

Paul Swain talking points for Thursday 27/4

- Thank you Minister for that update and thank you for championing and leading this major change to how fire and emergency services are delivered in New Zealand.
- And thank you to you all here today for your work so far on this project. We couldn't have got where we are today without you.
- I and the Board and management really appreciate your efforts and contribution.
- Nine months ago in this very room we all came together and we asked you then to work with us and help us build this new organisation – Fire and Emergency New Zealand.
- Hopefully today you'll see your contributions coming through strongly.
- I want to start with another request today because 1 July is just the start for us and we need you to keep working with us as we create Fire and Emergency New Zealand.
- These are the biggest changes in a generation – so we're taking our time to do it right.
- We want to keep working with you, and our partners, to build this new organisation over the next three years.
- The reasons and thinking behind Fire and Emergency New Zealand are worth remembering.
- Our firefighters are doing a great job right now, 24/7, right around the country whether you are career or volunteer, urban or rural.
- Our urban and rural fire services have long and proud histories.

- New Zealanders know help is close at hand because our unique mix of career and volunteer firefighters allow us to cover the whole country.
- Originally firefighters just focused on fire. Now they do a whole lot more, such as responding to motor vehicle crashes, medical emergencies, hazardous materials spillages, storms, floods, earthquakes and a wide range of rescue situations.
- In addition to the ongoing fire risk and these extra demands, there are more extreme weather events, and the population is ageing and changing.
- This is changing the work we do and how we approach it.
- The law, funding and structures have not kept pace with these changes.
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand is our and the government's response to this changing world.
- We want to take the best of our urban and rural services and add a suitable structure and funding to create a unified, well-coordinated, well-funded organisation that will deliver for our people and their communities now and in the future.
- We want to build something not only durable but also practical that works for our people because they are the ones on the frontline.
- We've been very fortunate to have the Government and Minister so committed to this project. They also given us two important things - money and time.
- Money to make it work and make sure all our people are supported – especially rural and volunteer.
- We've also been given the time to get it right, this has enabled us to split the work into three phases:

1. Amalgamation - 1 July

2. Integration – 1 July 2017-2020

3. Unification – 2020 onwards

- The focus has been on getting to 1 July with as little disruption as possible for our people so that we respond to fires and emergencies on 1 July just as well as we will on 30 June.
- To make this happen, we've been clear that we need the right management structure.
- We believe that we need a Chief Executive overseeing the whole organisation and the transition work, and a National Commander for urban and a National Manager for rural focusing on operations - so that the trucks continue to roll out the door in response to calls for help.
- We hope to be making announcements on those appointments later next week.
- The three key priorities for us for 1 July are:
 - o To make sure that our people can transfer to Fire and Emergency New Zealand smoothly,
 - o That our new organisation can function well from day one; and
 - o That we have the policies in place so that we can effectively perform our roles.
- In a moment, Kevin O'Connor, National Rural Fire Officer, Kerry Gregory, Deputy National Commander and Richard Stewart, Transition team leader, will take you through those priorities in some detail.

- This is all about making sure that we, as an organisation, make your job easier so you can all best serve our communities now and in the future.
- We are taking the best of our history and expertise and adding that to a new organisation to make this a reality.
- We are creating a world-leading, integrated, well-co-ordinated Fire and Emergency service that:
 - Reduces unwanted fires
 - Responds to fires and emergencies whenever and wherever they occur across the country
 - Works with our communities so that they are better prepared for whatever comes their way, and,
 - Helps our communities recover quickly.
- New Zealanders already know we are there for them and with Fire and Emergency New Zealand, they will know that we will be side-by-side with them in the future.
- We are very excited about the coming months and years. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for us all to build Fire and Emergency New Zealand.
- It is going to take all of us, working together to achieve it.
- As a career firefighter said to me recently:
 - "Thanks for helping to build my house but after you've gone, I'm going to have to live in it."
 - Let's all build the house that firefighters will be proud to live in.
- Thank you.