



**Note** This Day One policy was reviewed and approved as part of the implementation of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017. The policy will be further reviewed and updated by 1 July 2020.

## Introduction

**When to use** All operational personnel must follow this policy when responding to fires and designated emergencies across boundaries.

**Key personnel and roles** This document uses generic roles, which map to the following ranks or titles. There's no implied hierarchy within the rows of this table.

Generic role	Title/group	
Senior Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCE Service Delivery</li> <li>Members of the National Commander's Group</li> <li>Region Manager</li> </ul>	
	Urban rank	Rural title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area Commander</li> <li>Assistant Area Commander</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal Rural Fire Officer</li> <li>Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer</li> </ul>
Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Fire Officer</li> <li>Deputy Chief Fire Officer</li> <li>Senior Station Officer</li> <li>Station Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voluntary Rural Fire Force Controller</li> <li>Voluntary Rural Fire Force Deputy Controller</li> <li>Rural Fire Officer</li> </ul>
Non-Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Firefighter</li> <li>Qualified Firefighter</li> <li>Firefighter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crew Leader</li> <li>Rural Firefighter</li> </ul>

**Officer-qualified** A Senior Firefighter who is Officer-qualified is considered to have the equivalent rank of a Station Officer when riding in charge of an appliance.

A Crew Leader who is trained as a Rural Fire Officer and riding in charge of an appliance is considered to be a Rural Fire Officer.

They will be clearly identified by helmet markings.

## Boundaries

### Urban boundaries

Urban boundaries are the same as defined under the repealed Fire Service Act 1975:

- gazetted Fire Districts
- Section 38 agreements.

But excluding Defence Areas as defined under section 2 of the Defence Act 1990.

### Rural boundaries

These are the:

- Enlarged Rural Fire Districts gazetted under the repealed Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977
- boundaries of territorial authorities that were Rural Fire Authorities under the repealed Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977.

But excluding Defence Areas as defined under section 2 of the Defence Act 1990, and certain areas of Maori land under DOC agreements.

### Boundary maps

Urban and rural boundaries are defined by the maps that can be found in SMART Maps or the Portal list of [Urban and rural boundaries](#).

Boundaries can also be clarified by contacting Firecom.

## Working together

### Consult, cooperate, coordinate

At all times personnel responding at incidents must:

- consult, cooperate and coordinate to ensure incidents are managed safely, effectively and efficiently
- respect the qualifications, skills and experience of others.

### Disagreements

Should a disagreement arise over incident control, the on-call duty Senior Officer (rural or urban) may be contacted.

## Considerations when handing over control

### Decision to hand over control

The person in control of the incident must hand over control to an arriving officer if the person in control:

- has any concerns about the safety of personnel or the public, or
- has any concerns that the size and complexity of the incident may be beyond their qualifications, skills and experience, and
- the arriving officer has more appropriate qualifications, skills and experience.

## Considerations before taking control

### Initial conversation

A more senior arriving officer must have an initial conversation with the person in control about the incident to get full situational awareness, including a SHURTS or SMEACC briefing.

A thorough size-up and dynamic risk assessment of the incident should be conducted.

If the arriving officer considers the risks are not being managed in the most effective way, the arriving officer must take control.

### Monitor and mentor

When an incident is progressing safely and satisfactorily, the more senior officer may allow the officer to remain in control when:

- the incident is being managed in a safe and effective manner, and
- the strategy and tactics deployed are adequate and appropriate, and
- there's the required level of resourcing on the incident ground for the complexity and expected duration of the incident, and
- there's an appropriate incident ground structure in place.

If the more senior officer remains at the incident, they should monitor, support and assist the officer who is in control.

The more senior officer is still accountable when they remain on the incident ground. They have a responsibility to work with the officer in control to eliminate or minimise any safety concerns and operational issues they identify.

### Decision to take control

The more senior officer may take control if:

- the incident is escalating, or
- there are span of control issues, and
- they can provide more structure to manage the incident.

The more senior officer must take control if:

- time critical decisions need to be made, or
- there's a significant safety risk that they consider unacceptable (and imminent), and the danger is so serious that failure to act immediately is likely to cause serious injury or death, or
- requested by the person in control of the incident, or
- incident conditions are deteriorating and there is an increased risk where there's a need to escalate the management of the incident.

## Actions to take control

### Steps

The more senior officer must complete the following steps when taking control of an incident:

1. Advise the person in control that they are taking control.
2. Transmit an incident ground SitRep to advise the change in control.
3. Get a thorough handover from the person in control.
4. Transmit a K45 message to Firecom.

## Incidents within rural boundaries

When an incident is within a rural boundary, the following operational personnel can take control of the incident:

Type of incident	Who takes initial control?	Who takes control once officer(s) arrive?		
<b>Vegetation fire</b>	The most senior person on the first arriving fire appliance.	If the person in control is a...	and an...	then the arriving officer...
		Non-Officer	Officer arrives	must take control. (Regardless of risk-status, or in or out-of-district status.)
		Urban Officer	Rural Officer arrives	may take control or direct another person to take control.
		Rural Officer	Urban Senior Officer arrives	may take control or direct another person to take control. <b>Note:</b> The Principal Rural Fire Officer should be consulted.
		Urban Senior Officer	Rural Senior Officer arrives	may take control or direct another person to take control, or may choose to leave the Urban Senior Officer in control while they command rural resources.
<b>Any other incident type</b>	The most senior person on the first arriving fire appliance.	If the person in control is a...	and an...	then the arriving officer...
		Non-Officer	Officer arrives	must take control. (Regardless of risk-status, or in or out-of-district status.)
		Rural Officer	Urban Officer arrives	may take control, or may choose to leave the Rural Officer in control while they command urban resources.
		Urban Officer	Urban Officer from the same fire district arrives	may take control if they are of higher rank.
			Urban Officer from a different fire district arrives	should have the 'initial conversation' with the officer in control and make a joint decision about who should take control. If a joint decision cannot be reached, the first arriving officer remains in control and the on-call duty Urban Senior Officer may be contacted if required.
		Rural Senior Officer	Urban Senior Officer arrives	may take control, or may choose to leave the Rural Senior Officer in control while they command urban resources.

## Incidents within urban boundaries

When an incident is within an urban boundary, the following operational personnel can take control of the incident:

Type of incident	Who takes initial control?	Who takes control once officer(s) arrive?			
<b>Vegetation fire</b>	The most senior person on the first arriving fire appliance.	If the person in control is a...		and an...	then the arriving officer...
		Non-Officer		Officer arrives	must take control. (Regardless of risk-status, or in or out-of-district status.)
		Rural Officer		Urban Officer arrives	should have the 'initial conversation' with the officer in control and may take control. The Rural Officer has command of rural resources.
		Urban Officer		Rural Officer arrives	should have the 'initial conversation' with the officer in control, but may only take control if the in-district officer asks them to.
		Urban Officer		Rural Senior Officer arrives	may take control of a vegetation fire that requires specialist rural resources and tactics. <b>Note:</b> The Urban Senior Officer should be consulted.
		Rural Senior Officer		Urban Senior Officer arrives	may take control or direct another person to take control. The Rural Senior Officer has command of rural resources.
<b>Any other incident type</b>	The most senior person on the first arriving fire appliance.	If the person in control is a...		and an...	then the arriving officer...
		Non-Officer		Officer arrives	must take control. (Regardless of risk-status, or in or out-of-district status.)
		in-district Officer		out-of-district Officer arrives	should have the 'initial conversation' with the officer in control, but may only take control after following the steps in the 'Decision to take control' section.
		out-of-district Officer		in-district Officer arrives	should have the 'initial conversation' with the officer in control, and may take control if required.
		Urban Officer		Urban Senior Officer arrives	may take control or direct another person to take control.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

## Definitions

### Definitions

The following terms are used in this policy:

Term	Definition
Dynamic Risk Assessment	A process used by operational personnel to manage risk on the incident ground in rapidly changing situations.
Firecom	The radio call sign for the Fire Communications centre.
K codes	How operational personnel transmit messages to ensure radio congestion is kept to a minimum. K45 stands for command responsibility change (state name).
More senior officer	The officer who is more qualified, skilled and experienced.
Person in control	The Incident Controller (IC) under the New Zealand Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS).
Rural Fire Officer	An appointed rural incident controller. They may be a volunteer, a contractor or an employee of another agency e.g. DOC.
SHURTS	Stands for <b>S</b> ize up   <b>H</b> azards   <b>U</b> sing   <b>R</b> equirements   <b>T</b> actics   <b>S</b> tructure.
SitRep	Stands for Situation Report. A report that may be transmitted on incident ground radios or to Communications Centres.
SMART Maps	A suite of dynamic and interactive maps designed to help users quickly access spatial (location-based) data. It is integrated with the Station Management System (SMS).
SMEACC	Stands for <b>S</b> ituation   <b>M</b> ission   <b>E</b> xecution   <b>A</b> dministration   <b>C</b> ommand   <b>C</b> ommunications. It's an acronym for a standard sequence when directing actions.

## Document information

Owner	National Manager Response Capability
Last reviewed	1 July 2019
Review period	Every second year

## Record of amendments

Date	Brief description of amendment
1 July 2017	This interim policy has been reviewed and approved to provide clarity as to who has command and control of an incident from Day One of Fire and Emergency New Zealand. The policy will be further reviewed and updated by 1 July 2020.
1 July 2019	Updated 'Senior Officer' list to reflect Service Delivery Leadership Team role changes. Content owner updated.