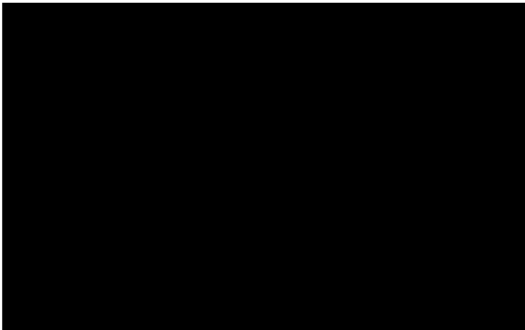




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6 June 2019



Information Request – Fire sirens

I refer to your official information request dated 10 May 2019 asking for the following information:

- *How many stations in New Zealand still use sirens?*
- *How many have stopped, where are these stations, and why have they stopped?*
- *How are stations without sirens doing since stopping and have there been cases where responding to emergencies has been delayed as a result?*
- *Why is there still a need for sirens at some stations given modern tech and are there plans to phase these out?*
- *How widespread/common are complaints about the sirens and what would you like to say to people that do complain?*

The use of sirens forms part of our firefighter alerting system. Primarily sirens are used to provide a localised alert which lets volunteer firefighters know they need to immediately travel to the station to respond to an incident. In some areas the siren may service a dual role as the community alert for local civil defence emergencies.

In Fire and Emergency, other technologies such as paging, texting and mobile phone applications are also used to alert firefighters. We support the use of whichever mix of these technologies provides the fastest possible response to our communities.

Fire and Emergency does not hold a record of the number of stations still using sirens, although our maintenance records do show that of 508 stations visited this year, 348 have a siren installed. Our records do not show whether that siren is still being used as part of the station's alert system.

The use of multiple alerts, provides us with the surety that we can respond quickly to all call outs.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602. Note also that this response (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Fire and Emergency website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raewyn Bleakley', written over a faint, illegible background.

Raewyn Bleakley
Deputy Chief Executive, Office of the Chief Executive