



New Zealand Fire Service

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Bradley Berry
C/- fyi.org.nz

By email: fyi-request-4411-641d4842@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Bradley

Information Request – Firefighter fatalities since 1992

I refer to your request for confirmation of the 'number of firefighter fatalities per annum for each financial year since 1992', broken down into statistics for career and volunteer firefighter fatalities. You have also asked for the 'investigation/report/findings' in relation to each fatality.

Your request has been processed under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

The New Zealand Fire Service Commission (NZFS) has decided to grant the first part of your request. The table below sets out the number of fatalities per financial year (using the July to June cycle employed by the NZFS as its financial year), broken down into career and volunteer fatalities. Further details relating to each fatality are set out in the Appendix to this letter.

Financial year	Career Fatalities	Volunteer fatalities	
		Urban	Rural
1992/93	-	2	-
1993/94	1	-	-
1994/95	-	-	-
1995/96	-	-	-
1996/97	-	-	-
1997/98	-	1	-
1998/99	-	1	-
1999/00	-	1	-
2000/01	-	2	-
2001/02	-	-	-

Financial year	Career Fatalities	Volunteer fatalities	
		Urban	Rural
2002/03	-	-	-
2003/04	-	-	-
2004/05	-	1	-
2005/06	-	-	-
2006/07	-	-	-
2007/08	1	-	-
2008/09	-	-	2
2009/10	-	-	-
2010/11	-	-	-
2011/12	1 (DOC/RFA)	-	-
2012/13	-	-	-
2013/14	-	-	-
2014/15	-	-	-
2015/16	-	-	-
Totals	3	8	2

These fatalities cover deaths at or closely following incidents, deaths while responding to incidents (i.e. vehicle accidents), and also deaths that have occurred during training.

The table also provides details of rural firefighter deaths. Most of these have involved volunteers, but one involved an employee of the Department of Conservation who was responding to a fire under the control of the local Rural Fire Authority.

With regard to the second part of your request, I confirm that the NZFS holds reports and other documents in relation to a number of these fatalities. It has taken some time to gather these for the fatalities that preceded the NZFS's modern electronic information management systems. Many of the reports are large documents that contain a great deal of personal information about the deceased and other people involved with each fatality. It is likely that much of the personal information would need to be redacted in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA before the reports could be released to you. Reviewing and redacting the reports is likely to be a time-consuming exercise that will take several weeks to complete. The NZFS may also need to consider imposing a charge for the time spent preparing the documents for release, in accordance with the OIA's charging provisions.

Before the NZFS commences any such process or makes a decision about charging, I invite you to indicate whether you still require the reports associated with these fatalities. It may be that the information contained in this letter satisfies your queries. If not, please consider whether the second part of your request could be refined in some way. For example, you might only require selected details from each report, or copies of reports relating to selected fatalities that are of particular interest to you.

I look forward to your response, which you can either provide through the fyi.org.nz service or by contacting the Business Service Coordinator to the Director, Office of the

Chief Executive (Louise.Robinson@fire.org.nz). The NZFS will take your further comments into account before completing its decision on the second part of your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rob Pope', is written over the 'Yours sincerely' text.

Rob Pope
Director, Office of the Chief Executive

Appendix

Career / Volunteer status	Rank	Brigade / Station	Date of death	Reason for death
Volunteer	Station Officer	Woodville	07.07.93	Died after the appliance he was driving left a narrow rural road and rolled down a steep bank
Volunteer	Chief Fire Officer	Waitarere	24.11.93	Collapsed at home following a brigade exercise
Career	Firefighter	Auckland	09.07.94	Killed by a drunk driver while operating the pump at a motor vehicle accident on an Auckland motorway
Volunteer	Chief Fire Officer	Waihi	??.??.98	Collapsed in the fire appliance responding to a logging truck accident
Volunteer	Firefighter	Mosgiel	06.05.99	Collapsed during a training session
Volunteer	Firefighter	Morrinsville	19.03.00	17 year old firefighter killed when the water tanker in which he was a passenger crashed down a bank on the way to a scrub fire
Volunteer	Senior Firefighter	Akaroa	01.02.01	Collapsed during Breathing Apparatus training
Volunteer	Firefighter	Foxton Beach	17.06.01	Killed when appliance he was in lost traction on a slippery road surface and rolled over
Volunteer	Firefighter	Waipukurau	23.03.05	Died as a result of a heart attack while on duty at a car fire

Career / Volunteer status	Rank	Brigade / Station	Date of death	Reason for death
Career	Senior Station Officer	Hamilton	05.04.08	Killed during Tamahere Coolstore explosion
Volunteer (rural)	Firefighter	Hicks Bay Rural Fire Force	27.12.08	Fire truck rolled while responding to a car crash
Volunteer (rural)		Willowby Rural Fire Force	08.04.09	Killed by falling branch while firefighting
Career		DOC / Northland RFA	30.11.11	Helicopter crashed in sea off Karikari Beach, en route to help people fleeing a fire in Matai Bay