

## FAQs for Year One Volunteer Support initiatives

Fire and Emergency New Zealand are committed to making it easier to be a volunteer and to recognise volunteers and their contribution. As part of this a range of volunteer support initiatives have been developed and will be added to over the next three years.

### What are the Year One volunteer support initiatives?

The Year One volunteer support initiatives are a starting point that we will build on. They are, in addition to other initiatives approved separately, and include:

- 62 'full time equivalent' roles for additional training, development, in-field support, administration and co-ordinator roles supporting urban volunteer brigades and voluntary rural fire forces.
- An additional \$2.6 million for local and flexible volunteer training and locally-based pilots to identify new ways to meet the differing needs of individual brigades and volunteer rural fire forces and reduce administrative burden.
- Clarity and simplification of existing reimbursement and payment processes for volunteers.

Volunteers will also have access to Advocacy and Support services, as well as Volunteer Issues and Interim Dispute Resolution processes, and Safety, Health and Wellbeing initiatives (such as psychological support, vaccination programme for all volunteers, and health monitoring).

### How many new roles will be introduced in Year One to support urban volunteer brigades and voluntary rural fire forces?

Sixty-two 'full-time equivalent' roles for additional training, development, in-field support and co-ordinator roles will be filled during the first year of Fire and Emergency New Zealand to support urban volunteer brigades and voluntary rural fire forces. These are:

- 8 (of up to 15) x additional Volunteer Support Officers to increase provision of support to volunteers in key Areas (Urban)
- 5 x support roles to ensure provision of support in rural areas, and to help close gaps in the new organisational structure (Rural)
- 12 x additional Capability Trainers to help improve Brigade operational response capability and sustainability (Urban)
- 5 x Regional Training Coordinators to be integrated into regional training teams to help reduce training administration, and to ensure the right training support is in place (Rural)
- 2 x Volunteer Development Managers, as a pilot, to help build leadership, team and support capability, including understanding of volunteer development needs (Rural and Urban)
- 1 x new trainer to deliver an additional 10 'brigade training officer' training courses, adapted to the rural environment (Rural)
- 1 x Recruitment Coordinator (Rural), 1 x recruitment administrator, and 1 x fixed term recruitment support assistant within the Volunteer Resilience Team (Rural and Urban)
- 1 x fixed term business analyst, and 2 x fixed term process redesign specialists to help ease administrative burden (Rural and Urban)
- 10 full time equivalents across two Regions to 'pilot' new ways of delivering support to volunteers (Rural and Urban)
- 10 x additional Safety, Health and Wellbeing Coordinators to provide advice to leaders and assist with meeting compliance requirements (Rural and Urban)
- 2 x volunteer data coordinators and 1 x business analyst to maintain volunteer data, including for facilitation of communications direct with all volunteers (Rural and Urban)



## **What are the volunteer support pilots that are being proposed?**

Within the suite of initiatives, there are four components which are new ideas to be piloted and used to inform the development of future initiatives for volunteer support. These include:

- 2 x new Volunteer Development Manager positions to work with Brigades and Fire Forces with a focus on learning and development.
- Funding the UFBA to provide financial management training and support to Brigades and Fire Forces.
- An in-field support pilot for regions to determine how the funding is best spent.
- Using online technology to source ideas from volunteers on how to improve support to volunteers.

The key aims of the pilots would be to:

- Provide the opportunity for volunteers to contribute ideas for improvements in support available for volunteers.
- Provide an opportunity for two Regions to design and trial innovative and flexible solutions that are based on local needs.
- To assist with the design of the future operating model and organisational structure.

We will talk to volunteers and others over the coming months about what these pilots might look like. The pilots are expected to be rolled out from the beginning of 2018.

## **What are the health and wellbeing initiatives that will be offered to volunteers?**

- Access to psychological support for all volunteers
- 10 additional Safety, Health and Wellbeing coordinators working at a regional level
- Extended health monitoring, including vaccinations and training for all volunteers

## **What package of ACC support/top up funding is available if a volunteer is injured in a response with a local volunteer brigade or voluntary rural fire force (e.g. for self-employed Volunteer)?**

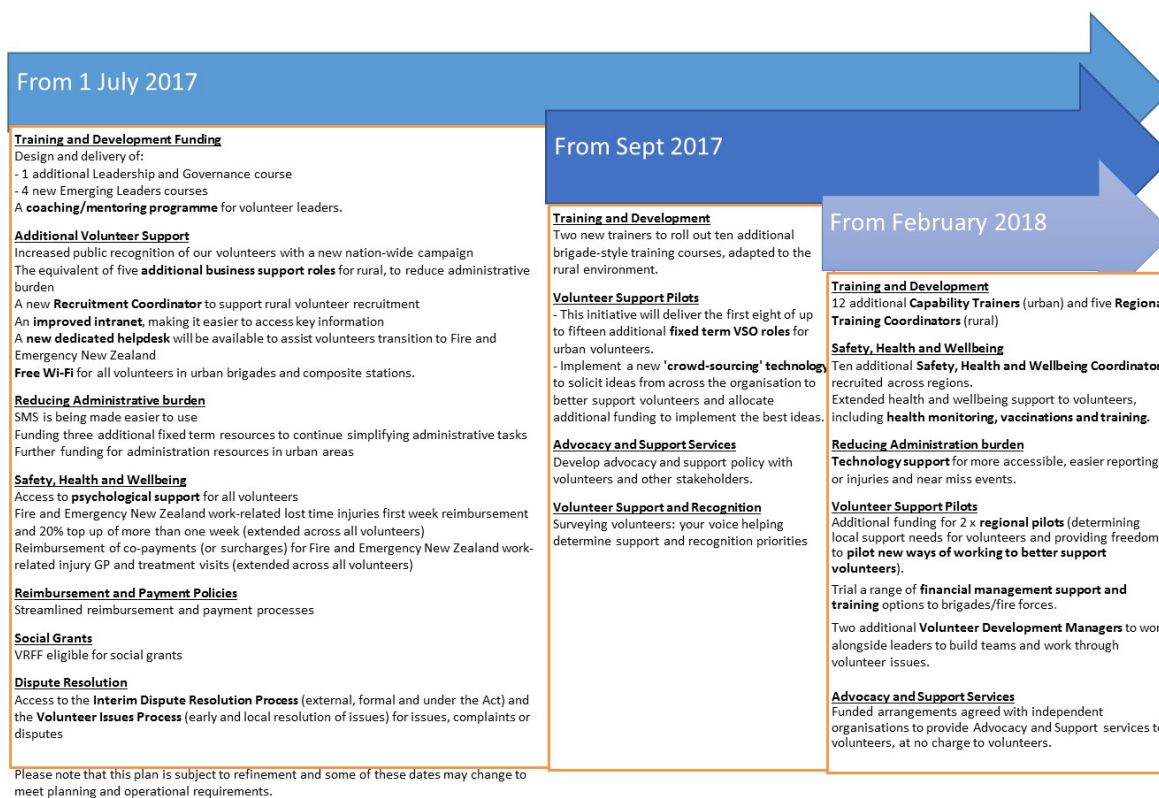
For Fire and Emergency New Zealand volunteers who are injured during the course of our incident response activities, and where there is lost time from their usual employment or self-employment because of the injury, ACC will manage the injury claim and the payment of any weekly compensation entitlement.

Through the UFBA administered Accident Assurance process, funded by Fire and Emergency New Zealand, volunteers can apply for reimbursement for the first week of lost time (not paid by ACC for 'non-work' injuries) and a 20% top up of the ACC calculated 80% weekly compensation entitlement.

The injured volunteer will also be reimbursed for any co-payment costs of GP medical visits or treatment such as physiotherapy that they may have had to pay, in relation to the injury incurred while 'working' for the organisation.

## When will these initiatives be implemented and how?

The diagram below details the initiatives and when they will be rolled out. Work has already started to implement the initiatives and we will provide quarterly updates of progress on this site.



## Who has had input into these initiatives?

For the past two years a wide range of volunteer and career personnel from across urban and rural sectors have provided input to how things can be better and different in the future for volunteers (e.g., throughout the Fire Services Review, opportunity for public submissions on draft legislation, focus groups brought together for the development of the 'Volunteer Principles' and Subject Matter Experts working within the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Transition Project).

A 'Volunteer Working Group' and 'Volunteer Support Management Working Group' have been established to represent the voice of volunteers and volunteer leaders. They've been providing input into the design and development of initiatives to better support volunteers, as well as the Volunteer Engagement document. These groups will continue to have input into the development of a long-term Volunteer Strategy for Fire and Emergency New Zealand, which will include other support initiatives, training and resourcing, and will be rolled out over the next three years.

Additionally, one of the pilots will use online technology to seek innovative ideas from volunteers and other personnel on how to provide better support for volunteers. This will allow volunteers to put forward ideas directly.