National Commanders Intent

Industrial Action Escalation – Contingency Planning

Situation

New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union (NZPFU) have published on social media the results of a recent ballot. FENZ has received a Notice of Strike Action stating a complete work stoppage between 13:00-23:00 (10hrs) on 27 November 2026. It is prudent that FENZ formalises contingency plans for this. These contingencies will be to minimise public safety impacts – FENZ cannot eliminate the public safety threat that a 10-hour withdrawal of labour poses. Specialist skills will be limited - no aerial appliances, USAR capability, water rescue, advanced MVC or Level 3 lines capability. There will be limited HAZMAT capability.

Mission

Operational Response will have contingency plans to take all reasonable steps to execute our functions under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017. A focus will be to protect life, property and the environment.

FENZ is focused on settling the outstanding industrial dispute by continuing to bargain in good faith to reach agreeable terms for both parties to avoid these escalated industrial actions.

We will plan an appropriate response should the complete work stoppage go ahead. FENZ will maintain priority emergency response services during the period of industrial action by deploying volunteer resources, commanders, partner agency support, and contingency arrangements to preserve life safety, manage significant incidents, and minimise harm to communities.

Wellbeing of our people will remain our priority. Our people will only respond within their training, equipment and PPC capabilities.

We will work across government, external partners and industrial representatives to ensure our people are supported.

Execution – Strategic Objectives during Industrial Action

Our priorities during these complete work stoppages in career firefighter locations are:

1 – OPERATIONAL FOCUS

- Maintain our focus on Section 11 responses
- Cease our Section 12 responses
- High risk tactics will only be considered when lives are at risk – measured tactics will otherwise be applied using Safe Person Concept / Dynamic Risk Assessment
- Task our people within their trained capability and appropriate equipment
- Limit activities that do not contribute to response

2 – STAFF SAFETY & WELFARE

- Support each other and create peer groups and cohorts for our frontline
- Ensure wellbeing arrangements are maintained

3 – ONE SYSTEM RESPONSE

- Ensure districts and cover arrangements are connected through robust communication networks and strong command and control structures
- Ensure we are dynamic and adaptive to response needs

4 – CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- Notify commanders of all incidents
- Enhanced volunteer dispatch to confirmed incidents
- Transfer designated specialist rescue requests to lead agencies where required
- Maintain regular partner agency liaison
- Escalate operational issues through national coordination structures

Administration & Communication

Key messaging themes will be:

- Response times will be longer
- Capability is reduced
- Avoid activities that increase fire risk
- Call 111 immediately in emergencies
- Several specialist services will be unavailable or significantly reduced

Command, Control, Coordination

- Incident Management Team
  - Incident Controller – Ken Cooper
  - Critical Advisor – Brendan Nally
  - Deputy Incident controllers
    - Gareth Hughes – Operations
    - Maree Cordell – Corporate
  - Operational Planning – Glenn Thompson
  - Planning – Phil Anderson
  - Intelligence – Matt Wheble
  - Coordinator – Tim Mitchell
  - Data/Analytics
    - Rebecca Lutz
    - Brian Bull
  - Communication Centres – Gavin Travers
  - Communications – Chelsea Johnson

National Commander Message

We are preparing for an unprecedented industrial action period that has increased community risk to a level that could have fatal consequence. Our ability to deliver our functions under our Legislation are reduced considerably and, in some functions, withdrawn completely.

We will be able to mitigate some risk but not eliminate all risk. Our residual risk to community will remain high.

How we prepare our community, engage with our partners, support our people, take all reasonable steps to cover response areas and stand together during this period is how we will be measured.

Authorised	Megan Stiffler National Commander	**Date**	09 November 2026