



National Headquarters

Level 12
80 The Terrace
PO Box 2133
Wellington
New Zealand

Phone +64 4 496 3600

28 March 2022

S Hill

By email: fyi-request-18707-7ce863c7@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear S Hill

Information Request – Data on sex offences

I refer to your official information request dated 28 February 2022 asking for statistics on sex offences.

To provide context to our response, at Fire and Emergency New Zealand all new employees, career firefighter recruits, and volunteer recruits are subject to either a Ministry of Justice or Police vetting check. Our Security Screening Suitability Guidelines state that any persons who have had a conviction in the last seven years for a sexual related offence will be deemed unsuitable to join Fire and Emergency.

In accordance with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982, we have set out your questions and our responses below. Please note the information (where it exists) we have provided below of convictions under the Crimes Act relates to convictions under sections 127 to 144C of the Crimes Act 1961.

1. Number of employees with Fire and Emergency New Zealand who have convictions under the Crimes Act with regards to 'Sex Offences'

We are not aware of any employees who have convictions under the Crimes Act 1961 with regards to sex offences.

2. Number of volunteers with Fire and Emergency New Zealand who have convictions under the Crimes Act with regards to 'Sex Offences'

We are not aware of any volunteers who have convictions under the Crimes Act 1961 with regards to sex offences.

3. A regional break down of the above, detailing employees & volunteers separately

Not applicable.

4. The number of employee dismissals in the 2021 calendar year relating to 'Sex Offences' under the Crimes Act

We are not aware of any employees who were dismissed in the 2021 calendar year relating to convictions for sex offences under the Crimes Act 1961.

5. The number of volunteer dismissals in the 2021 calendar year relating to 'Sex Offences' under the Crimes Act

We are not aware of any volunteers who were dismissed in the 2021 calendar year relating to convictions for sex offences under the Crimes Act 1961.

6. The number of 'Sex Offences' under the Crimes Act, both accused & committed by Fire and Emergency Staff or Volunteers in the 2021 calendar year.

We are aware of one volunteer who resigned from Fire and Emergency in 2021 during a disciplinary process relating to a conviction under the Crimes Act for a sex offence. We are not aware of any other complaints to Police accusing Fire and Emergency staff or volunteers of having committed a sex offence under the Crimes Act 1961 in 2021.

Fire and Emergency is committed to providing a safe and respectful workplace free from sexual harm. Such behaviour is never acceptable. We provide information to support complainants, including information about how to report alleged offending to the Police.

Misconduct of any type, including bullying and sexual harm, has no place in our organisation. We expect every complaint of such behaviour to be taken seriously and addressed in a fair and timely way. Everyone at Fire and Emergency should feel safe, welcome, and included. The establishment of the permanent Behaviour and Conduct Office is a key step in addressing bullying and harassment and building a respectful and positive workplace culture at Fire and Emergency. Anyone wanting to come forward and raise issues about people's unwanted behaviour in Fire and Emergency can raise them directly with the Behaviour and Conduct Office. The Behaviour and Conduct Office is a self-contained team, with a wide range of experience and skills in the complaints, investigation and resolution space. The Behaviour and Conduct Office is responsible for ensuring all issues are dealt with in a fair, timely and transparent way. When necessary, the Behaviour and Conduct Office will conduct its own investigation into unwanted interpersonal behaviour. In some circumstances it co-ordinates investigations using accredited external investigators. Our people are also able to complain to independent bodies; these are detailed in our policies.

In addition, our Positive Workplace Culture programme is implementing a range of initiatives to continue addressing the 33 review recommendations from retired Judge Coral Shaw's 2019 Independent Review of Fire and Emergency New Zealand's workplace policies, procedures and practices to address bullying and harassment. We have published five six-monthly Progress Reports on our Positive Workplace Culture programme, which outline the progress we have made, and continue to make, towards addressing the review recommendations. You can read more on [this](#) website. Our Board also commissioned KPMG to provide an external assessment of the establishment of our permanent Behaviour and Conduct Office. The Independent evaluation report is available [here](#).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raewyn Bleakley', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Raewyn Bleakley
Deputy Chief Executive, Office of the Chief Executive

