



# Operational Instruction: - Covid 19 – Station Staffing arrangements for Career Stations in Waitemata, Auckland City and Counties Manukau Areas.

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## Purpose

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This Operational Instruction is to ensure that Areas 3,4,5 can sustain adequate operational career staffing to maintain operational response to the community through this pandemic period. Once the current situation is resolved previous work arrangements can be reinstated.

- To provide a work environment that optimises personnel welfare and mitigates the risk of infection across workgroups and stations.
- Adapt working arrangements in direct response to the pandemic threat whilst meeting our statutory requirements, including CEA obligations.

## Background

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The normal rostering arrangements in Auckland requires personnel to work across multiple stations to ensure FENZ can maintain minimum shift staffing (MSS). This is due to Station and Area relieving cycles and overtime firefighters to replace personnel on sick/training/discretionary leave. This results in personnel working across many different workgroups at different stations.

This conflicts with Government advice for individuals to restrict travel and stay at home in family units (bubble), which is designed to limit any outbreak to that small isolated family unit. Our normal rostering arrangements could result in the transmission of Covid 19 between operational personnel across multiple stations and consequently back to their family members. Any such outbreak would affect multiple workgroups across many stations which would impact Minimum Shift Staffing and the ability for FENZ to respond.

## Situation

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We are in unprecedented times and the Covid 19 Pandemic demands that we will need to work in different ways for the foreseeable future. Area Management and NZPFU representatives have met to discuss options and agree on the best way to mitigate this risk.

This instruction has been agreed between Area Managers Twomey, Binning, Purcell and NZPFU Auckland Local Secretary Campbell, President Devoe and Vice President Shrimpton. These actions must be implemented as soon as practicable to ensure a safer and more sustainable workplace for our personnel. We acknowledge and understand this will impact and inconvenience some individuals for a period but it must happen to mitigate the risk of spreading Covid 19 amongst our personnel.

## Key Principles Agreed

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- Station workgroups stay isolated from each other as far as practicable
- Each Station to operate in an independent station bubble, separate from others. (Exception is 3 x Yellow watch stations, which co-locate as a workgroup bubble with neighbouring stations; 67 with 85; 69 with 64; 90 with 80)
- Composite Stations will operate as independent workgroups separate from each other
- Only those personnel who are assigned to that station bubble can work in that station
- Shift swaps and overtime can only be sourced from personnel assigned to that station bubble
- Some crew makeups may vary from normal and personnel riding up and/or down when required
- For those personnel incurring additional travel etc. then claim as per normal under CEA

## Key Actions

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To mitigate the risk of Covid 19 spreading it is important to implement three key actions as soon as practicable to ensure individual work groups are placed into their station bubble. This instruction is to take effect from 08.00 on Saturday 28 March 2020. This instruction covers the Te Hiku Region Auckland Career Station staffing across Waitemata, Auckland City and Counties Manukau Areas. (Areas 3,4,5).

1. All Area and Station Relievers will be assigned to a station bubble for the duration of these arrangements. This will prevent personnel working across several different stations to fill gaps left by personnel going on rostered annual leave. Assigning relievers to a station which currently has low personnel numbers increases, and will balance out numbers of personnel across stations to help sustain MSS. Current relievers are to relocate all their PPE and bedding etc to their new station on their first shift at/from 0800 hours on Saturday 28 March. Once assigned to a station personnel must not return to their previous station as this would increase the risk of spread to other station workgroups.
2. All Area 3,4,5 Career Stations are to operate in their own 'bubble'. Only personnel assigned to that station bubble are to work, and do overtimes at that station. No personnel from any other stations are to work there. This reduces the risk of cross station/crew contamination. Existing Roster departments can continue to roster overtime OIC's and Firefighters on the basis that they can only work at their home station.

3. Shift Change to occur at 0800 and 1800 sharp – Crew going off duty exit station together and the oncoming crew then enter station together so as not to interact. Time may be amended on the basis of a crew for crew basis e.g 4 on / 4 off, all at same time. There is to be no jump time which would result in mixed crews, and then responding to calls. This keeps the duty crews separate and allow for more accurate tracking of contacts should a crew member become unwell. This will require a very disciplined shift change by all personnel.

These arrangements will stay in place for the duration of the Government lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Area Management and NZPFU Local will meet on a regular basis (at least Weekly) to review and adapt these Operational Instructions as necessary. It is acknowledged that these arrangements may result in a discrepancy of overtime allocation throughout the three Areas. On conclusion of the COVID-19 emergency, the Auckland Local will work with FENZ to ensure a fair and transparent rebalance of overtime issued during this period. Should any concerns be identified with these arrangements please raise these through to the AAM Personnel for your Area. Area Management will work collaboratively with the NZPFU Local to ensure an equitable outcome is achieved and any adjustments required are implemented.

As this emergency continues to evolve FENZ may have to introduce additional measures and/or adapt these arrangements. Clear operational guidance will be provided at that time. We all need to stay agile and adapt accordingly to the circumstances we are presented with.

Auckland City Area Manager - Richard Twomey  
Waitemata Area Manager - Murray Binning  
Counties Manukau Area Manager - Geoff Purcell  
Auckland PFU Local Secretary - Marty Campbell  
Auckland PFU Local President - Sulu Devoe  
Auckland PFU Local Vice President - Jeff Shrimpton.