



13 May 2026

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Tēnā koe Peter,

Your Official Information Act 1982 request, reference OIA 2526-1116

I am responding to your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) which was partially transferred to the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) on 14 April 2026. The following was transferred to the Department for response:

Board Members' Pay

As a levy payer, I would like to understand the documented rationale or benefits behind the significant increase in board members' remuneration. Please provide any relevant documentation from the last three months, including information on how this increase was prioritized over other urgent needs, such as fleet replacement, given FENZ's stated budget constraint.

Response to your request

As there are no documents in scope of your partially transferred request, the request is refused in full under section 18(e) of the Act, that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found. However, to provide further context in relation to the increases, I am providing this written response.

The increase in Board members' remuneration reflects both system-wide changes to public sector board fees and the specific governance demands associated with Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire and Emergency).

On 14 July 2025, Cabinet agreed to update fee ranges within the Cabinet Fees Framework. These changes were made to better align public sector board remuneration with market conditions and to support the attraction and retention of suitably qualified board members. The revised Framework establishes the parameters within which individual boards are assessed.

Within this Framework, Fire and Emergency's Board has been assessed as operating at a high level of scale, complexity, and public accountability. The Board is responsible for high-consequence decision-making relating to expenditure, prioritisation, risk management, and the nationwide delivery of critical emergency services. The scale of the organisation's budget and its extensive operational responsibilities are considered the most appropriate indicators of the Board's overall scale.

Fire and Emergency also operate in a complex statutory and highly public-facing environment. It is responsible for delivering fire and emergency services across New Zealand, as well as for overseeing regulatory functions relating to fire safety and compliance. The Board must ensure effective organisational performance, oversee a significant public asset base, manage substantial risks, and provide strategic stewardship in an environment subject to sustained public, media, and stakeholder scrutiny.

The remuneration level reflects the capability, experience, and time commitment required to discharge these responsibilities effectively. In practice, Board members are required to commit time beyond standard expectations and bring expertise in governance, financial oversight, risk management, and large-scale public service delivery.

In accordance with the Cabinet Fee Framework, the factors considered in setting the fees include:

- the scale, complexity, and responsibility of the role,
- the skills and experience required,
- recruitment and retention considerations,
- the organisation's public profiles and associated reputational risks, and
- affordability with existing baselines.

Board remuneration is set in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework and is considered separately from operational funding and budget management decisions. Decisions relating to Board fees do not form part of, and are not used to offset, operational savings or service delivery changes.

Board remuneration does not affect funding for frontline service delivery. The previous review of Fire and Emergency Board fees took place in 2019. The updated fees reflect both the revised Cabinet Fees Framework and the evolving scale and complexity of the organisation's governance responsibilities.

Further information on the Cabinet Fees Framework is available at:

www.dPMC.govt.nz/publications/co-25-2-cabinet-fees-framework-members-appointed-bodies-which-crown-has-interest#cabinet-fees-framework-for-members-appointed-to-bodies-in-which-the-crown-has-an-interest

Accessing the Ombudsman

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my decision by the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Mark Batt
**Director Branch Performance
Policy and Te Tiriti**