



Memo Sheet

To: Russell Wood, Deputy Chief Executive Organizational Strategy & Capability Development
Dominic Hare, National Property Manager

CC: Myles Taylor, Principal Rural Fire Officer, Northern Whangarei Kaipara RFD
Mal Tipton, Te Hiku Property Manager
Wipari Henwood, Area Manager Muri Whenua
Wayne Goodfellow, National Planning and Programme Manager – Property
Tim Goodson, National Property Portfolio Manager
Deane Ingram, Te Hiku Planning and Performance Manager

From: Ron Devlin, Te Hiku Region Manager

Action: Dominic Hare, National Property Manager

Date: 16 July 2020

Subject: **Operational Requirement: Cavalli Fire Station New Build**

References:

- A. Memo: Request for new Fire Station build for the Cavalli Volunteer Fire Brigade dated 15 July 2020.
- B. Report on Fire and Emergency New Zealand Operational Impact at Matauri Bay (Cavalli Volunteer Fire Brigade) dated 17 June 2020.

Aim

1. The purpose of this memo is to summarise the data analysis, operational requirement and justification for a new Cavalli Fire Station to be built on land leased by Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ) in the Matauri Bay community. It endorses the proposed new build, seeks approval to release funds and commence construction.

Executive Summary

2. Located on the northeast coast of the Far North District, Cavalli Volunteer Fire Brigade (VFB) is located just inland from the coast at Matauri Bay, north of the Bay of Islands. While Matauri Bay is the correct geographical settlement location, "Cavalli" is the term in common usage. Cavalli VFB has its own First Response Area (FRA), separate from neighbouring Kaeo. Cavalli is isolated, with one main road (Matauri Bay Rd, including access from Martin Road) accessing the area, which then takes a circuitous route around the coast via Whangaroa to return to SH10 north of Kaeo.

3. Cavalli's FRA comprises a 2020 estimated population¹ of 549 persons across 102 SqKm. In terms of having a population pool close to the Fire Station in order to draw a volunteer establishment from, 324 persons are recorded by Census 2013 as living within five minutes' drive time of the current fire station location. Cavalli's population is 67%-55% split between Maori and European, with approx. 25% children under the age of 15, approx. 17% older than 64² giving a majority population age between 15 and 64. Employment statistics suggests a resident population that works on local farms, businesses or travels to nearby Kaeo (population 2195 persons) for work, rather

¹ NRRM Station Profile (accessed through SMS)

² NRRM Station Profile (accessed through SMS)

than resident retirees. The largely resident population with 5 min drive time of the Fire Station location indicate that the community has the capacity to support a fully functional VFB.

4. The median household income in the Cavalli FRA is \$32,100³, well below the median household income for the Far North of \$42,200 and NZ of \$63,800. Localised petty crime does occur, thus any FENZ presence requires a secure premise to operate from.

5. Currently there is no formal Fire Station or even a temporary building to house Cavalli VFB due to the old Hay Shed that was previously used as an adhoc Fire Station site being returned to the owner with the formation of FENZ on 01 July 2017. Situated on the edge of the Matauri Bay township, across the road from the old Hay Shed site, land was acquired under a 30 year lease agreement as the site for a future Cavalli Fire Station

6. On the new land lease site Cavalli VFB are currently utilizing shipping containers as training and secure equipment rooms. The single Pump appliance is temporarily housed in a farm shed 2km further down the road for security purposes. This temporary set up with minimal facilities fails to provide a safe, secure and appropriate environment for FENZ volunteers to operate in and to house emergency response equipment. Accordingly, the temporary nature of the facilities accommodating Cavalli Fire Station do not meet the specific requirements outlined in the Fire Station Design Manual and associated Guides, nor provide for the requirements of Importance Level 4 (IL4) under the Building Code Clause A3 Building Importance Levels.

7. The current personnel count of the Cavalli VFB is 13 members. Over the last several years it has become increasingly difficult to attract new members and the brigade now relies on a core of dedicated people. Due to the lack of a dedicated fire station or any basic facilities, the ability to recruit and retain volunteers from the local community suffers. The current lack of a station does not meet operational training/response needs nor allow the brigade to function effectively as a FENZ VFB. This is an isolated community that is easily cut off from other communities when a major emergency occurs and therefore a dedicated fire station is considered key to local resilience.

8. The lack of basic hygiene and decontamination facilities means FENZ is also falling well below its duty of care requirements for a volunteer station and is a source of frustration to the team. Under the current situation volunteers are returning from medical and fire calls with no ability to conduct decontamination. As a result, private vehicles and washing facilities in homes are being exposed to potential carcinogens and/or blood products thus forcing volunteers to potentially contaminate surfaces that their families come into contact with.

9. Geographic analysis in the Operational Impact Report shows Cavalli FRA has on average 18.7 incidents per annum with the majority being Medical Events followed by Other Fires, Vegetation Fires and Motor Vehicle Accidents. Cavalli VFB were alerted to 30 calls in the 2019/20 financial year of which they responded to 27. They became a MED Co-Responder in April 2020; thus, moving forward the VFB call rate is expected to increase as neighbouring VFBs are no longer required to respond to those Medical events. Furthermore, with a dedicated Fire Station building, this will allow Cavalli VFB to develop and be first responder to all fires and Motor Vehicle Accidents reducing the negative impact upon the neighbouring station cluster and volunteerism within those VFBs as any unnecessary responses by Kaeo or Kerikeri volunteers creates additional work for them.

10. In terms of operational value, Cavalli VFB provide a specialist wildfire response to the wider station cluster residing between two urban stations of Kerikeri to the south and Kaeo to the west; The area they cover is characterized as scrubland, farmland, and forestry. Fuel loadings are extremely high and the need for a team that have strong wildfire suppression capability is essential. This capability compliments the skills of both neighbouring brigades and fully aligns with the organisation's proposed modular service delivery concept.

11. The lack of a dedicated fire station creates increased risk to the Matauri Bay community due to the practicable inability for Cavalli VFB to respond in a timely manner despite best endeavours. Unfortunately, the current set up requires a member of the brigade to travel 2km down the road from where the rest of the crew are getting ready in order to retrieve the fire appliance out of a secure shed, lock the shed back up then travel 2km back to pick up the crew then attend the incident. Any

³ Statistics NZ (2020) House Labour Force Survey (summarised in Northland FENZ Local Profile)

response is delayed by at least 10mins due to this function alone. If housed in a dedicated Fire Station, then Cavalli VFB would be the first arriving appliance to incidents across its FRA.

12. The current land lease site was acquired in the previous structure, therefore no further station location analysis had been undertaken or attached to this memo; however, it is noteworthy that the site resides on the entry to Matauri Bay township offering easy access for volunteers and also for the appliance to respond across the wider FRA; it is outside the Tsunami Risk zones and is co-located to a good-sized community to draw volunteers from.

13. In terms of resourcing, Cavalli needs a high degree of resilience and capability to respond to local emergency incidents. Noting the majority of calls Cavalli VFB respond to are Medical, Other Fires and Vegetation Fires, the logical FENZ capability for the locality is the ability to respond quickly to render medical aid or quickly extinguish any emerging fires whilst they are small and able to be contained; thence await additional assistance from other responding units. In reviewing the potential capability levels that could be applied to Cavalli VFB, attention is drawn to the NRRM – Resource Matrix attached at Enclosure 2.

- Structure Fire: Level 1 (external Defensive Operations – no Breathing Apparatus)
- Misc Fire: Level 1 (Extinguish small fire including mobile property fire)
- Vegetation Fire: Level 2 (Able to size up, contain and extinguish vegetation fire, wildfire and contribute to larger fire force).
- Hazardous Material spill/leak: No Response: (not trained in HAZSUBs therefore unable to determine safe distance to cordon).
- Medical: Level 2 (Med Co-Response).
- Natural Disasters/Rescue/Special Services/Incident Management/CIMS: Level 0.

14. The current single PUMP appliance is considered sufficient for the level of community risk presented and specialist wildfire capability as part of the modular service delivery solution across the wider station cluster. Acknowledging the diversity of terrain and accessibility challenges beyond the formed roads, any future PUMP appliance will likely be four-wheel drive however there is no need for additional appliances beyond this, therefore a single bay, basic Fire Station is sufficient to meet FENZ operational capability needs.

Summary Justification:

15. In real terms, there is sufficient fire and emergency risk within the Matauri Bay community to justify a FENZ operational presence. There is already a fully functional VFB in situ, however the lack of a dedicated fire station delays responses to such an extent that it negates the benefit of having FENZ within the community therefore the build of a new dedicated Fire Station is considered essential in order to realise the benefits of a local VFB. Furthermore, the current infrastructure is not fit for purpose, does not meet its operational requirements exposing the community to increased risk and negatively impacts the health safety and wellbeing of our volunteers.

16. In order for FENZ to have an effective operational capability presence, a new dedicated fire station is required at 1405 Matauri Bay Road to host Cavalli VFB. Design Plans for the proposed fire station build are a single level structure that once completed will meet IL4 seismic requirements and all current Fire Station design guidelines wherever practicable. Building Consent and Resource Consent have been obtained and funding identified. The build is considered “shovel ready” with community and iwi support with the next step being the commencement of construction with higher approval and release of funds.

Request:

17. Addressees are requested to:

- a. NOTE the fire and emergency risks within the Matauri Bay "Cavalli" community;
- b. NOTE the operational risks that Cavalli VFB currently experience in providing a FENZ capability presence within Matauri Bay;
- c. NOTE the proposed Cavalli Fire Station is "shovel ready" and only requires senior FENZ leadership approval;
- d. APPROVE and FUND building a new dedicated fire station at 1405 Matauri Bay Road to host Cavalli VFB; and
- e. DIRECT the build of a dedicated Cavalli Fire Station within FY20/21.

Ron Devlin
Region Manager
Te Hiku

Enclosures:

1. Memo: Request for new Fire Station build for the Cavalli Volunteer Fire Brigade dated 15 July 2020.
2. Report on Fire and Emergency New Zealand Operational Impact at Matauri Bay (Cavalli Volunteer Fire Brigade) dated 17 June 2020.

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