

Debbie Ngarewa-Packer

Kaiārahi Takirua o Te Pāti Māori, Mema Paremata mō Te Tai Hauāuru



2 September 2025

Wattie Watson
National Secretary
New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union
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Te Kāhui Kaipatuahi o Aotearoa

Tēnā koe e Wattie otirā koutou o te Kāhui Kaipatuahi o Aotearoa,

E mihi ana ki tō koutou kaha, tō koutou manawanui me te aroha ki te hāpori, e tiaki ana, e whakaora ana, e whakaruruhau ana i ngā hāpori o Aotearoa i ia rā, i ia pō.

I want to acknowledge and support you in raising the alarm about the state of our fire fleet. The reports out of Whanganui, where firefighters are forced to rely on trucks 30+ years old, breaking down on the way to emergencies and even during fires are deeply concerning. No firefighter should ever be put in danger because of failing equipment, and no community should be left at risk because the tools aren't fit for purpose.

As Union Spokesperson for Te Pāti Māori, I stand with you in calling for urgent action. While we recognise that new appliances are on order, the pace and scale simply doesn't meet the reality on the ground. Every breakdown risks lives, undermines community trust, and takes a toll on firefighters' morale.

You deserve safe, reliable equipment to do your jobs, and our communities deserve the assurance that when an emergency call comes, the response will be backed by the best possible resources. I will continue to advocate alongside you until this becomes the standard you can rely on.

Nāku iti noa, nā

Debbie Ngarewa-Packer
Mema Paremata mō Te Tai Hauāuru
Kaiārahi Takirua mō Te Pāti Māori

CC: Hon Brooke Van Velden, Minister of Internal Affairs - Brooke.vanVelden@parliament.govt.nz