Fire Research Report

Diversity in the Community versus Diversity in the NZFS: who is missing and why?

Allen and Clarke

March 2015

This research aimed to explore differences between the operational and volunteer workforce; the extent to which the NZFS reflects the demographic diversity of New Zealand; barriers to the recruitment, retention and progression of a more diverse workforce; and best practice approaches to enhancing workplace diversity.

The findings suggest that the NZFS' workforce is not as demographically diverse as the NZ population. Other qualitative findings found several differences between recruitment, training and progression processes in the operational compared to volunteer workforce.

The report makes the following recommendations:

- harness the organisational culture of the NZFS to drive changes in perceptions and behaviours related to workforce diversity
- emphasise inclusion-based values and practices to ensure a culture of respect and support
- enhance support for diversity-related groups in the NZFS
- consider how diversity in the NZFS can be leveraged to enhance community engagement
- emphasise greater accountability and buy-in from managers and leaders into diversity- and inclusion-related practices
- consider additional training around cultural competency, inclusion and diversity, unconscious bias and communication skills
- continue development of current diversity initiatives and transparent appointment processes.

DIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY VERSUS DIVERSITY IN THE NZFS:

WHO IS MISSING AND WHY?

Final Report

25 May 2016

ALLEN+CLARKE

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS), comprised of approximately 1,700 career firefighters and 8,300 volunteer firefighters across the country, is committed to providing a professional response to emergencies, reducing the incidence and consequence of fire, and working with communities to protect what they value. Although the main focus of the NZFS is response to emergency incidents, it also supports fire or NZFS-related research through its annual Contestable Research Fund (CRF).

Through this annual research funding, the Fire Service[1] has contracted Allen and Clarke Policy and Regulatory Specialists Ltd *(Allen + Clarke)* to conduct the following research project regarding diversity representation within the NZFS workforce.

Research purpose

The Fire Service wants to better reflect the communities it serves and improve its recruitment, retention, development and progression strategies to encourage the support and development of a range of talented people. To this end, this research has generated information about NZFS workforce diversity to:

- identify best practice approaches to diversity, careers and volunteering
- analyse the extent to which career and volunteer firefighters currently reflect diversity in the community
- examine how well diversity-related recruitment, development and retention strategies are working within the NZFS and agencies similar to the NZFS
- identify existing barriers to choosing firefighting as a career/volunteer opportunity and factors that may encourage job retention for a diverse range of people
- develop actionable, evidence-based recommendations on ways to develop a workforce and workforce strategies to increase minority representation in the NZFS.

Methods

A four-phased research programme was developed that involved multiple information sources and a mix of methods, including:

- a document review
- a comparative analysis of NZFS demographic information and 2013 NZ census data
- one-on-one and small group interviews with NZFS personnel and other relevant stakeholders
- focus groups with NZFS personnel, including operational support staff, volunteer and career firefighters.

Key findings

NZFS volunteer and career workforce comparisons of workplace diversity

Stakeholders outlined general differences between volunteer (i.e. unpaid) and career (i.e. paid) fire service personnel. Points of divergence between career and volunteer firefighters' recruitment, retention and progression were also discussed, including the perceived impact of these differences on the diversity of both workforces.

---

[1] 'Fire Service' and 'NZFS' are used interchangeably within this document.

General points of difference between the two workforces included (but were not restricted to):

- the organisational structure and management of the two workforces
- the relative autonomy of the volunteer division
- the demographic composition of volunteer brigades is more heavily dependent on the make-up of community in which the brigade is established than career brigades
- volunteer brigades tend to be more demographically diverse than career operational personnel
- there may be different motivations for becoming firefighters between volunteer and career operational personnel.

Specific diversity-related differences in recruitment, training and progression between the operational volunteer and career workforces included:

- recruitment responsibilities lie with each volunteer brigade, as opposed to twice-yearly national recruitment rounds for career firefighters
- it is more difficult to recruit (and retain) volunteer firefighters, whereas the NZFS receive enough applications to recruit sufficient numbers of career firefighters during national recruitment rounds
- there are greater difficulties with retaining a diverse group of firefighters in the volunteer workforce than the career workforce
- stakeholders from both workforces believed progression of women and individuals from ethnic communities to higher-ranked positions could be improved.

Definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity

Interviews examined stakeholders' definition and perceptions of workplace diversity. Respondents answered questions concerning what their organisations (both the NZFS and comparable agencies) 'look like' in terms of their current demographic composition, what groups were under-represented, and the challenges and benefits associated with having a more diverse workforce.

Stakeholders from St John New Zealand, the New Zealand Defence Force, the New Zealand Red Cross, and the New Zealand Police also provided definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity. These were very similar to those of the Fire Service and all services were aspiring to recruit, retain and progress individuals from diverse backgrounds. One defining difference between the NZFS and comparable agencies perceptions' of workplace diversity concerned the importance these agencies consciously placed on 'inclusion' (e.g. a workplace that is inclusive of and safe for everyone) in partnership with diversity.

Several of the NZFS personnel we spoke with believed that the NZFS is increasingly demonstrating awareness and tolerance of groups falling outside its mainstream demographic.

Fire Service and comparable agency stakeholders noted various challenges associated with increasing workplace diversity. These challenges included:

- resistance to changing the status quo
- the autonomous nature of the volunteer workforce makes increasing and/or enforcing NZFS National Headquarters (NHQ) workplace diversity policies and practices difficult
- workplace diversity can sometimes result in an increase in conflicts and time required to complete tasks due to cultural differences
- the double-edged sword of affirmative action-related programmes (c.f. section 3.5.5.1).

Interviewees from both the Fire Service and comparable agencies generally believed that the benefits of workplace diversity outweigh the challenges a diverse workforce may present. For example, diversity was seen as a way to:

- better reflect the community and engage more effectively with community groups
- provide a more diverse set of skills and backgrounds to increase overall performance
- provide comfort to people being served, especially in emergency situations
- increase an organisation's competitive advantage
- create positive perspectives of an organisation
- role model career opportunities for young people
- bring value to an organisation.

Best practice approaches and specific barriers to workplace diversity

A major component of interviews involved discussions around best practice approaches to diversity. The NZFS has a number of initiatives currently in place to increase diversity in the career and volunteer operational workforce and to address negative behaviours such as discrimination, bullying and harassment. These initiatives include the current Strategic Plan, and policies and standards such as the Good Employer Policy and the Standards of Conduct. Further approaches currently in place include:

- the existence of a National Recruitment Manager position whose role is to plan recruitment campaigns to target underrepresented groups
- a variety of recruitment resources (e.g. DVDs and posters) featuring a diverse workforce that includes women, men, Māori, Pākehā, Pasifika, Asian, career and volunteer firefighters
- a proposed cadetship recruitment initiative for young people to start building a more diverse, youthful workforce
- the existence of support groups such as Te Roopu, Afi Pasifika, and New Zealand Fire Service Women (NZFSW).

Some initiatives specific to particular volunteer brigades were also described (e.g. volunteer brigades being utilised as a cultural centre, childcare initiatives organised by operational support volunteers for stay at home parents who are volunteer firefighters).

Some participants talked about diversity initiatives that had been in place within the NZFS previously, but had not been continued. These included a diversity and fairness strategy and a Diversity and Fairness Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Steering Group; a group for Asian peoples similar to the Afi Pasifika and Te Roopu groups; and a formal forum of NZFSW representatives.

Perceptions about the effectiveness of Fire Service diversity initiatives were mixed. Fire Service diversity initiatives were often considered 'box-ticking exercises' with no significant changes being observed. On the other hand, stakeholders believed that the Training and Progression System (TAPS) had enabled a number of women and an increased number of Māori and Pasifika people to progress to more senior levels in the volunteer and career workforces, although these numbers were still considered to be small. The NZFS was also said to have good pay parity, and received 'high praise' for their approach to diversity at the EEO Trust Work in Life Awards in 2007.

While current initiatives such as Afi Pasifika and Te Roopu were seen as positive and were supported by the NZFS, they were also said to be experiencing constraints in the work they are able to undertake. This was thought to be due to limited budgets, and a perceived lack of emphasis or under-utilisation of these groups.

High-level and specific best practice approaches to diversity were also discussed by representatives from comparable agencies. High-level approaches included incorporating the concept and importance of diversity into organisational values, and creating a comprehensive planning and logic mapping exercise to identify important focus areas and develop a charter of actions around implementing diversity-related strategies.

Specific diversity-related best practice initiatives also included accountability approaches; advisory groups representing under-represented individuals; a range of recruitment and progression strategies; mentoring and other support networks; practical training and educational resources for frontline personnel and managers; approaches to target bullying, harassment, and discriminatory behaviours; and ways in which to engage the collective organisation in the 'diversity journey'.

In general, comparable agencies considered they were making progress with their diversity initiatives. They discussed the positive impact of the aforementioned strategies in supporting workplace diversity, and some emergency services representatives believed their organisations had good leadership and organisational buy-in around the diversity progress being made. For example, the Defence Force in particular has received international and national recognition for their support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender service members in armed forces via their OverWatch group, and the NZ Police representative believed that their organisation is making progress, but acknowledged that there is no one solution to improving workplace diversity.

Despite providing a range of insight into best practice diversity initiatives, Fire Service stakeholders considered some of the following issues as specific barriers to recruiting, retaining, and progressing a more diverse workforce:

- during the recruitment process there tends to be a greater emphasis placed on life experience, making it less likely that younger people will be recruited
- communities' perceptions of the NZFS could be dissuading some people from joining
- women may find the physical entry test standards for career firefighters challenging
- there may be unchecked biases in the recruitment process
- 'recruitment drives' specific to Māori and Pasifika people were seen as not being a priority for the NZFS
- cultural differences were cited as potential recruitment barriers for some groups
- sexism was seen as a significant barrier to retaining women firefighters, with some brigades being described as not 'female friendly'
- some minority firefighters were said to have experienced problems with bullying, discrimination or harassment in their brigade despite NZFS policies in place that outline processes to deal with workplace issues
- there was a perceived tension between the team-based culture of the NZFS, where all firefighters are part of a 'team' and members of crews in their brigades, and an individual's interest in moving up the ranks to achieve career success.

Many similarities were noted between the NZFS and comparable agency representatives' perceptions of barriers to recruitment, retention and progression for people from diverse backgrounds (e.g. resistance to change and entrenched attitudes, constraints with the rank structure, lack of organisational buy-in, translating executive-level intentions into effective behavioural change).

Recommendations

Achieving increased workforce diversity is difficult and time consuming. In order to make progress in this area, several suggestions were offered centring on resourcing, accountability, inclusion and

diversity/change management approaches to enable people from diverse backgrounds to join, stay, and progress through the Fire Service.

A total of eight recommendations were provided:

1. Utilise the organisational culture of the Fire Service as a tool to drive changes in diversity-related practices and behaviours.
2. Enhance support for NZFS groups representing personnel from diverse backgrounds to increase retention and progression.
3. Continue to develop cadetships, scholarships, and mentoring programmes to further support minority personnel.
4. Consider how diversity in the NZFS can be further leveraged to enhance effective community engagement and create additional value for the communities it serves.
5. Encourage greater accountability and buy-in into diversity practices from those in managerial and leadership positions.
6. Emphasise inclusion-based values and practices to facilitate greater respect for and support of a diverse workforce.
7. Consider additional training courses targeting cultural competency, inclusion and diversity, unconscious bias, and communication skills to better understand and manage diversity.
8. Continue to develop transparent and unbiased appointment processes across the career and volunteer workforces to support retention and progression of a diverse range of people.

1   INTRODUCTION

Through its annual Contestable Research Fund (CRF), the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) contracted Allen and Clarke Policy and Regulatory Specialists Ltd *(Allen + Clarke)* to conduct a research project regarding diversity representation within the NZFS workforce. This report presents the findings of the research, which was undertaken between May 2014 and January 2015.   The findings and recommendations presented are the result of *Allen + Clarke*'s independent inquiry and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Fire Service.

1.1   Purpose

The NZFS commissioned this research in order to understand how its workforce can better reflect the community it serves (NZFS, 2013a). The Fire Service is also interested in improving its recruitment, retention, development and progression strategies to encourage the support and development of a range of talented people. To this end, the following research has generated information about NZFS workforce diversity to:

- identify and inform best practice approaches to diversity in the workplace
- analyse the extent to which career and volunteer firefighters currently reflect the diversity of the communities they serve
- examine how well diversity-related recruitment, development and retention strategies are working within the Fire Service and agencies similar to the NZFS
- identify existing barriers to choosing firefighting as a career/volunteer opportunity and factors that may encourage job retention for a diverse range of people
- develop actionable, evidence-based recommendations on ways to develop a workforce and workforce strategies to increase minority representation in the NZFS.

1.2   Audience

This report has several key audiences:

- the NZFS Commission
- Fire Service personnel responsible for the development, implementation and management of policies and practices aimed at improving the organisation's workforce diversity
- other Fire Service personnel likely to be involved in future diversity-related initiatives
- all NZFS operational and operational support personnel, including volunteers, as their day-to-day work is affected by current and any forthcoming diversity-related Fire Service initiatives.

The research findings will also be of interest to any associations or professional bodies which represent minority group personnel and have a vested interest in NZFS recruitment and retention policies affecting their members. These organisations include the New Zealand Professional Firefighters' Union (NZPFU), the United Fire Brigades' Association (UFBA), the Executive Officers Society and the Public Service Association (PSA).

Further audiences for the research findings include emergency services agencies comparable to the Fire Service with an interest in best practice approaches to diversity and inclusion initiatives, such as the New Zealand Defence Force, the New Zealand Police, St John New Zealand and the New Zealand Red Cross.

1.3   Structure of this report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- section 2 sets out the research methodology, including the overall approach to design, the research objectives and questions, and specific research methods
- section 3 provides a contextual background for the research
- section 4 presents the main research findings
- section 5 includes our recommendations related to workforce diversity for the NZFS.

2 METHODOLOGY

This section sets out *Allen + Clarke's* approach to the research, the research objectives and questions, a summary of the information sources, how methods and analysis were undertaken, and an overview of the strengths and limitations of the research.

2.1 Research approach

Allen + Clarke approached the research in four key phases. These included Project Scoping and Initiation (phase 1), Context Setting (phase 2), Stakeholder Engagement (phase 3) and Analysis and Reporting (phase 4). The specific methods used to collect evidence are described in section 2.3 below.

The research team regularly engaged with the NZFS throughout the project. The Fire Service project team provided input into the selection of stakeholders for interviews and focus groups, and the development of research tools such as interview checklists and focus group questions. *Allen + Clarke* provided regular progress reports to the NZFS outlining tasks completed, next steps, issues and risks, and any other relevant information. The research also included face-to-face milestone meetings at key stages of the process, including at the conclusion of each phase and after completion of various milestone tasks. The purpose of these engagements was to present emerging findings to the NZFS project team, provide an opportunity for feedback and discussion, and engage in interpretation of the findings' implications.

2.2 Research objectives

The research centred on the following five key questions.

1. In general, what best practice approaches help enable the recruitment, retention and progression of a diverse range of people working in emergency response services?
2. To what extent do NZFS career and volunteer firefighters, and operational support personnel, currently reflect the diversity of the communities they serve?
3. How well are diversity-related strategies perceived to be working within the Fire Service and in comparable emergency service organisations in New Zealand?
4. What barriers exist for minority groups when choosing and remaining with firefighting as a career or volunteer position, and what factors may encourage a more diverse range of people to join, stay and progress with the NZFS?
5. Based on the evidence gathered, what recommendations can the Fire Service consider regarding ways to increase and maintain minority representation within the NZFS?

2.3 Information sources and methods

The information and evidence required to answer the main research questions was gathered from multiple sources and through multiple methods. These included:

- a review of documents and data related to NZFS diversity policies and practices
- data comparison of NZFS demographic information against 2013 NZ Census data
- one-on-one and small group interviews with NZFS personnel and other relevant stakeholders
- focus groups with career, volunteer and operational support personnel.

The research team collaborated closely with the NZFS project team to identify individuals and organisations to engage with as part of the project. The Fire Service project team also worked with *Allen + Clarke* to distribute internal communications about the research before engagement—including both the interviews and the focus groups—in order to adhere to appropriate organisational protocols.

The research team also utilised respondent-driven sampling to recruit individuals for the focus groups. This method is a form of snowballing that utilises key advisory groups or individuals to help recruit people within their organisation to engage (in this case) as focus group participants, and these people in turn ask others to join.

A further technique utilised in the current project was appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). This technique is a non-conventional, positive perspective approach to problem-solving that uses inquiry as a way to discover and better understand new possibilities generated by participants themselves. Appreciative inquiry looks at organisational issues (such as the recruitment challenges the NZFS has identified) from a strengths-based perspective. Instead of focusing on problems, this approach aims to discover what is working well and what could be further enhanced. These approaches are further described below.

2.3.1   Document and data review

We undertook a comprehensive review and critical analysis of documents, resources and data related to NZFS workforce diversity, including:

- Fire Service policies related to diversity (for example: recruitment, appointment, progression, Māori language, equal employment opportunities)
- Fire Service-sponsored research and reports on volunteer retention and sustainability
- high-level workforce data for currently employed career and volunteer firefighters separated by region, gender, ethnicity, age, workstream (i.e., operational, operational support) and rank
- maps and regional information for the five NZFS regions
- NZFS annual reports (2012, 2013)
- NZFS Strategic Plan, 2012 – 2017
- NZFS Diversity and Fairness Plan, 2006 – 2010
- international and New Zealand-based research on organisations comparable to the NZFS related to diversity and inclusion practices
- stakeholder websites (e.g. NZ Red Cross, St John NZ, NZ Police, NZ Defence Force).

In addition to the document review, a demographic overview of the NZFS workforce and a data comparison was also undertaken between NZFS data and the communities it serves as represented by territorial authority areas within the 2013 New Zealand Census.

We sought specific demographic information about the NZFS workforce, including gender, ethnicity, age, leadership positions and rank, and different operational and operational support streams embedded within the organisation. We also compared NZFS demographics against the 2013 New Zealand Census (working age only) for each of the 25 Fire Service Areas and territorial authority areas.

Both the document review and data comparison enabled the research team a more detailed understanding of the subject matter, informed development of specific research tools (e.g. interview and focus group checklists), and helped determine the extent to which NZFS career and volunteer firefighters currently reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.

2.3.2 Stakeholder interviews

The research project involved engagement with stakeholders across three main areas:

- stakeholders responsible for the development, management and/or implementation of workforce diversity policies and practices within the NZFS
- stakeholders representing associations and professional bodies of which minority groups were members, or who are affected by NZFS policies and practices
- stakeholders from agencies comparable to the NZFS responsible for successful development, management and implementation of workforce diversity employment policies and practices.

There were 17 stakeholders interviewed for the project, including:

- eight NZFS personnel (e.g. Managers, Volunteer Support staff, Trainers)
- five representatives from associations representing NZFS personnel (NZPFU, UFBA, New Zealand Fire Service Women, Executive Officers Society, PSA)
- four staff from organisations comparable to the NZFS responsible for development, management and/or implementation of workforce diversity employment policies and practices (NZ Defence Force, NZ Police, St John NZ, NZ Red Cross).

The interviews were undertaken using a general checklist (Appendix B) developed in partnership with the NZFS centred on the following topic areas: NZFS volunteer and career workforce comparisons of workplace diversity; definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity; best practice approaches and specific barriers to workplace diversity in terms of recruiting, retaining and advancing individuals from different backgrounds; and potential strategies and enablers to recruit, retain, and progress or advance a more diverse workforce.

The interviews were conducted with a semi-structured approach to enable in-depth discussion of issues, and to focus on relevant aspects specific to each group. Each lasted approximately 60 minutes, and were face-to-face or via telephone depending on what was practical and appropriate.

2.3.3 Focus groups

A total of 62 people participated in the focus groups across eight sites nationwide. The groups included representation of volunteer and career firefighters, operational support NZFS personnel, and a variety of demographic groups as outlined in the table below[2]. The focus groups have been coded FG1 – FG8 for ease of interpretation within the findings section (section 4).

---

[2] Recruitment was open to Asian, Māori, Pasifika and other underrepresented ethnicities in FG 1-4, 6, 7, and 8. We did not necessarily gain representation from all of these groups.

Table 1: Focus group demographics and attendance

Focus group	NZFS workforce	Gender	Ethnicity	Number attended
FG1	Career firefighters	Men/Women	Māori, Pasifika	12
FG2	Volunteer operational support	Men	Māori, Pasifika	2
FG3	Volunteer firefighters	Men/Women	Māori (included Pākehā minority)	13
FG4	Career operational support	Women	Māori, Pasifika	4
FG5	Volunteer firefighters	Men	Pākehā	10
FG6	Career firefighters	Women	All (Pākehā majority)	4
FG7	Career firefighters	Men	All (Pākehā majority)	4
FG8	Volunteer firefighters	Women	All (Pākehā majority)	13
TOTAL NUMBER OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS				**62**

The focus groups lasted for approximately 90 minutes each and were facilitated using focus group question guides (Appendix C) to ensure the key research questions were addressed. Similar to the themes discussed in the interviews, focus group participants shared their perceptions of:

- the extent to which diversity is valued within the NZFS and why
- how current NZFS recruitment, retention and career progression practices are/are not working to attract, retain and progress minority group members
- existing barriers and factors that may encourage recruitment, retention and promotion of individuals from underrepresented groups
- the extent to which specific factors (i.e. organisational culture, leadership) contribute to or hinder recruitment, retention and the career progression of a diverse range of people.

For each of the aforementioned topic areas, the *Allen + Clarke* research team examined:

- the extent to which focus group participants' perspectives aligned or diverged with those gathered from the stakeholder interviews
- any new data specifically relevant to focus group participants
- if and how perspectives on the topic areas differed between the eight focus groups.

The qualitative information gathered from the focus groups was summarised into sub-themes under each of the aforementioned categories and is presented in section 4 along with the qualitative data gathered from the stakeholder interviews.

All interested individuals were informed that participation in the focus groups was voluntary, and each participant read an information sheet (Appendix D) and signed a consent form that explained the purpose of the research, how their information was to be used, and the research team's privacy commitments. Both the focus groups and interviews were recorded when permitted by the participants to ensure all key points were captured.

2.4   Analysis

The analysis focused on synthesising and triangulating information from the aforementioned data sources. We analysed the qualitative information from interviews, literature, and open-ended survey responses, and arranged the emergent data under each of the key research questions. We also corroborated findings with quantitative information such as analysis of census data and data provided from the NZFS. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings were revisited frequently with the NZFS project team to determine whether and how the supporting and relevant evidence supported the emerging findings. The analysis then involved looking across the information to identify recurring themes and patterns, and incorporated contextual information relating to the participants. This included examination of differences between participant groups' perspectives such as career versus volunteer firefighters, gender differences, and differences between various ethnic groups.

2.5   Strengths and limitations

The main strength of the project's research approach and methodology is its detailed consideration of current workplace diversity perspectives within the NZFS. The stakeholder interviews and focus groups allowed for the collection of context-rich information from multiple stakeholders that garnered a variety of opinions, both convergent and divergent. The research also offers pragmatic, evidence-based recommendations discussed in collaboration with the NZFS project team that may be used to guide organisational procedures and policies focused on retaining and enhancing the experiences of an increasingly diverse workforce.

A further strength of the current project is the emphasis placed on best practice approaches within agencies comparable to the Fire Service (e.g. NZ Defence Force, St John NZ, NZ Red Cross, NZ Police). The insights gained from these organisations should be of use in developing and growing diversity-related recruitment and retention strategies, and offers the opportunity to identify any lessons which may be applicable to the NZFS.

One limitation of the methodology relates to the fact that the views collected from focus group and interview participants cannot be generalised to the wider population of Fire Service personnel as a whole. Further, it should be noted that the demographic information (i.e. ethnicity) of a large number of NZFS personnel (N = 4,908) were missing from the data provided by the NZFS, particularly from within the volunteer workforce, as the NZFS only recently began collecting this type of information. Missing ethnicity data for the majority of the volunteer workforce lends itself to somewhat inconclusive results with regards to comparing cultural diversity representation across the 25 NZFS Areas. Further compounding the challenge of missing data is the issue of how ethnicity data are currently classified and differences between the NZFS-based classification system and that of the NZ Census classification system. Where the NZFS has 11 ethnicity categories[3], the NZ Census classifies ethnicity into 6 groups (Asian, European, Māori, Middle Eastern/Latin American/African, Pacific Peoples, 'Other' Ethnicity). In sum, the aforementioned issues have prohibited any conclusive findings about the degree of ethnic minority representation currently present between the NZFS and the wider population.

---

[3] Asian, Cook Islander, Niuean, Non NZ European, NZ European, NZ Māori, Other, Pacific Peoples, Pacific Peoples/Māori, Samoan and Tongan.

3 REVIEW OF EVIDENCE RELATED TO INCREASING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

3.1 Background and context

The following research was conducted in a time of unprecedented growth in the diversity of New Zealand's demographic makeup. Data from the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) indicate that, in 2010, New Zealand had the fifth largest proportion of people born overseas out of all OECD countries, with migrating groups coming from countries such as China, India, Samoa, and the Philippines (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Further, projection data show that New Zealand's Māori, Asian, and Pasifika populations will continue to grow (Statistics New Zealand, 2010). For example, the Māori population is projected to rise to 16 percent in 2026, and Pasifika and Asian populations are expected to increase to 10 and 16 percent in 2026, respectively. The current working population in New Zealand is, as a reflection, also increasingly diverse in terms of age, gender and ethnicity (Department of Labour, 2009; in Gardner, Bentley, Catley, Cooper-Thomas, O'Driscoll and Trenberth, 2013). Overall, these figures substantiate the need identified by the NZFS to address and adapt to these national changes in order to better reflect the communities it serves.

Previous research on workforce diversity and underrepresented populations commissioned by the NZFS has included mechanisms for accessing hard to reach populations (McDermott, 2013), fire safety strategies for Māori and Pasifika Peoples (Tiatia, Kingi, Rankine, & Clarke, 2006; Thomas, Rayner, & Moroney, 2000), and the recruitment and retention of women volunteers (UMR Research Limited, 2003). Furthermore, the Fire Service Commission 2012 – 2017 Strategic Plan (New Zealand Fire Service, 2012) identifies enhancing organisational workforce diversity as a national goal (Strategic Objective Five, National Goal 6.1), and NZFS Commission objectives for 2015 include workforce targets for Māori (11 percent), Pacific People (4.25 percent), and women (5.5 percent) representation. There are no projections for other minority groups (i.e. Asian), and no targets for ensuring diversity in volunteer fire brigades. The proposed research aligns directly with NZFS's strategic goals, and is the first known appeal from the NZFS for empirically-based research that will inform workforce diversity strategies and policies in order to increase minority representation within the NZFS.

The following section presents the results of a literature and document review relating to diversity in paid and volunteer workplaces with an emphasis on emergency services. For the purpose of this research, we specifically explored gender (representation of women) and ethnic diversity (representation of Māori, Pasifika and Asian people, and other underrepresented ethnicities) in the NZFS. The review focuses on evidence relating to the NZFS, comparable agencies in New Zealand, and reports and grey literature from comparable jurisdictions such as Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The review also includes a brief overview of theory relating to good practice around implementing diversity strategies in the workplace, and an exploration of barriers and enablers to greater recruitment, retention and progression of women and underrepresented ethnicities in the fire service.

3.2 Diversity-related policies within the NZFS

The NZFS provided *Allen + Clarke* several policy documents related to diversity in the Fire Service:

- Advertising Policy
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Māori Language Policy
- Pregnancy in Operational Firefighters Policy (and Supplementary Information)
- Good Employer Policy
- Appointment Policy.

The following table summarises each of the above policies, and includes a brief analysis of their relevance to diversity in the NZFS. All policies include sections outlining key personnel and roles in enacting the policy, those who are accountable for the operation of the policy, and who to consult for further assistance on each specific policy.

Table 2: NZFS policies pertaining to workforce diversity

Policy	Summary	Comments
Advertising Policy (March 2003). Last reviewed August 2013	This policy outlines the aims of the NZFS in terms of attracting potential candidates who have the skills sought after, are from the widest pool of possible candidates, and possess knowledge and experience that may add value to the NZFS. The policy outlines processes around advertising vacancies internally and externally (including reference to the Transfers, Notifications of Vacancies and Appointment Policy), and the role of HR in giving support and advice around these processes. The Recruitment Best Practice Guide is also referred to for further information.	The policy emphasises that there must be adequate opportunity for candidates to view and respond as interested.
Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (March 2003). Last reviewed August October 2013	The NZFS EEO Policy is to develop/implement annual EEO programmes, ensure that NZFS complies with the programmes, and summarise and report on objectives achieved in the programmes. Further, the policy references the State Services Commission's EEO Policy to 2010 document through elimination of all forms of unfair discrimination in employment. Section 56 of the State Sector Act is also referenced in terms of the groups most adversely affected in employment in NZ (Māori, ethnic and minority groups, women, persons with disabilities). The document outlines Good Employer Principles, and includes a definition of an EEO programme with general aims, i.e. "*Genuine equality of treatment and opportunity is available to all present and future personnel*" (p.3).	The NZFS EEO policy was last reviewed in October 2013 (as of May 2014) but includes reference to the older State Services Commission's EEO Policy to 2010 (1997) document, which has since been superseded by the Equality and Diversity Policy document (2008).
Maori Language Policy (November 2003)	The Maori Language Policy document defines institutional bilingualism and key Māori positions as core components of the policy. The document includes policy and processes on visibility of the Māori	The policy outlines that use of te reo Māori should be appropriate and that computer software should accommodate the use of

Policy	Summary	Comments
	language, key Māori positions, service delivery, and use of te reo Māori. The NZ Government's 1999 Māori Language Strategy is referenced and supported. The policy also includes NZFS Vision, Mission and Values.	macrons. However, the title and the policy itself does not utilise macrons in relevant Māori words.
Pregnancy in Operational Firefighters Policy (July 2007)	This document introduces the Pregnancy in Operational Firefighters Policy with reference to ensuring the safety of firefighters and stating special health and safety considerations of firefighters who become pregnant. The policy outlines steps that must be taken in terms of notification, allocation of duties (i.e. removal from operational emergency response tasks) and alternative duties of pregnant women. The supplementary information to be read alongside this policy includes information on pregnancy, potential hazards and activities, alternative duties, district chief responsibilities, employer obligations (with reference to EEO policy), employee obligations, early commencement of parental leave, disputes, protection of employment position, maternity grants, and information about parental leave under the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987.	The policy and supporting documentation gives NZFS personnel information on appropriately accommodating pregnant firefighters on station.
Good Employer Policy (July 2006). Last reviewed August 2013	This document outlines the NZFS's commitment to being a Good Employer as required by s. 118 of the Crown Entities Act (2004). This policy includes a clear definition of what it means for the NZFS to be a Good Employer, and describes how this policy is linked to the NZFS EEO Policy.	N/A
Appointment Policy (August 2013). Last reviewed August 2013	The Appointment Policy describes how the NZFS will appoint the best-suited person to any vacancy (internal or external). The policy also details any exceptions to this statement (i.e. those who may not have the legal right to work in NZ). Relevant information and legislation is referred to in this document for readers to make reference to. The policy also outlines best practice selection processes.	N/A

The policies listed above provide an underlying framework upon which to further build and enhance diversity initiatives in the NZFS. Values such as equal treatment and equality of opportunity provide a foundation for these policies, and relevant NZ government legislation is referenced with regards to the Fire Service's obligations as a Crown Entity.

3.3   Benefits of diversity in the workplace

Workplaces both in New Zealand and internationally are increasingly incorporating more diversity- and inclusion-related initiatives recognising individuals from a range of diverse backgrounds, and there is legal justification for diversity policies in the workplace. For example, the New Zealand Human

Rights Act 1998 and the Bill of Rights Acts 1990 stipulate that measures to ensure equality and freedom from discrimination are appropriate.

Some benefits of diversity are believed to include:

- long-term sustainability: organisations and companies are more likely to be successful and trustworthy if they reflect the communities they serve (NZFS Commission, 2011; Ministry of Defence, 2014) or are marketing to (EEO Trust, 2012)
- better decisions, better results: this is achieved through diversity of thought, new ideas and creative thinking, particularly when, for example, companies are diverse at a senior level (EEO Trust, 2012)
- fostering employee wellbeing (Gardner et al., 2013; Holvino, Ferdman and Merrill-Sands, 2004).

These benefits are more likely to be experienced when diversity initiatives ensure that members of all groups are fairly treated, feel (and are) included, have equal opportunities, and are represented across different levels of an organisation (Gardner et al., 2013; Holvino et al., 2004). It is also important that the knowledge and perspectives of different groups help shape organisational strategy, work, management and operating systems, values and norms for success (Holvino et al., 2004). Further, including women in higher levels of organisations can promote considered thinking and 'less chest beating' (EEO Trust, 2012). As the NZFS has a much higher proportion of male personnel, it is important to consider that:

> *"Equal treatment does not lead to equal outcomes. Treating women and men the same is not treating women and men equally. In an organisation where men are treated as the norm, such as firefighting, you have to treat women and men differently in order to treat them equally in this context"* (Lewis, 2004, p.22).

It will be important for the NZFS to further consider the implications of values such as 'equal treatment' for women as well as Māori, Pasifika, Asian, and other underrepresented personnel.

Fire and rescue service organisations in international jurisdictions have outlined strategies related to diversity. For example, the United Kingdom Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy (2008-2018) has five priorities. These consist of leadership and promoting inclusion; accountability; effective service delivery and community engagement; employment and training; and evaluation and sharing good practice. Further, one of their four core values is 'Diversity' (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008a). Furthermore, Avon Fire & Rescue in Bristol, UK, have a Single Equality Scheme (2010-2013) where equality is reported on annually.

Various pieces of literature have identified some important benefits to diversity in the NZFS workforce. These benefits include creating a better understanding of community fire safety needs, and promotion and education with regards to fire-related awareness (NZFS Commission, 2011). Further, a 2003 study found that women in volunteer fire brigades were perceived to have improved their brigade due to different sets of skills and attributes, being better able to deal with certain groups of victims, improving behaviour of male recruits, and the addition of a different perspective to the fire service (UMR Research Limited, 2003).

It is important for firefighters to also reflect the ethnic diversity of the community. This allows for interactions and communications from the Fire Service can be responsive to different cultural and ethnic groups (Tiatia, Kingi, Rankine and Clarke, 2006). New Zealand has diverse personnel resources (Ministry of Defence, 2014) which can help to build more flexible, effective workforces.

Comparable organisations to the NZFS also recognise the value of diversity. The NZ Police, for example, seek to reflect the ethnic profile of the wider population (Mossman, Mayhew, Rowe and Jordan, 2008), and NZDF recognises that "...*the application of equity and diversity principles enables optimal operations in all environments*" and recent reporting provides detail of regular events that relate to workforce diversity (NZDF, 2013, p.18). The NZDF are considered to be leaders in equity and diversity, particularly in their work to support gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (GLBTIQ) people (Ministry of Defence, 2014).

3.4   Barriers to increased workplace diversity

This section outlines findings from the literature review in relation to factors which act as barriers to the recruitment, retention and progression of women and underrepresented ethnicities within the workforce, with specific reference to volunteer and career firefighters where applicable.

3.4.1   Recruitment: What prevents women and underrepresented ethnicities from joining the NZFS and comparable organisations?

The literature suggests that key barriers to recruitment include:

- perceived inability to meet role requirements
- lack of visible role models
- belief that the Fire Service is unlikely to be 'user friendly' for women and underrepresented ethnicities
- fear of sexism or racism
- language barriers
- cultural biases.

These barriers are further described below.

3.4.1.1 Perceived inability to meet role requirements

The literature suggests that, particularly for women, a perceived difficulty to meet the entry requirements or perform the role acts as a barrier to recruitment. For example, women volunteers reported feeling inadequate in relation to their ability to be firefighters, as well as feeling that some of the challenging situations would be difficult (UMR Research Limited, 2003). Physical limitations around entry fitness test requirements were identified as a barrier for women to join the British Fire Service (Johnson, 2004) and other similar NZ organisations such as the Police (Mossman et al., 2008) and the Defence Force (Ministry of Defence, 2014).

3.4.1.2 Lack of visible role models

Several researchers have identified a lack of visible role models as a barrier to recruitment of women and different ethnicities (Heyworth and Fryer, 2004; in Suss, 2007; Mossman, et al., 2008). Mossman and colleagues found that in the Police force, a lack of personnel from similar ethnic backgrounds inhibited underrepresented ethnicities from participating in the recruitment process, and ultimately joining. The authors further note that fewer women are present in the higher ranks of the Police, which does little to attract female recruits (Mossman et al., 2008).

3.4.1.3 Perceptions that the organisation is not 'user friendly'

In UMR Research Limited's (2003) report, it was found that women struggled to become volunteer firefighters due to challenges in balancing the demands of volunteer service with family commitments. The Fire Service's time requirements for activities such as training were seen as not responsive to the needs of women with families. Similarly, Mossman and colleagues (2008) cite childcare and family responsibilities as perceived barriers to recruitment of women in the Police.

A lack of flexibility around religious requirements (for example, time for prayer or the need to adapt uniforms to meet religious norms) was seen as a potential barrier for some ethnic groups to join the Police Force (Mossman et al., 2008).

3.4.1.4 Fear of sexism or racism

Australian research on gender in firefighting posits that "*firefighting has been socially and organisationally shaped over time as a masculine occupation*" in the industrialised world (Lewis, 2004, p.8). A 2003 study of volunteer fire fighting in New Zealand found that women commonly held a perception of a male dominated environment that they may struggle to fit into (UMR Research Limited, 2003). Fear of sexism was reported as a factor that would prevent women from joining the Police (Mossman, et al., 2008). Perceived problematic stereotyping of 'masculine' and 'feminine' roles also prevented women from joining. Police work and leadership were considered to be 'masculine roles' creating barriers for the recruitment of women (NZ Police, n.d.). NZDF research found that the subjective nature of recruitment interviews have the potential to introduce gender bias (Ministry of Defence, 2014).

Māori, Pasifika and Asian/Indian people report higher levels of negative acts (discrimination and bullying) in the workplace, compared to New Zealand Europeans (Research New Zealand in Gardner et al., 2013). Research with underrepresented ethnicities reported a fear of being exposed to racism within the workplace as a common barrier to seeking employment within some organisations (Hershcovis, 2011, in Gardner et al., 2013). Minority groups in the British Fire Service often said that it was easier to conform to behaviours in the workplace rather than challenge them.

3.4.1.5 Language barriers and cultural bias

A 2004 study by Heyworth and Fryer (cited in Suss, 2007) stated that culturally and linguistically diverse populations may be reluctant to participate in volunteering because of language barriers. Mossman and colleagues (2008) also found that there was a cultural bias present in some recruitment processes which created barriers for underrepresented ethnicities and contributed to a reluctance to participate; recruitment tools such as verbal reasoning tests were generally developed by and aimed at 'white men'. Fox and colleagues (2006) found that an obstacle to recruiting a diverse group of firefighters was that the selection process requires education, certification or prior experience that can limit diversity.

3.4.2 Retention: What prevents women and underrepresented ethnicities staying?

The retention of women and underrepresented ethnicities within the workplace has also emerged as a potential issue for the NZFS. The literature suggests that the organisational culture, a lack of organisational flexibility and sexism and discrimination are key barriers.

3.4.2.1 Organisational culture

Research on diversity in fire and rescue services internationally suggests that the organisational culture of fire services may act as a significant barrier to retention of women and underrepresented minority groups (Baigent, 1996; Wood, 2002; Johnson, 2004; Lewis, 2004; Bendick, Moccio, Hulett & Thomas, 2008). Bendick and colleagues (2008) note that the 'traditional occupational self-image' of the firefighter tends to ignore how the role has evolved over the years to include more caregiving, medical treatment and social worker skills:

> *"Firefighting's traditional culture is proud and noble, building on shared perceptions that the occupation is dangerous and difficult. The key performance requirements are strength and courage. Only an elite subset of individuals is capable of performing its duties… ironically, these perceptions continue to justify exclusion of female firefighters as the evolving occupation itself erodes their relevance"* (Bendick et al., 2008, p.2).

Further, a New Zealand study on Pasifika leadership found that organisational culture was a key issue affecting retention (and progression) of Pasifika people in the public service (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2005; in EEO Trust, 2011).

3.4.2.2 Lack of organisational flexibility

Family commitments are often perceived as a barrier to retention for volunteer women (UMR Research Limited, 2003), as are the ongoing tensions of balancing family and career. Some British women firefighters did not feel supported by their managers when they were pregnant in the fire service, and correct procedures were not always followed by managers (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008b). Many workplaces fail to offer a 'family friendly' working environment (Ministry of Defence, 2014) which prevents women, especially those with families, from staying for long periods of time. In UMR Research Limited's (2003) report on women volunteer firefighters, the Fire Service's time requirements for activities such as training was seen as not responsive to the needs of women with families. Similarly, Mossman and colleagues (2008) cite childcare, family responsibilities, and lack of flexibility around religious requirements as barriers to retention for women and some ethnic groups in the Police force.

3.4.2.3 Sexism, harassment and discrimination

Research with women volunteer firefighters shows that they face difficulties working in a largely male dominated environment where 'male attitudes' are prevalent (UMR Research Limited, 2003). Women working in such environments reported 'uncomfortable situations' in which 'jokes' were made that that would be considered offensive in most professional settings (EEO Trust, 2012; Bendick et al., 2008). A survey of current and ex-firefighters (men and women) in England showed that 53 percent of respondents directly experienced unacceptable behaviours at their job in the previous 12 months, and women and other underrepresented groups were more likely to experience these behaviours (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008b).

Some women in traditionally 'masculine' roles reported feeling stigmatised. UMR Research Limited (2003) reported that women working as urban firefighting volunteers often faced difficulty in gaining acceptance from their male colleagues in brigades. Standards of behaviour for women firefighters can be seen to be determined by group male behaviour, where femininity is joked about or put down. Women are often judged as 'token' or 'honorary men', and may also be judged in terms of their participation in or response to 'traditional' masculine behaviours such as competition sport and drinking (Lewis, 2004). Similarly, it was found that some women in the NZ Police force feel separate

from the informal male culture, feel as if they have to act like 'one of the boys' and believe that they receive more performance scrutiny than their male colleagues (Mossman et al., 2008).

Stigmas can have a significant impact on a person's working capability and can undermine performance, self-efficacy and motivation (NZ Police, n.d.). The need for direct confrontation or effort directed at addressing largely gender based matters was seen as imperative to developing and improving cross gender relationships within these workforces (UMR Research Limited, 2003). Johnson (2004) reported that working conditions must allow people to maintain and be proud of their identity.

More seriously, sexual harassment and direct discrimination was highlighted as a retention barrier. For example, women working in the NZDF reported bullying, harassment and discrimination as an occurrence among the lower ranks of the NZDF (Ministry of Defence, 2014). With regards to underrepresented ethnic groups in the Fire Service, a British study on groupthink noted that some 'black and ethnic minority' firefighters can be excluded through 'out-group' stereotyping by a dominant and cohesive 'in-group' of firefighters (Pamah, 2005).

Women firefighters in New Zealand and in other countries have also raised concerns over ill-fitting uniforms and a lack of women's toilets and changing room facilities (UMR Research Limited, 2003; Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008b).

3.4.3 Progression: What prevents women and underrepresented ethnicities from advancing?

The literature provides some evidence around factors that prevent woman from advancing in organisations such as the Fire Service. These barriers primarily relate to structural discrimination within traditionally male-dominated organisations and perceptions (both external and from the women themselves) of leadership competency. The literature reviewed provided little evidence in relation to barriers which prevent underrepresented ethnicities from advancing in fire services.

3.4.3.1 Structural discrimination

While the literature reviewed does not discuss structural discrimination within the NZFS, this was identified as a barrier to progression in the NZ Police, the NZDF and the British Fire Service. Bryant (n.d.) found that a 'glass ceiling' exists for women firefighters in the British Fire Service, and barriers identified to progression into higher roles included prejudice, low numbers of women in the service, and lack of access to 'old boys' networks'. Mossman and colleagues (2008) report that women in the Police experience structural discrimination through being offered fewer and narrower opportunities, are often given 'feminine roles' which are seen as 'lower' status, and have limited promotional opportunities. In the NZDF, women tend to be provided with fewer deployment experiences, which subsequently inhibit them from being able to move up the ranks (Ministry of Defence, 2014). Women working in non-combat or operational support roles have restricted ability to access and play a role in top leadership structures in the NZDF (Ministry of Defence, 2014).

3.4.3.2 Perceptions of leadership competency

Women also tend to be affected by gender role stereotyping which influences perceptions surrounding women's competency as leaders. The role of leader has historically been associated with masculinity despite the presence of "*substantial evidence that both men and women perform equally well as leaders*" (Ministry of Defence, 2014, p.34). However, the equal capability of both men and women is often eschewed in favour of 'traditional' notions of leadership. It was also argued that women's tendency towards transformational leadership styles affects perceptions of their leadership abilities (Eagly and Carli, 2007; in Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2014). Differences in leadership styles were identified as a barrier to progression for women in the British Fire Service (Bryant, n.d.).

Women's career progression is also hindered by the tendency to apply for promotions when they believe they are 100 percent competent for the role, whereas men are likely to apply, despite believing their competence to be at a level of 60 percent (Fitzpatrick, 2011; in NZ Police, n.d.).

3.5 Enablers of increased workplace diversity

Ensuring that a workforce is diverse is a complex and ongoing challenge. There is *"...no quick fix. You have to be vigilant and keep going"* (EEO Trust, 2012). This section provides details on identified 'enablers' of workforce diversity, and outlines examples of good practice from the NZFS and other comparable organisations that enhance the recruitment, retention and progression of women and underrepresented ethnicities within the workforce.

3.5.1 Recruitment: What enables women and underrepresented ethnicities to join the NZFS and comparable organisations?

The literature identifies a number of factors which support the recruitment of women and underrepresented ethnicities, including affirmative action programmes, using diverse recruitment channels, and tailored recruitment messages. The United States Fire Administration has resources available to assist managers to best work with women in firefighting and to assist women who are thinking about joining or are in fire services (U.S. Fire Administration, 1999a & 1999b).

3.5.1.1 Affirmative action

Affirmative action programmes have been highlighted as a way to recruit higher numbers of women and underrepresented ethnicities. These aim to offer assistance to disadvantaged groups by reducing or eliminating factors that maintain disadvantage. However, the literature suggests that attempts to implement affirmative action programmes in comparable organisations to the NZFS have been met with controversy. For example, a literature review commissioned by the NZ Police found that while affirmative action programmes can be highly effective when properly constructed and implemented, the perception of 'special treatment' can perpetuate negative attitudes towards underrepresented groups (NZ Police, n.d.). Women in the Police have been shown to be disengaging with affirmative action efforts due to concern about potentially being seen to have achieved promotion due to gender rather than competence (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2012; in NZ Police, n.d.). Furthermore, women in the NZDF were deeply concerned that targets or quotas for representation of women in the organisation would undermine their credibility (Ministry of Defence, 2014). Heilman, Block and Lucas (1992; in Fox et al., 2006) found that people hired under an affirmative action plan can have stigmas attached to them for their entire careers.

3.5.1.2 Diverse recruitment channels

Use of a variety of carefully selected recruitment channels is important to successfully recruit women and underrepresented ethnicities. The NZFS recently reported on strategies to recruit diverse groups for career and volunteer fire fighting, including using social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook, tailoring vacancy advertisements to target various ethnicities, having a presence at women's expos, implementing a 'practice day' for the physical test for women, and developing a video targeting women for career firefighting roles (NZFS Commission, 2013).

Advertising through print media, radio or television can be an effective recruitment mechanism. UMR Research Limited (2003) found that television documentaries showcasing women firefighters were effective in raising awareness of firefighting as an opportunity for women, while Mossman and

colleagues' 2008 study of police recruitment practices found that *"...advertising had made a career in Police more appealing for 41% of females*" (p.11). Advertisements in media with specific ethnic groups as a target audience was suggested as a useful recruitment mechanism by the Fire Service Research and Training Unit (2004; in Suss, 2007).

Informal recruitment channels, such as using members of the target community to recruit others, have been used successfully by the NZ Police, which has appointed ethnic liaison officers to recruit more staff from underrepresented ethnic groups, and to promote diversity (NZ Police, n.d.). Warren and Wilson (2014) suggest: "*There are opportunities for fire services to work with new migrant communities for their mutual benefit – finding ways to improve fire safety for the fire service and increasing their employability for migrants*" (p.31).

3.5.1.3 Tailored recruitment messages

Evidence shows that the messages that are provided during recruitment campaigns are important to ensuring that the campaign resonates with and attracts the target groups. In their study of 'Best Practices' fire service departments in the United States, Fox and colleagues (2006) found that 57 percent had recruitment strategies aimed at women, and 63 percent aimed at minorities. Another strategy reported by Fox and colleagues (2006) included utilising women and different ethnicities as recruiters. A 2011 NZFS Commission report outlined strategies to recruit volunteers which aimed to demystify the role of firefighting by promoting the message "ordinary people, extraordinary job" to show that anyone has the ability to volunteer with the NZFS. Similarly, a recent NZDF report on maximising opportunities for women found that seeing young women in advertising campaigns created the impression that the NZDF was an accessible and feasible employment option for women (Ministry of Defence, 2014).

The literature also suggests that identifying potential barriers to recruitment, and promoting messages around how these can be mitigated, is likely to support diversity recruitment efforts. A 2008 study reported that potential women police recruits' concerns over their ability to meet the physical requirements of the role could be mitigated by emphasis on communication skills over physical fitness to better reflect the competencies that were valued for police recruitment (Mossman et al., 2008). The 2011 NZFS Commission report found that recruitment of women in the Fire Service could be enhanced by promoting the availability of childcare options for parents. Warren and Wilson (2014) place high importance on any initiatives that lead to greater cultural awareness within fire services, especially those that increase diversity amongst staff.

3.5.2 Retention: What enables women and underrepresented ethnicities to stay in their roles?

Literature reviewed identified a number of factors which support the retention of women and underrepresented ethnicities, including having more visibility of women in higher ranked positions, networking and mentoring opportunities, and flexible work environments. Internationally, publications such as Siren magazine[4] help to highlight issues and provide information for women in the fire service.

---

[4] Available at: http://www.nwcfbu.co.uk/siren/siren.php.

3.5.2.1 Visibility of women in powerful positions

A 2003 study of retention of women volunteers within the NZFS found that the choice of fire chief is important to overall morale. As older males retire, selecting more women as chiefs was likely to increase retention (UMR Research Limited, 2003). Several studies of the retention of female police recruits have also found that increasing the visibility of women in positions of power is correlated with longer services, and a likely flow-on effect is that more women may be encouraged into frontline ranks (Borkin, 2011, in NZ Police, n.d.). A 2012 EEO Trust report argues that targets for the representation of women in senior management roles are necessary to ensure that women have visible role models.

3.5.2.2 Networking and mentoring opportunities

Opportunities to connect and network with peers of shared ethnicity or gender is identified as a mechanism for retaining women and underrepresented ethnicities in fire services. A 2003 study by UMR Research Limited found that meeting with other women volunteers in their area, attending regional/national workshops for women volunteers, and meeting with paid women firefighters acted as a motivating factor for women to remain in the volunteer workforce. Similarly, international research has shown that mentoring for newly hired firefighters helps to improve retention and job satisfaction (Fox et al., 2006).

The NZFS Women's group has a website, and networking and mentoring groups are available for women in fire services internationally, including Australasia[5] and the United Kingdom[6]. These groups often hold workshops and organise conferences for women in fire services. Similarly, Mossman and colleagues (2008) found that the development of formal networks to increase opportunities for views of women in Police to access mentoring and support was an effective retention mechanism. The report highlights the Australian Women in Policing Network as an example of an effective networking opportunity for women. Mentoring was also seen as helpful for progression of Pasifika people in the public service (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2005; in EEO Trust, 2011).

3.5.2.3 Flexible work environments

The importance of developing work environments that are sensitive and adaptable to the needs of a culturally and gender diverse workforce was highlighted as a key factor influencing retention rates. Factors which can affect the retention of ethnically diverse community members include expectations around dress (for example, the ability to adapt uniform requirements to meet cultural requirements), attitudes to alcohol, the ability to engage in prayer and accommodation of dietary requirements (Giles, 2006; in Suss, 2007). For women, flexible work practices, such as part time work, were identified as helping women stay in the Police force (NZ Police, n.d.). A 2012 report found that individualised approaches such as flexible maternity leave arrangements are important in order to avoid staff resignations (EEO Trust, 2012).

3.5.3 Progression: What enables women and underrepresented ethnicities to advance?

The literature appraised as part of this review contained little information on factors that support women and underrepresented ethnicities to progress their careers in the NZFS or comparable organisations. One study conducted by the NZDF noted that the NZ Navy and two other services had promotional equity strategies, and the NZDF has developed a Women's Development Steering Group (WDSG) to give women in the Defence Force a greater opportunity to influence strategy at the senior

---

[5] See http://www.wafa.asn.au/ for more information.

[6] See http://nwfs.net/ for more information.

levels of the organisation (Ministry of Defence, 2014). What appears to be a positive strategy for progression (and retention) of a diverse workforce is a workplace where all employees feel valued and included.

3.5.3.1 An inclusive workplace culture

Research with Pasifika public servants (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2005; in EEO Trust, 2011) and women in United States fire service organisations (Hulett, Bendick, Thomas, & Moccio, 2008) highlight that being valued and included in the workplace assisted retention and progression of a more diverse workforce:

> *"Inclusion means more than hiring in numbers to match [underrepresented groups] availability. It also mean (sic) that, throughout their careers, [underrepresented groups] are treated equally… in how they are welcomed, trained, assigned, retained, promoted and otherwise given the opportunity to thrive"* (Hulett et al., 2008, p.12).

The review suggests that creating inclusive workplace cultures involve several steps. According to Bendick and colleagues (2008), these steps include:

- commitment by chiefs, officials, and fire service leadership
- monitoring and accountability
- translating broad goals into immediate consequences for mid-level managers and supervisors
- human resource management procedures embodying transparency, objectivity, and performance-relatedness
- changes in individual behaviour to address bias or aggression
- and sustained effort, particularly for long-established workplaces such as fire services.

4 KEY FINDINGS

The following section offers findings from the research project concerning the extent to which the NZFS currently reflects the communities it serves (section 4.1); diversity-related differences between volunteer and career Fire Service recruitment (section 4.2), retention and progression policies and practices (section 4.3); definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity (section 4.4); and enablers and barriers to workplace diversity for the NZFS and comparable New Zealand-based agencies (section 4.5).

4.1 Overview of the current NZFS workforce and comparison with 2013 NZ Census data

4.1.1 Demographic overview

We conducted a demographic overview of the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) workforce related to specific components of the NZFS workforce that included gender, ethnicity, age, leadership position and rank, as well as information regarding the different operational and operational support work streams within the organisation.

4.1.1.2 Gender

Of the 10,598 personnel that comprised the NZFS workforce at the time of this report, 86.1 percent were men and 13.5 percent were women (missing = 43 or 0.4 percent). Women were a minority within each of the three main NZFS work streams (career, volunteer, and operational support staff), with 3 percent of career firefighter positions, 14 percent of volunteer firefighter roles, and 41.4 percent of roles in the paid operational support stream.

Figure 1: Percentage of NZFS women and men across work streams

13.5% 86.1%	3% 97%	14% 86%	41.4% 58.6%
Total workforce	Career firefighters	Volunteer firefighters	Operational support staff
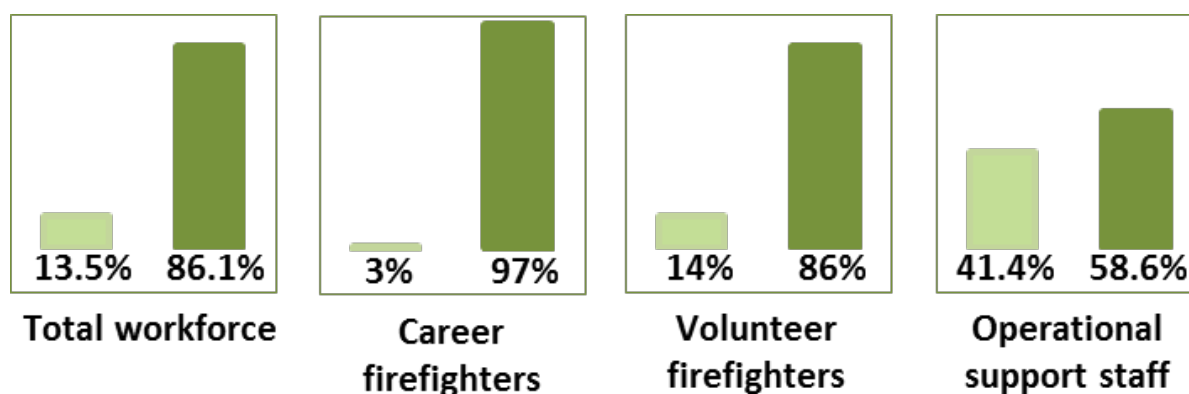
Gender across regions

Women represented less than 6 percent of paid firefighters across each of the five Fire Service regions. This ranged from 1.9 percent representation in Region 4 through to 5.4 percent representation in Region 5. The volunteer workforce is more diverse, with higher percentages of both women volunteer firefighters and operational support volunteers across the regions. These figures range from 11.5 percent in Region 5 to 16.4 percent women in the volunteer workforce in Region 2. Greater equality between the women and men is observed in the paid operational support workforce across each of

the Fire Service regions (e.g. a 56 percent women /44 percent male split in Region 5 through to 43 percent women/57 percent male split in Region 3).

Figure 2: Percentage of career and volunteer women firefighters across regions
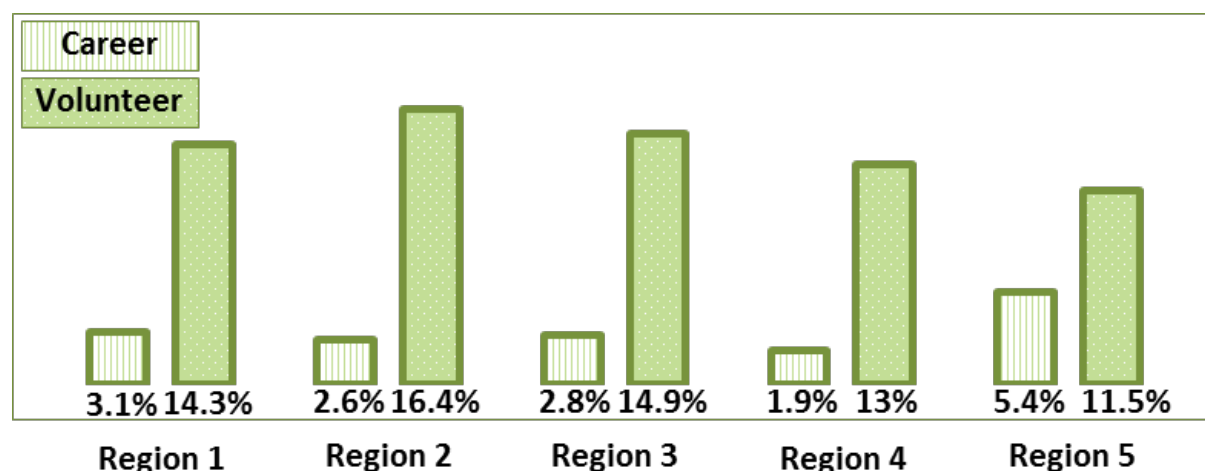
Gender across Areas

The Tairawhiti, Central Lakes and Muri Whenua Areas have the largest percentage of women NZFS personnel across the three Fire Service groups (21.1 percent career operational, 20.6 percent volunteer operational and 19.9 percent operational support personnel). Conversely, the Auckland City, Counties-Manukau and South Areas have the lowest percentage of women (4.8 percent, 7.6 percent and 7.8 percent, respectively).

4.1.1.3 Ethnicity

According to the cultural diversity categories established by the NZFS, New Zealand Europeans comprised the majority of the NZFS workforce (83.3 percent), followed by Māori (8.1 percent), Europeans at 4.4 percent (e.g. British), and 2.2 percent of individuals identifying as "Other" (e.g. Australians, Canadians). Representation from other ethnic backgrounds (Pacific Peoples[7], Asian, Middle Eastern/Latin American/African) was negligible, with Pacific Peoples representing less than 2 percent of the entire NZFS workforce and Asians representing around 0.4 percent.

It should be noted that the ethnicities of a large number of NZFS personnel (N = 4,908) were missing from the data, particularly from within the volunteer workforce, as the NZFS only recently began collecting ethnicity-related data. Unofficial statistics provided by the NZFS suggest that their volunteer workforce is comprised mainly of NZ Europeans (95 percent), followed by three percent NZ Māori and two percent "Other".

In comparing diversity across the three NZFS work streams, personnel identifying as Māori were the largest non-NZ European group in both the career operational stream (10.8 percent) and the volunteer operational stream (6.9 percent). Non-NZ Europeans (e.g. British, Irish, Russian) were the largest self-identified group of operational support personnel (10.3 percent).

---

[7] Pacific Peoples include Cook Islanders, Niueans, Pacific Peoples/Māori, Samoans and Tongans.

Figure 3: Ethnicity across the total NZFS workforce
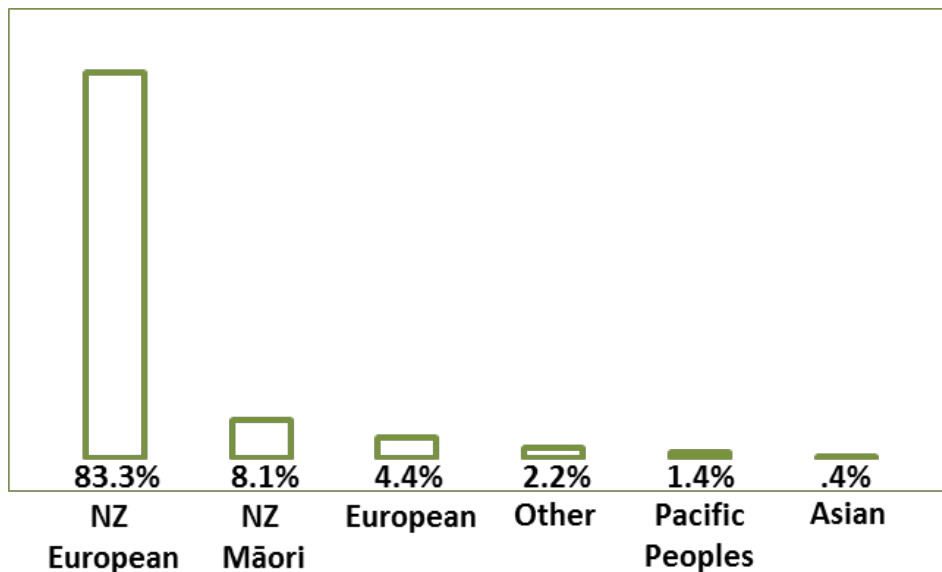
Ethnicity across regions

Across all five NZFS regions, NZFS personnel identifying as Māori were the second largest represented group after NZ Europeans. Percentages ranged from 4.9 percent Māori in Region 4to 14.6 percent in Region 1. Representation from other cultural backgrounds was very small across all regions with the exception of those identifying as non-NZ Europeans or 'Other'.

Figure 4: NZ European and NZ Māori NZFS personnel across regions
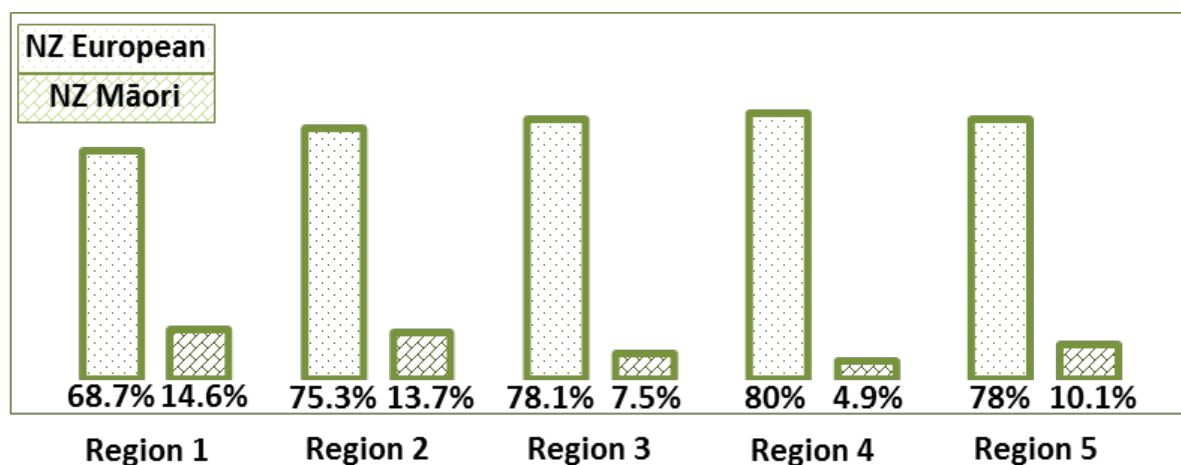
Ethnicity across Areas

Missing ethnicity data for the majority of the volunteer workforce lent itself to inconclusive results with regards to comparing cultural diversity representation across the 25 NZFS Areas. From the data provided by the NZFS, Māori representation in the career operational workforce was highest in the Hawke's Bay, Whangarei-Kaipara and Counties-Manukau Areas (28.6 percent, 25.6 percent, and 21.5 percent, respectively). The volunteer workforce in the Tairawhiti Area was comprised of the largest proportion of personnel identifying as Māori (56.9 percent), followed by 20.6 percent identifying as Māori in the Whangarei-Kaipara Area and 20 percent in the Central Lakes Area.

4.1.1.4 Age

The mean age of the entire NZFS workforce was 44.5 years, with a mean age of 46 in career operational roles, 43 in the volunteer workforce, and 46 in the operational support personnel. This illustrates an ageing workforce in line with wider workforce projections for the country (Callister & Didham, 2012).

4.1.1.5 Leadership, rank and gender

Women were overrepresented in administrative, accounting, and finance positions (90.5 percent, 71.4 percent and 75 percent, respectively). Further, although they held some degree of leadership positions (e.g. team leaders = 55.6 percent; manager = 28.9 percent), their representation in higher management roles was generally not strong.

With regards to rank within the NZFS, no woman held a rank of Assistant National Commander, Area Commander or Assistant Area Commander; all 83 of these positions were held by men.

Further, as rank increased, the representation of women within these ranks decreased: women represented 22.5 percent of Recruit Firefighters, 13.8 percent of Firefighters, 5.1 percent of Senior Firefighters, 3 percent of Station Officers, and 0.6 percent of Senior Station Officers.

Figure 5: Percentage of NZFS career and volunteer women firefighters by rank
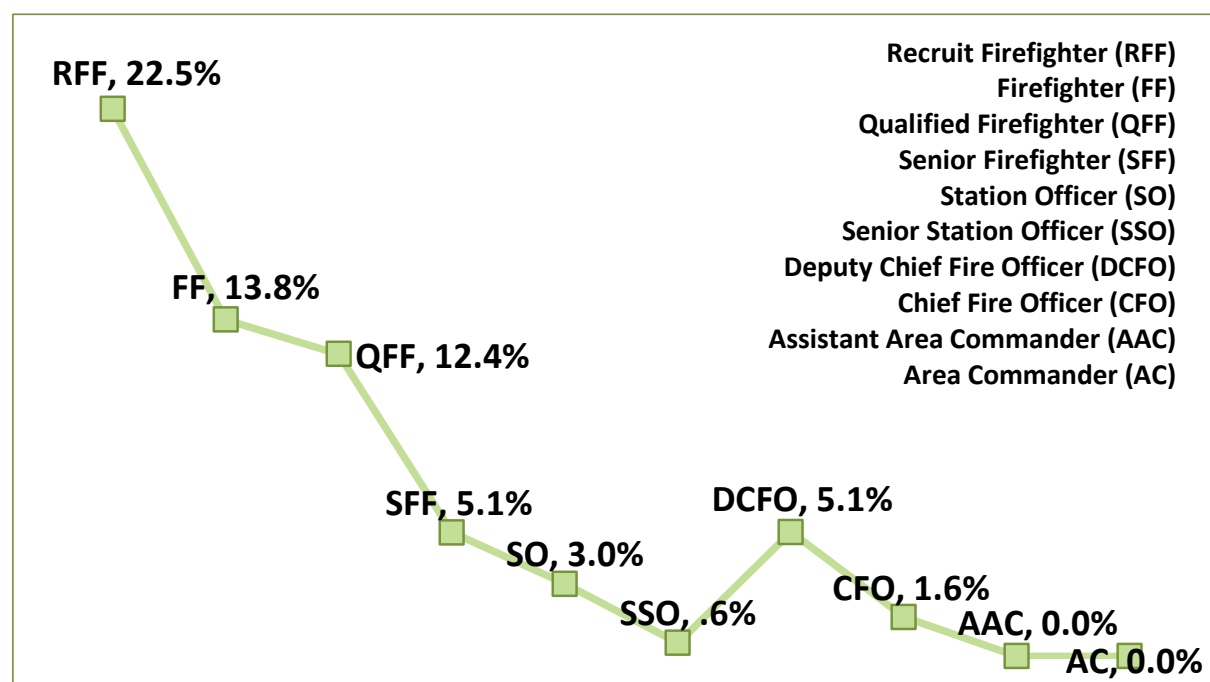
4.1.1.6 Leadership, rank and ethnicity

Similar trends were noted for culturally diverse representation within leadership and rank roles. New Zealand Europeans were over-represented in operational and operational support positions within the NZFS (overall NZFS = 83.3 percent; career operational personnel = 76.6 percent; volunteer personnel = 89.1 percent; operational support personnel = 74.1 percent). Further, New Zealand European over-representation in the majority of leadership or management positions was strong (for example, 5 or 62.5 percent of Area Advisors were NZ European, 21 or 84 percent were Assistant Area

Managers, 8 or 100 percent were Communication Centre Managers, and 7 or 87.5 percent were National Managers).

This underrepresentation of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds was also observed across the ranks of the NZFS. For example, around 26 percent of Recruit Firefighters were Māori, followed by 10.5 percent of Firefighters, 8.4 percent of Senior Firefighters, and 6.8 percent of Station Officers. Approximately 7.5 percent of Senior Station Officers self-identified as Māori out of an approximate total of 1,100 Station Officer positions currently filled.

4.1.2   Comparison between the NZFS and the communities it serves

4.1.2.1 Gender and age

In general, the NZ census data indicate gender equity across the territorial authority areas, with no notable differences found. This was in contrast to the overrepresentation of males found within each of the NZFS Areas.

In terms of age, people were generally younger in urban areas (e.g. Hamilton, Wellington City, Christchurch City and Dunedin City) than the NZFS workforce, with the average age group of these districts being between 20 - 24 years old. These findings contrasted against the mean age of around 44 years for the NZFS workforce. No notable differences were found in the age of NZFS workforce personnel and the areas in which they work.

4.1.2.2 Ethnicity

Section 4.1.1.3 indicated some challenges concerning the development of a clear picture of the cultural diversity present within the NZFS, specifically within the volunteer workforce. This issue remained when seeking to determine the degree to which the cultural diversity of the NZFS reflects the various populations of New Zealand it serves.

A further challenge involved how ethnicity data are currently classified and differences between the NZFS-based classification system and that of the NZ Census classification system. Where the NZFS has 11 ethnicity categories (Asian, Cook Islander, Niuean, Non NZ European, NZ European, NZ Māori, Other, Pacific Peoples, Pacific Peoples/Māori, Samoan and Tongan), the NZ Census classifies ethnicity into six groups (European, Māori, Pacific Peoples, Asian, Middle Eastern/Latin American/African, Other Ethnicity).   These issues have prohibited any conclusive findings about the degree of representation currently present between the NZFS and the wider population.

Overall, key findings from NZFS data indicate that representation of women in career and volunteer operational positions is generally low with some regional variation. Women are more highly represented in paid operational support positions (i.e. administration, accounting) than operational roles. Further, while much of the ethnicity data are missing, there appears to be low representation of Māori and other non-New Zealand European ethnic groups in the NZFS with some regional variation. The data also suggest the NZFS has an ageing workforce, and the majority of personnel in leadership and higher ranked positions are New Zealand European males.

4.2 NZFS volunteer and career workforce differences

This section presents stakeholders' perceptions about general differences between career and volunteer firefighting workforces, and considers specific differences amongst these two workforces regarding the way in which under-represented groups are recruited, retained and progressed.

4.2.1 General differences

Stakeholders who participated in the research outlined several general differences between volunteer and career operational Fire Service personnel. One fundamental point of difference involved the organisational structure and management of the two workforces. Volunteer fire brigades were generally seen to have greater degrees of autonomy than career stations: National Head Quarters (NHQ)-related Human Resources policies and processes were seen to influence rather than enforce how volunteer Chief Fire Officers (CFOs) manage their respective brigades. This key point of difference may be traced back to the creation of the Fire Service Commission (1974-1975) and the Fire Services Act in 1975, which ended control of fire boards at the local authority level and formed the New Zealand Fire Service in 1976 to centralise strategic and financial control of the Fire Service across the country (NZFS, 2014). It is perhaps because volunteer fire brigades have only been under the strategic control of the Commission since the 1970s that differences between these two workforces remain palpable.

The relative autonomy of volunteer brigades appears to create further differences between volunteer and career workforces' organisational cultures. For instance, some volunteer brigades were seen to more frequently provide non-fire related services to their communities than do career stations, and volunteer brigades are often the only emergency response service in isolated communities. Other stakeholders commented that, in contrast to career stations, the demographic composition of volunteer brigades can be heavily dependent on the make-up of community in which the brigade is established. Focus group participants similarly considered one key difference between volunteer and career personnel to be demographic composition, with volunteer brigades depending more heavily on and thus reflecting the make-up of their respective communities to a greater extent than the career firefighting workforce (FG5, FG6, FG8).

Some volunteer brigades are the "…*last bastion of contact with the government in their small community because all the other agencies are closed down, moved out of town…*" – NZFS personnel.

Brigade compositions can also depend on how well diversity is received and acknowledged in communities and within the brigades themselves. One rural fire brigade was said by a stakeholder to have a workforce comprised of 90% Māori and as such reflects its community demographic, whereas another rural community was said to be comprised of 80% Māori, but the brigade does not reflect this figure.

Several NZFS personnel noted that the culture of volunteer brigades was heavily dependent both on the brigades' community as well as the brigades' CFOs. Some brigade CFOs were seen to be more aware of diversity-related issues, open to different worldviews and willing to create more diverse- and family-friendly cultures than others.

Stakeholders also talked about the importance of relationships between local businesses that employ volunteer firefighters. Because volunteer firefighters often need to attend incidents during their work hours, buy-in and support from local businesses and employers is highly valued, and more crucial to ensuring volunteer brigades are able to serve their communities, than for career firefighters.

An additional difference between NZFS volunteer and career workforces observed by those interviewed was that volunteer brigades and the volunteer workforce generally tended to be more demographically diverse than the career workforce, particularly in terms of the number of women and ethnic minority volunteers. Others mentioned that the NHQ had better representation of diverse groups (e.g., gender and ethnic diversity) in their operational support personnel than did frontline career and volunteer firefighter personnel.

General differences between the motivations of and personalities of volunteer and career firefighters were also noted. Some NZFS personnel suggested that because volunteer roles are unpaid and individuals filling these positions are often doing so in addition to working in full-time roles outside of the Fire Service, they hold high regard and status within their communities. Further, some volunteer focus group participants (FG5, FG8) were of the opinion that career firefighters tend to 'fit in a box' with similar personalities (FG5), whereas volunteers represent a 'certain type of person' who feel their brigade is more like a family and who have a strong sense of responsibility for their communities (FG2): "*…it's in the blood that we want to help*" (FG8).

> "*It's their life. Their whole life revolves around [volunteering for the fire service]... You get whole families [that] volunteer…*"– NZFS personnel

In general, focus group participants did not voice any perspectives on workforce comparisons that were significantly different or opposed to those gathered during the stakeholder interviews, nor did views differ significantly between the focus groups. However, some volunteers noted a variety of key operational points of difference to career firefighters. For example, some volunteers perceived that they had not been adequately compensated for training courses or seminars they are required to attend[8], and attendance at these events (which are often held on weekends) must fit in around other work and family commitments (FG2, FG3, FG8). These participants noted that such barriers to attending further training makes upskilling or progressing through the ranks more difficult for volunteers than career personnel. Other volunteers believed that they were not offered the opportunity to become involved with diversity-related services or groups (i.e. Afi Pasifika) to the extent career personnel are (FG2). Furthermore, two volunteer focus groups mentioned having out-of-date equipment and appliances. Although they were grateful for what they have, not having up-to-date equipment and uniforms made them feel undervalued, especially when they compared themselves to career fire stations and when considering the amount of time they dedicate to the NZFS and the large areas they cover (FG3, FG8).

Lastly, volunteers tended to comment less on or not be as aware of diversity-related policy and practices as career firefighters (FG5), and some focus group participants felt as though they were not affected by these policies and practices (FG8).

---

[8] According to the NZFS Reimbursement Policy for volunteers (POLHR6.8), volunteer personnel can claim for loss of income when they attend training courses. Please refer to this policy for specific details.

4.2.2　Recruitment and training differences

Stakeholders noted some differences between the way career and volunteer firefighters are recruited, trained, retained and progressed in the NZFS which may have an impact on the diversity of both workforces.

For volunteer brigades, recruitment responsibilities lie with each brigade, as opposed to twice-yearly national recruitment rounds for career firefighters. Volunteer brigades are supplied with recruitment packs from the NZFS NHQ, but it is up to the CFO and/or management structure of individual brigades as to how any resources are used. Volunteer recruitment is often done through 'word of mouth' and 'who you know' in respective communities, and some brigades have several generations of family members volunteering in the fire service. However, this 'word of mouth' approach was described by some as a potential barrier to recruiting a diverse group of volunteer firefighters (c.f. section 4.4.3.1).

Generally, recruitment and initial training processes were said to be less stringent for volunteer recruits compared to career recruits, even though the NZFS targets both groups in their recruitment campaigns (NZFS, 2013c; NZFS, 2013d). The process for prospective volunteers to join a brigade was said to usually involve filling out an application form, and attending callouts to incidents on a trial basis to see how they find the job and 'fit in' with other brigade members. Prospective volunteers can then be 'voted in' to brigades by the members. This is a different approach when compared to the more structured, stringent processes in place to recruit career firefighters (NZFS, 2013c). Further differences between the two workforces were noted, including the length of training required and the breadth of prerequisite medical and physical screenings.

The relationship between volunteer brigade recruitment responsibilities and the ability of volunteer brigades to maintain numbers of volunteers was a further point of difference noted by stakeholders. As recruitment responsibilities generally lie with each brigade, many stakeholders believed recruitment was a challenge for volunteer brigades not experienced by the career workforce, which turns away many applicants during each recruitment round. Recruiting and retaining volunteer personnel can be particularly difficult for some rural communities (FG4, FG5, FG8): a significant portion of the working population commutes to larger urban centres to work, making it difficult for brigades to respond to callouts during week days. Volunteer brigades are important to the Fire Service's ability to respond to emergency incidents in the community, and the pressure to recruit local volunteers to avoid a 'membership crisis' may create more of a sense of instability or ambiguity in some volunteer brigades than is experienced in the career workforce. Despite the challenges some volunteer brigades face in recruiting members, both volunteer and career workforces of the Fire Service appear to struggle to recruit women and ethnic minorities, although volunteer brigades have a higher representation of these groups than the career workforce (see also section 3.3.1). Ultimately, volunteer brigades must embrace a variety of different recruitment strategies if they are to recruit a workforce that is both diverse and sustainable.

One further general point of difference noted by operational support personnel concerned the fact that recruitment, retention and progression processes and issues are very different to career firefighters. For example, operational support personnel do not go through the Training and Progression System (TAPS) programme, and there is no ranking system for operational support personnel as there is for career firefighters.

4.2.3 Retention differences

In general, retention of mainstream (e.g. male, New Zealand European/Pākehā) operational firefighters was not seen to be an issue for either of the career and volunteer workforces. Firefighters tend to stay working in the Fire Service; stakeholders viewed them as having significant passion for the job and as having a keen interest in serving their community.

If chiefs are "*prepared to do nothing about [unacceptable behaviour] and walk past it… members [of volunteer brigades] will believe it's sanctioned*" – NZFS personnel

Retaining a diverse group of firefighters in the volunteer workforce was seen to be more of an issue. One reason cited for retention difficulties concerned how discriminatory or bullying behaviours are managed and addressed. The NZFS NHQ can only influence the volunteer workforce in terms of the organisation's Standards of Conduct; not all volunteer brigades may follow these standards given their relative autonomy and the fact that volunteer brigade cultures are influenced by the CFOs. Stakeholders believed that volunteer brigade members who bully, harass, or practice other discriminatory behaviours against minority members of their brigade may experience fewer repercussions and less consequence for their actions, due to this autonomy. Thus, minority brigade members may feel forced to either 'deal with' continued harassment or to leave the brigade.

Further, retention in some volunteer brigades was considered an issue for all volunteers (regardless of demographic background), as brigades require their crew members be available during the day at some point each week (i.e. work rosters). Being available in this way is not always possible for those with full-time day jobs, particularly those who work outside of the community they volunteer in (FG2, FG5, FG8).

4.2.4 Progression differences

In terms of progression, the TAPS programme is available to both career and volunteer firefighters. One stakeholder believed that the NZFS is more focused on career firefighter development and career progression, and training materials are not geared towards the flexibility needed for volunteers (although he also acknowledged this more flexible TAPS approach for the volunteer workforce was starting). Furthermore, volunteer brigades vary more than the career workforce with regards to how formal or informal the progression systems are per brigade. Some volunteer brigades have transparent promotion processes where officer or senior firefighter positions are advertised and applied for within brigades, whereas others have a 'shoulder-tapping' approach. With specific regard to diversity and progression differences, stakeholders from both workforces believed that small numbers of women and individuals from ethnic communities appear to be progressing through the ranks.

Overall, the general differences between career, volunteer and operational support workforces do not appear to be issues directly related to diversity. However, the relative autonomy of volunteer brigades means NZFS policies and procedures such as the Standards of Conduct may not be observed as stringently as they are within career stations and across the paid workforce. As a consequence, diversity-related issues related to negative behaviours such as bullying, harassment or discrimination may be more difficult to address and mitigate within the volunteer workforce.

4.3   Definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity

Stakeholder interviewees and focus group participants discussed definitions and their perceptions of workplace diversity. Respondents answered questions concerning what their organisations (both the NZFS and comparable agencies) 'look like' in terms of their current demographic composition, what groups were under-represented, and the challenges and benefits associated with having a more diverse workforce. Their responses are summarised below.

4.3.1   NZFS: Definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity

Descriptions and definitions of workplace diversity varied greatly. Commentary on definitions of diversity within the NZFS included:

- the diversity of roles and skills in NZFS (career, volunteer, operational, operational support),
- workplace diversity as a 'whole spectrum' concept that extends beyond physical or external differences to cover any sort of difference (e.g. background knowledge, life experience, cultural, disability, age, world views, geographic location, attitudes),
- acknowledging difference helps to increase diversity awareness
- diversity can be a good thing, but not just for the 'sake of diversity': a representative group of society may not necessarily be a successful group of firefighters, so when it comes to workplace diversity within the NZFS, individuals should first and foremost be the best people for the position.

Workforce diversity is "*not about we're all the same. It is: Everyone is different. You have your key areas of diversity which I think most people would say (gender, ethnic, disability)… People have different ways of thinking, old, young… [diversity] goes across the whole spectrum.*" – NZFS personnel.

A verbal survey conducted during stakeholder interviews also examined NZFS personnel's and associated representatives' perceptions of how the organisation as a whole approaches diversity. Based on various research concerning how organisations frame and conduct their overarching interest in diversity strategies (Kreitz, 2007), individuals were questioned about the extent—not at all, somewhat, or quite a bit—they believed the NZFS as an organisation approaches workplace diversity as something to be:

- tolerated
- valued
- managed
- harnessed
- leveraged.

Responses indicated that Fire Service personnel (N = 8) believed the NZFS as a whole organisation was more likely to tolerate diversity than to harness or leverage it. Generally, NZFS personnel perceived the organisation to endorse more passive approaches to diversity (i.e. tolerating) in comparison to more proactive diversity approaches such as harnessing and leveraging diversity that require increased organisation flexibility and greater investment in diversity management practices.

Figure 6: Percentages of NZFS personnel's perceptions regarding NZFS diversity approaches
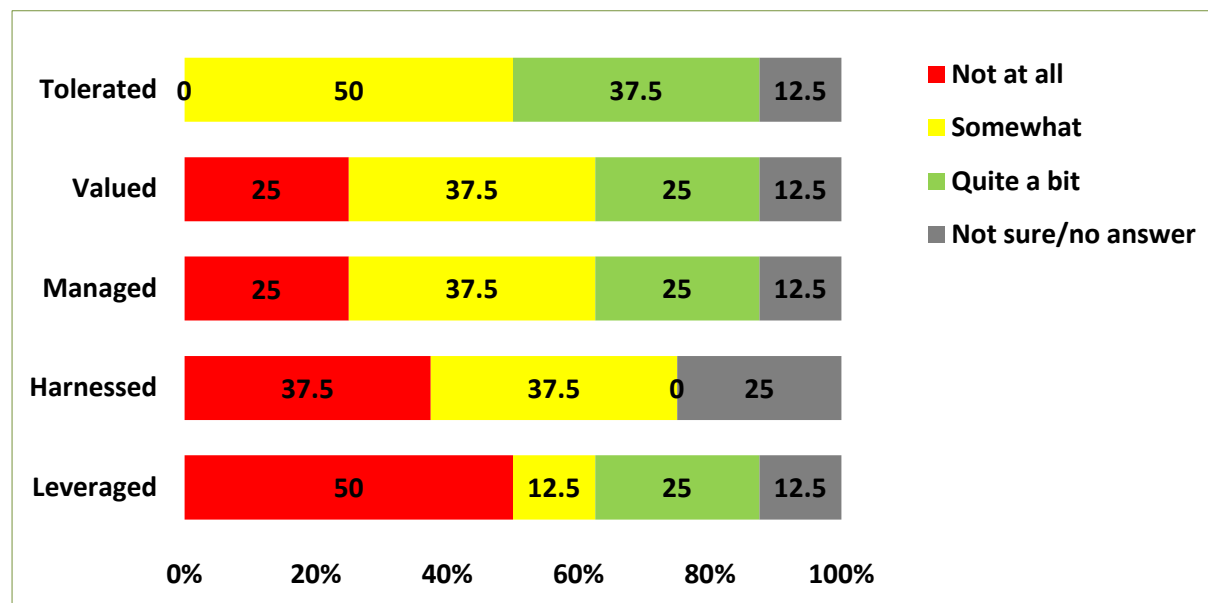
In comparison to responses from NZFS personnel, association representatives (N = 5) were generally more positive about the way in which the Fire Service approaches diversity (Figure 7). More specifically, they perceived the NZFS as more likely to value or manage diversity than to tolerate, leverage or harness it. Similar to the perspectives of NZFS representatives, there was a range of opinions on the extent to which the Fire Service approached diversity.

Figure 7: Percentages of association representative's perceptions regarding NZFS diversity approaches
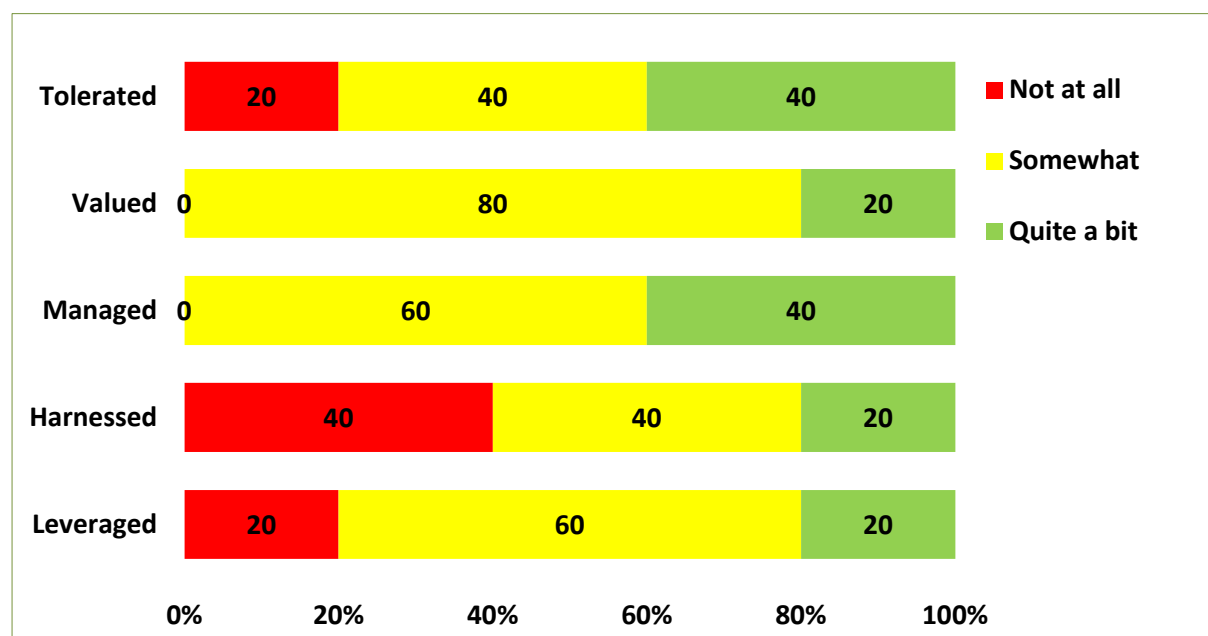
4.3.2 Comparable agencies: Definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity

Key stakeholders from St John New Zealand, the NZDF, the New Zealand Red Cross, and the NZ Police also provided definitions and perceptions of workplace diversity. These were very similar to those provided by NZFS personnel (e.g. ethnic, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation). However, one defining difference between NZFS and comparable agencies perceptions' of workplace diversity concerned the importance these agencies place on inclusion in partnership with diversity:

Similarly, the Police representative shared that they do not generally use the term 'diversity' alone,

> "*There's some benefit in just increasing the diversity in your organisation, but you don't really get the benefit out of that unless you actually have an inclusive organisation where people are able to participate fully in terms of who they are, and feel comfortable and welcome at work, and feel they can get along well with their colleagues and be known, and contribute what different things that they might have to bring [to] the organisation.*" – *New Zealand Defence Force representative*

but rather in conjunction with the term 'inclusion': "*For us, we're now in a place where we're beyond talking about diversity because that's widely accepted, and we're now talking about inclusion.*" For example, the Police have just developed a 'Diversity and Inclusion Strategy' outlining the importance of diversity as a business case and as an operational necessity.

As described in the previous section, stakeholders from comparable agencies (N = 4) were also questioned about how their own respective organisations were believed to approach workplace diversity (e.g. tolerate, value, manage, harness and leverage).

Figure 8: Percentages of comparable agency representative's perceptions regarding their organisation's diversity approaches
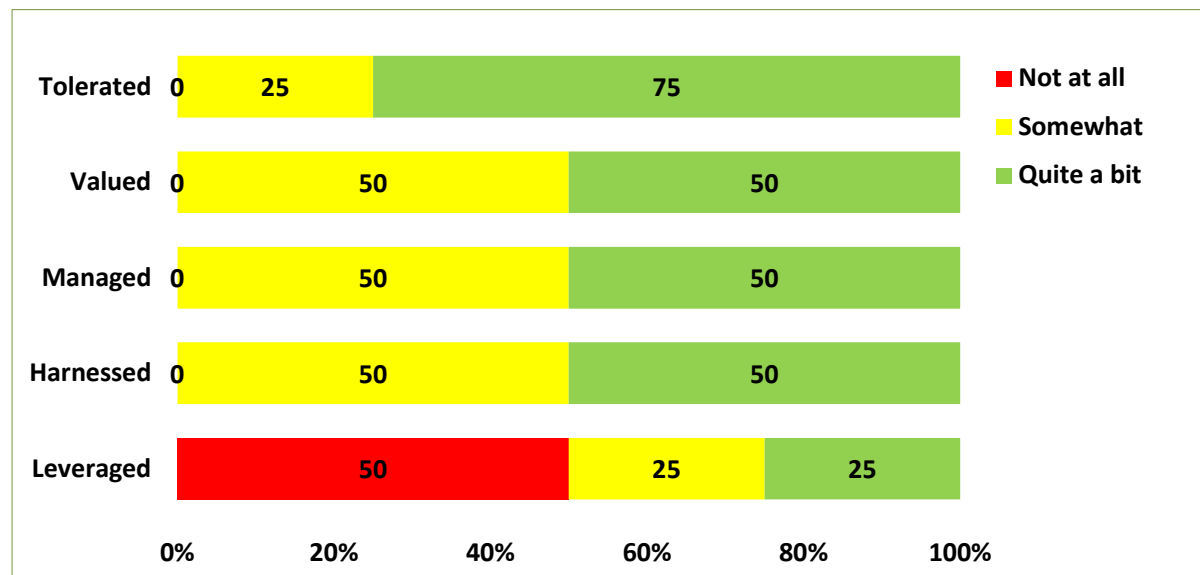
In contrast to NZFS personnel and NZFS association representatives, comparable emergency services representatives were more likely to perceive their organisations as tolerating diversity.

4.3.3 What does the NZFS 'look like' in terms of diversity?

The majority of NZFS personnel the research team engaged with viewed the Fire Service in its entirety as fairly homogeneous, with many focus group participants considering that the NZFS is not as diverse as it could be and is a 'work in progress' (FG1 – FG6). In particular, older, New Zealand European/Pākehā men tended to be mentioned as being over-represented within the organisation, with the exception of NHQ, which was cited by some as having more representation of individuals belonging to minority groups (FG4).

> "*If you're a... middle-aged white male, it's quite a cool place to work. You've got lots of folk who are very much like you, it's real blokey... It's the most trusted profession in the country... It's all set up for you.*" –NZFS personnel

Further, some focus group participants considered that over-represented groups within the NZFS were at risk of making assumptions, making generalisations about or stereotyping under-represented NZFS personnel. Pasifika communities were sometimes seen to be treated by the NZFS as one large, homogeneous group: For example, a Samoan firefighter might represent the larger Pasifika group; however, he/she may not be able to connect with other Pasifika communities (i.e. Tongan, Niuean) or have knowledge about specific Pasifika groups' cultural protocol or language (FG4).

Focus group participants also believed that Māori and Pasifika people are often over-represented in the media concerning fire fatalities and in NZFS fire safety campaigns (e.g. television), which may negatively impact on how these groups relate to fire safety messages and/or are perceived by different communities (FG4). Some focus group participants believed the media tended to over-report negative aspects of fire fatalities by highlighted gang connections and overcrowded housing, for example. Other participants in the group wondered if the NZFS was contributing to this stereotype: "*Do you think we're* [the NZFS] *feeding that* [negative perception]*, too? Because have you seen our ads? It's always that Polynesian family… and also there's a new ad and it's the same family… Why don't they*

> "*People get a perception of whatever [the media] are spouting out… It affects people's perceptions of the Fire Service.*" –NZFS personnel

mix it up instead of it always being Islanders?"

In terms of what groups were under-represented in the NZFS, the majority of stakeholders considered women to be under-represented in the workplace, and many personnel specified a current lack of women in senior leadership positions (FG2, FG4, FG8). Particular groups of ethnic communities were also cited as being under-represented in the Fire Service, including Māori, Pasifika and Asian (both East and West) people. Other under-represented groups within the NZFS that were mentioned included:

- youth
- GLBTIQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning individuals)
- individuals with disabilities
- non-Western religious groups.

On the other hand, as a point of difference, one interviewee believed the Fire Service was 'quite diverse' and that diversity was 'fairly spread' throughout the organisation (including the operational

support workforce): "*I don't think anyone is under-represented. We have a good mix of ethnicity, gender, age and knowledge-base.*" In sum, the views gathered from Fire Service personnel about under-represented groups in the workplace generally correspond to statistics gathered (section 4.4.1) concerning the organisation's demographic gender, ethnic and age composition.

Despite the general consensus that the Fire Service was over-represented by New Zealand European/Pākehā middle-aged men, several of the NZFS personnel we spoke with also believed that

the Fire Service is increasingly demonstrating tolerance and awareness of groups falling outside this mainstream demographic. Some participants mentioned that the Fire Service was once comprised much more predominately of 'white males', and that there are, for example, more women working within operational roles on brigades than in previous times.

"We're constrained by necessity… It's a tacit agreement that we have with the communities of Aotearoa that we need to be on top of our game, and diversity is of secondary importance to ability." – NZFS personnel

Others considered that diversity issues mattered more in training and in social contexts than during an emergency incident. One participant noted, "*There's only six of you [in a crew], you cannot afford to think that somebody can or cannot do [the job]*", and another interviewee shared that "*diversity is of lesser importance than having the best individuals for the job.*"

Further, some personnel said that the demographic diversity of the Fire Service changes per department: "…*we are a range of different departments with different goals and different management structures*"; different crews and brigades have their own approach to diversity and they have 'different people'. For example, individuals from one volunteer brigade perceived that their gender and ethnic composition was very different to the predominantly male make-up of the NZFS as a whole. Some women in this brigade reported taking the make-up of their brigade 'for granted' as it was their 'norm', and said they felt a sense of 'culture shock' while attending other NZFS events or training in the past where the majority of other attendees were male and New Zealand European/Pākehā.

Views regarding the demographic make-up of comparable organisations were similar to those expressed by NZFS personnel. For example, comparable agency representatives were interested in seeing more women in senior leadership positions and were still challenged by retaining and progressing women in their workplaces; further, most believed increased representation from Māori, Asian and Pasifika groups would be beneficial to their respective organisations. One point of difference to the NZFS was that younger people were seen to be relatively well represented in the Defence Force (although the military structure of the NZDF has led to older people being 'at the top' of the organisation as they have had to progress through different ranks and stages of their career). On the other hand, representatives from St John, Red Cross and the Police expressed similar views to the majority of NZFS interviewees that their agencies still had some way to go in increasing the recruitment and retention of young people.

4.3.3.1 Perceived gender differences within the NZFS

Gender differences were noted between stakeholders with regards to diversity in the NZFS. Woman firefighters (both volunteer and career) generally perceived themselves to have more 'soft skills' than their male counterparts (FG6), and believed they were more 'compassionate' and more skilled at planning ahead and mitigating damage to property than men (FG2, FG8). Many male participants also held these perceptions and suggested that having female crew members can be beneficial in certain

medical situations (FG7). Others voiced that women in the NZFS 'just want to be one of the boys', might find the 'male-dominated' workforce intimidating and are not as 'physically strong' or as 'practically-minded' as men (FG7).

These same firefighters also referred to themselves as a 'brotherhood' and a 'band of brothers' (FG1, FG7), which suggests unconscious gender bias.[9] This bias was confirmed by feedback from some woman firefighters who commented on assumptions and gender-stereotyped roles both the community and their male counterparts held of women in the NZFS. In terms of the community, some women said their communities considered firefighting to be a 'man's job' (FG6, FG8). It was perceived, by firefighters, that the public believes women have ulterior motives for joining the Fire Service (e.g. they are interested in starting relationships with male firefighters; FG8). Furthermore, they felt that their communities do not expect firefighters to be women and were often surprised to see them – women firefighters – in uniform or arriving at the scene of an incident (FG6, FG8). These sentiments were mirrored by operational support personnel, who conveyed their frustrations with male colleagues' stereotypes about women in administrative roles; for example, by making assumptions that they are responsible for bringing coffee, preparing food for staff events, and being a minute-taker/secretary at meetings (FG4).

Women reported several gender-themed challenges working with the NZFS. These included:

- feeling that they needed to 'prove themselves' to men
- standing up to assumptions and stereotypes about them as women being more likely to fail or being seen as not as capable as men
- having their failures or difficulties highlighted more often than their male colleagues.

Despite these significant challenges, some of the volunteer women firefighters we spoke with believed that ultimately their male counterparts looked out for them and considered them to be a part of the family; "*I have 21 fathers!*" (FG8). Women volunteers said they believed that having pride in themselves and who they are enables them to stand up to challenges in any situation as strong women firefighters or "*wahine toa*" (FG3). Further, many women voiced confidence that they had had the same training as everyone else, and were in the Fire Service to 'do the same job as men' (FG3, FG8). This sentiment was shared by several firefighters (women and men) who considered their crew to be family (FG1, FG3, FG5).

In summary, there were a range of comments from NZFS personnel regarding perceptions of diversity. The general consensus was that the Fire Service is not a diverse organisation, particularly in terms of gender, ethnicity and age. Stakeholders also said that the Fire Service ranges in its diversity according to workforce, brigade, station and department. Further, perceived gender differences in the Fire Service have implications for how men and women experience and are treated in the organisation and how these perceived differences can lead to challenges (further described below).

---

[9] Unconscious biases relate to internalised, unconscious biases that help us categorise and group people according to social and other characteristics. These biases also form the foundation of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

4.3.4 General challenges associated with workplace diversity

Many research participants noted that one challenge associated with increasing workplace diversity concerned resistance to changing the status quo. The Fire Service was seen by many to be a 'traditional' organisation where the 'this is how things are done here' approach was seen to thwart attempts to change its organisational culture. Some Fire Service personnel believed that the 'old guard' expect the new recruits to just 'tow the line' and fit in with normalised behaviours.

> "*It takes a long time to change the internal culture of such a large organisation.*"
>
> – NZFS personnel

Some of the comparable organisations also voiced similar challenges. For example, St John representatives related that changing entrenched attitudes and shifting mind sets about the benefits of having a more diverse workforce remains a challenge, and the Police spokesperson believed that one of the main 'frictions' in trying to increase gender diversity within the organisation was the need to recognise the importance of gender diversity versus issues with the Police's more traditional organisational culture (e.g. no flexi-schedules, part-time roles, job shares). The Red Cross representative noted challenges in terms of the membership and governance side of the organisation not being very diverse – 'getting diversity is the challenge'; whereas the staff and volunteer side of the organisation was 'reasonably diverse', and there can be a disconnect between the interests and focus of these groups.

Other similarities were noted between the NZDF and the NZFS regarding challenges associated with having a more diverse workforce. The NZDF representative noted that civilian women in particular sometimes feel as though their skills and expertise are not always being recognised or are 'overlooked' by ranked military personnel, despite civilians being an important part of the Defence Force. This perception was similar to some women from the NZFS, who indicated that if "*you haven't been a firefighter… and you're a woman, you have a lot more to prove. [Male personnel] don't just accept what you say…*"

Another key challenge noted by NZFS stakeholders relates to the previously mentioned differences between the volunteer and career workforces of the Fire Service (section 1). In particular, the autonomous nature of the volunteer workforce was mentioned by most Fire Service personnel as being a challenge to either increasing and/or enforcing NHQ workplace diversity practices. One NZFS stakeholder mentioned that "*if the [volunteer] chief doesn't want to buy into*" increasing diversity because he's "*friends of a bigot*" within his volunteer brigade then it "*could be particularly difficult for [new volunteers]*".

A further challenge mentioned by two of the comparable agencies with increased diversity in the workplace was the potential increase in conflicts and time required to complete tasks due to cultural differences, as increased diversity means an increased diversity of opinion. For example, the NZDF representative believed that things might not go as smoothly or as quickly in terms of board room/decision-making situations "*with different heads around the table*", but that the outcomes would ultimately be better, as they would have been more thoroughly thought through with a range of different perspectives considered.

> "*If there was a specific strategy to [promote an under-represented group] it would always be viewed as somebody going through the back door. So that would have a negative connotation on any strategies you're trying to implement.*"   – NZFS personnel

Others offered a counterpoint perspective to challenges associated with increasing workforce diversity within the NZFS. One of the association representatives said they were *"a bit fed up with the NZFS having to take a certain percentage of females or different ethnicities. I feel we are sacrificing some better suited applicants for the sake of being seen to be politically correct"*. [10]   In other words, one of the challenges related to workplace diversity mentioned by some stakeholders concerned the double-edged sword of affirmative action-related programmes. Although the NZFS was not seen to be practicing affirmative action per se, NZFS stakeholders were generally wary of potential targets or quotas created to offer assistance to disadvantaged or under-represented groups, as they believed that such 'assistance' could potentially have the opposite effect by undermining the credibility of the individuals themselves FG1, FG2, FG4).

As described by NZFS stakeholders and comparable agencies, there are a range of challenges associated with increasing workforce diversity. Perhaps the most significant challenge relates to the organisational culture of the Fire Service and resistance to change. The different structure and nature of volunteer and career workforces adds another layer to these challenges.

4.3.5 General benefits associated with workplace diversity

Many benefits of diversity were described by NZFS personnel. These benefits included diversity as a way in which to better reflect and relate to the community, engage with all community groups to deliver fire safety education and promotional strategies and provide a more diverse set of skills and backgrounds to increase overall performance. For example, many Fire Service stakeholders believed that having a diverse workforce would provide comfort to people being served, especially in emergency situations. Commonalities such as language, physical appearance, understanding around cultural protocols during emergencies, and gender were seen to be important factors that allow community individuals to quickly establish trust or a 'bond' with frontline Fire Service personnel. One NZFS representative shared his experience working with women volunteer firefighters at a motor vehicle accident with young children: "…*two female firefighters started interacting with those children in the distressed state they were in… The way they undertook that role to me showed the broadening of skills…. They are specialists in that area. Those children didn't want to speak to somebody six foot and big and ugly… They wanted to speak with somebody who they associated with Mum*." On the other hand, others believed that reaching minority communities was not necessarily dependent on diversity per se. They considered that having more employees who speak and understand different languages would help the NZFS to better reflect the communities it serves, but felt that language ability itself is a knowledge-based skill that anyone can acquire, regardless of their ethnic background.

> *"I think it's very important that… people who are under a lot of stress, who are often looking for comfort, can see that the people they're dealing with are empathetic and something like them."*
>
> – NZFS personnel

Further, having a diverse set of skills and backgrounds was viewed as a way of increasing overall performance. Older brigade members, for example, were seen as beneficial to both their brigades and their communities in terms of providing guidance and being given respect from the community as a 'respected elder' (FG5). Increased diversity within the NZFS was thought to lead to a greater awareness of what different communities value in terms of fire safety through a community-driven

---

[10] The NZFS does not have any affirmative action policies or procedures in place to recruit specific percentages of women or different ethnic groups.

rather than NZFS-driven needs assessment (e.g. understanding of what communities want from the communities themselves; FG4). Another key benefit to diversity described by Fire Service participants involved diversity as a competitive advantage. Increasing the diversity of the workforce was seen as a way to increase the resilience of volunteer brigades, 'keep up with the play' against comparable agencies for talent with 'similar traits' in a 'candidate-short market', and as a way to increase response time particularly with regard to daytime call-outs to incidents. Other benefits of diversity included increasing positive perspectives of the Fire Service in communities (e.g. the NZFS as an organisation that welcomes people from diverse backgrounds to join if they are interested) and diversity as a way to role model career opportunities for young people and young women.

Comparable organisations to the NZFS also believed that diversity brings value to their agencies. Similar to the views voiced by Fire Service stakeholders, these benefits included increased organisational effectiveness; the benefits majority group personnel receive through new experiences gained by working alongside different people that bolster cultural understanding; an increased awareness of what specific community groups may be facing; and the positive impacts this increased awareness can have on service delivery. Other benefits to increased workforce diversity were also cited by some of the comparable emergency services agencies, such as increasing organisational credibility within the community as a result of connecting with and reflecting the community itself, as well as having specific cultural knowledge and competence in different cultural settings.

Stakeholders from the NZFS and comparable organisations believed that increased diversity brought more value to their organisations and the work that they do, particularly in terms of their ability to engage with and work with the communities they serve.

4.4   Best practice approaches and barriers to workplace diversity

A major component of the research involved discussions around best practice approaches to diversity. This section explores NZFS and comparable agency approaches to workplace diversity and the effectiveness of these approaches, as well as barriers, strategies and enablers of workplace diversity.

4.4.1   NZFS approaches

4.4.1.1 Current and developing initiatives

The NZFS has a number of initiatives currently in place that could help to increase diversity in the career and volunteer operational workforce. Some participants (FG6) referred to projections in the NZFS current Strategic Plan for representation of diverse groups in the operational workforce as targets or goals (NZFS, 2012). Several stakeholders considered that strict adherence to specific quotas was unadvisable and were appreciative of the fact that the NZFS did not follow any form of affirmative action or strict quota system (FG4, FG5, FG7).

Further, some stakeholders mentioned that the Chief Executive of the NZFS must report on the diversity of workplace in the Fire Service Commission's annual reports (NZFS, 2013b). No projections for a diverse volunteer workforce were mentioned, however, volunteer brigade numbers must only be sufficient enough to meet their community obligations. The NZFS is currently running a Volunteer Sustainability Project, assisting brigades to maintain a sufficient number of volunteers, and has a strong focus on volunteer and brigade resilience.

Participants also talked about policies and standards that the NZFS has in place (see also section 3) that could help to guide building and supporting a more diverse workforce.

These were:

- Good Employer Policy
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Pregnancy in Operational Firefighters Policy
- Māori Language Policy
- Standards of Conduct.

Particular issues were highlighted in terms of implementing these aforementioned policies. For example, a 'disconnect' between the existence of diversity-related policies and work streams knowing about the impact of these particular policies on their work was noted. In one instance, those in charge of infrastructure (Fire Station buildings) were unaware of how the Maori Language Policy could affect their work (i.e. bilingual signage is required in fire stations, including those undergoing refurbishment), and a Fire Station was subsequently refurbished without bilingual signage. As another example of the disconnect between policies and their impact on work, some NZFS personnel observed that while the Pregnancy in Operational Firefighters Policy stipulates a financial incentive for woman career firefighters to return to the workplace early after having a child, there appears to be no incentive in place for women in operational support or volunteer positions.

While not specific to diversity, the Standards of Conduct were seen as important for deterring discrimination, bullying and harassment, as these behaviours are not tolerated by the NZFS. The NZFS has structured human resources practices in terms of dealing with these behaviours appropriately and offering support to complainants.

Further, the NZFS has a National Māori Liaison Officer with a team of four personnel that operates in and focuses on kaupapa Māori in the NZFS. The role was initially formed and grew in response to disproportionately high casualty rates due to fire incidents within Māori communities, but in terms of work towards increasing or promoting diversity within the NZFS, the National Māori Liaison Officer can have input into recruitment, retention, policy and procedures, advertising and communications in the NZFS, and ensuring recruitment materials are placed within Māori communities. The National Māori Liaison Officer role sits within the office of the Chief Executive of the NZFS, and fulfils the obligation of the NZFS to recognise the aims and aspirations of Māori throughout the organisation under the State Sector Act (1988), which directly relates to the partnership between the New Zealand Government and Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi. The NZFS incorporates kaupapa Māori practices into the organisation, such as powhiri and poroporoaki for all key appointments, and a marae visit for all new recruits. Māori Liaison officers also provide support to Pasifika people and other ethnic minority groups in the NZFS.

In terms of recruiting a more diverse workforce, the NZFS recently created a full-time National Recruitment Manager position whose role is to plan "*national, annual promotional recruitment campaigns in conjunction with Communications, to target demographics and communities of interest to ensure appropriate diversity*" (NZFS personnel). This role was seen as important to ensuring the implementation of permanent recruitment strategies—including those related to recruiting people from more diverse backgrounds—with more continuity. The addition of the full-time recruitment manager position is a new approach for the Fire Service, where previously a different senior firefighter would be seconded into a recruitment role every two years (this method did not allow as much opportunity for continuity in recruitment initiatives).

The NZFS was also noted as having a range of recruitment resources (e.g. DVDs and posters) featuring a diverse workforce that includes women, men, Māori, Pākehā, Pasifika, Asian, career and volunteer firefighters. The NZFS also advertises through media forums targeting Māori and Pasifika groups.

While not specific to gender and ethnic diversity, a cadetship recruitment initiative for young people has been proposed in order to start building a more diverse, youthful workforce. This initiative could help with succession planning and building a more diverse NZFS in years to come. It would involve recruiting a small group with equal numbers of young men and women to work for small periods of time in various departments of the NZFS over a 12-month period.

Several initiatives related to diversity in the NZFS have begun from the ideas of NZFS career and volunteer personnel, and have subsequently been 'bought into', supported and developed by the NZFS. There are two NZFS groups based in Auckland comprised of career firefighters from specific ethnic groups:

- Te Roopu (Māori) (established in 2002)
- Afi Pasifika (Pacific people) (established in 2003).

These groups were seen to increase the ability of the NZFS to interact with Māori and Pasifika communities in terms of fire safety awareness and fire prevention strategies, as well as way in which to provide an informal support network for their members. Te Roopu and Afi Pasifika representatives were passionate about their work, and reported doing work that 'needs doing' without remuneration. They sometimes worked together on similar strategies for their respective communities, and saw themselves as positive examples of groups that could be utilised around the country.

New Zealand Fire Service Women (NZFSW) was established in 1996 (formally in 2001); and previously met regularly to discuss issues pertaining to women in the fire service. NZFSW offered informal peer support, mentoring, and networking, and acted as a safe place for women to contact other women. A website (http://women.fire.org.nz/) for NZFSW was set up in the early 2000s with information for woman firefighters, including a contact email address where further information can be confidentially sought.

Some initiatives specific to particular volunteer brigades were described that were seen to support and retain volunteer diversity. For example, one volunteer brigade station was being utilised as a cultural centre in its respective community. Further, childcare initiatives have been organised by some volunteer brigades for stay at home parents who are volunteer firefighters. This was seen to help with maintaining volunteers as well as building a more gender diverse brigade. In addition, the UFBA supports volunteer brigades by providing leadership and governance workshops, which include soft leadership and management skills, as well as operational support workshops for secretaries and treasurers of volunteer brigades. Another volunteer brigade described its approach to retaining personnel—including a high percentage of woman volunteer firefighters—as 'inclusive' by ensuring that everyone in the brigade was supported (FG3). As a whole, the brigade considered itself to have strong peer support systems in place, and also welcomed other women from other volunteer brigades to train with them (FG3).

"…*operational support people are key to every single brigade family… this is another way of getting somebody involved that might want to help, but doesn't know how to…. Or is too afraid to come to the fire station and ask 'how can I help?'*" – Association representative

4.4.1.2 Previous initiatives

Some research participants talked about diversity initiatives that had been in place within the NZFS previously, but had not been continued or had 'gone by the wayside' due to a lack of resources and support from the NZFS.

For example, some stakeholders talked about the existence of a diversity and fairness strategy or plan that was active in the past but has not recently been reviewed or updated. We were able to access a copy of a NZFS diversity strategy from 2005-2010 (NZFS, 2005), which outlined the following four strategies:

- raising awareness of diversity and fairness
- changing views of diversity and fairness
- changing behaviour and business processes to support diversity and fairness
- maintaining change and monitoring results.

A Diversity and Fairness Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Steering Group was also discussed among those interviewed and focus group participants (FG1, FG4). This group was formed around 2002 and was active until approximately 2009[11], and was described as a 'cross-section' of the fire service where all levels of organisational perspectives were represented (career, volunteer, operational, operational support, senior leadership, communications, Māori, Pākehā, Pasifika, men and women) in an attempt to coordinate diversity efforts in the NZFS.

Topics discussed within the Steering Group included recruitment and retention policies and practices for a diverse workplace, and the group also gave presentations to new recruits on their marae visit. The people involved were described as self-organising and had a lot of dedication, passion and drive for the initiative. Some NZFS stakeholders believed that the steering group/forum was successful largely due to the efforts of one person in the NZFS human resources team, who was described as a 'champion' of the group**.**

"The people who were in that group were very keen and... a good group. Despite the diversity of the group, we were able to sit down and talk about a lot of real issues... I don't know whether or not those same issues come up anymore so that's a shame."

– NZFS career firefighter

Furthermore, a previous diversity initiative around ethnicity in the Fire Service that was mentioned was a group for Asian peoples, similar to the Afi Pasifika and Te Roopu groups. It was unclear how active this group is currently.

Stakeholders also talked about having tried to establish a formal forum group of NZFSW representatives who could meet regularly to spearhead thinking and strategies around women-related issues in the organisation. It was

"...if you recruit a few women, it doesn't mean it's going to perpetuate itself and we've seen that… We've got a low number of women coming in now…You've got to work really, really hard at that." – NZFS personnel

---

[11] An estimate based on interviews with stakeholders.

thought that the forum could assist with developing activities such as a mentoring programme, updating the website, providing information to women around physical tests and entry standards into the NZFS, distributing posters and flyers and creating brochures for NZFS women in recruitment packages, and reaching out to woman firefighters for their assistance with recruitment initiatives.

The representatives we interviewed had put together a proposal and work plan for the continuation and development of NZFSW, but to date this has not been actioned. The representatives said that in recent years the NZFS has not committed the support and resources needed for NZFSW to continue, despite the efforts of the group.

4.4.1.3 Effectiveness of initiatives

The NZFS at a senior level was described by many participants as having a lot of buy-in around building a diverse workplace, being enthusiastic about the idea of diversity, but having a lot of work to do in terms of achieving it. Fire Service diversity initiatives were often considered 'box-ticking exercises' with no significant changes being observed as a result of the initiatives. Some stakeholders also voiced a degree of cynicism when it comes to the impact that initiatives of NHQ may have at the ground level, and wondered whether diversity initiatives were 'too PC' (politically correct).

Other stakeholders believed that TAPS had enabled a number of women and an increased number of Māori and Pasifika people to progress to more senior levels in the volunteer and career workforces of the NZFS, although these numbers were still considered to be small. Fire Service stakeholders said there are an increasing number of women who are chiefs and deputies in volunteer brigades, and some brigades were described as being more inclusive of women.

> *"Since TAPS has arrived I've started seeing female fire officers running trucks, leading crews, female chief fire officers… It's opened an avenue for people from diverse backgrounds to not be excluded in terms of our national training system…"* – NZFS personnel

However, while TAPS was seen to have made the system fairer for under-represented groups to train and progress in the NZFS, some participants reported that older male personnel were resistance to TAPS (FG8). Others we interviewed believed TAPS was a challenging system to navigate (FG3, FG5, FG7, FG8) for those who have reading/writing challenges or difficulties with theory rather than practical-based work (FG1, FG3, FG5). Some stakeholders considered that individuals who have the operational and managerial skills and expertise to progress may ultimately be stymied by a bias towards academic competence in the TAPS programme (FG1).

While current initiatives such as Afi Pasifika and Te Roopu were seen as positive and supported by the NZFS, they were also said to be experiencing constraints in the work they are able to undertake due to limited budgets, a perceived lack of emphasis placed on their importance, and under-utilisation of these groups by the NZFS. Similar perspectives were held of the NZFS Asian people's group, as earlier described. On the other hand, one focus group believed there was 'too much' concentration on Māori policy and the Treaty of Waitangi, and not enough on other ethnic groups such as Asian or Pasifika people, noting, for example, that there are no Asian or Pasifika Liaison Officers (FG7).

In general, stakeholders believed that, based on the percentages of under-represented groups in operational firefighting workforces of the NZFS, current approaches to diversity have not been very

effective. Further, some focus group participants believed that there is nothing explicitly being done to increase diversity in the way of NZFS policies or practices (FG4, FG6) or structure (FG1).

The Fire Service was seen by stakeholders to have implemented some strategies in order to improve workforce diversity, such as the Strategic Plan, policies and procedures, training and progression system (TAPS) and mentoring/support for underrepresented groups. Some previous initiatives were also outlined, for example, the Diversity and Fairness Equal Employment Opportunities Steering Group, which was seen as having the potential to assist the Fire Service in its goal to increase workforce diversity. Unfortunately, diversity initiatives in the Fire Service were often seen as 'box ticking' exercises, and required more buy-in at all levels of the organisation to be effective.

4.4.2 Comparable agency approaches

Several research participants (FG1, FG2, FG4) considered other emergency services agencies in New Zealand such as the Police and the Defence Force to have more of a 'diversity presence' within their respective organisations than the Fire Service. The following sections offer insights into these agencies' high level and targeted diversity-related practices and policies, and the perceived effectiveness of these strategies.

4.4.2.1 High level approaches

The following strategies and best practice approaches to diversity were discussed by representatives from comparable agencies as approaches that were currently in place or were in development. Some of these diversity initiatives were developed in response to reports or inquiries about the organisations (Bazley, 2007; Ministry of Defence, 2014).

Comparable agency representatives talked about the importance of organisational values and objectives around diversity:

- the NZDF's organisational values of Courage, Commitment, Comradeship and Integrity (CCCI) align with their equity and diversity principles
- the Red Cross has Diversity as a core organisational value, encompassing celebration of diversity and being open, inclusive, and welcoming to all
- St John representatives said that current and developing diversity initiatives aligned with their business plan objectives
- the NZ Police have developed two new organisational values—Empathy and Diversity (in addition to existing Integrity, Professionalism, Respect, and Commitment to Māori and the Treaty of Waitangi)—and are in the early stages of implementing these across the organisation.

Organisational values were said to play an important role in supporting workplace diversity, as they 'trickle down' through all levels of organisations and influence its direction. The NZDF representative said that their organisational values are used a lot in their work, and everybody knows them. Further, the Police representative asserted that "what you consistently pay attention to drives behaviour."

Other emergency service organisation stakeholders also shared various high-level strategies they are currently implementing within their respective agencies. These included:

- an Equity and Diversity policy (NZDF) which sets out principles and expectations for workplace diversity

- a Diversity and Inclusion strategy (NZ Police) that outlines the importance of diversity as a business case and an operational necessity based on the principle 'Police is the community, community is the Police'
- St John were in the process of developing a diversity plan, which includes targets for diversity.

These plans, strategies and policies have an operational role, derived from and aligned with organisational values (section 3.2.1.1), and guide the development of specific initiatives that can help support a more diverse workforce, such as Flexible Employment Options (a potential Police initiative).

"A lot of what's good for women and ethnic minorities is actually good for the organisation as a whole. So it's not just about diversity, it's about making your organisation good at what it's supposed to be doing." – Comparable agency representative

Other high-level approaches taken by comparable agencies to support workplace diversity include:

- talking with corporate organisations such as the Human Resources Institute of New Zealand in order to gather ideas and information around workplace diversity strategies (St John)
- comprehensive planning and logic mapping exercise with external diversity specialists to identify important focus areas and develop a charter of actions around implementing diversity related strategies (NZDF)
- considering ways to include diverse groups in the organisation to ensure that there is a supportive culture (NZDF, Police, St John).

4.4.2.2 Specific diversity and inclusion approaches

Comparable agencies also talked about specific strategies to ensure successful implementation of diversity strategies. Every comparable organisation we talked to had at least one full-time person employed with direct accountability and responsibility for diversity initiatives. The NZDF has an equity and diversity manager, and there are cultural advisors in each of the armed services to assist with cultural protocols and engagement with dignitaries. The Red Cross representative noted that their Secretary General has taken on responsibility for driving diversity initiatives in the organisation. The NZ Police have an executive-level full-time employee in a position titled 'Deputy Chief Executive Māori' that oversees all diversity/inclusion initiatives for Māori, Pacific, and ethnic services. In addition to this full-time executive-level role, the Police also have approximately 22 full-time diversity and inclusion-related positions across the organisation, in addition to Asian, Māori and Pasifika portfolios people take on above and beyond their normal roles.

Accountability is a central component to the Police's diversity and inclusion strategies. For example, the Australian Chief of Army Lieutenant General David Morrison's message *"the standard you walk past is the standard you accept"* (Australian Army Headquarters, 2013), is being used by the Police to role model appropriate behaviours, and to manage unacceptable behaviour. In particular, the Police are holding sergeants or others in leadership positions accountable for bullying and discriminatory behaviour, as people in these roles have the responsibility and authority to create the sort of safe, inclusive and supportive workplace culture the Police are striving to create. National recruitment managers working within the Police must also meet various performance expectations across diversity-related key result areas (KRAs) to help ensure the importance of increasing diversity is communicated from the executive level down through the organisation.

Advisory groups

Comparable agencies also discussed the value of advisory or steering groups. The main objective of these groups centred on educating and supporting employees from the executive-level down with diversity-related activities and initiatives. Activities of these groups included guidance with policy development, developing strategies around recruitment of individuals from diverse backgrounds, and facilitating uptake of diversity approaches. Stakeholders believed the advisory and steering groups were an important part of increasing general awareness and understanding of different groups of people, and as such each comparable agency we spoke with had established advisory or steering groups for each of the under-represented groups identified within their respective organisations. For example, most organisations we talked to had a women's advisory/steering group:

- Women in Leadership Network Group (St John)
- Women's Development Steering Group (NZDF)
- Women's Advisory Group (NZ Police).

Further, the NZ Police have a Māori, Pacific and Ethnic Services (MPES) group that was formed in 2003 to provide strategic advice and operational support to districts and Police National Headquarters.[12] The Red Cross has two relatively new groups, a Refugee Advisory Group and a Pacific Advisory Group, who provide advice to the Red Cross board with a focus on how the Red Cross responds to communities. St John were in the process of developing a Māori advisory group, and are considering one for Pacific people.

Recruitment and progression strategies

Comparable agencies talked about a variety of recruitment strategies they undertake in order to increase workplace diversity. For example, the NZDF carry out various research projects on the topic, target recruitment days at girl's schools, hold trial military experiences for young women and have military women attend recruitment days.

The Police representative discussed the Women in Blue (television series) which showcases woman Police officers as an appealing career to a wider audience, engaging with ethnic community elders instead of targeting young people directly (as elders are seen to have a greater ability to influence younger members of some communities than non-community members), sponsoring events to increase awareness and profile of the Police, and developing locally-targeted recruitment strategies in conjunction with local Police districts to better tailor recruitment approaches in communities. The Police have also strived to develop more transparent, equitable methods around recruitment and progression through the adoption of robust, behaviourally- and empirically-based interviewing and psychometric testing appointment processes.

St John representatives talked about their organisation's recruitment advisory person, whose responsibilities include discussing diversity around recruitment. Furthermore, they talked about the importance of bringing people in uniform along to recruitment activities to send the message that they are 'already in the door' and can be approached with questions.

The Red Cross representative outlined that due to the majority of their organisation being a volunteer or membership base, they are open to all people. The diversity of the Red Cross was inadvertently increased when the organisation took on refugee resettlement contracts, and have found that

---

[12] See http://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/structure/commissioners-executive-and-district-commanders/general-manager-m%C4%81ori-ethnic-and-pacific-services for more information.

beneficial in terms of being able to better engage with refugee communities – *"the best people to work in refugee services are resettled refugees."*

Support networks/groups (i.e. mentoring)

Stakeholders from comparable agencies viewed mentoring and other forms of support networks as an important retention strategy. The NZDF referred to several support group networks in their organisation; for example, the Air Force has a formal mentoring programme that the NZDF leadership group is tasked with rolling out across the forces. There are also semi-formal networks for women in at least one army camp and on air force bases. The NZDF also supports OverWatch, a self-driven, self-motivated networking and support group for GLBTIQ military personnel: 'Visible, vocal, valued'.[13] OverWatch has an educational role, in that they have set up a website with information and resources to increase awareness about GLBTIQ issues for people in the NZDF (i.e. commanders and managers). OverWatch is also involved in a variety of community events such as the Pride Parade.[14]

Practical resources for frontline personnel

Comparable organisations discussed a few initiatives involving frontline personnel that they feel are contributing to and supporting ways to create a more diverse and inclusive workplace. The NZDF has recently designed a fitness and training smart phone app, and there has been a fitness programme initiative at a naval base for women in the military with babies which supports military women to get their fitness back after pregnancy. The NZDF is moving forward with improvements to flexible work arrangements, career structuring, and addressing challenges for military families concerning work-life balance. Similarly, the NZ Police talked about a new initiative around Flexible Employment Options that would be linked to their Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. These initiatives are generally believed to help women return to work after having children, as well as encouraging more people to remain with the organisation through recognition of family responsibilities.

Training and education

The NZ Police, NZDF, Red Cross and St John all described specific training and education initiatives for senior leadership staff to support a more diverse workplace. These programmes included unconscious bias awareness training or workshops where senior leaders are trained to be aware of, assess and manage biases (State Services Commission, 2014). In the NZDF, unconscious bias content has also been adapted for delivering leadership courses. The Red Cross Board has participated in cultural competency training. St John has been involved in educating executive and senior level staff around diversity and discussing with them possible strategies/initiatives in order to create awareness of diversity benefits for decision-making and operation of teams.   NZ Police includes cultural competencies training in their leadership framework to enable leaders to work with different populations more effectively, based around specific competencies. In terms of wider organisational education initiatives, the NZDF provides equity and diversity training across the entire NZDF, and is incorporating bystander intervention training [15] as part of this.

Approaches targeting bullying/harassment/discrimination

In addition to comparable agencies having high-level anti-discrimination and harassment policies (e.g. NZDF), the NZDF also has an anti-harassment initiative in which selected personnel participate in a

---

[13] See https://www.facebook.com/NZDFOverwatch for more information.

[14] See http://www.aucklandpridefestival.org.nz/auckland-pride-parade/ for more information.

[15] See https://www.notalone.gov/assets/bystander-summary.pdffor more information.

two-day upskilling programme to become an 'anti-harassment advisor'. This role is undertaken in addition to the employee's regular position, and involves advisors acting as a support person and providing advice to those who need it with a focus on the prevention the escalation of any bullying, harassment or discrimination issues. The NZDF also endorsed and engaged with 'Pink Shirt Day'[16], a national anti-bullying initiative, by creating posters featuring the Chief of the NZDF and other respected personnel to role-model the anti-bullying message. Further, as was previously mentioned, the Police have targeted anti-discrimination policies holding sergeants and others in leadership positions accountable for curbing any discriminatory or bullying behaviours they observe.

Collective engagement around diversity

The NZDF supports a variety of strategies that encourage their personnel to engage in conversations around diversity and supporting the development of different groups of people in the organisation. Women's development forums are held biennially in the Air Force and Navy, Pasifika fono are held annually, and the Army and Navy have marae with the Air Force in the process of building one. The NZDF also actively supported a diversity conference led by OverWatch in 2013.[17] In a similar fashion, the Police have also developed or are developing engagement strategies that encompass the entire organisation and the communities it serves in efforts to increase their workplace diversity. These approaches include sponsoring various ethnic and community events (e.g. Africa Day) to increase awareness about and the profile of the Police; the inclusion of a mandatory, diversity-related question in every recruitment interview ("*What diversity do you bring to NZ Police?*") in order to highlight the importance of diversity both within the organisation and to the applicant; and holding hui in Asian, Māori and Pacific Island communities each year to increase awareness and support of the Police in these communities.

4.4.2.3 Effectiveness of initiatives

Comparable agencies, in particular the NZDF, discussed the positive impact of the aforementioned strategies acting synergistically to support workplace diversity. Their representative described the NZDF as having good leadership and organisational buy-in for progress around diversity, and believes the organisation has done a lot to ensure good pay parity and that processes and procedures are fair and equitable. Further, the Defence Force has received international and national recognition for their support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender service members in armed forces:

- they were ranked number one internationally for their integration of LGBTIQ people in armed forces by the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies in the Netherlands in 2014[18]
- in September 2013, the NZDF received the ANZ EEO Trust Diversity and Supreme Awards for OverWatch.

The NZDF representative believed that current diversity initiatives are generally working well, as collective responsibility and buy-in from individuals in leadership positions and on the leadership board can be observed. Furthermore, the Defence Force representative believed that any future initiatives based on recommendations made in a review of opportunities for women in the NZDF[19] will be met by the Ministry of Defence using the NZDF Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

---

[16] See http://www.pinkshirtday.org.nz/ for more information.

[17] See http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/news/media-releases/2013/20131111ndfsdc.htm for more information.

[18] See http://www.hcss.nl/news/lgbt-military-index/873/ for more information.

[19] See http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/downloads/pdf/public-docs/2014/maximising-opportunities-military-women-nzdf.pdf for more information.

The NZ Police representative believed that they are making progress in their 'diversity journey', but acknowledges that there is no one solution to improving workplace diversity. They also made reference to the State Services Performance Improvement Framework (2014) that holds them accountable for change in the diversity area, and noted that short-term strategies are ways to build credibility to make long-term strategies more effective. Similarly, the Red Cross representative said that diversity strategies need to be done *"…properly, rather than just ticking the boxes".*

"The important thing is that you can't think of this as a quick sprint on the diversity journey. You've got to have some tractionable, long-term stuff in place. Otherwise, it's not going to work… So, as an organisation, taking our executive on the journey has been a three-year effort to get them here."

– Comparable agency representative

In sum, comparable agency representatives were able to outline a significant range of diversity-related strategies being implemented within their organisations that were viewed positively and as making progress. Representatives acknowledged that the success of strategies in the area of diversity takes time and commitment, and there is no 'one size fits all' solution to achieving long-term organisational change in terms of achieving and valuing a more diverse workforce. Considering this, stakeholders also discussed specific barriers to workforce diversity that continue to exist, and take time to overcome.

4.4.3   Specific barriers to recruiting, retaining and progressing a more diverse workforce

The NZFS and comparable organisations discussed several barriers to achieving organisations that value diversity and to recruiting, retaining and progressing more diverse workforces.

4.4.3.1 NZFS

A number of barriers to diversity in the NZFS were discussed by interviewees regarding recruiting, retaining and progressing a more diverse operational workforce. What is apparent is that low numbers of women and ethnic minorities being recruited into the fire service mean low numbers will be retained and progressed (FG1, FG2, FG7). Themes concerning this issue are further explored below.

Workplace culture

It was noted that the organisational culture of the NZFS was, for the most part, determined by its majority demographic (i.e. male, NZ European or Pākehā, middle-aged, working-middle class). Stakeholders generally described the Fire Service culture as having a traditional structure and routine with a siloed mode of thinking that is comfortable for those in senior positions, who were described by some as being resistant to change (FG1, FG2). As such, some stakeholders believed that this traditional culture filters down through the different levels in the organisation, which in turn impacts on both women and ethnic minority people in terms of their recruitment, retention, and progression.

"If you've got too many people of a similar mindset all the time, it's much harder to change things if something's not working" – NZFS career firefighter and Association representative

Recruitment barriers

One recruitment barrier noted by people interviewed involved a seemingly greater emphasis being placed on life experience, making it less likely that the potential of recruiting younger people is explored (FG1, FG4). And, as was previously mentioned in section 1.2, volunteer brigades differ in how 'welcoming' they are of new, diverse recruits. It was said some CFOs of volunteer brigades would not entertain the idea of having a woman as a brigade member, for example.

"If brigades have a narrow focus, you'll pull people from a certain area of the community because they will attract people like them… Like breeds like."

– NZFS personnel

A further barrier concerned the possibility that communities' perceptions of the culture of the NZFS could be dissuading some people from joining (FG6, FG8). For example, one NZFS member suggested that some people "*see [the NZFS] as the big macho hero with the firefighting hose*". Stakeholders suggested that the community may not be aware that the NZFS is attempting to increase its diversity, and as such women or ethnic minorities may not feel welcome or want to apply to become firefighters.

"We deal with a lot more death than we do saving people, our job's often very dirty, it's very physical and rough" – NZFS career firefighter

A frequently mentioned barrier regarding the recruitment of women is the physical entry test standards for career firefighters. There is a common assumption that women are more likely to fail this test due to having less upper body strength than men or may find the entry test more daunting or challenging, which may contribute to less women being recruited (FG3, FG6, FG7). There may also be unchecked biases in the recruitment process, which could lead to the recruitment team being more likely to recruit people who are similar to themselves in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and background (FG1, FG7).

Several barriers to the recruitment of ethnic minority groups were identified. Fire Service stakeholders suggested that 'recruitment drives' specific to Māori and Pasifika people were seen as not being a priority for the NZFS (FG1, FG2), and did not consider the NZFS to proactively engage with under-represented community groups (FG2, FG7). For example, some participants doubted that fire safety programmes were reaching lower socioeconomic schools, and did not believe these programmes reached out to Māori, Pasifika and Asian communities as much as they could (FG1, FG2, FG7). Reaching out to the community was seen as a way to raise awareness about the Fire Service,

which in turn could spark an interest in beginning a career in the NZFS for some under-represented communities. As one Pasifika volunteer commented:

> "*If your community knows who you are and what you do … that could build a stronger relationship between the Fire Service and everyone else… I would love to just take a fire truck out to the park and say hi to all of the little kids and show them around the fire truck and just be a bit more engaging*".

Further, various cultural differences were cited as potential recruitment barriers for some minority groups (FG1, FG4, FG5, FG7). It was understood, for example, that people from some Asian backgrounds may not be inclined to join the fire service, as firefighters may be seen as being of 'less value' in these societies. Other cultural differences were observed as potential barriers. Those following the Sikh religion, for example, may find it difficult to become a firefighter due to their dress (i.e. wearing a dastar or turban may not be operationally viable), and other religious customs around prayer, festivals and diet may not be easily accommodated. With regards to volunteering as a firefighter, immigrant populations may be less inclined to do so due to additional challenges this could present on top of adjusting to life in a new country and community. It was also believed that the type of work and situations that firefighters deal with, such as serious injuries or death in motor vehicle accidents, may also dissuade certain types of individuals from applying to join, or stay in the NZFS.

Retention barriers

There were a number of barriers reported with regards to retaining women and ethnic minority groups in the NZFS.

> "[Women] *really hate the attention being put on them because they are the minority, they just want to basically fit in with the crew, be one of the boys I guess, and not necessarily... embrace that they're different. Because I can imagine it's quite a hard road at times for them... being in the limelight or being different*"
>
> – NZFS personnel

Sexism and discrimination were seen as significant barriers to retaining women and ethnic minority firefighters (FG1, FG4, FG6, FG7, FG8). For example, women in particular were described as wanting to be accepted into their brigades and crews and to not stand out, but they have to 'prove' that they can be a firefighter and work even harder to do so. Some brigades were described as not being 'female friendly'—including ill-fitting uniforms for women firefighters (FG6, FG8)—and young women were said to sometimes labelled as 'distractions' to their male colleagues and gossiped about in small communities.

Men in the Fire Service were generally seen to 'get away with' 'jokes', comments or behaviour that would not be acceptable in other workplaces. *"This is not a job for somebody who's a prude… otherwise I wouldn't suggest that anybody apply to join the Fire Service... There's a huge difference between laughing with the guys over a dirty joke and being the target of sexual bullying or harassment"* (NZFS personnel and association representative).

> "*To fit in you have to not just be good, you have to be more than good, you have to be really contributing*" – NZFS staff and Association representative

Furthermore, anecdotes shared suggest that women firefighters in brigades are sometimes undermined, not taken seriously or not listened to by their crew

members and the public: *"I stepped in* [to diffuse an escalating aggressive situation between brigade members and members of the public] *and I said to the* [members of the public] *'look you've got to move away, there's a fire' and I just lowered the tone a bit… the complaint was about me challenging a member of the public… from within the brigade"* (NZFS personnel).

Some woman firefighters were said to have experienced problems with bullying, discrimination or harassment in their brigade, and despite NZFS policies in place that outline processes to deal with workplace issues, did not want to be seen to be complaining as they are a minority and fear backlash from their colleagues: they will either put up with problems or leave the Fire Service. Complaints of discrimination against women within volunteer brigades can be particularly challenging to deal with if the brigade is not managed effectively.

> *"It's really insidious, some of the stuff that happens to you as a woman out on a station... all those things might not seem like much independently, but it's like that cumulative effect"* – NZFS personnel

One of the common perceptions of barriers to the retention of women in the NZFS was pregnancy and family commitments. Women who are career firefighters were perceived as more likely to leave because they did not want to put their lives at risk, and there appears to be little flexibility for parents who need to stay at home to look after sick children, for example. There was also a perception that pregnancy and marriage are an inconvenience to the Fire Service, and an assumption that women who become firefighters will leave as soon as they want to start a family. These ideas may not engender the retention of women in the Fire Service. Conversely, other woman firefighters dismissed these sorts of challenges. One woman firefighter said that they '*know what they're getting into*' in terms of supporting their families/young children when going into the Fire Service (FG6). In general, however, women in stakeholder interviews and focus groups tended to more frequently mention retention barriers involving work and family conflicts, lack of childcare options especially for shift work and/or lack of different roles to perform during pregnancy (FG3, FG4, FG6, FG8) than men (FG2, FG5, FG7).

Racism or discriminatory behaviours such as comments, 'jokes', and 'humour' based on ethnicity was said to be experienced by some ethnic minorities in the NZFS. It was believed that the people who behave in this way may not realise or understand the impact that their comments have on others, due to such behaviour being ingrained in the workplace culture.

Further, some Māori personnel said that they were not able to 'be Māori' in the fire service. For example, some were dissatisfied with the mispronunciation of te reo Māori by their colleagues. Some also felt as though the significance of tangi to Māori is not appropriately taken into account, reporting that the bereavement leave policy allows for only three days, when expectations for tangi require people to be away for around five days.

Processes around conducting exit surveys were thought to be in need of improvement in terms of determining the reason or reasons—such as the aforementioned barriers—why people decide to leave the Fire Service. For example, some focus group participants believed that the operational processes supporting these surveys could be strengthened by ensuring a second, non-work email address is on file for all personnel. These participants reported knowing of exit surveys that had been sent to NZFS work emails of personnel who, in having left the organisation, no longer checked their NZFS email or no longer had access to it (FG7).

Progression barriers

One of the barriers to progression for women and ethnic minorities in the Fire Service noted by stakeholders involves a perceived tension between the team-based culture of the NZFS, where all firefighters are part of a 'team' and members of crews in their brigades, and an individual's interest in moving up the ranks to achieve career success. The strong team environment of the Fire Service may therefore discourage some individuals from 'putting their hand up' to progress into higher roles. This observed tension may also relate to Tall Poppy Syndrome, where 'tall poppies' (e.g. those who are seen to be successful or distinguished with a higher rank) are 'cut down to size' (Mouly & Sankaran, 2000). Due to their smaller numbers in the organisation, women and ethnic minorities already stand out as being 'different' from the rest of their team members, therefore gaining a higher rank could be met with negative reactions from their colleagues, compounded by both Tall Poppy Syndrome and perceived negative attitudes around their 'differences'.

> *"…they seem to be a bit reluctant to take the next step…because it would be the first time… they don't want the big 'oh my god, we got a female' and suddenly they're in the spotlight and they didn't ask to be in the spotlight, they just want to do the job and you imagine the pressure to perform in that situation"* – NZFS personnel, HR role

Conversely, some women reported not wanting to progress to more senior positions simply due to personal preference or because they do not yet feel ready to do so, and want to feel as though they are able to do all of the different aspects of their current roles first before progressing (FG6).

The organisational system of the NZFS was also seen as a barrier to the progression of a diverse workforce (see also section 4.4). Interviewees talked about the single-tier entry system into the NZFS career operational firefighter force (where all career firefighters must start at the 'bottom' of the ranks), and how this can dissuade senior volunteer firefighters, for example, from applying to join the career workforce of the NZFS. Some stakeholders also believed younger people may be dissuaded by the single-tier entry system and the length of time required to progress to a more senior rank, which may be viewed as longer in terms of progression trends in the wider job market.

Another systemic barrier to progression involving all NZFS personnel irrespective of demographic background was a perceived 'bottle-neck' with advancing to more senior positions. Many stakeholders considered that because the older NZFS workforce had not yet retired, little opportunity was available for others to progress (FG1, FG2, FG4, FG5, FG6).

4.4.3.2 Comparable agencies

Many similarities were noted between the NZFS and comparable agency representatives' perceptions of barriers to recruitment, retention and progression for people from diverse backgrounds. These barriers included:

- resistance to change/entrenched attitudes
- how to increase organisational awareness about the importance of diversity initiatives
- constraints with the rank structure (i.e. availability of qualified women/ethnic minorities without the availability of positions to promote them into)
- lack of organisational buy-in

- translating executive-level intentions into effective behavioural change at the individual, team, and frontline levels.

All of the comparable agency representatives also discussed facing challenges around 'getting people in the door' as being a barrier to greater diversity within their respective workplaces, as low recruitment numbers of women and individuals from different ethnic communities ultimately mean that fewer of these individuals are retained and progressed. For example, the St John representatives were unsure how attractive the job was, and talked about how the competitive job market could make it more difficult to recruit a diverse group of people. The Red Cross representative said that their staff and volunteer base was 'reasonably diverse', however, noted that their membership and governance structures were not diverse and may not appeal to younger people, for example.

> *"...it's really hard to get youth engaged because [members] meet at afternoon tea time... very traditional, sit around and the chairperson sits up the front. And a lot of people get turned off by that, where a lot of young people, they'll meet in the pub and talk Red Cross things. And they've got interests in things like international humanitarian law..."*

Job attractiveness was also mentioned by the NZDF representative, who acknowledged that the organisation could potentially engage in conflict situations and as such may not appeal to all potential recruits. Similarly, further recruitment barriers were noted by the NZDF and Police representatives regarding people from certain Asian or Pacific nations, as military or military-like organisations may not be highly regarded in some of these nations: breaking down cultural stereotypes and community/intergenerational resistance against entering into these types of professions may be a difficult obstacle to overcome for some potential recruits.

Stakeholders from the Fire Service and comparable agencies discussed several barriers to recruitment, retention and progression of a diverse workforce. The organisational culture (within the organisation and perceived by the community), individual cultural values and choices, sexism, racism, discrimination, bullying and harassment, organisational structure (policies and procedures) were all seen to be barriers to recruitment, retention and progression in the Fire Service. Comparable agency representatives outlined barriers at a high level, particularly in terms of organisational buy-in, resistance to change, and translating executive level intentions into actionable strategies that work. Strategies or enablers to begin to address these various barriers to recruitment, retention and progression are discussed in the following section.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING NZFS DIVERSITY-RELATED RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND PROGRESSION

Based on evidence gathered from the research, the following section provides conclusions and suggests ways in which the NZFS can recruit, retain and progress a more diverse workforce.

5.1 Conclusions

The statistics presented earlier in the report suggest that women, Māori, Pasifika and Asian individuals (particularly those in frontline career and volunteer firefighting and higher ranked roles) are not effectively represented within the Fire Service. Further, stakeholders across varying levels of the organisation suggested that, while diversity within the workplace is acknowledged as important, diversity initiatives should not just be 'for the sake of diversity': firefighters need to be the best people for the job.

Research findings also suggest that the Fire Service and comparable emergency services organisations experience similar diversity-related barriers and enablers. Similar barriers included lack of organisational buy-in and challenges associated with translating executive-level intentions into effective behavioural change (c.f. section 5.2). Similar enablers of increased workforce diversity were also observed. These included comparable agencies and NZFS's use of tailored recruitment channels, and similar drives to increase appointment equity by basing interviewing and other testing processes on empirically-sound, unbiased techniques.

One difference observed between comparable agencies perceptions' of workplace diversity and those of the NZFS concerned the importance of inclusion in partnership with diversity. The majority of comparable agencies considered that diversity should be closely associated with creating an inclusive and safe workplace for everyone, which was not a theme that came through as strongly with NZFS stakeholders. Further, comparable emergency services representatives were more likely to perceive their organisations as valuing, managing and leveraging diversity: NZFS stakeholders were more likely to consider the Fire Service as tolerating diversity. Last, every comparable organisation had at least one full-time person employed with specific and direct accountability for diversity initiatives, which was not a situation mirrored within the NZFS.

Finally, there was general consensus that the NZFS is increasingly demonstrating awareness and tolerance of groups falling outside its mainstream demographic.

5.2 Organisational culture and culture change

As the infrastructure that binds its workforce together to produce results, the organisational culture of the NZFS was generally perceived positively by stakeholders. Research findings suggest that those working for the organisation in both career and volunteer roles value the team-based approach of the Fire Service. Firefighters considered their crews/brigades to be 'family', where team members help one other and everyone has a place and purpose within the team. These organisational attributes enhance the Fire Service's ability to effectively respond to emergencies.

However, the organisational culture of the NZFS was also seen as a contributor to challenges associated with increasing its workforce diversity. In particular, stakeholders considered that the Fire Service can be resistant to change, and experiences difficulties translating executive-level intentions into effective behavioural change across all levels of the organisation. Challenges associated with organisational buy-in and accountability toward diversity initiatives was also observed.

The organisational culture of the Fire Service can be used as a tool to drive improvements in the recruitment, retention, and progression of a diverse range of employees. It will be important for the NZFS to further develop an awareness of its organisational culture and how its organisational values manifest themselves into behaviours to overcome diversity-related barriers and leverage off of existing organisational strengths.

In order to develop a deeper understanding of the Fire Service's organisational culture, the figure below presents an organisational culture 'iceberg'. Similar to the structure of an iceberg, the culture of an organisation can be seen to be comprised of two levels: a non-visible or non-observable layer (beneath the water), and a visible or observable layer above the water (Atkison, 1998). The non-visible elements of organisational culture consist of organisational values, assumptions and beliefs. These elements have a cause-and-effect relationship with visible aspects of the organisation, which include behaviours and other ways in which the organisation achieves its objectives (Pettigrew, 1979, 1990).

Figure 9: Organisational culture iceberg
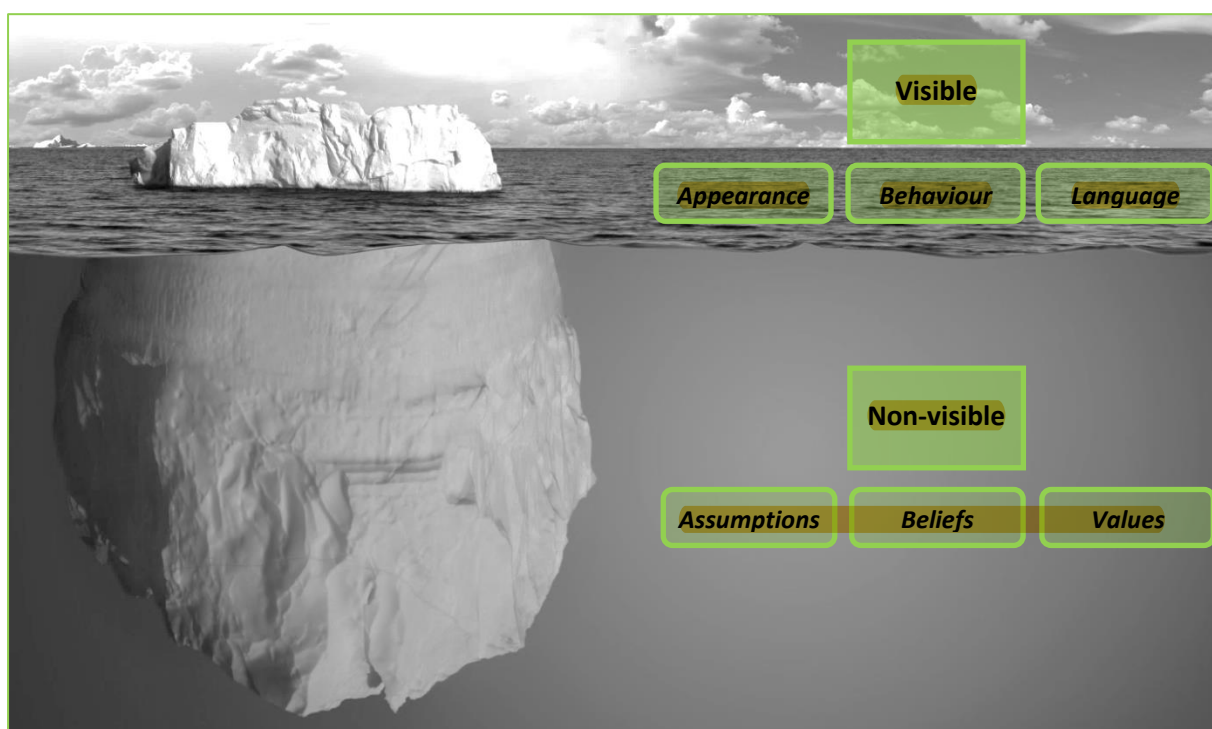
In terms of workplace diversity within the Fire Service, 'root causes' of both barriers and enablers to workplace diversity are situated within the lower, non-visible layer of the organisation's culture. These include barriers attributed to unconscious leadership and gender biases (sections 3.4.3, 4.3.3.1), valuing fitting in to the NZFS over individual identity (i.e. 'tall poppy syndrome', section 4.4.3), resistance to change (section 4.4.3.2), and assumptions regarding responsibility and accountability (section 4.4.2.2). Enablers of workplace diversity are also embedded within this deeper level of organisational culture, such as cultural awareness, beliefs and values about diversity (sections 4.3.1, 4.3.3), and values and assumptions concerning accountability (section 4.4.1.1).

These non-visible assumptions, values and beliefs then shape observable behaviours and practices that are both negative and positive 'symptoms' of diversity with the NZFS. These include the predominant demographic profile of the NZFS as older Pākehā men (section 4.3.3), workplace bullying or discriminatory behaviours (section 3.4.2.3), and language or cultural barriers when interacting with the public (section 3.4.1.5, 4.3.5). Conversely, when diversity is valued and accepted, positive results

are observed such as diversity and recruitment policies (sections 3.2, 3.5.1), creating more appeal for and the successful recruitment of women and underrepresented ethnicities into the Fire Service (section 3.5.1.2), improving fire safety messages for and working effectively with migrant communities (section 3.5.1.2), demystifying the role of firefighting (section 3.5.1.3), and increasing the visibility of women in higher ranked positions (section 3.5.2).

With this information in mind, any future changes focused on increasing workplace diversity must first target the non-visible components of the Fire Service in order to create lasting behavioural shifts. There are several ways to encourage and progress sustainable, diversity-related change targeting these deeper levels of organisational culture. To begin, the Fire Service may consider dovetailing future diversity/inclusion initiatives with current organisational strategies such as Vision 2020 "*Leading Integrated Fire and Emergency Services for a Safer New Zealand*" (Appendix F). This vision, which relates to adapting to changing expectations and working with NZFS personnel to deliver what communities expect out of the Fire Service, could provide a suitable platform for integrating positive, diversity-related values and beliefs into the organisation's culture. A draft diversity-focused results framework with progress indicators across the different areas of recruitment, retention and progression has been appended for this purpose (c.f. Appendix G).

Recommendation 1. Utilise the organisational culture of the Fire Service as a tool to drive changes in diversity-related practices and behaviours.

5.3   Further recommendations

Based on best practice research and stakeholder feedback, the following sections detail further suggestions regarding ways in which the NZFS culture may continue to improve its workplace diversity and diversity-related recruitment, retention and progression strategies.

5.3.1   Resourcing

Many NZFS stakeholders interviewed believed additional resources were needed to increase and strengthen the organisation's commitment to diversity-related recruitment, retention and progression policies and practices. For example, some suggested the provision of additional resources to NZFS groups that represent and support underrepresented personnel: groups such as Afi Pasifika, Te Roopu, and NZFS Women were specifically mentioned (c.f. section 4.4.1). Some believed that Afi Pasifika could expand beyond its current focus on community education to become more of an internal support network for both Pasifika and Asian staff. With regards to Te Roopu, NZFS stakeholders believed that the organisation recognises and supports the continuation of the group, but budget constraints are making the group less effective than it could be. Others suggested that these groups could work more closely with the National Recruitment Manager to coordinate recruitment approaches, which could in turn create more proactive recruitment drives for women and in Māori, Pasifika and Asian communities. It was also suggested that similar groups to Te Roopu and Afi Pasifika could be implemented in other areas of New Zealand with higher Asian/Pasifika/Māori populations.

Similar to Afi Pasifika and Te Roopu, the NZFS Women's group was considered a valuable yet under-utilised and under-resourced asset for women in the Fire Service across the career and volunteer workforces. As mentioned in section 4.4.1.2, the NZFSW representatives we interviewed had put together a proposal and work plan for the development of a NZFSW women's forum, but did not

believe the proposal or plan had been actioned. Committing additional support and resources to their efforts will be a vital part of ensuring women remain and progress within the organisation.

> **Recommendation 2.** Enhance support for NZFS groups representing personnel from diverse backgrounds to increase retention and progression.

Furthermore, support and development of Fire Service cadetships, scholarships, job shadowing and mentoring programmes was considered a further option for providing support to minority recruits as they begin their careers in the organisation (FG2, FG4, FG6, FG8).

> **Recommendation 3.** Continue to develop cadetships, scholarships, and mentoring programmes to further support minority personnel.

The Fire Service may also consider approaching future diversity-initiatives using a public value strategy or 'authorising triangle' (Moore, 1995). This could again utilise Vision 2020 or other strategic initiatives to strengthen how the NZFS leverages its diversity to engage effectively with and create value for the communities it serves. Specific considerations could include:

1. How will future NZFS diversity initiatives produce value for the public and communities the Fire Service serves?
2. What kind of support (e.g. fiscal, governance) is needed to authorise future diversity-related action(s) and sustain these efforts towards creating value for the public?
3. What operational capabilities (i.e. resourcing and innovations) are required to deliver the desired results to communities?

> **Recommendation 4.** Consider how diversity in the NZFS can be further leveraged to enhance effective community engagement and create additional value for the communities it serves.

5.3.2 Accountability

Increased accountability was a strategy mentioned by several NZFS stakeholders as a way to further recruit, retain and progress a diverse workforce. For example, it was suggested that resources be allocated for full-time, dedicated people to lead overarching diversity and inclusion initiatives (FG1, FG2, FG7). These roles could include a policy analyst position responsible for the review of current diversity policies, creation of a diversity group

"If you want to make progress... you really have to identify and get someone who's going to drive it and put some resources into it." – Association representative.

management position or a person to be responsible for revitalising the previously-established Diversity and Fairness group. Others believed managers and leaders could be held more accountable for ensuring a 'safe workplace' for everybody. Increased accountability amongst those in managerial or leadership positions was perceived as one way to demonstrate that the Fire Service is considering the topic of diversity seriously and intentionally, and would also help increase organisational buy-in to diversity initiatives across all ranks and levels of the NZFS (FG2).

It was also suggested that administrative and managerial processes within the NZFS could be more visible and transparent concerning specific diversity goals and expectations, otherwise "*any statements around encouraging people from diverse backgrounds [to join] is just a meaningless statement*"; increasing workplace diversity requires a "serious strategy to back it up".

In general, many stakeholders considered that an increase in 'intentionality' and organisational buy-in to diversity practices from management/senior-level officers was one central way in which to enhance workforce diversity within the NZFS (FG1, FG2).

> **Recommendation 5.** Encourage greater accountability and buy-in into diversity practices from those in managerial and leadership positions.

5.3.3 Inclusion

As was previously mentioned, one key difference observed between the NZFS and the comparable agency representatives we spoke with concerned the emphasis these agencies placed on the concept of inclusion *in partnership* with diversity. Although none of the Fire Service staff specifically mentioned the term 'inclusion' in conjunction with workplace diversity, they did offer several suggestions for ways in which the NZFS can improve its ability to involve and include everyone in the diversity

"*Not only do we need to broaden our scope, our catchment for people within the fire service so that we continue to reflect our community, but when they're in the brigade, we need to have a brigade with the appropriate culture where these people are going to feel like they're part of a team.*" – NZFS personnel

effort. For example, many NZFS staff believed a greater emphasis on role-modelling acceptable behaviours would help foster a greater sense of openness and acceptance of diversity within the NZFS and would contribute to decreased instances of bullying or discrimination (FG3, FG4, FG6, FG8). One NZFS staff member suggested that brigade leaders need to ensure that bigoted, discriminatory or bullying behaviours are not going to be tolerated, and deal with these behaviours appropriately either as a word with them "*behind the truck*" or as a formal disciplinary process to ensure all brigade members feel safe and supported (c.f. section 5.3.2).[20] Creating a more welcoming, supportive and friendly workplace was also seen as an important step to take *before* the Fire Service considers recruiting more people from underrepresented groups into the organisation (FG3).

Several strategies were suggested to help create a more supportive, inclusive workplace. These include:

---

[20] For further information see also section 3.2.1, which considers current strategies the Police and Defence Force have initiated concerning NZFS leaders' accountability for creating an inclusive, safe workplace.

- enhancing management training to increase CFOs' ability to recognise and emphasise different skills within the Fire Service
- creating a more formalised system of childcare to better support NZFS staff, including volunteers[21]
- sharing diversity- and inclusion-related 'success stories' regarding what has worked in other communities between brigades so these stories, where possible, can be emulated
- promoting and ensuring a welcoming environment
- enhancing proactive community engagement approaches between under-represented communities and the Fire Service
- focusing on how different tasks and responsibilities (e.g. education, prevention strategies and programmes, medical calls, car accidents) within the Fire Service can be advertised and 'sold' more effectively to different people with a diverse set of skills.

Section 4.3.2 describes examples of comparable agencies' strategies and messages around valuing both diversity and the inclusion of all NZFS members, such as the creation of family-friendly workplace policies (i.e. flexible employment and job sharing options).

> **Recommendation 6.** Emphasise inclusion-based values and practices to facilitate greater respect for and support of a diverse workforce.

5.3.4 Diversity and managing change

Success with recruiting, retaining and progressing a more diverse workforce were seen to rely on the strength of an organisation's diversity and ability to implement changes through avenues such as operational and management practices. Specifically, increased and targeted diversity and management training was seen as one way in which to help the NZFS provide a better service to the community, as well as interact with women and different ethnicities within the workplace (FG1, FG2, FG5, FG6). Some NZFS personnel suggested, for example, that TAPS could be better utilised to provide cultural competency training for those interested in advancing through the organisation (i.e. moving into leadership positions). As one NZFS representative observed, "*we seem to suffer from* [the emphasis on] *the female or the person with the diverse background need[ing] to understand how to work in [the NZFS] culture…I think maybe we need to change our focus… [by] teaching other people to work with others from different backgrounds*".

Cultural competency, diversity, and/or unconscious bias training could also be included as a part of the CFOs resource kit or during the volunteer executive officer course. For example, it was thought that increasing NZFS personnel's understanding and awareness of inherent gender biases, cultural differences and protocols (e.g. significance and whānau expectations of tangi or tangihanga, pronunciation and use of te reo Māori) would help the organisation ensure that its employees have the right tools to be able to work more effectively with both women and different ethnic groups (FG2). Some stakeholders also suggested that management training could also focus on increasing leaders' abilities communication skills when engaging with people from varied backgrounds. For example, one NZFS staff member had observed that some of the male CFOs he knew were unsure of how to relate

---

[21] Volunteers can claim for childcare costs for when they have to attend training courses under the current Volunteer Reimbursement policy.

to younger brigade members, and believed that further training in management and communication would help enable these CFOs to "*stop talking to them as if you're their father and start talking to them as if you're their older brother*."

Representatives from other emergency response agencies also mentioned a need to increase and target their diversity and management training approaches. For example, the NZDF spokesperson believed more practical assistance was required in terms of bringing awareness about the management of diversity into the senior level of leadership (e.g. cultural competency training, interpersonal relationship management training). Such assistance might make it easier for commanders, managers and personnel to manage diversity and to better understand how diversity impacts on the workplace (cultural festivals, religious groups) in terms of living, socialising and working together.

> **Recommendation 7.** Consider additional training courses focused on cultural competency, diversity, unconscious bias, and communication skills to better understand and manage diversity.

Operational and management practices related to fair and transparent appointments were also considered an important approach to increasing and retaining a diverse workforce. Without a transparent and unbiased appointment system, it was reasoned that CFOs and other leaders may be seen to favour either underrepresented groups (e.g. affirmative action, see section 3.4) or people 'like them'. It was suggested that transparent appointment processes be put in place across all brigades, particularly volunteer brigades. Standards around how new opportunities within volunteer brigades could be advertised and how internal appointments could be made were suggested, so that the most qualified or skilled person would be selected for the role and individuals in turn would not be overlooked for promotions. This would make the progression process within brigades fairer, and would not be seen as disadvantaging anyone.

> **Recommendation 8.** Continue to develop transparent and unbiased appointment processes across the career and volunteer workforces to support retention and progression of a diverse range of people.

The need voiced by those interviewed for a transparent and fair appointment system within volunteer brigades was mirrored by comparable agency stakeholders, who placed a heavy emphasis on the need to increase the equity of all appointments by basing the interviewing and psychometric testing process on robust, behaviourally- and empirically-sound techniques. The Police representative believed this approach was essential in deterring people from 'cooking' the process and increasing the transparency and clarity of standards across the organisation.

5.4   Next steps

This report has presented evidence-based research regarding workforce diversity within the NZFS. In particular, the research conducted (1) identifies best practice approaches to diversity; (2) outlines the extent to which career and volunteer firefighters currently reflect the communities they serve; (3) examines what is and what is not working with diversity-related strategies both within the NZFS and comparable agencies; (4) identifies barriers and enablers of choosing to join and stay with the Fire Service for a diverse range of people; and (5) offers actionable recommendations on ways the organisation can further enhance the diversity of its workforce and the effectiveness of its diversity-related workforce strategies.

The report also identifies the following eight recommendations for the NZFS:

1. **Utilise the organisational culture of the Fire Service as a tool to drive changes in diversity-related practices and behaviours.**

2. **Enhance support for NZFS groups representing personnel from diverse backgrounds to increase retention and progression.**

3. **Continue to develop cadetships, scholarships, and mentoring programmes to further support minority personnel.**

4. **Consider how diversity in the NZFS can be further leveraged to enhance effective community engagement and create additional value for the communities it serves.**

5. **Encourage greater accountability and buy-in into diversity practices from those in managerial and leadership positions.**

6. **Emphasise inclusion-based values and practices to facilitate greater respect for and support of a diverse workforce.**

7. **Consider additional training courses targeting cultural competency, inclusion and diversity, unconscious bias, and communication skills to better understand and manage diversity.**

8. **Continue to develop transparent and unbiased appointment processes across the career and volunteer workforces to support retention and progression of a diverse range of people.**

The Fire Service is currently in the process of establishing a review team and working group to begin to embed and action these recommendations. This change process will include engagement with the Organisational Leadership and Strategic Leadership Teams to agree and formalise future diversity-related work programmes, policies, and implementation into business as usual (BAU), including a full work programme with progress indicators (see Appendix G for a results diagram template).

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

Atkinson, P. (1998). The iceberg agenda. Rushmere Wynne. Retrieved from http://www.philipatkinson.com/Philip-Atkinson-CreatingCultureChange.pdf

Australian Army Headquarters [AustralianArmyHQ] (2013). Chief of Army message regarding unacceptable behaviour [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QaqpoeVgr8U

Avon Fire and Rescue. (2010). Single Equality Scheme (2010-2013). Available at http://www.avonfire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity

Baigent, D. (1996). Who rings the bell? A gender study loking at the British Fire Service, its firefighters and equal opportunities; using academic reading, anecdotal experience and a survey of women firefighters. Unpublished dissertation. Available at http://www.fitting-in.com/baigent/diss.pdf

Bazley, M.C. (2007). Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Police Conduct. Available at http://www.parliament.nz/resource/0000055162

Bendick, M., Moccio, F., Hulett, D.M., & Thomas, S.Y. (2008). A fair shake. Fire Chief, April 2008, 52:4, pp.36.

Bryant, R. (no date). Climbing the fire service ladder of success – a matter of perceptions. Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Central Lancashire. Available at http://www.fitting-in.com/c/bryantma.pdf

Callister, P. & Didham, R. (2012). Workforce composition – Age. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 13-Jul-12. Downloaded on 15 January 2015 and available at http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/workforce-composition/page-8

Cooperrider, D. & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. Available at www.margiehartley.com/home/wp-content/uploads/file/APPRECIATIVE_INQUIRY_IN_Orgnizational_life.pdf

Department for Communities and Local Government. (2008a). Fire and Rescue Service equality and diversity strategy 2008-2018. Department for Communities and Local Government. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7633/equalitydiversitystrategy.pdf

Department for Communities and Local Government. (2008b). A survey of current and ex-firefighters in England. Fire Research Technical Report 8/2008. Available at http://www.fitting-in.com/reports/c&lgequality/womensurvey08.pdf

Equal Employment Opportunities Trust. (2011). Specifically Pacific: Engaging young Pacific workers. Equal Employment Opportunities Trust. Available at http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/content/docs/reports/Specifically%20Pacific%20Report.pdf

Equal Employment Opportunities Trust. (2012). Transforming cultures to grow women leaders. Ministry of Women's Affairs. Available at http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/content/docs/e.doc12-07T.pdf

Fox, K.A., Hornick, C.W., & Hardin, E. (2006). Achieving and retaining a diverse fire service workforce. International Association of Firefighters Diversity Initiative. CWH Research, Inc. Available at http://www.iaff.org/HR/Media/IAFF_Diversity_Report.pdf

Gardner, D., Bentley, T., Catley, B., Cooper-Thomas, H., O'Driscoll, M. and Trenberth, L. (2013). Ethnicity, workplace bullying, social support and psychological strain in Aotearoa/New Zealand. New Zealand Journal of Psychology, 42 (2), pp.84-91. Available at http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/content/docs/reports/2014/Ethnicity%20and%20workplace%20bullying%20in%20New%20Zealand.pdf

Holvino, E., Ferdman, B.M. and Merrill-Sands, D. (2004). Creating and sustaining diversity and inclusion in organizations: Strategies and approaches. In Stockdale, M.S. and Crosby, F.J. (Eds.). The psychology and management of workplace diversity (pp. 245-276). Malden: Blackwell Publishing. Available at http://bernardoferdman.org/Articles/Holvino%20Ferdman%20and%20Merrill-Sands%202004.pdf

Hulett, D.M., Bendick, M., Thomas, S.Y., & Moccio, F. (2008). A national report card on women in firefighting. International Association of Women in Fire & Emergency Services. Available at https://i-women.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/35827WSP.pdf

Johnson, A.J. (2004). Positive action, negative effect. A study into the negative effects of positive action on minority groups in the British Fire Service. Unpublished dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Masters of Business Administration, University of Derby. Available at http://www.fitting-in.com/c/johnson.pdf

Kreitz, P.A. (2007). Best practices for managing organisation diversity. Draft article submitted to the Journal of Librarianship. Available at http://www.slac.stanford.edu/cgi-wrap/getdoc/slac-pub-12874.pdf

Lewis, S. (2004). Research paper one: Gender and firefighting. Metropolitan Fire Brigade gender equity research project 2004. Swinburne University of Technology. Available at http://www.fitting-in.com/c/GenderProjectPaper1.pdf

Ministry of Defence, Evaluation Division (2014). Maximising opportunities for Military Women in the New Zealand Defence Force. Available at http://nzdf.mil.nz/downloads/pdf/public-docs/2014/maximising-opportunities-military-women-nzdf.pdf

Ministry of Women's Affairs. (2014). Inspiring action: Action plans and research to help you attract and retain talented women. Ministry of Women's Affairs. Available at http://mwa.govt.nz/sites/public_files/MWA_bibliography%20complete%20(large).pdf

McDermott, M. (2013). Final Report: Delivery mechanisms for hard to reach groups. Available at www.fire.org.nz/Research/Published-Reports/Documents/Report131_DeliveryMechanisms.pdf

Moore, M.H. (1995). Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA.

Mossman, E., Mayhew, P., Rowe, M., & Jordan, J. (2008). Literature reviews about the barriers to recruiting a diverse police workforce. Available at www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/barriers-to-recruiting-a-diverse-workforce.pdf

Mouly, V.S. & Sankaran, J. (2000). The tall poppy syndrome in New Zealand: An exploratory investigation. In M. Sheehan, S. Ramsey & J. Patrick (Eds.) Transcending boundaries: Integrating people, processes and systems. Hosted by: The School of Management, Griffith University (p.285-289). Proceedings of the 2000 Conference, Brisbane, Queensland Australia. Brisbane: Griffith University. Available at http://ecampus.nmit.ac.nz/moodle/file.php/4599/Talent/Sheehan,%20Ramsay%20%20Patrick%20-%20Transcending_Boundaries,%202000.pdf#page=303

New Zealand Bill of Rights Act (1990). Reprinted as at 1 July 2013. Wellington, New Zealand.

New Zealand Defence Force (2013). The 2012-2013 Annual report for the year ended 30 June 2013. Available at http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/downloads/pdf/public-docs/2013/nzdf-annual-report-30june2013.pdf

New Zealand Fire Service Commission (2011). Volunteer sustainability. Internal document developed by the New Zealand Fire Service.

New Zealand Fire Service Commission (2013). Statement of Intent 2013 – 2016. Available at http://www.fire.org.nz/about-us/publications/Statement-of-Intent/Documents/NZFS_StatementOfIntent_2013-2016.pdf

New Zealand Fire Service (2005). Diversity and Fairness Plan 2006 – 2011: Appreciating and valuing our uniqueness. Downloaded on 23 September 2014 from http://www.neon.org.nz/documents/NZ%20Fire%20Service%2009Mar06_Diversity%20%20Fairness%20Plan%202006-2010.pdf

New Zealand Fire Service (2012). New Zealand Fire Service Commission Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017. Available at www.fire.org.nz/About-Us/Publications/Other-Reports/Documents/Strategic-Plan-2012-2017.pdf

New Zealand Fire Service (2013a). Contestable Research Fund Instructions for Preparation of Expression of Interest 2013-14.

New Zealand Fire Service (2013b). Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2013. New Zealand Fire Service Commission. Available at http://www.fire.org.nz/About-Us/Publications/Annual-Reports/Documents/NZFSC_Annual_Report_2013.pdf

New Zealand Fire Service (2013c). 'An Introduction to Volunteering'. Downloaded on 22 September 2014 from http://www.fire.org.nz/Jobs/Volunteer-Firefighters/Pages/AnIntroductiontoVolunteering.html

New Zealand Fire Service (2013d). 'Recruitment Process'. Downloaded on 22 September 2014 from http://www.fire.org.nz/Jobs/Career-Firefighters/Recruitment-process/Pages/RecruitmentProcess.html

New Zealand Fire Service (2014). *1970's*. Downloaded on 25 September 2014 from
http://www.fire.org.nz/About-Us/History/Pages/1970s.html

New Zealand Human Rights Act (1998). Reprinted as at 1 December 2014. Wellington, New Zealand.

New Zealand Police (no date). Literature review about the use of affirmative action programmes to address gender discrimination in the workplace. Paper commissioned by NZ Police (on Ministry of Women's Affairs website). Available at
http://mwa.govt.nz/sites/public_files/Lit%20Review%20FV.pdf

New Zealand State Sector Act (1988). Section 56(2)(d). Available at
http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1988/0020/latest/DLM129110.html

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2013). Fact book Country Statistical Profiles, 2013 edition: Population and migration. Available at
www.oecd.org/std/01_Population_and_migration.pdf

Pamah, D. (2005). Watch culture groupthink. A study of the implementation of the EU equal treatment directives in the UK Fire and Rescue Service. Unpublished dissertation, University of London. Available at http://www.fitting-in.com/c/pamah.htm

Pettigrew, A.M. (1979). On studying organizational cultures. Administrative Science Quarterly, 24, pp. 570-81.

Pettigrew, A.M. (1990). Is corporate culture manageable? In Wilson, D. and Rosenfeld, R. (Eds.), Managing Organisations, pp.267-72.

State Services Commission (2014). Performance Improvement Framework: Core Guide 1. Understanding the Performance Improvement Framework Agency Model. Available at
http://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/pif-core-guide-1-january2014.pdf

Statistics New Zealand (2010). National Ethnic Population Projections: 2006 (base) – 2026 (update). Available at
www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/population/estimates_and_projections/NationalEthnicPopulationProjections_HOTP2006-26.aspx

Statistics New Zealand (2013). International Travel and Migration: November 2013. Available at
http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/population/Migration/IntTravelAndMigration_HOTPNov13.aspx

Suss, J. (2007). Annotated bibliography summarising material related to fire service volunteering by people from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) and Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) backgrounds. Bushfire CRC Enhancing Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Project. Available at
http://www.bushfirecrc.com/sites/default/files/managed/resource/annotated-bibliography-multiculturalism-february-2007.pdf

Tiatia, J. Kingi, P., Rankine, J. & Clarke, F. (2006). Effective fire safety strategies for Pacific People. *NUI Development Inc.* Available at www.fire.org.nz/Research/Published-Reports/Documents/a56aa1b2327998c659fe6970e6d20f1c.pdf

Thomas, P., Rayner, K., & Moroney, M. (2000). Determining effective fire safety strategies for Māori: Bay-Waikato fire region. Available at www.fire.org.nz/Research/Published-Reports/Documents/5baf76f58182a12b29e76570839a0e7f.pdf

UMR Research Limited, (2003). Recruitment and retention of women volunteers within the Fire Service. Available at www.fire.org.nz/Research/Published-Reports/Documents/d88d6fe0e71e15a9274bb222001d73c5.pdf

US Fire Administration. (1999a). Many faces, one purpose. A manager's handbook on women in firefighting. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Available at http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-196-508.pdf

US Fire Administration. (1999b). Many women strong. A handbook for women firefighters. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Available at https://i-women.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/fa-195.pdf

Warren, J. and Wilson, C. (2014). Communicating fire safety messages to new migrants: Research report. Julie Warren and Associates, New Zealand Fire Service Commission. Available at http://www.fire.org.nz/Research/Published-Reports/Documents/Report%20135%20Communicating%20Fire%20Safety%20Messages%20to%20New%20Migrants.pdf

Wood, L. (2002). A sociological explanation of the occupational culture of the fire service and women's place within it. Unpublished MSc, University of Edinburgh. Available at http://www.fitting-in.com/c/wood.htm

APPENDIX B: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

1.	**Background information**	
	1.1	Please describe your job position with the NZFS, including how long you've been in the role.
2.	**Perceptions of workplace diversity**	
	2.1	The concept of 'workplace diversity' can mean different things for different people. How would you define workplace diversity? (Prompt: personality [traits, skills, abilities], internal [age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation], external [culture, nationality, religion, marital or parental status), and organisational [position, department, union/non-union])
	2.2	Do you feel as though you currently work in a diverse workplace? Why or why not?
	2.3	Do you think the NZFS should create a more diverse workplace? Why or why not?
	2.4	What demographic group or groups do you think are underrepresented in the Fire Service? Which of these groups would you like to see more represented and why?
	2.5	The Fire Service's current strategic plan states that the NZFS Commission would like to improve diversity in the organisation in order to better reflect the community it serves. Do you think having a more diverse workforce would help the NZFS to better reflect the communities it engages with? Why or why not?
	2.6	Would there be other benefits to increasing diversity within the Fire Service? If so, what would these benefits be for you personally? Your team? The NZFS as a whole? The community?
	2.7	What challenges are associated with having a more diverse workforce for you personally? Your team? The NZFS as a whole? The community?
3.	**Involvement in workplace diversity**	
	3.1	Does the Fire Service have any specific workplace diversity policies or practices that you're aware of?
	3.2	Are you or have you ever been responsible for the development of workforce diversity policies or practices within your NZFS role? If yes, what specific policies and practices did you develop or are you currently developing?
	3.3	To what extent do you believe these policies or practices have been successful in achieving organisational buy-in and why?

	3.4	Are you or have you ever been responsible for the management or implementation of workforce diversity policies or practices within the NZFS? If yes, what specific policies or practices did you manage/implement or are you currently managing or implementing?
	3.5	How successful do you feel you have been at managing or implementing these policies or practices and why?
4.	**Best practice approaches to diversity**	
	4.1	Every organisation approaches workplace diversity differently. For this next question, I'll read five verbs, and would like to know to what extent—not at all, somewhat, or quite a bit—you believe the NZFS as an organisation approaches workplace diversity for each verb. To what extent do you believe the Fire Service approaches workplace diversity as something to be … …tolerated? Not at all Somewhat Quite a bit …valued? Not at all Somewhat Quite a bit …managed? Not at all Somewhat Quite a bit …harnessed? Not at all Somewhat Quite a bit …leveraged? Not at all Somewhat Quite a bit
	4.2	Does the Fire Service's approach to workplace diversity differ to your own personal approach and, if so, how?
	4.3	Are you aware of any practices or approaches the NZFS is currently taking to increase workforce diversity?
	4.4	How effective do you think these practices or approaches are and why?

		4.5	Is the NZFS currently promoting diversity using any of these specific strategies, and if so, how effective are they and why?
			◯ Development of a diversity strategy and/or plan aligned with the organisation's strategic plan
			◯ Involving all employees in the diversity effort
			◯ Assigning responsibility of any diversity initiatives to a department or individual at the executive level
			◯ Defining diversity goals
			◯ Tracking progress towards diversity
			◯ Accountability metrics which hold managers responsible for meeting diversity goals
			◯ Recruitment strategies targeting underrepresented workforce
			◯ Retention strategies targeting underrepresented workforce
			◯ Succession planning to identify and develop a diverse pool of talent for NZFS's future leaders
			◯ Diversity training
			◯ Other strategies? Please describe.
		4.6	What barriers do you see to **recruiting and training** a more diverse workforce in the NZFS?
		4.7	What are some strategies you can think of that would enable the NZFS to recruit and train a more diverse workforce?
		4.8	What barriers do you see to **retaining** a more diverse workforce in the NZFS?
		4.9	What are some strategies you can think of that would enable the NZFS to retain a more diverse workforce?
		4.10	What barriers do you see to **advancing or progressing** a more diverse NZFS workforce?

	4.11	What are some strategies you can think of that would enable the NZFS to advance/progress a more diverse workforce?
5.	**NZFS Diversity: Volunteer vs Career Sectors**	
	5.1	Are there differences between the volunteer and career sectors of the Fire Service regarding how people from **diverse backgrounds** are recruited and trained? If so, please describe.
	5.2	Are there differences between how people from **diverse backgrounds** in the volunteer workforce are retained or encouraged to stay on with the Fire Service compared to those in the career/non-op workforce? If so, please describe.
	5.3	Are there differences between how people from **diverse backgrounds** in the volunteer workforce are progressed or advanced compared to those in the career/non-op workforce? If so, please describe.
	5.4	What recruitment, retention, and progression strategies do you think would work for both sectors of the NZFS?
6.	**Concluding comments**	
	6.1	Are there any other points or issues related to workplace diversity in the NZFS that we have not yet discussed?

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

1. Welcome

Thanks everyone for coming to this meeting, we appreciate your time.
[Info about *Allen + Clarke*]

2. Purpose

[Pass around information sheets]

The purpose of this meeting is to get some views about workplace diversity from people who work for the NZ Fire Service.
- This is a chance for you to provide your thoughts on diversity in your role as [XXXXX]; if you know of any diversity policies and processes in the NZFS and how they work
- We'll also be asking some specific questions about your perceptions on barriers and enablers to recruitment, retention and progression of underrepresented groups (such as women, Māori, Pasifika, Asian peoples) in the NZFS

We will then feed your views into the wider results we are gathering as part of this research project. As well as this focus group, we are doing seven other focus groups with volunteer and career firefighters, and non-operational NZFS employees.

The NZFS wants to understand what their personnel think about diversity in the workplace to inform recruitment, development, retention and progression strategies and help create a NZFS workforce that better reflects the communities it serves.

[Pass out consent forms]

Ask to read and complete consent form / check if okay to turn on audio recorder.
Info about the research project:
- Work we've already done (literature review, KIIs - we have had several stakeholder interviews with staff from various parts of the NZFS, as well as interviews with association representatives such as the NZPFU and UFBA, and comparable organisations such as the NZDF, Police, and St John).
- Work still to complete (FGs, draft final report).

3. Ground rules

'Focus groups' like this are used for a number of reasons. The 'focus' part is that the discussion is focused on a topic – **in this case the focus is on workplace and workforce diversity in the NZFS** – and there is some common focus as you are [XXXXX] for the NZ Fire Service.

The 'group' part is very important. The aim is that the interaction you get in a group situation/discussion brings out different information than you might get in a series of one-to-one interviews – as people listen to each other and this can trigger new thoughts.

Let's agree to some ground rules. I just would like you all to confirm that you are happy with these:
- Everyone's ideas are important and everyone has to have an opportunity to speak

- In a group you expect to hear different views, but there are no right or wrong answers to the questions and we need to respect each other's views even if we disagree with them
- People should be comfortable in providing both positive and negative comments about the issues we're discussing – both are useful in gaining insight into how the service is working
- All the comments people make are confidential, your names won't be communicated in the notes that we take from tonight's discussion, we will mainly only be communicating summarised information, if we communicate specific quotes there will be no way of people identifying who said it
- If people are happy, we would like to record the discussion, only so that we can play it back and take some further notes – it enables me to stay focused on the discussion tonight
- We'll also need to finish 90min from now – but we may finish earlier
- Finally, please contribute as you feel comfortable doing – don't feel pressured – we want to give everyone the opportunity to talk.

Are people happy with those ground rules?

4. Introduction

Most probably know each other but it would be helpful if we could just start off by getting you to introduce yourselves and if you don't mind, saying a few words about what your position is in [XXXXX] and how long you've been here.

[Person leading focus group facilitates introductions]

We have a list of 5 topics to discuss:
- Your thoughts on workforce diversity
- What you know about NZFS policy or practices around workforce diversity
- Barriers to workplace diversity
- Enablers of workplace diversity
- Any further comments you may have

5. Questions/discussion topics

5.1 Your thoughts on workforce diversity:
- Workforce diversity can mean different things to different people. We would like to know how you would define it (Prompt: personality [traits, skills, abilities], internal [age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation], external [culture, nationality, religion, marital or parental status), and organisational [position, department, union/non-union])

PROMPTS:
- Do you currently work in a diverse workplace? Why/why not?
- Should the NZFS create a more diverse workplace? Why/why not?
- Are there any groups that are under-represented in [XXXXX]? Would you like any groups to be more represented – why/why not? If so, which?
- Would having a more diverse workforce help you to better engage with your community? Why/why not?
- Are there any benefits to increasing diversity in the workplace? If so, what?
- Challenges? (same structure as question above)
- Are there any stories or examples from [XXXXX] where diversity may have helped or hindered a situation?

o Has [XXXXX] ever dealt with issues related to diversity? If so, what were they and how were they handled?

5.2 Workplace diversity policy and practices in the NZFS:

PROMPTS:
o Does the Fire Service do anything to increase workplace diversity? If so, what?
o [If yes] What do you think about these practices? Do they affect you? If so, why? Have they been successful? If so, why do you think that is?

5.3 Barriers to workplace diversity in the NZFS (or, what prevents diversity in the FS):

PROMPTS:
o As [XXXXX], did any of you ever feel like there were barriers to you joining the Fire Service? If so, what were they? What might be barriers for other under-represented groups? [recruitment / training]

o As [XXXXX], do you ever experience challenges or barriers that make staying in the Fire Service difficult? If so, what are they? What might be barriers for other under-represented groups?
[retention]

o As [XXXXX], do you feel there are barriers or challenges for you to move up the ranks in the Fire Service if that was something you wanted to do? What barriers or challenges might exist for other under-represented groups? [progression]

5.4 Enablers of workplace diversity in the NZFS (or, what can increase diversity in the FS):

PROMPTS:
o As [XXXXX], what encouraged or enabled you to join the Fire Service? What might encourage other under-represented groups to join? [recruitment / training]

o As [XXXXX], what would/did encourage you to stay in the Fire Service? What might encourage other under-represented groups to stay? [retention]

o As [XXXXX], what might/did encourage you to move up the ranks in the Fire Service if that was something you wanted to do? What might encourage other under-represented groups to progress?
[progression]

6. Concluding comments

Can you each tell us one thing you have heard here tonight that is really important for this research, and for the NZFS to consider?

Please also add any other ideas you may have thought of during this time together.
Thank you very much for your time!

APPENDIX D: INFORMATION SHEET

CONTESTABLE RESEARCH FUND RESEARCH PROJECT:

DIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY VS THE NZFS: WHO IS MISSING AND WHY

INFORMATION SHEET

Background

The New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) has appointed *Allen + Clarke*, an independent research and policy services company, to conduct a research project on diversity representation within the NZFS workforce. This research is supported by the annual NZFS Contestable Research Fund, http://www.fire.org.nz/Research/Current-Round/Pages/Current-round.aspx.

What is the research about?

The research will inform NZFS recruitment, development, retention and progression strategies for career and volunteer firefighters in order to help create a NZFS workforce that better reflects the communities it serves.

Specifically, the research includes consideration of the extent to which NZFS career and volunteer firefighters currently reflect diversity in the communities they serve; how current NZFS policies and practices are or are not working to attract, retain and progress a diverse NZFS workforce; the barriers and enablers of joining and staying with the NZFS for a diverse range of people; and actionable, evidence-based recommendations on ways the NZFS can develop a workforce and workforce strategies to increase minority representation.

Once the research is completed, *Allen + Clarke* will provide a final report to the NZFS. The report will include an analysis of the research findings and recommendations to guide adjustments or improvements to NZFS workforce diversity policies and practices.

Who will be involved?

The research will engage with a variety of stakeholders to ensure different perspectives are reflected. It is anticipated that these stakeholder groups will include:

- NZFS personnel
- New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union
- United Fire Brigades' Association
- Executive Officers Society
- Public Service Association
- New Zealand Defence Force
- New Zealand Police
- Red Cross
- St John New Zealand

Who is the research team?

Allen + Clarke is a well-established and respected Wellington-based consultancy firm. We specialise in the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policies and programmes. A key component of our work involves research and evaluation of public sector programmes and services.

The research will be managed by Jessie Wilson, an Associate with *Allen + Clarke*. Jessie is an experienced researcher and project manager who has been involved in a range of research and evaluation projects. Further *Allen + Clarke* personnel will also provide analytical support for the project.

How will the research be conducted?

The research will use a mix of methods (outlined below) and engage with NZFS personnel and other stakeholders to ensure different perspectives are reflected. This includes:

- a document review regarding good diversity practices in, and relevant research conducted on, comparable service- and/or community-based organisations
- a demographic comparison to analyse how career/volunteer firefighters reflect diversity in their communities using 2013 census data
- 12 – 14 key informant interviews focused on experiences and views of workplace diversity policies and practices
- 8 focus groups with NZFS personnel that are and are not well represented within the NZFS to analyse perceptions of diversity and barriers and enablers of joining and staying with the NZFS.

The research will take place from May to December 2014.

Participation in the research

Participation in the research is voluntary. If you are contacted and asked to participate, *Allen + Clarke* will provide further information about the purpose of the research, why you are being asked to participate, what it will involve (e.g. an interview) and how we will use any information you provide, including how we will protect your privacy.

Further information

For more information please contact Jessie Wilson at *Allen + Clarke*:
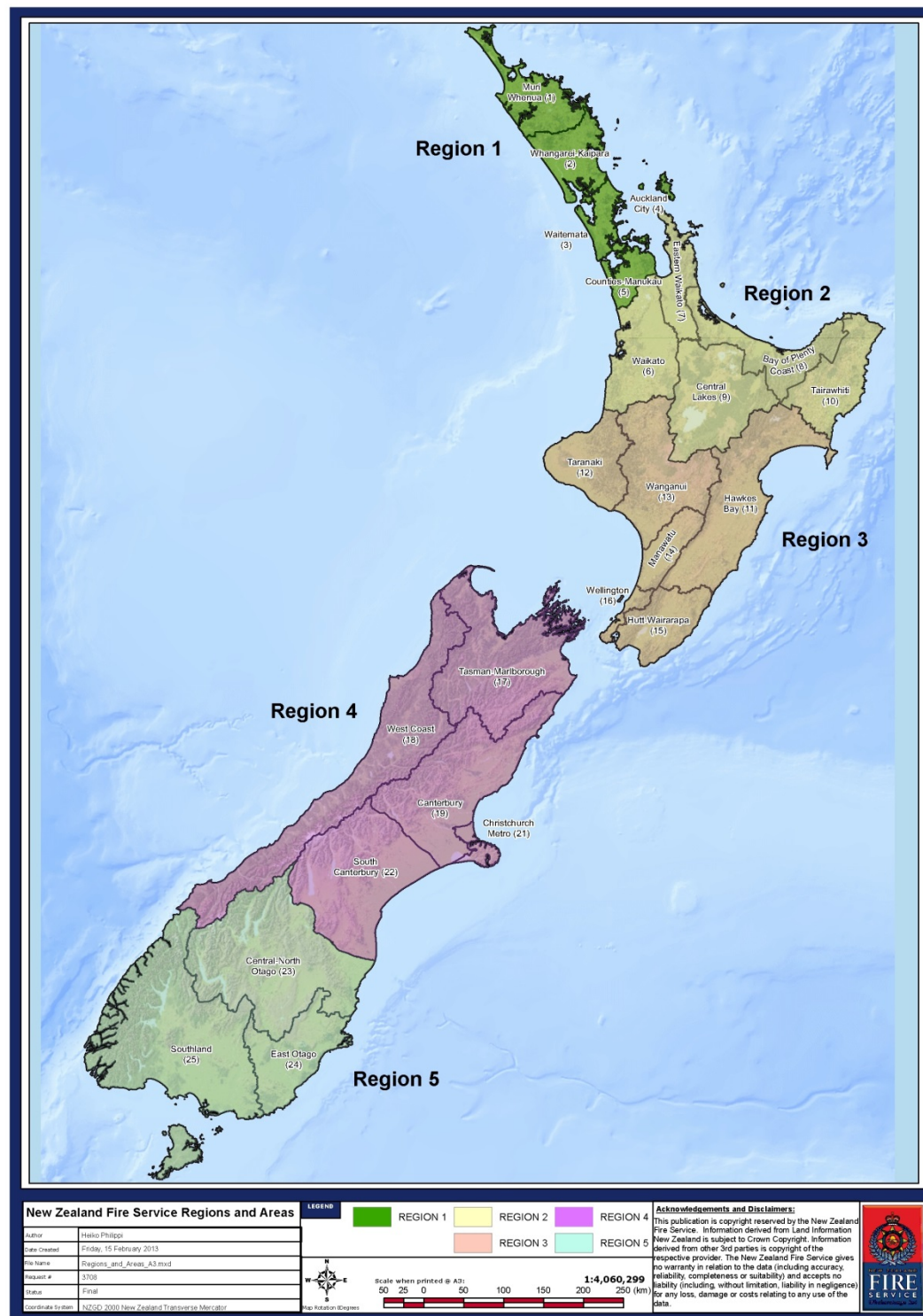Email: jwilson@allenandclarke.co.nz
Telephone: 04 550 5776

Susan Todd is the primary contact at the NZFS:
Email: susan.todd@fire.org.nz
Telephone: 04 496 3615

APPENDIX E: NEW ZEALAND FIRE SERVICE REGIONS AND AREAS

APPENDIX F: VISION 2020

VISION 2020

"**Leading integrated fire and emergency services for a safer New Zealand**"

Te Manatū o ngā ratonga ohotata kia haumaru ake ai a Aotearoa

LEADING

People who strive for excellence

'We have skilled and effective people where and when we need them'

By 2020 we will:

- Be able to demonstrate that our performance is equal to, or better than, any fire and emergency service in the world
- Have a ready supply of skilled and inspiring leaders, supported by high-quality development programmes

Agile

'We will recognise when we need to change things and do so promptly'

By 2020 we will:

- Work with communities to anticipate their changing needs
- Adapt our processes and approaches smoothly and rapidly when change is required

Improved decision-making

'We will make better decisions'

By 2020 we will:

- Have embedded risk-based management into how we do business

INTEGRATED

Effective partnerships

'We improve how we work with our emergency service partners'

By 2020 we will:

- Work with our partners to eliminate duplication of services
- Have seamless working relationships with other emergency services
- Have strong relationships with international emergency services

Unified

'We work together'

By 2020 we will:

- See all our rural, urban, career and volunteer people working seamlessly together
- Work collectively towards common solutions where everyone who should be involved is appropriately engaged
- Have connected systems and processes so that users only need to provide the same piece of information once

Consistent

'We deliver a seamless service to all New Zealanders'

By 2020 we will:

- Deliver high standards of service using the same risk-based approach and processes throughout the country

FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Excellence in incident management

'We are recognised for our excellence in incident management'

By 2020 we will:

- Ensure that across all ranks and support people effective incident management is embedded in everything we do
- Have seamless working relationships with our emergency service partners on incident management protocols and procedures

Supporting the front line

'We will focus on our frontline responsibilities'

By 2020 we will:

- Optimise our processes and tools to help people do their job more effectively
- Listen and respond to frontline needs and innovation in a consistent way

Wide range of incidents

'We will perform well at a wide range of incidents'

By 2020 we will:

- Ensure that we have the right mix of trained skills in the right places to respond to a wide range of fire and non-fire emergencies

SAFER NEW ZEALAND

Risk reduction

'We will make our communities safer'

By 2020 we will:

- Have reduced the rate of fire deaths in our vulnerable communities
- Improve how we support communities to manage their risk

Safer homes and workplaces

'We will reduce the number of injuries to our people and the New Zealand public'

By 2020 we will:

- Have significantly reduced the number of serious injuries and harm to our people
- Be demonstrating zero tolerance to bullying, harassment and other harmful behaviours in our workplaces
- Have reduced the number of serious injuries in our communities

Community-based

'We work in partnership with our communities and other emergency partners'

By 2020 we will:

- Work effectively with our communities to reduce the number of incidents and improve our response to them
- Have a clear understanding of our role in communities and what is most important to them
- Work collaboratively with volunteer communities to support their brigades

APPENDIX G: RESULTS DIAGRAM