



15 May 2017

[insert name]

[insert VRFF]

[insert RFA]

[insert address]

place

Dear [insert name]

Volunteer Engagement with Fire and Emergency New Zealand

As you are aware, Fire and Emergency New Zealand will be established on 1 July 2017. From this date, Fire and Emergency New Zealand will assume responsibility for urban and rural fire functions, powers and duties. This includes the functions undertaken by volunteers within your Voluntary Rural Fire Force.

As part of establishing this new organisation, I am very pleased to formally welcome you as a Fire and Emergency New Zealand volunteer.

The formation of Fire and Emergency New Zealand on 1 July 2017 is a significant step for our sector and New Zealand as a whole. The Board wants to see Fire and Emergency New Zealand become a world-leading integrated fire and emergency service.

As a volunteer with Fire and Emergency New Zealand, you will continue to be part of your existing Voluntary Rural Fire Force, which will also form part of Fire and Emergency New Zealand, led by your Controller.

The terms of engagement as a volunteer with Fire and Emergency New Zealand are attached as an appendix to this letter and set out the organisation's commitments to you and the basis on which you will continue to be a volunteer. It is intended that the schedule captures the complete details of your volunteer engagement with Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

This offer can be accepted by signing, dating and returning one copy of the engagement document in the enclosed prepaid envelope, no later than 7 working days after the date of this letter. If you would like to discuss any aspects of this volunteer engagement, please speak to your Controller or Principal Rural Fire Officer.

This is an exciting time in the evolution of New Zealand's fire and emergency services and in particular for our volunteers. This 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 step changes in volunteer support across the new organisation.

You will start to see tangible evidence of our commitment to improving support for our volunteers from 1 July 2017 with the introduction of some new initiatives including a Volunteer Issues Process, an Interim Dispute Resolution process, Advocacy and Support services, increased funding for training and development, as well as additional in-field support roles. More information on these will be provided over the upcoming weeks.

Over the following three years, Fire and Emergency New Zealand will continue making improvements including, developing policy and organisational arrangements that encourage, maintain and strengthen the capability of its volunteers.

We are delighted to confirm your important role as a volunteer in this new organisation, and look forward to your continuing contribution and assistance to help us make Fire and Emergency New Zealand a huge success.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Swain". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

Hon. Paul Swain

Board Chair

New Zealand Fire Service Commission

Volunteer Engagement with Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Fire and Emergency New Zealand: we deliver fire and emergency services to New Zealand's urban and rural communities. We greatly appreciate and rely on people like you who volunteer to help improve your community's safety and wellbeing.

We will:

- Treat you with respect, dignity and fairness, and ensure you can get the benefits of being a Fire and Emergency New Zealand volunteer and one of our personnel
- Provide modern dispute resolution processes
- Adopt a set of modern volunteer principles to guide our relationship
- Enter agreements with organisations providing independent advocacy and support services to make those available at no cost to our volunteers
- Ensure you have the equipment, delegations, authorisations, personal protective equipment, and training you need as a volunteer
- Give you opportunities to give and get feedback
- Develop policy and organisational arrangements which encourage, maintain and strengthen the capability of our volunteers

You are a Fire and Emergency volunteer: because you want to support and maintain the wellbeing and safety of your community. You are one of our personnel and a part of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand voluntary rural fire force (as shown in **Schedule 1**), reporting to your Controller. You are not an employee or a contractor.

Payments: We know you may sometimes have costs when volunteering for us, including not being paid by your employer. Any payments that you are eligible for are set out in **Schedule 1**.

This means that: you will only do work for Fire and Emergency New Zealand you have been appropriately trained for, and for which you display the skill levels and personal attributes required. You need to follow any policies that are in place and/or any directions given at the time.

We'll provide you with initial and ongoing training, either directly or through your voluntary rural fire force. You will need to go to training regularly and keep up your skills as needed by your voluntary rural fire force and the organisation's policies.

We are committed to your safety, health and wellbeing: so that you go home safe and well after any work you do for the organisation. Let us know immediately if you feel that you might need help (including medical or psychological help), or more information about anything.

You must take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and for your colleagues and others you work alongside, so that nothing you do or don't do, adversely affects their health and safety. You must comply with reasonable instructions, and follow Fire and Emergency New Zealand policy or procedure, for the safety, health and wellbeing of yourself or of other people.

You need to follow our policies, procedures, rules and standards of good conduct whenever you're representing Fire and Emergency New Zealand: this is critical to everyone's safety, and allows you to work well. If that isn't happening, then we'll talk with you before we decide on

the most appropriate solution. If you have any problems, let us know as soon as you can and we'll work with you to sort them out if we can.

Confidentiality: the nature of our work means we must keep some matters confidential and protect the privacy of people we help or work with. Our expectation is that you will keep confidential and private information confidential. This means that you cannot share this information with other people, including your friends and family, or on social media or with the media.

Discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation are not acceptable: please let us know immediately if you think any of these unacceptable behaviours might be happening to you or another volunteer. You also need to consider your own behaviour towards others.

Our reputation is important to us: both Fire and Emergency New Zealand and your voluntary rural fire force are trusted and respected. As a volunteer, you will be too. This trust and respect is very important so we can continue to support our communities with the work we do. Anything you do that makes or could make other people think less of Fire and Emergency New Zealand or your voluntary rural fire force, or of you as a volunteer within your community, may mean that your volunteer arrangement will need to end.

Ending your volunteer relationship: you can end your volunteer relationship with Fire and Emergency New Zealand at any time. If you're thinking of doing so, talk to your local leader, or someone in the voluntary rural fire force, first. If you still wish to end your volunteer relationship, you just need to let us know by writing to your voluntary rural fire force.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand may end the volunteer relationship in some circumstances including if you don't follow policies or directions, or if you do something that could make people think less of you or us. We would listen to you carefully to get your views before making this decision, and we would also let you know in writing.

Thank you for volunteering – on behalf of Fire and Emergency New Zealand I acknowledge and thank you for your significant contribution as a volunteer.

15 May 2017

Signature: Paul Swain

Board Chair

Date

I'm committed to being a Fire and Emergency volunteer: I am signing this agreement because I want to be a Fire and Emergency New Zealand volunteer. I acknowledge and fully understand the terms on which this offer of voluntary service with Fire and Emergency New Zealand is made, as set out in this letter. In particular, I acknowledge that while I will continue to be entitled to my existing payments, I will be a Fire and Emergency New Zealand volunteer under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act.

Signature: [insert name]

Date