

Board Update New Zealand Fire Service Commission



Board Update - April 2017

Please print and circulate

Thank you to everyone involved in the response to Cyclone Cook, especially in the hardest hit areas in the Bay of Plenty. Fortunately, across much of the rest of the country the impact was not as testing as we had anticipated from the weather forecasts. This again demonstrated our ability to take the lead and pre-plan for a proactive response to these type of events.

Once more, we are seeing New Zealanders relying on our emergency response role as well as our firefighting role. The broad range of services we provide will be formally recognised on 1 July when Fire and Emergency New Zealand is established.

Yesterday we brought together 180 people who work within and alongside our fire and emergency services at a National Forum in Wellington to update them on progress towards 1 July.

Presentations covered readiness for Day One of Fire and Emergency New Zealand in relation to people, organisation and policy, planning for integration post-1 July, and the new identity.

The presentations are available on the website www.fenzproject.co.nz/events. Over the next month and a half, rural and urban leaders will be bringing people up to speed at workshops in your area.

We've come a long way since a similar forum held in July last year. While there is still much to do, we are putting firm foundations in place for a fire and emergency service that delivers for communities, and the firefighters who serve them.



Paul Swain presenting the new look at the National Forum on April 27th.

This month's update covers:

- Fire and Emergency New Zealand visual identity
- Command and control
- Safety, Health and Wellbeing update
- 50 Year Medals

The new identity

We are delighted to share the new look for Fire and Emergency New Zealand with you. This has been developed through an inclusive process over several months of consultation with people from across the fire services sector and research with the public.



The Board approved this identity at our April meeting, after listening to those involved and receiving a unanimous recommendation from members of the 12-person 'Identity Panel', made up of representatives from urban and rural firefighters (career and volunteer), unions and associations and the communications team.

We have followed the identity design process closely and are excited with the result, which is a fresh new look that symbolises the coming together of rural and urban in a new organisation while retaining the traditions of the past.

The new logo uses the Battenburg pattern of high-visibility markings on the side of emergency vehicles. The red and yellow 'Battenburg' is internationally recognised as symbolising fire, and in our case it also symbolises the coming together of urban (red) and rural (yellow) fire services.

Whakarātonga iwi means 'serving our people'. The gold SERVIMUS star stands for the values of Service, Efficiency, Resourcefulness, Valour, Integrity, Mobility, Unity and Strength. The symbols of helmet and crossed pulanski tool and axe reflect our tradition. These elements, within the protecting shape of the silver fern, put our tradition of serving our communities firmly at the heart of our identity for the future.

The research shows that the shield shape (as used on the arm badge) is seen by the public as a symbol of authority and reassurance.

All fire services personnel – urban, rural, career and volunteer – will be able to unite under this banner from 1 July. You'll see it around a lot over the next couple of months.

However, this does not mean uniforms and fleet livery will all change on 1 July. The question of uniforms for example, will require extensive discussion and consultation in the integration phase, so any changes will be gradually introduced.

You can find more about the identity on the website www.fenzproject.co.nz

Command and control

The Board wants to thank all parties involved in developing and agreeing the Command and Control policy for Day One.

Representatives from associations and unions, the operational leadership team, senior managers and frontline staff have worked together in the best interests of all to collectively arrive at a workable policy for July 1.

The Board is pleased to hear that agreement has been reached on a policy that provides for clarity and safety on the incident ground on Day One, and forms a base for building a robust command and control approach in the future.

In most circumstances, there will be little difference when the new policy takes effect on 1 July. Before then, you will get more information about how the policy will work in practice and will have the chance to talk about this with your leaders over coming weeks.

Safety, health and wellbeing

Safety, health and wellbeing is the first major item on all our Board agendas.

We often have speakers giving us their point of view on this priority area.

This month we heard a rural perspective on safety, health and wellbeing from Principal Rural Fire Officers Mike Grant (Southern) and Bryan Cartelle (Auckland). As always we were interested in how things are working now, and what our focus should be in this area for Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

While current practice in this area understandably varies across 38 different rural fire organisations, it was reassuring to hear that both Mike and Bryan agree with the planned approach to supporting our people in Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

The Board has approved the new safety, health and wellbeing direction, set out in a strategy document, to be in place from 1 July.

There's an overview in the Day One Readiness presentation on the website and you'll get more information in workshops the coming weeks.

This vital piece of work will help us meet our duty of care, continuing the legacy of making sure both urban and rural firefighters return safely at the end of the day. The strategy was developed with the help of those doing frontline work every day and the unions and associations who represent them.

50 Year Medal

Congratulations to Station Officer Frank Simpson of Newlands, who received a 50 Year Medal for his long service at a ceremony on Saturday 1 April. Thank you Frank for your outstanding commitment to the New Zealand Fire Service and your community.

Until the next update, stay safe and keep up the good work.

Hon. Paul Swain

Board Chair, New Zealand Fire Service Commission