

The reform of New Zealand's fire services
**Supporting our members during the transition to
a new unified organisation**



Fire services reform: The devil is in the detail



George Verry, UFBA Chief Executive Officer

On 28 April, the Minister announced further Government decisions on the reform of New Zealand's fire services.

These decisions, together with those the Minister announced at the UFBA Conference last November, set the 'direction of travel' for the newly appointed New Zealand Fire Service Commission Board (the NZFSC Board).

Some of the decisions relate to funding changes, some to the wider mandate and some to the way volunteers will be engaged and organised in the new unified national organisation, **Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)**.

They are high level decisions that set out general principles and approaches—it is for the new Board to fill in the details. *As always, the devil is in the detail.*

Working tirelessly for members

Since the time the UFBA filed our submission in response to the Minister's discussion document last year, we have worked tirelessly with officials in workshops, forums and senior official liaison meetings.

We can say with hand on heart we enjoy the confidence of DIA officials and that we are regarded as a trusted advisor who will deliver on our undertakings.

However, we are but one of many stakeholders whose views have to be taken into account by officials and by Ministers—we have no exclusive rights to policy advice.

Significant wins for members

Through our effective advocacy representing the interests of our members, we have had some significant wins:

- Overall there is a huge increase in funding for volunteer support
- There will be ongoing funding for independent advocacy for volunteers
- There will be provisions for the Board to enter into relationships with independent agencies like the UFBA
- Our high level advice on the leadership capabilities we would expect to see in a reformed environment met with good support.

More questions than answers

Not all of the UFBA recommendations in our submission were accepted.

Government has indicated that urban volunteers will no longer be engaged by way of membership of their local volunteer brigade. Instead they, along with rural volunteers, will be directly engaged by the new organisation.

This immediately raises the question: "What are the terms and conditions of direct engagement?"

A host of other questions follow. Who will volunteers report to under this model? Who will recruit volunteers and maintain their service records? Who will discipline them? What happens to brigade camaraderie and social activities under this model?

It also raises the question of the future status of your independently constituted volunteer brigades.

No one can answer these questions at the moment. The NZFSC Board has met only twice so far and has just started to put its collective mind to the process it will follow to formulate a coherent framework for volunteers in the new organisation.

Slow progress so far

Progress is agonisingly slow—the Transition Committee of the NZFSC Board met for the first time only in mid-May. Anders Crofoot (a member of the Castlepoint Volunteer Rural Fire Force)

has been appointed as an independent member of the Committee. Up to two more independent members are yet to be appointed.

A Transition Programme Director (currently Fraser Fyfe is acting in this position) will be appointed to lead the programme team. A number of groups will report to that position including a transition design team and various stakeholder forums.

The slow appointment process for members of the programme team is frustrating—urgent progress needs to be made on the details to enable the UFBA to advocate effectively for our members.

We are NOT comfortable with direct engagement

Some of you may have seen a recent Facebook forum in which the Chief Executive of the NZFS responded to a series of questions posed by volunteers and career staff.

This was a wide ranging discussion. However, we were concerned at an inference that the UFBA was "comfortable" with the direct engagement model. We note that the Chief Executive went on to suggest a key reason for the change to direct engagement was to make it easier for NZFS management to mediate in volunteer disputes.

To be absolutely clear, the UFBA is **not comfortable** with the direct engagement model given the current level of detail around it.

- We heard the views of volunteers on this subject when we surveyed members on the discussion document
- We submitted against it
- We wrote a strongly worded letter to the DIA transition team setting out our objections when the decision was announced
- We have reserved our position on the matter until such time as the details have been filled in.

Our forebears had similar concerns around direct engagement at the time the creation of a new national urban fire service was under consideration in 1975.

Amongst other things, brigades lacked confidence that an appropriate leadership model would be established to manage the organisation. That is why UFBA officials of the day brokered a deal with Minister Henry May to preserve the relative autonomy and empowerment of community brigades and their leadership in return for supporting the unification of the old metro and district fire boards.

Retention of the volunteer system was intended to be a central feature of those reforms. The Government has left no doubt that this philosophy remains at the core of the current reform programme.

A new way of doing things

We think these reforms offer the possibility of a true reformation of our fire

services. It is for this reason that the UFBA continues to support the reform process.

If we simply transition to a new entity but with the same leadership model and the same cultures intact in the new organisation, the reforms will fail.

It has to be about a completely new way of doing things. That may require us to make some concessions but the end game will be worth it for volunteers and the communities they serve.

A whole-of-sector approach

We feel confident we will be involved as a key stakeholder in determining the details of the changes.

The NZFSC Board is ultimately accountable for putting the new organisation together

and making it work on 'go-live' day.

Reform programmes only succeed if everyone works together to get the changes across the line.

To that end the reforms must ultimately be underpinned by 'whole-of-sector' support. All organisations within the sector must take their lead from the NZFSC Board in order to preserve the whole-of-sector approach. That is the responsible action the UFBA intends to take.

Yes we have some bottom lines. Yes, there are ditches we are prepared to die in. No, we are not even close to that stage.

We will let you know when we are.

This column was first published on the UFBA website www.ufba.org.nz on 9 May 2016.

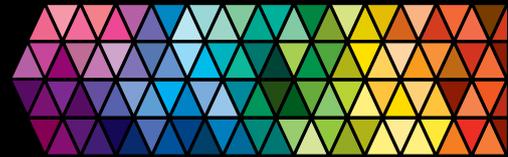
Supporting members: Our recent actions

1. The Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the UFBA along with the Chief Executive of NZFS met with Paul Swain, the Chair of the New Zealand Fire Service Commission, shortly after his appointment.
2. The NZFSC Board and senior leaders held a two-day planning session at the National Training Centre in Rotorua in mid-May. The UFBA prepared a comprehensive paper for the session detailing how we speak for all 400 volunteer fire brigades and many rural fire forces, their members and the communities they serve. We recommended that:
 - The NZFSC Board formulate and promulgate as a matter of the highest priority a statement of the principles the new organisation will apply to its relationships with volunteers
 - The Transition Committee of the NZFSC Board should include one or more independent persons with demonstrated experience and qualifications in volunteer relationships
 - Work on the new terms of engagement with volunteers commence immediately after the NZFSC Board has formulated and promulgated its statement of principles
3. The Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the UFBA met with the NZFSC Board on 17 May and reinforced the key points of our paper prepared for the NZFSC Board's planning session and our recommendations
4. We also presented the UFBA 2016-2017 Business Plan to the NZFSC Board—this seeks for additional resources to advocate for our members' interests during the fire services reform and to support volunteer members e.g. in conflict and dispute resolution. We are waiting for the NZFSC Board's response.
5. Our Patron, Dame Margaret Bazley, met with the UFBA Board on 23 May, giving wise counsel on our future advocacy and actions during the transition to the new unified organisation.
6. A number of rural fire forces belong to FRFANZ (Forest and Rural Fire Association). We are working in partnership with FRFANZ on common interests

Major fire services reform decisions made so far

- A new organisation—Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)—will be in place by 1 July next year
- The new single unified entity will merge 40 organisations—38 rural fire authorities, the National Rural Fire Authority and the New Zealand Fire Service
- Minister Peter Dunne has announced funding of \$303 million over five years to combine urban and rural fire services into one organisation
- The fire levy (paid on insurance for contents, property and motor vehicles) will become the main source of funding replacing a variety of funding sources for rural fire services
- The existing urban and rural fire services workforce, paid and volunteer, will transition into Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- A principles-based dispute resolution scheme will apply to disputes under the new fire legislation, enabling the scheme to respond flexibly to the disputes that may arise.

To keep up-to-date with the fire services reforms visit www.dia.govt.nz/Fire-Services-Transition or www.ufba.org.nz/fire_services_review/actions



The Annual UFBA Conference is a premier event on the fire community calendar and it will be here before you know it.

It's time to lock in the date and start the conversation about the delegate nomination process at a brigade meeting soon.

KEY DATES

8 July	Online registration opens
28 July	Remits and Nominations due into the UFBA Office
23 September	Constitutional AGM Information packs sent to brigades
28 September	Delegate Notification forms due
30 September	Conference registration closes

28-30 OCTOBER 2016
Air Force Museum, Wigram Airbase
Christchurch

NRFA MEMBERS NOW FUNDED

One delegate per UFBA membership from NZFS and NRFA are funded. Military and Industrial brigades are welcome to attend self-funded.

As well as the delegate nomination, there are two Board vacancies, one for the Technical Panel and one for the position of Vice-President. All Nomination and Remit information and forms have been sent to UFBA brigade and rural fire force members.

You can also download the forms at www.ufba.org.nz/events/2016 UFBA 138th Annual Conference

UFBA Road Crash Rescue Challenge season a huge success

After running eight Challenges in five months, the UFBA summer Challenge programme is now complete.

Two greatly successful Regional Road Crash Rescue level events in **Milton** and **Greytown** were followed by the final event of the five month stretch—the National Road Crash Rescue Challenge.

Held in **Inglewood**, Taranaki from 19 to 21 May and hosted by the team at Inglewood Fire Station led by Cameron and Nathan Gillespie, this event was a huge success. Nathan, Past President of the Taranaki Provincial, has a goal to reignite challenges in the province. He hopes to bring more UFBA events to the region to encourage the growth of all four Challenges.

This is a vision the UFBA fully supports. Inglewood and brigades from the surrounding area did a great job at hosting and organising the event—from the great welcoming meal at the station, to the provision of all the gear that we need to put on the Challenge. A particular highlight was the patients they organised. SADD students from the local high school were both keen to learn and helpful patients in the pits.

The help of the Inglewood brigade and the fantastic venue (indoors to protect us from the thunder and lightning storms) meant this was one of the best Challenges of the year. Over three days, 16 teams competed in some of the



Rolleston took first place in the RCR and Trauma Challenges at the Nationals

most competitive car crash and trauma scenarios that we have had.

"It was possibly one of the closest RCR Challenges in the last couple of years," says UFBA Events Manager Ceara Owen-Perry. "All the teams did incredibly well and the scores were really close. In fact, we had to do several countbacks so we could find the clear winners on the day, there was so little in it."

In the end, **Rolleston** came out top of the RCR Challenge closely followed by **Rangiora** and then **Hawera**. In the Trauma Challenge the medics from **Rolleston** claimed first place, with **Geraldine** second and **Feilding** third.

Thanks to our sponsors Chubb Holmatro, a prize pack was awarded to the winning Trauma team and the winners of the individual categories—Best Team Leader (Rolleston), Best Medic (Rolleston) And Best Technical (Rangiora). Holmatro will

also provide the teams selected to attend the Australasian event with two-piece coveralls.

The Australasian Rescue Challenge hosted by ARRO will be held in Warragul, Victoria in July. As per the RCR Challenge rules, UFBA will fund the top two teams from this year's Nationals and the next highest ranking team that has not attended the Australasian event in the last five years to attend this event.

Rolleston, Rangiora and Geraldine will attend this year. This will be the fourth time Rolleston has competed but the first time for Geraldine and Rangiora. Geraldine placed fifth at the Nationals and has been competing for only two years so did well to earn their place.

See the results of the National Road Crash Rescue Challenge at www.ufba.org.nz/events/2016-national-road-crash-rescue

EVENTS

UFBA National Drivers Challenge

Save the date! The 2016 UFBA National Drivers Challenge is on at Ruapuna Park in Canterbury from 19-20 August.

As trialled last year, the two-day format of this event will return and it allows the Challenge to take on more entrants than in previous years, offering the capacity for 100 individual competitors.

With the introduction of two new categories within the Challenge rules, the Technical Panel believe that the maximum number will be reached in no time.

"Annually, we attend tens of thousands of incidents. I'd love to see this Challenge reach maximum competitor numbers to help ensure we get to and from these incidents safely," says UFBA Challenges Committee Chair Nigel Lilley.

"With the Technical Panel adding the two new categories, I believe we are on the right track to achieve that."

An equal chance at winning

Being an individually competitive event not only ranks you against your fellow firefighter fraternity, but it gives everyone an equal chance at winning—including those that have never competed before.

To further recognise and encourage new competitors, the Technical Panel has now added a 'Rookie' category. All first time National Drivers Challenge entrants will be automatically entered into this category and should you win as a first timer, you'll get national bragging rights for a year and a certificate to show for your accomplishment.

New Team Aggregate category

The Technical Panel has also introduced the 'Team Aggregate' category. Similar to the UFBA Firefighter Combat Challenge, this category lets you form a team of three to five members from within the same brigade. The top three placing team members' aggregate overall penalties are then calculated to determine placings for this category, giving your brigade the chance to achieve a status that has never before been attainable.

Hone your driving skills

If you've never been to a Drivers Challenge before, the event kicks off with a pre-drive test—a short driving competency test serving as a familiarisation with the appliances alongside a qualified NZFS driving instructor.

All competitors then sit a written theory test in a classroom setting which is based on the Heavy Traffic Class 2 road code and other fireground practices. This is scored and the points contribute to your overall scores and placings.

The practical part of the Challenge takes you through a set of exercises specifically designed to replicate day-to-day manoeuvres of the appliance, including parallel and bay parking, shrinking chicanes, lane changes and emergency braking.

There is no better way to hone your driving skills

than with a hands-on experience, both on the road and in a controlled and supervised environment. The learning outcomes of this event are second to none and are essential to your individual self, your brigade and your community. And remember, taking part in a UFBA Drivers Challenge can serve as your ERD revalidation if it is either overdue or up for renewal in the next two years.

UFBA members funded

If you are a current member of a brigade or rural fire force that is a member of the UFBA, you are funded for travel, accommodation and meals for the duration of the National Drivers Challenge.

Save the date now and keep an eye out for registration information hitting your station's mailbox in June.

Keep up-to-date about the UFBA National Drivers Challenge at www.ufba.org.nz/events/2016_national_drivers_challenge



United Fire Brigades' Association
DRIVERSCHALLENGE



Geraldine will attend the Australasian Rescue Challenge for the first time this year

Events Calendar

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 21-24 July | Australasian Rescue Challenge, Warragul, Victoria, Australia |
| 19-20 August | National Drivers Challenge, Ruapuna, Canterbury |
| 6-8 October | UFBA Leadership and Governance Workshop, Wellington |
| 28-30 October | UFBA 138th Annual Conference & AGM, Christchurch
<i>Building Strong Foundations</i> |

We remember dedicated firefighters

Anzac Day is taking on much more meaning as we recall events of the First World War 100 years ago.

Not forgotten are contributions made by firefighters: fit young men, ever-eager to help their community and country, well-used to working in a disciplined team who thus made ideal recruits for the Army.

At the end of hostilities most brigades—like **Feilding**—erected an Honours Board. Many brigades found they had one member whose experiences at the front were extraordinary.

Dedicated firefighters

Feilding Brigade unveiled an Honours Board with names of 32 members who had served, notable because the brigade normally comprised about 20 firefighters, so some replacement recruits must have signed up soon after joining.

Of the 32, nine members paid the supreme sacrifice, killed in action. In June 1919, the Mayor led a presentation of service awards to those whose UFBA honours had accumulated while they were away at the War.

Many men were to continue their membership in the brigade but some retired through injury and sickness suffered overseas. Thanked, too, were those men who filled the ranks, replacing those who went abroad, ensuring an active brigade throughout the War.

Outstanding firefighter

Feilding's remarkable individual was Fireman **Alfred John Shoebridge**, a 28

year old carpenter working for well-known Manawatu farmer, Ernest Short, when he enlisted soon after the outbreak of war in August 1914. He went to Gallipoli with the Wellington Infantry Battalion and, in the now-celebrated pre-dawn battle, helped secure the Spur on Chunuk Bair on 8 August 1915.

But the Turks retaliated at daybreak. Shoebridge became separated from his troop and tried to walk back to the British camp on the beach. A Turkish sniper picked out the lone soldier and shot him, shattering Shoebridge's right arm. Though he surrendered, he was lined up against a wall to be summarily executed, shot. The Turks took him prisoner instead and he was posted as 'missing in action' until some weeks later when was found in a Prisoner of War camp by the American Ambassador in Constantinople.

This contact through the US Embassy proved useful. The 1916 UFBA Conference, made aware of Fireman Corporal Shoebridge's incarceration, took up a collection for him. The seven pounds gathered, matched by his own brigade, was sent to the Ambassador to give to Shoebridge. Prisoners could buy food, but at fantastically inflated war-time prices.

The captive was treated harshly. "Turkish guards reckoned the British mis-treated their prisoners so we were in for pay-back". Conditions were rough, discipline barbaric, the winter severe, food was scarce, facilities unsanitary, and injuries, such as Shoebridge's, went unattended.

Shoebridge was transferred to another



POW camp at Psamitlia. "By now doctors had examined my arm more than 20 times, but still no proper medical attention to my shattered, protruding humerus".

Escape via exchange

As luck would have it, some inmates from this prison were considered for exchange with Turkish prisoners held by the Allies. In January 1918, Shoebridge was on his way to London, and medical help, as an exchange prisoner. It was a circuitous journey through Bulgaria, Serbia, and Austria. "That was when progress came to halt for several months. We had to wait while Turkish exchange prisoners recovered from disease".

The journey resumed by train through Switzerland and France and then to England. "As Allied soldiers we were hated as we travelled behind the lines, locked in our transport out of sight, but in France we were welcomed as heroes!"

England ... and home

Once in England, Shoebridge began a long series of operations and treatment for his arm in military hospitals, the first proper surgery in more than two years since he was shot. He was also sought out by Military Intelligence—as one of the first prisoners released by the Turks to reach London he had valuable information from behind enemy lines, including the results of Allied air-raids on Constantinople.

Alfred Shoebridge returned to New Zealand in mid-1918 for further medical treatment. Military doctors declared him disabled because of his wounds which had gone untreated for many months while he was POW. Fireman Shoebridge re-connected with his brigade in Feilding (and Palmerston North with whom he had earlier served) where he received UFBA Service Honours.

Alfred Shoebridge had been the only New Zealand firefighter who was taken prisoner of war. He died in Christchurch in August 1919, aged 33. The cause of death was "pneumonia following surgery for wounds received on active service".



A view of troops landing from ships' boats on to the beach at Anzac Cove on 25 April 1915. The photographer was in the Wellington Battalion. Photo courtesy of Wairarapa Archive, 14-50/2

SERVICE HONOURS

Congratulations to the following members who received 50 Year and Gold Star medals up to 31 March.

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

50 Year Medals

Napier BROCK Noel

Napier
Waikanae
Waikanae
Warkworth

Gold Stars

Lake Tekapo
Mangonui

BULL Michael
ROBINSON Eric
TINNEY Alan
AITKEN Gary

GREEN Andrew
BARCLAY Leslie

Maramarua
Maramarua
Napier
Paeroa
Portland
Raglan
Taneatua
Warkworth

COLE Howard
IRVINE Bryan
BICKERS Matt
JACKSON Paul
ANDERSON Peter
GILSHNAN David
BLACK Daniel
AITKEN Peter

NEW ZEALAND HONOURS

UFBA congratulates the recipients of New Zealand Honours who were recognised for their services to the NZFS and their communities at Government House in Wellington on 14 April.

From left: UFBA Chairman Rick Braddock, President Russell Anderson, Membership Support Manager Jane Davie, Kevin Drummond QSM (Waiuku), Tony Groome MNZM (Feilding), David Allerton QSM (Urenui), Jim Ryburn MNZM (Christchurch), Bernie Rush MNZM (Whanganui) and UFBA Chief Executive Officer George Verry.

Darren Wright MNZM (Sumner) was recognised for services to the community on 12 April.



Photo: New Zealand Fire Service

Exam update

From Brendon Wood, NZFBI President

The format for the New Zealand Fire Brigades' Institute (NZFBI) examinations is changing.

If you are midway through a qualification there is no better time to finish it off and get the recognition it affords. If you have previously sat NZFBI papers but have not yet passed enough units to reach a qualification tier, then I would recommend you take advantage of the transition period between structures to finish your Diploma.

This means if you have less than four units (some of which can be cross-credited from TAPS) for Associate, less than seven units for Member (further cross-credits may apply) or not having passed all nine for Fellow, you will need to sit additional papers to reach the grade.

Remember, you can sit up to three papers a year and this is the second to last year for qualifying under the old structure.

Just download an application form from www.ufba.org.nz, claim any cross-credits and apply for additional papers under the 'current student' list. Syllabi and reading lists are also available online.

Examination centres will be confirmed once **applications close on 1 August** and suitable locations identified. This year, the exam date is **Saturday 3 September**.

If you are interested in starting your NZFBI qualifications, the new structure is up and running and the syllabi and reading lists online.

The new Associate paper is one two-hour exam of multichoice and long answer questions. This is aimed at QFF level and is seen as a culmination and consolidation of your TAPS learning.



The Member Diploma is SFF level and provides the candidate the opportunity to display a greater understanding of fire and rescue skills and present a professional and educated image. This requires a more focused effort to sit and pass four papers over two years, with some additional learning alongside.

The new Fellow Diploma applies only to candidates under the new structure and will apply from next year at the earliest.

Good luck to you all, I look forward to signing your New Zealand Fire Brigades' Institute Diploma.

For more about the NZFBI exam structure visit www.ufba.org.nz/nzfb/exams

Applications close on **1 August** and the exams will be held on **3 September** and. For application forms see www.ufba.org.nz/nzfb/exams/applications

NZFS Sportsperson of the Year

On 16 March, the New Zealand Fire Service Commission presented the NZFS Sportsperson of the Year Award to firefighter/paddlesports athlete **Anne Cairns** for her outstanding achievements in 2015.

Anne, a Qualified Firefighter at Palmerston North Station, is off to the Rio Olympics this year to represent Samoa in the K1 200 event.

On congratulating Anne for her sporting achievements, Rt Hon Wyatt Creech (former Fire Service Commission Chair) said the Fire Service is particularly proud of her efforts. Anne joins a number of previous award winners, whose names are embellished on the Sports Council board at National Headquarters.



Anne Cairns with, from left, Boyd Atkinson (Vice Chairman Sports Council), National Commander Paul Baxter, Jamie Molenaar (Secretary Sports Council), Rt Wyatt Creech, Warren Dunn (Chairman Sports Council)



Strengthen vital life skills

Leadership & Governance Workshop

Strong leadership is key to us working together to deliver vital services to our local communities. Enhance your leadership skills at this fully interactive 2.5 day workshop.

- Learn from leading experts in the field
- Develop new leadership and coaching techniques
- Gain valuable insights into the key elements of governance
- Strengthen your professional development
- Great for your personal life, career and fire service

UFBA manages and covers the cost of travel arrangements, accommodation and meals. Find out more at www.ufba.org.nz/events/leadership_governance_workshop_Oct16

If you are interested in attending or nominating someone for the next UFBA Leadership & Governance Workshop from **6-8 October** in Wellington (spaces are limited), email **Hayley** at hayley@ufba.org.nz

firefighters helping firefighters
Awhi atu awhi mai



For all people involved in firefighting: rural, volunteer and paid staff as well as administrative staff.

Benefits:

Holiday & Convalescent Homes	In Hospital TV Rental
Discretionary Loans & Grants	Hospital Parking
Corrective Lens Benefit	Assistance with out of town travel costs for medical visits
Hearing Aid Benefit	Home Help
Birth of a Child Benefit	Counseling
Gift Baskets	Disaster Fund
In Hospital Visits	Child Adoption Assistance
Home Visits	Funeral Assistance

www.firefighters.org.nz **AON**

Availability and messaging system

From NZFS

The Fire Service has now evaluated the vendor responses for the Availability and Messaging System (AMS).

A business case will be presented to Project Governance Committee for funding approval, with SLT sign-off in early June. If funding is approved, a contract will be finalised with the preferred vendor. Once that's completed, the design, planning and implementation stages will begin.

In the meantime, current software and support licenses for brigades using VACS have been extended until the end of June 2016.

New UFBA staff member

The UFBA welcomes **Victoria Scirkovich** to our Office team. Victoria has joined us for one year while our Fire Shop Administrator Megan Leggett is away on parental leave.

Congratulations to Megan and her family who welcomed a baby girl in April!

You can reach Victoria on the main UFBA line at 04 237 0265, or email her at Victoria@ufba.org.nz

Welcome to the team Victoria! For more about our team and contact details, visit www.ufba.org.nz/about/our_people/office_staff

Connect

We'd love to hear from you. Share your news or information, contact:

news@ufba.org.nz

Engage

Be the first to hear 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:

membershipsupport@ufba.org.nz

