

# Joint Provincial Association Presentation

## Grahame Howell, President Auckland Provincial Fire Brigades' Association

Mr President, Honoured Guests and Delegates.

After the success of the single, combined Provincial address at last year's conference, we have again collectively agreed to continue with this format.

Firstly, on behalf of all the past and present Provincial leaders, I extend our thanks to George Verry for all his hard work during his time as Chief Executive Officer of the UFBA and we wish him all the best for the future. We wouldn't be in such a strong position without his tireless efforts.

We also welcome Bill Butzbach as the new Chief Executive Officer and look forward to building on the relationship we have already started with him.

We are now into the three-year integration phase of Fire and Emergency New Zealand and welcome those volunteer rural fire forces that have become members of the UFBA and joined their respective Provincial Associations.

The focus of Conference is **Leading together**. It is crucial that all of us here lead together to make sure we can continue to make our major contributions to building safe, sustainable communities.

As local leaders, Provincials are now leading together with the UFBA.

With our changing environment, we need to build a strong culture and continue to evolve.

As leaders, we can be effective and positive influencers on changing the culture ... in our brigades and rural fire forces, in our Provincials and in the wider Fire and Emergency New Zealand organisation.

Networks and knowledge are the keys to success. Provincials have these in spades. Let's use them.

We can contribute to sustainable volunteerism through learning and development opportunities such as our training and competitions, enhancing wellbeing in our brigades and rural fire forces and reducing the burden of administration on volunteers.

The Provincials and UFBA are working a lot closer together with monthly conference calls helping us all to see how we can better support volunteers.

One new volunteer support initiative we are working on, with the UFBA and Fire and Emergency New Zealand, is arranging member consultation in our areas on identifying the most time-consuming admin tasks and capturing processes to see how we can improve administration. All with the aim of making it easier to be a volunteer.

Now that we are working in partnership with FRFANZ, we are liaising closely with our colleagues in rural fire forces, so they can benefit from our networks and knowledge.

We have been looking at ways to make Provincials more 'fit for purpose' and how to work better for our members with Fire and Emergency New Zealand and the UFBA. A start to this is adopting one set of rules and constitution across all the Provincial Associations. At this point they are very similar but will need to be rewritten and presented to each Provincial conference to be ratified.

### **We, as Provincials, will be more influential by having:**

- Better culture
- Well-resourced, better supported and trained people
- Modern and robust administrative and executive structure common to all Provincials
- Established partnerships with each other and the rest of our communities
- Additional connections to a more diverse geographic spread of communities through Sub Associations
- The right size to be effective within our communities, with the right level of support from and for Sub Associations.

**Actions taken since last year's conference, as Provincial leaders:**

- Having regular meetings together, with the strategic thinkers of the UFBA to make the big picture a reality
- While continuing to provide our traditional training, competitions and recognition of service, we are aiming to be a local resource where ideas and concerns can be fed back to our national representatives. As well as being a trusted partner for delivering information from the UFBA and other national influencers into our communities, brigades and rural fire forces.
- This growth is change, and change is often challenging and takes time to implement, but as members of your Provincial you can support your executive leaders through this time of change, by driving a strong culture of change and development at your brigade and rural fire force level, and getting involved with Provincial activities.

**Potential initiatives include:**

- Training people in each Provincial area in disputes resolution to assist brigades and rural fire forces to resolve issues at an early stage during the Volunteer Issues Process, before they escalate to the more formal Dispute Resolution Process. (this is the bottom level of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand resolution framework triangle model)
- Being the first 'port of call' for brigades and rural fire forces in our Provincial areas as a stepping stone to UFBA services
- Developing a UFBA roadshow with Provincial Association members accompanying the roadshow team
- Retaining immediate Past Presidents in the communication loop to maintain continuity
- The possibility of being able to report to the Local Advisory Committees on behalf of area brigades and rural fire forces
- UFBA to continue with the Leadership and Governance Workshops to give future leaders the skills required to run effective brigades and to continue building on these initiatives
- Rolling out the Secretaries and Treasurers Workshops to those who would benefit.

We see the Provincial and Sub Associations as being many branches of the UFBA 'tree' that can reach out to all member brigades and rural fire forces as well as liaising with other emergency services in our Provincial areas such as Coastguard, Search and Rescue and other emergency teams, to build on addressing our communities' needs.

I'm sure that you will all agree, that us changing the format to one combined provincial presentation, is more informative and works better than the way it was in the past and this is a good example of how continuing to evolve and change can be beneficial.

If we all make this choice to grow, the Provincials, the UFBA and no matter what organisation we work within, will continue to have the trust, respect and Mana we currently hold in our communities.

Thank you.