Fire and Emergency has coordinated another deployment of Kiwi firefighters and IMT personnel, this time to help our colleagues in Tasmania.

The island state has been ravaged by wildfires since late December, mainly in the south and southwest, following an extended period of very high temperatures and dry conditions.

We have deployed seven IMT personnel, in aircraft operations, planning, intelligence, and logistics roles. There are also 21 arduous firefighters from FENZ, forestry companies and DOC, along with a liaison officer.

Our IMT personnel landed in Hobart on 22 February, with the 21 fighters following a day later. The four aviation personnel (Paul Shaw, Bradley Shanks, Atila de Oliveira and Kerry O’Neill) were deployed to Burnie and Launceston, about a 2½ hour drive north of Hobart. The three others (Bobby Lamont, Robin Thompson and Glenn Thompson) are based in Hobart/Cambridge. They had a rest day yesterday (28 February) after five days’ work.

The 21 firefighters are split into two groups – Alpha and Bravo – and are based at the Fenton Base Camp, along with firefighters from other Australian states helping out the Tasmanians. The Alpha group are currently working on the Gell River Fire and the Bravo group are working on the Riveaux Road Fire. The work is tough but fatigue levels are being monitored. The work involves back burning, fuel reduction burns and strengthening containment lines.

The firefighters’ rest day is scheduled for Thursday after seven days of hard work. Temperatures are in the high 20s to early 30s during the day and dropping at night.

The seven IMT personnel are scheduled to return to New Zealand on 3 February.

TASMANIA WILDFIRE STATS
(AS OF 29 JAN 2019)

- 29 KIWI PERSONNEL FROM FENZ, DOC AND FORESTRY COMPANIES
- 7 IMT
- 20 ARDUOUS FIREFIGHTERS
- 1 TASKFORCE LEADER
- 1 LIAISON OFFICER
- 39 FIRES BURNING
- 20 ARE CONSIDERED GOING
- 2 ARE CONTAINED
- 17 ARE IN PATROL
- 9 FIRES REMAIN UNMAPPED
- 133,482 HECTARES HAVE BEEN BURNT
- 1,287 km OF FIRE LINE
- 498 PERSONNEL WORKING ON FIRES
- 134 INTERSTATE & INTERNATIONAL PERSONNEL
- 37 AIRCRAFT DEPLOYED
A karakia is performed before the IMT group departs from Auckland. The mauri stone (on the ground) was taken by the deployment to give life and positive energy while they’re in Australia.

The Gell River Fire viewed from the air.

The arduous firefighting team receives a briefing from the Tasmania Fire Service.

State Operation Centre briefing.

**THANK YOU MESSAGES (VIA SOCIAL)**

- Michael Thomas • Fire and Emergency NZ
  - 22 January at 20:08
  - To the firefighters heading to tasmania to help out TasFire, Thank you

- Todd Holloway • Fire and Emergency NZ
  - 25 January at 20:09
  - Not sure if this is going to find the correct personal, i wanted to thank all the firefighters who are here fighting fires here in tasmania, i am sure i speake for all tasmanians when i say thank you, stay safe and we all appreciate the work that you are doing.

- Heyabeli_19
  - 13 hours ago
  - Would like to say, thank you for coming to tasmania and helping with the fires. Day after day we've been covered with smoke and even at some points have ashes falling. A few days ago we were preparing for embers as the fire is getting closer and closer. If it wasn't for you guys and many other firefighters it would have burnt through us ages ago. Thank you so much for your work. True heroes

**FIRE MAP - NZ DEPLOYMENT**

- **Burnie Aviation personnel**
- **Launceston Aviation personnel**
- **Gell River Fire**
  - Alpha Group
- **Riveaux Rd Fire**
  - Bravo Group
- **Hobart**
  - IMT personnel
- **Fenton**
  - Base camp