

Brigade Representatives

Draft Terms of Reference

Background

The Fire and Emergency Act came into force in 2017. This Act set out a new framework for FENZ to operate within and deliver its services. Since 2017, FENZ has been planning for and implementing changes, some of which have not yet impacted on Brigades. We anticipate that there will be implications for Brigades and how they will operate as a result of the following, for example:

- the new FENZ management restructure and new senior appointments
- community risk profiling and risk plans for Brigades
- implementing the Volunteerism Strategy
- implementing medical and physical health standards
- reviewing the Model Rules for Brigades
- reviewing rank and role
- as a result of an increased focus on all Brigades to work better together.

The United Fire Brigade Association (UFBA) and Forest and Rural Fire Association of New Zealand (FRFANZ) want to ensure that Brigades are well placed to input to these changes and ensure sustainable fire and emergency services in their local communities.

We see an opportunity to work closely with the Provincials and their networks. We could have a situation for example, where a Provincial member could also be a Brigade Representative. We encourage these connections and for Provincials to use their networks to communicate and gather feedback on topics of interest via the UFBA and FRFANZ so they can be conveyed to FENZ/government. Provincials can also use the Brigade Representatives network to strengthen their voice.

Purpose

To strengthen Brigades voice (as a collective) to influence sector-wide FENZ policy and changes overtime especially where changes could impact on delivery of fire and emergency services in local communities. The UFBA and FRFANZ wants to ensure Brigades are well supported by FENZ to service their communities and continuously improve service delivery for New Zealanders.

Ideally every Brigade (that is volunteer, urban and rural but optional for career) would have a Brigade Representative that both FRFANZ and the UFBA could engage with on a regular basis.

It is proposed that each Brigade (whether they are volunteer, rural, industry specific or even possibly career – which is totally optional) has a nominated representative who works with the UFBA and FRFANZ to represent their interests, concerns and proactive ideas to FENZ and other interested parties.

Objectives

- to advocate for volunteer (both urban and rural) and industry specific Brigade issues through the UFBA/FRFANZ to FENZ, Government and other interested parties
- to have a well-informed Brigade network that is ready to respond to changes that impact on them and better still anticipate potential changes and provide proactive advice to FENZ and government
- to hold FENZ to account and uphold aspects of the Fire and Emergency Act, (examples below) and Section 118 of the Crown Entities' Act and the EEO provisions:
 - to promote and encourage the training and education of persons engaged in rural fire control (including those so engaged as principal rural fire officers or rural fire officers under the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977)
 - to promote Section 36 (duty of FENZ in relation to volunteers) and 37 (FENZ to make advocacy and support services available to FENZ volunteers).
- to ensure the overall intent of the reform programme is achieved
- to liaise with other networks within the region (ie. Local Advisory Committees and existing Provincials, civil defence groups and/or other emergency agencies) to optimise service delivery opportunities within a region.

What value can the UFBA/FRFANZ offer to Brigades

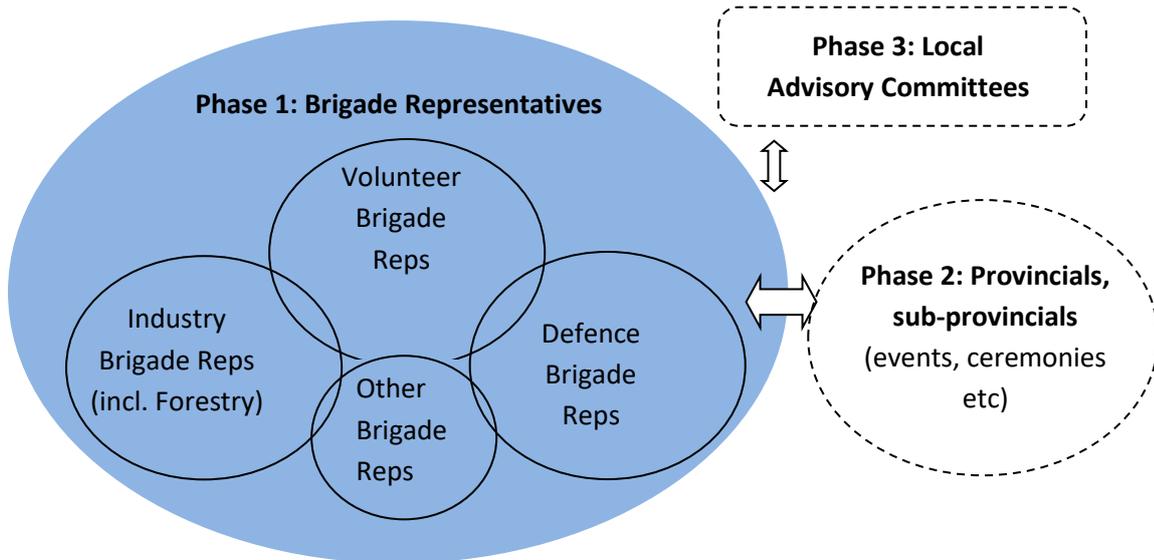
Together we can:

- capture you're on the ground practical experience and knowledge about how changes are working or could work in the future
- advocate on behalf of Brigades to take a certain position (in the form of submissions) with FENZ/government and influence policy/change
- condense and convey targeted information to Brigades so they remain engaged in changes that FENZ are going through and have an opportunity to have their say
- look across the country at feedback/responses and identify trends/common issues
- put Brigades in touch with other Brigades to learn from each other/share best practice.

Scope of the network

There will be different types of Brigades in the network and all (including urban, rural, volunteer and career) their views are welcome as they bring different perspectives. If Provincials were keen to be part of this network then this would add tremendous value to the Brigade Representative network. We want Brigades to remain relevant to their local communities so staying connected to the Local Advisory Committees and Civil Defence related agencies will be important.

A phase approach to developing the Brigade Representative network could look like this, with phase 1 focusing on Brigade Representatives, phase 2 exploring the connection with the Provincials and phase 3 exploring the connection with Local Advisory Committees.



Deliverables

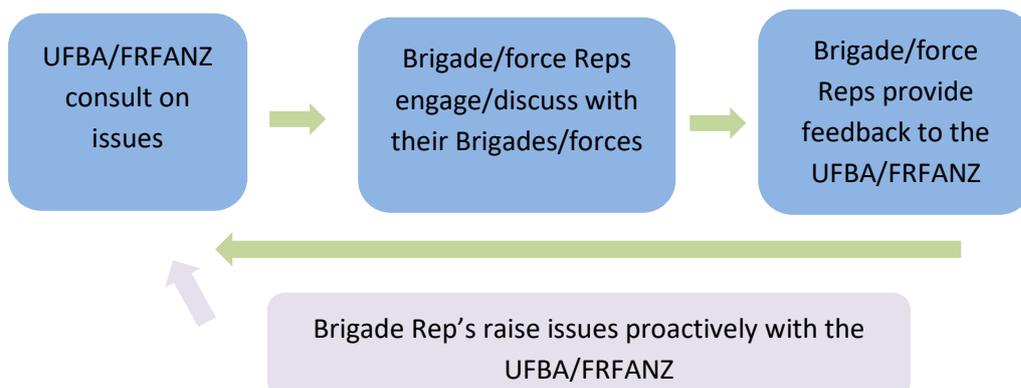
There will be an element of “push” and “pull” within the Brigade Representative network. Some issues will be raised by Brigades through their Representative and other issues will come from FENZ to Brigades for consultation.

Specific deliverables could be:

- monthly agenda of topics (from the UFBA) for Brigades to discuss and provide feedback on (if they wish)
- Brigades feeding issues through to the UFBA (feedback@ufba.org.nz) and FRFANZ that need to be addressed
- bringing representatives together a few times a year (at least within each region) to discuss common issues and challenges.

Information flows

As your advocacy agent, we would like to strengthen how we get information to and from your teams through you or a delegated representative. The UFBA/FRFANZ would like to provide you and your Brigades with an opportunity to have a say in all matters that substantially affect you. This is how it could work below:



Who can be a Brigade Representative?

The representative:

- some one in the Brigade who is a leader or an aspiring leader, has the ear of and support of their enrolled members, able to look at both their local needs *and* understand the national perspective. Also, a key player in your local community and passionate about its safety and sustainability
- doesn't need to be the CFO or DCFO, it is not a hierarchical position but one of true influence both inside and outside the Brigade
- needs to have effective working relationships within the Brigade and be trusted to act on the Brigades behalf
- needs to have the ability to remain objective and not let their own personal views override those of the Brigade
- needs to be invested in and committed to conveying the Brigades views to the UFBA/FRFANZ (either formally or informally). Formally may be via submission for example.

There can only be one representative per Brigade and the UFBA/FRFANZ has a target of having one rep per Brigade. It could be that the Treasurer and/or Secretary is also the representative, or it could be someone else within the Brigade. It's up to each Brigade how they want to nominate their representative.

What is the role of the Brigade Representative?

- they represent the Brigades views as best as possible, which may at times be different to their own personal views
- to fully understand issues within their Brigade and discuss them with the Brigade to determine how they will be communicated back to the UFBA/FRFANZ
- to raise issues identified through the Brigade Representative network at Brigade muster and training meetings and provide feedback to the UFBA/FRFANZ on issues that need further discussion with FENZ/government
- to be a point of contact for the UFBA/FRFANZ to test new ideas and consult with members on
- to liaise with the Volunteer Development Manager to target training needs within their region and work with the UFBA to ensure relevant training is provided
- to receive Brigade Representative emails from the UFBA/FRFANZ and take appropriate action.

Engagement

Volunteers are by nature very busy people, so we will be mindful of your time commitment by providing only key information in summarised formats that are easy to read and understand. Ways that we might engage with you may include:

- inviting Representatives to a regional Brigade Representative meeting (in your region) each year, with agenda items you'd like to discuss
- providing you with a heads up on emerging issues or to point you to key information
- working through Volunteer Development Managers (in each Region) to ensure training is targeted in the right areas in your region
- providing examples of how FENZ changes may affect you/your Brigade or we might seek your advice on how to solve a problem or capture an opportunity at a national level.