



**Auckland Volunteer Fire Brigade Inc**  
**Auckland Operational Support**

[www.aucklandoperationalsupport.org.nz](http://www.aucklandoperationalsupport.org.nz)

## **Auckland Volunteer Fire Brigade Inc & Auckland Operational Support**



## **Annual Report**

**Annual Report of Chief Fire Officer Glenn Teal for 2019 - 2020**

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- Phone chargers in trucks – purchased and installed
- Mobile speed humps – 1 trailed and second set purchased. Now on OS2 and OS3
- Supply Drivers' Trousers - 6 pairs brought and bring trailed
- Reconfigure turnout PDAs – completed
- Supply Glove Gripper – 60 brought and distributed to members
- Regular First Aid Kits checks – in place
- Mentoring at incidents - underway for potential SO's
- More social activities – first event held in March
- Canteen refit and re-purpose project (received a large number of submissions)–project underway
- Jumper leads - 1 set per vehicle (including OS4)
- Sunshades for Vehicles – being supplied
- Inclusion of additional Brigade Honours – agreed and being actioned
- Events/fundraising – review of catering/food options to support members attending events underway.
- Red lights to FF – reviewed process to ensure consistency
- Backpack for members - being ordered

President: Sulu Devoe (027) 362 8683  
V. President: Jeff Shrimpton – 021024 03748  
Secretary: Martin Campbell – 021 292 7729

**Committee:**  
Terry Bird      Steve Devine  
Nigel Foulkes    Brett Goodhue  
James Hall      Ivan Millan  
David Phillips    John Waldow  
Jamie Whitehead   Adam Wright

## AUCKLAND LOCAL

Correspondence to: The Secretary, P O Box 303-235 North Harbour, Auckland.

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11 November 2019

Ref: ALC/19-83

CFO Glenn Teal  
Operational Support.

Dear Glenn

### Appreciation for Operational Support - International Convention Centre Fire

The New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union and members of the Auckland Local would like to formally thank and acknowledge the hard work that was put in over the many days by Auckland Volunteer Operational Support at the recent International Convention Centre Fire.

Your members assisted career firefighters over several days, such as transportation to the incident from fire stations and back again after many hours, assisting with traffic and crowd control throughout the many days, staffing the canteen unit providing tea, coffee and distribution of donated food brought down by members of the public.

A survey has recently been presented to FENZ highlighting many concerns raised by career staff during this incident. The Union wishes to assure Operational Support members that such criticism of FENZ is in no way, shape or form aimed at its membership.

Operational Support and your members are a vital part of the Auckland Community and continues to have the support of the Auckland Local. The Union hopes that by raising issues with FENZ, certain concerns and problems can be avoided in the future, with proper policy and procedures written up.

Once again, our thanks and gratitude go out to your membership.

Yours sincerely

Martin Campbell  
Secretary  
Auckland Local  
NZPFU

**We are a unique Brigade - undertaking support services but not hot firefighting. We don't have a station. Individual members have a huge level of autonomy and responsibility as they respond to incidents in their own vehicles and commence duties rather than responding in a fire appliance with a crew of colleagues and a supervising officer. It's a "one-off" within FENZ.**

## 1.0 Looking Back: Considering 2019 - 2020

### 1.1 Emergency Responses

The primary purpose for which the Brigade exists is to provide support service to volunteer and paid firefighters across the Auckland region at emergency incidents, training and community events.

Auckland Operational Support continues to be a very busy volunteer brigade, having attended 528 incidents during the 2019-2020 year. When considering these very high response numbers it is important to also note that this Brigade is only dispatched by Firecom to working incidents, unlike most volunteer operational brigades we do not attend false alarms.

The 528 responses was significantly fewer (-18.6%) than the previous year, largely due to the impact of the global pandemic (Covid-19). This reduction mirrors the overall nationwide reduction in emergency incidents, traffic volumes, and business activity during the level 4 lockdown during late March and April, and the level 3 restrictions in May. For example, the Brigade responded to only 18 incidents in April 2020 compared with 44 in April 2019, and to 26 in May 2020 compared to 73 during May 2019. This was 62% reduction for these two months. The 'quiet' period continued through the following months.

The secondary contributor to the reduction is the changes which have been implemented to some of the response protocols at Firecom. Our Brigade has now been removed from automatic response to several categories of incident for which we rarely had operational duties once we arrived. These included gas main ruptures, airport crash standbys, and minor chemical spillages. These changes had two benefits (1) Slight reduction in unnecessary volunteer workload, and (2) elimination of unnecessary urgent responses across Auckland and through busy traffic conditions, thereby eliminating a potential hazard.

The following statistics illustrate the mix of call types, duties undertaken, and utilisation of vehicles. These statistics are compiled from our own Brigade website-based data rather than the FENZ SMS.

#### Incidents Attended - Type

	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Motor Vehicle Crash	179	234	262	339
Structure Fire	238	251	245	232
Power Lines Down	15	16	38	28
Effects of Weather	12	7	27	19
Gas Leak	22	46	35	45
Hazardous Substance or Chemical Spill or Fuel Spill	15	39	44	39
Vegetation Fire	30	14	12	17
Emergency	7	14	13	16
Rescue (non MVC)	2	5	3	4
Special Services (other)	0	0	1	2
Fire (unspecified)	6	9	4	7
Vehicle Fire	1	9	7	10
Assist Police (without other FENZ attendance)	0	2	2	2
Flooding	1	3	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>767</b>



Road Cleanup after Motor Vehicle Crash

#### Officers

The Officers Forum addresses operational matters, including:

CFO Teal	-	Leadership and Management
	-	Liaison with FENZ Senior Management
DCFO Bay	-	Leadership and Management
	-	Oversight of Recruitment; On-boarding; Progression to Membership
SSO Officer	-	Oversight of Operational Readiness
SSO Cuthbert	-	Health & Safety; Recruit Training
SSO Scott	-	Brigade Training Officer; Oversight of Skill Maintenance
SO Carlyon	-	Assistance with Stakeholder Liaison
SO Carnell	-	No Specific Portfolio
SO Duncan	-	Vehicles - Servicing, Mechanics, Readiness, Operations etc; Ablutions Trailer
SO England	-	Driver Training; Assistance with Brigade Training
SO ChanSee	-	Telecommunications
SO Smith	-	No Specific Portfolio
SO Christie	-	Recruitment and Observers Programme
SO Scott	-	Record Keeping and Data Management (SMS, DSM, Dashboard Reporting)

#### Management Forum - The Management Forum oversees administration

The Members of the Management Forum and their Portfolios are:

CFO Teal	-	Executive Brigade Business   H.R. Issues   Rosters
DCFO Bay	-	Executive Brigade Business   H.R. Issues   Leave Management
QFF Watson	-	Secretary; Service Honours; Uniform & PPE Issue
SSO Officer	-	Brigade Treasurer
SSO Scott	-	(Elected Member)
QFF O'Connor	-	(Elected Member) Ideas Generator
SO Carlyon	-	Minutes; Content Management of Website & Social Media
QFF Walker	-	Events (Elected Member)
SO Scott	-	SMS, DSM, Dashboard Reporting (Elected Member)

Portfolios outside the Forum, reporting from time to time:

QFF Potter	-	Fundraising and Sponsorship
QFF Foster	-	Website & Social Media Technical Management
QFF Batterbee	-	Website Technical Management
M Harding	-	Rosters Administration Assistant
B Grant	-	Canteen Vehicle

#### Recruitment Panel

SO Rich Christie (Convenor), SSO Ross Bay, QFF Matt Walker.

#### Website Committee

Honorary Member Mark Foster, QFF Ian Batterbee.

## Members Joining

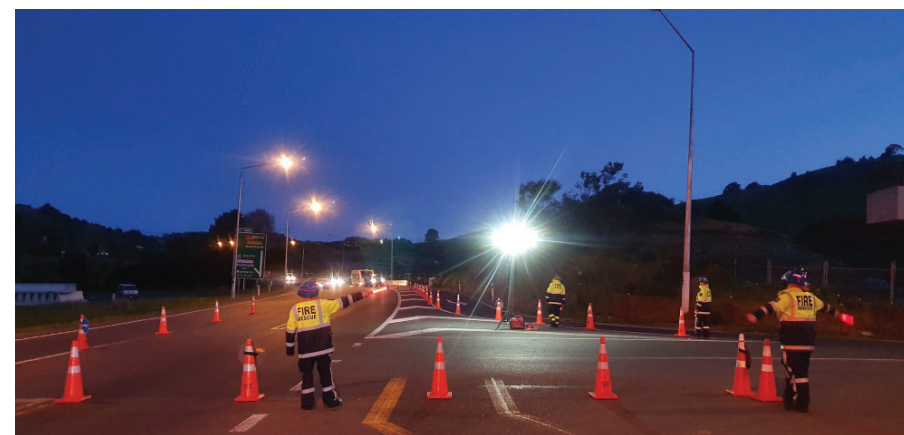
Name	Date	Previous NZFS Service
ViJay Talekar	02/10/19	Nil
Robin Yin	02/10/19	Nil
Srikant Bhaktar	01/10/19	Nil
William Maxwell-Steele	23/01/20	Nil
Victor Khan	23/01/20	Nil
Deepak Sharma	13/12/19	Auckland Operational Support
Doug Grieve	23/04/20	Auckland Operational Support

## Members Leaving

Name	Date	Years of Service with Auckland Operational Support	Reason
Sarah Sanford	19/08/19	3 Years	Moving to Dunedin
Kieran Liddington	19/08/19	3 Years	Moving to Dunedin
David Little	22/12/19	9 Months	Transferred back to Pukekohe Volunteer Fire Brigade
ViJay Talekar	10/02/20	3 Months	Change in Personal Circumstances
Douglas Grieve	13/02/20	2.5 Years	Moving to Australia
William Maxwell-Steele	12/02/20	1 Month	Resignation
Stephanie Dagnell	28/05/20	1 Year	Resignation
Gene Konov	25/02/20	2 Years	Unable to Maintain Commitment
Shayne Mardon	10/06/20	4.10 Years	Transferred to Kumeu Volunteer Fire Brigade
Gary Wyatt	10/02/20	4.5 Years	Change in Personal Circumstances

## Duties Performed at Incidents

	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Traffic Management or Road Closure	321	364	422	457
Refreshments/Meals (from Canteen Appliance)	40	37	37	36
Light Refreshments (not from Canteen)	159	196	185	151
Pedestrian & Crowd Management	90	89	109	89
Other Fireground Duties not specified elsewhere	34	44	35	31
Security of Appliances/Buildings/Property/Scene	28	27	45	40
Lighting	57	61	51	47
Waterways - Running Feeders/Deliveries/Ship Standpipe	12	22	8	9
Waterways - Making up	56	75	34	26
Assisting with Specialist Appliances - ICP/Command Unit	26	25	29	21
Assisting with Specialist Appliances - Other	4	1	?	2
Assisting with Specialist Appliances - BATender/Cylinders	4	8	11	6
Salvage	3	4	4	5
Road Clean up following MVA	10	17	19	22
Assist Police - SCU/Photography	5	15	12	16
Assist Police - FENZ not present	3	5	3	8
Driving - Delivering Equipment	5	4	5	5
Driving - Delivering operational crews	8	7	8	4
Assist Ambulance	1	1	2	0
First Aid	6	7	4	4
Evacuations	2	4	3	6
Ablutions	2	0	2	2



Traffic Management on a High Speed Road following a Motor Vehicle Crash



## Responses by Operational Support Vehicles

Vehicle	No of Responses				Most No of Responses in a Day			
	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
OS 1	254	326	367	434	6	5	5	5
OS 2	167	199	218	218	4	4	9	5
OS 3	145	184	185	185	3	5	4	6
OS 4	17	37	35	40	2	1	2	2

Among the responses to fires, MVA's, weather events and other emergencies, the following stand out as major or unusual incidents which the Brigade attended:

## Structure Fires

Among the many responses for the year, the following stand out as major and/or spectacular incidents:

- 3rd Alarm Warehouse fire, Portage Road New Lynn – August 2019
- Campaign Fire, International Convention Centre, Auckland CBD – October 2019
- 3rd Alarm Fire at range of shops, Manukau Road, Epsom – November 2019
- 4th Alarm Fire in Storage Units, Harris Road, East Tamaki – November 2019
- 3rd Alarm Fire in a Games Venue, Glendene – December 2019
- 3rd Alarm Shops & Flats Fire, Eden Terrace – March 2020
- 3rd Alarm Warehouse & upstairs office complex, Hugo Johnston Drive, Penrose – May 2020



House Fire - Lighting

Canteen/OS4 Responses During Covid-19 Level 4  
Do not respond unless you are well!

## Setup and Operating the Canteen

- Ensure adequate supplies of soap are present for the hand washing facility
- Using cones, arrows and pedestrian barriers (from another OS vehicle) set up a pedestrian flow path starting at the hand wash basin, down the side of the truck to the back steps, then beyond the truck for exit.
- Place rubbish bin along the exit path
- NO entry to back steps directly by any person – only via the pedestrian flow path which you have set up.
- MAXIMUM 2 persons inside the kitchen
- Gloves and masks must be worn inside the kitchen
- Ensure social distancing while serving, and encourage self-service
- Ensure hygiene rules are strictly followed by all
- Cooking MEALS will be avoided whenever possible. No meals to be cooked without the permission of the incident Officer in Charge.
- Ask Operational Support OIC to supply a person to provide outside support for the Canteen. This is a critical role to ensure people are only entering via the hand washing facility, social distancing and hygiene are being maintained, our people are wearing appropriate protection inside the kitchen, and generally checking it is running smoothly (bin not overflowing, no trip hazards, generator well away from vehicle, etc.)

## The people we serve

- Ensure they have washed their hands
- MAXIMUM one person on the back step at a time to self-serve drinks and food
- Encourage them to avoid lingering to keep any queue moving
- Greet and assist them in our usual friendly way

## Vehicle Checks

Ring Balmoral Station in advance of visiting to do vehicle checks 09-638 9546

## Extra supplies to Fireground

One of our other vehicles may be called upon to get extra supplies from Storeroom at Balmoral Station if necessary. Arrange access to Storeroom with the Balmoral SO on 09-638 9546.

## Returning the Canteen and Restocking from Storeroom

DO NOT go beyond the Engine Bay except to obtain supplies to restock from Storeroom. You must arrange access to the Storeroom with the Balmoral SO on 09-638 9546.

## Management of Auckland OSU Responses During Covid-19 Level 4

### Rationale

During the level 4 Period the following protocols apply to all Responses. One of the main reasons is to limit the number responding to each incident to minimise contacts between Brigade members and between our members and the public. If one of our people becomes infected, then everyone else who attended incidents with that person will be stood down from duty, so it's really important to minimise contact. We would struggle to operate if large numbers of our Brigade were stood down (we already have a good number unavailable due to essential service commitments and age/health risk).

### Responses in OS FENZ Vehicles

- Be careful to maintain social distancing at any fire station from which you pick up a vehicle. Wear gloves to unlock gates/ doors etc.
- When driver commences shift – wipe all relevant surfaces clean (use disposable wipes or cleaner) eg: steering wheel, dashboard & switches etc; exterior & interior door handles.
- Only one person (the Driver) is to respond in the vehicle unless the exception has been specifically authorised by CFO/DCFO.

### Responses in Your Own/ Private Vehicles

- Do not respond if you are at all unwell.
- Do not respond unless OSU has been paged.
- Be aware that Radio Operator may ask you to (a) standby or (b) K28, depending on numbers responding and on your distance from the incident (Only Officers may query such instruction from duty Radio Operator). Senior Officers may assist Radio Operators to manage attendances via radio/ phone.
- You must wear FENZ uniform in your vehicle when responding (Dark Blues or Overalls).
- Do not respond across town/ over a long distance to any First Alarm attendance which the Brigade has been paged for. For example, limit your response to the Sector of the urban area where you are (eg members living in West & North should confine responses to west and north in the first instance, etc). Officers are the exception to this protocol.
- Do not get out of your vehicle at an incident until the first full ranking member has arrived, confirmed that OS have duties to undertake, and instructed you to get to work.
- If Standing By or Awaiting Instructions at the scene – do not congregate or meet together and chat with each other.

### Working at Incidents

- Maintain social distancing (eg don't get closer than 2m to members of the public when undertaking traffic / pedestrian management; don't lean into car windows, etc).
- Wear gloves when handling every piece of equipment – no matter how small it is.
- Vehicle driver is to wipe down all door handles (interior & exterior) and locker handles with cleaner after every callout.

## 1.2 International Convention Centre Fire - Auckland CBD

### Tuesday 22 October

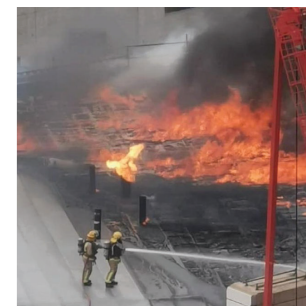
A significant fire broke out in combustible material being applied to the roof of the \$700million International Convention early in the afternoon of Tuesday 22 October. This is a very significant structure, occupying almost an entire city block bounded by Hobson-Wellesley-Nelson-Victoria Streets, which was nearing completion after a four-year construction phase. Due to a number of factors, the fire was relatively difficult to access and spread quickly. Within the first few hours fire commanders, in consultation with construction engineers, made the decision to let the roof based fire to burn itself out to avoid inherent safety risks to firefighters on and below the roof level. This was done in a controlled manner designed to avoid potential loss of the main structure itself. At that stage it was estimated that the roof would burn itself out through the night.

On that first afternoon the fire escalated to the equivalent of a 6th Alarm response, including an aerial appliance from Hamilton. The huge smoke plume was visible from several kilometres away attracting widespread public and media attention right from the initial outbreak. As the wind direction shifted to and fro, heavy smoke engulfed varying parts of the CBD.

Our Brigade response was large and busy during the Tuesday afternoon and evening with a total of 42 of our personnel on the fireground. Operational Support were fully engaged: assisting to establish water supplies and running feeders; pedestrian management; road closures and point duty/ traffic management; evacuation of premises; supplying refreshments to firefighters around the perimeter; serving meals from the Canteen vehicle. Our own command and control and radio communications functions were fully developed in order to manage this large number of personnel, undertaking such a variety of tasks, over a wide area.

Throughout the afternoon, the evacuation area grew wider. Additionally, many CBD offices and businesses closed early due to effects of smoke being drawn into aircon systems and road/ footpath closures preventing access to their premises for customers. This led to huge volumes of pedestrians swarming through heavily smoke logged streets in order to make their way home, to buses, and to cars in underground carparks, often through areas which had to be closed. The closed streets varied by the hour due to shifting wind direction and smoke travel presented several hours of busy and quite challenging work for our team. Vehicle traffic quickly became very heavy as workers headed homeward but many of their usual routes were closed and bus routes disrupted.

The first day saw a huge response from our Brigade in terms of numbers, and effort. During the early evening we even managed to deploy a crew to undertake traffic control at a 2nd Alarm fire in a downtown high-rise apartment building in addition to the Convention Centre demands.



## Health and Safety Shortcoming

Our members worked in heavy smoke throughout that afternoon. St John Ambulance services provided paper masks, but these were totally ineffective and impractical for the situation. Operational Support personnel undertaking routine duties such as traffic control regularly have to work in smoky conditions which is unavoidable. It is completely unacceptable that FENZ personnel continue refusal to issue masks suitable for these conditions, especially considering that paid and volunteer firefighters have these as standard issue based on health and safety requirements. Simplistic responses purporting that Operational Support personnel are not to work in smoky conditions are plainly out of touch with the reality of the situation.

## Wednesday to Friday: Campaign Fire – Huge Commitment from Members

Despite initial assessments, the roof fire did not burn out overnight Tuesday. The situation turned into a campaign fire which continued to burn for 3 days and nights, with the subsequent recovery phase lasting for many further days. Auckland Operational Support maintained support services onsite until the following Friday night. Round the clock meals and refreshments were served from the Canteen vehicle, security cordons maintained, and drivers collected and delivered Paid crews to/ from the fireground for every change of shift for this whole period. Many of our members came back to do multiple shifts during that period by juggling work, study, sleep and home commitments.

## Food and Refreshments

Huge volumes of donated food and drinks were served in addition to using all Canteen supplies on hand, numerous loads purchased from supermarkets, and a load brought in from Ngaruawahia in their new Canteen Vehicle. This has been the longest sustained period of operation by our volunteer people, which involved 50 members and Observers (Almost the entire Brigade membership) over a 96 hour continuous period. Unfortunately, this contribution was marred by some particularly negative and incorrect statements made to media outlets and social media channels by a number of Paid firefighters and their Union. These alleged that they had not been adequately supported, fed poor quality food, and lacked liquid refreshments. This caused considerable unhappiness in the Brigade and generated widespread commentary and questions throughout the Volunteer fire Community. Fortunately (and just before we commenced issuing our own contrary public statements), the local branch of the NZPFU issued a statement on its website and copied to the Brigade, in which it commended the support it had received from us and clarified that criticism should not be aimed at us. I have attached a copy of that as Appendix 6. We were happy to let that matter lie after receiving the statement.



The Brigade maintained a busy programme of attending and supporting events throughout the year which are detailed at Appendix 2. Events attended and/or supported were of three types:

- Fire and Emergency NZ events – fire related exercises, open days; promotional activities etc at which we provide support services – typically traffic and crowd control, and refreshments.
- Community events – public ceremonies; community parades; fundraising events by emergency service related organisations (at some of which we provide traffic control and parking marshals as fundraising opportunities). These are also typically used as training opportunities to practise STMS, TC, point duty and public relations skills.
- FENZ and UFBA related organisational meetings.

## FENZ Exercises

- 3x USAR Exercises
- Exercise – Piha
- Exercise – Tank Farm

## UFBA Events

- UFBA Conference Attendance – Christchurch
- UFBA Driver Challenge – Participation – Feilding

## Emergency Services / FENZ / Brigade Promotional Events

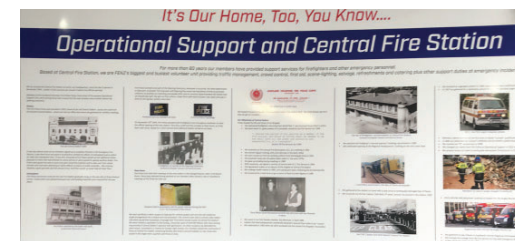
- Memorial Stairclimb Event – Auckland CBD
- Sirens and Sounds Event – Avondale
- Pacific in the Park – Massey
- Emergency Services Open Day at MOTAT – Western Springs
- Skytower Challenge
- 75th Jubilee Celebration of City Fire Station

## Fundraising for Brigade

- Howick Santa Parade – Traffic Control Services
- Weekend Promotions at Z Energy Stations – “Good in the Hood”
- “Good in the Hood” Awards Presentations
- Papatoetoe Santa Parade



Our Team in the 9-11 Memorial Stairclimb at the Skytower



Display Board about Auckland Operational Support long association with City Fire Station at the Station's 75th Jubilee celebrations

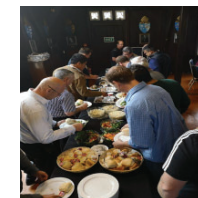


## Roster Shifts 01 July 2019 - 30 June 2020

ROSTER SHIFTS 01 July 2019 - 30 June 2020							
Rank	Name	Total Calls	DRIVER weekday	DRIVER weeknight	DRIVER weekend	RADIO	CANTEEN
FF	Michaels	265	3	2	18	3	16
SSO	CuthbertR	144		33	20		
SSO	Officer	144	1	7	80		
QFF	Harding	132	14	4	64	1	
SO	Duncan	112	136.5				
SO	ScottJ	100	2	2	18		
TRAIN	Sharma	89				13	4
SO	Christie	87	22.5	2	1		
FF	Adams	79	2		9	2	6
QFF	Bryant	78	13	9	28	4	
SSO	ScottD	76	10	5	8		
QFF	Serjeant	70	5.5	29	31		
FF	Southern	68				22	0.5
SO	Smith	65					
FF	Reyna	64					12.5
QFF	Walker	63	3		22	43	
DCFO	Bay	58	4	1			
TRAIN	Bhaktar	58				13	2
QFF	CuthbertA	56				26	
QFF	Koloamatangi	56	22	3			
FF	Sands	53					9
SO	England	47	2	41	5		
QFF	Watson	44					
CFO	Teal	43	2	3	8		
QFF	Falaniko	41				17	
QFF	Grant	41	6	1	18		8
QFF	Stillwell	39		2	4		
FF	Wallace	38				20	4
QFF	Batterbee	36		38			
QFF	Sadler	35				20	
SO	Carlyon	33	6.5		4		
QFF	Hohaia	32			28	48	
FF	Grieve	31				7	
FF	Lewis	30					
QFF	Chisnall	29	12	11	2		
QFF	O'Connor	28				20	
FF	TealJ	26				14	
QFF	Somerville	25				44	
TRAIN	Khan	24					
QFF	Potter	18	2		33		
TRAIN	Yin	18				4	4
SO	Carnell	17		33	8		
SO	Chan See	17				16	
FF	Nand	17				10	
TRAIN	Jones	16					2
TRAIN	Schellingerhout	12					
TRAIN	Adair	8					
FF	Mellars	5				43	2
TRAIN	Tanielu	4					3

### Unwinding Afterwards

The Brigade cancelled a scheduled November muster and replaced it with an informal dinner and drinks evening at the Selwyn Library in Parnell at which members could catch-up, relax and reflect on the success of their part in this Campaign Fire.



### 1.3 Global Pandemic- Special Protocols

As the global pandemic escalated, the NZ government adopted a strategy of 'Elimination' and in late March introduced a system of Alert Levels, each Level involving a higher degree of restriction on movement, business and social interaction. The country rapidly went to Alert Level 4 at midnight 25 March when everyone other than essential service workers were required to stay home in isolated 'bubbles' for 5 weeks. This had several effects on the Brigade and its operations.

#### Reduced Response Capability

The Brigade operated with an approximately 30% reduction in membership availability during this period. This was a result of:

- All members subject to immune compromised health conditions and those 70 aged years or over, were stood down from active duty by FENZ due to the more severe effects of the Covid-19 virus on people in these categories;
- Most employers of workers in essential services required their staff to forgo involvement in voluntary activities in order to maintain workforce availability;
- A portion of the crew is always unavailable at any one time for personal or medical reasons. Fortunately, the much-reduced level of business activity and traffic volumes, resulted in an unusually quiet period for FENZ services generally, so these reductions had no adverse operational effect.

#### Special Protocols

The Brigade instituted two special protocols:

- Highly Managed Response Protocol. Numbers of personnel responding were severely limited to ensure that only the absolute minimum number of personnel required at an incident were initially dispatched, and then only got to work once it was established that support duties were absolutely required. This protocol sought to maximise members' safety by minimizing potential exposure through breaking of bubbles. Furthermore, if exposure had unavoidably occurred to a response group then our overall response capability would not have been overly affected due to the small numbers involved.
- Canteen/ Food Handling Protocol. Highly controlled handwashing, queuing, preparation, serving and separation arrangements were put in place to protect everyone involved.

Area management adopted and included these protocols in the overall arrangements for the Level 4 & 3 periods. Copies of the Protocols are included as Appendix 3.

#### Impact on Individuals

Happily, only one member's household suffered Covid infection and has made a recovery.

Several members and / or partners have lost their jobs through Covid related cutbacks while several others are on reduced hours.

Overall morale was somewhat affected due to not being able to meet or train in person. The ability to meet and interact would have helped members process the untimely death of our member Will Maxwell-Steel more effectively. Two Brigade meetings were held via Zoom in order to at least maintain some contact.

#### 1.4 Member Participation at Incidents – Attendance, Vehicle and Radio Operator Duties

In order to undertake the support services we provide, it is necessary that every operational member fully participates and contributes to our attendance at incidents which we are dispatched to. Appendix 1 details the level of activity by individual members as measured by:

- Response to incidents
- Radio Operator Duties (number of shifts worked)
- Emergency Driver duties on First Response vehicles (number of shifts rostered on duty)
- Canteen Driver and Assistant duties (number of weeks rostered on duty).

The many hours of time contributed by members, both in being available on-call and in actually attending incidents reflects the enormous commitment given to making the Brigade successful.

#### 1.5 Training

There is a continuous emphasis on training to ensure that all members are fully competent and confident to undertake the **full** range of support duties which Operational Support is mandated to provide. This is especially relevant given the reality that the Brigade will continue to include a significant number of relatively inexperienced members (with less than 5 years' service).

In addition to regular Monday night training, weekend courses were held for Site Traffic Management Supervisor and Traffic Controller Qualifications, First Aid, and the annual Skills Development Weekend.

With the prohibitions on gatherings during levels 4 and 3, and corresponding social distancing requirements during level 2, Brigade Training was severely disrupted from March to the end of the financial year. During that time members were encouraged to complete the relevant on-line training modules.

Trainee members have been undertaking targeted training in basic skills in preparation for attendance at TAPS courses at National Training Centre. Members who have completed the TAPS course and demonstrated suitable incident attendance and skills attainment have been progressed to FF (OS) rank as described in Section 2.3 below.

The Brigade is fortunate that five of our members (DCFO Ross Bay, SSO Dan Scott, SSO Richard Cuthbert, SO Chris England, QFF Matt Walker) are FENZ qualified Trainers and regularly train recruits at the TAPS courses for Operational Support held at National Training Centre in Rotorua. That is on a paid basis. Their skills are regularly utilised in training our Brigade.



Training: Portable Dams

#### 4.3 Replacement of Vehicle – Operational Support 1

The new Mercedes Van landed in NZ in late May 2020 and is currently being fitted out by FENZ. The Brigade will welcome this replacement. It which has been 2 years in gestation and will replace the 11-year-old Ford van which travelled more than 240,000km and is frequently off the road due to maintenance and breakdowns.

#### 4.4 Engagement of Members – Facebook Group

A closed Facebook group will be launched in the following Financial Year to provide a social / informal forum for us to share photos/ stories/ anecdotes etc.

#### 4.5 'Ideas from Members' Initiative

The success of this as a means for ideas to be proposed by members for investigation by the Management Committee has demonstrated its ongoing value. Further improvements to services and equipment will continue.

#### 4.6 Operational Support

Planning for Operational Support inclusion in 'Rehabilitation Sector' at major incidents and at campaign fires, including:

- Redesign of Canteen Vehicle
- Contract for provision of toilets by private sector contractors at campaign fires
- Backup food service for campaign fires.

#### 4.7 Core Skills Training

Provision of Core Skills Training to Operational Support Personnel from Areas 3, 4 and 5.

#### 5.0 Conclusion

This is a strange year to report on for the Brigade because it has been completely dominated by two events- the Convention Centre fire and the Global Pandemic.

Despite the slowdown due to the Pandemic, we still assisted at 528 incidents, helped at events, maintained our skills, and ran a great Brigade. All this was possible due to our combined effort and enthusiasm. The Brigade's future looks good.

Thanks to you all

Glenn Teal  
CFO Auckland Operational Support Unit  
and Auckland Volunteer Fire Brigade Incorporated.

### 3.0 Thanks and Acknowledgments

Year on year a huge contribution made by members enables this Brigade to continue its high level of activity and maintain its success.

Thank you all for your contribution and commitment to the following:

- Driving rosters to maintain vehicle response
- Radio Operator rosters to manage the responses and assist the incident OIC's
- Training Team who keep our skills current and our Trainees prepared for TAPs courses
- Management Committee and Portfolio Holders who keep the myriad of 'back office' functions running well
- Station Officers who manage people and operations at incidents
- Senior Officers Group (DCFO and SSO's) who run the Brigade from day to day

Thanks again to the Area Management team, especially AM Richard Twomey and AAM Roger Callister, for their encouragement, support, and having an open door for us.

## 4.0 Looking Forward – Brigade Priorities for 2020-2021 Business Year

### 4.1 OSH – Protection from Smoke Hazards

The highest risk outstanding health and safety matter is the exposure of our members to unavoidable smoke and toxins when undertaking normal duties at incidents. Despite the efforts of our Area Manager, issue of safe masks has been stymied by both the Regional Health and Safety Committee and by the refusal of National Training Centre to measure our members for mask issue.

Wind direction and smoke plumes often change during incidents which results in our volunteers being exposed to risks while undertaking traffic control (even at distant locations) and other duties around firegrounds. It is simply not possible to avoid working in smoky conditions at all times so we all must continue to make balanced, careful judgement calls at incidents.

Comments from some that Operational Support personnel shouldn't be working in smoke are simply impractical. Despite this being raised as an issue at the high profile Convention Centre fire, all requests to FENZ to address this have been rejected.

### 4.2 Completion of Revision of Turnout Protocols

Firecom and the Planning and Intelligence Unit are currently altering the turnout protocols to both eliminate some responses to distant zones and to alter the way in which Auckland Operational Support is dispatched. Elimination of auto response to distant zones is part of the work commenced at the beginning of the 2019-20 year. Other changes were implemented at that time (refer Section 1.1).

### 1.6 Honours

#### National Drivers' Challenge

Nigel Hohaia won the Braking Test Event at the National Drivers' Challenge in August. He was one of a team of three from our Brigade who took part in the annual contest organised by the United Fire Brigades' Association. In taking out the Braking Test, Nigel beat 100 competitors from brigades throughout the country. The Drivers' Challenge is held in controlled conditions at Manfeild Circuit and Event 10 simulates emergency braking. Nigel won the trophy with the quickest reaction time and shortest distance even though he competed in an appliance very different to the Auckland Operational Support vehicles he is accustomed to.



Our Competitors in the Drivers Challenge: QFF's Mark Potter, Nigel Hohaia (Winner of Event 10), Dean Serjeant

#### Celebrating Success Awards (Te Hiku)

The Te Hiku Region of FENZ made its inaugural 'Celebrating Success' Awards in December. Awards are made for having made an Outstanding Contribution in five different categories. CFO Glenn Teal and DCFO Ross Bay were jointly recognised as having made an Outstanding Contribution by being granted the supreme award in the 'Leadership' category "In recognition of inspirational and outstanding leadership". It was announced that Glenn and Ross took out the Region-wide Leadership Award for their dedication and achievement leading the biggest and busiest brigade in the country. At the awards ceremony Area Manager Richard Twomey said, "Both lead busy lives, Glenn in business and Ross as Anglican Bishop of Auckland, yet they successfully oversee what's arguably the most diverse brigade in FENZ, providing invaluable support services to the organisation across Auckland. In keeping with the aims of the Leadership Award, their efforts, their achievements and their inspiration to others, makes them top in this category across the Region".

In accepting the Award, Glenn Teal acknowledged that leadership depends on the work of all members in the team, all of whom are volunteers, and he hoped the Award would also draw attention to the benefits of Operational Support and to the strength of volunteerism.

They were also finalists in the 'Operational Efficiency' category.



CFO Glenn Teal and DCFO Ross Bay with Region Manager Ron Devlin after receiving the award for an Outstanding Contribution in the Leadership category "In recognition of inspirational and outstanding leadership" at the Te Hiku Celebrating Success Awards.

## 1.7 Improvements Implemented from Members' Suggestions

The implementation of an online mechanism for members to make suggestions to improve equipment and operational efficiencies (called the "Ideas Generator" ) has been very successful during the Year as summarised by:

- 75 ideas nominated to Management Committee by members
- 21 approved following investigation and implemented
- 9 collected for consideration as part of project to upgrade the Canteen Vehicle
- 14 declined after investigation
- 26 under investigation at end of Financial Year.

## 2.0 Brigade Membership

### 2.1 Membership Changes during 2019-20

During the year the Brigade took on 6 new trainee members, and farewelled 9 members (including two of those taken on during the year). Additionally one member rejoined two months after resigning in order to move to Australia. The pandemic changed his plans. Membership movements are detailed in Appendix 4.

The Recruitment Panel has continued to respond to good numbers of membership enquiries and sought to bring forward the most appropriate candidates for membership by assessing attitude as well as practical and mental skills.

Members continue to move on for a variety of reasons including transferring to other brigades, relocation of workplace, and in some cases recognition that they simply cannot keep up the level of participation required in light of their other commitments.

### 2.2 Observer Program Prior to Commencement of Recruitment Process

This approach to recruitment is now in its fifth year and working well for us. This approach involves bringing suitable candidates on as 'observers' for a 6-8 week period during which they attend incidents, training, and meetings etc with us with a view to establishing whether the Operational Support role and commitment is really what they want. We also take the opportunity to observe their levels of participation and attitude etc during that time. One of the main objectives of this approach is to reduce churn and the wasted effort and expense which accompanies churn.

We have run several groups of applicants through this observer programme with good results. Of the 14 people who participated in the Observer Programme, 7 progressed to become members of the brigade.

It is notable that some of our most frequent incident responders continue to come from this Programme.

## 2.3 Progression

### New Appointments

We again congratulate all the appointments and progressions achieved in 2019 -20 which are listed below.

**Trainee Firefighter to Firefighter (OS)**  
Garreth Lewis 21/07/2019

## 2.4 Life Events

### Engagements

QFF Dean Serjeant to Melissa Dickie

## 2.5 Passing of William Maxwell-Steele

Will joined our Observers Programme in September 2019 and immediately proved to be a very keen learner and participant in the Brigade. Over the following 6 months he attended 65 incidents, undertook Radio duties and canteen shifts and picked up this role many times during weekdays when no other members were rostered on this duty. We were very surprised to receive his unexpected resignation in February 2020 and then shocked and saddened to learn of his passing a few days later.

In the short time with the Brigade, Will made a big contribution and made a good number of friends. The grief of his passing led to a level of upset among part of our membership which we are now moving past. The support services available through FENZ have been offered confidentiality and repeatedly. A number of members attended a memorial function for Will. He is missed.

I was overseas on a holiday when this occurred and for the immediate period afterwards. I want to acknowledge the great work done by DCFO Ross Bay in providing pastoral support and leadership to many during that time and subsequently. I also acknowledge Goretch Keir (FENZ HR) for his ongoing assistance over the subsequent months.