



Health & Safety at Work Act

DECEMBER 2015 UPDATE

What does the new legislation mean for you?

On April 4 2016, the new Act will come into effect. The Fire Service is already meeting most of the new obligations and we're well aware of health and safety – so, although there are a few changes to be aware of, day-to-day work and focus will remain the same for most personnel.

Some new terms under the Act:

Officers under the Act are not fire officers – this term refers only to the most senior leadership, e.g. Region Manager and above. This role carries the most responsibility for health and safety.

PCBU or 'person conducting a business or undertaking' will be used to cover all employers, businesses or similar who engage people to work for them, e.g. the Fire Service.

Worker is the new term for everybody who undertakes work of some sort for a business or undertaking – all support people, trainees, contractors, managers and area commanders are all seen as workers under the Act.

If you have any further questions about what the Act means for you, contact your Region Safety & Wellbeing Co-ordinator or see our FireNet link for more details – on the home page under 'Quick Links'.

All firefighters, trainees, support staff and contractors:

- **Keep doing the good things you are doing** to work safely to keep yourselves and your crew members and colleagues safe.
- **Follow and comply** with any reasonable instructions and guidelines or policies notified by the Fire Service.
- **Talk about and identify** hazards where you can, note the most effective ways to eliminate or manage these risks.
- Continue to use tools like **dynamic risk assessment** and the **Safe Person Concept** tools you have been trained in, during situations where things may change rapidly, e.g. incident grounds.

Executive officers and managers, Career SSOs and SOs:

- Continue to manage the health and safety of people and situations where you have the ability to influence or control the matter for NZFS people and others.
- When working with building owners or councils, or other agencies such as Police, Civil Defence or Ambulance, continue to **"consult, cooperate and coordinate"** with other agencies as you do now with CIMS.

CFOs, DCFOs, Volunteer SSOs and SOs:

- You should also continue to **"consult, cooperate and coordinate"** with other agencies, but your main responsibilities for health and safety are the same as those outlined for **workers** above – to keep your crew members safe, and follow NZFS training and policy.

NZFS Commission, and Strategic and Operational Leaders:

- The new Act focuses strongly on good leadership. 'Officers' under the Act are not fire officers – they are the most senior leadership (region manager and above) with significantly increased responsibilities to **know** and keep up to date with health and safety, to **understand** NZFS risks and hazards, to ensure we have **resources** to manage our risks, to **monitor** NZFS health and safety processes, to ensure we **comply** with our obligations and then **verify** we meet these.