

October 2016

The New Zealand firefighter magazine

K1



15 years on ...

# K1

October 2016

K1 is an independent magazine produced by the K1 Group.

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K1

Cover photo



*One of a collection of previously unpublished 9/11 photos taken by Associated Press photographer Richard Drew. He is famous for his photo of Falling Man. The collection has been released to mark the anniversary.*

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# Ambulance sector working as a charity

The fragility of ambulance funding is in the news, yet again, with Paramedics Australasia's Sean Thompson saying the sector faces a crisis.

St John and Wellington Free Ambulance rely heavily on public donations and volunteers, with only 70% of funding coming from the Government. St John posted a \$7.5 million deficit last year, while Wellington Free fell \$600,000 short.

This time around, after finishing their annual fundraising drives, both services still have huge budget shortfalls.

"We have a core medical provider, staffed by highly trained paramedics, operating as a charity! We would not expect our hospitals or the Police to operate that way, but that's the service and system we provide for New Zealanders who are critically unwell."

Lack of funding means less resources, including staff, and paramedics are getting stretched. "They're getting stressed, they're getting overworked, they operate in a highly demanding environment, and they're getting fewer breaks to get the rest and recuperation they need."

This raises questions of safety for the paramedics and their patients. Volunteers are needed to perform similar tasks to those seen in hospital emergency departments

at times, he said. "In the past, we've been a first aid provider who takes people to hospital where the real work is done. But now the real work is also being done in the field. As an intensive care paramedic, I'm doing medical procedures and providing very powerful controlled drugs that would normally only be provided in hospitals. I'm making some of the decisions that you might expect to be made by a GP."

## Review ordered

The Government ordered a review last year and a draft report was completed in February. It has since been the subject of review by stakeholders and may be before Cabinet this year.

As is the case for much of the health sector, St John faces the impacts of increasing demand, rising costs and an aging population, said St John's CEO Peter

Bradley. "This means that even though we've made significant advances in increasing income, reducing costs and modernising our service delivery methods, we require additional funding to simply stand still. In addition, we need to find a way to bring single crewing to an end."

Cost savings measures and the part charge increase are two avenues St John has taken in order to help return it to a financially sustainable position. St John reported an underlying deficit of \$7.5 million for the 2014/15 financial year and it projects another deficit for the 2015/16 year.

"We receive outstanding support from the public, both in donations and in volunteer hours. However, due to the factors already mentioned (increasing demand, rising costs and demographic changes), we need the Government to fund a higher proportion of the ambulance service operating costs. This is being considered as part of the ambulance sector funding review.

"We are confident the Government is committed to sustainable funding for the ambulance sector, and look forward to the outcomes of the review," he said.

## FENZ

Meanwhile, Mr Bradley says St John is comfortable with where it sits in the proposed Fire and Emergency New Zealand establishment. The Memorandum of Understanding 2014 formalises practises between NZFS and St John and works well, providing clear guidance and processes around how the two services operate and respond together, he said.



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# Massive job for NHQ

by Ross Miller

National Headquarters staff have a massive job in front of them – K1 understands every brigade will be consulted as to its individual priorities and this needs to (or should) happen before the current Bill becomes law in July next year.

That's 400 brigades of varying size and description – as well as melding former Rural Fire brigades into the family. It appears every brigade will have its individual current workloads translated into how it responds to clauses 11 and 12 of the proposed ACT.

On the surface, it would be understandable if St John is aggrieved at finding law drafters consider medical response only an alternative responsibility and only if the firefighting capacity of the brigade is maintained. Doesn't NZFS have an MOU with St John that says we will pick up the slack?

The way the proposed legislation reads, single truck stations like Plimmerton will not be leaving the station for anything other than its strict priorities, or it will only be able to go to an 'additional function' such as a medical if it is guaranteed Porirua career trucks are available for back-up on the first tier of responsibilities. Theoretically, it gets into trouble if it gets a medical and Porirua gets a third alarm five minutes later.

I appreciate drafting legislation for something like this is complex, but law writers have to be careful not to put brigades in compromising positions –although, many CFOs around the country are known for making up their own minds and justifying it under Section 4 Whatever of the current Act.

So who makes these decisions on when and where a brigade is despatched? It sounds like several train-loads of elephants just barged into the NZFS communications centres.

And to belabour the point, what happens to brigades if their new priorities are yet to be finalised by the time the Act becomes law in July next year? Technically they will be acting outside the law if they work under the old law (although maybe there is an escape clause in there), or do OICs do what they have always done – make a decision and live with it?

## Whisper getting louder

There is a whisper going around about the demise of urban volunteers.

It's been heard before, but this time the whisper seems a little louder. On the surface it makes perfect sense. Career stations theoretically cover the urban areas where some volunteer stations grew up, and there is a certain argument over duplication of services, saving in station costs – in the Porirua basin alone, about \$2 million if volunteer stations go.

That's all very well and makes a nice balance sheet. But the major factor is, if volunteers don't take up the offer of retained status (we assume the offer will be made) there is a real problem of manpower. Lawmakers shouldn't make assumptions about retaining the bulk of current volunteers as there is no guarantee employers will give their staff time off to get paid by somebody else!

Of course, FENZ could employ more career staff and absorb the excess volunteer trucks, but they have to be accommodated, and that costs.

Then there is the question of urban stand-alone Operational Support brigades. Will they be fed to the insatiable maw of the god Contracted Out – we note the recent appearance of Downer specialised Incident Support Unit trucks with flashing lights, cones, brooms and revolving street sweepers on the front, etc, etc. Perhaps FENZ can also contract out traffic control, incident perimeter patrol and catering and ablutions to the Police!

Let's take the Porirua area as an example: volunteer stations at Porirua (as well as the career crews), Plimmerton and Titahi Bay. Take all the vollies away and what happens if while Porirua's two trucks are off at a third alarm, there is a serious medical in Titahi Bay and a fatal smash on State Highway 1 – not beyond the bounds of possibility. It can happen in the blink of an eye.

Who is going to apologise to the families who miss out?

**K1**

# Magirus prototype on the street soon

A Magirus HLF 10 one-off prototype, imported fully built-up from Europe, will be on somebody's streets this month. The trial programme has yet to be finalised.

Buying the European off-the-shelf appliance provides an opportunity to trial certain operational features. In particular, NZFS is interested in the pump control system, the custom crew cab and the equipment layout and locker features. These are notable differences with current appliances.

The Magirus' specifications are:

- Iveco ML140E25 chassis

- Allison automatic gearbox
- Magirus Team Cab
- 2000 lpm single stage pump
- Automatic pump control system
- 2000 litre water tank
- 100 litre foam tank
- Single hose reel.

The appliance will be trialed by a number of brigades, locations to be determined, and then be permanently allocated. All of the lessons learnt from the trial, will be incorporated in future appliance specifications and the procurement processes.



The appliance was on display at the recent AFAC conference in Australia and created considerable interest. This model comes with several crew cab layouts including six crew seats.

(Perhaps there is room in there for a transverse-mounted stretcher compartment and three crew seats ? – Ed)

# Intermediate vehicle on trial

A state-of-the-art Intermediate Capability appliance is being trialled by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. Slightly smaller than traditional appliances, it is equipped with cutting-edge ultra-high pressure lances and the latest rescue gear. It can be crewed by between 2 and 5 crew.

Designed and implemented with input from firefighters, it will if successful, be the start of a number of appliances to be rolled out in the county over the next year, including Southsea, Rushmoor, Basingstoke and Whitchurch stations.

The IC vehicle is part of a strategy that runs alongside the pioneering SAVE (Scan, Attack, Ventilate, Enter) approach that could shape the future of modern firefighting and was devised by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service.

This approach will be delivered by a new, more effective, three-tier vehicle fleet ranging from traditional-style engines to a First Response Capability vehicle.



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# FENZ team answers questions

We asked the FENZ Transition Project team to answer some of the most common questions about the transition to FENZ.

## Sector-wide questions

### 1) ***When will you be able to answer my questions?***

There are two really important reasons why some questions are not able to be answered in detail yet.

- The Fire and Emergency New Zealand Bill is not expected to become law until March/April 2017. The Bill sets out FENZ objectives, functions, and other details about New Zealand's fire services. The Bill could change following feedback from the public to the Select Committee. That's why the word 'proposed' is used in some answers.

- The FENZ Transition Project is working on a huge range of areas to get ready for Day One: 1 July, 2017. Amalgamating urban and rural fire services – involving people, assets, information technology, policies and processes – is no small job. Working with numerous stakeholders, taking into account a lot of feedback, and all significant decisions need to be signed off by the Board. This all takes time.

### 2) ***What will happen to my job?***

Decisions on structures and jobs cannot be made until the Board has a good understanding of how it

wants FENZ to work. As it will work closely with the sector on filling out this detail, it will take some time to complete, i.e. beyond Day One.

Bringing employees and volunteers from NZFS, NRFA and Rural Fire Authorities together, and adding in FENZ new powers and functions, will mean developing a new organisational structure, in time. In the meantime we want to ensure operational continuity (i.e. trucks will still roll out the door) and only make changes to roles where it is absolutely essential. It is likely that interim arrangements will need to be made for some parts of FENZ from Day One.

The Board will soon consider what interim arrangements will need to be made and once this has happened, these proposals will be shared more widely, and discussed with people who might be affected, including unions and associations.

Right now we know that, on 1 July 2017:

- NZFS and NRFA employees will automatically become employees of FENZ and will retain their existing entitlements under their employment agreements.
- Volunteers become FENZ personnel, so the new organisation will be better informed on, and able to better support and communicate with volunteers

over time. This does not detract from the local relationships that volunteers will continue to have with their local leaders, their brigade or fire force, and their community.

- Employees working for Rural Fire Authorities employed solely (whether part or full-time) on fire and emergency work, will transfer to FENZ with their new employment agreement reflecting their current entitlements.
- For local authority employees who perform some fire work (along with other work specific to the local authority), there will need to be a discussion with them and their current employer to work through future arrangements. This may be resolved either through an employment arrangement or an operational agreement between FENZ and the local authority, whatever is most suitable to the specific situation.

### 3) ***Who will I report to from 1 July 2017?***

This will be answered well before Day One. It's a vital part of carrying out FENZ work from 1 July 2017. The FENZ Transition Project says in its Day One Blueprint, which sets out the direction and priorities of the project's work to amalgamate urban and rural fire services: "The priority for Day One is to ensure that business as usual continues seamlessly in communities. This means making sure trucks go out the door, people know who they report to and what they're supposed to do, employees get paid, people feel supported and have access to the information and equipment they need to do their jobs."

The aim is to get clarity on reporting relationships before Christmas.

*What immunity provisions are there for firefighters?*  
Immunity will be provided to everyone carrying out (in good faith) the broader functions of FENZ. In

other words, firefighters will have a legal mandate for the non-fire work they are currently providing in communities (e.g. MVAs and natural disasters).

*What will be the relationship between volunteers and FENZ?*

All members of volunteer fire brigades and voluntary rural fire forces will become part of FENZ, the new single fire service, from 1 July 2017. Volunteers will continue to:

- be engaged locally by their brigade or voluntary rural fire force (VRFF);
- be organised in much the same way as they are now;
- have matters dealt with locally by brigade or fire force leaders wherever possible.

The FENZ Transition Project is working with the UFBA, FRFANZ and others on how things will work from Day One, and will make sure leaders and volunteers have information about what any changes mean to them.

4) ***What do we know about the Local Committees; their role, membership, appointment process and boundaries?***

Local committees are proposed under the FENZ legislation as advisors to FENZ on their local area's risks and needs. At this point it is expected there will be up to 16 local committees, although no decisions have yet been made. The committees have an advisory function – they will not make operational or management decisions for FENZ.

Before the local committees can be formally established there will be public consultation on the geographic boundaries for each committee. The public consultation isn't likely to start until after Day One. Given this, we will probably have interim arrangements in place to cover the gap.

The FENZ Transition Project is planning one or two pilot committees to test what is required and how it will work in local communities. We expect these pilot committees to start by early 2017 and will let you know more detail as we go along.

5) ***How will the new infringement scheme work?***

FENZ will have a range of compliance tools, from education and guidance to prosecutions to help improve fire safety. These tools will

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include a new infringement scheme. Infringement notices are designed for minor offences that don't require court proceedings, but need something more serious than a warning.

Under the Bill, FENZ will be able to authorise certain people to issue infringement notices (that is, not everyone will be authorised). Other FENZ people will continue to have a role in working with communities to help them understand fire safety and what they need to do to comply with the legislation.

The Board recognises that careful consideration must be given to how the enforcement process will work so that the trusted role firefighters have in their communities is maintained.

## Rural sector

### 6) *What will happen to assets bought through community fundraising?*

Some services have built up assets through fundraising and community donations, or have entered into financial or other non-financial arrangements. Those assets should continue to be used in the community/region that brought or fundraised for them using the philosophy that the assets obtained for a community, should be retained by the community.

You can read more about assets in the new Assets Fact Sheet under 'Information' on the FENZ project website.

For more information go to [www.fenzproject.co.nz](http://www.fenzproject.co.nz). Send any questions to [myvoice@fenzproject.co.nz](mailto:myvoice@fenzproject.co.nz).

# Day One blueprint adopted

A picture of what FENZ will look like is emerging.

The establishment of FENZ moved a step closer last month after the Board formally approved a FENZ Blueprint from 1 July, 2017. "The Day One Blueprint is a key document," said chair Paul Swain. "It sets the direction for the work that needs to be done by the Transition Project Team and the sector over the next nine months.

"The ultimate goal is a unified fire and emergency organisation by the end of the four-year transition. The initial goal is to amalgamate urban and rural fire services into one cohesive organisation for 1 July, or Day One. The most important of the Blueprint's aims is operational continuity.

"The Blueprint lays out what FENZ will look like on that date and how things will work. It also lays out what changes people inside and outside FENZ can expect to see.



"A point I want to stress is that the establishment of FENZ is only the start of the process. We've got four years to move to a fully unified organisation and we're going to take our time to get it right. The Blueprint is not set in stone. It can change to reflect feedback as we move further into the transition process."

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**Chair Paul Swain**

From Day One, most things will stay the same, although there are likely to be some interim arrangements, he said. "Our people will be kept involved and informed as we go along." The Board is now focusing on the detail required to make the organisation effective from Day One, and monitoring progress.

To read the Day One Blueprint, go to [www.fenzproject.co.nz](http://www.fenzproject.co.nz).

More detail is available in the FAQs on the website.

Send any questions to [myvoice@fenzproject.co.nz](mailto:myvoice@fenzproject.co.nz).

There are opportunities for secondments into the Transition Project team. Go to <http://fenzproject.co.nz/opportunities/>

## Firefighters killed

Eight Russian firefighters died recently when the roof of a plastics warehouse collapsed. Firefighters had been battling a blaze in the 16,000 sq m warehouse for 13 hours and rescued more than 100 workers.

And in New York a few days ago a battalion chief was killed by flying debris and 12 others were injured when a Bronx house exploded. It is thought the residence was a marijuana nursery and the explosion cause was probably a gas leak.



## Top shelf

***Debunking myths about soft leadership and exploring it to achieve organizational excellence and effectiveness*** M.S. Rao, (2016)

The purpose of this paper is to debunk myths about soft leadership. It calls for companies exploring this new leadership perspective to achieve organisational excellence and effectiveness; and countries to achieve peace and prosperity. This new leadership perspective can be adopted by leaders for companies and countries. The social implications of this research suggests that leaders can improve employees' performance and productivity by treating them as partners.

*Industrial and Commercial Training*, Vol. 48 Iss: 7, pp.362 – 366

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***Creating a Relationship with Your Water System***  
WODICKA, REID A.

The article discusses the importance of the collaboration between the fire departments and water system operators, wherein it reveals several ways to create a good relationship.

*Fire Engineering*. Aug2016, Vol. 369 Issue 8, p14-16. 2p.

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***Youth firesetting and intellectual disabilities***

Explains the correlation between intellectual disabilities and firesetting in children. Also explains the psychology and culture that can lead to firesetting behaviour.

*Fire Engineering*, September 2016 (vol 169, iss. 9)

## 'That's what you do!'

Kings Park firefighter Roseanne Kleppsattel was returning from her husband's funeral – on the back of a fire engine – when they hit traffic on the Long Island Expressway. A five-vehicle crash had temporarily shut down the westbound lanes. A woman was trapped in her car, pinned next to a bus.

Kleppsattel – whose husband was a former Kings Park fire chief – stood with the hoses and helped out, wearing her dress and her late husbands' fire jacket.

Police officers were stunned when they spoke to the fire crew on scene and learned they'd just escorted the widow. They couldn't believe Kleppsattel jumped out herself to help, but she told them: "That's what you do."

The victim, who was trapped in her car, suffered non life-threatening injuries.

## Joint team on MAN

A joint NZFS/PFA team is working on the structural and performance issues with the MAN T3 appliances. Excellent progress reports are available on Firenet (so far, MAN newsletters 1 and 2) – all you wanted to know, and more.

There are 19 MAN trucks in service and no more will be introduced until all issues are fixed and tested. Auckland City and Christchurch City are using relief pumps in the interim. The current phase of the Fraser Fire and MAN remedial programme (strengthening doors, replacing rivets, securing panels, etc) has been completed on most appliances.

The joint investigative group has met to decide on a robust testing regime, once the defect issues have been resolved. That testing should be in 3 to 4 months' time.

## Last call



**John Arthur**

former SO Wellington

**Bruce Popple**

former SO Wellington City

**Haydn Fraser**

QF Auckland City Fire Area

**Kevin William Adie** QFSM

former SO Hastings

## October 2016

# Same circus, different clowns

Fire and rescue services worldwide are on their own journeys, most still grappling with what is diversity to them, and why is it necessary, according to SO Bronnie Mackintosh, currently a regional training instructor for Fire & Rescue, NSW.

Presenting at AFAC 2016, she pointed out that the past five years have seen the most rapid changes within Australasian urban fire agencies. Advances in technology and equipment have been readily embraced, but the changes in social capital have been glacially slow.

"All urban fire agencies in Australasia have now developed recruitment strategies for diversifying their operational workforce which has been met with fear, resistance and backlash for those employed during such campaigns. A summary of these strategies indicates that improving the statistics at recruitment is the easy part – ensuring cultural inclusion of a diverse workforce, recruited amidst fears of lowered standards and reverse discrimination is the ongoing challenge.

Achieving a desirable 'End State' is a vision that sees the normalisation of women and diversity within frontline rescue services. "The idea is to foster the relationships and build support networks in the Australian urban fire service that reflect the community in which we live, work and serve. By mirroring the makeup of the society in which we live, rescue services become better able to help people."

Bronnie won the Churchill Fellowship in 2015 and her aim was to research recruitment of women in the fire service. "The End State was firmly at the forefront of my mind when devising my approach. I came to the conclusion that in the simplest terms, this End State needed to be pursued 'one conversation at a time.' " Her epic Churchill journey took in 10 countries in 10 weeks, 33 flights, 40 cities and she met people from 40 different fire departments, including the world's largest in NYC, Tokyo and London.

"I now know that one conversation at a time alone won't create that desired End State. Apart from learning there are multiple cogs in this metaphorical machine of inclusion, the most obvious learning from this global research of world's best practice is that every single urban fire service is facing the same challenges of diversifying its operational staff.

"As an American fire chief said: "Same circus, different clowns".

"Most fire and rescue service are also focussing on creating their own End State of Inclusion that is integrated in effective, efficient and sustainable service delivery. Anecdotally, it's fair to say that Australia is somewhere in the first two-thirds varying from why to how."

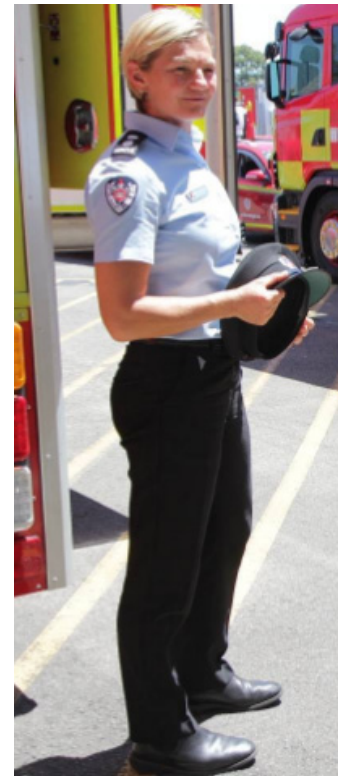
Her Churchill Fellowship research task was to research the three predominant recruitment strategies used globally: Quotas, Targeted Recruitment and Social Change programmes. "All three recruitment strategies are valid. As single strategies, they have all served their purpose statistically. I believe there is room for all of them to achieve an End State of Inclusion. But just as one conversation may be too slow, so too is focusing on one strategy. I believe we need a combination of all three.

"We need numbers through the door to have a foundation that normalises fire and rescue roles for women. What if we aimed for 15% as a target? Across a spectrum of women (across all racial backgrounds, because we know there are female firefighters in Japan, Hong Kong, India, even Iran), we can safely say that 15% fit the physical and psychological profile for doing team-based work. Work that is hot, dirty and requires lateral thinking to problem-solve. And the

emotional intelligence required to engage with our communities in prevention and preparedness programmes. The US Dept of Labour currently set 17% as the standard cultural competence benchmark.

"The three fire services I visited in India currently have a 33% quota for women in government jobs. Given the lack of modern equipment, including an absence of breathing apparatus in many places, as well as an intensely patriarchal society, I found this incredibly progressive. The women firefighters I met in Jaipur were not

**Bronnie Mackintosh**



only empowered firefighters, but women afforded freedom from the rural child-bride pathway as well as improving their social status overall. This was one of the trip's highlights."

Bronnie said targeted recruitment is needed to ensure numbers reflect diversity in operations as well as leadership. "LAFD has the best targeted recruitment programme. Change was created by litigation and a community demanding transparency. It prompted Mayor Garcetti to overhaul the entire recruitment process: 10,000 applicants sit the entrance exam, then the suitable candidates are grouped to mirror the ethnic breakdown of the community they serve.

"Alternate pathways that are designed to fast track leadership for viable candidates should also be considered to promote innovation, continuous learning and inclusiveness. Such initiatives can future-proof fire and rescue against the next era of cutbacks and government reform. The UK effectively used diversity and cutbacks to reinvent its fire and rescue



**Malaysian women are up for it – there were 520 in March, 2106.**

services towards a prevention-based focus. It reflects the community and works with it to spend less time fighting fires and more in education, prevention and protection.

### **Social change required**

"Ultimately, we need to change the fabric of society. Real and lasting change needs to be a 5-10 year plan in which our broader society knows and understands the diversity of our fire and emergency service role. It embraces women having equal access to careers and conditions. And respect and tolerance for our diverse traits and capabilities. Social change has to happen in the schools of our communities. Kids must see that firefighters are not one-size-fits-all. And most importantly, we show them that they can be one of us if they choose."

The statistics from the girl's fire camps in USA and Canada, the high school and cadet programmes in UK and USA were Bronnie's best proof that social change programmes result in improved recruitment of women and people of colour.

"I looked to London for its recruitment strategies and found a seven-year hiring freeze. But a progressive programme I saw was the collaboration between services to close community 'risk' loops. During the Big Freeze last winter, fire crews conducted compulsory 'safe and well visits' to identify any risk factors and notify the relevant authorities. This meant medical and home safety issues could be passed onto relevant agencies and other concerns to the police, mitigating the risk of possible emergency in the future.

"The collaboration between the services not only prevented fire emergencies, but engaged the community to make their homes and families safer."



**An Iranian woman career firefighter with one her Karaj brigade's quick response motorbikes. They say the hijab does not prevent them from taking a full part in firefighting.** Photo: MEHR

The UK inclusion experience is far more advanced than anything Bronnie had seen. Yet challenges remain.

"If the general population believes being a firefighter is reserved for those who can physically carry another (even average sized) person out of a flaming building, it's hardly surprising the view that women are not physically capable of the job remains. Yet only a handful of men in the thousands I have met and worked alongside would come close to such a feat. Their strength does not lie in their physical stature, but in a diverse range of skills. Skills they share with other less physically imposing team members," she concluded.

*Bronnie has been a firefighter for 13 years and played professional rugby in the USA before joining the service – she played 15 tests for Australia. She has a bachelor's degree in sport science and is Chair of the Australasian Women and Firefighting Association.*



# Record number of NZFS volunteers

There are currently more volunteer firefighters in New Zealand than ever before, according to NZFS figures that say there are only 370 vacancies.

Adding up the number of volunteers each brigade would ideally like to have, gives a national total of 8500. At the end of August, 53 stations were under 80% establishment, including 31 under 70%.

Over 20 years NZFS has seen an incremental increase in recruitment while turnover has remained relatively static at around 11%. Every year around 900 new volunteers are trained. Overall, that more than adequately replaces leavers. However, the national volunteer figure does mask pockets of variability with some brigades struggling to attract and retain members. While the total number of willing, competent people volunteering with the Fire Service has never been greater, the volunteer model is becoming harder to sustain in some communities as the rural workforce shrinks and the population changes.

About half of volunteers leave within five years of service and a significant portion are under 35. This is not unusual for emergency sector volunteers and the broader voluntary sector. Apart from resignations – where reasons aren't provided – the two most cited reasons for Fire Service volunteers leaving are: leaving the district or personal reasons.

time as shown in the low turnover rate. It's a much sought-after career path – in the last career round 1200 applicants applied for 48 positions.

## Major focus

A major focus of the current transition is to support volunteers: \$191 million additional funding over four years will be used to build a unified fire services organisation under FENZ. Nearly half will go towards improving support for volunteers (\$23 million per year over four years).

Under FENZ, volunteers will be organised in a way similar to how brigades and volunteer rural fire forces are now. It's important to retain the local identity of fire services, and their roles in communities. The move to a unified fire services organisation will enable more support to be provided to volunteers, as sustaining volunteerism is core to the fire services reform, says the NZFS.

During 2014, the Fire Service's senior leadership team travelled around the country and spoke to approximately 50% of the workforce. Less than 0.5% raised bullying as a concern. The Fire Service is a very large organisation, with over 10,000 personnel working alongside each other, often in high pressured situations. Bullying will not be tolerated and when it comes to our attention, all incidents will be investigated, said National Commander Paul Baxter.

Like many other volunteer organisations and

emergency services in particular, the Fire Service has long been grappling with ways to support the volunteer workforce. Supporting volunteers can be deceptively challenging and requires sustained and dedicated organisational effort. As a volunteer-dependent organisation we are aware of the challenges ahead and strive to do better by our volunteers, said Mr Baxter.

## Birkenhead goes public

Birkenhead volunteer OIC Shane Prince appeared in the *New Zealand Herald* recently talking about 30 vacancies across the Waitemata area. That exposure produced 10 possible recruits for Birkenhead. "Three dropped out immediately once they understood the commitment level. The others are going through the process – if a couple of them drop out in the first three

## Gold Stars

*50 Year Medal for September*

**Henry Waitoa**

Christchurch Airport

*Gold Stars for August and September were:*

**Robert Orr**

Waiau Pa

**Robert Ngatoa**

Marton

**John Boswell**

Henderson

**Sheldon Martin**

Rangiwahia

**John Bambry**

Pongaroa

**Kevin Malcolm, Martin**

**Rendall**

Alexandra

**Blair Symons**

Otautau

**Nigel Moore**

Gore

**Michael Uren**

Seddon

**Robert Neame**

Wakefield

**Ian Wellings**

Tokoroa

**Robert Hancock**

Stoke

years, we'll still rate that a success. We are particularly fortunate to pick up a couple who live very close to the station who have just moved into the area and were wondering what community activities they could get involved in."

Retention is a problem for composite stations, says Shane. "We are second truck in the evenings and the weekends. Occasionally we'll get a daytime weekday call if there is a really big job, and we can usually manage to get a truck out the door." But boredom can be a big factor. "My son transferred to Silverdale and is a different person – enthusiastic and ready for the next one. Silverdale volunteers are first truck to everything in their area, and he is loving it – MVAs, structure fires, etc, etc."

Recruiting and retaining volunteers is not a new problem and brigades everywhere are looking for solutions. Right across the USA, fire departments are getting deeper and deeper into social media to make contact with younger residents. Across Texas in the last decade there have been 80,000 less recruits signed up, than per normal. The lack of work in small towns these days is quoted as one of the main reasons, and the fact that many families now have to have two incomes to make ends meet, leaving far less hours for volunteering.

In some American college towns, students live free on station in exchange for a place on the roster. The Kentucky legislature is looking at a \$1000 tax credit for firefighter volunteers.

## Refugees save brigade

The Victorian CFA brigade at Noble Park almost closed last year until it began approaching refugees and migrants, many of whom have been more than happy to do something for their community. Abbas Abdollah was one of 100 people on a fishing boat. The Australian Navy saved him and his fellow travellers and he believes he owes duty. There are 16 languages spoken at the brigade and the now healthy roster

sheet has over 50 names, nearly half of them born overseas.

It is probably no surprise, but a number of studies come back to the same thing: a brigade's best recruiter is a current firefighter who is positive in his/her experience with the brigade. And the follow-up needs to be a positive, organised programme that immediately makes the recruit part of the brigade.

## Question EVERYTHING !





# 70 shillings a week man

Colonial photographer William A. Price took this evocative portrait of Fireman Eddie M. P. Rexworthy standing proudly in front of Auckland Fire Board's 1910 Dennis fire engine. Taken in the old Auckland Central Fire Station in Pitt St in 1914, the Dennis was capable of pumping 800 gallons per minute (3600 litres per minute).

At that time Fireman Rexworthy was earning around £3 10s a week, while his colleagues in Wellington were earning around £4 – about \$380 in today's equivalent. A considerable amount of his four days on – one day off duty hours was spent in polishing and maintaining all the brass work and splendid hand painting and lining evident on the bodywork behind him.

His brass helmet was not for decoration, it was his turnout helmet as were the woollen clothes, similar to this dress set he is wearing in the picture. Self-contained breathing apparatus was years into the future, as were flash hoods, and specialist designed PPE.

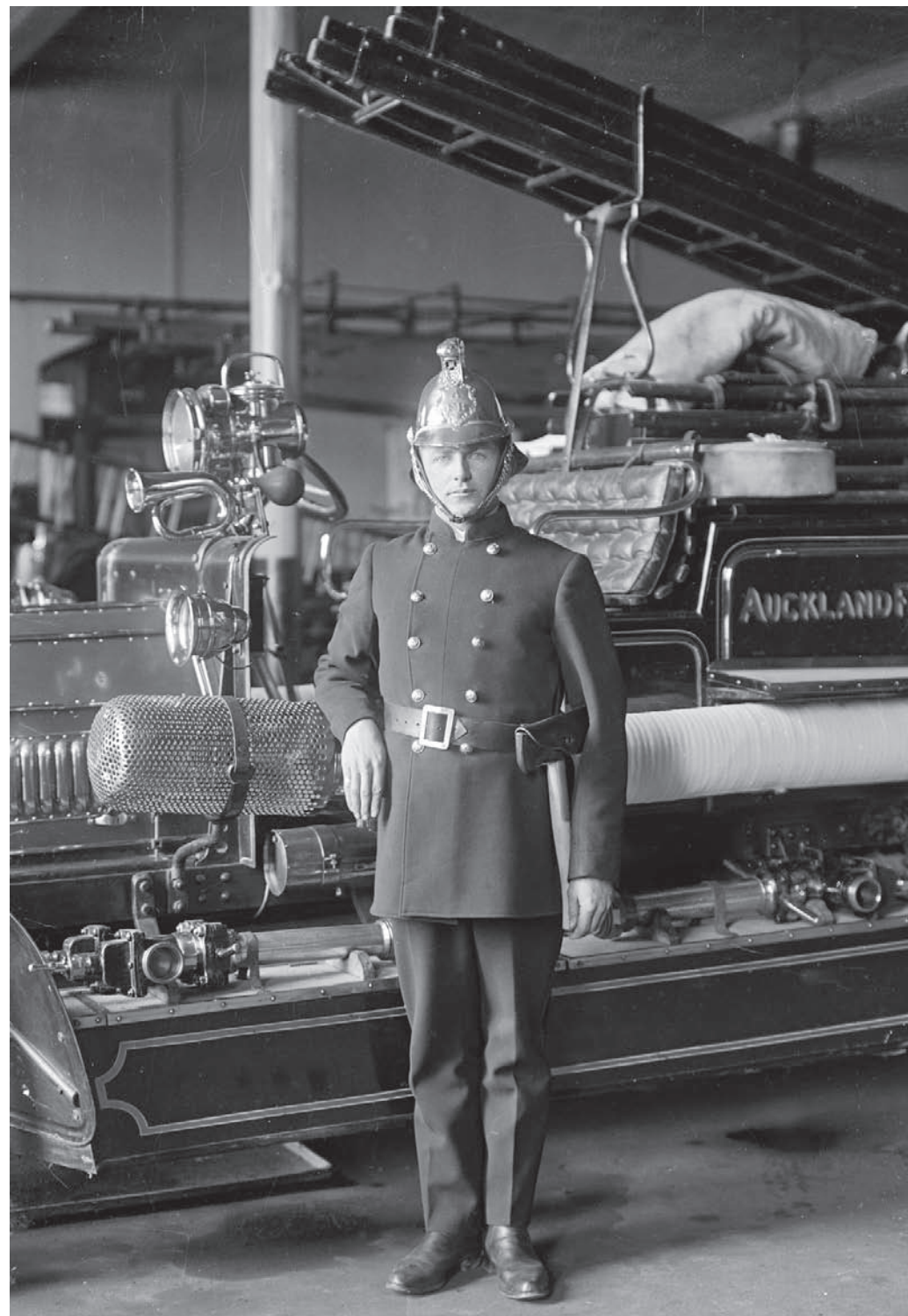
Corporal Edward Mitchell Pharazyn Rexworthy took part in the landings at Gallipoli at the start of the Anzac campaign, was injured but recovered to be transferred to France where he was killed in action at the Somme on October 4, 1916.

Researching this article, co-editor Russell Postlewaight found Rexworthy and his Postlewaight grandfather had fought alongside each other in both theatres 100 years ago.

## Chiefs suspended over behaviour

Two Florida chiefs were placed on 30 days' suspension without pay after an investigation uncovered the use of racial and homophobic slurs, bullying and belittling behaviour. The behaviour is thought to have been long-term.

Both chiefs will have to go through managerial seminars that will include diversity and cultural training. They will also have to sign a last-chance agreement. If they violate the agreement, it will result in immediate termination.





# World's smallest fire station

The north Yorkshire volunteer fire station at Goathland has been officially recognised as the smallest station in the world by the Guinness Book of Records. There is room to park the Landrover appliance and not much else.

Goathland village is isolated enough at the heart of the North Yorkshire Moors National Park to need separate cover and is Yorkshire's only non-career

or retained brigade. The stone garage is only 4 x 6 metres, but home for its nine-strong crew. There is a filing cabinet at the back, and that is the stopping point for the Landrover, said firefighter Chris Barker.

Their personal gear hangs on the side walls, but there is no running water or toilet – they use bottled water and have a key to the public toilets nearby.

The gear carried on the Landrover is tailored to local needs and carries its own water and two BA sets. The crew are trained for the full range of jobs from structure fires to scrub fires, but the callouts tend to concentrate on blazes on the moors and car crashes.

Callouts per year vary from 25 to 50.

The village is not only famous for its fire station – it was the setting for Aidensfield in the tv series *Heartbeat* and its railway station featured in the Harry Potter films as Hogsmeade station, as did some of the local railway line.



© Ross Parry Agency

## FDNY to deploy drones

New York firefighters will soon be using drones to help with second alarm and above calls.

"It is without doubt, the most boring drone on the planet," said Tim Herlocker, director of FDNY's operations centre – It goes up and it comes down on a 60m tether. But the \$US85,000 craft has very expensive high definition video cameras and infra-red equipment for real-time imaging.

Operating in New York City presents a number of challenges, he said. For instance, almost three-quarters of the city is classified by the federal authorities as restricted airspace, leaving it off limits to drones, even those flown by public agencies. To work around that, FDNY has reached an agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration.

Another hurdle is the city landscape, with its tall buildings and narrow, congested streets, where a drone's GPS component might have difficulty getting reception, or the device could get tangled in trees.

"We're working toward being able to deploy this anywhere in the city, regardless of the terrain around it and the obstacles that we face." One solution was adding the tether, a thin white cable attached at the bottom that allows the drone to stay aloft indefinitely and send back an uninterrupted video feed. It has GPS connections that make sure the drone stays in the same place, its rotors automatically speeding up and slowing down in response to the wind.

# From Tikokino to the world

Chief of tiny Tikokino brigade and a jet-setting international pump sales executive wouldn't, at first glance, have a lot in common. However, what CFO Mike Harrison learned on the job, has had a major effect on his future.

A mechanic and owner of a lawnmower shop in Napier, he was re-conditioning pumps for the NZFS. He and other firefighters found the portable pumps of the 1990s hideous to use, so when he ran out of NZFS pumps to work on, he set to designing his own, merging popular designs into a high-volume, high-pressure pump. "The best that was on offer at the time was very low volume, low pressure powered by dated engines." Even when Mike had repowered them, they weren't great.

The largest of the resulting Phoenix fire pumps can shift 2000 litre/min at 700 kpa (100 psi), and comes on a trolley: that's the same rating as Tikokino's current Mitsubishi appliance. At the other end of the scale are 18hp and 23hp pumps Phoenix supplies to NZFS. These shift between 600 and 750 l/m at 700 kpa. There are now six models of land fire pumps, plus an add-on to convert an engine into fire pump, and five marine choices.

Mike established Vortex Holdings and realising New Zealand was too small a market even for a niche pump business, he took the design to a trade fair in Italy. UK-based Angus Fire liked it, and asked him to produce the Phoenix under the Angus brand.

Some smart sales decisions mean Phoenix is not distributed to areas where the main Angus brand is exported: for instance, Indonesia and India, which are

showing strong growth, and China. Mike had been wary of China copying his design, but he says it turns out they are not interested in small niche stuff. Shell Oil in Nigeria is a steady customer buying around 20 units a year.

With business doing well, Mike shifted to Onekawa in Napier to bigger premises, but the area proved too dusty for precision engineering, so the company is

back in sleepy Tikokino where the only dust raised is by tourists having taken a wrong turn doing the vineyard trails.

Mike's mechanical and fire background is ideal for pump sales. His customers want to see the product, and see it working. "Generally you have to demonstrate the product, so it ends up in quite a few air points." He loves watching how different handle the same product. "The Indian firefighters, for

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**Mike does his bit on the hand-build assembly line.**

Photo: courtesy Hawkes Bay Today



**K1**



instance, have a lot of flooding issues at monsoon time, so the pumps are used for moving water rather than firefighting."

Various fire services have varying add-ons but being a small production lines means it is a particular hassle to have pumps with dual manual/electric start or specific size couplings, etc.

The company turns out about 150 hand-built pumps a year, some worth \$20,000 each, which is good business for a team of three and a contract body moulder in Napier.

## 24 crews at plastics fire

Twenty-four crews fought a fire in a Henderson plastics factory a few days ago.

Residents say there was a series of explosions that continued as the first crews arrived, and the fire is being treated as suspicious. While the business owner was fully insured, the building owner confirmed it was not fitted with fire alarms or sprinklers. The building was gutted and an adjoining car wrecker was also razed. Residents were advised to stay indoors due to possible toxic smoke and crews also had to dam run-off.



## Anne back on the job ...

Palmerston North firefighter Anne Cairns is back on the job after fulfilling a dream to compete at the absolute top level of sport.

The Olympian, who represented Samoa in the canoe K1 200, has represented New Zealand in several water sports in the past and nearly made it to the Beijing Olympics with the New Zealand K4 crew until a residency problem with one of the crew stopped that.

Now she is back on shift among the firefighters who did so much to help her prepare, but part of her is still thousands of kilometres away in Rio. "Definitely a highlight was having my family there to be part of the Olympic experience. Having done all of my competing and travel for the last three years completely on my own without a coach, manager or other support, made this all the more fulfilling."

Anne was pleased with her racing, making some major gains in terms of measurable performance compared with world champs last year. Not progressing to the semi-finals was disappointing, and for once she wished she had been drawn in a heat with Lisa Carrington!

In kayaking, the semi-finals berths are decided on placings, not times. "Had I been in one of the other heats, I would easily have made it through to the semis, by five seconds! It's basically just bad luck to draw that heat. Although I pretty

much paddled my personal best time, I was unable to cause an upset and make the next round."

She said the virus alarm came to nothing. "I saw three mosquitos the whole time I was there and they were on the bus, so were easily squished. To think that people didn't go to the Olympics and cited zika as their main reason, seems such a shame."

Anne had a 30km race at the end of September for waka ama long distance nationals at Mount Maunganui where she will race in both the singles and six women crew events. "Then racing at World Masters Games in kayaking and surf ski. Whitewater rafting world champs are in Japan next year as well, so I've got plenty to keep myself busy."

Anne didn't leave Rio with a medal, but she did come home with a ring, after her partner made a surprise proposal on top of Rio's world-famous Sugar Loaf Mountain.



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# Simon East top driver

Cust firefighters are in the safe hands of this year's driving champion, Simon East, pictured right with UFBA vice-president Alan Kittelty. The mid-Canterbury brigade driver took out the title at Ruapuna with 413.6 penalties over previous champion Braden Hammond from Bulls (448.1 penalties) and Lincoln's Richard Reid in third on 482.7 penalties.

Simon also is the inaugural winner of the National Fleet Manager's Trophy for Top Rookie. The new competition pushed entries to a record 96 drivers – 46 were new competitors.



Photos: **Kirsten Bolton**, UFBA



## Cairns case concluded

The long-running legal dispute between former Kaiapoi firefighter Brent Cairns and the NZFS has concluded with a confidential settlement.

No other information is available.

## Couple burned for \$37m

Two Oregon state residents are facing a \$37m bill for extinguishing a wildfire that burned more than 10,520 hectares.

The Oregon State Department of Forestry plans to bill two men the full cost of putting out the month-long Stouts Creek fire in 2015 after determining the illegal use of their lawnmowers caused it. Both men were cited for using lawnmowers – illegal at that time of year between 10 am and 8 pm – which started the fire.

"We're trying to make people aware that they have some responsibility -- so people know there are consequences when you start a wildfire," said Forestry Department's Jeff Bonebrake. "If we can prevent one, that saves everyone a lot of grief."

The wildfire started July 30, 2015, forcing evacuations and burning over 10,500 hectares of timber and wildlife habitat on private and national forest land over the course of a month. Oregon holds people financially responsible for the costs of extinguishing fires, with the US\$37 million bill expected to cover the costs of firefighting crews, helicopters and bulldozers used to suppress the fire.





**Killer earthquakes in Italy.** Photo: CNN



**One-in-a-thousand year floods in Louisiana and record fires in California.** Photos: VOAnews and Los Angeles Times.

## Cometh the hour ...

**Putting out car fires after a barrel bomb strike in Syria.**  
Photo: AFP



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