



**U.F.B.A**  
UNITED FIRE BRIGADES'  
ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND

**DRAFT AGM MINUTES – FOR APPROVAL BY MEMBERSHIP AT 2026 AGM**

**MINUTES**

**Minutes of the 147<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the United Fire Brigades' Association (Inc)  
held at Te Pae Conference Centre, Christchurch and Live Streamed via the UFBA Website  
Friday 7 November 2025**

***Apologies:***

The following apologies were received:

LHM Sandy Lawson	LHM Peter Lockery
LHM Don Roper	Past President Peter Guard
LHM Peter Drummond	Past President Erick Speck
Past President Bary Bridges	Past President Brian Watters
Past President Ian Lindsay	Past President John Grenfell
LHM George Verry	Past President Brian Stanley

The President of the UFBA Jeffery Manson welcomed dignitaries, past presidents, life honorary members, delegates and observers.

Following a Karakia by CEO Bill Butzbach, and the National Anthem, the UFBA Board Chair officially declared open the 147<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the United Fire Brigades' Association at 1306 hours.

***Theme of Conference***

The theme of the 2025 Conference is “Responding to Tomorrow”.

***Quorum***

The Chair stated that Quorum had been met as verified by our auditors Grant Thornton, enabling AGM business to be conducted. 342 Delegates; 17 proxy votes. A majority vote of 50% + 1 is 181

***Obituaries***

The delegation was upstanding for a Moments Silence to acknowledge and remember those who have passed.

Below is the official obituary list:

Rank	First Name	Surname	Brigade
Retired Firefighter	Penelope (Penny)	Campbell	Albury Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Firefighter	Trevor	Harrison	Alexandra Volunteer Fire Brigade

Retired Firefighter	John	Wilson	Alexandra Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Firefighter	Larry (Tolly)	Tolliday	Auckland Fire District
Station Officer	Matthew	Walker	Auckland Operational Support Unit
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Trevor	Todd	Balclutha Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Gaynor	Mercer	Bunnythorpe Volunteer Fire Brigade
Volunteer Support Officer	Tony	Jones	Canterbury Fire District
Communicator	David (Bars)	Barham	Central Fire Communications Centre
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Murray	Casey	Cheltenham Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Operational Support Member	Ray	Duncan	Cheviot Volunteer Fire Brigade
Senior Firefighter	Carl	Whiten	Christchurch Fire Brigade
Senior Firefighter	Blair	Halder	Clutha Valley Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Alfred (Ray)	Johnstone	Cust Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Station Officer	Harold (Grant)	Clarkson	Dunedin Fire Brigade
	Edward (Ross, Bosun)	Walker	Dunedin Fire Brigade
Retired Qualified Firefighter	David (Ian)	Mitchell	Dunedin Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Kevin	Reid	Dunedin Fire Brigade
Retired Senior Firefighter	Kelvin	Mercer	Feilding Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	John	Story	Foxton Beach Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Steven	Payne	Geraldine Volunteer Fire Brigade
Operational Support Firefighter	J N (Noel)	Kennedy	Gore Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Kerry	Eggeling	Haast Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Rural Controller	Brian (Thomo)	Thompson	Hamilton Fire Brigade
Retired Senior Firefighter	John	Woolley	Hamilton Fire Brigade
Retired Officer	James (Jim)	Hutchinson	Haumoana Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Christopher	Dear	Haumoana Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Ian	Dudley	Hawera Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Graeme	Day (Daisy)	Hawkes Bay Fire District
Retired Member	Craig	Jamieson	Hawke's Bay Fire District
Retired Member	Ron	Turton	Huntry Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Terry	Foreman	Inglewood Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Terry	Griffiths	Inglewood Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Paul	Richardson	Invercargill Fire Brigade
Retired OS Senior Station Officer	Neville	Checketts	Invercargill Fire Brigade
		Price QSM, QFSM,	
Brigade Life Honorary Member	L. Neill	JP	Kaiapoi Volunteer Fire Brigade
OS Senior Station Officer	Geoffrey	Mayal QSM	Kaikohe Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	David (Squid)	McKenzie	Kaitaia Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Support	Peter	Gibson	Karamea Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Stephen	McLennan	Lincoln Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	John	Taylor	Manaiia Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	William	Edwards	Manutuke Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Gerry	Ireland	Methven Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Peter	Keillor	Mossburn Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Gordon	Dixon	Motueka Volunteer Fire Brigade
Firefighter	Bruce	Tait	Motunau Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Senior Firefighter	Kevin	Smith	Napier Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Douglas	Ramsey	Napier Fire Brigade
OS Firefighter	Alan	Parkes	Napier Operational Support Unit
Retired Senior Firefighter	John	Mackey	New Plymouth Fire Brigade

Retired Commandant	Lloyd	Johns	New Zealand Fire Service College
Retired Commissioner	Brian	Hyland OBE QFSM	
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Michael	FIFE	New Zealand Fire Service Commission
Senior Firefighter	Robert (Rob)	Goomes	Oban Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Samuel	Walden	Okaiawa Volunteer Fire Brigade
Operational Support Firefighter	Georgina (Georgie)	Leask JP	Omakau Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Qualified Firefighter	Bruce	Robertson	Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	John (JR)	Dyson	Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Firefighter	David	Rogers	Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Norm	McClunie	Oneroa Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Senior Firefighter	Kevin	Lewis	Otago Fire District
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Maurice	Reid	Otaki Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Chris	King	Otaki Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	John	George	Paeroa Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Wayne	McKain	Paraparaumu Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Donald	Sarjeant QSM	Porangahau Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Mike	Steele	Putaruru Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	David	Glentworth	Raetihi Volunteer Fire Brigade
	John	Griffin	Rolleston Volunteer Fire Brigade
Firefighter	Sam	Savin	Shelly Beach Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Donald	Johnson	Southbridge Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Control Room Operator	Vicki	McMillan	Southern Fire Communications Centre
Rural Firefighter	Justine	Ryalls	Springs Junction Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Senior Station Officer	Colin	Kelly	Stratford Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Mervyn	Quay	Taihape Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Terry	O'Connor	Te Aroha Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Firefighter	Bruce	Gray	Te Aroha Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Warwick (Wacky)	Avery	Te Atatu Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Deputy Chief Fire Officer	Russell	Thompson	Tikokino Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Fire Police Captain	John	Lumb	Titirangi Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Kimbo	Munns	Turua Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Alfred	Stirling	Waiheke Island Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	George	Herbert-Jones	Waiheke Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Moe	Scott	Waihi Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Laurie	Stevens	Waikanae Volunteer Fire Brigade
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Bernard (Bernie)	Whitburn	Waikanae Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Chief Fire Officer	Carey	Sundgren	Wairoa Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Senior Station Officer	Jeff	Gregory	Waitemata Fire District
Retired Senior Firefighter	Greg	Mills	Waitemata Fire District
Volunteer Support Officer	Mike (Sooty)	Sharp	Waitemata Fire District
Retired Senior Firefighter	James (Jim)	Barratt	Ward Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Bruce	West	Warkworth Volunteer Fire Brigade
Retired Member	Ross	Wilson	Wellington Fire District
Retired Senior Firefighter	Murray	Bridgeman	Wellington Fire District
Retired Senior Firefighter	Steven	Tonks	Wellington Fire District
Brigade Life Honorary Member	Sid	Tooley	Wellington Fire District
Retired Member	Trevor	Leabourn	Whakatane Volunteer Fire Brigade
Senior Firefighter	Peter (Grassy)	Gibson QSM	Whanganui Fire Brigade
Retired Station Officer	Keith	Mangin	Whitianga Volunteer Fire Brigade
		Whitson	Wyndham Volunteer Fire Brigade

***The UFBA Chair, the Hon. Peter Dunne addressed the Delegation:***

This is another large AGM turn out, continuing the trend that's been prominent over the last few years. The growth in numbers is a huge tribute to the work of all of our brigade representatives and our permanent staff who have worked so strongly throughout the year to keep our individual brigades and members fully in touch with our activities. It also speaks volumes for the strength of our association and the commitment of so many of you from around the country who have worked so hard to develop a meeting and conference programme that attracts such a wide response. My heartfelt thanks to all of you.

I want to give a special welcome to the first-time delegates and observers who are here today. You are the future of the UFBA, and we need your support and involvement alongside the work you do in your local brigades, to ensure our organisation continues to prosper and grow in the years ahead. I'm looking forward to your participation over the next few days, alongside that of the more familiar faces who we welcome back once more. I also greet those of you who are watching via our live stream.

We have received apologies from past presidents and life honorary members who were unable to attend today but hopefully are watching from home, I welcome you as well. I also acknowledge the video message that we have received from the Minister of Internal Affairs, which will be played tomorrow. And I just want to say that, Minister, we appreciate the interest you show in our work, and we enjoy working with you and your colleagues to advance the issues that matter to volunteer firefighters.

Before I move to the bulk of my remarks, I'd like to give a special acknowledgement to our patron, Dave McFarlane QSM, who is with us today and will be addressing us shortly. Dave is standing down as Patron this year after a lengthy career of service to firefighting in New Zealand. Alongside his professional career, Dave has had the distinction of serving on both the Boards of the New Zealand Fire Service and the UFBA. He is also a former president of the UFBA. I've had the pleasure of knowing Dave for many years and have always appreciated his wise counsel. I will miss that, and I wish Dave well for the future.

Let me now introduce the members of our Board. Deputy Chair Kevin Ihaka. Kevin is the Managing Director of Forest Protection Services, based in Whangarei and brings extensive experience in fighting wildfires across New Zealand, Australia, Canada and North America. Kevin was previously Chair of the Forest and Rural Fire Association of New Zealand and was first appointed to the UFBA Board in 2019, then reappointed in March 2023.

Tom Thompson, ONZM Tom was appointed to the Board of 2019. He is a former executive member of the Forest and Rural Fire Association of New Zealand. He is deputy controller of the Motunau Rural Fire Brigade and the managing director of Elastomer Products. Tom is chair of the Board's Audit and Risk Committee.

Jason Prendergast Jason was elected to the Board of 2021. He is a past President of the UFBA and is well known to you all. He supports our volunteers on the West Coast as a Volunteer Support Officer for Fire and Emergency New Zealand. He is a long serving and senior official of our challenges, and he makes a valuable and conscientious contribution to the Board's deliberations.

Howard Cole. Howard was elected in 2022. He has extensive experience with wildfire and is the Chief Fire Officer of the Maramarua Volunteer Fire Brigade

. He is the managing director of three dairy farms in the Waikato, a former executive member of the Forest and Rural Fire Association of New Zealand and he has been on the UFBA Membership Advisory Panel.

Karl Scragg. Karl was elected in 2024. He's the Chief Fire Officer of the Manutuke Volunteer Fire Brigade and a former President of the East Coast Provincial Fire Brigades Association. Karl brings significant experience in community groups and Civil Defence and Emergency Management to the Board and makes a strong contribution.

Our two interns, Kaye Ahsam from Northland and Duncan Tabor from Wellington, have made a positive contribution to our work over the last 15 months and I thank them for that.

I also want to acknowledge President Jeff Manson and Vice President Lesina Walden. I will say a little more about both of them later on.

To the Board, Dave, Jeff and Lesina, I expressed my thanks and appreciation for your contribution and support during the year. You have all served the Association well and we are lucky to have that commitment. To our

dedicated professional staff, lead so ably by Bill Butzbach, our Chief Executive, thank you too for all your commitment and service throughout this year. As a team, you have shown an inspiring devotion to duty which constantly leaves me in awe of the hard work that you put in on our behalf to ensure that the UFBA always operates to the highest standards of professionalism.

The theme of this year's conference is Responding to Tomorrow. And it's an important opportunity for this organisation to review and take hold of the challenges before us. Although the UFBA has almost 150 years of service to its members, making it deservedly one of the country's most respected and credible membership organisations. We must not sit on our laurels. Together, we need to use our cumulative wisdom and experience to best advantage to ensure that our best years are before us. Our emphasis must be constantly future focused. Promoting always the interests of our members, our volunteers especially, and working collaboratively with Fire and Emergency New Zealand, to achieve the most effective organisation and utilisation of fire and emergency services across the country. We must play a role in wider issues relating to future Emergency Management issues and the shaping of the national response. As last year's Hidden in Plain Sight report noted the monetary contribution and value of volunteers' efforts is currently the equivalent of more than \$820 million a year right across the country. We have a responsibility to use our collective value and experience to help shape the policy and operational responses of the future and to play a part in their implementation.

Responding to tomorrow is therefore about doing what we can to build greater levels of resilience in all aspects of our Emergency Management response. An important part of building that future resilience is ensuring our members health and safety is protected when they are responding to incidents. In that regard, the UFBA continues to promote moves to change the Accident Compensation legislation, so that volunteers receive the same rehabilitation support, compensation, health and safety cover as employed firefighters do when they are injured on duty.

The current situation where volunteer firefighters who attend the bulk of emergency incidents and are therefore exposed to the greatest cumulative risk are treated less favourably than their employed counterparts is simply wrong and unjust. Both the current Government and its predecessor have so far shown themselves unwilling to act in resolving this injustice, apparently fearing erroneously do so would open the door to all community volunteers to claim similar coverage.

This is a mistaken view. Our concern is about treating emergency service volunteers the same as employed staff when they contract ongoing illnesses because of their exposure to potentially toxic substances in the course of their response to emergency incidents. Earlier this year we were pleased to assist Queenstown Firefighter Katherine Lamont in promoting her parliamentary petition to change the law to ensure equal ACC treatment for volunteer firefighters. That petition received around 36,000 signatures and was presented to Parliament in May. The UFBA and Katherine recently appeared before Parliament's Education and Workforce Select Committee in support of the petition, and we are now awaiting its findings.

In the meantime, the Labour Party has prepared a Members' Bill to change the ACC legislation the way we are seeking. We welcome that initiative. Although we note there is no guarantee that the Bill would be drawn from the ballot for introduction to Parliament as a non-government Bill, nor that it will attract sufficient votes to pass, should it be introduced. Nevertheless, Katherine Lamont's petition has done much to raise the profile of this issue with the public and with Members of Parliament alike, and to increase the pressure on the Government to act to resolve the current injustice. The UFBA thanks Katherine for her commitment, determination and her work on this important issue. It shows what passion and commitment combined with the professional skills of the UFBA, working constructively together can achieve.

As we look to the future the UFBA's most important relationship will continue to be with Fire and Emergency New Zealand. Over the last few years, this relationship has been strengthening and moving on to a more even basis. While we will always be two separate organisations with our own perspectives and differences. There is far more about the work we do that unites us than divides us. The Board took a very strong message from last year's AGM that members want to see our two organisations working constructively together on issues where we can.

This year we have worked very hard at Board and Management levels to enhance this relationship and to collaborate more on dealing positively with the issues that matter. Together we have been developing a new Volunteer Engagement Model, which we expect to be finally agreed and released soon.

The UFBA and FENZ have also been formulating a new strategic relationship agreement to both recognise our partnership and set out the basis of how we will work together in the future. That agreement will most likely be formalised tomorrow. On both counts, the process we have followed has been based on good faith. No surprises or threats. The UFBA will continue dealing with FENZ on this basis. And we will expect the same in return. That is consistent with the UFBA's guiding motto, Kia kaha, kia Kotahi ra, our unity is our strength.

Various official reviews of Emergency Management practises and responses have been continuing in the wake of recent cyclones and subsequent adverse weather events. Many of these have pointed to an adequate operational preparedness and resourcing. But few have acknowledged the critical role and volunteers played in those responses. So far, they have all appeared to overlook the reality that without the volunteer component, there would have been no response. Yet none of the official reviews has sought input from the UFBA or volunteers, and there has been limited input sought from FENZ nor has the government's remarkably well funded principal advisor, the National Emergency Management Authority, sought any discussion with the UFBA Board. Whether it is by oversight or design that omission is a serious mistake. Our volunteers practical experience is invaluable, and their input should be a critical part of shaping the future national response. Therefore, we say to the government and various reviewing agencies that without meaningful consultation with volunteers who know the situation on the ground, there is a real risk of reinventing the wheel. So please come and talk to us. We do not need another Emergency Management organisation, our volunteers already provide that response. What we need is better training and resourcing for them to be able to continue to do so safely and effectively for their communities.

The incidence of wildfires, both nationally and internationally has become far more pronounced since FENZ was established in 2017. Even hotter summers have seen major wildfire outbursts across the world. Greece, Portugal, California, Canada, Australia and New Zealand to name a few. New Zealand firefighters continue to play their part in assisting to deal with these incidents. At their meeting earlier this year, the leaders of the G7 group of nations, supported by the leaders of India, Australia, Mexico, South Korea and South Africa. Establish the Kananaskis Wildfire Charter. This charter commits the member countries to take steps to prevent and mitigate the occurrence of wildfires through a wide-ranging whole of society approach. It focuses on promoting scientific research, data collection, establishing early warning systems, sharing knowledge and interoperability, and ensuring best access to modern firefighting equipment.

Last July, Tāngata Matatau, which the UFBA had established in 2019 as an independent peak body to provide a voice for all those groups with an interest in Emergency Management but who currently fought outside the FENZ structure, held an initial conference on the future management of risk, fire risk and forest in rural environments.

More than 120 representatives of forest and rural contractors, FENZ, local government, conservation and science participated. This was the first time in a decade that all these groups had come together to start to develop the future strategies necessary to deal with the emerging challenges of greater wildfire risk alongside climate change generally.

The UFBA was very pleased with the outcome and through Tāngata Matatau is now working with FENZ on the steps needed to address the issues that were raised at that conference.

We were especially pleased that FENZ that have previously been very wary of Tāngata Matatau as a potential challenge as it thought to its authority, not only chose to attend the conference, but also played a very constructive role within it. This further demonstrated the partnership the UFBA and FENZ can provide when we work together. It showed that when we do so, we can achieve effective change. On both that front and the issue of future emergency service planning, the UFBA is more than ready and willing to engage in those discussions, based in no small part on recognising the needs and abilities of communities and their volunteers and I might say the role that some of us played in the establishment of FENZ.

After a challenging few years, the UFBA's financial position has stabilised due to no small part to the decision of last year's AGM to adopt the Board's recommendation to increase the brigade levy. As a result of that, along with increased earnings from investments, reductions in administration expenditure, our accounts are showing a small surplus at the end of the September quarter. That is a pleasing result. But there are still some significant challenges ahead. For example, the call on our advocacy services increased during the year and will almost certainly exceed our current budget provision. Also, the demand for UFBA honours is running ahead of the budget allowance and it's further complicated by increasing uncertainty over the international gold price. On top

of that, rising house insurance premium costs, causing many people to review, reduce and in some cases stop their insurance cover altogether. That's already leading to a drop in the insurance levy revenue that funds FENZ and therefore can be expected in time to adversely impact on FENZ's commitments funding wise to the UFBA. And then I add the announcement in recent days of FENZ wanting to prune its expenditure by around \$50 million a year to meet some of the requests from government. For all those reasons. The UFBA is seeking to diversify its income stream, including commercialising some of our activities so that the UFBA becomes less reliant on FENZ's funding in the future.

Overall, consistent with its constitutional responsibility to prudently manage the UFBA's business in the interest of the membership, the Board will continue the fiscally cautious approach it is adopted to date, and we will not make rash decisions that could affect our future viability. We are acutely aware that our primary obligation is not only to uphold UFBA's past legacy and meet the needs of our members today, but also to lay the platform on which our successors can take the organisation forward in the future.

These are some of the key challenges we face as we take on that challenge of responding to tomorrow and as we seek to ensure that the UFBA continues to play its role prominently and effectively. We are already ready, and willing to do all we can to ensure that the voice of volunteers is both clearly heard and strongly influential on the important issues ahead. But as we do so, we must never forget that our greatest resource is our people. The volunteers who tirelessly serve our communities and who work so hard to keep them safe. You are always on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, rain, hail or shine. You're not constricted by shifts or days off. There's no such thing as a roster for you. Rather, there's a passion and a commitment, which means you always respond when called out, whatever the circumstances or the personal inconvenience.

That extraordinary commitment is made possible and strengthened by your families who support and encourage you. Every one of you would have endured disruptive family occasions to enable your partner, sibling, parent or child answer the community's call. So, we owe the UFBA families a mighty thank you and a huge debt of gratitude for enabling you to serve your communities the way you do. Your employers, who stand by you when you were called out, also play an important unspoken role which must be acknowledged.

So, I thank you employers for your ongoing support and understanding. Personally, I continue to regard it as a huge privilege to be involved with such a committed, highly skilled and uncomplaining group of people as our members.

Therefore, please enjoy the next few days of camaraderie and learning. I look forward to catching up with many of you over that time. And I wish all of you. Every success for the future.

No reira, tena koutu, tena tatou katoa.

#### ***Confirmation of the 2024 AGM minutes***

**MOTION:** That the minutes from the 2024 AGM which are on the UFBA website, are true and correct as confirmed and adopted by the UFBA Board on the 29 January 2025, in accordance with UFBA Constitution 6.1 (b)(i).

**Moved:** CFO Steer - Pauanui Volunteer Fire Brigade  
**Seconded:** CFO Austin Kaitangata Volunteer Fire Brigade

The motion was **CARRIED**.

Let the minutes show that the Minutes of the 2024 AGM are adopted, and true and correct.

#### **UFBA CEO Update**

Kia ora koutou,

It has been another busy year for your association, and I am pleased to be here to share with you a few highlights of our work and achievement this past year.

Our membership has never been more engaged or more active, your influence is being felt across the sector, and it's inspiring to see so many of you stepping forward as candidates for Board Director and Vice President positions. That's leadership in action. It's how we ensure that the volunteer voice in our movement remains

strong, resilient, diverse, and future-focused because it is incumbent on us to prepare for the future for those that follow.

For many years, the UFBA has been working to secure fairness and equity for volunteer firefighters across a range of areas. Peter touched on the ACC legislation, my sense is that we've reached a significant milestone this year. The Hon. Kieran McNulty produced a member's bill developed with our input. And it's now in the ballot. I also want to acknowledge the work of Katherine Lamont, who supported by the UFBA team once again highlighted, this to the public and drew tremendous support and Katherine's efforts spoke loudly to me about the power of the members actually having a voice out there. Because on many occasions your voice is far more powerful than mine and Peter's because you're the people. You are the reality of what's out there, in the field. The job isn't done yet. And when that ballot is drawn. It's really important that we keep pressure on the MPs and this is a bit of a call to action really to you. This makes sure that Parliament understands what fairness really looks like for you. Our voice is strongest when we're all fronting up for the same cause at the same time to the decision makers, so very soon we'll be reaching out to through our brigade reps' network, brigade leaders and various forums. We will give you a script so that you can go and visit your local MPs because when they're all sitting around the house, we want them to remember your words and vote in the right direction.

I talked with Kieran McNulty the other week and pointed out to me that within the Labour caucus there's broad support for this change of legislation. He and Camilla Belich are working very hard at the moment. to make sure that this becomes Labour policy in their manifesto for next year. That is also another positive, but they're not there yet. I'm confident that the in time the changes will be made.

I speak now to the productivity of our team over the last year, we've been really busy. I'll mention a few statistics for the 2024/25 year:

- 4,302 awards recognising service and achievement.
- 114 ACC top-ups to support injured volunteers.
- 130 new advocacy and support cases.
- 869 competitors across our Challenge events. (25%)
- Workshops for more than 100 members on governance and accounting.
- And over 450 users accessing our new video resource library for brigade secretaries and treasurers.

Behind those figures are thousands of engaged members who demonstrate what our collective strength is all about.

We've also made some real gains in how the volunteer perspectives are heard and act on through our networked approach. And above all else, our voice must be coherent, consistent and broadly representative of the wider membership, not just a few individuals with opinions. We have to do everything we can to make sure that we hear your voice. Above all else, our voice must be coherent, consistent and broadly representative of the entire membership. We are making good progress in this regard.

Our Brigade Rep network is thriving. Every two months I meet online with the reps, and it provides an opportunity. for Key subject matter experts, particularly from FENZ to come and talk and engage with our members as well. Hopefully your brigade groups are coming back and passing on that information and get engaged with you. Those conversations actually shape our advocacy and support agenda. And strengthening our understanding of what's working and what's not at a brigade level.

Our monthly UFBA and provincial leaders' meetings are going really well. And I acknowledge Jeff as president and his supporters and Lesina, who have done a really good job to keep that network connected. And they are such an important movement out there within the UFBA because they help us to identify national trends and so working together to strengthen both our memberships and to form a national view of the advocacy agenda.

We've also piloted the UFBA Volunteer field expert groups, starting with Fleet and Hauora. These groups bring together volunteers with technical expertise and a passion for particular subject areas. We get a voice that's broader and deeper by getting bigger groups together, maybe around 35 people to actually be proactive in those areas, not just to complain about what's not, but to envisage what could be so that we can make a case defence in the future. Because technology and all those other things are going to play a great part in making the boat go faster and better, supporting you out in the field.

We've been made aware there is a lot of advocacy going on at the moment. FENZ have launched a lot of projects. The TAPS review has just started. Training, Rank and Roll, which is a real biggie in the future operating capability that will touch on every brigade. And you'll hear more about that during the conference.

Working with Fire and Emergency there's a lot of insights gained from our membership engagement that have contributed to major FENZ projects. Including the volunteer voice forum that some of you may be part of. Which really, for the first time in the history of the fire services in New Zealand, allows individual volunteers to speak directly to FENZ, to have a direct voice, into management. This forum is a direct result of the work of the UFBA to ensure that the purposes of the FENZ Act set out in Section 3 are implemented by FENZ, especially to improve support for volunteers, and to allow them to communicate directly with FENZ. This complements our own Association forums who have their own direct line to FENZ.

The Rank and roll framework I've already mentioned will provide a fit for purpose unified system that applies to all personnel. The UFBA has a very firm position on where the no go zones are. One of the things we will never allow is for the two different rank systems Volunteer and Paid. We need a unified system that everyone understands.

Volunteer brigade leaders' development review, ensuring leads pathways really reflect the true needs of leaders in their brigades out there. Local planning and the future operational capability model, where we have really insisted on there being a strong volunteer lens to ensure an accurate understanding of risk within the communities, informed by local brigades and a consistent and fair and fit approach for the support and the resource modelling. That will apply across the country because at the end of the day. Your people have the knowledge, you know what's going on in your communities and no one is in a better place to advise than you.

As many of you know, we're also Co designing the volunteer engagement model with FENZ, which is redefining the relationships that the volunteer brigades and Fire and Emergency have. It's pretty clear that when FENZ was formed, volunteers were named within the act as FENZ personnel and they have a direct relationship with FENZ now, but the brigades don't yet. The brigades are constituted in under the New Zealand Fire Service rules and that's pretty much been grand parented. That's the stuff that we're sorting out now alongside the model rules. There's a little way to go, but good progress is being made.

Tomorrow there's going to be a learning lab on this that you'll all get a chance to participate in. And I encourage you to be really vocal in those sessions. Don't hold back, be vocal and pass on your experience and the realism of actually what this project needs to get it right.

Outside of the UFBA and the membership, we've built some really meaningful relationships with decision makers across the Parliament. We meet with the Honourable Brooke van Velden, the Minister of Internal Affairs, to discuss equity for volunteers and the critical role of the UFBA. She understood just where we all fit into the world. We also have been doing some work with the MP Camilla Belichop. She's the opposition spokesperson for ACC and Emergency Management. She has been engaged with us on our campaign for volunteers and ACC, and she was very interested to consult with us on the discussion paper.

You may, be aware that the Emergency Management legislation at the moment is under significant reform. And I would say within a year or two. It's going to have a significant impact on us out there in the field and in our communities. At the heart of that new legislation will be communities at the centre. And no one to me represents their community in this area more than Volunteer Fire brigades. I said before, the Labour caucus is absolutely unanimous in its support for our bid for the ACC cabinet.

Finally, to every one of you who serves, whether you're on the truck, behind the scenes or leading your brigade, from us, thank you. The UFBI exists to ensure that you have a platform to be heard, supported and I think most importantly, celebrated. We're here to elevate your profile, where it counts. Your movement will be at a peak when you can all speak with one collective and powerful voice. The voice of New Zealand communities.

Together, we are stronger. Together, we are stronger. Together, we carry the mana of 14,000 members – almost 12,000 volunteers – who define what community service and a demonstrated commitment to a critically important purpose truly means.

Kia kaha, kia Kotahi ra., Our strength is our unity.

Ngā mihi nui — thank you

*A short video introducing members of the UFBA staff was played to the delegation.*

### ***Board Director Candidates***

The four board director candidates Kaye Ahsam, Howard Cole, Steve Smith, Tom Thomson addressed the delegation.

### ***Voting Process***

The AGM voting process of a show of voting card were overseen by our scrutineers, auditors Grant Thornton. An announcement of the elected candidate for the first position will be made before the next Board Director vote.

### ***Voting for Board Director Position 1***

*The four director candidates left the auditorium while the voting took place.*

Voting Delegates held up their voting card and proxy voting card as the names of the candidates were read out and voted per their Brigade for the first Board Director Position.

Grant Thornton as scrutineers counted the votes for each of the four candidates and advised the Chair of the result.

The candidates were asked to return to the auditorium

### ***Announcement of Elected Board Director - Position #1***

The successful candidate for the first elected Board Director position was Kaye Ahsam from Fire and Emergency Whangarei Administration. The appointed would be made after General Business.

### ***Voting for Board Director Position 2***

*The three remaining director candidates left the auditorium while the voting took place.*

Voting Delegates held up their voting card and proxy voting card as the names of the remaining candidates were read out and voted per their Brigade for the second Board Director Position.

Grant Thornton as scrutineers counted the votes for each of the three remaining candidates and advised the Chair of the result.

The candidates were asked to return to the auditorium

### ***Announcement of Elected Board Director - Position #2***

The successful candidate for the second elected Board Director position was Tom Thomson from the Motunau Volunteer Fire Brigade. The appointed would be made after General Business.

### ***2024/25 Annual Report***

All Brigades have received a copy of the 2024/25 Annual Report. Reporting on the years activities has been provided in the annual report as required by constitution and financial statements have been audited.

### ***Director Thomson and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee addressed the delegation:***

As chair of the Audit and Risk committee, I will address this year's financial results. The financials have been circulated and for the most part I will take them as read.

We received our Auditors report and it'd be fair to say it's a very good report. We used the same auditing firm but organised a new lead auditor for this year. It's always good to have change and a new set of eyes. The Auditors took more time to familiarise themselves with the organisation and we made sure they give us a fixed fee at the start.

The Auditors were very happy again with the timely response received from the management team and from the board. I'm pleased to report they once again they made positive comments on the professional nature of all the staff and the organisations they interacted with.

Once again, I wish to record my appreciation of the work that Bill and his team have done and continue to do in an ever-changing world. Our UFBA Finance and membership manager, Stephen Malinchak, continues to do an exemplary job. The more I see of Stephen, the more amazed I am at what he's doing. He not only helps me with the facts through times that require difficult decisions, but more importantly responds in a timely and professional manner to his team members and the ever-increasing demands of his FENZ counterpart.

I also want to thank my co members, on the audit and risk committee and the wider Board for their support and input this year. Our chair, Peter Dunn is a tower of strength, and we all benefit hugely from his professionalism in the wide contacts in the Hall of Power.

This time last year I outlined for you the direction of our accounts caused for the most part by sinking lid policy on our financial support from FENZ, a total reduction of 40%, in the previous two years. We were looking at an accumulated loss of \$367,000 that would have lost by this stage half \$1,000,000, if we went with the original budget. I said then, we can't keep thinking we can cost cut our way to financial stability indefinitely. Doing the same thing and expecting a different result is a definition of stupidity.

Last year I asked you to back me by increasing the level of subscriptions we will pay as probably one of the few, real options that we had. Again, I thank you for that, support. You'll see from the accounts that the measures that we took have righted the ship and all the events were held as normal wherever possible. No one can yet control the weather; it wiped out one event.

As noted in the various feedback in the run up the conference, the UFBA along with the FENZ board have worked hard to try and remove barriers and set up feedback loops so that each party can work towards common goals whilst keeping their own mandatory independence. To regular meetings of the two CEOs, Bill and Kerry and their support teams and, between the chairs and the board members to board-to-board meetings. We have kept the lights on and the ball rolling. Peter and Bill have also taken every opportunity to keep our Members of Parliament up to speed. From the FENZ/UFBA relationship, we're involved in all the decisions that impact our members now and in the foreseeable future and that wasn't the case when I first started doing this job. The plan has always been to make a case for a long overdue cost of living increase on the annual brigade grants which we have asked for and we have received a sympathetic response in the main. But it will come as no surprise that we are still fighting headwinds on this issue. Reply was that all areas are up for review. I took that as code to mean be careful what you wish for, but nevertheless we will keep pushing the case.

Management and the Board have worked hard to identify, financial initiatives to move the association back into a surplus. But the big gains of previous years have been taken. You can't take them every year. You can't sell an asset this year and again next year. You sell it once and you don't get it again. We are back on course, but anyone who looks at these accounts and thinks we're back in Clover has the book upside down. Most of the FENZ's funding comes not from government but from business, Fire insurance levies. In a recent conference, our Minister Hon. Brooke van Velden made it very clear to both the FENZ and UFBA Boards that times are tough and not likely to improve in the short term. The Minister told us what we already know, and we heard again that she was talking about \$60 million, Kerry's talking \$50 million. It's a big figure and it's going to affect us. And as we all know, our truck fleet is large and in constant need of repairs and maintenance and inevitably leads to replacement in due course. This just means more costs are one part of the FENZ costs of the organisation. We're seeing a lot of industry and corporate business players going overseas to organise their insurance, which means that we miss out on the New Zealand levy. So, there is a decrease in the fire insurance levy, which is where most of FENZ's money comes from.

The impact of inflation on our funding from FENZ's is static and not increasing. The ongoing FENZ funding of legal costs for a member advocacy cases, the fund is \$60,000 and we're nearly exhausted that already. We're in discussion of FENZ to see how we can stop some of the stuff going all the way to full legal action because that's where the money is going to. we believe FENZ, have a role to play in there, the way they deal with some of the stuff.

Our investment markets, one of the good things we did a couple of years ago, was to put some of our funds that weren't needed immediately into investment funds. That has been a very good investment even these trying times. I've been very impressed with the way that our particular ones have gone. We're going to need to start rethinking about the shares and the way our portfolio is managed. The company that's doing managing this is doing an excellent job and report very regularly.

**Technology** The cost of keeping up with technology and the use of artificial intelligence is concerning. To provide more to the members with the same number of staff will require investment in technology and AI, for example, investment in customer relationship management, which keeps everybody connected. There's significant costs in that and we're not really in a position to be getting too far down that track, but it's something that in the future will need to think about.

The UFBA team is tightly managing costs. The rising cost of gold. We came back to the membership last year when we received advanced notice of a huge increase in gold, in my opinion we still have the same two simple choices going forward.

- continue and review and if possible, remove all non-core activities where they add no value to the members and
- work hard to identify or to work hard to identify new funding sources outside traditional model.

We've been exploring income generating activities such as training amongst other things, but these often require significant seed capital and a lot of team effort with the rewards quite often some years away. Doesn't mean don't do it, just be very careful about what you're getting yourself into for first upfront funds to actually start getting money coming back.

We've talked with FENZ about the areas where it would make more sense for the UFBA to deliver courses. Peter's alluded to that and Bill as well. There's definitely some room for, continued discussions there. Both organisations are doing their best to support volunteerism in our sectors in what are truly tough times. There's no point in us having scraps or FENZ it's a wasted argument, but we don't have to roll over and play dead either.

Finally, as I noted last year our dependent financial advisor has retired and it's my pleasure to welcome Ian Smith who was taken up this position for the next three years. This is an important position and as I said earlier, Stephen Malanchak is under huge pressure. All he wanted from the Audit & Risk Committee was somebody independent of both the UFBA and the committee or the board that he could talk to about matters technical and, and this is high level stuff that government requirements and that type of thing. We went to the market and had a lot of replies. We went to some of the big four companies. If you want to pay \$1000 an hour you'll get them, but we don't have that sort of money. Ian has fire history and is very keen to do it. He's doing it on a, agreed basis. only when he's actually on the job and he's quite happy to have casual off the cuff discussions. the role, is one to advise the UFBA Audit and Risk Committee, provide expert independent advice to support the Committee in fulfilling its governance responsibilities in the area of financial reporting and audit, insurance and risk management, financial planning and budgeting, financial management and internal controls, development and review of financial policies and, of course, risk management.

As the financial statements have been circulated, the meeting was opened up to questions about the 2024/25 Financial Report.

*There were no questions were raised from the floor:*

#### **Membership Advisory Panel Annual Report**

UFBA President Jeff Manson address the delegation:

With the strong governance and day to day management leading our association, there have been no matters for the MAP to consult on in the 2024/25 financial year.

The MAP members have been working collaboratively in their respective roles with the UFBA Management and Board directly, on a regular basis. It is great to see the UFBA taking a networked approach to gather feedback and insights from members – creating a broader, more accurate and inclusive membership view.

The MAP is still in place, and should you have any concerns about governance, we can still be contacted.

### ***Benevolent Fund Annual Report***

The Fund's Chairman Past President Alan Burgess introduced and thanked the Trustees and spoke to the Benevolent Fund Annual Report.

Good afternoon, everyone. And can I just reinforce the comments that have been made previously. It's great to see some familiar faces and also great to see a lot of new faces. The Benevolent Fund has been in existence now for an excess of 30 odd years and has been serving this organisation extremely well.

I will introduce the Trustees:

Graham Booth, Brian Styles, Amber Hollis, Ross Dittmer, along with the UFBA President and Vice President. The other person that we have on the board as an ex officio is George Verry. George's name will be familiar to a lot of people in here with his past involvement with UFBA. We use George as our conduit to our financial advisors in Wellington. Finally, our go to person that most of you have that first interaction with is Jane.

We have introduced a new vest that when we have a major event, e.g. another Gisborne or another earthquake, God help us if it ever does, but we need to be prepared. One of the things that we were short on was visibility at these times. We have enough vests now that we can send them out to our, helpers in the particular areas, so members can identify the Benevolent Fund support person.

Last financial and reporting year we dispersed \$95,000, to 30 claimants. It is a substantial amount gone out both in monetary value and in vouchers, that we sometimes use.

The current funding subscription was moved from \$5 to \$8 last year. That allowed us to actually live within our means in the last 12 months. If we hadn't had that increase, we would have been dipping into our reserves to get us through the 12 months.

At our AGM this morning we have appointed Craigs Investments as our financial advisors, in particular Tim Crooks from that organisation.

It's up to us to build a very, solid financial base. Our current shareholding sits in excess of \$660,000. Our target after discussion with Tim is to try and aim to have \$1,000,000 as our backup fund. So, it's a balance between what current needs are and our planning for the unknown.

It's absolutely critical that we understand both of those elements. And of course, the unknown thing becomes a real issue.

One of the other things that was a concern to the trustees was the image of the Fund. One of the things that we have done is that we have produced a booklet. It gives you an insight into why the Fund was set up, what we're doing currently and see what we're planning in the future. With that and social media, we're developing a better image as we go forward.

The financial detailed from the year in the Annual Report is correct so far as transactions are concerned. But one of the things that occurred to me when I read it is that the current year financial income was substantially different to the previous year income. Now that shouldn't have been, because this year should, have been the first year that, showed us the full impact of the increase that we had from the \$5 to \$8 subscriptions. So why did that happen? As well as the \$5 to \$8 difference, we also went from a different payment frequency, from yearly to quarterly receipt of grants.

There was also an overpayment of \$35,000, that doesn't belong to us, that belongs to brigades. This has been paid back in the last couple of weeks and that will be reimbursed to Brigades in the next round of grants.

Another thing that we have goes back to the Christchurch earthquakes in 2011, 2012. We had an arrangement with New Zealand Fire Service at the time, as well as the Benevolent Fund grant where the New Zealand Fire Service supported us because of the magnitude of the operation. The amount of money that was put in from the Benevolent Fund and New Zealand Fire Service 'was close to \$800,000 just on earthquake payments. So that's pretty substantial.

In the COVID pandemic, we thought we were going to get hit a lot worse than we did. So, we were able to reimburse back to the Fire Service because they gave us some support in excess of \$90,000. For Cyclone Gabriel, FENZ was not supportive of that operation. The Benevolent Fund paid out just short of \$165,000 into the Gisborne cyclone.

When people ask, why are you accumulating a funding base, that's the very answer for it. So, if we get another earthquake, another cyclone, we need to be prepared for it and that's the very reason that we're doing that.

The other thing that we've decided to instigate is a channel to leave a bequest, giving an opportunity to leave some funding from your legacy to the Benevolent Fund. We are looking at setting this up. In reality, we just can't keep asking people in the membership for coin. So, we are looking at other ways that we can raise a few dollars in the longer term.

if you do have any questions, we are more than happy to answer them.

Thank you

***UFBA Benevolent Fund Subscription Fees***

**MOTION:** In accordance with UFBA Constitution 4.8 a), the Board moves that the UFBA Benevolent Fund Subscription fees will remain unchanged.

**Moved:** UFBA Board

**Seconded:** A Burgess - Benevolent Fund Trustee

*Questions about the Annual Report were invited*

*There were no questions raised.*

***Approval of Annual Report and Financial Statements***

**MOTION:** Annual Report and Financial Statements have been received, considered and approved for 2024/25 in accordance with UFBA Constitution 6.1 (b)(ii).

**Moved:** CFO Austin - Kaitangata Volunteer Fire Brigade

**Seconded:** CFO Sayer - Foxton Volunteer Fire Brigade

Let it be shown in the minutes that the Annual Report and Financial Statements are reviewed, considered and approved by the membership.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

***Thank Outgoing Patron***

*UFBA Chair thanked outgoing Patron Dave McFarlane for his tenure as the UFBA Patron.*

***Outgoing Patron Dave McFarlane addressed the delegates:***

UFBA Board Chair Hon Peter Dunne, UFBA President Jeff Manson, Members of the Board, Past Presidents & Life Members, Distinguished Guests, Delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen

As Peter has announced, I am standing down from the role of UFBA Patron. I have long been of the view that being UFBA Patron should not be regarded as a job for life, so after 3 years in the role I am stepping aside so someone else can step up.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as your patron, and I have enjoyed the role. I am pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute to this great organisation and I thank you for putting your faith in me.

The work of the UFBA is a vital component in sustaining the volunteer workforce and making sure that the Fire and Emergency reform agenda, that is, placing NZ Communities and their volunteers at the heart of the organisation, is achieved as designed and intended by the government.

The Fire Service has always been a disciplined service. It has to be, given the nature of the often-dangerous tasks it is required to fulfil. So, it is a matter of great concern to witness, almost daily on television news reports, various slogans being written on fire appliances.

This is a serious lack of discipline. It is disfiguring government property, and it seems to be tolerated by FENZ management, and clearly the FENZ Board are not holding management to account on the issue.

Lack of discipline, if not addressed will ultimately affect operational efficiency and more importantly, on the job health and safety. It should be addressed as a matter of urgency

I am pleased to know that our Board and the Fire and Emergency Board have a professional strategic relationship and continue their board-to-board meetings, in recognition of the UFBA as the volunteers' representative's body. While we don't always agree with Fire and Emergency, we work together, professionally, to find solutions. We both realise the core of the organisation needs to be supported to serve the communities, and while the FENZ Board is lacking in representation of volunteer firefighters, the UFBA Board and senior management is strong and brings a wealth of volunteer and operational experience to the table.

It has become very clear in my long service as a firefighter, chief fire officer and former fire commissioner, that volunteers don't work for the fire service or indeed fire and emergency, they work for their communities and are supported and resourced by Fire and Emergency to make that possible. This is the nature of the relationship, and it must be retained, because at the heart of any emergency management system, high community ownership and participation is of paramount importance!

In closing I would just like to say that I continue to be very impressed with the amount of work the UFBA undertakes on behalf of its members.

I wish your new Patron and the UFBA well in the tasks they face in the future.

The Delegates gave outgoing Patron McFarlane a standing acclamation.

***Appointment of UFBA Patron***

**MOTION:** I would like to move that Colin Kitchen be appointed as UFBA Patron for 12 months in accordance with UFBA Constitution 6.1 (b)(vii).

**Moved:** UFBA Board

**Seconded:** SO Lovich - Kawakawa Volunteer Fire Brigade

Let it be shown in the minutes that Colin Kitchen is appointed by the membership as UFBA Patron for the next 12 months.

The Motion was **CARRIED** by acclamation.

***Incoming Patron Colin Kitchen addressed the delegation.***

Tēnā koutou katoa, good afternoon, everyone.

Firstly, may I extend my sincere thanks to the UFBA Board for bestowing this great honour upon me. I feel deeply privileged and humbled to accept the role of Patron for this historic and vital organisation. The UFBA has a proud lineage of leadership stretching back 147 years, and I wish to acknowledge the distinguished Patrons who have come before me — Dame Margaret Bazley, Dave McFarlane, and the many others who have served with such dedication over the decades. It is a great responsibility to follow in their footsteps, and one I do not take lightly.

A little about myself — I was born and raised in the Far North and have proudly served as a volunteer firefighter in Kaitaia for 57 years, including 10 years as Chief Fire Officer. During that time, I have been privileged to see firsthand the strength, courage, and commitment of volunteers across our country. My governance experience has grown alongside that service — from my time on the Executive of the UFBA and other regional associations, to my years as Chair of the Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group, and more recently as a Northland Regional Councillor.

I have also had the opportunity to serve on national working groups for volunteer sustainability, recruitment, and employer recognition — areas that are crucial to ensuring our volunteer brigades remain strong and supported. This combination of volunteer and governance experience has given me an understanding of both the operational realities on the ground and the policy decisions that shape our sector.

As Patron, my role is to help the UFBA become more visible, lend credibility to its cause, and assist the Board and Management in increasing the Association's influence — both internally within Fire and Emergency New Zealand, and externally with our partners, government, and communities. I look forward to using my networks and experience to open doors where needed, support meaningful engagement, and help ensure volunteers have a strong and respected voice in the reforms and changes that lie ahead.

We know the coming years — particularly with the emergency management reforms — will bring significant change to how we serve our communities. My goal is to ensure that throughout these transitions, the invaluable contribution of volunteer firefighters remains recognised, resourced, and celebrated.

In conclusion, I want to acknowledge the selfless service of our volunteer firefighters, their whānau who support them, their employers who release them, and the self-employed volunteers who give so much of their own time. Together, you make up 86% of the frontline Fire and Emergency workforce, responding across 93% of New Zealand's landmass. Your contribution saves our country an estimated \$823 million every year — but the true value cannot be measured in dollars. It's in the lives saved, the communities protected, and the spirit of service that defines us as New Zealanders.

I am truly honoured to stand beside you as Patron of the UFBA and look forward to supporting you all in the important work ahead.

*The board Chair presented Incoming Patron of the UFBA with a lapel pin*

#### **General Business**

Thirty minutes was allocated for General Business.

The following pre-submitted question was received to the AGM questions email address.

**From:** Reed, Warwick - CFO Tapu VFB  
**Subject:** Recognition for Kaumatua attached to Brigade

*The UFBA recognise Chaplains that are attached to Brigades with a medal, can an Iwi Kaumatua who is attached to a Brigade for cultural and support purposes also be recognised in a similar way, please?*

*Thank you for taking the time to consider our Brigade's request.*

*Take care and stay well*

**UFBA Chair Hon. Peter Dunne responded:**

There is merit in that question and it is something the Board will consider, and we certainly see the logic behind the question. We cannot give an absolute answer at this point, but it is something that will be considered.

*There were no items raised from the floor.*

#### **Thank you for Outgoing Board Director**

The Chair thanked outgoing Board Director Cole.

#### **Installation of Elected Directors**

The Chair invited re-elected Director Tom Thomson and newly appointed Director Kaye Ahsam on stage for the presentation of the director pin.

#### **Vice President Candidates**

The three Vice President candidates Dale Lindsay, Mati Soi and Duncan Tabor addressed the delegation.

#### **Voting Process**

The AGM voting process of a show of voting card were overseen by our scrutineers, auditors Grant Thornton. An announcement of the successful candidate.

*The three candidates left the auditorium while the voting took place.*

Voting Delegates held up their voting card and proxy voting card as the names of the candidates were read out and voted per their Brigade for the UFBA Vice President Position.

Grant Thornton as scrutineers counted the votes for each of the three candidates and advised the Chair of the result.

The candidates were asked to return to the auditorium

***Announcement of Appointed Vice President***

The Chair advised that the successful candidate for the Vice President is Dale Lindsay from Te Puke Volunteer Fire Brigade and would be appointed after the incoming President's speech.

***Thank you for Outgoing President***

The Chair thanked outgoing President Manson and presented a plaque

Past President Manson was presented with a lapel badge and was thanked for his service to the UFBA during his term.

***President Manson addressed the delegation***

Outgoing President Manson addressed the delegates.

***Installation of Officers***

Newly appointed President Walden was presented with the Presidential chains and then made an address to the delegates.

***Appointment of Vice President***

President Walden presented newly appointed Vice President Lindsay with a lapel badge.

*UFBA Chair Hon. Peter Dunne declared the 2025 Annual General Meeting closed at 1524 hours*

***The closing Karakia was performed by UFBA CEO Bill Butzbach***

Ka whakairia te tapu

Kia wātea ai te ara

Kia tūruki whakataha ai

Kia tūruki whakataha ai

Hui e! Taiki ē!

Restrictions are moved aside, so the pathway is clear.

To return to everyday activities, to return everyday activities.

Enriched, unified and blessed