

Terms of Reference

Working Party - Remuneration Rates for Firefighters and Officers

Background

The recently settled Collective Employment Agreement (CEA) between the New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union and the New Zealand Fire Service documents the parties' commitment to working collaboratively together, through a working party approach, to develop a remuneration structure for fire firefighters and officers. The specific commitment agreed is detailed in Clause 6.2.7 of the CEA and is as follows:

"The parties have identified that further work is required to develop a revised remuneration structure for firefighters and officers, that considers the development of a structure based on a true hourly rate, and that examines current levels of remuneration for these roles against appropriate benchmarks.

A key piece of this work will be in the identification of appropriate benchmarks for these positions.

The parties agree to advance this work over the term of this Agreement, with the aim of this work informing collective negotiations in 2013 and beyond.

The parties accept that particularly because the fire service is effectively the only employer of firefighter's traditional market force conditions may not provide a fair mechanism for determining firefighter remuneration. The parties agree that work needs to be undertaken to identify fair mechanisms to review remuneration for firefighters on a regular basis to inform collective negotiations.

The work will include an analysis of:

1. The value of the work of firefighters.
2. Changes in role, responsibilities and training of firefighters over the past 10 years, and considerations for planned and expected future changes in role over the likely period that a new CEA would apply.
3. Changes in remuneration of firefighters in the past 10 years.
4. Appropriate benchmarking for firefighters both internally and externally.

The parties collectively shall agree on the use of external expertise as is seen as appropriate to support this work on a joint cost basis. The parties may also seek external expertise independently to support this work and where this is done it will be funded by the party seeking the expertise."

Working Party Composition

The working party will consist of representatives from both the New Zealand Fire Service and the New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union to recognise the joint commitment to this work.

The New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union will be represented by:

Steve Warner	-	President*
Peter Hallett	-	Vice President*
Derek Best	-	Secretary
Denis Fitzmaurice	-	Committee Member
Peter Nicole	-	Committee Member
Mike Powell	-	Committee Member
Boyd Raines	-	Committee Member
Jim Ryburn	-	Committee Member
Ian Wright	-	Committee Member

*It is noted that elections for President and Vice President will occur during the period of the working party and that representatives may change as a result of these elections.

The New Zealand Fire Service will be represented by:

Brian Butt	-	Fire Region Manager
Larry Cocker	-	Area Manager
Ken Cooper	-	Assistant Area Manager
Kerry Gregory	-	Area Manager
Janine Hearn	-	Director, HR
Ruth McKenzie	-	Remuneration and Organisational Development Manager
Brendan Nally	-	Area Manager
Brett Warwick	-	Chief Financial Officer
Chris Wells	-	ER and HR Services Manager

Scope Of The Work To Be Undertaken

The scope of the work undertaken by the Working Party will include:

1. Development of position descriptions for firefighter roles that can be utilised as the basis for the establishment and setting of remuneration levels. Such position descriptions will describe core roles and identify any additional functions that may be performed by some but not all incumbents.
2. An analysis of the changes in role, responsibilities and training of firefighters over the past 10 years, utilising role maps that have informed training and changes in the range of skills and expertise necessary to perform the position, and consideration of the "value" of those changes as they relate to remuneration, relative to changes in remuneration over that period.

3. Develop a set of measureable criteria to assess options for job sizing/evaluation and pay setting methodologies, to determine their applicability to firefighter positions. These criteria will include recognition of the following where these are identified as appropriate determinants of work value/remuneration level:
 - a. 24/7 nature of position.
 - b. Risk and personal danger associated with the position.
 - c. Nature of judgements/decisions required, the environment or context within which those decisions are made and the consequences of those judgements being made correctly/incorrectly.
 - d. The differing levels of complexity of the range of tasks and functions performed.
 - e. The volume of work overall, and across the range of tasks and functions.
 - f. The value of the assets/equipment over which control is exercised in the performance of duties.
 - g. The identified health risks associated with the role and the degree to which those are mitigated.
 - h. Enables effective and appropriate internal and external comparisons to ensure relativity with other NZFS positions and the wider job market.
 - i. Enables consideration of the ability to recruit and retain employees against the transferability of skills.
 - j. Enables consideration of changes in productivity levels, changes in the content of the role or in the skills and experience required in the role.
 - k. Incorporates a range of factors that are appropriate in determining the complexity and volume of the work undertaken within the position.
4. Considers the range of benefits beyond core remuneration applicable to the position and their "value" in overall compensation for the work.
5. Research best practice in the establishment/setting of remuneration levels and in remuneration frameworks and structures..
6. Research job sizing/evaluation and pay setting methodologies used in relevant sectors and occupations, and evaluate their applicability to firefighter positions and/or the New Zealand environment, including:

- a. the State sector, particularly taking into consideration those used in "unique" occupations where there tends to be only one, or one main, employer e.g. teaching, police, health sector, defence force,
 - b. other emergency response positions
 - c. other service industries
 - d. Australian fire and rescue agencies
 - e. that used for other positions within the New Zealand Fire Service
 - f. occupations where skill sets have a similar degree of transferability nationally or internationally to the positions being considered because of employer monopoly and/or nature of the position, where these can be identified.
7. Determine the most appropriate methodology/methodologies for the setting and review of remuneration for firefighter positions against the set of established criteria referred to in 2. above.
 8. Determine the most appropriate framework/structure for remuneration taking into account current best practice, applicable legislation, the elements of the role to be recognised through remuneration, and productivity and performance requirements/expectations.
 9. Agree, where possible, an implementation approach to give effect to any recommendations arising from the work.
 10. Agree a process to regularly review any changes in roles that may impact remuneration.

The working party have agreed that the work to be undertaken will focus on the positions of Senior Firefighter and Station Officer, and the outcomes for these positions will form the basis of decisions for Trainee Firefighter, Firefighter, Qualified Firefighter and Senior Station Officer

The working party reserves the right to review the scope of the work to be undertaken as the work progresses and any amendments to this scope will be incorporated into a revised terms of reference at the time they are identified and agreed by all members of the working party.

Key review and decision points will be identified by the working party, and these will form key milestones in the achievement of the work defined above. Decisions will be taken by the working party as to the most appropriate body to undertake each key component of work, whether that be the working party themselves, expert practitioners identified by the working party, individuals from within NZFS beyond the working party members, or a combination of these.

The working party is committed to progressing this work in good faith without pre-determination of outcome.

Timeframe

The parties are committed to progressing the work in a timely fashion, but this will be balanced with ensuring that issues are thoroughly researched, analysed and considered in reaching conclusions. The parties are committed to progressing as much of the work as is practicable in the period 21 June to 31 December, to enable it to inform collective negotiations upon expiry of the current Collective Employment Agreement.

Costs

Costs of attendance and participation in working party meetings will be met by the individual representative bodies. Costs incurred in undertaking the work, through the use of specialist expertise, will be met on a joint cost basis, and agreed by the parties in advance of the costs being incurred. Any other potential costs associated with the working party will be discussed by the parties and agreement reached on how these costs will be met. Representatives on the working party will be released from duties by the Fire Service for working party meetings.

Communications

The parties have agreed that all communications relating to the working party will be joint communications developed, agreed and issued by both parties. No independent communications will be undertaken by either party without the agreement of the other.

Other Influences

The parties recognise that there will be external influences/environmental factors that lay outside the control of the working party that may need to be taken into account in considering the implementation of any recommendations made.

Approved



Derek Best
on behalf of New Zealand Professional
Firefighters Union



Janine Hearn
on behalf of New Zealand Fire Service

Date:

24 / 07 / 2012