



12 August 2016

Fire Services Review

Department of Internal Affairs

PO Box 805

Wellington 6140

By email: fireservicestransition@dia.govt.nz

Submission: Discussion Document - Proposed Regulations to Support FENZ Bill

1. Water New Zealand ("Water New Zealand") appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission on the above discussion document.
2. Water New Zealand is a national not-for-profit organisation which promotes the sustainable management and development of New Zealand's three waters (freshwater, wastewater and storm water). Water New Zealand is the country's largest water industry body, providing leadership and support in the water sector through advocacy, collaboration and professional development. Its 1,500 members are drawn from all areas of the water management industry including regional councils and territorial authorities, consultants, suppliers, government agencies, academia and scientists.
3. The District and City Councils who in part make up our membership are providers of water supply in reticulated urban environments, and have an existing relationship with the New Zealand Fire Service with regard to their use of the water system for fire-fighting.

Proposed Regulations for Levy Exemptions

4. The Association supports retaining the levy exemption for "*any water reticulation pipe*" under Schedule 3 of the Fire Services Act 1975. (Item 10 page 17 of the discussion document).

Local Committees and Local Planning

5. The FENZ Bill provides little detail about who will be represented on a local committee. Given that territorial local authorities are predominantly responsible for the provision of reticulated water to fight fires in urban environments it is surprising that they are not specified in the legislation as being a core member of any local committee.
6. We suggest that the nomination and appointment process for committees is a matter that should be regulated; including a requirement that a representative of the relevant local territorial local authority be a member of every committee.
7. Who and how people are appointed to local committees should not be left to be decided by operational policy.
8. It is unclear whether the FENZ legislation and the associated regulations/code of practice will seek to establish a degree of consistency in approach to the operations of FENZ in relation to the reticulated networks which Councils operate. While we can see there will be some need to reflect the needs of local stakeholders, wherever possible

we would like to think that there is a consistency in approach – especially in terms of technical requirements.

9. The advice we are receiving is that the existing Code of Practice is problematic for many councils to comply with, particularly large scale subdivision developments. A review is needed.

Functions of the Local Committees

10. In our view the functions of local committees needs to be consistent across the country and as such should be provided for in regulation.
11. In our submission on the FENZ Bill we expressed concern that in post emergency situations there did not appear to be any process for FENZ and territorial local authorities/civil defence and emergency management services to decide the priority for water use – ie. Fire-fighting or provision of essential drinking water.
12. We suggest that one of the functions of a local committee should be to provide advice on this matter in the development of FENZ's national strategy, and in the development and finalisation of local fire plans.

Development of Fire Plans

13. The Association supports Option 2 in relation to the development of what a fire plan must cover. That is, the main matters a fire plan must cover should be set in regulation – but should allow a plan to take a broader focus as the local circumstances demand.
14. We would like the regulations to require FENZ to undertake “integrated emergency management” with the relevant territorial local authority or civil defence and emergency response agency in relation to the development of fire plans.

Consultation on Fire Plans

15. The Association believes that a regulated approach to the development of fire plans is appropriate, but that any consultation is targeted. We doubt that mandatory public consultation will add much to the detail of local fire plans. They could be made available for public input, but the requirement to neither consult nor give effect to public submissions should be provided for. The development of these plans is a technical issue and should be left to those with relevant expertise.

Further Consultation

16. Water New Zealand would like to be kept engaged in the development of these regulations as they progress.

Sincerely



John Pfahlert
Chief Executive