

Auckland Volunteer Fire Brigade Inc & Auckland Operational Support



Annual Report

Annual Report of Chief Fire Officer Glenn Teal for 2023-2024

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*Figure 1 (Cover page) - Fifth alarm at Green Gorilla, Onehunga, February 2024.
Photo Courtesy of Hayden Woodward*

“ **We are a unique Brigade – undertaking support services but not hot firefighting. We don’t have a station. Individual members have 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 2023 – 2024

1.1 Emergency Responses

The primary purpose for which the Brigade exists is to provide support services 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 564 incidents during the 2023-2024 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. We continue to be a very busy volunteer fire brigade!

The 564 responses is almost the same total as the previous year (562) but include a 12% increase in Structure Fires. This increase was offset by corresponding reductions in the number of Weather-Related Events and responses to Power Wires Down. This reflects the absence of major storm events which were such a big part of the previous year.



Figure 2 - Traffic management at Waterloo Quadrant, 2nd Alarm Fire at the Pullman Hotel - July 2023

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

	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Motor Vehicle Crash	169	171	184	188
Structure Fire	289	258	238	224
Power Lines Down	21	34	22	13
Effects of Weather	8	33	21	12
Gas Leak	18	4	5	9
Hazardous Substance, Chemical Spill, Fuel Spill	11	7	5	8
Vegetation Fire	16	13	31	22
Emergency	9	9	2	2
Rescue (Non MVC)	3	2	3	4
Fire (unspecified)	10	13	5	2
Vehicle Fire	4	7	10	8
Assist Police (without other FENZ attendance)	2	3	0	0
Flooding	2	5	2	0
Medical	2	3	3	0
Total	564	562	531	492



Figure 3 – FF Ben Ale cooking for crews at a major vegetation fire, Kawakawa Bay - March 2024

Duties Performed at Incidents

	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Traffic Management or Road Closure	376	386	357	322
Light Refreshments - (not from Canteen)	210	192	177	139
Pedestrian & Crowd Management	101	93	83	87
Lighting	56	62	83	59
Waterways - Making Up	50	52	44	51
Other Fireground Duties not specified elsewhere	34	42	35	27
Security of Appliances / Buildings / Property / Scene	18	14	37	31
Road Clean-up Following MVA	20	25	27	17
Canteen - Refreshments	27	18	14	23
Specialist Appliances - ICP / Command Unit	17	19	22	14
Canteen - Meals	14	11	11	15
Ablutions	12	9	11	14
Assist Police - SCU / Photography	4	13	10	9
Waterways - Running Feeders / Deliveries	9	8	5	13
Waterways - Hose Ramps	26	3	0	0
Salvage	1	5	5	8
Absorbent	6	9	4	0
Leaf blower	18	0	0	0
Waterways - Ship Standpipes	4	4	3	6
Driving - Delivering Equipment	4	5	4	1
Driving - Delivering Fire Crews	2	2	4	6
Assist Police - no other FENZ resources present	0	9	1	3
First Aid	4	5	1	3



Figure 4- QFF Joshua Teal and SO Ian Batterbee preparing meals at a long duration Police incident, Glen Eden – October 2023

Responses by Operational Support Vehicles

Vehicle	Number of Responses				Most Number of Responses in a Day			
	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
AUCKOSU1	217	253	253	234	5	4	7	4
AUCKOSU2	198	157	188	183	4	4	4	5
AUCKOSU3	185	187	148	104	4	4	4	3
AUCKOSU4	39	26	24	30	2	2	2	2
AUCKOSU7	17	12	14	14	1	1	1	1
AUCKOSU8	0	1	5	0	0	1	1	0

Major and Notable Incidents

Among the responses to fires, MVC's, weather events and other emergencies, I usually list incidents the Brigade attended during the year which stand out as being major or unusual. This year has been one of "business as usual" with a lot of Second Alarm house fires, and some Third Alarm structure fires, but relatively few incidents of special note. Those of note or long duration include:

- Major Gas Leak, Customs St East, CBD (4.5 hours) – 24/08/23
- Person in Tree/Possible Self Harm, Longfellow Rd, Glen Eden (8 hours) – 07/10/23
- 5th Alarm Structure and Waste Materials fire, Green Gorilla, Victoria St, Onehunga (24.5 hours) – 07 & 08/02/24
- Major Vegetation Fire, Kawakawa Bay Rd, Kawakawa Bay (12 hours) – 30 & 31/03/24
- Major Vegetation Fire, Kaipara Coast Highway (10.75 hours) – 11/04/24

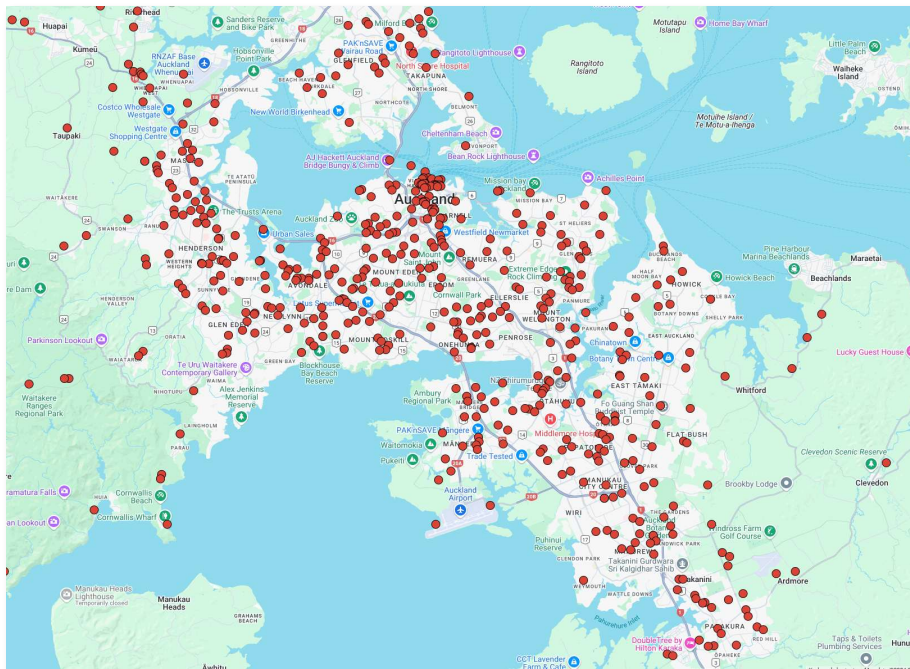


Figure 5 - locations of our 564 turnouts during FY 2023-24

1.2 Brigade Events and Activities

Outside of Brigade operational and organisational duties, our members continue to participate in many other events including social activities; FENZ and UFBA events; and fundraising.

These events included:

- A celebration of the 90th Anniversary of the Brigade followed the 2023 AGM.
- Delegates attended the UFBA Conference and the Auckland Provincial Conference.
- A team entered the UFBA Driver Competition.
- We mounted a display about our Brigade and assisted with safety duties at the “150 years of firefighting in Auckland” open day at Queens Wharf.
- Participated in the 9/11 Stairclimb.
- Held Brigade family BBQ/Picnic at Coyle Park.
- Undertook ushering/ security duties at Eden Park to raise funds.
- Participated in fundraising during the Z Energy “Good in the Hood” promotion - with thanks to Aiga Energy Limited for their continued support.

A selection of photos of members at these events follows



Figure 6 – SO Srik Bhaktar helping our brigade at 'Good in the Hood'



Figure 7 - CFO Glenn Teal and QFF Joshua Teal raising public awareness of the brigade



Figure 8 - QFF Ricky Dragland promoting the brigade



Figure 9 - Brigade Picnic/BBQ at Coyle Park in March 2024



Figure 10 - Members playing cricket during Picnic/BBQ at Coyle Park



Figure 11 – Brigade Display at the '150 years of Firefighting in Auckland' event.
The Cloud, Queens Wharf - February 2024



Figure 12 - Members running a display at the 2024 Diwali event

90th Anniversary of the Brigade

We marked the 90th anniversary with a low-key ceremony which followed the 2023 AGM. Ric Carlyon (a fire services history buff) and Patron David Neil spoke of the formation and history of the Auckland Volunteer Fire Police Corps and the Auckland Operational Support Unit. It was noted that achievement of 90 years is truly outstanding given that many other volunteer fire brigades and other organisations have and continue to falter and fail these days.

Supper followed which included a celebration cake which was symbolically cut by the existing and past CFO's and DCFO's who were present (left to right - Ross Bay, Jim Smith, Glenn Teal, John Pendleton, Ric Carlyon,).



Figure 13 – The cutting of our 90th Anniversary cake - August 2023



Figure 143 - The 90 Anniversary cake



Figure 15 – SO Ric Carylon speaks of the events of past years at the Brigade's 90th anniversary



Figure 16 – Members, Life Honourary Members, and guests attending the Brigade's 90th AGM

1.3 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 person 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.

1.4 Training

Regular training remains an essential part of the programme in order to ensure member confidence and competence in Operational Support duties and tasks as per OSM, plus some additional skills such as traffic control and Canteen vehicle operation.

Nigel Bernie, Srik Bhaktar, Ricky Dragland and David O'Connor, undertook the Heavy Vehicle ERD course, and Mike Adair, Melani Falaniko, Abel Reyna and Joshua Teal the Light Vehicle ERD course. Given the nature of our operation it takes considerable time and effort to get these drivers through their 12 supervised urgent response drives after course completion. FF Schellingerhout and our Recruit Firefighters Clarke and Stapleton successfully completed the TAPS course at National Training Centre.

Our Training Team members are all qualified instructors for the OS TAPS course at National Training Centre, so our training programme is of a high standard.

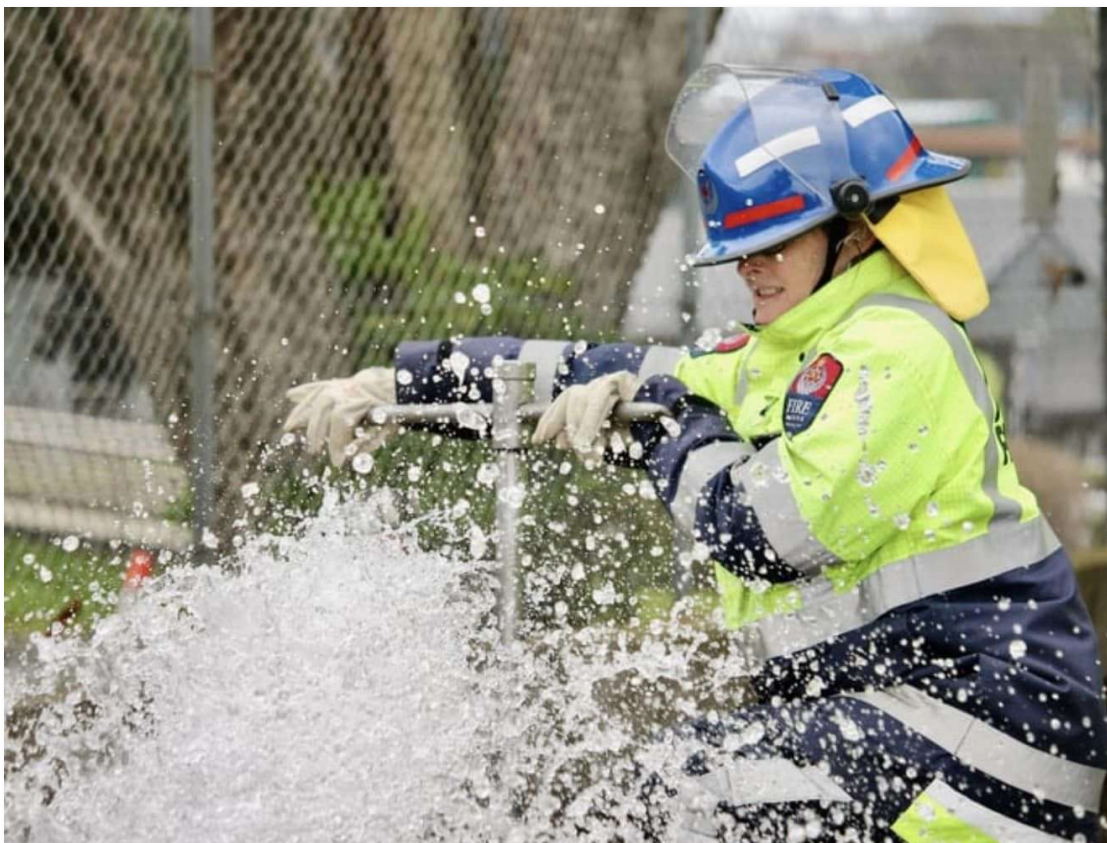


Figure 17 - SO Mary Harding during training



Figure 18 - Members establishing an improvised dam during training

1.5 Honouring Members

Ric Carlyon – Retired after 42 years of Service

Ric joined the Auckland Volunteer Fire Police Corps in 1981. By that time, he was already very well known throughout the NZ Fire Service community, especially in Auckland but also nationally, because of the extensive coverage of “all things fire” which he had provided over many years as a journalist. Ric immediately became a very active and valuable member of the Corps.

With the passing of the then officer in charge, NZFS executives were keen to encourage a modernisation of the Fire Police operation and for it to develop additional roles which would enhance and add value to Fire Service operations across Auckland. Ric was appointed with the rank of Divisional Officer as the OIC Fire Police in 1989. The appropriateness of this appointment was obvious – Ric was a very senior executive manager (Head of TV News and Current Affairs), passionate and active in the Fire Police, and widely known and respected across the NZFS.

So commenced the modernisation and development journey into the highly successful and valued Brigade we have today. His first act was to introduce a rank structure paralleling the rest of the NZFS with the appointment of three Senior Station Officers – John Pendleton, Jim Smith, and Glenn Teal, two of whom followed him in the Brigade OIC role and continued the improvement and development programme which he commenced.



*Figure 19 – Auckland Fire Police executive officers, 1990.
Left to right – SSO Glenn Teal, SO Alan Baldick, SSO John Pendleton, DO Ric Carlyon, SSO Jim Smith*

Under Ric’s leadership, Brigade meetings and fireground operations became well organised and run. Portfolios and subcommittees were introduced to more systematically and professionally manage matters such as recruitment and training. One of the most significant developments was the expansion of responses to include Motor Vehicle Crashes and associated duties. As a part time Traffic Officer at Mt Albert Borough Council, Ric was well placed to lead this innovation.

Ric left the Brigade in 1996 when his employment took him offshore and rejoined on his subsequent return to NZ. With the change of OIC in 2010, Ric was appointed DCFO, held several portfolios and assisted with implementation of many more changes and improvements to the Brigade operation. During these years Ric was active in the wider fire community with the Auckland Provincial, and the United Fire Brigades’ Association. Ric served 6 years as an appointed director of the UFBA.

When Ric started planning for his eventual retirement, a succession plan was implemented whereby he gradually stepped down over several years rather than suddenly relinquishing all leadership roles.

He moved from DCFO to SSO for several years and then to SO prior to retirement in October 2023. In this way his wisdom and experience were retained within the leadership group and were available to new and younger officers as they were appointed and gained experience. During recent years Ric served as Brigade Meetings Secretary.

Ric's contribution to this Brigade has been enormous. His extensive contribution and retirement will be marked at the forthcoming Honours function to be held on 9 November 2024.

His commitment, sense of responsibility, humour, and friendship will be missed.

We wish our Life Honourary Member Ric a very happy retirement!!



Figure 204 - Ric Carlyon in 2007, receiving his 25-year Gold Star

Glenn Teal – Awarded Membership of the New Zealand Order of Merit

It is an honour and a privilege to have been awarded this Royal Honour for services to FENZ and for services to the community. Although the MNZM has been given to me, in reality it is a recognition of the work of all volunteers in the Auckland Operational Support Unit and the work of many people in the charitable businesses which I am involved in.

The Citation for the Award reads:

For services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and the community

Mr Glenn Teal has been Chief Fire Officer of the Auckland Operational Support Unit (OSU) since 2010, having joined the preceding Auckland Volunteer Fire Police Corps in 1979.

The Auckland Operational Support Unit (OSU) comprises 60 volunteer members and provides 24/7 support to Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) personnel and other emergency services across Auckland. Mr Teal's leadership has ensured the seamless operation of the unit across the wide and diverse Super City region. He helped formulate FENZ's first comprehensive basic training and progression system for Operational Support personnel in 2011, still in use today. He was on the committee which instigated a national standard for FENZ Operational Support personnel apparel. He established an Observer Programme to drive recruitment, introducing potential recruits to the unit's in-field activities. He led projects to upgrade the unit's stand-alone radio network, refurbish OSU premises, and replace brigade vehicles in 2023. He mobilised OSU resources to directly assist following the 2010 Christchurch earthquake and during the 2019 Marlborough wildfires. He oversaw measures to ensure the Auckland OSU could continue to provide full support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Teal has applied his property and investment expertise in voluntary and professional capacities to charities, including the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle Trust Board for 36 years and Laidlaw College Foundation for 18 years.



Figure 21 - CFO Glenn Teal, receiving the New Zealand Order of Merit, from the Governor General



Figure 22 – CFO Glenn Teal with his wife Philippa at Government House. Families provide huge support to our volunteers.

Service Honours

No honours presentation ceremony was held in 2023-24, there having been two functions during the previous year. The next will take place on 9 November 2024.



2.0 Brigade Membership

2.1 Membership Changes during 2023 - 2024

During the year the Brigade welcomed 2 new members and farewelled 7 members. Membership movements are detailed in Appendix 2.

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.



3.0 Brigade Vehicles

Highest Priority: Replacement of the Ultralite Vehicles.

Both existing Ultralite vehicles are past their useful life. The difficulties in maintaining operational response and maintaining Brigade morale were fully documented in several previous years' reports.

Action was finally initiated following a meeting in March 2023 where we had the opportunity to make a presentation about the situation to the FENZ National Commander Russell Wood, all of the Regional Managers, and DM Vaughan Mackereth.

A funded project has been underway for several months by National Fleet to specify and procure a prototype vehicle for Auckland Operational Support based on the Iveco Daily model. The detailed configuration of the lockers, vehicle stowage etc has been led by the National Fleet Engineer and supported with specific input from 4 of our members who regularly drive our Ultralites (SSO Allan Officer, SSO Richard Cuthbert, SO Chris England and SO Ian Batterbee) and have the most practical experience of our vehicle requirements over the past 10 years. CFO Glenn Teal and DCFO Ross Bay are involved in this Working Group as Brigade management representatives.

Once delivered in October / November, activities will focus on final stowage and equipment replacement. Once ready for service, all urgent qualified and trainee drivers will undertake a structured familiarisation/ induction programme with a view to having the new vehicle in service from Balmoral for the forthcoming summer.



Figure 5 - Replacement vehicle for one of our aging ultralites, during construction - September 2024



4.0 Thanks for your Contributions and Commitment to our Future Sustainability

This report records and recognises the huge contribution made by members which ensures our Brigade maintains its high level of activity and success.

Thank you all for your contribution and commitment. It's a team effort.

We are very proud that our volunteer Brigade has now been operating successfully for 91 years. We have a very unusual niche role within FENZ and within the setting where we operate, which is a metropolitan region of 1.5 million residents largely served by career/paid firefighting staff, rather than volunteers.

To ensure ongoing success in future generations we must be continuously working on several key elements

- Delivering support services which are wanted and appreciated by our stakeholders
- Executing delivery of service very well due to our training, skills, and good attitudes
- Identifying and implementing new services which assist our firefighter colleagues
- Maintaining good relationships with all parts of the FENZ community
- Maintaining full participation by all members
- Sharing the workload and responsibility and creating opportunities for members to learn new skills and have interesting experiences.

During this year we have made great progress with several aspects which enhance the future sustainability of our Brigade and pave the way for succession to all roles:

- Appointment of 5 new Station Officers – Ian Batterbee, Srikant Bhaktar, Jack Bryant, Mary Harding, and David O'Connor
- Rotation of several portfolios between Members for experience and interest
- More delegation of roles and devolution of authority for operation of the Brigade – there are now 24 members who are actively involved each holding a Portfolio (this delegation is additional to operational fireground roles held by ranking officers)
- Nine drivers completed the ERD Course

Thanks again to DM Vaughan Mackereth and GM Barry Fox, for the large amount of support and assistance which they give to us – we appreciate it! Thanks for having an open door to us.

*Glenn Teal
CFO Auckland Operational Support
Chairperson Auckland Volunteer Fire Brigade Incorporated
September 2024*

Appendix 1: Operational Activity by Members

Incident Attendance and Roster Shifts

Financial Year 01 July 2023 - 30 June 2024							
Rank	Name	Calls	Driver	Driver	Driver	Radio	Canteen
			weekday	weeknight	weekend		
SO	Batterbee	224	11	44	6		
SSO	Officer	129	3	4	51		
SSO	CuthbertR	118		34	10		
QFF	Akroyd	103				11	2
SO	Harding	101	5	6	34		
QFF	Bean	91	11	5			
RFF	Stapleton	90					
SO	England	89	46	48	1		
RFF	Clarke	81					5
SO	Walker	79		1	24		
QFF	Reyna	75	25	4			11
QFF	Koloamatangi	74	12	1			
SSO	Scott	74	8		2		
SO	Bhaktar	70	4	2	44		1
QFF	Schellingerhout	66				31	
DCFO	Bay	63					
SO	Bryant	59	19	4	16	1	
QFF	CuthbertA	58				26	
QFF	Kitchen	58				6	1
CFO	Teal	58			4		
QFF	Sharma	53		5	27	61	
	AdamsC	51	5	5			3
QFF	Southen	50	3		42	4	
QFF	Hadler	48				2	2
QFF	TealJ	48			16	19	
QFF	Stillwell	47					
SO	Christie	45	25	4			
QFF	Bernie	44	3	1	32		
SO	OConnor	44	22			11	
	Ozpinar	44				3	
QFF	Dragland	43	7	5	13	8	3
QFF	Kumar	40				12	
QFF	Watson	40					
QFF	Adams	39	1	29	1		

FF	Balasubramani	38				9	
QFF	Hohaia	38	1		30		
SO	SmithJ	34	9				
QFF	Grant	32			36		3
FF	Parker	31					1
QFF	Falaniko	30	9	2			
	ScottJ	30			5		
QFF	Adair	28	11	4			
FF	Ale	27				4	3
QFF	Richards	27				7	
QFF	Somerville	25				44	
	Callaghan	22	5			21	
FF	Dilsook	22				4	1
QFF	Serjeant	21	5	11	13		
RFF	Taio	16				6	
QFF	Potter	13			22		
FF	Allen	9					1
QFF	Lewis	9					
RFF	SharmaE	9				6	
	Carlyon	7	1			3	
	Prabakaran	7					
	McCormack	6					
	Harvey	5					
RFF	Holloway	5					
	Davies	3				3	2
SO (NO)	Duncan	3					
VBS	Wallace	3				20	
OBSVR	Ferris						
	Foster						
	Koppens						
OBSVR	Maea						
VBS	Mellars					46	
OBSVR	Page						
VBS	Sadler					20	
OBSVR	Wilkie						

Appendix 2: Membership Changes From 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024

Members Joining

Name	Date	Previous FENZ Service
Brett Clarke	22/02/2024	-
Scott Stapleton	22/02/2024	-

Members Leaving

Name	Date	Years of Service with Auckland OSU	Reason
Justin Scott	2/10/23	6 Years	Work and other Commitments
Jessica Davies-Shirley	16/10/23	2 Yrs 7 Mths	Work Commitments
Ric Carlyon	30/10/23	42 Years	Retirement
Brooke Koppens	20/11/23	6 Mths	Resignation
Carl Adams	24/1/24	2 Years	Transferred to Titirangi
Eren Ozpinar	7/2/24	1 Yr 4 Mths	Transferred to Titirangi
Ciaran Callaghan	22/4/24	3 Yrs 8 Mths	Personal Matters

Members Joining from Observer Programme

Name	Outcome
Brett Clarke	Became a Recruit
Ralph Wilson	Did not continue with the Programme
Scott Stapleton	Became a Recruit
Purushoth Prabakaran	Did not continue with the Programme
Sanket Mankar	Did not continue with the Programme
George McCormack	Did not continue with the Programme

Progression

Recruit to Firefighter

Name	Date
Ben Ale	24/Jul/2023
Sunita Dilsook	24/Jul/2023
Eren Ozpinar	24/Jul/2023
Ilia Parker	24/Jul/2023
Senthil Balasubramani	31/Jul/2023

Firefighter to Qualified Firefighter

Name	Date
Michael Adair	18/Dec/2023
Carl Adams	18/Dec/2023
Terence Akroyd	18/Dec/2023
Troy Bean	18/Dec/2023
Nigel Bernie	18/Dec/2023
Ricky Dragland	18/Dec/2023
Mary Kitchen	18/Dec/2023
Ash Kumar	18/Dec/2023
Caitlin Richards	18/Dec/2023
Jason Schellingerhout	18/Dec/2023

Qualified Firefighter to Station Officer

Name	Date
Srik Bhaktar	31/Jul/2023
Jack Bryant	31/Jul/2023
Mary Harding	31/Jul/2023
Ian Batterbee	31/Jul/2023
David O'Connor	31/Jul/2023

Members to Brigade Support

Name	Date
Leslea Wallace	26/Feb/2024

Appendix 3: Life Events

Babies born

Name	Gender	Name	Date
Dean Serjeant & Mel	Boy	Mason	12/Oct/2023
Ricky Dragland	Boy	Winston	27/Jul/2023
Jason Schellingerhout	Boy	Oliver	31/Dec/2023

Marriages

Name	To	Date
Jack Bryant	Hazel	-

Appendix 4: Portfolios Held 2023 – 2024

CFO Teal	Brigade Leadership and Management Liaison with FENZ Executive Management Rosters Management Committee Chairperson (Ex Officio) Te Hiku Volunteerism Working Group
DCFO Bay	Brigade Leadership and Management Liaison with FENZ Executive Management Management Committee (Ex Officio) Oversight of Recruitment; Leave Management;
SSO Officer	Oversight of Operational Readiness Brigade Treasurer (Management Committee Position)
SSO Cuthbert	Health, Safety and Wellbeing
SSO Scott	Brigade Training Manager Oversight of OSM Compliance
SO Smith	Technical Advisor re Communications
SO England	Portfolio: Driver Training
SO Duncan (Support)	Portfolio: Vehicles
SO Christie	Portfolios: Welfare; Meetings Secretary
SO Walker	Portfolio: Communications Management Committee (CFO Appointee); Portfolios: Uniform & PPE; Rosters Assistant Member FENZ Women's Network Exec.
SO Harding	Portfolio: Uniform & PPE
SO O'Connor	Portfolio: Website Technical Manager
SO Batterbee	Management Committee (Elected); Portfolios: Recruitment, Ideas Generator
SO Bryant	Management Committee (Elected); Portfolio: Equipment
SO Bhaktar	Honours and Attendance Secretary (Management Committee Position)
QFF Watson	Management Committee (Elected); Portfolio: Events Management
QFF Sharma	Management Committee (Elected); Portfolios- Social Media, Brigade Rooms
FF Richards	Portfolio: Data Management and Compliance (SMS & OSM Records)
FF Bernie	Portfolio: Canteen Vehicle Operations
QFF Grant	Portfolio: Fundraising
QFF Potter	Portfolio: Catering/ Suppers/ Hospitality
FF Dragland	Portfolio: UFBA Representative
FF Allen	Portfolio: AMS
QFF Lewis	

Committees

Training Committee:

DCFO Bay
SSO Scott
SSO Cuthbert
SO Walker
SO England
QFF Potter

Vehicle Configuration Committee:

SO England
SSO Officer
SSO Cuthbert
SO Batterbee
CFO Teal (Ex Officio)
DCFO Bay (Ex Officio)



Auckland Volunteer Fire Brigade Inc
Auckland Operational Support

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