



Working together to support our members
**UFBA and FRFANZ ensure volunteer firefighters
have a single powerful voice**

Fire services reform: Our role in the process



George Verry, UFBA Chief Executive Officer

The last few weeks has seen a burst of activity on the fire services reform front. I thought it was timely I update you on progress and indicate what is ahead in terms of process and where we intend to focus our efforts.

Our recent actions

So looking back over the last month:

1. On 21 June, UFBA Chairman Rick Braddock met with New Zealand Fire Service Commission (NZFSC) Board Chairman Paul Swain.

They discussed our concerns including the lack of clarity around the proposed direct engagement model, the uncertainty surrounding the future status of volunteer brigades and the future status and funding arrangements of the UFBA.

The key message was that unless these matters were clarified to the satisfaction of the UFBA very shortly, the UFBA would have difficulty supporting the forthcoming Bill at the Select Committee stage.

Paul Swain responded to the effect there was no predetermined agenda on any of these items and that his Board was looking to the UFBA and other stakeholder groups for constructive proposals.

2. On 27 June, we convened a UFBA Board workshop in Wellington to discuss a range of options for direct engagement of volunteers, the future status of brigades and the future

status and funding of the UFBA. The meeting was attended by Bruce Kitto the deputy chair of FRFANZ who contributed to the positive debate.

All agreed that the fundamental relationship between the community, the individual volunteer and the local brigade/rural fire force must be retained.

Paul Swain and Paul Baxter attended the meeting for an hour over lunch during which time we presented a high level 'wiring diagram' that depicted how we thought the various relationships could be configured in the future.

Both Paul Swain and Paul Baxter considered this approach a very constructive contribution and asked us to progress it through the FENZ Transition Team being established under a sub-committee of the NZFSC Board.

We also proposed a Memorandum of Understanding to address the future status and funding of the UFBA and FRFANZ. Paul Swain invited us to draft a document for the NZFSC Board's consideration.

3. On 30 June, the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Bill to repeal the two Acts governing New Zealand's fire services (the Fire Service Act 1975 and the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977) and to give effect to a single unified fire services organisation (FENZ) was introduced to Parliament.

As previously foreshadowed, the Bill takes a contemporary approach to legislation and does not prescribe how the organisation is to be structured or managed. Instead it takes an enabling and permissive approach.

At a very high level, the Bill can be described as setting out the objectives and functions of the organisation and then vesting the power and authority necessary to achieve those objectives in the Board. The Board is then expected to design the detailed

systems and structures to deliver the results and delegate such of its powers as it considers necessary to management.

We aim to provide a more detailed analysis of the Bill from a volunteer perspective shortly so I will not dwell on it here except to emphasise:

- Numerous positive provisions contained in the Bill are there as a direct result of our advocacy and intervention
- We are well positioned to secure the interests of volunteers, their brigades/rural fire forces and the communities they represent when the FENZ Board comes to consider the detailed design of the systems and structures to achieve the objectives of the Bill.

4. On 4 July, Chairman Rick Braddock, Director Bill Butzbach and Murray McKee met with the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon Peter Dunne.

The Minister was well briefed on our concerns and was anxious to allay our fears concerning any possible intention to disturb the primary relationship between a volunteer and their brigade or that the UFBA and FRFANZ would be left high and dry as a result of the reforms.

The Minister was aware of our intention to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Board of the new unified organisation and he thought this was entirely appropriate. He particularly welcomed our advice that we were about to enter into a formal agreement with FRFANZ to work together on matters of mutual interest.

Rick, Bill and Murray came away with the strong impression that the Minister has a deep regard for the work of the UFBA and FRFANZ and fully expects the existing relationship to be carried forward in the new organisation albeit that the role will not be prescribed in statute.

5. On 5 July, the FENZ Bill had its first reading in Parliament.

Minister's speech

Amongst other things the Minister had this to say in the course of his speech at the first reading of the Bill:

"Volunteers will move to a direct relationship with Fire and Emergency New Zealand, although they will not become employees as such, and there will still be an important role and place for the United Fire Brigades' Association.

This bill enables the provision of independent advocacy services and support for volunteers, at no charge to them—the role the UFBA has played for more than a century now.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand will develop a framework for supporting volunteers, based on modern volunteer principles.

Increased support for volunteers recognises their contribution, while not detracting from the support given to the paid workforce.

The bill states that the existing paid and volunteer workforce will retain their entitlements when Fire and Emergency New Zealand is established.

So local brigades will retain their Chief Fire Officers, and Deputy Chief Fire Officers."

A small number of MPs from all parties in the House spoke to the Bill. There appeared to be a degree of cross-party support for the Bill and the few issues raised were more matters of emphasis than substance. Several speakers suggested they will look closely at submissions from volunteers for evidence of support.

At the conclusion of the first reading, the Bill was referred to the Government Administration Select Committee for detailed consideration. The Committee has called for submissions on the Bill—these close on 18 August 2016.

6. On 7 July, Rick, Bill, Murray, UFBA Communications Manager Loralee Hyde and I attended a FENZ transition stakeholder seminar/workshop in

Wellington. Approximately 180 stakeholders from a wide range of organisations were invited.

The Minister and Paul Swain spoke and other members of the Commission, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Fire Service, National Rural Fire Authority and FENZ Transition Programme Team presented on a variety of subjects.

Partnership with FRFANZ

Prior to the start of the seminar, UFBA Chairman Rick Braddock and FRFANZ Chairman Kevin Ihaka formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the parties. Minister Dunne and Paul Swain attended the signing ceremony and expressed their congratulations.

The Minister referred to the joint UFBA/FRFANZ initiative and to other constructive contributions our organisations have made throughout the reform process in his keynote speech to the seminar.

See page 3 for more about the UFBA and FRFANZ partnership.

What do I take out of all this busy-ness?

First, I know our interventions and contributions to the reform process to date have served the cause of fire services volunteerism well. I can point to numerous positive provisions in the FENZ Bill that simply would not be there without our firm persistent advocacy.

The Minister, the NZFSC Board and their officials recognise we have made a positive difference and will continue to look to us for considered, thoughtful and constructive input.

Second, I am totally confident that the fundamental relationship that presently encompasses the community, the volunteer and the brigade will be preserved into the future.

I concede we have not yet pinned down exactly what a 'direct relationship' between volunteers and FENZ will look like.

The Bill does not help us in this regard—it simply says the direct relationship is intended to enable volunteers to communicate with the organisation. At the end of the day it will mean what the Board of FENZ and we (the UFBA and FRFANZ) agree it means.

"I can point to numerous positive provisions in the FENZ Bill that simply would not be there without our firm persistent advocacy."

George Verry
UFBA Chief Executive Officer

Both Minister Dunne and Chair Paul Swain have urged us to formulate how we think the relationship should be structured and our model is already well advanced.

Third, I am equally confident that the rights and privileges fire services volunteers, their brigades/rural fire forces and the UFBA enjoy under the current legislation will continue into the future, albeit under different constitutional arrangements.

These include binding instruments such as a charter of volunteer rights, a regularly updated collective engagement agreement for all volunteers and a Memorandum of Understanding between the FENZ Board and UFBA/FRFANZ.

I am confident of this because the Minister's continued public references to the ongoing role of the UFBA assures me that we are very well positioned to secure the interests of volunteers through engagement and negotiation with the incoming FENZ Board.

Finally, I am conscious there is still an incredible amount of work to be done and much to play for. What we have seen to date is about relatively straightforward matters of principle, structure and organisation. It is painting by numbers. It treats fire services like a machine—turn a handle at one end, the cogs grind and a widget drops out the other end.

As I said in my column in May, the whole exercise will have failed if it does not achieve a transformation of the dominant culture of the fire service. That is where we need to engage next.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a one-page update on the actions UFBA is taking on behalf of our members during the fire services reform. I would appreciate you sharing this update with your brigade/rural fire force members.

To keep up-to-date with the fire services reform process visit fenzproject.co.nz or www.ufba.org.nz/fire_services_review/actions

■ EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

UFBA and FRFANZ: A single powerful voice



Left to right: UFBA Chairman Rick Braddock and FRFANZ Chairman Kevin Ihaka signing the UFBA/FRFANZ Memorandum of Understanding, Minister Peter Dunne and NZFSC Board Chairman Paul Swain

Urban and rural firefighter representative organisations are working together to ensure volunteer firefighters have a single powerful voice.

Urban and rural volunteer firefighters make up 80 percent of New Zealand's fire services.

Their representative organisations, the **United Fire Brigades' Association (UFBA)** and the **Forest and Rural Fire Association (FRFANZ)**, have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** to make sure fire brigades and rural fire forces have a single united voice as fire and emergency services transition to a new unified organisation.

Independent advocacy

Internal Affairs Minister Peter Dunne has introduced legislation to establish Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ).

This will provide the legal framework needed to bring together more than 40 separate organisations, over 600 fire brigades and rural fire forces, more than 12,000 volunteers, and approximately 3000 paid staff into the single new organisation.

Mr Dunne says the bill enables the provision of independent advocacy services and support for volunteers, at no charge to them – “the exact role FRFANZ has provided for almost thirty years, and the UFBA for more than a century”.

“FENZ will develop a framework for supporting volunteers, based on modern volunteer principles,” Mr Dunne says.

“Increased support for volunteers recognises their contribution, while not detracting from the support given to the paid workforce.”

Uniting volunteers

UFBA Chairman Rick Braddock says, “Although there have been other reviews of our fire services in the last 40 years, this is the first to result in completely new legislation that will lead to better, more sustainable emergency services for New Zealand communities.

“The aim of the agreement between UFBA and FRFANZ is to unite people, in particular volunteers, who are dedicated to the common cause of protecting lives and property in their communities throughout the country.”

Aim is to work together

FRFANZ Chairman Kevin Ihaka says, “Volunteers in both organisations share many of the same issues so our aim is to work together to ensure the best outcomes while still recognising differences within our sectors.

“This is an opportunity to manage positive change by unifying the voices of all volunteers no matter where they are from.”

Combining UFBA and FRFANZ advocacy

The intention behind combining UFBA and FRFANZ advocacy into a single powerful voice representing collective fire and rescue services personnel closely follows the Government's rationale in setting up the new unified fire and emergency services organisation.

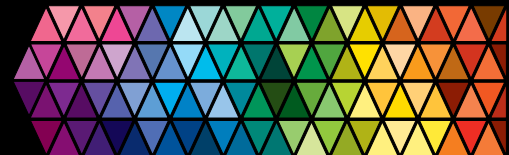
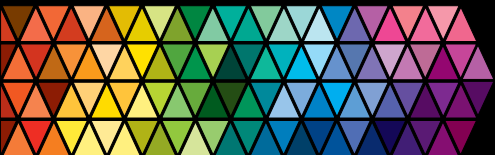
The agreement will enable UFBA and FRFANZ to facilitate the extensive consultation needed with fire brigades and rural fire forces during the various stages of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Bill as it translates into policy and regulation.

FRFANZ Conference

UFBA Chief Executive Officer George Verry and Director Bill Butzbach attended this year's FRFANZ Conference in Masterton at the end of July. We will report more on this Conference in our next newsletter.

The **Forest and Rural Fire Association (FRFANZ)** represents people and organisations concerned with fire and fire protection in forests and rural areas throughout New Zealand.

FRFANZ develops and provides communication links between all those involved in rural fire from firefighters to administrators at National Rural Fire Authority (NRFA) and Rural Fire Authorities (RFAs). For more information visit www.frfanz.org.nz



BUILDING STRONG FOUNDATIONS

The theme of this year's conference is *Building Strong Foundations*—a reflection of the resilience and adaptability of Canterbury following the devastating earthquakes and the region's ability to embrace change and grow stronger.

Our fire services, and consequently all who are committed to protecting property and lives, are now facing major change during the fire services reform. The UFBA 2016 Conference keynote presentations and interactive workshops will provide delegates with ideas and resources on how to deal with change and lead through this time—thereby building stronger brigades and communities.

LAST YEAR'S CONFERENCE: AN INSPIRING FORUM

Keynote Speaker: Group Captain Catherine McGregor

"This was an amazing speech. One of the highlights if not the highlight of the weekend and great for brigade leaders to hear. Well done UFBA!"

Renee Moffitt, Stokes Valley Volunteer Fire Brigade

Skills Workshop: Coaching and Mentoring

"I will use the coaching workshop skills to change behaviour on fire calls, work out what type of people I have on the call and coach them into doing the work required."

Warren Maslin, Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade

28-30 OCTOBER 2016

Air Force Museum, Wigram Airbase

REGISTER NOW!

With thought-provoking keynote speakers, interactive workshops and forums, this year's UFBA Annual Conference & AGM in Christchurch is a wonderful opportunity for members to network and socialise with their peers.

Register online today at:

www.ufba.org.nz/events/2016_ufba_138th_annual_conference

ELECT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

Brigade delegates have the opportunity to vote for two Directors to join the Board, one Vice President and one Technical Panel member at the 138th AGM of the United Fire Brigades' Association.



Alan Kittelty, UFBA Vice President

Alan Kittelty was elected as Vice President at the 2015 AGM. Alan joined Springfield Volunteer Fire Brigade in 1985 and transferred to Darfield in 1990 where he has been Chief Fire Officer since 2010.

Alan spent a term as a member of the UFBA Board from 2012-2014 and has many years' experience in both governance and management roles. He has served

as President of Canterbury Provincial Fire Brigades' Association. An advocate of strong leadership, he has been part of working parties and advocacy groups on behalf of the UFBA for a number of years.

What have been the highlights of your time as UFBA Vice President?

Meeting member brigades and presentations of Gold Stars. Being involved with the UFBA Board in discussions, submissions and representations around the fire services reform.

What would you like to achieve in your time as an Officer of the UFBA?

Continue to represent the UFBA and meet as many member brigades and individuals as possible, listening to their concerns and assisting where possible. Be fully involved in the fire services reform process with the UFBA Board.

You are a graduate of our Leadership and Governance workshop. How does this programme benefit brigades and their communities?

This UFBA workshop provides participants with the opportunity to learn from experts in their field and allows them to grow their

leadership skills and understanding of governance. It provides positive learnings for their fire service, personal life and career. I recommend it to anyone who wishes to strengthen their professional development.

What are the advantages for brigade delegates attending Conference?

The opportunity to meet and network with like-minded people from across the country, hear fantastic keynote speakers, share ideas with others and understand UFBA's direction and future plans. And it is funded for one delegate from each NZFS Brigade and NRFA Rural Fire Force that are members of the UFBA.

How do members benefit from UFBA representing their interests?

Being a UFBA officer is exciting and challenging as it is a time of change for all. The fire services reform is at the forefront of the areas UFBA is focusing on and it is vitally important we continue to influence the outcome of the reform in a positive way for our members. The MOU between the UFBA and FRFANZ provides a very strong unity for urban and rural firefighters. The positive affirmation from Minister Dunne during the first reading of the new FENZ legislation shows the UFBA is a strong voice for us all.

EVENTS

Challenges 2017 update

Challenge locations and dates

Hot on the heels of completing the 2016 events season we are now able to announce the majority of the 2017 challenge locations and dates.

Please start pencilling these dates into your brigade calendars. Unless the date or location has (TBC) next to it, these dates are confirmed and will not be changed.

Looking for hosts

There is still a number of opportunities for brigades and Provincials to host events. Hosting a UFBA event is a great opportunity to strengthen the camaraderie of your brigade.

There are also some opportunities to fundraise for your brigade or Association. And bringing an event to your community has some economic benefits for your township.

Showcase your brigade

Hosting an event for the UFBA doesn't have to be hard work, and you don't have to have done one before OR have a competing team in the event.

The UFBA Events team will help you every step of the way. The UFBA look after all the big stuff, make all the bookings and secure all the resources. Catering, venue and resource sourcing and willing helpers is all it takes to be a great host.

Hosting an event is a great opportunity to showcase your district and brigade and make new friends. If you would like to consider being a host for one of our events next year, contact Ceara in the UFBA office on 027 201 2212 or ceara@ufba.org.nz to get more information.

FIREFIGHTER COMBAT CHALLENGE



United Fire Brigades' Association
DRIVERS CHALLENGE



United Fire Brigades' Association
WATERWAY CHALLENGE



United Fire Brigades' Association
ROAD CRASH RESCUE CHALLENGE

2017 Challenges

Date	Challenge	Location
21 January (TBC)	Region 2 Waterways	Carterton (TBC)
4 February	Region 1 Waterways	(TBC)
18 February	Region 4 Waterways	Clutha/Wanaka
2-4 March	Region 3 Waterways	Ross
25 March	National Waterways	Kamo
8 April	South Island Combat	Alexandra (TBC)
5-6 May	North Island Combat	Palmerston North
20 May (TBC)	National Combat	Wellington
3 June (TBC)	Regional RCR	(TBC)
20-22 July	Regional RCR	(TBC)
August (TBC)	Australasian RCR	Hamilton
19-21 October	National Drivers	(TBC)
	Australasian Waterways	Carterton



UFBA 2016 National Firefighter Combat Challenge, Wellington



UFBA 2016 National Road Crash Rescue Challenge, Inglewood

Helping firefighters through tough times

Many brigade members and their families in financial hardship or need have been assisted by the UFBA Benevolent Fund over the last 26 years.

What is the Benevolent Fund?

Set up with a Trust Deed in 1990, the UFBA Benevolent Fund provides assistance to firefighters and their families who are going through tough times financially or who have suffered misfortune in their lives.

Brigades contribute \$2 per member per annum to the fund—the amount will increase to \$5 from 15 October this year.

The UFBA Benevolent Fund is a registered charity under the Charities Act 2005.

The Trustees on the Benevolent Fund Board consider every application on a case-by-case basis and make decisions regarding assistance accordingly.

Who are the Trustees?

The current Trustees have extensive experience in fire services, the UFBA and in the community. They are:

- Chairman Alan Cockburn QFSM, JP
- Graeme Booth MNZM
- Ray Topia MNZM
- Alan Burgess MNZM
- Bryan Styles
- Russell Anderson (UFBA President)
- George Verry (Chief Executive Officer)

Who can apply for help?

Any member of any brigade or rural fire force that is a UFBA member—volunteer, paid, rural, urban, industrial or defence—can apply for assistance from the UFBA Benevolent Fund.

Benevolent Fund Chairman Alan Cockburn encourages brigades to remember the fund is there to assist their own membership in times of genuine hardship or need.

“Should a member need assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact the UFBA office,” Alan says. “It’s a credit to the brigades who recognise members in dire need and act quickly in contacting the UFBA family for assistance.”

What kind of help is available?

Every application is considered by the Trustees on the facts of the situation.

Some recent examples of members in need:

- Extra travel or accommodation costs required by family members following a severe injury or illness
- Accommodation, food and clothing needed immediately after a house fire.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the UFBA Benevolent Fund allocated a total of \$42,650 in ex gratia payments to members in need

Making a difference

The testimonials below show how the UFBA Benevolent Fund makes a difference to the lives of members in need.

“I am so overwhelmed with the kindness from UFBA for even considering us. This will make a huge difference to us allowing me to stay with my daughter at a very important time in her life. When receiving your email I became emotional, that this is being done for us, this means so much!! So please pass on our very overwhelmed thanks and gratitude with helping out our family in its time of need, there is not enough words to say how thankful we are.”

“Earlier this year I required emergency surgery which along with the hospital stay and recovery period I was unable to

work for two months. After exhausting all sources of income and support, bills continued to accumulate with no way to pay them. The UFBA were informed of my situation and granted me some much needed assistance during this time. With this generous assistance I no longer had to stress over financial things and was able to just focus on my recovery so I could return to work. My health is now back to normal and things are going well all thanks to the generosity from the UFBA and support from my extended family in the New Zealand Fire Service.”

And from a Volunteer Fire Brigade ...

“I had a member of our brigade that fell ill and required emergency surgery, after the surgery the recovery period was long and stressful. I made a phone call to the UFBA and spoke in full confidence with Jane about the situation ... I was blown away about how willing to help they are and it really made me feel as if we were all part of a big family. The funding that our member received was so important and removed all the stress about bills and allowed them to focus on family and recovery. I urge anyone out there that needs help to get in touch with the UFBA and reach out.”

How to apply for assistance from the UFBA Benevolent Fund

- Download the Benevolent Fund Application Form on the UFBA website at www.ufba.org.nz/member_services/benevolent_fund
- The Chief Fire Officer of your brigade must complete and sign the application—give as much information as possible about the situation
- Send the completed and signed application to the UFBA office
- The UFBA Chief Executive Officer may ask for more details before circulating the application to the Benevolent Fund Trustees for consideration
- The Trustees forward their recommendations to the Chairman of the Benevolent Fund, who makes the final decision
- UFBA will then let the applicant know the outcome of their application
- Approved payments are made directly to the family—the Benevolent Fund does not give to fundraising websites such as Givealittle.

For further information, please contact UFBA Membership Support Manager **Jane Davie** by phone on 04 237 2683, 0274 428 655 or email membershipsupport@ufba.org.nz

■ SERVICE HONOURS

Congratulations to the following members who received 50 Year and Gold Star medals in June.

Thank you for your dedicated service to the Fire Service and your communities.

50 Year Medal

Waihi

SHAW James

Gold Stars

Ashhurst

Milton

Winton

BIRCHALL Noel

WEATHERALL Rodger

LAVERTY David

Provincial Associations Meeting

Seven Provincial Associations throughout the country unite member brigades within each province through meetings, social events, challenges and Gold Star Associations.

UFBA supports Provincial Associations in four significant ways: providing support from the Chief Executive Officer at their AGMs, giving priority to new Executive members as participants in Leadership & Governance Workshops, offering a facilitator to help

develop a business plan, and an annual half-day meeting with the UFBA Board.

Provincial Association Executive teams will meet with the UFBA Board on **Sunday 11 September** in Wellington to discuss the fire services reform process with the Board, network with like-minded members, meet UFBA staff and participate in a workshop on how UFBA can better support Provincial Associations and vice-versa.

Events Calendar

19-20 August National Drivers Challenge, Ruapuna, Canterbury

6-8 October UFBA Leadership and Governance Workshop, Wellington

27 October NZFBI Field Day: Christchurch Urban Search and Rescue

28-30 October UFBA 138th Annual Conference & AGM, Christchurch

Building Strong Foundations

Register online at www.ufba.org.nz/events/2016 UFBA 138th Annual Conference



Field Day

Urban Search and Rescue: Christchurch Task Force

Thursday 27 October—on the afternoon before the UFBA Annual Conference in Christchurch from Friday 28 October to Sunday 30 October.

Tour the Christchurch USAR Task Force base and view demonstrations of their capability.

Pre-register now to secure your place!

- There will be a registration fee for this event—the cost will be advised as soon as possible
- Travel and accommodation costs must be met by attendees
- Those attending the 2016 UFBA Conference as a delegate from 28 October may claim back flights/mileage based on the UFBA travel policy outlined in the Conference registration pack. Reimbursement for the Thursday flight will not exceed the lowest possible fare option to arrive in Christchurch on Friday 28 October by midday.
- Accommodation on the evening of Thursday 27 October is not funded.

Pre-register your interest now by completing the online Field Day registration form at www.ufba.org.nz/events/nzfbifielddaychristchurch2016

Engage

Keep up to date about news and events. Take part in online polls and our forum. Register at:

www.ufba.org.nz

Consult

We're committed to representing and supporting you. Get in touch at:

membershipsupport@ufba.org.nz

Connect

Are we sending your UFBA newsletters to the correct address? To update your brigade's postal address, email:

news@ufba.org.nz

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