

IGNITE

TE HIRINGA O TE TANGATA

Issue 11 / March 2019 / Poutūterangi 2019



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Ignite is the official magazine for Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

Te Hiringa o te Tangata – To have drive, zest, determination. To have heart and soul.

Ignite represents the voices of the men and women across the country who dedicate themselves to protecting life and property in their communities.

It is produced by the Fire and Emergency Communications Team, National Headquarters, Level 12, 80 The Terrace, Wellington.

Contributions to Ignite

Contributions to be considered for publication are welcome and may be submitted to: communications@fireandemergency.nz.

Photos need to be at least 1MB.

Read Ignite online

<https://fireandemergency.nz/news-and-media>

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Fire and Emergency leaders visit Paihia Fire Station

Welcome to the first issue of Ignite for 2019. We are now two months into the new year and so much has happened already.

Wildfires test our unified capabilities

The start of the year has provided us with an opportunity to demonstrate the lessons we learned following the Port Hills fires two years ago.

In January we co-ordinated and deployed an interagency team of firefighters and Incident Management Team personnel to Australia to assist with the response to wildfires ravaging Tasmania since late December. The crews have been operating in extremely tough conditions, often being flown in and out of steep and remote areas by helicopter. As always our people have been well looked after, and their efforts have been appreciated both by their Australian counterparts and the Tasmanian public.

On Tuesday, 5 February fire broke out in Pigeon Valley in the Tasman area, marking the start of one of

New Zealand's largest wildfires in more than 60 years and allowing us to demonstrate how far we've come as a unified organisation. From effective, integrated command and control to better organised cordon control and information flow, we have worked together effectively with our interagency partners.

To everyone who has been involved both in support of Nelson and across the Tasman, and to those of you who have stayed home to ensure we can continue to provide adequate coverage where it is needed across New Zealand, thank you. It is heart-warming to see the dedication and commitment you show to the communities we serve throughout New Zealand and internationally.

Judge Coral Shaw Report released

Judge Shaw's independent review was commissioned to help us understand how Fire and Emergency can lead, develop and support a positive and inclusive environment for its personnel that is free from bullying and all forms of harassment.

The report has clearly highlighted a need for change to remove unwanted behaviour from our organisation and has made 33 recommendations, including the need to adopt a new set of values, Code of Behaviour, and remove barriers to reporting bullying and harassment.

I have accepted all the recommendations and work is now underway to implement them. It is going to take time. It is going to be hard. But we have to do better.

Executive Leadership Team confirmed

Prior to Christmas I announced the new Executive Leadership Team (ELT) structure and appointments. On 1 February the new structure came into effect with a pōwhiri to formally welcome the ELT into the organisation.

Over the next six months we expect to appoint the direct reports to the DCE Service Delivery and the other ELT members, and then gradually move down the operational layers of the organisation to confirm their direct reports and core staff members.

Throughout February we sought feedback on our proposals for positions reporting directly to the DCE Service Delivery. We are currently reviewing and assessing the feedback received and expect to make further announcements shortly.

Commemorating Waitangi Day

Fire and Emergency was privileged to send a contingent of people to attend the Waitangi Day commemorations. Thank you to our Northland Fire and Emergency crews for your hospitality and the way you engaged with the crowds.

For the very first time a fire organisation delivered a karakia at the Waitangi Dawn Service; it was a great honour for me to do that on behalf of Fire and Emergency.

Amongst the messages I gave to New Zealand, the most important was that we need to be an organisation that values respect and the diversity we have both within our organisation and the communities we serve.

–Rhys Jones, Chief Executive

LET US KNOW WHAT IGNITES YOU

Over the next few months the National Communications team will be piloting a new look and feel for Ignite and increasing the magazine's frequency to a monthly publication so you can continue to get the same great content but more of it.

We are also looking at other ways we can get information to you in a format you enjoy and value. We're interested in hearing your thoughts about the way we share news and stories. Please take the time to complete and return the feedback card to:

National Communications,
Fire and Emergency,
PO Box 2133,
Wellington, 6140

Or email us at:
NationalCommunications@fireandemergency.nz

WAITANGI DAY CELEBRATIONS

Fire and Emergency was privileged to once again send a contingent of people to attend the Waitangi Day commemorations.

Our people engaged with local Iwi, the public and Ministers of the Crown as part of the free public festival on the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, providing fire safety information, demonstrations, and fun activities and challenges for children.

We also took part in the waka display with Iwi Liaison Officer Albert Cash, a kaihautu (captain) who has been involved in waka since childhood, passing on some of his knowledge of waka skills and protocols as we look to upskill our personnel in tikanga Māori.

And for the very first time a fire organisation was invited to deliver a karakia at the Waitangi Dawn Service, and Rhys Jones was proud to share the following message with New Zealand on behalf of Fire and Emergency:

Tihei uriuri

Tihei nakanako

Tihei ki te wheao ki te ao marama

Tihei mauriora.

As a unified Fire and Emergency, we give thanks for the honour and privilege of representing and serving this nation and the many communities that we call home.

We acknowledge Māori as tangata whenua, and recognise the important relationship we have in working together to help protect and preserve life, property and the environment — not only for Māori but for all New Zealand communities.

We are committed to embracing diversity, respect and inclusion in our organisation as well as the communities we serve, and we will do this by acknowledging, understanding and valuing each other's differences, and working together in an environment of respect, trust and good faith.

We believe that these are the attributes that are needed to build both a strong organisation and a strong country.

E te Ariki, whakarongo mai ki a matou e inoi nei. (Lord hear our prayer).



The crowd watches as CE Rhys Jones speaks at the Dawn Service



A beautiful day for the waka crews on their Waitangi Day journey



He waka eke noa - Everybody in one canoe, with no exception



High five for the great effort on our kids combat challenge!



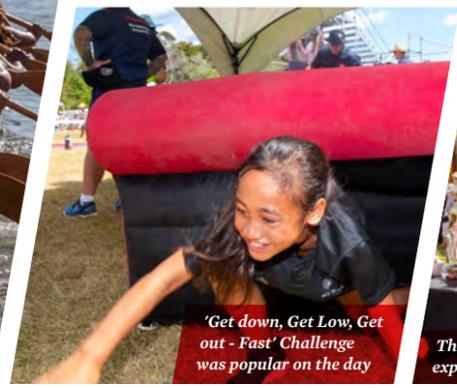
The kitchen fire demonstration being explained in sign language and te reo



New Zealand's emergency services brought together for our Waitangi festival



Emergency services sat down together for a hearty breakfast in preparation for the festival



'Get down, Get Low, Get out - Fast' Challenge was popular on the day



The 'Escape my house' VR experience was popular as always



Our Māori liaison team on the ground welcoming the locals



Fire and Emergency leaders at the dawn ceremony



Getting a taste of the job



Recruiting them early!



A future firefighter plays dress up at our kids combat challenge



Kids of all ages took part in the firefighting challenge



Competitive Kiwi kids on the combat challenge

“Building relationships is really important; no matter what we do in life, it's everything. It's the foundation of how we move forward, it's everything we do. It's about honouring each other, it's about ensuring that trust and integrity is upheld”

**Albert Cash,
Maori Liaison Officer/Station Officer Kawakawa VFB**

CREATING A POSITIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

Chief Executive Rhys Jones addresses the media after the release of the Coral Shaw report

In July 2018, Fire and Emergency asked retired Judge Coral Shaw to conduct an independent review into our workplace policies, practices and procedures to address bullying and harassment.

“The safety, health and wellbeing of our people is of paramount importance to us. I have zero tolerance for bullying and harassment of any kind in this organisation”

Rhys Jones, Chief Executive, Fire and Emergency

“An organisation that is grounded in respect and inclusion can only be better and allow us to continue focusing on what we do best – keeping New Zealanders safe”

Rhys Jones, Chief Executive, Fire and Emergency

The review and its resulting report have clearly highlighted a need for change. As an organisation we need to be better at promoting and improving respect, safety and equality, and removing unwanted behaviour.

The report, released on 24 January, contains 33 recommendations including the need to adopt a new set of values, Code of Behaviour, and remove barriers to reporting bullying and harassment. Chief Executive Rhys Jones has accepted all of the recommendations and set the organisation a three-year timeframe to deliver on them.

Making positive steps

Since the report was released we have engaged with all leaders, unions, associations and networks on the key recommendations, and are in the process of developing a high-level action plan that will outline how we will deliver on all 33 recommendations.

This plan will be published at the end of March and we will be providing six-monthly progress reports (as a minimum) throughout the duration of the three-year project.

“...here is the opportunity to put a line in the sand and say we have one set of behaviours and values now and this is how we need to behave.”

Bill Butzbach, Chief Executive, United Fire Brigades' Association of New Zealand



You can view the full report at: www.fireandemergency.nz/research-and-reports/positive-workplace-culture-review

WHERE YOU CAN GET SUPPORT:

Talk to someone you trust – this could be a peer support person, a Safety, Health and Wellbeing Adviser, or your manager in your region.

Free confidential advice and counselling is available to all employees, volunteers and their families via the employee assistance programmes below.

Region 1, 2, 3	Region 4, 5		NHQ
Vitae Services 0508 664 981 www.vitae.co.nz	EAP Services 0800 327 669 www.eapservices.co.nz	Workplace Support 0800 443 445 / 0800 333 200 www.workplacesupport.co.nz	EAP Services 0800 327 669 www.eapservices.co.nz

NATIONAL HELPLINES

You can free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained health professional. Visit www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/in-crisis/helplines/ for more information on all of the 24/7 national helplines available.

“If people are feeling unsafe for whatever reason, they can have the matter addressed appropriately”

Wattie Watson, Secretary, New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union

MEET THE POSITIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE REVIEW TEAM

The Positive Workplace Culture Review Team has been established to lead the implementation of the report's recommendations.



Aaron Waterreus

Aaron has been seconded from his role as Area Manager of the Eastern Waikato. He joined the New Zealand Fire Service in the mid 1990s and has been operational in Rotorua and a number of stations around Wellington. Having also spent time in training and a few years overseas, Aaron is happy to be working on the review team and is excited about the direction the new organisation is going, in particular the creation of a more respectful and inclusive workplace for all.



Elizabeth Church

Elizabeth has been seconded from the Office of the Chief Executive, where she worked to establish and support Judge Shaw's independent review. Drawing on her skills to bring people together and co-ordinate effort across the organisation, Elizabeth is also an experienced lawyer with a strong governance background. Her most challenging role to date is parenting two primary school-aged children and teaching them to be Kiwis after early years in London and Hong Kong.

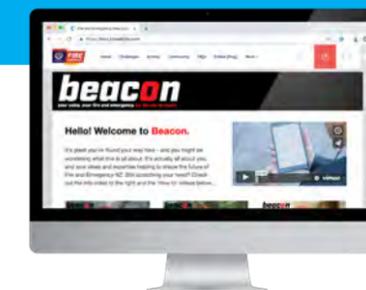


John Kingsbury

John is a Station Officer on the Tawa Volunteer Fire Brigade. His substantive role is National Safety, Health and Wellbeing Manager. He has contributed to the development of the Psychological Wellbeing for Leaders workshops that are currently being delivered. He represents Fire and Emergency on the AFAC Mental Health and Wellbeing Network.

WE WANT YOUR IDEAS

The Positive Workplace Culture Review is a defining piece of work that will set the tone for the culture of Fire and Emergency.



As an organisation, we are committed to building a unified workplace where everyone feels respected and included, regardless of their role, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and religious beliefs.

“I'm encouraged that the report shows a real appetite for change amongst our people.”

Rhys Jones, Chief Executive, Fire and Emergency New Zealand

We need your help to do it. We all have ideas about what we can do to make a difference—this is your opportunity to share yours.

There are two main ways you can share your ideas with us:

- Email (positiveworkplace@fireandemergency.nz)
- Beacon Challenge.

What is Beacon?

Beacon is a secure online platform where ideas to help improve Fire and Emergency can be shared.

It allows us to issue Challenges for you to respond to with your ideas. A Challenge is basically a question looking for an answer.

Once an idea is posted, it becomes open for people to vote and comment on. This allows our people from across the country to have an input into what is directly affecting them.

Our latest Challenge is calling for your ideas about what we can do at Fire and Emergency to build a culture that's more respectful and inclusive. How can we better support people to call out the behaviour and language that works against that intent and reinforce the positive behaviour and language?

So if you have an idea that will help us build a more respectful and inclusive organisation, please let us know.

Accessing Beacon

You can access Beacon using any device and regardless of where in the organisation you're based. Simply type fenz.crowdicity.com into your PC, tablet or mobile phone and you will be taken to the Beacon page.

If you don't already have a Beacon account, you'll be asked to create one. There are three ways to do this (using your FENZ login, personal email login, or social media account) and the page will walk you through the option you select.

Questions about Beacon?

Email: beacon@fireandemergency.nz

Phone: 04 806 4120 (Caitlin Mackay)

“The aim is to use ideas from the Beacon Challenge to inform our work in building a respectful and inclusive workplace and creating a shared understanding of what this means for all of us – through leadership, training and education and everyday behaviours.”

Elizabeth Church, Chief Advisor, Office of the Chief Executive, Fire and Emergency New Zealand

THOUGHTS FROM A NELSON RESIDENT

Four days after the wildfires began in the region, a Nelson City Councillor took to Facebook to share his thoughts on what was unfolding.

"It's no exaggeration to say that today Nelson felt like it was under attack.

We woke up in a city that smelled of smoke; a city where the air and light were tainted by a dirty haze and people were worried.

At Saxton Field volunteers got on with the job of preparing food and supplies for our firefighters as a steady stream of Nelsonians arrived with boxes of donations and offers of help. In town the fire was on everyone's mind. Everyone wanted to know the latest from Pigeon Valley, Teapot Valley, Redwood Valley and Wakefield. Everyone was worried about how dry the region had become and no one liked the look of the short-term forecast.

We all felt grateful for the men and women keeping us safe and lucky to live in a community, in a country, that pulls together in times of crisis.

Then, at around 2.30pm, things got more intense.

Tania called from work and told me to look out the window.

Across town a hill we used to live on was on fire—the flames visible for the city to see—and friends were evacuating.

Hoping to make myself useful I jumped on my bike.

Riding through town was unreal. People stood open-mouthed in the street staring at the action while choppers with payloads of water fresh out of Tasman Bay came in low and fast. You wanted to yell "Go! Go! Go!" as they closed in on their targets. You wanted to cheer every time they hit the dump button.

By the time I got to Iwa Road the police were clearing the street. Our friends had grabbed their dog and a handful of stuff and, along with their neighbours, were on the move. A house that had looked doomed had been saved with hoses while above two planes armed with fire retardant were joining the attack. Soon the evacuees were safely down on the street below with front row seats to the drama that was unfolding.

A lot has already been said about the courage, skill and professionalism of our first responders but, seriously, it was impossible not to be impressed by what we saw today. The pilots and firefighters on the ground kicked that fire in the arse! Yes, there were flare ups and, yes, they needed to return once or twice to make sure its arse remained kicked but when you consider how hard they have been working, some of them for four days, it was a stunningly well executed assault on a fire that could have easily turned into something truly horrific.

The fact they then returned to fighting the monster out in Tasman is also slightly mind-blowing.

It also has to be said that today Nelson got lucky. Had the biggest aerial firefighting effort this country has ever seen not been taking place nearby, those choppers, planes and pilots would not have been on hand to do what they did as fast as they did it. We were lucky the fire didn't ignite a massive stand of gum trees and we were lucky the tide wasn't out as that would have made it harder to get those monsoon buckets filled as fast.

We are also lucky to live in the developed world where we have the kind of resources that can mean the difference between life and death.

Will we be so lucky next time? I'm an optimist but climate change is going to mean more fires, more often. My hope is that what's been happening



in Nelson snaps a whole lot of us out of our complacency. We need to start taking this stuff more seriously because, if we don't, being under attack may soon feel normal."



Operations Manager and Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer Clive Lennox and his son, Rural Crew Leader Andrew Lennox



Firefighter digging up a hot spot



The crews being briefed for the days work ahead



Firefighter extinguishing flames



Tree roots were burning up to 1.8m deep



The Team Mitchell Incident Management Team



Birchwood Primary School students sent these lovely thank you cards to our firefighters!



One of the drones being used to map hot spots overnight



Selfie of a hard-working team



The day crews at their morning operational briefing



Some of the crews on the fire ground



Heavy machinery and ground crews dampening hot spots

“Firefighters from all around the country have been working tirelessly to bring the fire under control and on behalf of residents of the Nelson Tasman regions I would like to say a huge thank you for your efforts. We understand the enormity of the task you are facing and appreciate all you are doing to manage it.”

Rachel Reese, Nelson Mayor

FIRE AND EMERGENCY

2019 EVENTS

This calendar of events is updated regularly, so if you have an event in your region that you think should be on here, then let us know by contacting the National Communications Team at communications@fireandemergency.nz



Region 1	Location	Date
Northland Field Days	Dargaville	28 Feb-3 Mar
North Shore Home & Garden Show	North Shore	8-10 Mar
A&P Show	Kumeu	9-10 Mar
90 Mile Beach Bonanza	90 Mile Beach	12 Mar
Polyfest	Manukau	13-16 Mar
Pasifika Festival	Auckland	23-24 Mar
Waitakere Home & Garden Show	Waitakere	20 May
Kutai Festival	Mitimiti	4 Nov
Sirens and Sounds	Auckland	Nov

Region 2	Location	Date
R2 Community fire safety workshop	Rotorua	Early Mar
Taupo Home & Garden Show	Taupo	5-7 Mar
Beach Hop Whangamata	Whangamata	Early Mar
Taupo Teddy Bear picnic	Taupo	11 Mar
Onemana Whangamata Beach Hop	Onemana	27-31 Mar
Taupo Christian Expo	Taupo	1 Apr
Fieldays Hamilton	Hamilton	12-15 Jun
Take a kid fishing	Raglan VFB	Jul
Quiz night in conjunction with coalition group and Burns support	Hamilton	15 Jul
Whitianga Scallop Festival	Whitianga	Sep
Expo for Fonterra staff	Hamilton	10 Sep
Pirongia Craft Day	Pirongia	28-29 Sep
Hamilton A&P show	Hamilton	Oct
Gisborne A&P Show	Gisborne	11-12 Oct
Homeshow	Hamilton	Oct
Wine and Food festival	Gisborne	21 Oct
White ribbon day	Hamilton	14 Nov
Kirikiri Marae Expo	Hamilton	16 Nov
Mana Wahine Expo	Hamilton	30 Nov
Everyday Heroes	Hamilton	Dec
Rhythm and Vines	Gisborne	29-31 Dec

Region 4	Location	Date
South Island Field Days	Christchurch	27-29 Mar
Oxford A&P show	Oxford	30 Mar
MacKenzie Country A&P show	Fairlie	22 Apr
Migrant workers on dairy farms promo	Waitaki	Jun/July
Gypsy day	Canterbury	Jun/July
Marlborough Home & Garden Show	Blenheim	5-7 Jul
Christchurch Go Green Expo	Christchurch	10 Aug
Nelson Home & Garden Show	Nelson	27-29 Sep
Ellesmere A&P Show	Ellesmere	12 Oct
Northern A&P show	Rangiora	18 Oct
Ashburton A&P show	Ashburton	25 Oct
Timaru Fire Station open day	Timaru	Nov
Twizel event	Twizel	Nov
Canterbury A&P show	Christchurch	13 Nov
Courtenay A&P show	Kirwee	23 Nov

National events	Date
International Firefighters' Day	4 May
National Volunteer Week	17-23 June

Region 3 - Taranaki	Location	Date
Home and Lifestyle Expo	New Plymouth	12 Apr
Inglewood 125 year Jubilee	New Plymouth	31 May

Region 3 - Hawkes bay	Location	Date
Positive aging expo	Hawkes Bay	4 Mar
Maeraekakaho Market Day	Maeraekakaho	9 Mar
Havelock North Fire Brigade Centenary, and open day	Havelock North	30 Mar
CHB Retirement and beyond expo	Waipukurau	1 Apr
Youth Alcohol + Driving Expo	Hawkes Bay	May
Napier cultural diversity	Napier	mid May
Wairoa Elder Abuse event	Wairoa	mid June
FMG Young Farmer Final	Napier	1 July
Hawke's Bay Home & Garden Show	Napier	13-15 Sep
Kapa Haka Event	Hawkes Bay	30 Sep
Next steps Lifestyle Expo	Hastings	late Sep
Hawkes Bay A&P show	Hastings	23-25 Oct
Teddys bears picnic	Napier	Early Oct
Duck day Central Hawkes Bay	Hawkes Bay	Early Oct
Central Hawkes Bay A&P show	Waipukurau	Nov
Womens lifestyle expo	Napier	Nov
Mitre 10 ladies night	Napier	Nov
Napier disability event	Napier	2 Dec
Birthright toy run	Hawkes Bay	2 Dec
Iron Māori Kaumatua Event	Napier	5 Dec

Region 3 - Manawatu	Location	Date
Central Districts Field Days	Palmerston North	14-15 Mar
North Island Firefighter Combat Challenge	Palmerston North	3 May
Wanganui Home Show	Wanganui	17-18 Aug
MASH event	Palmerston North	Early Oct

Region 3 - Wellington	Location	Date
National Waterways Challenge	Wainuiomata	1 Mar
Newtown Fair	Wellington	3 Mar
Rural Fest	Wainuiomata	9 Mar
Life flight open day Wellington airport	Wellington	10 Mar
Greenacres school gala	Wellington	23 Mar
Regional Kapa Haka Festival	Wellington	1 Apr
National Firefighter Combat Challenge	Wellington	29 Apr
Wellington Better Home & Living Show	Wellington	12 May
Home and Living Expo	Wellington	25-27 May
Wellington Home & Garden Show	Wellington	20-22 Sep
Spring into Tawa	Tawa	27 Oct
Iron Māori Kaumatua Event	Wellington	5 Dec

Region 5	Location	Date
Strath/Taieri A&P Show	Middlemarch	2 Mar
Womens Expo	Dunedin	6-7 April
Kidszone	Invercargill	8-14 Jul
Region 5 Polyfest	Dunedin	Aug
National Childrens Day	Invercargill	20 Nov

Events as of 16 January 2019

NELSON BAY DREAMS



A new approach to how we ensure large festivals manage fire risk has produced an excellent result.

The Nelson Bay Dreams music festival over 3–4 January saw us deploy a small team to the region to personally deliver fire safety messages to the estimated 20,000 people attending event.

Mobilising a small team of firefighters and NHQ communications staff, a proactive presence at the festival helped to drive the message home in a friendly and relaxed way. Festival attendees were happy to wear fire safety stickers and pose for photos supporting the key messages.

The team, reporting to Area Commander Grant Haywood and supported by Fire Risk Management Officer Craig Piner, created an 'on the ground' presence, supported by a comprehensive social media campaign (Facebook and Instagram) with signage prominently displayed in and around the venue.

As a result of the team's efforts, there were no fire incidents during the two-day festival.

“There’s always a worry when there’s 20,000 people coming into town, with many who are camping, but it’s been really good”

Steve Shackleton, Nelson Senior Station Officer

“It was especially noticeable [Friday] night how concertgoers seemed to be looking out for each other, reporting and supporting others who became unwell or distressed, which was fantastic”

Inspector Paul Borrell, Police Area Commander, Nelson Bays

“Hosting 20,000 people in a population of 51,000 is no small feat but Nelson delivered superbly. A big hats off to Fire and Emergency NZ, other emergency services and volunteers who put in long hours to deliver a safe and positive experience for so many young people and the wider community.”

Rachel Reese, Nelson Mayor



CHANGING STUDENT BEHAVIOURS AND IMPROVING OUTCOMES

Establishing a close working relationship between the Palmerston North Fire Station and Massey University is an excellent example of a brigade responding to local needs. Since the new partnership was formed in early 2018, private fire alarm activations attended by Fire and Emergency on-campus are **31% down** on the average annual call out volumes over the previous seven years.



Barry Madgwick, Palmerston North Station Officer, presents fire safety messages to 300 new international students at Massey University

Palmerston North Station Officer Barry Madgwick has developed a good understanding of the leading causes of brigade call outs in the city during his 17 years as a local firefighter. Massey University is a significant contributor to these call outs, leading the brigade to tailor their support to meet their local community's need.

“The University is really a city within a city,” says Barry. “But it also has a disproportionately high volume of call outs.” A number of concerning behaviours contribute to the high volume of on-campus call outs, including nuisance alarm activations, nuisance fires and cooking in hostel rooms. “There are also concerning behaviours in response to alarm activations,” he explains.

“Students are leaving home for the first time and moving into a shared living environment, often with very little awareness of how to be fire safe or how to respond when a fire does occur,” he says. “The habits they develop in the halls of residence are then taken with them into flatting situations.”

Realising that a lack of systems and processes between the brigade and the university was also contributing to the issues on-campus, a new university liaison role was established, complete with a formal job description. Barry was appointed the first liaison person.

A joint Fire and Emergency/Massey University liaison group now meets on a quarterly basis to review recent Fire and Emergency call outs and address issues such as access to locations on-campus and fire warden training.

Events throughout the year provide opportunities for Fire and Emergency staff to engage directly with students. “Orientation Week is about rapport building,” explains Barry. “We take an appliance on-campus and have fun with the students squirting water around. The following week is ‘Health and Safety Week’ which is our opportunity to educate students about fire safety in their rooms and evacuation procedures. Later in the year the university runs a programme to prepare students for life off-campus in flats, giving us another opportunity to reinforce fire safety messages.”

The group also identified a need for education in good fire safe behaviour with new international students in the halls of residence, delivered through on-site visits and presentations and fire safety awareness posters throughout the halls of residence.

The university has been incredibly supportive of the initiative and the



A new approach to speaking to the university students included memes.

results are beginning to show. “Since we began the pilot programme last year, fire call out statistics are 31% down, although it has to be an ongoing programme as students cycle in and out of the halls of residence every year,” explains Barry.

This month sees a significant milestone with a document formalising the joint relationship between Fire and Emergency and Massey University to be signed by Area Commander Mitchell Brown and Massey University senior management.

“We share three common goals,” explains Barry. “Reduce the number of unwanted alarm activations, prepare students moving into flatting situations, and deliver improved fire risk management on-campus.”

On a recent visit to Massey, Chief Executive Rhys Jones and Area Commander Mitchell Brown discussed with Vice Chancellor Jan Thomas the benefits of expanding the programme to the Albany and Wellington campuses, as well as using it as a template for Fire and Emergency to develop similar working relationships with other universities.

Barry adds, “It is really satisfying to see how far we’ve come with this relationship and to witness the benefits.”

PORTABLE HANDHELD RADIO DEPLOYMENT A HUGE SUCCESS

The nationwide roll out of new incident ground radios was completed on 20 December 2018, with 7,745 Motorola IGC handheld radios deployed to all urban (5,024) and rural (2,721) brigades across the country.

The new radios have been specifically built for firefighting conditions and have improved communication performance and capability features that allow effective incident ground communications across the broad range of incidents we respond to across the country. In addition, the dual band radios easily function across UHF and VHF, providing vital interoperability not only between brigades but between our various partner agencies such as ambulance services, NZ Police, rescue helicopters, DOC, Maritime and Civil Defence.

Josh Nicholls, National Operations Advisor IGC, says the dedication and effort of everyone involved in the four-year National IGC Portable Handheld Radio Replacement Project has made it one of the most successful infrastructure projects the organisation has seen over the past decade. “The commitment of team members has been fantastic—they’ve had to spend extended time away from home and family, working late nights and travelling large distances,” he says.

“In particular, I’d like to acknowledge Mike Winiata (Project Manager) and Jason Hill (IGC Business Owner) who designed the project structure and approach, then planned and managed the national rollout, and Steve Hudson (National Operations Advisor IGC) who worked with me to develop and deliver training and manage logistics for the national deployment.”

A key factor in the successful deployment has been a strong focus on user engagement—both in terms of seeking input and feedback at every stage of the project (procure, test, deploy) and upskilling all Fire and Emergency staff to improve proficiency in incident ground communications.

“User engagement has allowed us to deliver a portable handheld IGC radio solution that is fit for purpose. We’ve spent a lot of time out in the field, both in assessing user needs and providing tailored training. We’ve had to be adaptable along the way. For instance, the training we developed for urban brigades wasn’t as effective for rural brigades, requiring us to quickly adjust the way in which we engaged with our rural crews—doing this helped to ensure the project was well received by everyone.”

Feedback received from firefighters and Area Management across the country has been consistently positive during the term of the project, especially in terms of the quality of training, deployment approach and the operational benefits that the new IGC radio equipment has delivered to firefighters.

Meantime members of the project team have recently been on the ground in Nelson during the wildfires, observing the radios in action and gaining feedback from the crews using them during this large-scale incident.

“Providing this level of support helps keep our people safe and provides them with the tools and knowledge needed to effectively respond to incidents and better serve our communities”

Josh Nichols, National Operations Advisor IGC



'DRIVER REVIVER' INITIATIVE TARGETS WEARY HOLIDAYMAKERS

Lawrence, located on State Highway 8 (SH8), is known as the gateway to Central Otago and the inland towns of Queenstown and Alexandra.

Police have designated the section of road through Manuka Gorge to Raes Junction as ‘high risk’ or ‘extreme high risk’ of serious injury. On average, around 2,100 vehicles travel along SH8 every day, swelling to more than 5,000 vehicles a day during the holiday periods.

Over the last two years the Otago ‘Driver Reviver’ campaign has provided weary drivers returning from holiday with a roadside rest stop at the Lawrence Fire Station. Lawrence Community Police have worked with local brigades from Lawrence and Waitahuna to provide complimentary refreshments and help spread the road safety message.

Local volunteer firefighters gave their time to support the cause, including doing all the cooking and serving on the BBQ. Over two separate days (one day in 33 degree sunshine, the next in rain) more than 800 people stopped for sausages in bread, tea, coffee and cold drinks.

Senior Constable Craig Bennett said the initiative was well received by motorists. “Most were astonished we had organised such an event. As well as refreshments, we gave out stickers and had New Zealand driving condition and rule booklets available, some in different languages for our overseas visitors,” he says. “Our local fire team of Jason Robertson, Francine Keach, Bill Bazley, Pete Darcy, Rory Tisdall and Matt Little were awesome and gave me great support.”

The Driver Reviver was run alongside other holiday road safety initiatives,

which included messages in local papers and social media, a crashed vehicle on display at the entrance to Lawrence township, and Police and Fire and Emergency vehicles handing out lollies.

Senior Constable Bennett says the area had no crashes over the holiday period for the second year running, which shows just how successful the initiative has been.

Rodger Smith, Assistant Area Commander, East Otago is very supportive of the campaign. “Initiatives that help to reduce traffic incidents on our local roads not only benefit the people in our local communities, but help to reduce the trauma that our Fire and Emergency personnel are potentially exposed to and the negative influences on their psychological wellbeing.”



(From left) Josh Nichols, Mike Winiata and Steve Hudson at Upper Takaka Fire Station, the last fire station in the country to receive the new radio in December 2018



Lawrence and Waitahuna fire stations provide complimentary refreshments and help spread the road safety message



KUMEU 8629 TO THE RESCUE

Kumeu crew use a harness and ropes to rescue a horse from a creek

The Kumeu Fire District covers a rapidly growing region with a mix of large urban and rural farming areas and just about every type of terrain possible, including two large forests, a large section of beach and dunes, and lifestyle properties, farms (recreational and commercial), paddocks, orchards and wineries.

As a result, the brigade is required to respond to a broad range of incidents, many of which present access issues for standard vehicles and equipment.

“The wonderful firefighters at Kumeu Station saved my daughter’s eight-week-old foal when she was stuck in waist-deep mud. Without their quick response, equipment and manpower it would’ve been a very different outcome”

Krista Treneary

In October 2017 the Kumeu VFB replaced its aging Nissan Urvan with a new Nissan Navara NP300 4WD, fondly known as ‘Kumeu 8629’, a vehicle custom designed and constructed to better meet local needs.

The vehicle allows the brigade to access both Muriwai Beach with essential car-cutting tools and rural areas to respond to scrub fires. It is also used to transport more crew to incidents and to help with traffic management at car accidents.

And it is the designated large-animal rescue unit for the wider West Auckland community, carrying large-animal rescue equipment for both the Waitemata and surrounding areas.

The brigade works closely with local vets who appreciate the specialist capability the brigade can provide. Bex Baddeley, Fire Risk Management Officer for Auckland City Fire Area and a trained veterinary nurse, says Kumeu 8629 gives the brigade the flexibility to adapt and deliver to the community’s needs. “Kumeu Brigade responds

“Horse rescues are a relatively common occurrence in our area. Having a specialist equipped vehicle and a well-trained and knowledgeable crew at Kumeu Station is an invaluable resource”

Dave van Zwabenberg, Vets North

to around 20-30 animal rescue requests each year, often involving large animals that have gotten stuck in bogs or waterways—Kumeu 8629 lets us get the right equipment and people to where it needs to be.”

Bex says it’s not just about having the right equipment for the job. “Safety is paramount, for both the animal and the people working to rescue them. Six of the crew have completed a one-day animal rescue course run by Massey University, while Len Blake (Volunteer Support Officer for the Waitemata Area) has developed and circulated a training manual for other local brigades and held training sessions with them.”

WOODEND VFB STEER RESCUE

While a few brigades around the country (such as Kumeu VFB) have specialist animal rescue equipment, other brigades need to make use of materials at their disposal to get the job done.

In January the Woodend VFB crew attended an incident where a beloved 1,200 kilogram pet steer called Mitchell had managed to escape his North Canterbury paddock and get himself stuck in the Cam River near Kaiapoi.

Mitchell’s owner Sarah Allan, was alerted to his predicament at about 9pm—they tried to get the steer out of the river but he wouldn’t budge. She called the SPCA and was advised to call Fire and Emergency.

“I thought it might have been a bit over the top, but I was so worried about him,” says Sarah.

Murray Lamb, Chief Fire Officer, Woodend VFB assessed the situation with Lucy Stanley, a large-animal vet from Rangiora Vet Centre, and it was decided to delay the rescue attempt until the following morning. “Lucy wasn’t too concerned about the steer’s condition at that point and it wasn’t a safe option to go into the river in the dark,” Murray said.

The following morning, once it was clear Mitchell was not coming out of the water by himself, Murray and his crew returned with Lucy and enlisted the help of a neighbour with a tractor and a canoe, and a drainage contractor who brought a digger in case a trench was needed to get the steer out.

The vet and two members of the Woodend VFB paddled out to Mitchell in the canoe and fitted a halter to

pull him to shore. Unfortunately, a steep bank prevented Mitchell from climbing out, so another rope was placed around his backside and the tractor used to pull him out.

The vet then checked the steer and deemed him to be in excellent health, although she gave him a shot of pain relief in case his muscles were sore and fatigued after spending so long in the water. A few minutes after the rescue, Mitchell was back in his paddock eating hay.

Murray Lamb said it was not a typical callout, but they were happy to help. “It was a real team effort. An animal’s welfare was at stake, someone was in need of our help and that’s what we’re here for.”

“It may have seemed like a crazy callout but [the firefighters] could see how worried I was and they were amazing”

Sarah Allan



Rescuing a steer



IWI CONSULTATION ENSURES APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

In early January 2019, the Ruapehu Volunteer Rural Fire Force (VRFF), Manunui Volunteer Fire Brigade and Owhango Volunteer Fire Brigade were dispatched to a grass fire in Kakahi, a small rural town in the Central North Island near Taumarunui.

Manunui and Owhango Brigades responded well by containing the fire and preventing it from spreading; with the Ruapehu VRFF arriving shortly after for a handover.

During the handover the Ruapehu team were informed that the grass fire had ignited around a Māori burial ground (urupa), in a large amount of ash being deposited on many of the grave sites. The team was instructed to clean the site.

“It was a rewarding job for all Fire brigades involved, to not only extinguish a fire but also gain better appreciation of the communities we serve”

Nick Watson, Ruapehu Rural Fire Officer

Recognising the cultural significance of the task, Ruapehu Rural Fire Controller Gareth Dunn sought advice prior to commencing the clean-up. Discussions with DPRFO, Nathan Jones, the newly appointed Ruapehu VRFF iwi liaison and Rural Fire Fighter Rayden Horton, and local kaumatua provided the team with a clear understanding of the appropriate protocol for entering and working within the cultural site.

The Ruapehu VRFF held a karakia (prayer) and manaaki before entering

the urupa for clean-up. The urupa was then cleared of ash and burnt materials were removed from the site.

“The incident provided us with an excellent lesson on the importance of being aware of appropriate protocol when working in and around culturally sensitive sites,” said Nick Watson, Ruapehu Rural Fire Officer. “It was a rewarding job for all Fire brigades involved, to not only extinguish a fire but also gain better appreciation of the communities we serve.”

IN THE MEDIA

From showing the NZ public first-hand the importance of fire safety with electronics to pitching in to help our overseas partners, we've received some great media moments recently



ROAD WORKER RESCUED IN DUNEDIN

A man helping to install roadside signs suffered back and neck injuries after he fell three metres down a steep bank.

Fire and Emergency crews from Willowbank Station and Dunedin Central Station used a Stokes rescue basket to lift the man back to safety.

St John ambulance staff gave the man initial pain relief before he was lifted to safety and taken to hospital.



AUCKLAND FIREFIGHTERS LEFT SPEECHLESS AS 'LADY IN PINK' PICKS UP MEAL TAB

Four members of Silverdale's Volunteer Fire Brigade in the middle of a 24-hour shift were left speechless after a complete stranger picked up their meal tab.

A woman known only as the "lady in pink" walked up to the register at Dear Coasties in Orewa, paid their bill and popped the receipt onto their table before wishing them all "Happy New Year".



FIREFIGHTER HONOURED FOR WORK WITH SOUTH TARANAKI NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT

Andrew Cotter, Fire Risk Management Officer for Taranaki has received the Neighbourhood Support New Zealand partner award for his work helping promote fire safety through Neighbourhood Support and assisting with running events and promoting the organisation in the Hawera community.

Local Neighbourhood Support coordinator Wendy Foreman says "[Andrew] goes beyond his paid job because he believes in helping to create safer communities for all walks of life, whanau and families".

A blue and white helicopter is shown in flight, dropping a bucket of water onto a large fire. The fire is consuming a forest of evergreen trees, with thick smoke rising from the flames. The helicopter's rotors are blurred, indicating motion. The bucket is suspended by a yellow rope and is positioned just above the fire, with a spray of water visible as it falls.

**Thank you to all
our partners and
the community
for helping us
respond to the
Nelson Fires**