



05 MAY 2026

Peter Campbell  
fyi-request-34349-8f816ea5@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Peter

## Official Information Act 1982 request reference OIA346

Thank you for your email of 2 April 2026 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*I write regarding the remuneration of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Board and related matters.*

*We trust that you have the best interests of the community in mind when emergencies occur. We therefore request the following information to demonstrate that:*

- 1. Are you aware of how many brigades operate with trucks over 30 years old? Please provide the number.*
- 2. What communications have you had with FENZ within the past four months regarding prioritising the budget to ensure it supports service delivery targets (e.g. reducing breakdowns and ensuring timely response)?*
- 3. Please provide the full rationale for the increase in board members' remuneration, including any supporting documentation from the past four months.*
- 4. Please provide documentation from the past four months relating to any budget adjustment communications that explain why the significant increase in board members' remuneration was approved while FENZ has been directed to implement budget savings, including in the context of stations being closed and aging or unreliable frontline vehicles.*
- 5. What FENZ staff have you met with in the past 2 months and at what locations?*
- 6. Do you have any conflict of interest with your positions and FENZ in anyway?*

## Response to your request

- 1. Are you aware of how many brigades operate with trucks over 30 years old? Please provide the number.**

As of 1 April 2026, Fire and Emergency New Zealand has 119 brigades with one or more appliances (fire trucks) manufactured before 1996.

Please note, this figure excludes brigade-owned appliances, relief and training appliances, appliances not assigned to stations or brigades and appliances designated for disposal.

**2. What communications have you had with FENZ within the past four months regarding prioritising the budget to ensure it supports service delivery targets (e.g. reducing breakdowns and ensuring timely response)?**

Fire and Emergency has provided the following communications that included information related to budget prioritisation to ensure it supports service delivery targets, in the past four months:

- Briefing 25-20 Board expectations regarding savings and efficiencies
- Briefing 26-02 Powered watercraft – Huntly and Ngāruawāhia stations
- Briefing 26-04 Quarterly organisational cost savings update #5
- Briefing 26-06 Abilities Group Fire Operational Review – additional information
- Briefing 26-07 Aviation fuel costs response
- Fortnightly Report 26-04 for period ended 6 March 2026
- Fortnightly Report 26-05 for period ended 20 March 2026
- Fortnightly Report 26-06 for period ended 4 April 2026.

**3. Please provide the full rationale for the increase in board members' remuneration, including any supporting documentation from the past four months.**

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

On 14 July 2025, Cabinet agreed to updated 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 provides governance oversight of an organisation with an annual budget of approximately \$750 million and 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 operational responsibilities is considered the most appropriate indicator 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 therefore 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 Fees 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 profile and associated reputational risks
- affordability within existing funding baselines

Board remuneration does not affect funding for frontline service delivery. Fire and Emergency New Zealand does not have a role in reviewing or determining Board members' remuneration. 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:

<https://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>.

I am releasing to you one document in scope of this element of your request. This is attached as **Appendix A**.

**4. Please provide documentation from the past four months relating to any budget adjustment communications that explain why the significant increase in board members' remuneration was approved while FENZ has been directed to implement budget savings, including in the context of stations being closed and aging or unreliable frontline vehicles.**

I have not received any documents within the past four months that relate to budget adjustment communications linking the increase in Board members' remuneration with Fire and Emergency New Zealand being directed to implement budget savings. This includes any communications relating to station closures or the condition of frontline vehicles.

Accordingly, I refuse this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, on the basis that the information requested does not exist.

For clarity, Fire and Emergency does not have a role in reviewing or determining Board members' remuneration. Board remuneration is set in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework and is considered separately from Fire and Emergency's operational funding and budget management processes. Decisions relating to Board fees do not form part of, and are not used to offset, operational savings initiatives or service delivery decisions.

**5. What FENZ staff have you met with in the past 2 months and at what locations?**

In the past two months I have regularly met with the Chief Executive of Fire and Emergency, Kerry Gregory, Chief of Staff, Becks Kearns, and Fire and Emergency Board Chair Rebecca Keoghan.

My Ministerial diary is proactively released and is available on the beehive website. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/minister/hon-brooke-van-velden>

**6. Do you have any conflict of interest with your positions and FENZ in anyway?**

I do not have any conflicts of interests with my position as Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister responsible for Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

**Public interest considerations**

As is required by section 9(1) of the Act, I have considered whether the ground for withholding the information requested under section 9(2)(a) is outweighed by other public interest considerations which would make it desirable to make this information available. In this instance, I do not consider that to be the case.

**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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'BvV', is positioned above the typed name.

Hon Brooke van Velden  
**Minister of Internal Affairs**

**Table one: documents requested**

<b>#</b>	<b>Document name</b>	<b>Document date</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Reason for withholding</b>
1	[Excerpt] IA202510547 Commencement of the 2026 FENZ Board Appointment round	9 December 2025	Released in Full	N/A

# Internal Affairs briefing

**Hon Brooke van Velden**  
**Minister of Internal Affairs**

**Title:**       **Commencement of the 2026 Fire and Emergency New Zealand Board appointment round**

**Date:**        9 December 2025

## Key issues

A fees review has also been conducted for the Board to reflect the new Cabinet fees framework set out in CO 25(2). The Department proposes that fees increase to \$91,560 per annum for the Chair, \$57,000 per annum for the Deputy Chair and \$45,600 for members. The PSC has been consulted on the proposed fees and advised that all proposed fee increases have met criteria, are within the new fee ranges and are justified.

## Action sought

The Department of Internal Affairs recommends that you:  
**agree** to the proposed fees for Board members.

## Timeframe

As soon as  
convenient

## We have conducted a fees review to update the Board fees

14. Cabinet approved a new fees framework in 2025, set out in Cabinet circular CO 25(2): [Cabinet Fees Framework for members appointed to bodies in which the Crown has an interest]. Depending on how each statutory body is classified, the fee ranges have increased between 30% and 80%.
15. Fees for Boards do not automatically increase. A fees review must be conducted to assess the size and scope of the statutory body and to recommend where in the range the fees should be set. The PSC has to be consulted before a final decision is made.
16. The Department has conducted a fees review. This involved scoring the Board against the criteria in the fees framework. The scoring confirmed that the Fire and Emergency Board should be a Group 3A, level 2 entity under the framework.
17. The current fees are \$64,150 per annum for the Chair, \$31,762 per annum for the Deputy Chair and \$25,410 per annum for members.
18. The Department proposes that fees increase to \$91,560 per annum for the Chair, \$57,000 per annum for the Deputy Chair and \$45,600 for members, with effect from 1 April 2026.
19. Fire and Emergency have confirmed that the proposed fee increases can be afforded from within their baseline budget.

20. The PSC has been consulted and advised that all the proposed fee increases have met criteria, are within new fee ranges and are justified and that the Commission has no issues with the proposal.

### **Recommendations**

21. The Department recommends that you:

d) **agree** to the proposed fee increases for the Board.

**Yes/No**