



WHAKARATONGA IWI

**FIRE**  
**EMERGENCY**

NEW ZEALAND

**INSIGHT**



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**JUNE 2017**





# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

**July 1 is a major milestone for us all with the establishment of Fire and Emergency New Zealand. This is the most significant change to the structure of New Zealand's fire services in 70 years, bringing together more than 14,000 of New Zealand's rural, urban, career and volunteer personnel for the first time.**

It has been a long time in the making. In fact, it is the first comprehensive reform of the sector since the aftermath of the Ballantynes' fire in 1947. Bringing together the fire functions of 40 organisations and more than 600 individual brigades into a single integrated service is ambitious and it is bold.

This is about structuring our fire and emergency services for today and beyond.

It is about recognising that over 80% of our services are provided by volunteers and the organisation needs to strongly support both urban and rural volunteers.

It is about recognising that some areas have been better resourced than others, for a variety of reasons, and reducing that imbalance.

We need to make sure that right across New Zealand, in every community, that when a fire appliance is dispatched, the staff are well trained, the equipment is up to date and the service is excellent.

Many of you have given a huge amount to get Fire and Emergency New Zealand to this point, and for that I thank you.

You, our firefighters and those of you who support them, are a passionate and committed group of people – across urban and rural, career and volunteer. The success of this change to a large part rests with you, and I have no doubt that your passion and commitment will deliver a truly world-class fire and emergency organisation.

**Hon Peter Dunne**  
Minister of Internal Affairs

INSIGHT is a one-off publication marking the establishment of Fire and Emergency New Zealand on 1 July 2017.

It is produced by the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Transition Project in Wellington.

This publication is also available online at [www.fenzproject.co.nz/dayone](http://www.fenzproject.co.nz/dayone)

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# ASHBURTON SET FOR NATIONAL EVENT

**July 1 represents an exciting and historic change for New Zealand's fire and emergency services. Day One will be celebrated with a national event and parade in Ashburton.**

"With the big change coming up I thought, why don't we just mark the occasion – we'll have a bit of a parade," says Laurie Armstrong, a rural fire officer for 27 years. "It's the first time I've organised one, so I went round the urban and rural stations and called on the Mayor. Everyone thought it sounded like a good idea so away we went."

An organising committee was soon up and running and an invitation extended to

Minister Peter Dunne and the Board, which was quickly accepted.

"We've got representatives from our urban and rural stations on the committee, along with a couple of councillors. Everyone is happy to give up their time to make this happen. It may sound daunting, but we thought, why not give it a go? You've got to grab these opportunities by the horns."

The locally organised parade will include current rural and urban fire appliances and vintage vehicles from the local museum. It will end at the showgrounds with a public display of vehicles and photos, and an address from the Minister.

"We're closing off the main street and will be making our way to the showgrounds with 32 engines, 150 firefighters and a government minister. We've got the Salvation Army providing hot and cold drinks and local councillors doing the barbeque. Everyone's invited. Being a small community it's natural to work together."

As for the amalgamation, for Laurie it's long awaited and the practical option. "We already put out fires together. I don't think there'll be much change to how we currently get on with things, we're just one big family."

Like Ashburton, communities up and down the country are holding events. If you are taking part have a great day.

*The first trucks in the new branding will be showcased at the Ashburton event. Photos show mock-ups only.*





# AN URBAN PERSPECTIVE

## Rodger Smith

*Assistant Area Manager East Otago, Region Five*

"My view? I believe we've a vision for the future that respects existing good practice, then adds improvements and innovations that will help us all. Simply put, we'll be better able to respond to our communities when they need us.

How do we make this integration work? We build on the strong relationships that already exist, work hard to improve the relationships that are struggling and establish new relationships where there are gaps. I've heard excitement about the future and a willingness to embrace new concepts and ideas that I think bodes very well.

What's important? People value face-to-face communication most. We need to take advantage of every opportunity to make that happen."

## Steve Jones

*Senior Station Officer, Otara*

"It doesn't come along that often. A chance of this size, the possibility to move in a new direction.

For me, it's recognition that we're carrying out tasks that weren't anticipated for the fire service of 40+ years ago. Hazardous Substances is a good example; we're being recognised as the principal emergency services responder.

My experience on the project? I've seen people can have their say. They've been heard. Opinions are varied, points of view differ, but they've all been taken into account.

Yes, we are going through change. But let's not lose sight of bigger picture – what our organisation's here for. The core values and quality of staff, and the high level of response remains. How I turn out and what I do as a firefighter remains, it's the support mechanisms that have been greatly enhanced."

## Grant Haywood

*Senior Station Officer, Hutt City*

"We haven't had a good change experience in the past, but this is different. I've been part of the team and it's been good.

They've been taking time to listen. Unions and associations are actively encouraged to be involved – that's got to be positive."

In three years' time we'll see a real difference. There'll be support in place to develop people, better spaces to work together, a more mature organisation. The funding is coming to bring us into the 21st Century.

Read and talk, don't try and fill in the gaps on your own. There's information available and people to talk with if it's not clear. It's a pretty scary time for some, let's step up and support each other.

We can become an agile and modern emergency service. We will be able to reflect the diversity of our communities and become better placed to serve their needs. It's a massive opportunity and we should seize it."

*Left to right: Rodger Smith, Steve Jones, Grant Haywood*



**"...I'VE SEEN PEOPLE CAN HAVE THEIR SAY. THEY'VE BEEN HEARD. OPINIONS ARE VARIED, POINTS OF VIEW DIFFER, BUT THEY'VE ALL BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT."**

*Steve Jones, Senior Station Officer, Otara*

**“LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE, VOLUNTEERS WILL BE VALUED AND BETTER SUPPORTED.”**

*Rachael Thorp – Principal Rural Fire Officer, Wellington Rural Fire Authority*



*Left to right: Richard McNamara, Thomas Harre, Rachael Thorp*

## **A RURAL PERSPECTIVE**

### **Richard ‘Mac’ McNamara**

*Regional Manager Rural, Region 4  
(From 1 July)*

“What will change on the ground on Day One? For the vast majority of volunteers, not a lot.

But we have a chance to do something great with Fire and Emergency New Zealand. We’ve been given the tools by the Minister, by DIA, and by the Transition Project. We’ve had this over-complicated structure with good people making it work. What can they do when they can really fly?

We aren’t designing this new service for us. We’re designing it for the 12 year old down the road who wants to be a first responder. We want that 12 year old to say ‘I want to be part of that’!

Do I have fears? Sure. Human beings are genetically wired to worry about what comes next. And yes, there’ll be uncertainty and rubbing shoulders for the first 12–16 months. We all just need to breathe through the nose. You have to have faith.”

### **Thomas Harre**

*Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer, Auckland Rural Fire District*

“We are all excited because we’re forming something important for New Zealand.

It’s good to feel part of a team and for some isolated voluntary rural fire forces, Fire and Emergency New Zealand means they’ll be part of a national organisation.

I’m looking forward to more clarity and consistency across the services – to forming and strengthening strong and respectful relationships with our urban colleagues.

Getting the right resources to incidents and supporting our volunteers with training is critical and the earlier we can do this, the better.

Our customers are number one, so we don’t want to lose touch with them. Whether it’s giving advice about land management or talking to them about fire permitting, I want to make sure they know how to contact us, and know we are still there for them.”

### **Rachael Thorp**

*Principal Rural Fire Officer, Wellington Rural Fire Authority*

“Looking into the future, volunteers will be valued and better supported.

To start with we had fears our relationship with community might change under Fire and Emergency New Zealand but if anything it should get better.

We’re an office of three-and-a-half paid people and we do everything from write our own media releases to all the admin. So, we’re at capacity just doing our day-to-day work, and that means less interaction with our community. With more people to help in a bigger organisation, we can get on with more community work.

We’ve been fully engaged throughout the transition and have had the opportunity to shape the new organisation. So, we feel pretty excited.”



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# BEHIND THE BRAND

**The new logo representing Fire and Emergency New Zealand is now on display after months of work with personnel and the public to develop it. Board Chair Paul Swain says the logo is a symbol of our new organisation as we head into the future.**

More than 160 fire services people from across the country were involved in developing the new identity. An identity panel, made up of 12 people from across the services and including union reps, was responsible for guiding the design and making a final recommendation to the Board. Here's what some of our people have said about the process and result.

"The Identity Panel was united in its decision. What the new identity represents is a fresh start."

*Mike Grant, Principal Rural Fire Officer, Southland*

"I was a bit unsure about being on the Identity Panel but all views were well debated, well thought out and understood and tested. We came up with an identity I think all firefighters would be proud to wear."

*Craig Gold, NZFS Senior Station Officer, Thorndon*

"We looked at three logos. There were mixed opinions in our group, not necessarily between urban and rural, more between younger and older firefighters. People in my group were all passionate about the star. We could see elements of urban and rural in the options, which is good for showing integration."

*Scott Marchant Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer, Auckland, regional workshop*

"I think the new logo and markings are really good and something that will work well, and hopefully help bring us all together and move forward as one."

*Steve Bishop, Station Officer (Vol), Waitakere Fire Brigade*

Uniforms and fire trucks will stay the same on Day One and the new identity will come out in stages.

At the Day One national event and parade in Ashburton on 1 July, four fire vehicles will be decked out in the new identity. These vehicles – an Iveco Type 2 fire truck, a rural tanker and two Hilux utes – have been chosen to show how the new identity will be used.

Planning is underway to work out the programme, budget and resources needed to rebrand uniforms and fire appliances in the integration years.

**If you'd like to know more about the development of the new identity with our people and the public, you can watch a video telling the story of our new logo. It's on [fenzproject.co.nz](http://fenzproject.co.nz).**

**"IT'S REALLY POSITIVE CARRYING OVER WHAKARATONGA IWI IN OUR NEW IDENTITY. IT DISPLAYS OUR RESPECT FOR TE REO MĀORI, THE CULTURE AND OUR DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO SERVE OUR PEOPLE."**

*Piki Thomas, National Māori Advisor*







# SAFE FOR ALL

**'Keeping people safe' – it's what everyone working in fire services strives for. "We all want to take care of our crews and protect our communities from harm," says Todd O'Donoghue, National Advisor Fire Risk Management. "Our new legislation has a strong focus on fire safety, and sets out specific powers to support us to do this."**

"We are already checking that buildings comply with relevant fire safety legislation, carrying out pre-incident planning to ensure crews can respond safely, and undertaking fire investigation work to identify trends." Says Todd. "We will all still be able to do these activities, where occupants of premises consent to us doing so. Where they don't consent, it will require someone with Inspector Powers to give us authority to go onto site."

On Day One it will mainly be Fire Risk Management Officers and Level 2 rural fire investigators who will be trained, appointed and issued an identity card to use Inspector Powers. "If it's identified that more people need these powers to perform their roles, then it'll be looked at, we'll be evolving and adapting over the next 12 months"

"In many ways this is a continuation of what we've always done. The legislation just requires us to put more structure around the way entry is achieved to carry out these tasks. We won't always need to use Inspector Powers to enter land and buildings. In fact, it's probably more going to be the exception rather than the rule. Our first option will always be to seek an invitation."

A working group with representatives from the PSA, NZPFU, Rural Fire and the Manager Fire Investigation and Arson

Reduction have been working with Fire and Emergency New Zealand to ensure the implementation of these powers are in a workable format for our front line staff. The team acknowledge there's still work to be done, and will continue to work with the organisation to get the best possible outcome.

What's clear is that we all have a role to play says Todd. "From our educational activities right through to the compliance work done by our fire risk management officers, everyone can promote fire safety."

"We want to continue the good work that our firefighters and Fire Risk Management Officers have been doing working with communities in the interest of fire safety. Where we do need to use formal powers the legislation protects the rights of community members and our personnel."



# DEDICATED TO SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**Nothing is more important than our people!" This is the first line in Fire and Emergency New Zealand's new Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW) Commitment, He waka eke noa, to be signed by the Board and Chief Executive once the organisation is officially stood up on 1 July 2017. This Commitment will also be accompanied by a signed endorsement from all sector unions and associations.\***

The SHW Working Group, in place since early this year, is behind the development of this Commitment. The members are a dedicated bunch of 22 representatives from right across the sector. Meeting at least fortnightly, they are working to make sure the newly approved five-year SHW Strategy is well implemented, well understood and meets the needs of all 14,000 personnel across the new organisation.

Alison Barnes, Transition Project SHW Lead, is heading this work and says it has been an "unexpected privilege" to work with a group so committed to the "good of the whole".

"There are robust discussions in a great atmosphere, which is exactly what we need to deliver a new safety, health and wellbeing learning culture and system over the next few years," she says.

All those involved in this vital piece of work know that success will come from building a new culture together and that will take time.

Group member Kevin Ihaka, Principal Rural Fire Officer Whangarei/Kaipara says the challenge isn't just in the first year. "It's got to be ongoing. We have got to create that culture and keep it, and everybody has to be focused on it, the whole organisation, all of the time".

Bruce Irvine, Fire Risk Management Officer, also a member, says: "I personally think the biggest change we are going to see is even more focus on the whole wellbeing for all our people, not just frontline. Not just a focus on treating injuries, but the needs of the person as a whole".

A new, flexible technology system for reporting injuries, illnesses and events is just one of the improvements to be implemented this year.

"Making it easy for people to use the system has been a big driver for us from the start. We need a system that people can easily use, that is available on multiple levels and devices," Group member Greg Crawford, Assistant Area Commander, Christchurch Metro says.

"The new system will provide us with far greater information than we have had in the past and enable us to support our people better when they are injured, but also inform decision-making," Greg says.

As we get closer to 1 July, there will be more information on SHW provided to all personnel about their responsibilities and support available to them.

Group members Boyd Raines, Senior Firefighter, and Glenn Williams Chief Fire Officer, emphasise the commitment of the Working Group to ensuring everybody goes home safe and well after any work they undertake on behalf of Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

*\* New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union, Fire and Rescue Commanders Association, United Fire Brigades Association of New Zealand, Public Service Association, and Forest and Rural Fire Association of New Zealand.*

*Pictured are members of the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Working Group. Sitting (left to right): Julie Wilkins, Kathy McAlpine, Pam King and Grace Chung. Standing (left to right): Boyd Raines, Pani Herekiuha, Kevin Ihaka, John Kingsbury, Brian Adams, Mike Grant, Alison Barnes, Bruce Irvine, Carol Love, Greg Crawford, Regan Hopkins and Glenn Williams. Absent: Paul Baker, Trevor Brown, Grant Haywood, Richard McNamara, Bill Butzbach and Bryan Cartelle.*







# SUPPORTING OUR VOLUNTEERS

**Fire and Emergency New Zealand is the first organisation in New Zealand that has the duty to recognise, support and develop its volunteers within its legislation. It's this legislative commitment that will help drive the improvements in volunteer support across the new organisation.**

Bill Butzbach, Chief Fire Officer for the Martinborough Fire Brigade and Director United Fire Brigades Association, says the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 marks a significant step forward for volunteers and the new organisation.

"This piece of legislation is the first in New Zealand – probably in the world – where volunteers are mentioned specifically in terms of the duty that the organisation has to them," says Bill. "So it speaks volumes for the commitment the government has got to volunteerism within New Zealand."

Board Chair Paul Swain says the new volunteer support initiatives that will be in place for Year One are a starting point the new organisation will build on. There will be over 60 additional training, development, in-field support and co-ordinator roles supporting urban volunteer brigades and volunteer rural

fire forces filled during the first year of Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

Volunteer Support Officer Rachael Leighton says the additional in-field support "will make a huge difference to our day-to-day operations and allow volunteers and other personnel to focus on their core roles".

Year One will also see an additional \$2.6 million for local and flexible volunteer training. Locally-based pilots will be run to identify new ways to meet the differing needs of individual brigades and volunteer rural fire forces and reduce administrative burden.

Chief Fire Officer for Plimmerton's Volunteer Fire Brigade, Carl Mills, says providing more flexibility and innovation is a really positive step towards supporting brigades and rural fire forces.

"I'm a strong supporter of both a one-organisation approach to training, equipment and standards, but also self-ownership and accountability on how to deliver for communities. The transition has provided fantastic opportunities to engage, give opinions and shape change," he says.

Wainuiomata Voluntary Rural Fire Force Controller Tom Goss is also excited about the national approach to operational

standards. "Using the same procedures and communications for management at a fire ground will make a huge difference. I'm also excited about better support to those remote teams and fire forces that attend all emergency incidents."

Tom says the ability to train with other teams will strengthen both urban and rural responses while maintaining the interests of volunteers.

The Fire and Emergency New Zealand Transition Project has brought together a wide range of volunteer and career personnel from across urban and rural sectors to put their minds to how things can be better and different in the future.

Rachael says these working groups are important to maintaining the momentum and ensuring a volunteer perspective during the integration phase. "The groups are really diverse, which allows a lot of different experiences and perspectives to be brought to the table. I see them as an important voice in the organisation.

"This is such a huge opportunity for us all to work together. It's a radical change, and it will take time, but if people are committed to making it work, I think it's a great opportunity to shape how the fire and emergency sector looks in the future," Rachael says.

# INTO THE FUTURE

**From 1 July, more than 14,000 employees and volunteers will become Fire and Emergency New Zealand personnel. But what does that mean for the next 12 months?**

Starting up a new organisation means setting up the structure so that it is fit for purpose. "On Day One we start with urban and rural as separate streams, and will be taking a good look at how we best bring them together," National Commander Urban Paul McGill says. "We need to set up a structure that it is fit for purpose."

Kevin O'Connor, National Manager Rural, is clear that strong existing connections will be key to our success. "Our people have got us this far, and we'll be calling on them to support Fire and Emergency New Zealand through the next phase."

"Having our people involved in workshops, testing groups and evaluations was a big part of what got us through transition. We'll be focused on ensuring this continues," Kevin says.

Transition Director, David Strong, is also on board with the co-design approach.

"It's got us to a good place, and we are determined to continue to work with everyone who has an interest in developing our organisation."

Paul says, "We've got committed and passionate personnel with a wealth of experience. We're aiming to create an organisation that reflects this."

Keeping personnel safe has been at the forefront of our decisions to date, and this will continue. "We're a people based organisation, and we will maintain and build our focus on the safety, health and wellbeing of our people," Paul says.

The spotlight will also be on making sure everyone is properly resourced to do their role – and ensuring others know our capability and requirements. "In the next couple of years we'll see changes in better support for volunteers, resourcing and equipment," Kevin says.

"Partnerships with rural contractors and organisations are critical, and we'll be working to keep them engaged in the design of the future. We'll also be looking to build our partnering capability with other emergency services."

Kevin says the opportunity to engage through local advisory committees is an exciting one. "It's clear that we will continue to support our communities, and in return rely on their support."

"Over the next 12 months we'll start to see how we can best involve them and represent their risks and needs. We can bring to life the ability of our local communities to inform and work with us," he says.

"Getting all this done needs a plan, and a vision. This is where the work underway on our Target Operating Model comes in," says Paul. "The title Target Operating Model sounds pretty dry, but in fact it's a vital guide to how we want to be, helping convert strategy ideas into operational plans. Think of it like a wish-list for building your new house. You may change some things as you move along, but you wouldn't start work without one."

To get the best from the changes ahead, one thing is particularly clear to Kevin and Paul. If we build people relationships first, then the rest will follow. This means all of us taking opportunities to get to know each other, whatever our role.





A photograph of Rhys Jones, a middle-aged man with a balding head, wearing a dark pinstripe suit, a light blue shirt, and a green patterned tie. He is standing in front of several red fire trucks. The trucks have "NEW ZEALAND FIRE" and "EUROCA" visible on them. One truck has the number "441" and a license plate "GJT78".

# PROFILE – NEW CEO RHYS JONES

**The incoming Chief Executive of Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Lieutenant General (retd.) Rhys Jones, says he comes to the organisation with a “deep and honest respect for the work firefighters do”.**

“Urban and rural firefighters are held in great respect – they are New Zealand’s most trusted profession, and I come from a similarly-trusted operational organisation. So I know what that means and I feel really proud to be going into Fire and Emergency New Zealand.”

As Chief Executive, Rhys will work alongside Paul McGill, National Commander Urban, and Kevin O’Connor, National Manager Rural, to lead the integration phase of Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

The youngest of nine children, Rhys’ father was a Methodist minister, “so I grew up with that mentality of service to the people”. That, combined with an interest in military history, led him to enlist in the New Zealand Army when he graduated from Wanganui Boys’ College in 1978.

Understanding how different groups work together has been a consistent theme throughout his military career, from coordinating infantry alongside the armoured corps, to the three-service capabilities of the Army, Navy and Air

Force as Commander of Joint Forces for overseas operations.

In January 2011, Rhys’ 35-year career with the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) culminated in his appointment as Chief of Defence Force. He was in Christchurch for the February earthquakes and oversaw the NZDF’s operational response alongside other agencies. “[Christchurch] was a really proud moment for me to see Defence, Fire, Police, Civil Defence and others all working together as part of one team.”

Coming into Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Rhys says he’ll have his “eyes and ears open” to learn as much as he possibly can about the organisation and its people. “In that respect I consider myself very lucky to be working with Kevin and Paul, whose experience, knowledge and respect within the fire services is excellent,” he says.

“Looking ahead, we have a clear goal for the next three years – the integration of urban and rural fire into one unified organisation. We need to work out the detailed plan of how we get there, and that’s something that will require input from all levels of the organisation.

“I plan to spend my first three months not only working with the leadership team, but also getting out and meeting as many people as I can to listen and understand their views on the issues.”

Compared with the NZDF, he says there is probably a greater public understanding of what firefighters do, but that more awareness will be needed around all the non-fire work firefighters do as changes to the levy are introduced to adequately fund this work.

The NZDF also relies on volunteer ‘reservists’, but Rhys says volunteer firefighters make up a bigger part of New Zealand’s day-to-day firefighting capability than reservists, “so better supporting and recognising the role of volunteers, and their employers and families, will also be important in the new organisation”.

Rhys is a strong advocate of equity and diversity. “When you look at shared values like courage or comradeship, none of them make any judgement about gender or ethnicity. Our focus needs to be on having the best people we can get, and that’s based on their ability to do the job well, not on someone’s mental image of what a firefighter should look like.”

For now, Rhys says he’s looking forward to meeting the people of Fire and Emergency New Zealand and start working to deliver the benefits of integration to them. “I’m not a bureaucrat – I come from an operational background, so I’m really looking forward to helping the organisation work towards one integrated structure, and streamlining the operational aspects of that for our people.”

**“OUR FOCUS NEEDS TO BE ON HAVING THE BEST PEOPLE WE CAN GET”**

*Rhys Jones, Chief Executive*

## SEE WHAT'S NEXT

Watch our leaders in conversation.  
Video supplied with your station pack and  
available online at [fenzproject.co.nz/leaders](http://fenzproject.co.nz/leaders)

