

Reducing risk to make our communities safer

Te whakaheke tūraru kia haumaru
ake ai ngā hāpori



Risk Reduction Strategy 2019–2029

Te rautaki whakaheke tūraru 2019–2029



“Reducing risk is the single most effective thing we can do in seeking to protect New Zealand’s people, property and environment.”



CALL 111

TAI TOKERAU

FIRE EMERGENCY

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FIRE EMERGENCY

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Foreword

Whakapuakitanga

We are pleased to introduce Fire and Emergency New Zealand's Risk Reduction Strategy -

Reducing risk to make our communities safer

Te whakaheke tūraru kia haumarua ke ai ngā hapori

The professionalism and dedication of our frontline staff has earned us respect and trust throughout New Zealand's communities. This allows us to enjoy a special relationship with our communities, and we value this trust and confidence. While this is often because of our response activities, we are also recognised for the ever-increasing role we play in reducing risk and making communities safer by preventing incidents from occurring or reoccurring. On the basis of that hard-won trust and respect, we now have an important opportunity and responsibility to engage, educate and promote risk reduction in our local communities.

Risk reduction is central for us as a new national organisation. It was a key intent of the government reforms, and is embedded in our legislation – the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017.

Reducing risk is the single most effective thing we can do in seeking to protect New Zealand's people, property and environment. As well as preventing incidents occurring in the first place, reducing the frequency of incidents, and mitigating the impacts of an emergency are also core risk reduction interventions. Furthermore, a crucial part of risk reduction is helping individuals and communities prepare for unavoidable emergencies, so that such incidents have less impact and they are able to recover more quickly.

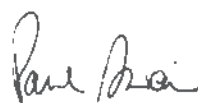
A stronger risk reduction focus also enhances the safety and protection of our own people as well as other emergency service personnel.

Risk reduction will therefore be a more prominent part of our work and we will play a leading role in this area. While it remains critical that we are able to respond quickly and professionally to emergencies, we can have a much greater impact on community safety and resilience by the work we do on risk reduction before and after incidents happen.

Our legislation and regulations also provide us with significant new and strengthened compliance and enforcement responsibilities, and stronger powers to intervene in cases of non-compliance with relevant fire safety legislation. In line with this, we have developed a comprehensive Compliance and Enforcement Strategy, which supports our Risk Reduction Strategy.

This strategy sets out what we need to do over the next decade to strengthen our risk reduction activities as we further define and develop our new organisation.

We thank our people, our unions and associations, and other partners who have helped develop this strategy. Their wider perspectives and insights contributed to this strategy, and are key to our long-term success.



Hon. Paul Swain
Chair



Rhys Jones
Chief Executive

Introduction

Kupu whakataki

This document sets out Fire and Emergency's first Risk Reduction Strategy -

Reducing risk to make our communities safer

Te whakaheke tūraru kia haumarua ake ai ngā hapori

The document is divided into the following sections:

- **Introduction** – this section gives an overview of Fire and Emergency's role and objectives. It explains how we are strengthening our focus on risk reduction and preventing fires and emergency events, and how we will approach this.
- **Our operating environment** – this sets out the current context for risk reduction and why, what and how we can build on our existing expertise to make New Zealanders, our communities and our environment safer and more resilient to better cope with unavoidable emergencies in the future.
- **Priorities and key shifts** – this sets out the three priorities for risk reduction we will pursue in response to this context and discusses how we will achieve this. For each of these priorities we explain why it matters, what success will look like, and the steps we will take towards achieving it over the next few years. The section also sets out how this strategy is supported by a network of related strategies, with further detail at Appendix 1, and our new Operating Model.

What is risk reduction?

Our definition of risk reduction encompasses activities which seek to identify and analyse long-term risks to human life and property; taking steps to eliminate those risks if practicable and, if not, reducing the magnitude of their impact and likelihood of them occurring.

The need for a Risk Reduction Strategy

Proud history

From the first volunteer fire brigades, our organisation has a strong foundation of passionate, committed and skilled people who have earned the trust and respect of New Zealanders. As local community members, our people serve to protect and preserve life, property and the environment.

While our primary focus remains on the reduction of unwanted fire, we work across four areas of emergency management, through a model known as the 4Rs:

- **reduction** of risk
- ensuring response **readiness**
- providing emergency **response**
- making coordinated efforts to facilitate **recovery** following an emergency.

The 4Rs model is explained on the next page.

Using this approach, including applying some collaborative arrangements such as coordination between communities and the former Rural Fire Authorities, we have successfully reduced the incidence of fires, fire deaths and injuries. However, our focus has largely been on our readiness for emergencies and our response; which are only two components of the 4Rs. Furthermore, within and between the 40 organisations that now make up Fire and Emergency, there has inevitably been some variation in service delivery which has compromised our ability to have a coherent risk reduction and recovery focus.



The 4Rs model

The 4Rs of comprehensive emergency management is a well-established model used by many emergency sector agencies in New Zealand and overseas. Fire and Emergency applies the 4Rs model to define and describe the scope of its expertise.

As illustrated below, the 4Rs model encompasses four areas of activity: reduction, readiness, response, and recovery.

Risk reduction occurs across many levels of service delivery. It includes preventing or minimising harm and loss through:

- proactive identification of risks or hazards
- complete elimination of a hazard or risk
- mitigation to reduce or minimise the impact or consequences of the emergency, both short-term or long-term
- substitution – using a less harmful method or product
- maximising voluntary and self-managed compliance, coupled with taking firm enforcement action for serious, high risk non-compliance
- developing capacity and capability to support relationships and partnerships with our partner agencies and stakeholder representatives.

Recovery has been the least developed and practiced component of the 4Rs by fire organisations previously. It has often been considered to be a longer term and more complex component and the responsibility of other agencies.

It is however, the phase that, if done effectively and in a timely manner, can have the greatest impact on the long-term wellbeing and return to normality for those individuals and communities affected by an incident.

Long-term recovery efforts following major disasters and incidents are the legislative mandate of partners such as the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management. However, Fire and Emergency has a major role to play in recovery due to our early attendance at incidents and the interactions we have with those most affected.

Through a people centred approach with those affected by fires and the other emergencies we attend, and a recovery focus even in the early stages of an incident, we will play a vital role to minimising its impacts which often are still present long after the incident is resolved.

We will do this:

- through our immediate actions at emergencies following good incident management practices that minimise the short-term and long-term impact and consequences of the original event
- by ensuring those immediately affected by the emergency get the support they need, including making sure people suffering loss and trauma receive appropriate support from the relevant agency.

In addition, as a precursor to recovery we will support and encourage community pre-planning for major events and support recovery/clean-up activities to strengthen community resilience following an incident.

Reduction. Identifying and analysing long-term risks to human life and property; taking steps to eliminate these risks if practicable, and, if not, reducing their impact and the likelihood of them occurring.

Recovery. Helping people who have suffered loss and trauma to receive the appropriate support. Coordinated efforts and processes to bring about the immediate, medium-term and long-term recovery of a community following a major emergency.



Readiness. Developing operational systems and capabilities before an emergency occurs, including self-help initiatives for the public, specific programmes for emergency services, lifeline utilities and other services.

Response. Attending incidents and taking immediate action before, during or directly after a fire to protect and preserve life, prevent or limit injury, reduce damage to land or property, protect the environment and help people begin recovery.



Bright future

A key driver of the government's reform programme and the decision to establish a single fire and emergency organisation was recognition that the biggest impact we can have on the safety and wellbeing of our crews, the public and the environment is, where possible, preventing emergencies from occurring in the first place.

This risk reduction focus is enshrined in the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 (the Act). As part of our principal objectives, we have a duty to reduce the incidence of unwanted fire and associated risk to life and property. In addition, the Act provides a broader mandate than in the past to protect and preserve life, prevent or limit injury, and prevent or limit damage to property, land and the environment across a range of emergency situations. The Act clearly sets out our main functions and additional functions we may deliver if we have capability and capacity, provided this does not compromise our ability to carry out our main functions.¹

With the advantage of our single organisation and our broader mandate, we now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to work with our communities so they are safer and recover more quickly when emergencies do occur. While we will continue to provide an expert and effective response to fires and other emergencies, our principal objectives require an enhancement of the 4Rs, particularly as it relates to community readiness and recovery, with a greater focus on identifying and mitigating risk, both locally and nationally, to create safer communities and build community resilience.

To achieve this, we will need to take a different approach from in the past. This will mean better preparing and resourcing our people to ensure we have the capability and capacity to deliver the appropriate risk reduction activities within our communities. We will enable this through flexible brigade models, specialist resources and expertise, and an enhanced national programme framework for risk reduction and prevention activities.

This strategy sets the long-term direction for this work, conveys how this will be the prime focus of the organisation, and outlines a comprehensive range of measures underpinned by a set of risk reduction principles which we will use to promote fire safety, provide fire and emergency hazard management advice and safety guidance in relation to them.

Not all fires are unwanted as, for example, fire is widely used as a land management tool. Letting fires burn in a controlled way can also sometimes be more beneficial to the environment as this prevents the release of incomplete combustion products. We will ensure that these situations are managed safely for people, the local community and the wider environment.

Risk reduction is not solely the responsibility of Fire and Emergency. It requires a coordinated approach with other emergency sector agencies and public and private sector organisations. Members of the public are also responsible for identifying and managing risks in our communities. In this work we will engage collaboratively with other organisations responsible for risk reduction and influence their policies and practices to eliminate or mitigate risks. We will foster stronger engagement with our diverse communities, particularly those most vulnerable, to identify strengths, risks, needs and opportunities to partner with us to strengthen resilience for emergency and hazard management.

This work will require us to change our ways of thinking as well as operating and to adopt a risk reduction focus across all of our work. We will also benefit, as a strengthened risk reduction programme will improve the safety, health and wellbeing of our frontline responders, as well as that of all other emergency responders we work alongside during emergencies.

¹ The Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017, which refers to our main functions, i.e. fire safety (including guidance on the safe use of fire as a land management tool) and firefighting, responding to hazardous substance incidents, rescuing trapped people, urban search and rescue. Our additional functions refer to: medical emergencies, maritime incidents, other rescues, weather events and disasters, incidents where substances present a risk to people, property or the environment, and any other situation where we can assist.



How our Risk Reduction Strategy will strengthen our services and communities

Our Risk Reduction Strategy will be the foundation for our work in this area. It sets out how, over the next decade, we intend to influence government policy, invest in risk strategy nationally, establish stronger compliance and enforcement, commit dedicated and specialist resources to risk reduction and use evidence-based information to drive investment decisions and monitor success. It also sets out how we will build community resilience by working with communities to identify strengths, risks and needs, support them to behave in safer ways and plan for emergencies and for instances where emergency assistance is delayed.

In addition, our Risk Reduction Strategy will bring benefits to our insurance industry partners, central and local government, asset owners, business owners and employees.

Building on good examples of risk reduction work occurring at all levels within the organisation, we can become more effective with a more focused approach. Where appropriate, providing dedicated community safety and specialist resources and expertise at local level will assist frontline staff to plan and deliver risk reduction activities more effectively and provide capacity where time constraints and expert capability is not always available. This will not only allow for more flexible delivery of risk reduction activities, but also ensures local people with the right skills and connections are involved.

From smoke alarms and emergency supplies in every house and everyone following the speed limit to a reduction in the scale and impact of fires, floods and other incidents, Fire and Emergency's aim is to make New Zealand safer and better prepared.

Lives, property and the environment are increasingly protected and preserved, and our country is stronger physically, economically and socially.

We are a thought leader in risk reduction good practice, influencing national standards including in road, rainwater and vegetation management and in building construction.

We work with our emergency sector partners and are closely engaged with our communities, sharing local hazard management based on local strengths, risks and needs. We design our own activities based on research and intelligence about what works to change behaviour.

Our people are safer, as the public are prepared and informed about what to do when incidents do occur.





Our communities will be at the centre of everything we do



At a brigade level

- Brigades will be supported by district staff, responsible for local delivery of effective programmes through approaches that meet the risks and needs of the community in terms of their unique characteristics and target audience.
- Likely to include both core and relevant regional and district activities, reinforcing national awareness campaigns of particular relevance to risks and needs of the local community.
- Supported to test new approaches or methods of risk reduction intervention that increase effectiveness and build community readiness and resilience.



At a region and district level

- Regions and districts will have multiple roles to translate national priorities and requirements into planning, implementation, delivery and evaluation of programmes and activities delivered at the regional and district level, coupled with identifying and allocating appropriate resources and necessary supporting tools for regional and district service delivery.
- Regions and districts may also have a role in supporting delivery of national programmes, simultaneously with supporting local personnel in adapting and delivering core requirements in ways that reflect local community characteristics, needs and risk profiles.
- Empowering decision making at this level will facilitate greater consistency in service delivery in parallel with enabling identification of local priorities and new or creative delivery approaches, giving this level the ability to adapt the approach based on the risks and needs of their local communities.
- Delivery of regional and district programmes - established for specific audiences and purposes.

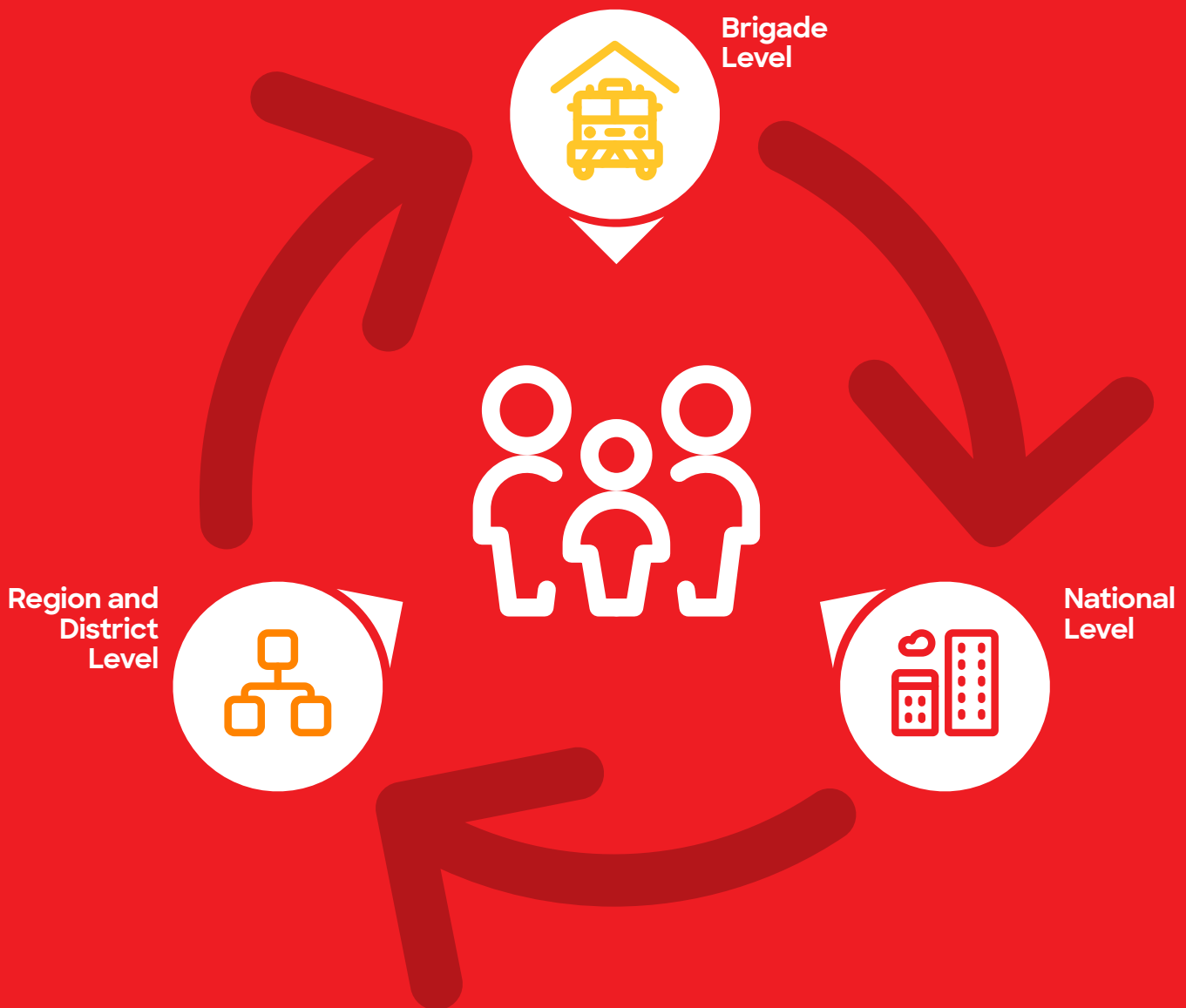


At a national level

- Our Risk Reduction Strategy system will support the organisational strategic aims and objectives by setting the parameters for frameworks, policy and guidance for the planning, management and delivery of core risk reduction initiatives; and oversee resource allocation, monitoring, evaluation and strategic relationships with our risk reduction partners.
- The strategy will be supported by interpretation of legislative requirements, research and innovation to ensure that risk reduction efforts are future focused and linked to our broader investment priorities.
- Will be responsible for the design and development of national programmes and delivery of mass media awareness campaigns, such as TV advertising, and managing ongoing relationships with our key sector agencies.



We will establish robust communication frameworks across all levels of Fire and Emergency and with other key sector agencies.



Risk reduction activities are informed by the insights and perspectives of our communities.

This strategy advances the intentions of government and the provisions of our legislation. It has been developed from a rich source of research and evidence, informed by data and good practice standards. We have also drawn on the expertise of our people, unions and associations, and other partners to shape our approach to risk reduction so that it will work effectively for many years to come.

This strategy will operate at, and between, all levels of the organisation. This will ensure we are delivering what our local communities need from us. We will strive for continuous improvement and build on a culture of learning from good practice, local initiatives, innovation and creativity.

Risk reduction activities are continuously monitored and assessed to understand the impact and success of initiatives.

Research, data and intelligence is used to optimise outcomes and make evidence-based decisions on the development of new activities and the effectiveness of current risk reduction activities.



Fire and Emergency faces broad challenges

We are experiencing rapid changes in weather patterns, demographics, and social trends.

New Zealanders are also expecting more of us: the volume of fire and emergency incidents we respond to has grown, as has the range of incidents.

Together, this makes the environment we operate in more complex, and puts greater demands on all our Fire and Emergency personnel.



Nelson-Tasman fires, February 2019.

Our operating environment

Te ao mahi e noho nei tātou

Changing nature of fire and emergency response

The number of fires has decreased in recent years, due to improved building standards and fire prevention measures. However, New Zealand is experiencing wildfires that are bigger and causing more damage. Wildfires are challenging to bring under control and can have far reaching impacts. Not only do they risk lives, destroy property and devastate natural areas, they can seriously affect primary industries, which in turn can hurt entire communities. We have also seen an increase in weather-related emergencies as a result of climate change, including significant flooding from swollen rivers and major landslips. In recent years Fire and Emergency has also been central to the response to major earthquakes, which have a significant effect on our communities and economy.

There is also an increasing need to respond to a wide range of non-fire emergencies, where we often coordinate with and assist other emergency services. These include responding to motor vehicle accidents, medical call-outs, technical rescues, hazardous substance incidents such as gas or chemical leaks, and accidents and other incidents at sea. In 2016/17, we attended more medical emergencies than structure and vegetation fires combined.² International cooperation between fire and emergency services has grown, and New Zealand's firefighters provide reciprocal assistance in Australia, North America and the Pacific Islands.

This changing operating environment is putting pressure on our traditional service delivery models, and requires our firefighters to develop a broader range of skills and capabilities through investment in education, training, and ongoing professional development.

² In 2016/17, the New Zealand Fire Service responded to 5,236 structural fire incidents, 3,859 vegetation fires (9,095 fires in total) and 11,681 medical incidents (NZ Fire Service Annual Report 2016/17).

The creation of Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Fire services reviews

Two reviews of the fire services, carried out between 2012 and 2015, considered the significant changes in the country's fire and emergency environment over the last 40 years, and the type of fire and emergency services needed in New Zealand for the future.³ The reviews involved extensive consultation across the sector and established wide agreement on how best those services should be supported and funded.

The reviews identified some key areas of focus relevant for risk reduction in our fire and emergency services, in particular:

- how our operating environment is changing and therefore how we need to refine our services to ensure we better protect our communities
- the need to stay closely aligned with our communities to ensure we understand and respond to specific strengths, risk and needs
- the importance of working with partners and other agencies effectively and collaboratively.

The reviews noted that if these challenges were not addressed now, they would have a growing impact in the future and would be harder to resolve.

In response, the government decided to reform the way fire and emergency services were funded and delivered, to establish a new single organisation, Fire and Emergency New Zealand and to replace two previous Acts with new legislation. A stronger focus on risk reduction is core to this reform, and the government has provided our new organisation with enhanced duties and responsibilities to actively provide for effective community risk reduction activities. These aim to prevent unwanted fires and other emergencies, provide guidance on fire safety, risk reduction and prevention and on the use of fire as a land management tool. This is enshrined in our legislation.

³ Fire Review Panel 2012 (the Swain Report) and the Fire Services Review, established in 2014 in response to the Swain Report, and other matters outside the Fire Review Panel's original terms of reference.



Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017

The Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 (the Act) provides the legal authority for the reforms arising from the reviews. It recognises the importance of communities, volunteer and career firefighters alike.

The Act combines urban and rural fire and emergency services into a single, unified fire and emergency services organisation for New Zealand with the mandate to provide a wide range of services for communities. These are set out in our principal objectives, and delivered through our main and additional functions.

Our principal objectives are to:

- reduce unwanted fires
- protect and preserve life, prevent or limit injury, and prevent or limit damage to property, land and the environment.

The Act sets out the main functions that we must do including:

- fire safety (including guidance on the safe use of fire as a land management tool) and firefighting
- responding to hazardous substance incidents
- rescuing trapped people
- urban search and rescue.

The Act includes additional functions we may do if we have capability and capacity, and provided this does not affect our ability to carry out our main functions.

These include responding to:

- medical emergencies
- maritime incidents
- other rescues
- weather events and disasters
- incidents where substances present a risk to people, property or the environment
- any other situation where we can assist.

To a large degree, this wide mandate formalised existing operational reality.

The Act places strong emphasis on the critical role that communities play in supporting fire and emergency services. This includes providing volunteers and contributing knowledge of the strengths and needs of each community and the risks they face. As an organisation, Fire and Emergency will look at mechanisms that ensure localised input informs definition of local risks, issues and needs, on which assessments, planning and service delivery will be based. All risk reduction activities will reflect the characteristics and risk profiles of each community at the local level.

The Act requires both a continuation of the strong role that fire services have always had in our communities, and a fresh opportunity to build an organisation that is inclusive and strategic.

Central to the Act is a focus on risk reduction and an expectation that we will enhance our work across the 4Rs to give greater emphasis to the areas of readiness (particularly community readiness) and to recovery from an emergency.

New Zealand's changing social and demographic landscape

To be effective, these changes need to be undertaken in ways that also respond to key features of New Zealand's wider social and demographic landscape, which are described below.

Changing nature of communities

Migration to urban centres is increasing, particularly by younger people. In 2033, four million people are projected to live in the main urban areas, and 289,000 are expected to live in secondary urban areas.⁴

As with other developed nations, the rate of structural fires has fallen in recent years due to improved building standards and fire protection measures. However, greater population density, changes to planning regulations and social trends are also leading to increased residential building in some urban fringe areas that have a higher risk of fires and flooding.

Populations are also becoming more transient, with less connection to place-based communities, and stronger connections to online communities.

An ageing population

The number of people aged 85 or older is expected to more than triple in the next 30 years.⁵ An ageing population requires greater community support and increases risk, particularly as our aged become more socially isolated. While this is likely to increase demand on our response services due to our footprint in every community, it is also an opportunity for us to positively engage and contribute to the safety and wellbeing of people during our normal home safety visits and community engagement activities. In doing so, we will be able to target our resources and activities to those who are identified as being most at risk.

The changing profile of New Zealand

We are becoming more ethnically and culturally diverse⁶, although our own workforce is still predominantly male and mostly identifies as New Zealand European. We must be a trusted educator and messenger, and engage effectively within our diverse communities and with the people we serve.

There are also some demographic groups, primarily Māori and Pacific peoples, who are disproportionately affected by structural fires. To deliver our services, we must have strong relationships with them and provide targeted services to those communities at greater risk.

Māori are a significant group and a growing number are land and forest owners, playing an increasing role in managing these key resources. They are also community leaders with an important role to play in preventing fires and other emergencies. As such, they are key partners in our risk reduction activities.

Ethnicity is only one aspect of New Zealand's diversity, and the needs and challenges facing one community may be different from the next. Communities understand their particular strengths, risks and needs, so it is crucial they have a strong voice in planning for the fire risk and other emergencies in their area and informing local decisions.

⁴ Statistics NZ 2018

⁵ Statistics NZ 2018

⁶ In 2038, 20% of New Zealanders will identify as Māori, 21% as Asian, 11% as Pacific and 66% as Pākehā (Statistics NZ). These statistics include people who identify with more than one ethnicity.

What this means for our future

Changes in demographics, social norms and shifting population density all challenge our ability to be responsive to these issues in the way we have dealt with them in the past.

This operating environment also demonstrates that it has never been more important to seek to reduce and mitigate the occurrence and reoccurrence of unwanted fire and other emergencies.

Strengthening risk reduction in this context requires new and innovative approaches. We can play an active leadership role within our communities to prepare people for these events and support communities to be more resilient when these events occur, thereby assisting with more rapid and effective recovery. This will require a strategic and overarching focus that relies on good research and information both nationally and internationally, and a clear understanding of risk and potential treatments, how we will effectively engage with our changing communities, and who we would partner with to achieve this.

This requires us to make a number of key shifts over the next decade:

Use research and evaluation to become more evidence-based

We aspire to be a learning organisation that recognises the value of acquiring, applying and sharing knowledge. We will do this through the analysis of operational statistics, programme evaluations, quality assessments, internal audits, experiential knowledge and research.

Research is widely recognised as playing an important role in policy development, decision making, service improvement and the evaluation of organisational practices. We will therefore forge strong partnerships with research agencies and kindred organisations and use international best practice to guide our work in the development of our programmes and specific risk reduction initiatives.

Become an 'influencer' of standards, public policy formulation, national and local government

We will build more formalised relationships at an organisational level to enable joint risk reduction activities. We will also promote good practice and influence policies within standard-setting bodies and with central and local government.

Be accountable for developing and implementing national risk reduction plans

We are developing a formalised function which sets and drives risk reduction plans combining corporate strategy and operational plans. These plans will set the general direction for risk reduction promotion and compliance and enforcement across the country, which can be adapted to suit local needs.





“ We need to recognise that communities are not solely defined by geographical boundaries and are **increasingly virtual.**”

Play a consistent role in the community

We will strengthen our relationships to better understand the strengths, risks and needs of local people, partners and other agencies for us to contribute to their safety and wellbeing and ensure we maintain continuous and ongoing engagement where possible.

Once established, our Local Advisory Committees will be critical to the work we do. They will enable and support planning and delivery of risk reduction activities, reflecting local risks and needs. We need a strong focus on supporting and assisting these new bodies.

We need to recognise that communities are not solely defined by geographical boundaries and are increasingly virtual. Individuals may also identify with several different communities based on ethnicity, life stage or interests. We will actively engage to build trusted relationships, to find out what is important to each community. We will need to undertake different ways of engaging and communicating depending on the channels used by our communities, their languages and their cultures.

Adopt a clear operational focus and invest beyond response

Our leaders will drive our Risk Reduction Strategy, and all our people have a part to play in reducing the risks in their communities associated with our main and additional functions. We will invest in our people to strengthen existing capability and capacity so that we are well trained and resourced, and provide career pathways in risk reduction.

Fire and Emergency values its staff and knows that fire crews are respected and trusted in the community. We also recognise and support fire risk management staff and how they work with fire crews to take a wider role in the community. Notwithstanding this, there are aspects of risk reduction that would be better provided by more dedicated specialist resources so we can deliver more timely, focused and expert services and provide enhanced services where operational crews have limited time because of the demands of their broader role. Where appropriate, this will include the use of dedicated risk reduction staff, external specialists, contractors or other agencies. We will also support volunteers to deliver risk reduction in their communities.

We will need to focus specifically on working with rural communities and those on the urban fringe to ensure they understand the risks of the environment they live and work in, and to help them to mitigate those threats. We will work with the rural sector and industry associations to provide effective and common-sense fire and hazard control systems and practical advice and guidance, including on how to safely use fire as a land management tool.

We have made a commitment to support the Crown in its Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities by working with tangata whenua to contribute to a safer environment for Māori, and for all New Zealand communities. We will work with iwi as land and forest owners and community leaders, and engage with Māori through culturally tailored engagement and risk reduction promotion programmes.

Priorities and key shifts

Ngā whakaarotau rautaki me ōna panonitanga

Our Risk Reduction Strategy comprises three priorities, and the key shifts to achieve them. It is grounded in the spirit of the reform and reflects our duties under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 (the Act). It guides all decisions and actions to strengthen our risk reduction activities.

This strategy sets out an ambitious but practical plan that will involve all our people. It is based on our current knowledge of our operating environment and on budget. It is likely that some detail will be updated as we learn from experience. However, our communities can rely on us to strengthen our risk reduction activities so they are safer and better prepared to recover from emergencies that do occur.

Some changes will be evolutionary, building on our strengths and of course correcting things when needed. Other changes may be more progressive as we build our new capability, capacity and culture. We will also continue to work closely with our people, unions and associations, and with other partners and stakeholders, to design and deliver these changes.

This strategy is a key milestone within the Fire and Emergency Blueprint (2017–20), advances the organisational strategy, and is both supported by and integrated with a network of related strategies, some of which are still to be developed. These include strategies for:

- people and workforce
- information management
- research
- diversity and inclusion.

This strategy also informs, and is informed by, our proposed Operating Model that was consulted on from August to October 2018.

See appendix 1 for our completed strategies, and how they align with our Risk Reduction Strategy.



Reducing risk by leading with best practice



Priority 1: Leading the development of risk management best practice

Why does this matter?

Effective risk reduction requires sound research and many parties working together locally, nationally and internationally. By sharing and working in partnership with our communities, our risk reduction partners, and the international community, we can harness and coordinate our collective resources, learn from the evidence, insights and success of others, and enhance our communities' resilience to be prepared for, manage and then recover from future disasters.

We are uniquely placed to take a leading role in risk management best practice, and to champion and promote a strategic approach. Unlike any other agency, we have a strengthened legislative mandate, extensive 4Rs expertise, resources and a footprint across New Zealand. Our proud history and strengthened mandate also make us well-placed to initiate international dialogue.

What does success look like?

We are recognised as the leading agency in risk reduction in New Zealand.

We are an influencer of government policy and standards and have strong and effective relationships locally, nationally and internationally across the wider emergency sector, government agencies, the insurance sector (including EQC), universities, research bodies and businesses. These enable us to coordinate, share, learn and promote best practice and take a collaborative whole-of-sector approach to risk reduction. Through these relationships, we will seek to influence others and support their legislative mandates where we can add value.

We have active and well supported Local Advisory Committees across the country. We understand our respective communities' strengths, risks and needs and tailor our interventions to reduce risks and build community resilience to withstand and recover from emergencies when they do occur.

We make strategic and tactical decisions on investment and interventions based on research, data and evidence of good practice.

Key shifts

Proactively develop and manage relationships and partnerships that facilitate interagency planning and cooperation, sharing of good practice, agreeing common industry standards, protocols and guidelines.

Invest in a programme of aligned research and capture data, evidence and insights to position ourselves to build our own best practice, and influence other partners' contributions to risk reduction.

Weaving risk reduction into our New Zealand way of life



Priority 2: Fostering a risk reduction culture and capability

Why does this matter?

Hazards and risks are all around us and becoming more complex to eliminate or control, resulting in more damaging consequences if an emergency arises. The best value we can deliver for New Zealanders is preventing the fire or emergency happening in the first place, and working with communities to build resilience so that together we can manage and recover more quickly from an unavoidable emergency.

A strengthened emphasis on risk reduction enhances the health, safety and wellbeing of all our people, particularly that of our frontline personnel – both volunteer and career firefighters.

The Act requires us to collaboratively reduce risk and the impact of fire and other emergencies on people, property and the environment. This requires us to build a risk reduction culture throughout our organisation, and grow our capability in this area.

Fire research and development and its application to fire control, management and suppression services can be technically complex and a specialist area of emergency management. We need to grow our capability to strengthen risk reduction across our organisation.

What does success look like?

Our organisation understands risks and is clear on its role and plans in preventing or reducing them.

We have a structured framework for risk reduction that meets our responsibilities under the Act, is planned and proactive, based on research and evidence, and is nationally led, while enabling flexibility for regional and local delivery.

We are engaged with our partners and communities in our shared responsibility to identify and reduce risks and build resilience.

Our leaders promote a risk reduction philosophy and how it applies across all our functions and activities, from corporate to business support to frontline crews.

All our people appreciate the importance of risk reduction, its value to communities and to themselves. They understand their own role in delivering it and feel skilled and supported to do so.

We have the right capabilities – skills, systems and processes – to deliver our risk reduction responsibilities, including in highly technical and specialised areas.

We provide opportunities for progression in risk reduction roles for both career personnel and for volunteers.

Key shifts

We will develop a 'centre of excellence' for risk reduction within our organisation. This will provide a coordinated approach, building on and growing our existing knowledge and technical expertise, and will:

- enable the setting of national priorities, investment decisions and resources. These will be based on sound research, up-to-date data and intelligence, and communication with local communities to ensure we have relevant up-to-date information about the nature of hazards and the risk profiles in each location
- facilitate the application of specialist technical knowledge and expertise across our organisation, enable sharing and learning about best practice and standards and help identify learning and training needs that are tailored to individual roles and responsibilities
- inform the development of clear and easy-to-follow policy frameworks that guide implementation, including policies and practices on the use of fire as a land management tool
- help identify the specialist risk reduction functions we require, including career pathways within brigades
- optimise the managing of stakeholder and partner relationships, including interfaces with other regulatory agencies where our service delivery overlaps, and where regulatory authority (and responsibilities) are dependent on circumstances
- develop and nurture strong links and alliances with research and development partners, both domestic and international.

Reducing risk effectively together



Priority 3: Safer people, communities and environments

Why does this matter?	<p>We have a footprint in most communities in New Zealand and expertise about promoting safety and good practices in diverse circumstances.</p> <p>Our legislative mandate requires us to expand and strengthen our proactive and preventative risk reduction expertise, including through partnerships with stakeholders and communities, to enhance people's ability to help themselves.</p>
What does success look like?	<p>Communities are becoming more engaged. They are more aware of risks and are becoming better protected from, and informed during, unwanted fires and other emergencies.</p> <p>We actively support our diverse communities and Local Advisory Committees to understand local strengths, risks and needs. We have evidence-based community profiles and we continually adapt to ensure that internal and external capability is fit for purpose to address community risks and needs.</p> <p>Our national programmes are developed in partnership with our stakeholders. They are designed to achieve behaviour change, are based on research and evidence and are consistently evaluated. They are tailored to focus on the needs and risks of different communities, targeted to individuals and communities most vulnerable to fire and other emergencies, provided through multiple channels and reflect the cultures of their audiences.</p> <p>We work to influence and inform government/agency/industry stakeholders to promote safety, good practice, compliance, and research and innovation.</p> <p>We use data and intelligence (both internal and external) as a core part of our business to support strategic and tactical decision making, and will actively seek opportunities to improve technology and automation.</p> <p>The safety, health and wellbeing of responders has improved.</p>
Key shifts	<p>We will grow our capacity, capability and technology to use intelligence and analytics to inform risk reduction planning and decision making. This includes data and intelligence to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide a comprehensive understanding of risks• support and source local and international research of fire trends and new and innovative approaches to risk reduction interventions• evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and activities, and make sound investment and disinvestment decisions• share data with and between our risk reduction partners.

Appendix 1

Our Risk Reduction Strategy is supported by a suite of related strategies which will help advance the key shifts we need to make. The strategies below are completed, and others will be developed in the future.

The new Operating Model will also support our Risk Reduction Strategy by providing the required functions and roles to deliver our suite of strategies.

Strategy	How this supports our Risk Reduction Strategy
<p>Compliance and Enforcement</p> <p>This strategy sets out our intention to provide clear guidance, resources and training to our personnel, partners and the public so we work collaboratively to comply with the significant new compliance and enforcement responsibilities in our legislation.</p>	<p>Our compliance and enforcement function is a major component of our risk reduction activities. The strategy provides a structured, comprehensive, proactive and customer-centered compliance and enforcement regime. It actively supports people and communities to understand, accept and voluntarily undertake their compliance obligations, and uses data and intelligence to identify and address non-compliance early. This helps to prevent and protect against unwanted fires or harm from fire.</p> <p>It also facilitates collaboration with industry, government, advocacy groups and the wider emergency sector to promote good practice and foster a coordinated approach to compliance and enforcement.</p>
<p>Safety, Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Nothing is more important than our people. Our Safety, Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out our intention to develop a transformational safety, health and wellbeing culture - together we will effectively manage critical risks in our new and more diverse organisation. We will work to ensure that everyone goes home safe and well every time they undertake work for the organisation. This includes psychological wellbeing alongside physical safety and work-related health.</p>	<p>The Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW) Strategy focuses on reducing harm and supporting recovery. This supports the intention of our Risk Reduction Strategy to enhance the safety and protection of our own people as well as others we work alongside.</p> <p>The strategy also supports Priority 2 of our Risk Reduction Strategy to foster a risk reduction culture and capability. It will do this by developing SHW leadership so that leaders celebrate good SHW behaviour, expect high standards of themselves and others, and know their personnel and how to support them. It will also contribute to building a learning culture that listens to and values our people. This will help ensure all our people understand their own roles in delivering risk reduction and are skilled and supported to do so.</p> <p>The strategy focuses on enhancing collaborative relationships. It will support us to work together with unions and associations and engage effectively with those we work alongside in contractor and agency relationships and responsibilities. This supports our Risk Reduction Strategy Priority 1 to lead the development of risk management best practice, facilitating interagency planning and cooperation and sharing of good practice. Ultimately, this supports our Risk Reduction Strategy Priority 3 of safer people, communities and environments.</p>

Strategy**How this supports our Risk Reduction Strategy**

Volunteerism

This strategy affirms our commitment to volunteers and volunteerism and sets out our intent to build a future where volunteers and volunteerism will thrive in the years to come.

Volunteers are part of the fabric of their community, and are therefore a vital link in understanding community strengths, risks and needs and helping build community resilience. Thriving volunteers and volunteerism are therefore essential to our Risk Reduction Strategy so that we can provide effective and affordable services throughout New Zealand and tailor our interventions to each community.

Our Risk Reduction Strategy requires a greater focus on identifying and mitigating risk. The Volunteerism Strategy supports this by providing a broader choice of volunteer roles, beyond firefighting, that can include risk reduction activities. It also aims to recruit volunteers from all walks of life, and this will strengthen our ability to engage effectively with our diverse communities.

Diversity and Inclusion

This strategy intends to shape a culture that enables everyone to feel they can bring their whole self to work. This will help to create a unified organisation and a shared identity. It will also help to build a workforce with the broad skills needed in our new organisation and enable us to work more effectively with New Zealand's diverse communities.

Our Risk Reduction Strategy recognises that communities are not only geographic, but are also shaped by ethnicity, life stage or interests. We need trusted relationships with each community to understand their unique risks, and to achieve behaviour change by tailoring our risk reduction interventions to the nature and culture of each community. The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports this by shaping a workforce that is more reflective of the communities we serve and by increasing the cultural competency of all our people. Further, by supporting an inclusive work environment we also support the psychological safety and wellbeing of our people and promote effective decision making.

Our Risk Reduction Strategy also identifies the critical role of leaders in fostering a risk reduction culture and capability. This is supported by the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy's focus on growing behaviours that equip leaders to shape culture, supporting an inclusive environment by driving effective decision making, and promoting the importance of psychological health and wellbeing. This helps to proactively identify and mitigate potential risks within the organisation and in our communities.

Māori Outcomes Programme

This programme reflects our published commitment to work with Māori as tangata whenua. It sets out how we will build strong and productive relationships with iwi and Māori which contribute to a safer environment for Māori and for all New Zealand communities.

The Māori Outcomes Programme supports us to collaborate with iwi and Māori as we design and deliver our risk reduction services. It will build our organisational diversity and our cultural competence to engage with tangata whenua. This will enable us to partner with iwi as community leaders and as significant and growing land and forest owners, and reduce the disproportionate risk of harm from fire for Māori through culturally tailored engagement and risk reduction programmes.



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