

Candidate Profile & Notice of Motions

CANDIDATE PROFILE: VICE PRESIDENT (UNOPPOSED)

Steve Smith

I'm Steve Smith, and I'm currently the CFO at Blenheim Rural. I have a strong interest in business and leadership, hold an MBA, and have owned businesses over the years. For almost 17 years, I've also been a business coach for a local trust, supporting people to strengthen and grow their businesses.

But more importantly, I want to explain why I'm putting my hand up to be your UFBA Vice President.

Not long ago, I had a conversation with someone from a neighbouring brigade who asked me what the value was in being a member of the UFBA. I've heard similar comments elsewhere, and they've stayed with me. I believe strongly in what the UFBA stands for and the important role it plays in supporting and representing brigades and members across the country.

If elected, one of my priorities would be getting back to the basics: being present, listening and having meaningful conversations with our members.

We live in an era of Zoom meetings, texts and emails, but I still believe there is real value in meeting people face-to-face. I want to visit brigades, attend honours nights and, where possible, brigade and provincial AGMs. I want members to know their UFBA representatives, feel comfortable approaching us, and know they have someone outside of Fire and Emergency who will listen, understand their concerns and advocate for them.

I don't pretend to have all the answers to the challenges facing brigades. What I do bring is experience, ideas, time to contribute and, importantly, a willingness to listen. Whether the conversation is about succession planning, supporting volunteers, strengthening a brigade or simply working through an issue, I want the UFBA to be visible, approachable and connected to its members.

I'd also like to see a strong UFBA presence at Provincial Associations. Provincials provide an



important opportunity to connect with multiple brigades, hear directly from members and strengthen relationships across our network. I believe strongly in the role Provincials play and in supporting them to remain strong and effective for our members and the UFBA.

Will this solve every problem? No. But I have the time, energy and commitment to contribute, and I'm prepared to put in the work.

If we can ensure our brigades feel heard, valued and connected to their Association, we can strengthen confidence in the UFBA and ensure it continues to deliver value for its members.

At the end of the day, our strength comes from our unity.

Ngā mihi,

Steve Smith

Notice of Motions

The following motions have been received for consideration at the 148th UFBA Annual General Meeting (AGM), which will be held at the NZ International Convention Centre in Auckland at 1300hrs on Friday 23 October 2026.

- Motion one: Amendments to the UFBA Constitution
- Motion two: Reallocation of UFBA Funding
- Motion three: Volunteer ACC Benefits
- Motion four: Investigation into Private Insurance for Volunteer Firefighters

The motions are detailed on the following pages.

MOTION ONE:

Amendments to the UFBA Constitution

Moved by: UFBA Board

Received by the UFBA: 24 June 2026

MOTION:

That the amendments to the Constitution as detailed below be adopted by the membership.

That the UFBA Constitution be amended, as noted in the blue text, as follows:

4.2 Becoming a Member

- c) The Chief Executive shall accept or reject an application and shall advise the applicant **and the Board** of his or her decision as soon as practicable.

Add a new member category

4.4 Past Presidents

- a) **Past Presidents have the right to attend and speak at Members' meetings but not to vote.**

11.1 Officer Roles

- c) No Brigade Member or Industry and Defence Member may have more than one of its Enrolled Members holding any of the Officer positions **or Board positions** at any one time **unless no other nominations are received.**

15. Dissolution

- 15.1 The Association may be wound-up or put into liquidation by a majority vote at a Members' Meeting, and otherwise in accordance with the procedures (including any notice requirements) specified in the Incorporated Societies Act **2022**~~1908~~ or any replacement legislation in force at the time.

Delete

Transitional Provisions clause 17 subclauses 17.1 – 17.4

REASON:

Clause 4.2 (c) This amendment formalises the need for the Chief Executive to ensure the Board are aware of every membership application and the outcome.

Clause 4.4 (a) The established practice noting the rights of Past Presidents at Members' meetings was unintentionally overlooked when the current Constitution was written.

Clause 11.1 (c) Updating this clause provides more flexibility and assurance that the Board can carry out its business with a quorum and maintain continuity of the Associations Governance function.

Clause 15.1 Modifying this clause to reflect the current legislative foundation for our Constitution. Our Constitution reflects the requirements of the 2022 Act, not the 1908 Act since repealed.

Clause 17, subclauses 17.1-17.4. The transitional provisions were a temporary arrangement, they have fully achieved the outcomes sought in 2019 and are no longer relevant to the Association.

MOTION TWO:

REALLOCATION OF UFBA FUNDING

Moved by: Wakefield Volunteer Fire Brigade

Seconded by: Upper Moutere Volunteer Fire Brigade

Received by the UFBA: 21 July 2026

MOTION:

That the UFBA Competitions Budget be reduced from \$1.2 million to \$600,000 per annum, and that the resulting savings of approximately \$600,000 to be redirected to all 600 plus UFBA member brigades equally via the operation grant.

This will assist all brigades to effectively carry out their;

- Formal functions
- Welfare initiatives
- Support brigade families when needed
- To support their competitions members, all at the brigade discretion.

This will deliver direct benefits across all brigades and the wider membership.

REASON:

The United Fire Brigades' Association (UFBA) competitions programme has a long history of successfully developing operational skills, encouraging camaraderie, and supporting the sharing of knowledge between brigades. The programme has provided significant benefits to those members who participate.

However, there is growing concerns about whether the current level of funding represents the best value for the wider UFBA membership.

The UFBA competitions budget for 2024-25 is \$1,237,500, representing approximately 22% of the Association's total budget. During 2024-25, only 768 members participated in UFBA competitions.

With a national membership of approximately 14,000 members, this means that only 5% of members directly participated in competitions.

While the benefits to participants are acknowledged, a significant proportion of brigades receive little or no direct benefit from this expenditure. It is therefore appropriate to review whether the current funding level is proportionate to the number of members directly involved.

There may be opportunities to reduce costs while maintaining the competitions programme. Example could include:

- Greater use of regional qualifying events.
- Increased carpooling and shared transport arrangements.
- Reviewing accommodation costs for competitors and officials.
- Reviewing the ratio of officials to competitors at national events.

MOTION THREE:

VOLUNTEER ACC BENEFITS

Moved by: Tarras Volunteer Fire Brigade

Seconded by: Kingston Volunteer Fire Brigade

Received by the UFBA: 21 July 2026

MOTION:

That the membership is prepared to give up \$20 of our annual token \$380 (or what ever it takes) to cover the \$244,533 to ensure that the Volunteer firefighters have the same ACC benefits as career firefighters.

REASON:

Following a crash on 19th of December 2024, which resulted in 1 fatality and 20 injured, 2 critically. Following this mass casualty event Peter Ottley of the Kingston Brigade was Diagnosed with PTSD. As we all know he was denied any help from ACC as he was a volunteer.

During December 2025, the Parliamentary Education and Workforce committee considered the 37,000-signature petition presented by Katherine Lamont of the Queenstown brigade calling for even treatment by ACC for volunteer firefighters.

Despite the ACC's own figures showing that it would only cost \$244,533, or \$20 for each volunteer to receive the same benefits as our Career counterparts, the committee members declined to make the necessary changes as they didn't want to create a precedent, using woman's refuge as an example.

Each year FENZ pay us \$380 for "out of pocket expenses"

Our remit is "That the membership is prepared to give up \$20 (or whatever it costs) of this token payment of \$380 to top up their ACC levy to allow Volunteer firefighters to have the same ACC cover as career Firefighters".

A unanimous vote in the affirmative will send a strong signal to FENZ and the Government that they need to get off their collective backsides and get this issue fixed.

MOTION FOUR:

INVESTIGATION INTO PRIVATE INSURANCE FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

Moved by: Queenstown Volunteer Fire Brigade

Seconded by: Arrowtown Volunteer Fire Brigade

Received by the UFBA: 23 July 2026

MOTION:

Investigation into Private Insurance for Volunteer Firefighters.

That the United Fire Brigades' Association and Fire and Emergency New Zealand jointly establish a working group to:

1. Investigation into Fire and Emergency New Zealand obtaining a supplementary group insurance policy for volunteer firefighters that complements existing ACC entitlements.
 2. Assess insurance products that could provide financial protection for volunteers by covering some or all of the difference between standard ACC entitlements and the workplace ACC cover available to paid employees.
 3. Consider policy features including, but not limited to:
 - income replacement or income protection;
 - lump-sum payments for serious injury;
 - rehabilitation and recovery support;
 - family assistance where appropriate; and
 - other financial benefits that reduce hardship arising from service-related injuries.
 4. Evaluate alternative or complementary mechanisms, including enhancements to the UFBA Benevolent Fund or other financial assistance programmes, where these may provide comparable protection.
 5. Assess the financial, legal and operational implications of each option, including estimated costs, funding models, eligibility criteria and administrative requirements.
 6. Develop recommendations for implementation, including short-term measures that can be introduced while broader legislative reform is pursued.
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MOTION FOUR (cont.):

REASON:

Purpose

To establish a collaborative programme of work between the United Fire Brigades' Association (UFBA) and Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) to investigate and develop options for supplementary financial protection for volunteer firefighters who are injured while undertaking authorised Fire and Emergency duties.

Background

Volunteer firefighters responding to emergencies or undertaking authorised brigade activities are currently covered by the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC). However, unlike paid firefighters, volunteers do not receive workplace ACC entitlements that adequately compensate for lost income and other financial impacts arising from service-related injuries.

This creates a significant disparity whereby volunteers undertaking the same operational risks as paid firefighters may experience substantial financial hardship following an injury sustained in the course of their service.

While legislative reform to address these inequities remains the preferred long-term solution, there are practical measures available that can be explored and potentially implemented without waiting for changes to legislation.

Principles

- The work should be guided by the following principles:
- Volunteer firefighters undertake the same operational risks as paid firefighters and should not be exposed to avoidable financial hardship because of the nature of their employment status.
- Practical improvements should be pursued wherever they are available, regardless of the longer-term objective of legislative reform.
- Financial protection should be meaningful, equitable, and capable of providing volunteers and their families with confidence that they will be supported if injured in service.
- The outcome should reinforce Fire and Emergency New Zealand's commitment to the wellbeing, safety and sustainability of its volunteer workforce.

Expected Outcome

The working group will report back to the UFBA and FENZ setting out practical recommendations for supplementary financial protection for volunteer firefighters, including preferred insurance or alternative support mechanisms, implementation options, indicative costs and recommended next steps. Volunteer consultation is important in this process.

The intent of this work is to ensure that volunteer firefighters are not left carrying a disproportionate financial burden when injured while serving their communities and to deliver practical improvements that can be implemented alongside ongoing advocacy for legislative change.

United Fire Brigades' Association (UFBA)

86 Main Rd, PO Box 56079, Tawa, Wellington 5028

04 237 0265 / events@ufba.org.nz



DRIVEN to
RESPOND

CONTACT DETAILS

UFBA Events Team

events@ufba.org.nz

Lisa Mead - 027 238 8975

Lilla Rutherford - 027 580 7930

Gilpin Corporate Travel Ltd

ufba@gilpin.co.nz

09 361 4730 opt 5