a bespoke programme to the ComCen Leadership Team. Called the Social Identity Leadership 5R Programme, it is an evidence-based approach, developed by Professor Alexander Haslam and colleagues. Development began in mid-2025, with the first of six in-person workshops taking place in December 2025. The programme gives leaders "action learning" tasks to use with their teams to co-create shared approaches, goals and strategies to improve "we-ness" and "us-ness".

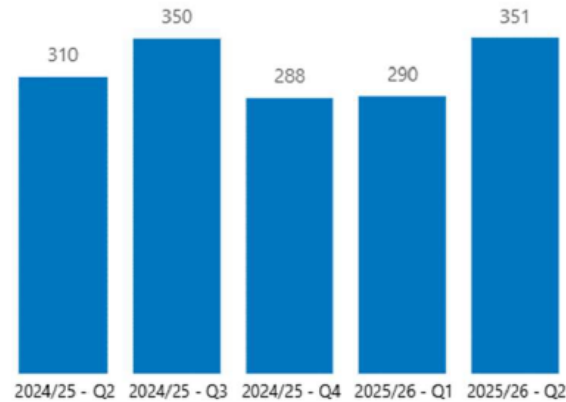
#### This reporting period:

- Lead Self was fully integrated into the ComCen recruit course.
- Fifty percent of ComCen personnel (47 staff) have now attended Lead Self.
- Ten ComCen Shift Managers and Leadership Team members have attended Lead Teams, with five more registered to attend in 2026.
- A six-month ComCen-specific leadership programme launched in December 2025 with a one-day workshop for the nine members of the ComCen Leadership Team; additional workshops are planned each month until May 2026.
- Mastering Difficult Conversations workshops have been delivered specifically for ComCen staff.

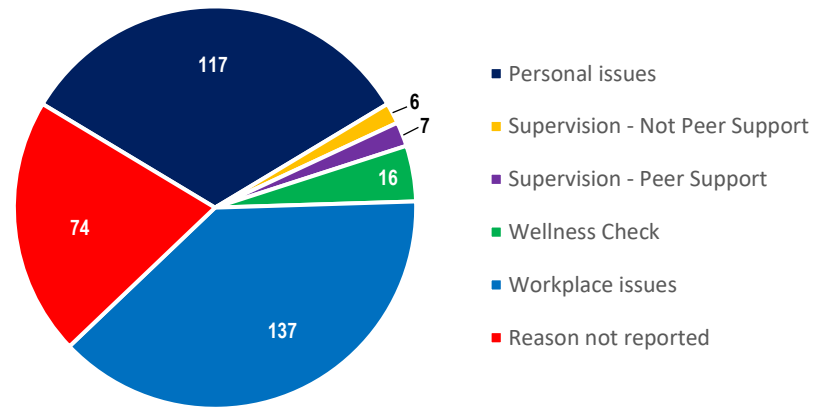
# Providing a safe, positive and inclusive environment

## Mental and emotional wellbeing

Number of Psychological Wellbeing reports



Number of Psychological Referrals, 1 July to 31 December 2025



## Key Insights

This period saw a significant increase in psychological wellbeing reports recorded in Safe@Work compared with both the previous quarter and the same period last year. While most reports related to exposure to operational trauma, there was also a notable rise in reports of difficulties with a colleague or manager, and work overload or pressure.

The increase in reporting is positive and indicates our efforts to actively promote wellbeing support across the organisation are succeeding. Initiatives promoted in Q2 such as Mental Health Awareness Week in October and Movember in November continue to encourage open conversations about mental health and increase awareness of available support.

Psychological referrals between September and December 2025 decreased across all worker group categories. Of these referrals, 38 percent were linked to workplace-related concerns.

We have also seen increased engagement in preventative education for teams, supporting earlier intervention and potentially reducing the need for external referrals.

In November, the Leaders Change Toolkit was launched to help leaders support their teams throughout the organisational change process.

In the **Safety, Health and Wellbeing Survey** delivered in June-July 2025, 71 percent of respondents reported feeling safe to report unwanted interpersonal behaviour, the same percentage as the previous survey in 2024.

In the same survey, 85 percent of respondents felt comfortable reporting any safety, health and wellbeing concerns, a slight reduction of 2 percent from the previous survey.

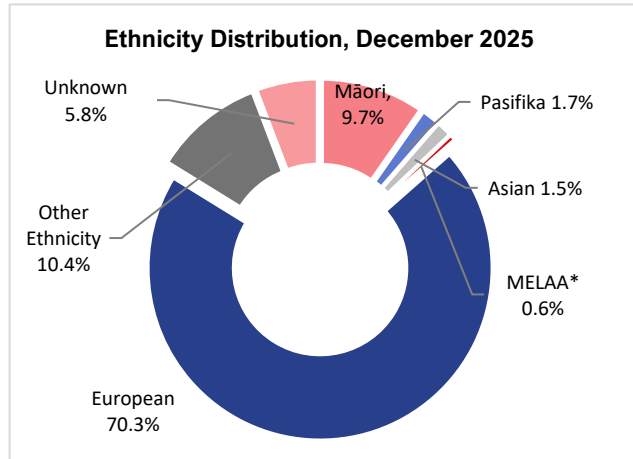
# Providing a safe, positive and inclusive environment

“Completing He Timatanga Kōrero has helped our brigade understand and apply Kaupapa Māori principles, making us stronger volunteers.”

“My pronunciation and understanding of kupu (words) Māori has improved which opens me up to making better relationships with iwi and improved outcomes for the wider community.”

## Ethnic representation

Key Metrics December 2025	
<b>1,471</b>	<b>Māori</b> 73% are Volunteers Up by <b>57 (4.1%)</b> from same period last year
<b>247</b>	<b>Pasifika</b> 47% are Volunteers About the same from same period last year
<b>226</b>	<b>Asian</b> 55% are Volunteers Up by <b>36 (18.9%)</b> from same period last year
<b>10,544</b>	<b>European</b> 79% are Volunteers Down by <b>84 (0.8%)</b> from same period last year



### Key Insights

During the reporting period, representation from Māori and Asian communities showed strong short-term gains, up 4.1 percent and 18.9 percent respectively, while Pasifika participation held steady. Pākehā/European participation dipped slightly but remains the largest group.

These trends continue to support the longer-term slow growth in diversity across the organisation.

Māori leadership representation continues to rise, but overall senior-level diversity remains below Public Service benchmarks.

## Cultural capability uplift

During this reporting period:

### He Tīmatanga Kōrero

- 206 personnel received their Tohu (pictured below) for completing the module between 1 July and 31 December 2025.
- 2,358 or 16.1 percent of personnel across Fire and Emergency have now completed this online module since July 2021.



### Te Aho Tapu

- Fire and Emergency’s cultural capability online assessment tool launched June 2025.
- 89 personnel engaged with the tool between 1 July and 31 December 2025 (one or more course completions).
- Since inception, 253 personnel have engaged with the tool (1.7 percent of the organisation).

### The Wall Walk

- 54 personnel engaged in the Wall Walk programme.

### Te Reo Māori classes

- 25 people engaged in the Cultural Discovery (Pre-level) programme.
- 66 completed the Te Reo Ohoho (Level 1) class.
- 26 completed the Te Reo Māphi Maurea (Level 2) class.
- 17 completed the Te Reo Matapopore (Level 3) class.
- 65 people wait-listed for next round of classes.

# Providing a safe, positive and inclusive environment

## Case studies

### Greerton VFB members attain their Tohu

Fire and Emergency’s Tohu is a wearable pin signifying our commitment to working with Māori as tangata whenua and dedication to progressing knowledge and understanding of Māori culture. This is a critical capability that enables Fire and Emergency to better connect with, and improve outcomes for, at risk communities. The Tohu is awarded to individuals after completing the He Tīmatanga Kōrero online module, an introductory guide to Kaupapa Māori designed specifically for our organisation.

Greerton Volunteer Fire Brigade (VFB) members completed the module during one training night. Officer in Charge David McLaughlan spearheaded his brigade’s efforts following the Ngā Tai ki te Puku Volunteer Leadership Conference, where he was introduced to a range of resources aimed at uplifting knowledge of Māori culture. Members were presented with their Tohu at the annual Tauranga Brigade Honours and Awards dinner.

#### This reporting period:

- 15 members of the Greerton VFB completed He Tīmatanga Kōrero online module and attained their Tohu.
- 16.1 percent (2,358) of personnel across Fire and Emergency have now completed He Tīmatanga Kōrero online module since its launch in July 2021.



### Building connections between dispatchers and firefighters in Southland

Dennis Hika, a Station Officer at Kingswell Station, is well known at the Southern Communications Centre (South ComCen) for his efforts to create a positive and supportive working environment between fire crews and dispatchers.

Interactions often occur in high stress situations, and Dennis has taken a lead on encouraging a culture of mutual respect and trust. He has encouraged his watch to be patient with new dispatchers to improve their onboarding experience and has broken down barriers that can exist between ComCen and firefighters.

The result: improved relationships in sometimes difficult circumstances.

#### This reporting period:

- Through Dennis’s example, dispatchers and team leaders at South ComCen have seen a shift to more respectful and positive interactions with fire crews across Invercargill.
- South ComCen has seen an improved induction experience for new dispatchers over the past 10 years.
- Dennis’s impact has been felt so significantly that he was recognised by Te Kei Region in late 2025 for his efforts to champion a safe and positive workplace.



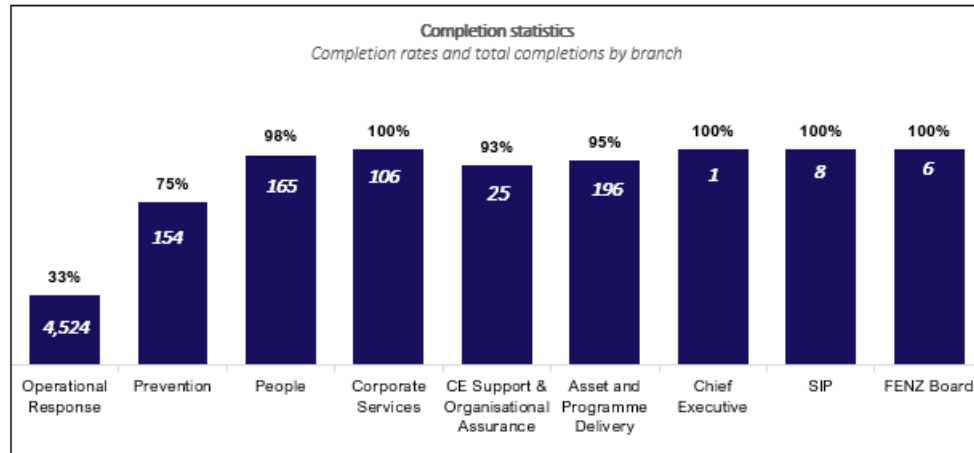
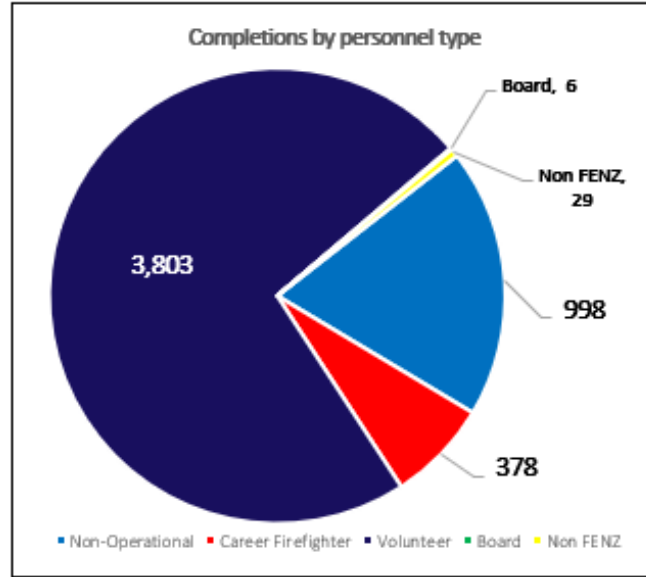
Dennis has worked to break down the separation barrier that is often between comms and the fire crews.



His attitude as an officer is matched by his crews creating a great workplace and interactions, no matter the job.

# Raising the bar on acceptable standards of conduct and behaviour

## Code of Conduct learning completions



## Key Insights

Our Code of Conduct | Te Tikanga Whanonga (the Code) is a key foundation of our work to create a safer, more positive and inclusive environment for all our people. It supports personnel to make the right decisions and sets out what will happen if they act outside those expectations.

We are continuing to embed the Code, including promotion of compulsory learning via the Code e-learning module and have launched new workshops for volunteer brigades to increase awareness and completion of the Code of Conduct.

A total of 5,214 personnel have completed the Code learning since July 2024, including 45 percent of employees and 33 percent of volunteers.

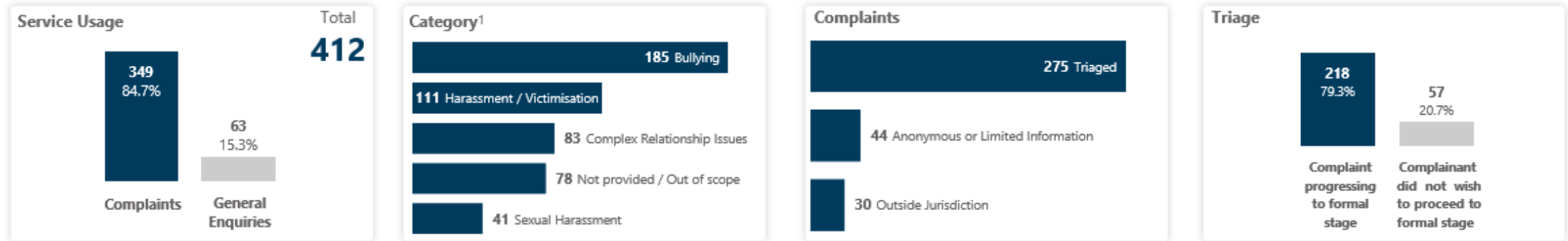
The Brigade Culture Training Pack has been developed specifically for volunteers and contains content for two workshops that guide volunteers through discussions about the Code of Conduct and values. These discussions are facilitated by a member of the brigade, with optional facilitation training to support them.

Since its launch in September 2025, 85 volunteers have submitted an expression of interest to facilitate the pack with their brigades, 5 volunteers have completed facilitation training, and 3 brigades have completed the workshops.

We are starting to develop an annual online refresher and a suite of materials to support leader-led discussion.

## Speak Safe @ Fair Way Contacts (excluding Kāpehu Service)

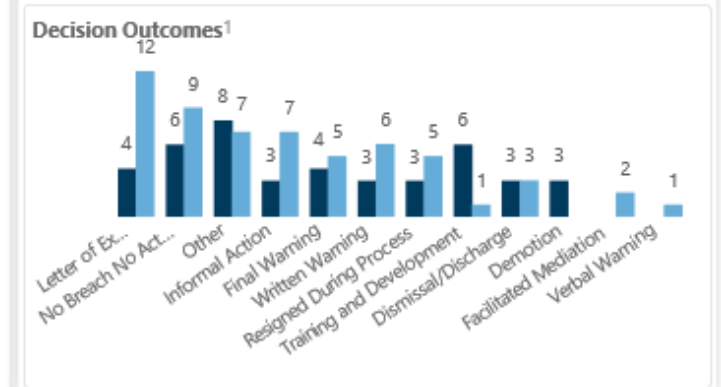
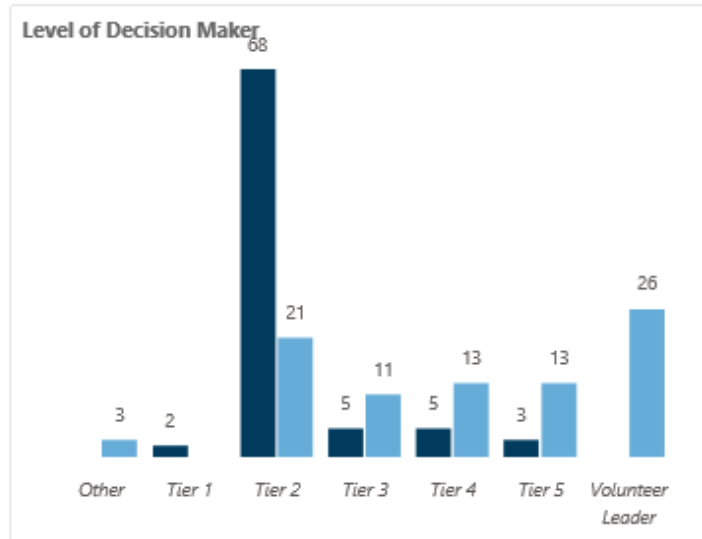
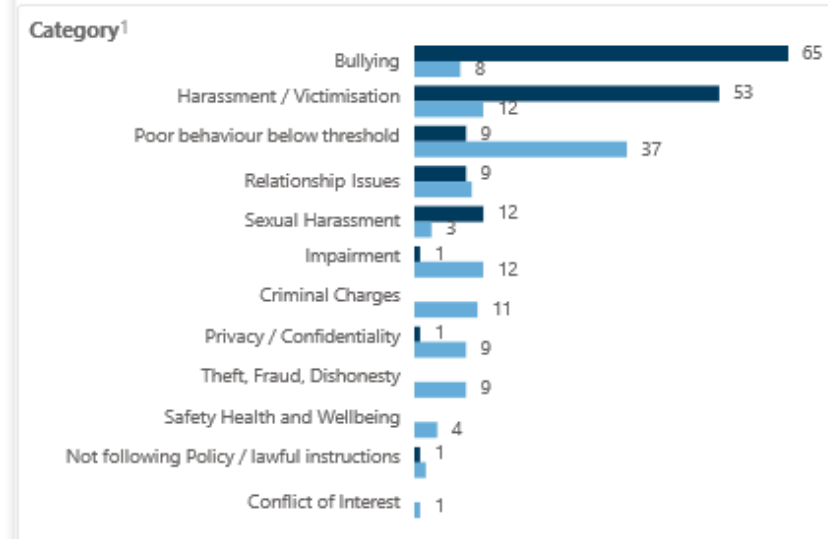
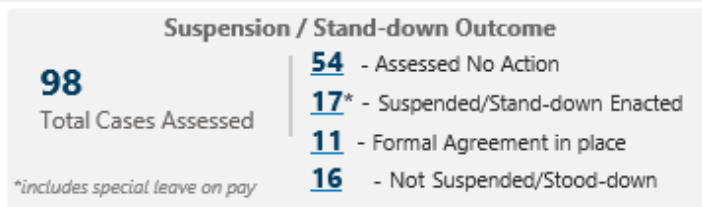
Received from 29 Apr 2024 to 31 Dec 2025



## Formal complaints (Fair Way and Non Fair Way)

Cases received from 29 Apr 2024 to 31 Dec 2025

### Open Investigations as at 31 Dec 2025



<sup>1</sup>A single contact may relate to multiple incident/matters

Other - working to clarify this data

# Raising the bar on acceptable standards of conduct and behaviour

## Case study

### Brigade Culture Training Pack

Since Our Code of Conduct | Te Tikanga Whanonga launched mid-2024 as a key foundation of our work to create a safer, more positive and inclusive environment for all our people, there has been a strong focus on building understanding through learning.

The Brigade Culture Training Pack has been developed specifically for volunteers and contains content for two workshops that guide volunteers through discussions about the Code of Conduct and values. These discussions are facilitated by a brigade member, with optional facilitation training to support them.

The pack is offered as an alternative to the Code of Conduct online module, which has been completed by more than 5,200 personnel.

#### This reporting period:

- The Brigade Culture Training Pack launched to all volunteers.
- 85 volunteers expressed interest in facilitating the pack with their brigades.
- 5 volunteers completed facilitation training via the Leadership Development team.
- 3 brigades completed the workshops.



“ The pack helps us talk openly about integrity and doing the right thing, how we support one another, and how safe and inclusive our relationships feel across the brigade. For me, it offers a chance for us to pause as a brigade and reflect on who we are, how we work together and the environment we want to create moving forward.

**Kimberlee Tararo (Titahi Bay Volunteer Fire Brigade)**



“ We need to know about the Code of Conduct and how it applies to us. These workshops are great for bringing everyone together to help us learn what the Code is all about and how our values help us work better together.

**Tina Singer (Chief Fire Officer, Runanga Volunteer Fire Brigade)**



# Appendix: Complaints dashboard guidance

# Complaints dashboard guidance

**Service Usage:** A count of total contacts with Fair Way either complaints or general enquiries.

**Category of Fair Way complaints:** The count of complaints against the four jurisdiction areas. One complaint may relate to more than one category.

**Complaints:** A count of total complaints that have moved through the triage process at Fair Way.

**Triage:** Count of complaints progressing to formal stage following triage. This is a self-led process, with the complainant agreeing to proceed or not.

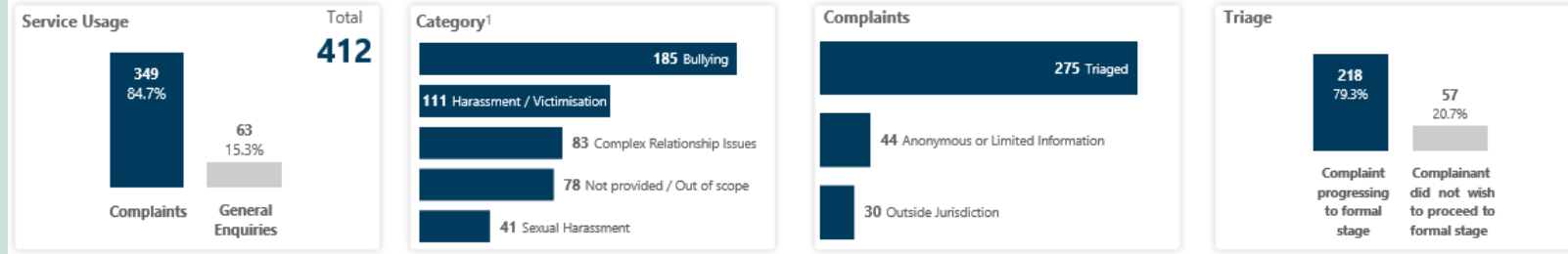
**Received between:** Time period for the data in this report.

## Speak Safe @ Fair Way Contacts (excluding Kāpehu Service)

Received from 29 Apr 2024 to 31 Dec 2025

### Speak Safe @ Fair Way Contacts (excluding Kāpehu Service):

This section is reporting only on Fair Way data.



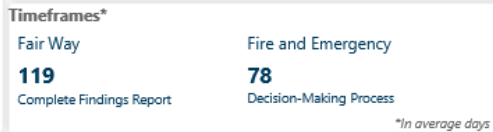
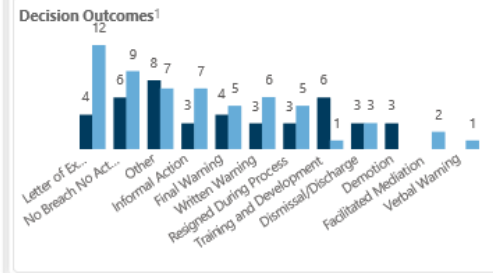
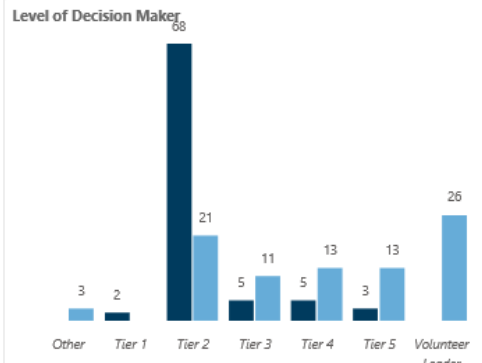
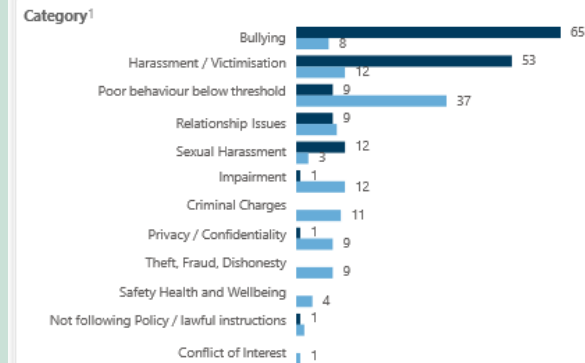
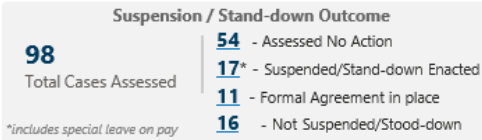
### Formal complaints (Fair Way and Non Fair Way):

This section is reporting on both Fair Way and non Fair Way formal complaint data.

## Formal complaints (Fair Way and Non Fair Way)

Cases received from 29 Apr 2024 to 31 Dec 2025

Open Investigations as at 31 Dec 2025



**Opened investigations:** Count split by Fair Way and non Fair Way.

**Suspension Decision Outcome:** Number of complaints considered for suspension or stand-down and outcome.

**Timeframes - Complete findings report:** Average days from 'Open Investigation' to Fire and Emergency receiving the findings report.

**Category of formal complaints:** Count when raised split by Fair Way and non-Fair Way. A single complaint may refer to multiple categories.

**Level of Decision Maker:** Position level of Fire and Emergency personnel assessing the complaint.

Additional timeframe information will be added as we improve our reporting. This will include average days for decision making and show the split between Fair Way and non Fair Way cases.

**Closed Investigations:** Number of complaints closed in the time period split between Fair Way and non Fair Way. A case is considered 'closed' when both the investigation and decision-making process are finalised and all parties have been notified.

**Decision Outcomes:** Results from closed investigations. A single complaint may have multiple outcomes. Some options do not show on this list such as 'dismissed' if this was not an outcome during the period.



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