

From Rhys Jones, Chief Executive whole of country email sent 24 March at 5:16 PM

Tēnā koutou katoa

As a nation, we are all preparing to move up to COVID-19 Alert Level 4 – Eliminate, at 11.59pm Wednesday 25 March. My email, and Kerry Gregory's National Notice yesterday outlined what this means for our people. These updates can be found on our [COVID-19 Portal page](#). My update today focuses on the practicalities of continuing our core business as we enter Alert Level 4 for at least the next four weeks.

These are unprecedented times. It has never been more important for us remain calm and highly competent to support the communities we serve. I'd like to thank you for doing so. I am proud to see our people living our values at this time, particularly Manaakitanga – we serve and support.

As many of us head in to self-isolation, other than critical functions that can't be done from home, I'd like to remind you of another of our core values – Whanaungatanga – we are better together. While we can't be together in person, there are many ways we can look out for each other and stay connected for our wellbeing.

Looking after your mental health

In these times, our psychological wellbeing is critical. As circumstances change day-by-day, so does our wellbeing. You may be feeling increasingly stressed, anxious or overwhelmed. No matter the source of stress, it is important to seek help before you are struggling.

There are several support services available to all Fire and Emergency personnel and their families. On the [COVID-19 portal page](#) you'll find links to a range of support services available to you, both from within Fire and Emergency and external to our organisation.

I also ask you to look after each other – where you can do that safely. Connect via Skype, phone or email. For those of you at home with whānau, it's timely to check your homes are fire safe – particularly as you will be spending so much time there.

Working from home

For office-based staff, following yesterday's announcement, I trust that you have made arrangements to carry out your work at home. If you need assistance to connect, or setting up and joining virtual meetings, check out the COVID-19 [working from home Portal section](#) for guidance.

IT equipment

Our ICT team are working hard to ensure we keep our critical functions operating as we prepare to move to Alert Level 4. With courier services still operating as an essential service, IT equipment has been distributed across the country to critical function staff. These people are our priority. Please speak to your manager if you have IT equipment needs. The ICT team will assess priorities on a case by case basis.

Internet outage required – Wednesday 25 March

With more of our people working remotely during these challenging times, our ICT team needs to increase the capacity of our network to ensure that staff can successfully work from home.

On **Wednesday 25 March**, there will be an internet outage **of up to 1 hour from 3am – 4am**. We are not expecting the outage to last a full hour, but if any remediation work is required there's a possibility that it may take this long.

This will impact all staff who are trying to access the internet via a cabled connection or Wifi between the hours of 3am – 4am, and any applications that require the internet to be used.

IT support staff will be available during the outage along with key business contacts for critical applications and will be conducting testing to ensure that everything is working as expected, no action is required from personnel unless they are experiencing issues outside of the outage window. The best place to raise any issues is via the ICT Helpdesk.

IT issues

The ICT Helpdesk will still be available as we move to Alert Level 4. Please contact them in the first instance if you are experiencing any issues while working from home.

Call them on 0800 374 843 or email ictsupport@fireandemergency.nz

Thank you all,

Nōku te rourou

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Ka ora ai tātou