

Scope for Phase One of the Volunteer Engagement Model

A Volunteer Engagement Model describes, and provides the mechanisms for, the engagement of Volunteers by Fire and Emergency New Zealand for the purposes of delivering its functions, and the role volunteer brigades have in supporting and enabling that.

This work will be co-designed with the United Fire Brigades Association and Fire and Emergency working in partnership and ensure that individual volunteer fire brigades have their own independent voice and representation as part of the work. Both Fire and Emergency and the United Fire Brigades Association will appoint a programme lead who together will lead the programme of work to develop and deliver the outcomes sought.

It is recognised that this programme of work is necessary to deliver and embed some of the recommendations of the Eke Taumata programme within Fire and Emergency, which was established to implement the recommendations of the Te Kawa Mataaho/Public Service Commission review into Fire and Emergency's culture and complaints handling processes.

Where work is undertaken within the Eke Taumata programme (or other related programmes) that clearly delivers on the aims of the Volunteer Engagement Model, the result of that work will be incorporated and embedded within this programme. The Eke Taumata programme will remain a separate but closely aligned programme and the Volunteer Engagement Model programme lead appointed by Fire and Emergency will be appointed within, and report through, the structures of this programme and its governance including to Fire and Emergency's Executive Leadership Team and Board.

Building on the work done during the establishment of Fire and Emergency and since (including the development of a high-level volunteer engagement framework in 2020), the programme of work to establish a new volunteer engagement model will determine how the relationship between volunteer personnel and their brigade, and volunteer personnel and Fire and Emergency needs to work in the future to achieve the following desired, interest-based aims:


- Provide for the continued identity of local brigades in the community, and for the continued identity of individual members within that brigade and community
- Provide assurance to Fire and Emergency that, when operating under the Fire and Emergency banner, brigades and individual members operate in a manner that is consistent with the public's expectations of individuals in public roles and complies with the organisation's policies.
- Enable Fire and Emergency to set standards of behaviour, conduct and performance for volunteer personnel and ensure that expected standards of behaviour, conduct and performance are upheld at both a brigade and individual level.
- Provide appropriate mechanisms for the effective management of issues within and between volunteers, brigades, their representatives and Fire and Emergency, recognising the accountabilities and responsibilities within each of these entities.
- Ensure all aspects of the volunteer relationship align with the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 and Fire and Emergency's values, operating principles, agreed operating model and volunteerism principles.

- Appropriately recognise the differing expectations, accountabilities and relationships that Brigades, Brigade leadership roles and Brigade non-leadership roles have with regard to their operation under the authorisation of Fire and Emergency.
- Recognise, respect and promote the contribution of volunteers to the performance and exercise of Fire and Emergency's functions, duties and powers, and to the well-being and safety of communities.
- Provide a positive supportive environment for all volunteers to undertake their duties in support of delivering Fire and Emergency's functions.
- Deliver accountability and authorising environments that effectively recognise and support the achievement of the above aims.
- Ultimately supports the sustainability of volunteer brigades and actively encourages and recognises the significant contribution volunteers, and volunteer brigades, make to the overall performance of Fire and Emergency's functions, and the trust and confidence the New Zealand public have in its ability to perform its role.
- Reflects Fire and Emergency's duty as a Crown Entity to apply its "good employer" obligations in all practicable ways to volunteer personnel as if they are Fire and Emergency employees. This includes regularly reviewing all Fire and Emergency Policies, Procedures and Processes to ensure groups of Fire and Emergency personnel are not discriminated against.
- Define, set and enable the engagement, empowerment, and oversight of Fire and Emergency volunteer personnel which enables them to maintain their strong and clear link with community and brigade at the same time as establishing a strong and clear link and accountability to Fire and Emergency.
- Define, set and enable the safe and good governance of brigade funds and resources for the effective and efficient running of brigades.


These components may ultimately replace, or revise (in full or in part), all of the following, but not without the appropriate engagement and consultation as specified in the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017:

- Agreement(s) of Service or Constitution(s)
- Brigade Rules of Association (Model Rules)
- Brigade Leader (Controller, Chief Fire Officer, Officer in Charge,) and Deputies - Appointment Process and Letter of Appointment
- Volunteer Appointment Process and Letter of Engagement.

Signed on behalf of the
Fire and Emergency New Zealand


Kerry Gregory
Chief Executive
Date: 2 October 2024

Signed on behalf of the
United Fire Brigades' Association


Bill Butzbach
Chief Executive
Date: 2 October 2024