Daily Media Log 13 February 2026

Media responses overnight (1)

Fleet: NZPFU comments about aerial trucks

Kim Baker Wilson from RNZ requested a response to the NZPFU's claims that Rotorua, Hamilton, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, and Gisborne's aerials were all out of service.

RESPONSE: Please attribute to a Fire and Emergency New Zealand spokesperson:

It is not true that four Type 4 aerial trucks are out of action.

Rotorua's aerial is back in service.

Gisborne's aerial is in the workshop getting a minor issue fixed but available for response if required. For scheduled services and minor repairs , we generally make arrangements that if a truck in the workshop overnight it will be left in an operational state so the station can use it if needed. Similarly, if they need it during the day the workshop will endeavour to stop what they are doing and make it available.

Palmerston North is undergoing a scheduled service and will be available again tomorrow.

New Plymouth's Type 4 aerial is in the workshop getting an intermittent electrical issue diagnosed and repaired.

It's important to understand that we have 16 operational aerial appliances the same type as the Rotorua aerial, that get a proactive service 4 times a year. These services typically take 1-3 days each, plus any time for repairs. This means on average there is a Type 4 in the workshop for a proactive service for about 2.5 days for every week of the year. This is good maintenance practice, and demonstrates our investment in looking after our fleet.

We have a fleet of around 1300 trucks and we take a network approach to our fleet management, so we can provide relief or alternative vehicles whenever and wherever they are needed. During incidents, our dispatching procedures enable us to call out the next available truck if the nearest truck is attending another call or is unavailable for any other reason, like scheduled maintenance or repair work.

Our firefighters are trained to use a range of tactics for different types of incidents. This means that if one particular type of fire truck is unavailable, they can adapt their tactics to the resources that they have.

Our firefighting truck fleet is an important asset and Fire and Emergency is investing more than $20 million per year over the next three years upgrading the fleet and $12.5 million on new heavy aerials.

It is also important to note the NZPFU is currently taking industrial action over their collective employment agreement.

Fleet: Taupō-nui-a-Tia College fire truck breakdown

Tom Eley from NZME asked questions about truck breakdowns during the response to this fire.

RESPONSE: Please attribute the following responses to Deputy National Commander Megan Stiffler:

1. **What is the average age of FENZ's frontline and aerial fleet?**

The average age of Fire and Emergency New Zealand's appliance fleet is approximately 17 years old (this excludes appliances that are owned by brigades). The average age of our aerial appliance fleet it approximately 22 years old. We acknowledge we have an ageing fleet which we inherited when we formed eight years ago.

Our firefighting truck fleet is an important asset and Fire and Emergency is investing more than $20 million per year over the next three years upgrading the fleet. Supply contracts are in place to continue to order suitable replacement fleet as we work towards resolving the challenge around our aged fleet, although we acknowledge this will take some time. 60 firefighting trucks are currently on order, including five new heavy aerial trucks scheduled for delivery this year which will replace the older aerial appliances in the fleet.

Additional information about fleet:

- Fire and Emergency has a fleet of around 1300 firefighting trucks deployed across over 620 fire stations nationwide.
- Since being established in 2017, 317 new appliances have been put into operational service.
- We have taken delivery of another 20 new trucks which we are currently fitting out and getting ready for service, and, as above, we have a further 60 on order.

2. **How does FENZ prioritise maintenance and replacement of ageing appliances?**

All our trucks are maintained in a fully operational condition regardless of age.

We have a proactive servicing regime for all trucks and replace any worn parts as required to keep them at an operational standard. These are large, complicated vehicles but they are well maintained, safe, certified, and legally compliant.

3. **How common is it for frontline or aerial appliances to be unavailable due to mechanical faults?**

We don't keep that specific information, however like any large fleet operator we take a network approach to our fleet management, so we can provide relief vehicles whenever and wherever they are needed. During incidents, our dispatching procedures enable us to call out the next available truck if the nearest truck is attending another call or is unavailable for any other reason, like scheduled maintenance or repair work.

4. **Are there any planned upgrades or replacements for appliances servicing the central North Island, including Taupō?**

New Type 3 trucks are going to Rotorua, Hamilton, Greerton (Tauranga), Palmerston North, Milson (Palmerston North, Napier, Hastings, Whanganui and New Plymouth. A new Type 1 4WD is going to National Park.

5. **Does FENZ believe its current funding level is sufficient to meet operational demands during large-scale incidents?**

Like any organisation, we work within financial constraints and make risk-based decisions about how resources are deployed. Our operating model is designed to respond to incidents of all sizes, including large-scale events, by scaling and drawing on resources from across the country when required.

6. **How does FENZ's current budget impact the maintenance, availability, and replacement of frontline and aerial appliances?**

We spend approximately $20 million per year on maintaining our trucks and have maintenance contracts currently set up across the country to ensure that proactive and reactive repairs and maintenance can be done cost effectively whilst minimising the impact on our service delivery. We are also spending $20 million each year over three years to upgrade the fleet and $12.5 million on new aerials.

7. **Under what circumstances are firefighters required to work on roofs, and how are risks managed when aerial support is delayed or unavailable?**

Firefighters are trained in working at heights in firefighting conditions which includes training in working safely at heights and working with ladders. This training is combined with the application of the Safe Person Concept and Dynamic Risk Assessment, which are integral to our operations.

8. **Does FENZ consider roof-based firefighting a last-resort tactic?**

No, it is not a last resort, Firefighters can apply a range of tactics, including using hoses at height to direct water onto a fire. Doing this from an aerial appliance or from a roof are both tactics which an Incident Commander may consider, depending on the circumstances, the type of incident and the resources available.

Fleet: Taupō-nui-a-Tia College fire truck breakdown

Paora Manuel from Stuff asked questions about truck breakdowns during the response to this fire.

RESPONSE: Attributed to Deputy National Commander Megan Stiffler:

Yesterday Fire and Emergency New Zealand responded to a large fire which occurred at Taupō-nui-a-Tia College. Firefighters from Lake Taupō, Taupō, Kinloch, Rotorua, Tokoroa, Greerton, Tauranga and Kaiangaroa extinguished the fire, and prevented it from spreading to other buildings.

Two vehicles experienced mechanical issues during the response. One was replaced by a similar truck and the other was not needed. Like any large fleet operator, we take a network approach to our fleet management so we can provide relief vehicles whenever and wherever they are needed. During incidents, our dispatching procedures enable us to call out the next available truck if the nearest truck is attending another call or is unavailable for any other reason, like scheduled maintenance or repair work.

Crews reported an issue with an aerial truck from Rotorua, so a replacement aerial was dispatched from Hamilton. During the period before its arrival, firefighters successfully used other tactics to contain the fire to the building of origin and protect all neighbouring structures.

Mechanics have identified that a sticking valve caused the issue with the Rotorua aerial. Their investigations indicate this fault had occurred previously but had corrected itself. This was not reported for repairs. It is critical firefighters report all faults to ensure maintenance on the fleet.

The crew of the command unit from Greerton Station reported issues with its gearbox while they were on the way to Taupō. As a command unit from Rotorua was already at the scene, the second command unit was not required. Mechanics have diagnosed that the problem related to the engine's emissions control system, rather than the gearbox.

All our trucks are maintained in a fully operational condition regardless of age. We have a proactive servicing regime for all trucks and replace any worn parts as required to keep them at an operational standard. These are large, complicated vehicles but they are well maintained, safe, certified, and legally compliant.

Our firefighters are trained to use a range of tactics for different types of incidents. This means that if one particular type of fire truck is unavailable, they can adapt their tactics to the resources that they have.

Fleet: Taupō-nui-a-Tia College fire truck breakdown

Dubby Henry from NZME asked questions about truck breakdowns during the response to this fire.

RESPONSE: Please attribute to a Fire and Emergency New Zealand spokesperson:

The crew of the command unit from Greerton Station reported issues with its gearbox while they were on the way to Taupō. As a command unit from Rotorua was already at the scene, the second command unit was not required. Mechanics have diagnosed that the problem related to the engine's emissions control system, rather than the gearbox.

Crews reported an issue with Rotorua's Type 4 aerial appliance, reported during the fire, so a replacement aerial was dispatched from Hamilton. During the period before its arrival, firefighters successfully used other tactics to contain the fire to the building of origin and protect all neighbouring structures.

Mechanics have identified that a sticking valve caused the issue with the Rotorua aerial. Their investigations indicate this fault had occurred previously but had corrected itself. This was not reported for repairs. It is critical firefighters report all faults to ensure maintenance on the fleet.

Media responses today (8)

Fleet: Taupō-nui-a-Tia College fire truck breakdown

Phil Pennington from RNZ asked questions about truck breakdowns during the response to this fire.

RESPONSE: Please attribute the following to Deputy National Commander Megan Stiffler:

Firefighters are trained in working at heights in firefighting conditions which includes training in working safely at heights and working with ladders. This training is combined with the application of the Safe Person Concept and Dynamic Risk Assessment, which are integral to our operations.

Firefighters can apply a range of tactics, including using hoses at height to direct water onto a fire. Doing this from an aerial appliance or from a roof are both tactics which an Incident Commander may consider, depending on the circumstances, the type of incident and the resources available.

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Fleet: Rotorua Type 4 Aerial and Greerton's Command Unit 'breakdowns' en route to Taupo-nui-a Tia College Fire.

Eva Gallot from Stuff asked for comment about NZPFU claims two trucks broke down on their way to the Taupo-nui-a-Tia school fire.

RESPONSE: Please attribute to Deputy National Commander Megan Stiffler:

Rotorua's Type 4 aerial truck has suffered a breakdown while responding to the fire at a Taupō high school. A mechanic is on site to confirm what the issue is.

Hamilton's aerial has been assigned to this fire as a replacement, which has arrived in Taupō and is now assisting the response.

Firefighters put different tactics in place while there was no aerial truck. Using these tactics, firefighters were able to contain the fire to the building of origin and protect all neighbouring structures.

Greerton's Command Unit had an issue with its gearbox while responding. However, it was not required to respond in the end as Rotorua's Command Unit was on the scene and there was only need for one unit.

Recognising the age of the aerial fleet, Fire and Emergency New Zealand has invested $12 million in the aerial fleet, with 5 new aerials in the final stages of build. Fire and Emergency is also investing a further $20 million in fire trucks each year for the next 3 years. This will reduce the overall age of the fleet.

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Media responses today (8)

NZPFU – Roslyn fire ladder truck

Laine Priestley from the Otago Daily Times asked questions about firefighters using a backup aerial truck at the Roslyn scout hall fire yesterday.

RESPONSE: Please attribute to Fire and Emergency New Zealand National Commander Megan Stiffler:

The Otago District leadership team has no awareness of any 'internal advisory' as claimed. The relief aerial was used to great effect at the incident.

We expect to have Dunedin's new heavy aerial truck delivered by mid-2026, along with the four other long reach aerial ladder trucks we have purchased for our fleet at a cost of $12 million. It is important to note however that they then must go through fitout and training before they can be operationally deployed. That process can be a couple of months, and we do not have exact timings.

The process of codesign with our firefighters, and assembly production of such trucks is a long one, especially with bespoke vehicles of such complexity, size, and weight. Incorporating feedback from our firefighting and engineering staff throughout the design process gives us assurance that these specialist vehicles will meet our requirements.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand's fleet has around 1300 specialist firefighting trucks.

We acknowledge we have an ageing fleet, but it is well- maintained, safe, certified, and legally compliant.

We are spending $20 million annually on new firefighting trucks and vehicles. Since we were established in July 2017, we have taken delivery of 317 new firefighting trucks and have 78 on order that we expect to have operational in 2026 and 2027.

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Media responses today (9)

NZPFU – Christchurch aerial

Daniel Alvey from Star Media asked about Christchurch's aerial being

RESPONSE: Please attribute to a Fire and Emergency New Zealand spokesperson:

Christchurch's aerial appliance is undergoing scheduled servicing and repairs to its air conditioning unit. Servicing and repairs are due to be completed by the end of the week.

The ute used by the crew does not replace the aerial appliance. It is being used as a means of transport for crews when necessary to assist with incidents as required.

Our firefighters are trained to manage each incident according to available resources and capabilities.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand is currently building five aerial appliances at a cost of approximately $12 million. These trucks will be sent to Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin and are due to arrive mid-2026. This is part of a significant investment in our fleet. We are currently spending $20 million a year over the next three years to replace our older trucks.

This demonstrates Fire and Emergency is prioritising our fleet replacements and renewals as a priority.

We later sent the following update:

We have been advised that servicing and repairs are complete, and the aerial appliance is due to be back on the run later today.

NZPFU – Mosgiel commercial fire

Laine Priestley from the Otago Daily Times requested a response to comments made by the NZPFU that their response to a fire in a Mosgiel commercial building was hindered by fleet issues.

RESPONSE: Please attribute to District Manager Craig Gold:

The Dunedin Station's regular aerial appliance is currently being repaired and a replacement aerial appliance is in place. Both aerial trucks have a similar reach in regard to height.

Our firefighters are trained to manage each incident according to available resources and capabilities. The tactics and practical firefighting skills displayed by our crews were evident at this incident and our firefighters served their communities well.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand is currently building five aerial appliances at a cost of approximately $12 million. These trucks will be sent to Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin and are due to arrive mid-2026. This is part of a significant investment in our fleet. We are currently spending $20 million a year over the next three years to replace our older trucks.

This demonstrates Fire and Emergency is prioritising our fleet replacements and renewals as a priority.

We have issued a statement about Friday's strike which you can find on our website here - https://www.fireandemergency.nz/incidents-and-news/news-and-media/fire-and-emergency-received-calls-for-22-incidents-during-todays-strike/