

Positive Workplace Culture Report

Building a Positive Workplace Culture



Six Monthly Progress Report
April - October 2019



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He Waka Eke Noa

Everyone in one canoe with no exception

Foreword

He Tīmatanga Kōrero

We are building an organisation where everyone feels safe, welcome and included.

Firefighters are there when they're needed most, from medical emergencies and natural disasters, to fire safety education and fighting fires. Communities look to us with trust and respect and we're very good at keeping New Zealanders safe. However, we know ourselves that we need to do a better job of looking after each other.

In January 2019 I publicly released the findings and 33 recommendations of retired Judge Coral Shaw's independent review into the workplace policies, practices and procedures to address bullying and harassment at Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

The report was confronting and highlighted a clear need for change to remove unwanted behaviour from our organisation. Its release was our line in the sand on a journey to reshape the way we act as a unified organisation.

I committed to releasing an action plan detailing how we would address all 33 recommendations – which we did in early April – and to reporting on progress every six months.

This is our first six-month progress report.

Bringing together cultures from 40 different organisations and building a positive workplace culture we can all be proud of will take time, but we're making good progress.

In this first six months we have focused on addressing the most urgent priorities highlighted in the Action Plan and on establishing foundational processes and practices.

We have also continued to progress a number of initiatives that have been underway for some time and will help us build a safe, welcoming and inclusive place to work and deal with unwanted behaviour.

I look forward to updating you further on our progress in our next report in April 2020.



Rhys Jones, Chief Executive
Fire and Emergency



Executive Summary

Key Achievements: April – October 2019

A number of key changes have been made to create a more respectful, inclusive and positive workplace at Fire and Emergency. Urgent needs have been addressed, with foundational processes and practices established ensuring everything we do is thoughtful, meaningful, supported and effective.

The Action Plan identified eight priority areas:



Living our values



Behaviour and conduct office



Bullying and harassment complaints process



Shared code of behaviour



Support for our people



Leadership



Policies and procedures



Full programme and engagement plans

The following are our key achievements to date in each priority area.

Living our Values

We developed and launched a set of values that inform the way we behave and the expectations we have of each other. They will also form the basis of all our behaviour related policies, processes and support systems.

Behaviour and Conduct Office

The Behaviour and Conduct Office (BCO) is being established. It is the central entity responsible for education, training, support and guidance relating to values-based behaviour.

Bullying and Harassment Complaints Process

To immediately deal with complaints, an interim complaints process was established. This allows our people to seek information from someone independent from the incident or issue, while we continue to develop a permanent complaints process.

Shared Code of Behaviour

A Shared Code of Behaviour concept has been drafted. It will give clear guidelines on expected standards of behaviour, individually and collectively. It will be a foundation piece in eliminating unacceptable behaviour from our workplace.

Supporting Our People

Psychological Wellbeing Workshops have been attended by 727 of our people across the country. They include managers, officers, volunteer and career firefighters, non-operational personnel, peer supporters, safety, health and wellbeing staff and union/association representatives.

Leadership

Bullying and Harassment Workshops have been attended by 310 of our leaders as part of our awareness raising. Our executive leadership team have also taken part in a respect and inclusion pilot training programme which will now roll out across the organisation.

Policies and Procedures

We have developed a draft bullying, harassment and victimisation policy which will be further tested with our people in coming months.

Full Programme and Engagement Plans

We have established a Positive Workplace Culture team whose sole focus is to ensure the 33 review recommendations are implemented. A focus on respectful, inclusive behaviour has also been driven by partner associations including our unions, associations, Afi Pasefika, Pou Herenga Māori, WFENZ and the Respect and Inclusion Taskforce.

An extensive three-year programme has also been developed mapping all the work required and already in place to address review recommendations.

Full details on these key achievements and all other progress are detailed in the following section.

The Action Plan

Tracking Progress

As noted, the Action Plan launched in April outlined eight priority areas that set out the direction, priorities and initiatives enabling us to implement the review's recommendations. This is the detailed progress to date on each area. The complete Action Plan and related work can be found at positiveworkplace.fireandemergency.nz.

Living our values

Our values lay the foundation for how we behave and the expectations we have of each other. They bind us together, setting out what we believe in and how we work together to keep each other and our communities safe.

Fire and Emergency Values

We do the right thing – Kia Tika

We are better together – Whanaungatanga

We serve and support – Manaakitanga

We strive to improve – Auhatanga



What we set out to achieve:

- Confirm support for our values from unions and associations.
- Develop a plan for embedding our agreed values into everything we do.
- Develop a plan for a soft launch and roll-out of our values as part of the operating model design and delivery.
- Embed our values in position descriptions for all new roles from mid-April 2019.



What we've achieved so far:

- Successfully worked with unions and associations to gain approval of the values and sought input on how to best embed them.
- Engaged with groups across the organisation on the embedding process.
- In April 2019 our CE launched the values internally.

- Embedded our values into our position descriptions for all new roles from July, as well as all roles in the organisational design tranches.
- Launched training sessions on our values with Volunteer Leaders in the regions. We will continue to roll this out across the country.
- Developed a new organisation karakia based on our values.
- Included values as part of our new induction programme.
- Values are referenced and integrated in work and presentations across the organisation.



What's next:

- Further embed values as part of our organisation's culture.
- Investigate the development of a values-based awards programme.
- Update the content on our internal and external websites with further information about the values.



Case study

Values must be lived to be relevant

Our values sit at the heart of what we believe in and how we behave – but they're no good on a page, they have to be lived.

Since we launched our values in June 2019, we've heard a number of stories from teams around the country exploring meaningful ways to bring them life.

In Sumner, Chief Fire Officer, Daryl Sayer decided to front foot it and lead by example. At a brigade meeting he stood up and asked members to call him out on any words or actions that could verge on bullying, harassment or being disrespectful. He then gave the brigade the opportunity to stand and ask the same thing of each other. Every person stood up.

They also agreed that everything they do – from building a station to running a meeting should be measured against our values.

As we embed the values throughout our organisation we know their strength and impact will come from individuals and teams finding their own connection to the values and the behaviours they champion.

Behaviour and Conduct Office

The Behaviour and Conduct Office (BCO) started to form in June 2019. It is the central entity responsible for training, support and guidance relating to values-based behaviour. The BCO will establish systems across the organisation to ensure everyone is held accountable for conduct and behaviour.



What we set out to achieve:

- Establish the office and appoint an interim director to lead the development of the BCO's function.
- Align the development of roles within the BCO with changes to our organisational structure and roles.
- Consult on the BCO functions and processes.



What we've achieved so far:

- The BCO is being established and an interim director appointed.
- We've engaged with a wide range of our people (career, volunteer, urban, rural and non-operational people at all levels) to ask what they need to prevent, address or deal with unwanted behaviour. We also tested whether the scope and structure of the BCO will be fit for purpose, based on the organisation's needs. This will inform any policies, processes, training, support and guidance that are developed or refined within the BCO.



What's next:

- The interim complaints process will be managed within the BCO while we continue to work on a permanent solution.
- The co-design process for the development of the BCO will continue, with ongoing input from our people. Once design is complete, the structure and roles for the function will be developed and formally consulted on.

“Through the establishment of the BCO and good tools and resources for our people, my aspiration is that everyone will use our values as a decision-making tool and ask themselves ‘will my action align with our values?’”

Brent Mikaera

Interim Director of the Behaviour and Conduct Office



Bullying and harassment complaints process

Strong progress has been made on developing a robust, effective complaints process that is fair, consistent, timely, transparent and trusted. The process will also enable system-wide data capture and reporting.



What we set out to achieve:

- Identify short-term improvements with the assistance of independent expertise and establish an interim process.
- Establish a project team to develop a long-term solution for an effective, fair, and transparent complaints process.
- Continue to work with unions, associations, employee networks, and personnel throughout development to ensure the process meets everyone's needs.
- Educate and coach people who are handling complaints and ensure everyone is clear of the role and responsibilities.



What we've achieved so far:

- An interim complaints process has been established for those raising a complaint of bullying or harassment, or wishing to seek information from someone independent from the incident or issue. The process is coordinated through Humankind, an external provider who is working with Fire and Emergency while we develop a permanent bullying and harassment complaints process.
- A dedicated project team is developing the long-term solution for managing complaints and they are engaging with our people, unions and associations on the design of the complaints process.

- Following workshops with key stakeholders, the decision was made to extend the scope for the complaints process so that it covers all complaints (not just those related to bullying or harassment). This ensures that we will capture and deal with all complaints in a consistent and fair way, and allows for robust reporting on all complaints.



What's next:

- The detailed design of the complaints process will be done in parallel with the design of the BCO and continued engagement with our people. The design is focused on three key components: early intervention processes, an informal complaints resolution process and an independent investigation process.
- Work is underway to gather requirements for an end-to-end case management IT system to support the BCO and the complaints process. The system will enable tracking, monitoring and reporting on all complaints.
- The interim process will remain in place to support bullying and harassment complaints while a long-term solution is developed.

The interim complaints process has dealt with 18 complaints since launch in June 2019. Around half of the complaints were new issues with the rest being historic or ongoing issues. Most of the complainants were Fire and Emergency people, the rest were from outside the organisation.





Over the past few months, the code of behaviour concept has been shared with over 400 people across the country. The conversations about what values-based behaviour looks like in action will help form a robust code of behaviour that represents and works for everyone.



Shared code of behaviour

A Shared Code of Behaviour will give clear guidelines on expected standards of behaviour that apply to everyone. It will be a foundation piece in eliminating unacceptable behaviour from our workplace.



What we set out to achieve:

- To develop a shared code of behaviour which everyone in Fire and Emergency understands and is held accountable to. The code will set expectations of behaviour, and incorporate values and standards. It will be developed through consultation with our people, unions and associations.



What we've achieved so far:

- We have confirmed support from our unions and associations to develop a shared code of behaviour for everyone.
- We have engaged with the Respect and Inclusion Taskforce (a diverse group of individuals from across the organisation who are supporting and championing positive culture change), and with their help we have designed an initial draft code.
- We have tested the draft concept in engagement sessions held across the country that included volunteers, career firefighters, area support teams and regional leadership teams.



What's next:

- Collate the feedback from our engagement sessions to further refine the draft code.
- Develop a policy to address bullying, harassment and victimisation.
- Develop a new policy for managing alleged misconduct and poor performance.
- Further testing of the shared code of behaviour with our people.
- Roll out of training and education to embed and support the shared code of behaviour and new policies.

Supporting our people

Nothing is more important than our people, so we have set out to ensure everyone knows where to seek support, how to receive the right support and in turn learn how to support others.



What we set out to achieve:

- Ensure everyone knows where they can get support now.
- Assess our existing support channels to make sure they work as part of a cohesive network supporting everyone dealing with unwanted behaviour in the workplace.
- Include culturally appropriate support options (e.g. Whānau Ora).
- Understand how we can support our people to stand up when they see poor behaviours.
- Make sure we have the right support, from the right people, at the right time.
- Make sure there is support for our people experiencing change.



What we've achieved so far:

- Raised awareness of the current support channels available through internal communications. We have also highlighted and promoted the interim complaints process, which is in place while we work on a long-term solution.
- When the organisation consults on role changes, we ensure the support available is well promoted and encouraged.

- Initiated a 'support stocktake' to consider our current support channels, assessing how they add value to the process of culture change.
- Developed a series of videos explaining why we need to build a workplace culture where everyone feels safe, welcome and included. The videos also explain bullying and harassment and unconscious bias and how to address it.
- Developed respect and inclusion focused training which will be trailed and then rolled out as a nationwide learning programme. The programme will be supported by e-learning content.
- Delivered the very first respect and inclusion focused training to Fire and Emergency's Executive Leadership Team and Safety, Health and Wellbeing Team.
- Delivered 54 Psychological Wellbeing Workshops to 727 of people including managers and officers, volunteer and career firefighters, non-operational personnel, peer supporters, safety, health and wellbeing staff and union and association representatives. This equates to 18.6% of our identified target of 70% of leaders.
- Safe@Work is the new technology support tool for reporting, recording and investigating work-related injuries, illnesses, exposures, near misses and psychological wellbeing concerns. Safe@Work has been successfully rolled out across all of Fire and Emergency.



What's next:

- Continue to raise awareness when possible of the current support channels, particularly during times of organisational change.
- Organise events at our national office and in the regions to determine our people's needs when it comes to support and the best ways to provide it.
- A nationwide rollout of the video series using a wide range of internal channels and engagement opportunities.
- The respect and inclusion focused training workshops will be trialled at 20 stations in Te Hiku and Ngā Tai ki te Puku regions between now and the end of the year.
- We are partnering with Mike King's 'I am Hope' to support the 2019 national tour. This will include talking with our firefighters across the country about the mental health impacts of their work.
- Continue to deliver our Psychological Wellbeing Workshops to reach our target.
- Establish a Health Standards project to develop and normalise safety, health and wellbeing checks for all our people who undertake operational activities. This will include regular checks for psychological wellbeing, physical health, including monitoring of hearing, lung functions, cardio-vascular risk and occupational cancer risk, and physical readiness checks.

This will ensure people have early access to treatment and support. We are working closely with our unions and associations and support networks on this project and will engage with our people in 2020 to get feedback on what's proposed.

- Investigate how to improve the management of safety health and wellbeing risks for our contractors.
- Develop and implement a Performance Development Framework that incorporates values and behaviour expectations.
- Continue to share and seek a range of ideas through our crowd sourcing tool, Beacon, exploring ways to build a respectful and inclusive culture.



Case study

When we support each other, we support our communities

Ruatāhuna is a tight-knit but isolated community in Te Urewera National Park. With the nearest fire station over an hour away, the community relies on local volunteer brigades to stay fire safe.

Earlier this year our local volunteers, regional and area staff joined local iwi and communities to bring fire safety into every home.

It wasn't about imposing a plan, it was about coming together, listening to what the community really wanted and working together to make it happen. Behaviours that create a positive culture and long-lasting change.

More than 40 locals from Ruatāhuna, Te Whaiti and Minginui, along with the Fire and Emergency team visited over 150 households to ensure every home

had a working smoke alarm and talked about how to keep whānau safe from fire. It was an overwhelming success with more than 300 smoke alarms installed or replaced in several marae and homes.

We supported each other to support our community. We listened first, worked together and made a difference. Simple but powerful behaviours that deliver genuine support.

Leadership

Our leaders have a role to play in developing a respectful and inclusive workplace. We will ensure our leaders have the support, capabilities, and training they need to live the Leadership Qualities Behaviours and Expectations required of them.



What we set out to achieve:

- Ensure our leaders know where they can find support and have the tools for managing issues in their teams while our policies and processes are being designed and developed.
- Build awareness across our leadership teams of what bullying and harassment looks like, while we develop a full training and education strategy.
- Establish a cross functional working group to develop a framework that supports leadership recruitment, development, training and education, and cultural competence.
- Continue our current leadership programmes and develop a network of leadership champions.



What we've achieved so far:

- Continued to raise awareness of the current support channels and tools available for managing issues.
- Recruited a Senior Adviser Leadership Development to lead the design of a core management skills programme that will feature content on building our management and leadership capability around handling unwanted behaviour.
- Continued to roll out modules on positive leading and watching for the warning signs (conflict management) as part of the Volunteer Leadership Development Project.
- Held workshops with more than 310 people as part of our awareness raising for leaders around bullying and harassment.

These sessions have been facilitated by an external provider. The workshops have been held across the country with a wide range of leaders across the country including regional leaders, tier 3 managers, comcen managers, operations managers and the National Urban Search and Rescue management team.

- Held change support for people leaders workshops, with a focus on above and below the line behaviour as well as resilience and wellness. These have been held across the country and 80 staff who have completed the workshop are now workshop delivery and support leads across the organisation.



What's next:

- Determine the scope of setting up a 'champion network' of people who will lead and model respect and inclusion across Fire and Emergency.
- Continue bullying and harassment workshop sessions for more leaders, particularly volunteer leaders. These workshops will eventually be replaced by a nationwide learning programme that will be developed following the respect and inclusion training trials currently underway in Te Hiku and Ngā Tai ki te Puku regions.
- Continue to hold change support for leaders workshops when the need is identified.

In 2018, 109 people attended our watch for the warning signs workshops, and 122 people attended our positive leading workshops. We are working on a schedule for more workshops to be held across the country between now and the end of the year.

Developing policies and procedures

Our policies and procedures relating to bullying and harassment must provide sufficient detail for every single person to understand expectations and responsibilities. We will ensure we provide comprehensive guidelines that meet the State Services Commission's Standards of Integrity and Conduct – being fair, impartial, responsible, and trustworthy.



What we set out to achieve:

- Identify the policies and procedures needed to address unwanted behaviour.



What we've achieved so far:

- Determined the need for a policy to address bullying, harassment and victimisation.
- Confirmed support from our Unions and Associations and approval from our positive workplace culture executive leadership panel to develop a robust, permanent policy.
- Developed a draft bullying, harassment and victimisation policy. The policy will help our people know their rights and responsibilities if they encounter or experience bullying, harassment and/or victimisation. It will also help Fire and Emergency resolve matters on bullying, harassment and victimisation.



What's next:

- Revise the draft policy outline using the feedback we've received following early engagement with our people.
- Further testing of the draft bullying, harassment and victimisation policy.
- Develop supporting guidelines to ensure people understand how to use and apply the policy.
- Communicate and embed the policy, while ensuring alignment with supporting initiatives such as the Code of Behaviour.



Case study

Research to Support Recruitment

Recruiting isn't an exact science but Fire and Emergency undertook detailed research to ensure we're addressing key workplace behaviours to attract the best people across a diverse set of backgrounds.

We carried out three pieces of research to better understand barriers and concerns:

- Young people's perceptions of firefighting as a role
- Experience of the Career Recruitment process
- An Evidence Review of successful interventions to increase the diversity of new recruits

Research evidence and insights helped us make changes to our recruitment campaigns, cognitive testing and led to trialled boot camps to get people 'match fit' for physical tests.

A key finding was that it's not simply enough to 'get more difference in the door.' We need to ensure everyone who joins Fire and Emergency feels safe, welcome and included. A focus on creating a positive workplace culture helps us all feel valued and excited about what we do. We attract better people who will stay with us longer.

Copies of the research reports are available at [fireandemergency.nz](https://www.fireandemergency.nz)

Producing a full programme and an engagement plan

We will continue to identify all the activities and deliverables required across policy, procedure, processes, training, education and engagement. We will detail everything required to produce each distinct piece of work, who needs to be included and will engage with everyone in our organisation as well as stakeholders. We will define the benefits we expect from this work, articulate what success looks like and determine success measurements.



What we set out to achieve:

- Complete full analysis of the recommendations from review.
- Map where there is already work under way that will contribute to the outcomes we want to achieve (e.g. Values, Respect and Inclusion), and how we will collaborate.
- Define all projects, initiatives, and deliverables required to implement our response to the recommendations.
- Identify and plan our success measures and evaluation framework.
- Identify the resources and services required to deliver the programme.
- Plan how to productively and meaningfully engage with our people, and how we will work with our unions, associations, sector partners, and our communities.
- Establish an Independent Advisory Panel to provide assurance to the executive leadership team as initiatives are developed.



What we've achieved so far:

- An extensive three-year work plan has been developed to map all the work underway across the organisation, addressing the recommendations from the review and ultimately contributing to creating a positive workplace culture. The three-year plan identified opportunities to collaborate and the resources required to carry out each stream of work.
- A communications and engagement strategy has been developed to define how we will carry out communications and engagement with our people. It covers what and how we will communicate and the principles we will follow.



What's next:

- Track our progress against the three-year work plan.
- Continue to proactively communicate with our people on what a positive workplace culture looks like and support engagement to drive culture change.

The three-year work plan is a more extensive version of our Action Plan. The three-year work plan can be viewed at positiveworkplace.fireandemergency.nz



Our journey to creating a positive workplace culture

Here's a few key milestones that have contributed to creating a Fire and Emergency where everyone feels safe, welcome and included. For more information on these milestones, visit positiveworkplace.fireandemergency.nz

July 2017

- Safety, Health and Wellbeing commitment made

June 2018

- Respect and Inclusion Strategy approved
- Working with Māori as tangata whenua commitment made

July 2018

- Independent Positive Workplace Culture Review commissioned

May 2019

- Volunteerism Strategy launched
- Risk Reduction Strategy launched

June 2019

- Interim Director Behaviour and Conduct Office appointed
- Interim process for bullying and harassment complaints established
- Organisational Strategic Framework launched

September 2019

- Respect and Inclusion pilot training tested for Te Hiku and Ngā Tai ki te Puku regions



November 2018

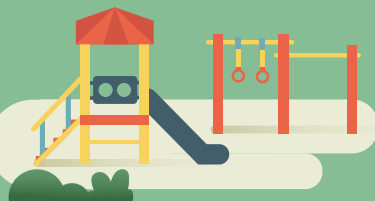
- Set up the Respect and Inclusion Taskforce

January 2019

- Independent Positive Workplace Culture Review findings released

March 2019

- Respect and Inclusion Beacon Challenge launched



April 2019

- New values announced
- Positive Workplace Action Plan launched



October 2019

- 6 month progress report released



Under construction

- Respect and Inclusion video campaign
- Engagement with our people on:
 - our review of support services
 - the development of the Behaviour and Conduct Office and complaints process
 - the draft policy to address bullying, harassment and victimisation
 - our shared code of behaviour.
- Support of the 'I am hope' New Zealand tour focused on mental health
- Continue to deliver a wide range of training and workshops to support our people to address unwanted behaviour.

Measuring Success

Fire and Emergency is monitoring and evaluating the extent to which the initiatives are achieving their objectives against the review recommendations.

As part of the programme planning a Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework is being developed to:

- Support the positive workplace culture programme in achieving its objectives.
- Contribute to positive outcomes for Fire and Emergency New Zealand.
- Enable the systematic collection, analysis and use of information to improve and report on the programme.

These measures alongside annual people surveys, exit surveys, pulse surveys and gathered project metrics will provide a way to monitor performance and support continuous improvement of key initiatives and identify barriers and enablers to implementation.

A draft evaluation framework approach and draft measures have been developed and tested with a cross-section of Fire and Emergency people through the Respect and Inclusion Taskforce and national office colleagues as part of a workshop held in August 2019. Work is currently underway to incorporate feedback to finalise the evaluation framework.





[newzealand.govt.nz](https://www.newzealand.govt.nz)