

Rik Walsh

I live with my wife, Tracey, in the small coastal village of Fitzroy New Plymouth. Our daughter Leah, married to husband David with three great boys (our grandsons) and my parents Mike and Rae whom all reside in New Plymouth.

I started my firefighting career on the 07 September 1987 in Auckland at the Panmure training centre. Finishing my rookies course I spent time at Auckland stations Remuera (Brown), Onehunga (Brown), Titirangi (Yellow) and Glen Eden (Green). It was during my time at Glen Eden station, night shift 03 November 1992, I was part of the crew that attended a Video Shop fire and was inside the building when it flashed over. I received burns to 30 % of my body requiring multiple skin grafts and an extended period of therapy after which I returned to duty. Continuing my career I transferred, back home, to New Plymouth on 11 December 1999 where I am a Senior Firefighter, Green Watch, at New Plymouth station.

During my tenure with NZFS / FENZ I have participated in rugby, skiing, surfing and fishing enjoying the camaraderie that involvement offers. I have served as the president of the New Plymouth Brigade Social club and currently hold the position of secretary for the New Plymouth NZPFU Local.

I represented NZFS Western Region on the National Promotions Council and I am a recipient of the National Commanders Pride in Prevention, Graeme Dorset Memorial Award.

I am a long-standing member of the Fitzroy Surf Lifesaving Club, a past competitor, Club Captain and current committee member. I hold a position on the club's judicial committee and continue to coach junior life guards (under 14 yrs.) Sunday mornings, during the summer months. I have served as Chairperson of the Taranaki Surf Lifesaving Lifeguarding Committee, received Taranaki Lifeguard of the year and hold Taranaki and New Zealand Surf Lifesaving service awards.

Prior to my firefighting career I worked and trained in New Plymouth as a draughtsman obtaining a New Zealand Certificate-Draughting.

I am a person who likes to get involved, participate then wants to give back. I appreciate what people have done prior, have achieved, which allows me to enjoy the present.

As a firefighter of 34 years, I have witnessed a fair bit of what past governments and managements have proposed for our service to the community. I am proud of the unity fellow firefighters have shown in the past and continue to show towards our professionalism for the future.

With this opportunity to represent fellow firefighters, I will participate to help ensure our roll to our communities is professional.