

## Information Sheet

April 2025

The project team can be reached by emailing  
[volunteeringengagementmodel@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:volunteeringengagementmodel@fireandemergency.nz)

Or contact the UFBA team by emailing [connect@ufba.org.nz](mailto:connect@ufba.org.nz)

### Introduction

The Volunteer Engagement Model is an important piece of work and is fundamental to defining the relationship between Fire and Emergency and volunteer brigades, which will aim to give more clarity and consistency in the way brigades and Fire and Emergency work together.

There are many differing agreements and the nature of the emergency services we provide has evolved since those arrangements were put in place.

Fire and Emergency has a duty in relation to volunteers under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 to develop policy and organisational arrangements that encourage, maintain, and strengthen the capability of Fire and Emergency volunteers.

### Project purpose

The Volunteer Engagement Model project, formerly known as the Agreements of Service and Model Rules project, is being developed in collaboration with the United Fire Brigades' Association (UFBA).

The previous Model Rules project was paused in 2021, with the work completed being key to the initial discovery and fact-finding work done for this project.

Volunteer agreements\* were inherited with the formation of Fire and Emergency in 2017. These agreements are inconsistent across the country, and we have not defined the foundation to support a relationship between volunteers, volunteer brigades and Fire and Emergency.

This project aims to modernise volunteer agreements to better reflect the vital role of volunteers to keep our communities safe, while defining relationships and aligning with the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017. It also seeks to provide greater consistency and clarity about volunteer brigades' connection to Fire and Emergency's policies and procedures, all while preserving their independence and mana.

A key consideration for the team is that any proposed changes meet the needs of all parties and be consulted on.



*\*Volunteer agreements is a catch-all term to describe the documents listed in the scope*

## Current status – April 2025

The project team are attending regional conferences to gain insights which will help build the foundational knowledge to assist with drafting the initial agreements.

A fact finding and discovery process is near completion, which provides an understanding of the current situation. Information from previous projects has contributed to this.

The Change Approach and Communication and Engagement Strategy is in draft form and will be submitted for approval at the April governance group meeting. Together these documents will shape how the next steps of the project will look, including how we engage with our people throughout the project.

Recent project highlights have included:

- Governance has been established, with co-sponsors leading the project – Bill Butzbach (UFBA) and Janine Hearn (Fire and Emergency)
- Key governance documents, including the Terms of Reference and Authorising Framework, have been approved with input from the project co-sponsors A presentation to Eke Taumata Internal Advisory Rōpū was held on 19 February – this included a workshop to gain further insights
- An initial meeting was held between business owners and FECA
- A project plan has been approved
- Service Design work undertaken – to understand the problems in more depth, develop journey maps, stakeholder profiles, ecosystem map, and service blueprints
- Discovery work undertaken– clarifying number of incorporated societies/charitable trusts and gathering agreements of service/constitutions.

## Timelines

Throughout 2025, the team will be engaging with stakeholders gathering feedback as we work to draft the agreements. Brigade and volunteer input is critical to the success of this work. We aim to provide draft documentation for consultation in 2026.

## Project Scope

The scope includes that the following components, which may ultimately replace, or revise (in full or in part), all of the following:



- Agreement(s) of Service or Constitution(s)
- Brigade Rules of Association (Model Rules)
- Brigade Leader (Controller, Chief Fire Officer, Officer in Charge,) and Deputies - Appointment Process and Letter of Appointment
- Volunteer Appointment Process and Letter of Engagement.

For the full scope document, please [read the scope of work here.](#) [PDF, 751 KB]

### **Brigade constitutions and agreements in the interim**

It is important that all brigades continue to apply the range of existing agreements, constitutions and transitional processes.

We ask that brigades do not put local effort into re-writing their own rules or constitutions but are welcome to send any thoughts or considerations to the project team.

Due to updated legislation, brigades that are Incorporated Societies will need to re-register with New Zealand Companies Office prior to April 2026. Please contact the UFBA ([connect@ufba.org.nz](mailto:connect@ufba.org.nz)) who can provide a template constitution for this purpose.

### **We would like to hear from you**

Brigade and volunteer input is critical to the success of this work and as the project progresses, we will continue to seek feedback and input. The project team will be in touch with when and how brigades and volunteers can input into this work.

The project team are always happy to receive any feedback that may be important for us to hear at this early stage. The project team can be reached by emailing [volunteerengagementmodel@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:volunteerengagementmodel@fireandemergency.nz) or [connect@ufba.org.nz](mailto:connect@ufba.org.nz)

### **Connection to Eke Taumata programme**

The Volunteer Engagement Model project will support key recommendations of Fire and Emergency's Eke Taumata programme, which focuses on long-term culture change and ensures a positive experience for all of our people.

The Volunteer Brigade Leader development and review process began its implementation process from 1 November 2024. The project will aim to identify and clarify the links to this new process within other agreements, documents and processes.

This project will not revisit work completed through Eke Taumata but will look at how it integrates with the Volunteer Engagement Model.

### **Project team**



A project team was stood up at the end of November. The project team includes:

Barry Madgwick – Fire and Emergency Senior Advisor  
Rowena Hughey – Fire and Emergency Project Advisor  
Julia Costa – UFBA Principal Strategic Advisor  
Selina Gentry – Fire and Emergency Senior Change Advisor  
Tayla August – UFBA Communications Manager  
Logan Westwater – Fire and Emergency Business Analyst  
Erica Herron – Fire and Emergency Project Manager  
Rowan Whitton – Fire and Emergency Project Coordinator