



WHAKARATONGA IWI

**FIRE**  
**EMERGENCY**

NEW ZEALAND

# *THREE YEARS ON E TORU TAU WHAI MURI AKE*

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Making a difference to New Zealand  
He painga mō Aotearoa





### OUR PURPOSE

Protecting and preserving lives, property and the environment

### OUR VISION

Stronger communities protecting what matters

### OUR OUTCOMES

Communities prepare for, respond to and recover well from emergencies

Our services are valued and trusted

Social, economic and environmental impacts from emergencies are minimised

### OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Building resilient communities

Collaboration, partnerships and influence

Growing our people

Intelligence-led, evidence-based decisions

Keeping pace with change

### OUR VALUES



**We do the right thing**  
Kia tika



**We serve and support**  
Manaakitanga



**We are better together**  
Whanaungatanga



**We strive to improve**  
Auahatanga

### OUR OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Put safety, health and wellbeing first

Value people

Champion inclusion

Strengthen communities

Work together

Drive change

Be accountable

# Proud history Hītoria whakahī

## Bright future He anamata angitu

Since the first fire service organisations were established in New Zealand in the 1850s, they have played a critical role protecting our communities. Over time, the types of emergencies we respond to have changed.

Two reviews considered the role of fire services in 2012 and 2015. The reviews looked at governance across rural and urban services, how fire services worked with other emergency services, and the support structures, legislation and funding required for them to be more successful.

The reviews also looked internationally at how other fire service organisations had managed similar changes. The advice was clear: the changes should be co-designed with the sector, include community perspective, and grow an organisation that reflects the diversity and nature of the communities it now serves.

Cabinet agreed to unify urban and rural fire services, to use a new funding model, to repeal two Acts, and to create a new law for fire services in New Zealand.

On 1 July 2017, Fire and Emergency New Zealand was established under a new law, the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017.

Since that day we have worked with Fire and Emergency's 14,000 people, the unions and associations, agencies and other organisations, and the communities we serve, to shape our new organisation.

A key part of our new mandate is working with communities to help them to prepare for, respond to and recover when a major event or disaster happens. To meet the challenges facing New Zealanders now and in future years, we have taken the successful parts of our former organisations and built on them. We have made significant changes to our structure and the way we work as we have brought together rural and urban fire services. We have also invested heavily in our people, property, fleet and equipment.

Throughout these changes we have maintained our key focus on the health, safety and wellbeing of all our people, and maintained the high level of trust placed in us by our communities.

Of course, we couldn't have made the progress we have without the support of our people. I want to thank all Fire and Emergency people – our career and volunteer firefighters and all those who support them in many different roles.

We conclude our three-year Integration phase with a sense of achievement about the progress we've made. The benefits of being one organisation are becoming visible every day. Our people are better equipped, connected, informed and working more closely together and with our emergency partners to do what they do best – protect life, property and the environment.

We have more to do, but we are well on our way to creating a unified Fire and Emergency New Zealand.



**PAUL SWAIN**  
Board Chair  
Fire and Emergency New Zealand



# Integrating Fire and Emergency

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## He whakakotahitanga

For more than 150 years, fire service organisations have been at the heart of New Zealand communities, protecting and preserving life and property.

During that time, our role and the types of emergencies we respond to have changed. The importance of our service to our communities has remained strong.

So too have the trust and confidence of New Zealanders in the service we provide. In 2020, that was shown by us being named the most trusted agency within the public sector in Colmar Brunton's annual Public Sector Reputation Index Survey for the fifth consecutive year: three years to Fire and Emergency and before, that, the New Zealand Fire Service.

## WHY FIRE AND EMERGENCY NEW ZEALAND WAS FORMED

The challenges facing New Zealand are changing. The climate is changing, bringing an increase in extreme weather events in some areas and drier conditions in others. Our population is growing, ageing and becoming more diverse. Technology is developing at an ever-increasing rate. Emergency events are increasing in frequency and severity.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged in New Zealand in early 2020, has also challenged Fire and Emergency and the communities we serve.

In 2017, the Government decided to unify New Zealand's urban and rural fire services into one integrated fire and emergency services organisation to reflect the changing roles of firefighters and to meet the changing needs of our communities.

On 1 July 2017, Fire and Emergency New Zealand was established under a new law, bringing together more than 40 firefighting organisations around the country and around 14,000 people.



Photo credit: Jackie Ranken – [jackieranken.co.nz](http://jackieranken.co.nz)



## FOCUS ON INTEGRATING

Since then we have focused on bringing together rural and urban fire services and developing the structures, systems, tools and ways of working that we need to operate as one unified organisation.

We are building an organisation that supports our purpose: to protect and preserve lives, property and the environment; an organisation that builds on the strengths of the past while acknowledging there are areas we can improve further.

As we amalgamated and shaped Fire and Emergency we identified eight key areas of change to support our organisation and the way we operate to better serve our communities. We built our operating model around these areas of change, and we have made significant progress across our first three years.

# We set out to...

Ko tā mātou e whai nei...

Become a **strategy-led** organisation and a leader within our sector, with a clear direction about how we and our partners can make a difference for New Zealand.

Increase our **community focus** and to recognise the diverse voices and interests in communities across New Zealand.

Formalise our proactive **risk reduction** activities, working alongside communities and our partners to reduce harm.

Provide **transparency of our investment, cost and value**, to make sure our funding model is sustainable and fit for purpose.

Introduce **empowered decision-making** to make sure our people know what decisions they can make in line with the organisation's broader direction, and are supported to do so.

Gather better **insight from intelligence**, using technology to increase the scope and quality of the information we gather, and use it to make better decisions.

Focus on how we continue to be a **learning organisation**, including understanding what we do well and want to continue, and where and how we can improve.

Build an **inclusive and dynamic people system**, recognising that we're building a different organisation for all of our people.

# We've done this by...

Kua pēnei mā te...

Developing strategies that set the direction we will take to meet future challenges and opportunities; for example, Our National Strategy 2019–2045 and 10-year plan, and strategies for Risk Reduction, Volunteerism, People, and Respect and Inclusion.

Our statement of commitment to Māori as tangata whenua, by strengthening our relationships with iwi and Māori through local, regional and national events, and by establishing our first seven Local Advisory Committees in communities across New Zealand.

Working with other agencies to influence policy, legislation and regulation as they establish approaches to land use, building developments and access to water. For example, on 2 November 2019, we used section 52 of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 to put in place a total fire ban and restriction in Central Otago on activities that can cause sparks. This was prompted by our predictive modelling showing extreme fire risk over a four-day period.

Establishing a portfolio of project and programme investments within our new Investment and Portfolio Directorate to deliver our National Strategy. We are tracking our progress through the Performance Measurement Framework developed and implemented between 2019–2020. We are also taking a more integrated approach to asset management.

Providing our people greater empowerment through better information to support decision-making and national frameworks to address local risk with more flexibility. Our operating model set the foundation for this strategic shift.

Introducing new technology to improve our connectivity, to help our crews respond to call-outs, and to connect with key data and each other during incidents. We're also using data and analytics; for example, to inform our public safety campaigns.

Completing operational and management reviews after significant events we've responded to, and building the recommendations into our processes. A continuous improvement framework is being introduced to our response to the COVID-19 pandemic using the OILL methodology (Observations, Insights, Lessons Identified, Lessons Learned). This will enable us to learn from experience and ultimately improve performance.

Reshaping our recruitment focus as part of building a diverse and inclusive culture, recognising that firefighting is only one of the services we deliver to New Zealand's varied communities. We've also launched and implemented our new organisational values.

# Operational benefit of being one organisation

Ngā painga paheko o te noho hei rōpū whakahaere kotahi

## UNITED RESPONSE FOR TASMAN WILDFIRES

In early February 2019, fire broke out in Pigeon Valley in the Tasman area and quickly developed into one of the largest wildfires New Zealand had experienced. In what became a major national incident, Fire and Emergency joined with multiple support agencies to stop the fire spreading, protecting people and property.

Fire and Emergency personnel came from all over the country to help fight the fire. Rural and urban firefighters worked together to battle the blaze and our Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams carried out rapid disaster assessments as well as identifying hotspots and giving real-time information on resources.

John Sutton, one of Fire and Emergency's Incident Controllers at that event, said the joint response with other agencies was exceptional.

"Once the state of emergency was declared on the second day, Civil Defence Emergency Management (now National Emergency Management Agency) became the lead agency. We worked side by side with them and other agencies such as the Police,

Defence, Ministry of Primary Industries, Department of Conservation, Red Cross, local government, iwi and others.

"It was a totally collaborative, focused response and a big part of the success was due to having worked together on a recent flood event and the previous training our local teams had done with Civil Defence for an event just like this," said John Sutton.

Because of the extent of the Tasman fires and magnitude of our response, an independent review was commissioned, with all findings accepted.

Fire and Emergency National Commander and Deputy Chief Executive Kerry Gregory said: "It was pleasing the reviewers found we had taken lessons from the Port Hills fire in 2017 and showed we were able to manage such an extreme incident working with our partner organisations.

"We've continued to streamline our incident management systems, undertaken regular training with partner agencies to ensure consistency, and learned to work together even more effectively."





## NZICC FIRE DEMANDS HIGHLY COORDINATED RESPONSE

The New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC) fire in October 2019 highlighted the specialist capabilities career firefighters bring to large emergency events.

This was a large and dangerous fire that had serious impacts on the city of Auckland. At its peak there were 150 firefighters at the scene and up to 30 fire appliances, with critical support from our Communications Centres and Auckland Operational Support Unit.

With such a fluid situation and parts of the city brought to a standstill, a vital part of our role was to coordinate our response with a range of partners and agencies including Police, St John, Civil Defence, Auckland Transport, Auckland Council, Auckland Public Health and government departments. It was an exceptional effort by everyone concerned and after three days the fire was safely brought under control, with no loss of life.



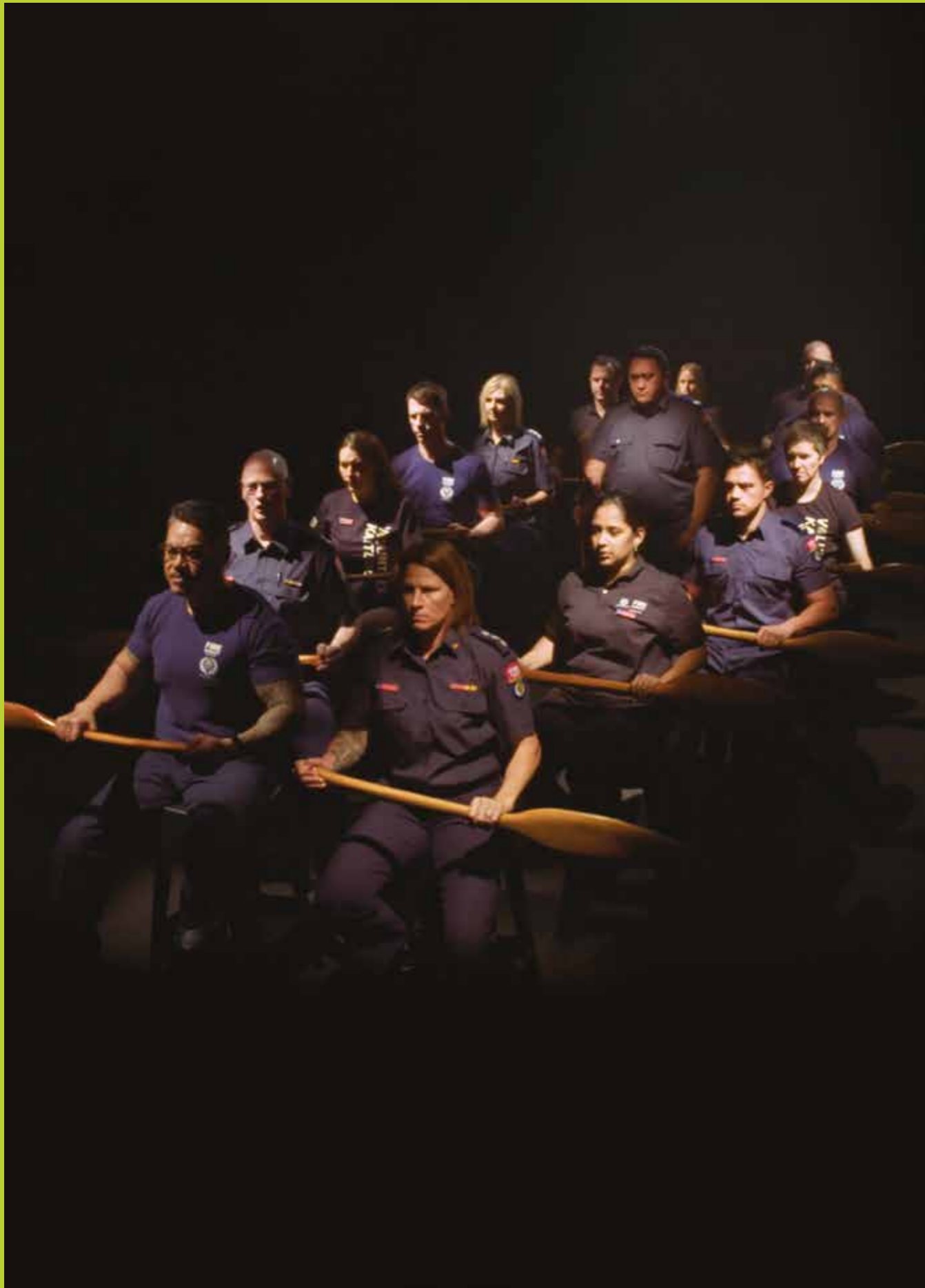


## INTERNATIONAL DEPLOYMENTS TO HELP BATTLE CLIMATE CHANGE

One of the reasons Fire and Emergency was formed was to build resources within New Zealand to deal with extreme wildfires increasingly associated with climate change, both here and internationally.

We have several reciprocal international arrangements and since our amalgamation in 2017, to the end of June 2020, we have deployed 617 personnel to assist with wildfires in Canada, the United States and Australia. Most recently, we deployed more than 300 personnel to help our Australian colleagues with their devastating wildfires over the 2019–20 summer.

The scale and complexity of these extreme fire events give our personnel the opportunity to help our international allies at a time of great need and to gain unique learning and development opportunities at the same time.



# Building a positive workplace culture

Te waihanga ahurea mahi ngākau pai

## ACTION ON CULTURE CHANGE

In January 2019, our Chief Executive, Rhys Jones, publicly released the findings and 33 recommendations of an independent review into the policies, practices and procedures to address bullying and harassment. It was a clear line in the sand for everyone in the organisation about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

We are determined to make Fire and Emergency a safe place for all our people and if things should go wrong, to have the mechanisms in place to quickly and appropriately address them.

"The safety, health and wellbeing of our people is of paramount importance to us. An organisation grounded in respect and inclusion can only be better and allow us to continue focusing on what we do best – keeping New Zealanders safe," said Rhys Jones.

One of our first steps was to release a Positive Workplace Culture Action Plan. Every initiative was aimed at ensuring our people were safe, welcomed and included.

We then developed and launched a shared set of values, creating a clear signpost of what we believe in, how we behave and a key foundation for all our positive workplace culture initiatives.

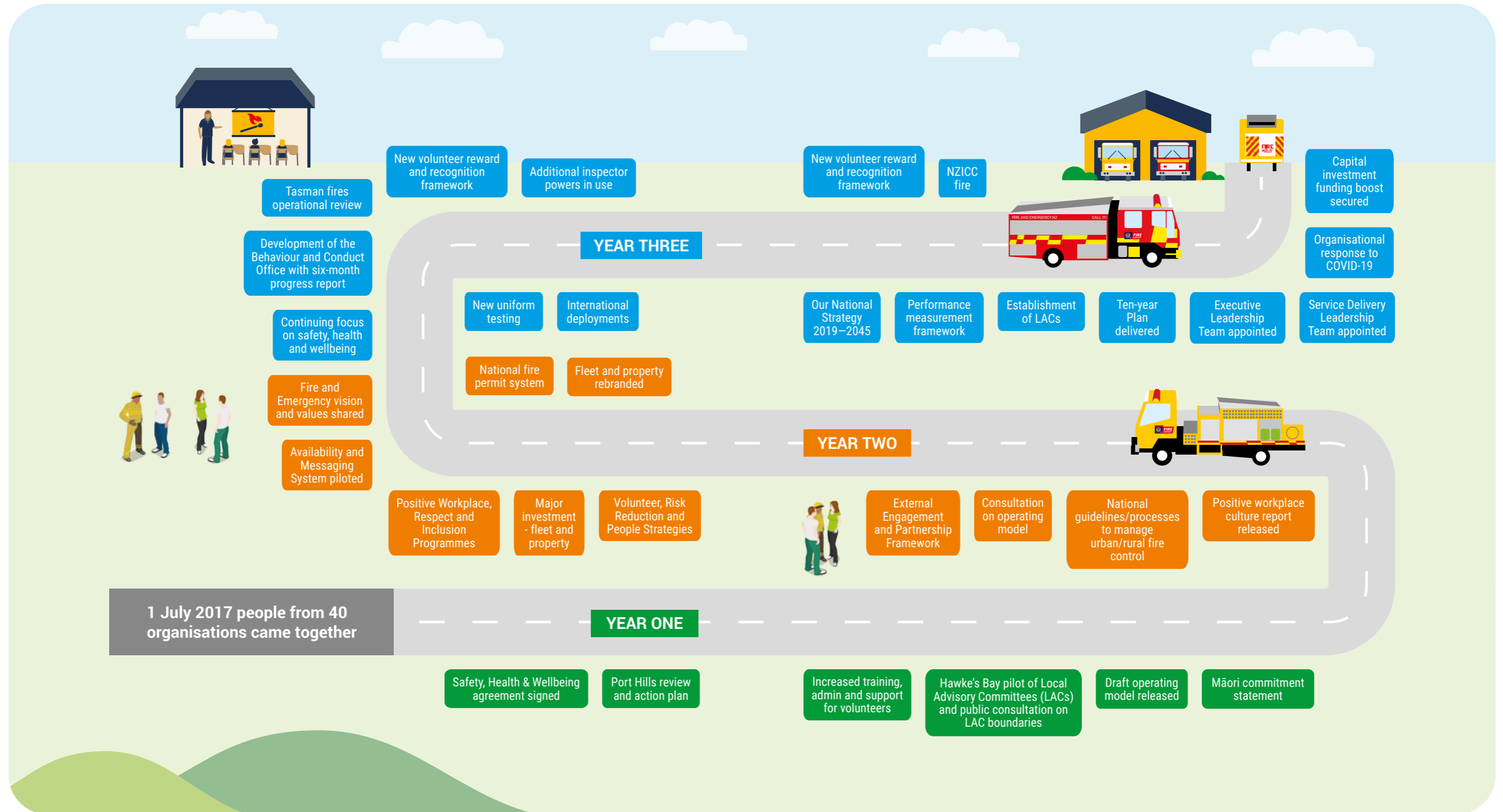
To support our belief that we all deserve to be treated right, a Respect and Inclusion video campaign was launched along with a pilot programme of associated workshops. These continue to be held around the country in a modified format following feedback.

Pending the outcomes of consultation, we are also establishing a Behaviour and Conduct Office (BCO), which will be the central point for education, training and guidance related to values-based behaviour. It will also manage our bullying and harassment complaints in a confidential, fair and transparent manner.

Supporting these initiatives are our Policy to address bullying, harassment and victimisation and our recently released Code of Behaviour. They are clear, meaningful resources to help stop unwanted behaviour and continue building an inclusive, respectful organisation.

# Integration road map

Mahere whakatōpūtanga



## INCREASING DIVERSITY THROUGH CAREER RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS

Creating a diverse and highly skilled workforce is a key aim of Fire and Emergency New Zealand. When we reflect the communities we serve, we can work more effectively with them.

In 2018 we took a different approach to our career recruitment campaign, to focus on diversity in gender, ethnicity and thinking. We sought people from all walks of life, with a wide range of different skills and knowledge, to join our organisation as career firefighters.

Informed by research, our campaign included targeted marketing, videos to inform prospective applicants, and information and practice sessions.

It resulted in the highest ever number of applications from women, as well as an increase in applications from those who identified as Māori, Pasifika and Asian.

“Overall, we had the highest number of applicants for a recruitment in Fire and Emergency New Zealand and New Zealand Fire Service history,” said Rochelle Martin, National Manager Career Recruitment.

“Based on the success of that campaign, we have now built these changes into the way we recruit career firefighters at Fire and Emergency.”





## RECOGNISING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Almost 12,000 dedicated people around New Zealand are volunteers with Fire and Emergency. They help communities every day as firefighters and in brigade and operational support roles.

To recognise the value they give and the unrelenting support of their whānau and employers, in June 2019 the government announced a \$4 million annual package as a first phase of volunteer reward and recognition initiatives.

The package includes an annual reimbursement of \$300 to cover expenses, an allowance of \$50 per night to support whānau when volunteers are away training, reduced health insurance fees and access to handy discounts for everyday items. In its first year, more than 8,500 of our volunteers signed up for the annual reimbursement.

Fire and Emergency also supports volunteers with free annual flu vaccinations and financial support for the United Fire Brigades' Association to help run training workshops around the country.

# Breadth of our response and service



The successful recovery of two missing trampers in Kahurangi National Park in May 2020 was the result of a lot of hard groundwork, cross-agency collaboration and specialist technology including USAR Southern Team's thermal imaging drones.



We responded to more than 228 weather-related call-outs in early January 2018, the majority of which were in the South Island. We also attended over 260 other incidents to assist Police and Civil Defence with evacuations in areas of significant flooding.

## Te whānuitanga o tō mātou urupare me te ratonga



Our rural crews worked closely with forestry crews to extinguish a blaze that destroyed around 350 hectares of forestry at Tangoio, north of Napier, in January 2020.



Members of our USAR team were deployed to help the people of Tonga get back on their feet following Tropical Cyclone Gita in February 2018. They helped to assess and record damage for the Tongan Government.



In October 2019 our crews responded to a large fire in central Auckland. We worked closely with many agencies throughout the event.



We are called to an increasing number of motor vehicle accidents and medical emergencies each year, often responding alongside our emergency service partners.



Get Firewise is one of our key community initiatives to improve the fire-safety behaviour of children, and in turn their families. It is delivered to children at primary and intermediate schools across New Zealand.



Our Home Fire Safety Team installs smoke alarms into eligible homes. We know working smoke alarms give people an early alert to fire in their homes, and the best chance of escaping alive.

# Creating stronger and more resilient communities

He waihanga hapori pakari ake,  
manawaroa ake

## LOCAL KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

It's no accident that the community is at the heart of Fire and Emergency's vision to build "stronger communities, protecting what matters". To achieve that, we needed to give our communities a voice at the table to tell us what matters to them, so we set about establishing Local Advisory Committees (LACs).

While emergency response remains at the core of our organisation, we are increasing our focus on building strong, able communities and reducing the consequences of emergencies.

Starting with a pilot in Hawke's Bay in 2019, we've now appointed 49 members to our first seven LACs in the West Coast, Northland, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay, Marlborough, Chatham Islands and Otago.

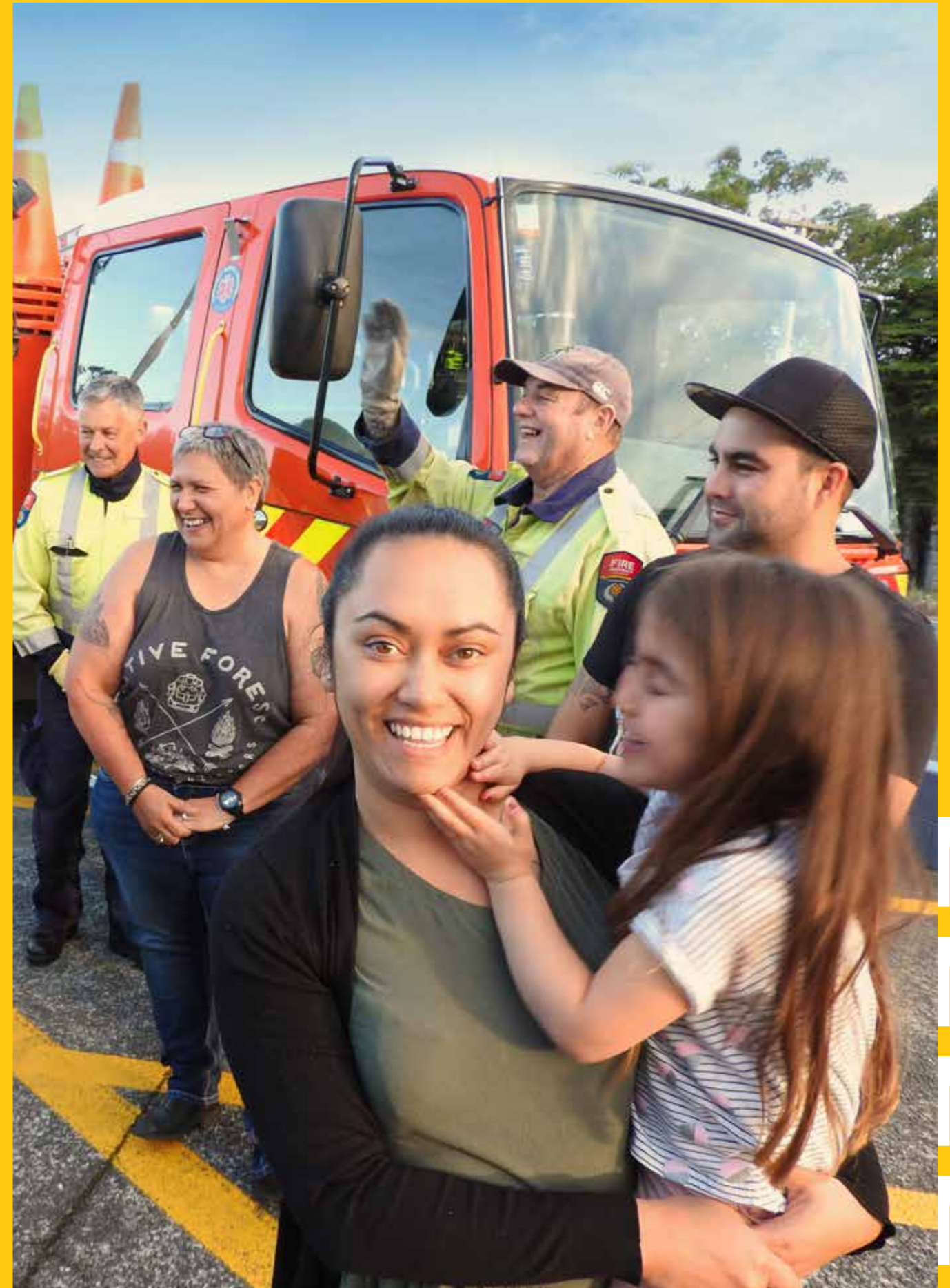
Fire and Emergency Chair Paul Swain said that while we have always worked closely with our communities, the LACs take those relationships to another level.

"This is all about giving local people a chance to tell us what's important to them. They'll help us identify risks, needs and local priorities, working with us to help them prepare for major local emergencies," he said.

Grant Haywood, Area Manager, Tasman-Marlborough, is working with one of the first LACs in his own area. He stresses how important it is to have a truly local perspective, as communities can differ greatly from area to area.

"Local Advisory Committees are a great sense checking mechanism for us, a way to make sure we've got our planning right. One size doesn't fit all. We have to do things differently and local knowledge and input is an important way of making that happen," he said.

The goal is to build strong, resilient communities together, then put plans in place to help them prepare for, survive and recover quickly when major disasters occur.





## CREATING CONNECTIONS AT WAITANGI

Every year it's a great privilege for Fire and Emergency to play a part at the Waitangi commemorations, an important part of our recognition of the status of Māori as tangata whenua and key stakeholders in the work we do.

It's an important chance to kōrero with local iwi and the public, especially as part of the family day celebrations on the Waitangi Treaty grounds. We talk with families about how they can reduce the risk of unwanted fires and stay safe, as well as having fun with demonstrations and activities for the children.

Our involvement with Waitangi Day is also an important part of Hiwa-i-te-rangi our Māori Outcomes Programme. We know the conversations we have here, along with our school education programmes, are key to helping reduce fire deaths in Northland. Our involvement also helps our own organisation in building our mōhiotanga, our knowledge base, with important information and understanding we can all use.







## PARTNERING FOR IMPROVED FIRE SAFETY

Fire and Emergency and Kāinga Ora staff have worked together for some time at a local level, and this has now been lifted to a national partnership, helping to keep tenants safe from fire.

In 2019, our two organisations signed a Relationship Agreement focused on cementing a team approach and designing safer homes, to bring long term benefits to communities.

The agreement focuses on three main goals:

- increasing community fire safety awareness, particularly with vulnerable people and families
- working more effectively together
- improving technical cooperation.

As part of this work, Fire and Emergency has advised on the installation of sprinklers in some of Kāinga Ora's new homes, and is working with the agency on integrating home fire safety into all designs, particularly for new builds.





# Investment in key infrastructure

## Te whakangao ki ngā hanganga matua

We continue to invest to make sure all our people have the right facilities, tools, technology and support so they can keep communities safe.

### UNITING RURAL AND URBAN AT NEW CHRISTCHURCH FIRE STATION

The new Spencerville Fire Station is another great example of bringing rural and urban brigades together, to support and protect local communities. It's one of 12 stations being redeveloped as part of our Christchurch Rebuild programme, uniting the Brooklands Volunteer Fire Brigade and the Bottle Lake Fire Force.

"Following the earthquakes in 2010 and 2011, we took the opportunity to review the entire network of fire stations in greater Christchurch and work out the best location for each station to serve its community," said Fire and Emergency Chair Paul Swain.

"The new site at Spencerville was chosen, rather than building on either of the current sites, because uniting the 28 volunteers from the Brooklands Station and 19 from Bottle Lake will better protect the local communities and nearby forest plantations," he said.

Brooklands Chief Fire Officer, John Reed, is excited about the new station, due to be officially opened in early 2021.

"Although we all have great memories of the Brooklands station, the Spencerville station will bring a new start with better facilities, safer systems, and double the number of members. Bottle Lake and Brooklands Brigades already have a great relationship and we're looking forward to working together even more closely," he said.

The new station will include two appliance bays, a three-bay resource garage, an operational area with decontamination facilities, modern IT equipment, and meeting and training rooms that will also be available for the community to use.

"It's a major investment to make sure firefighters have the right facilities, tools, technology and support, in the right locations, to keep doing what they do best – keeping New Zealanders safe," said Paul Swain.



## NEW MULTI-PURPOSE RURAL APPLIANCES

The first rural fire truck to be built since Fire and Emergency was formed was delivered in 2019 to the Koiatiara Rural Fire Force and has been helping them to fight fires in the lower Rangitikei district.

With our crews attending a broader range of call-outs, our rural appliances needed a major upgrade. The new design has an improved lighting and communications system, increased water and locker capacities, a slide-out hose locker drawer, redesigned waterway and hose system, and stepped rear deck area.

"This sort of investment in rural communities like ours makes a big difference," said Alan Benson, Koiatiara Rural Controller.

"The establishment of Fire and Emergency means our resources are the best they've ever been and we get truckloads of training. It's great for our community and our crew – gives us a real sense of pride."

Since 1 July 2017 we have received a total of 153 new trucks, comprising 84 urban, 41 rural and 28 tankers.





## INVESTING TO CONNECT OUR PEOPLE AND STATIONS

Fire and Emergency has made major investments in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to significantly improve connections between our people and stations.

We're installing high-performing internet into every station in the country with the fastest speeds possible. This is particularly important in remote stations that had no connectivity previously.

We've also rolled out 8,200 purpose-built, fire grade, handheld radios to all brigades, providing much greater coverage and crystal-clear connectivity.

Another game changer has been the launch of our Availability Messaging System (AMS). AMS alerts local volunteers if there's an incident and they can let us know if they're available – a huge improvement in the way brigades manage crews and respond to call-outs.

"As well as the major achievements, the investment has also seen an improvement in technology capability right across the organisation," said Murray Mitchell, Chief Information and Technology Officer.

"Everyone can now consistently access better information, improving safety and delivering efficiencies, helping us keep communities safer."



Between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2020 we celebrated the openings of **11 new fire stations**



**5 CAREER**



**4 VOLUNTEER**

**2 COMPOSITE**



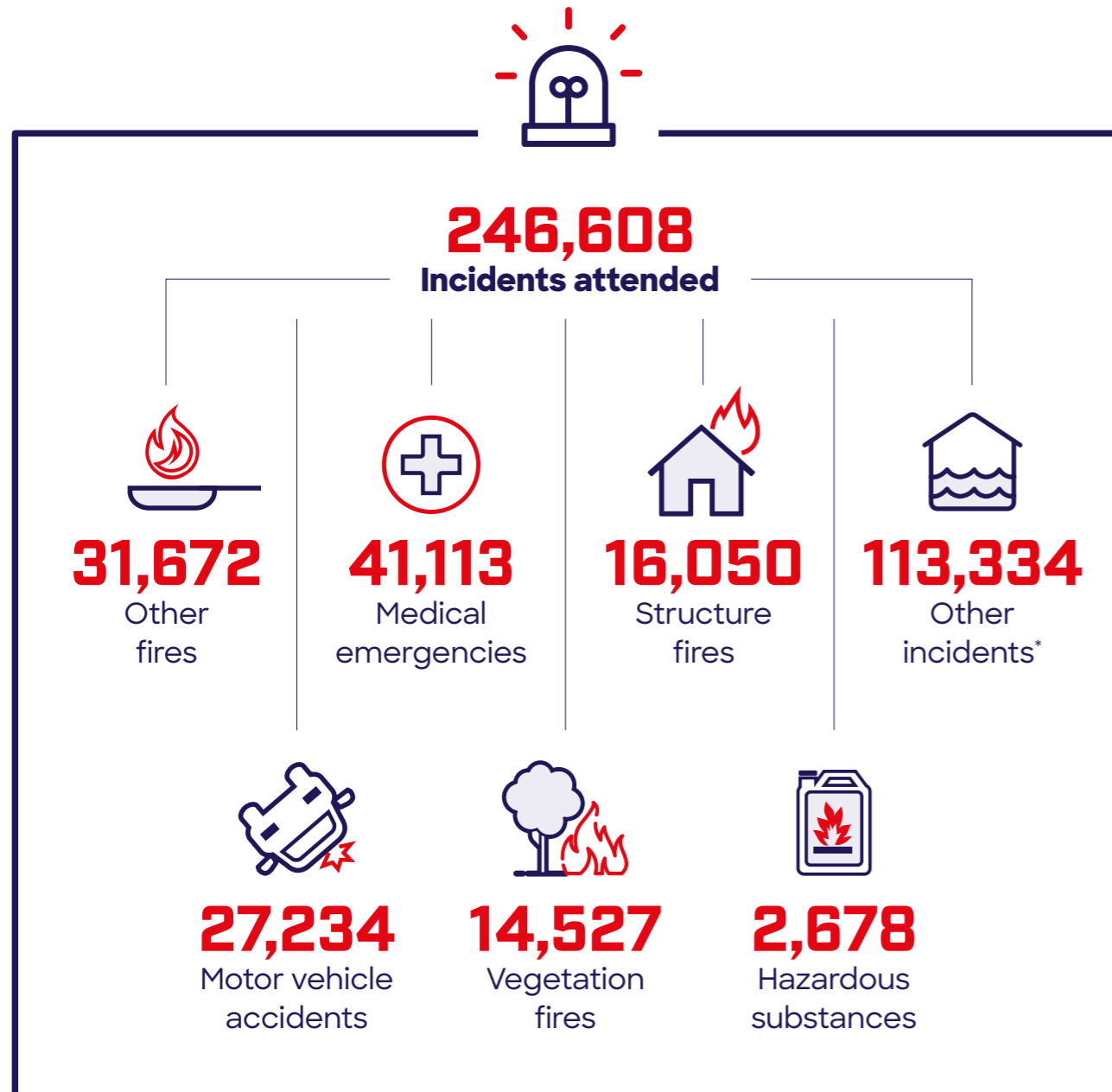
**6 SEISMIC UPGRADES WERE ALSO COMPLETED**

**5 OF THESE PROJECTS WERE PART OF OUR CHRISTCHURCH REBUILD PROGRAMME**



# Total incidents 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2020

Te tapeke o ngā ohoreretanga  
1 o Hongongoi – 30 Pipiri 2020



\*Other incidents include suspected fires, assistance to the police and public, responses to weather-related incidents, faulty alarm systems and malicious false alarms.





