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Te Whare Māngai o Aotearoa

Governance and Administration Committee
Komiti Whiriwhiri Take Whakahaerenga

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Inquiry into Fire and Emergency New Zealand's fleet management and related issues

Presented to the House of Representatives
by Hon Jan Tinetti, Chairperson

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Inquiry into Fire and Emergency New Zealand's fleet management and related issues

Summary of recommendations

The Governance and Administration Committee has conducted an inquiry into Fire and Emergency New Zealand's fleet management and related issues, and makes the following recommendations:

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1.1 Strategic planning and investment

1. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to shift its focus from generating corporate documents to efforts that will deliver tangible improvements at frontline stations.

1.2 Fleet renewal and future capability

2. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to complete its Future Operation Concept, and ensure it takes a risk-based approach to the modern environment.
3. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to invest in sustained fleet replacement of current Types until such time as it can deliver any changed operating concept.

1.3 Investment priorities and funding

4. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to engage in long-term (10-year) replacement contracts to ensure a rolling pipeline of new appliances each year, and a consistent variant being rolled out each year.

Chapter 2: Appliances

2.1 Type 3 Appliances

5. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to move to a consistent variant and layout of Rescue Tenders (RT) and Pump Type 3s across all stations.
6. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to purchase off-the-shelf Type 3 appliances with consideration given to those already in use in other countries, and be willing to compromise on the extent of customisation to ensure on-time delivery.

2.2 Aerial appliances

7. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to cease a culture of changing design requirements mid-project to avoid unforeseen escalating costs and the inconsistency of coordination.

8. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to purchase off-the-shelf aerial appliances with consideration given to those already in use in other countries, and be willing to compromise on the extent of customisation to ensure on-time delivery.

2.4 Fleet availability and resilience

9. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to record the true state of responsiveness of all types of appliances for all types of incidents, including when appliances are not available due to unserviceability or scheduled maintenance with no replacement.

Chapter 3: Procurement and maintenance

3.1 Procurement practices

10. We recommend that the Government consider whether FENZ is best placed to conduct its own procurement, or if further support is required from another government department or agency.

3.4 Fleet information and reporting

11. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to adopt and rapidly implement a digital fleet maintenance management system.

Chapter 4: Other matters

4.1 Governance and oversight

12. We recommend to the Government that the responsible Minister review the membership of FENZ's board, given this committee's lack of confidence in the current board.
13. We recommend that the Government consider whether additional oversight of FENZ is required and assess how effectively ministries oversee Crown agencies more generally.

4.4 Other matters outside of scope

14. We recommend that the Government take action on the out-of-scope issues identified in this inquiry.

Introduction

About Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) was established in 2017 under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017. It was created from the merging of the National Rural Fire Authority and the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS).

The main functions of FENZ are to:

- promote fire safety
- provide fire prevention, response, and suppression services
- provide for the safety of persons and property endangered by incidents involving hazardous substances
- rescue people trapped because of transport accidents or other incidents
- provide urban search and rescue operations.

FENZ is a Crown entity governed by a board and is accountable to the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Department of Internal Affairs monitors its performance on behalf of the Minister. FENZ is funded primarily through a levy on insurance contracts covering property in New Zealand, including motor vehicles.

Reason for the inquiry

We have held several hearings with FENZ in recent years. During these hearings, and in subsequent written responses, we frequently received information that was inconsistent or incorrect. This often raised further questions and made it difficult for us to obtain a clear understanding of important issues affecting the organisation.

Our concern is not based on a single incorrect answer. Rather, it arises from a pattern of conflicting information provided over an extended period. The most significant example relates to the 30 MAN cab and chassis units purchased for Type 3 fire appliances in August 2019. We repeatedly sought information about the status of these appliances, including how many were operational. However, the information provided by FENZ changed several times over a 15-month period:

- December 2024: We were told that the "majority" of the 30 appliances were in operational use.
- February 2025: FENZ corrected this position in written responses, informing us that none of the 30 appliances were operational as at 3 December 2024. It also stated that all 30 appliances were expected to be delivered by 30 September 2025 and in operational service by the end of the first quarter of 2026.
- January 2026: We were told that 14 appliances had been handed over to operational response and were undergoing training before entering service.
- March 2026: In response to post-hearing questions from January 2026, FENZ told us that none of the 30 appliances were in use as at 1 February 2026 and that the first 16

were expected to be operational by the end of the financial year. We also heard that 17 appliances had been accepted as at 21 November 2025.
- March 2026 hearing: FENZ subsequently clarified that the correct position was that 16 appliances were undergoing training and were expected to enter service by June 2026, with the remaining appliances to be completed in the following financial year.

Despite repeated forecasts that appliances would enter service, none of the 30 appliances were in operational service during this inquiry, nearly seven years after the MAN cab and chassis units were purchased.

Over a series of hearings and written responses, FENZ gave different answers to what was essentially the same question. We were told that the majority of the appliances were operational, then that none were operational, followed by figures of 14, 17, and 16. Although FENZ later attributed these discrepancies to different stages in the delivery process, including receiving, accepting, training on, and operating appliances, our questions consistently related to operational use.

These inconsistencies were not minor matters of terminology. They affected our understanding of the condition, availability, and future capability of critical frontline assets. The changing answers made it difficult for us to establish the true status of the fleet and raised wider questions about FENZ's internal reporting, assurance processes, and ability to provide Parliament with timely and accurate information.

The issues surrounding the 30 MAN appliances also highlighted broader concerns about fleet management. We are also aware, and heard during this inquiry, that FENZ has underinvested in Type 3 appliances since it was established. In our 2024/25 annual review, we noted that underinvestment led to a significant proportion of appliances going past their target age, and we expressed concern about the fleet's long-term sustainability.[1] We were also concerned that procurement and delivery delays had kept ageing appliances in service for longer than intended. In our report on the 2026/27 Estimates for Vote Internal Affairs, we noted that funding was not the only constraint.[2] Delays in property and fleet procurement had contributed to FENZ spending less than planned on capital investment. We discuss these matters in this report.

On 1 April 2026, we initiated this inquiry into FENZ's fleet management and related issues. The inquiry seeks to examine the state of FENZ's fleet, the effectiveness of its asset management and procurement practices, the causes of delays and cost pressures, and whether the organisation has the systems and processes needed to ensure that frontline firefighters have access to safe, reliable, and fit-for-purpose appliances.

Parliamentary process and terms of reference

Terms of reference

The full terms of reference are set out in Appendix B. Our main areas of focus were:

- the current state of FENZ's appliance fleet

1 A copy of the report is available on the Parliament website.

2 A copy of the report is available on the Parliament website.

- the current and future fleet needs
- FENZ's procurement issues
- the process for introducing appliances into service, or returning to service
- communication by FENZ.

Our consideration

On 1 April 2026, we opened for public submissions on the inquiry with a deadline of 30 April 2026.

Between 13 May and 29 July 2026, we heard from FENZ leadership, firefighters, stations and brigade staff, union representatives, and public submitters. These hearings supplemented the written information we received. We thank all members of the public who took the time to provide us with information in writing or in person.

We appointed the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) as an adviser for this inquiry, given its responsibility for fire services policy and its role in monitoring FENZ. Officials from DIA attended public hearings and our private consideration.

Appliances

FENZ's fleet includes a range of vehicles designed for different emergency response functions. Collectively, these vehicles are known as appliances within FENZ. Most appliances consist of a purpose-built body mounted on a heavy-vehicle chassis. They carry different combinations of firefighting, rescue, and hazardous substances equipment, depending on their operational role.

Fire appliances consist of:

- a cab-chassis, which is the base truck, capable of driving independently. There are several manufacturers internationally, but none in New Zealand. A range of potential "bodies" can be built onto a given chassis type (fire appliances, rubbish trucks, delivery trucks, and others)
- a body build, which refers to the superstructure constructed on top of the cab-chassis. For a fire appliance, this primarily comprises lockers, water tank, pump housing, and all firefighting-specific components.

Some appliances perform specialised functions. The main category of specialised appliance is the aerial appliance. These vehicles are fitted with telescopic or articulated platforms that can be extended to a height. They are used for firefighting in large buildings and for rescuing people from multi-storey structures.

Appliance types

FENZ classifies its appliances into several categories. Types 1 to 3 are general firefighting appliances, while Types 4 to 6 are aerial appliances. Other categories include rural, tanker, and special appliances.

Volunteer firefighters primarily operate Type 1, Type 2, rural, and tanker appliances. Full-time firefighters primarily operate Type 3 to Type 6 appliances, and special appliances.

An illustrated description of appliance types is set out in Appendix C.

1 Current and future strategy

FENZ's fleet is a significant operational asset that requires long-term planning and investment. Decisions about fleet renewal, future capability, and funding affect FENZ's ability to meet current and future operational requirements. This chapter examines FENZ's approach to fleet planning, asset management, investment, and future strategic direction.

1.1 Strategic planning for fleet management

Strategic framework

FENZ told us that fleet management is a strategic priority for the organisation. It said that fleet management forms part of the "stronger business foundations" objective in its organisational strategy. At the hearing on 20 July, FENZ said that this objective includes building a fleet that supports the organisation and its firefighters to carry out their work.

FENZ described its strategic planning framework for fleet management as comprising:

- the Fleet Asset Management Plan, which guides how FENZ plans and manages its fleet assets over a 10-year period, setting out fleet replacement requirements, investment needs, and funding constraints. It is based on a like-for-like replacement approach and is intended to be regularly refreshed.
- Future Operating Capability (FOC) work, an evidence-based model to help align FENZ's resources with community risk. The model will be implemented over three levy funding cycles and will inform the Fleet Asset Management Plan and future financial projections as the organisation's fleet needs become better understood.
- a fleet strategy, which is currently under development and is intended to provide the medium to long-term strategic direction for FENZ's fleet and guide future iterations of the Fleet Asset Management Plan.

These components are intended to guide long-term fleet planning and investment. FENZ said its decisions must balance operational needs, affordability, asset life, maintenance costs, funding constraints, and future risks.

Relationship between fleet planning and organisational strategy

FENZ told us that improving its asset management is a core area of focus in its Strategic Direction 2025–2030.[3] It replaced an earlier strategy that extended to 2045. FENZ said that the current strategy provides an organisational focus for the next five years, while fleet planning draws on longer-term asset management work.

At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said that the shorter strategic period reflects the pace at which its operating environment is changing. It distinguished the five-year organisational strategy

[3] Tā Mātou Ahunga Rautaki Our Strategic Direction 2025–2030.

from the longer-term FOC work. The FOC work considers how future risks, technology, and capability needs may develop.

Fleet Asset Management Plan

FENZ told us that the Fleet Asset Management Plan is the primary document currently guiding fleet planning.[4] It described the plan as a 10-year roadmap for managing fleet assets. The plan focuses on reducing the age profile of the fleet and aims to bring 90 percent of operational "red" fleet assets within their target age over time. FENZ said this level of detail was not available before the asset management plan was developed.

The plan reflects an initial focus on stabilising an ageing fleet inherited at the creation of FENZ in 2017. The asset management plan is based largely on a like-for-like replacement approach and forms part of a wider set of first-generation asset management plans developed across its major asset classes.

The plan is intended to align with other strategic documents such as the Strategic Direction 2025–2030, the Climate Response Strategy 2022–2030, the 10-Year Plan 2020–2030, and the Fire and Emergency Fleet Strategy 2024–2029 (currently in development). The plan distinguishes between the investment required to manage the fleet over its whole life without budget constraints and what can be achieved under current revenue forecasts.

FENZ described the plan as a decision-support tool that will be updated through stakeholder consultation, practical experience, emerging asset management approaches, new information, and scheduled reviews.

As this is a first-generation asset management plan, FENZ acknowledged that the current plan has limitations, and further work is planned to:

- develop agreed fleet service levels
- improve asset condition information
- strengthen performance measures
- improve fleet data and systems.

FENZ does not yet have a standalone fleet strategy

FENZ is currently working on developing a standalone fleet strategy. It prioritised completing its asset management plans and progressing its FOC work before preparing the strategy. It said the asset management plans provide information about its existing asset base. The FOC work will help define future operating requirements.

At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said preparing a fleet strategy without those inputs risked producing a document that would not be effective. Its initial priority following establishment was to stabilise the ageing fleet inherited in 2017. FENZ acknowledged that, in an ideal sequence, future capability requirements might be defined before an asset management plan was developed. However, the condition and age of the inherited fleet meant that stabilisation had to be addressed first.

[4] A copy of the Fleet Asset Management Plan is available on the Parliament website.

Development of a future fleet strategy

FENZ's future fleet strategy is intended to provide medium-to-long-term direction for its operational "red" fleet and support "white" fleet. It is also expected to guide future versions of the Fleet Asset Management Plan. The strategy will bring together information about:

- existing assets
- future operational requirements
- risk profiles
- affordability
- lifecycle costs
- technological change
- network coverage.

FENZ said that this information would support decisions about future fleet investment, replacement, and trade-offs. It would also support the organisation's move towards a more risk-based operating model. FENZ described the strategy as providing the "direction of travel" for future fleet planning and management. It said that a final draft is planned to go to the board in the third quarter of the 2026/27 financial year.

What submitters told us

Some submitters raised concerns about the absence of a national strategic fleet plan. The Fire and Emergency Commanders Association said FENZ had not published such a plan since its establishment in 2017. It considered that this had contributed to a lack of direction, oversight, and accountability for fleet management.

We also heard concerns about the absence of strategic plans for specific parts of the fleet. Submitters referred particularly to the lack of an aerial appliance strategy. They questioned whether replacement decisions were being guided by an overarching strategic framework.

Some submitters considered that fleet planning should be more closely linked to operating capability and long-term service outcomes. They said decisions should reflect a clear understanding of the capabilities that communities require, rather than being based primarily on existing assets and replacement programmes.

Committee opinion

In our view, FENZ's strategy is confused and narrow. It has shifted from a 25-year plan to a 10-year plan to a 5-year plan. It is based on assumptions, such as like-for-like replacement, which may not reflect changing operational demands and future service needs. Even accepting static inputs (like-for-like), the plan does not deliver the basic requirements it needs to sustain operations. We are yet to see consideration given to a changing environment, including large population growth in cities like Auckland, a growth in high-rise and high-density housing, and a much higher reliance on aircraft to respond to vegetation fires.

Despite efforts to stabilise the fleet, its age profile has worsened since FENZ was established in 2017. This does not give us confidence in the effectiveness of FENZ's approach. There are conflicting statements about the level of risk carried by the ageing and

faulty fleet. The Asset Management Plan appears to be a reactive document only recently released, which in parts highlights the issue of years of underinvestment. More concerning is FENZ's ability to deliver against any plan or strategy, which is discussed in subsequent chapters.

A national fleet strategy would enable FENZ to have a clearer understanding of its administration, delegation, and governance requirements. This would assist rapid and robust decision making to support the direction being exercised.

We also consider that a reliance on producing documents to meet compliance objectives has been prioritised over delivering tangible results to fire stations across New Zealand, and gives a false sense of security to FENZ's national headquarters.

1.1 Recommendation

1. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to shift its focus from generating corporate documents to efforts that will deliver tangible improvements at frontline stations.

1.2 Fleet renewal and future capability

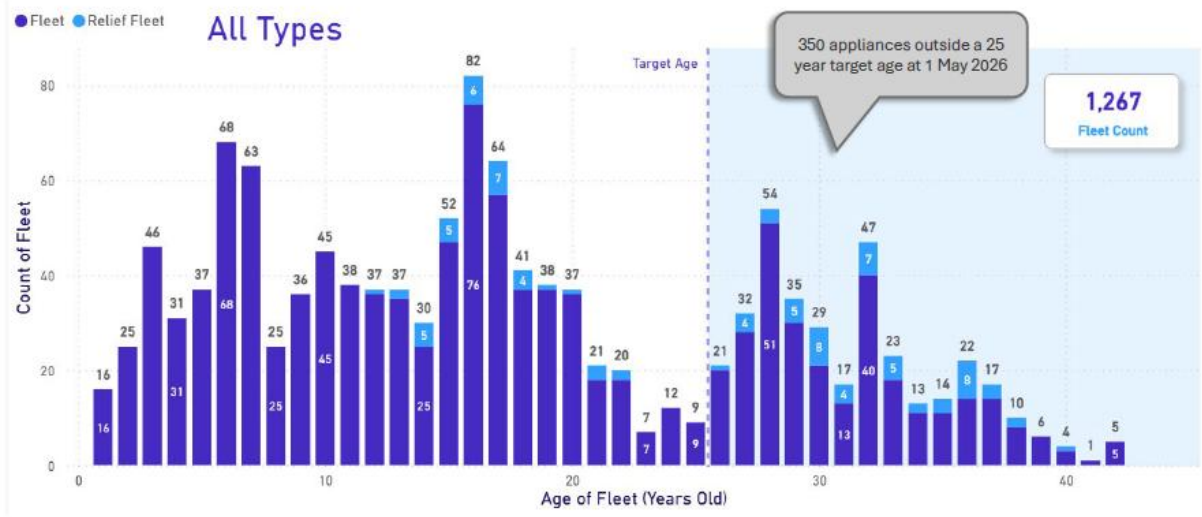
A significant proportion of the fleet is beyond target age

FENZ inherited an ageing fleet in 2017. At establishment, 23 percent of appliances were already beyond target age. This comprised 17 percent of former New Zealand Fire Service appliances and 37 percent of appliances inherited from territorial authorities and rural fire districts.

In its written evidence, FENZ described target age as "a planning benchmark and not a hard replacement limit". Appliances may remain in service beyond target age where appropriate. Decisions about retirement and disposal take account of an appliance's age, condition, service history, and type.

FENZ said the age of the fleet is its greatest fleet management challenge. As at 1 May 2026, 24 percent of Type 1, Type 2, rural, tanker, and special appliances, and 52 percent of Type 3 to Type 6 appliances were beyond target age. We understand that, in total, over 380 appliances are past their target age. FENZ said that the appliances on order would reduce, but not eliminate, the number operating beyond target age.

Graph 4: Age distribution of FENZ's appliance fleet, showing Relief Fleet, on 1 May 2026



The age profile of the relief fleet is also an acknowledged concern.[5] Of the 93 relief appliances, 60 were beyond target age. FENZ said that the older age profile of the relief fleet reflects its cascade model, under which new appliances are deployed to the busiest stations before being transferred to less demanding roles as they age.

At the 20 July hearing, FENZ described relief appliances and network arrangements as mitigations rather than permanent solutions to specialist appliance outages. It said local outages involving aerial appliances should not be dismissed simply because other resources could be moved through the national network.

Future Operating Capability work will inform future investment

FENZ said it is developing FOC work to better understand the resources it needs to meet community risk. It described FOC as an evidence-based framework for defining community risk and matching appropriate resources to that risk. At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said the work considers how risks, technology, and operating requirements might develop over 10 to 20 years, while identifying practical actions over a 5-year period. FENZ said that this would support more consistent and transparent decisions about the capabilities it requires and where resources should be located.

The work represents a shift away from relying mainly on historical-based planning. FENZ said that the model will be informed by data, prioritised by risk, and able to be updated as conditions change.

The FOC model is expected to be implemented over three levy funding cycles. FENZ said that it will inform future versions of the Fleet Asset Management Plan and later financial projections once the organisation better understands its fleet requirements.

[5] Relief appliances temporarily replace frontline vehicles undergoing planned maintenance, repairs, or other work.

Changing risks and new technology will affect fleet composition and allocation

FENZ said that future fleet requirements will need to respond to changing community risks and operational demands. Relevant factors include climate change, population trends, emerging technology, health and safety, sustainability, and wider government and emergency sector planning. We understand that the organisation's operational workload has also changed. At the July hearing, FENZ said that, 20 years earlier, it would not have anticipated the extent to which motor vehicle crashes and medical responses would form part of its work. It said FOC would consider how similar changes could affect future fleet, equipment, training, and personnel requirements.

New technology may also change how FENZ responds to emergencies. When discussing responses to weather-related events, the chief executive referred to the potential role of drones. He also said that FENZ's statutory fire-response responsibilities would remain central to its work.

Higher-capacity Type 3 and aerial appliances are normally located in more complex built environments. Provincial and rural communities require a different fleet mix, including Type 1, Type 2, tanker, and rural appliances. The presence or absence of a hydrant network can also affect the type of appliance required, particularly the deployment of tankers.

Urban development is another factor affecting fleet and response capability. We asked about taller buildings, narrower streets, changing access requirements, and whether large aerial appliances could access streets affected by urban intensification. FENZ said that its appliances and future planning would need to meet the needs of changing communities and built environments, including considering street width, appliance access, and whether the current like-for-like fleet replacement model should change.

At the 20 July hearing, we asked whether the current number of Type 5 and Type 6 appliances remained appropriate given population growth. FENZ said the FOC work would assess where these resources should be located and whether the organisation had the right mix of appliance types. It said that the current distribution had largely been inherited.

What submitters told us

Submitters said unreliability in the fleet affected firefighters' ability to perform their duties. They also said that it lowered morale, created stress, and could increase risks to communities. Older appliances remaining in service were a particular concern. We heard that some older appliances were showing wear and tear, had outdated safety features, and were difficult to service because replacement parts were not always available. Some ageing appliances were described as no longer fit for their operating environment. Examples included appliances struggling on inclines and equipment that was no longer efficient for incident response.

Submitters said increased repairs to frontline appliances had led to greater reliance on older relief appliances. Some of these appliances were at, or near, the end of their intended lives but were being used at busy stations.

Local suitability was another theme. Submitters said population growth, urbanisation, geographical isolation, seismic risk, and local road conditions should be considered when allocating appliances. They referred to narrow or winding roads, gravel roads, tunnels, cycle

lanes, road humps, high-rise buildings, and isolated regions with limited access to relief appliances.

Some submitters also raised concerns about rural capability. Issues included vehicle weight limits, the loss of specialist rural equipment, and limits on the equipment that could be carried. They said local risk should inform capability decisions, including in communities served by volunteer brigades.

Committee opinion

We discuss type-specific issues in the next chapter. We accept the need for a new operating concept, and acknowledge the changing environment. However, using that as an excuse to avoid even like-for-like replacement and a fleet refresh is not acceptable. Our view is that until a new operating concept is accepted and rolled out, there needs to be consistent sustained fleet renewal every single year. Projects are taking such a long time that it is unlikely that we will see the embodiment of a new operating concept for 10 years. During that time, half of the fleet will need a minimum of like-for-like replacement.

1.2 Recommendations

2. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to complete its Future Operation Concept, and ensure it takes a risk-based approach to the modern environment.
3. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to invest in sustained fleet replacement of current Types until such time as it can deliver any changed operating concept.

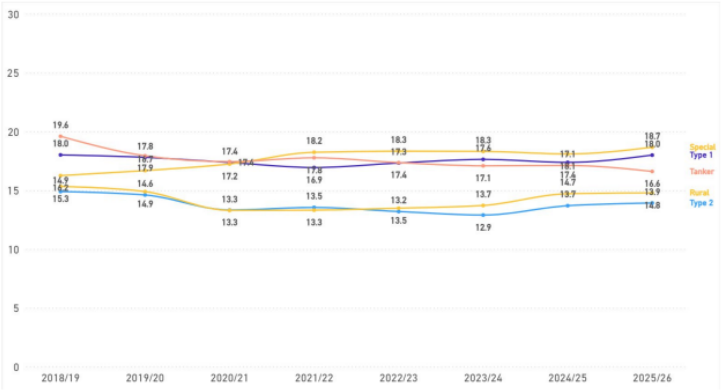
1.3 Investment priorities and funding

Initial investment focused on rural and volunteer fleets

FENZ said that the fleet it inherited in 2017 was particularly aged in rural and volunteer areas. The Government had also asked it to prioritise investment in those areas. At the hearing on 13 May, the then board Chair, Rebecca Keoghan, said Cabinet's direction at amalgamation was clear that the rural fleet needed investment. She said this investment was made first and that FENZ was subsequently turning its attention to Type 3 and aerial appliances.

Since 2017, FENZ has brought into operational use 117 Type 1 appliances, 41 Type 2 appliances, 63 tankers, and 71 rural appliances. It said that the number of rural appliances increased by 35 and the number of tankers by 8 over that period. This investment was largely based on like-for-like replacement and was intended to address issues inherited when FENZ was established.

Graph 2: The average age of Type 1, 2, Rural, Tankers and Special fleet types since 2017/18



Graph 3: The average age of Type 3–6 fleet types since 2017/18

The rural asset base was not fully understood at amalgamation. FENZ said there was no complete national view of rural fire finances or a complete national asset register. Also, property and asset transfers were still being worked through. At the 20 July hearing, the chief executive said investment had broadly maintained, rather than substantially improved, the age profile of Type 1, Type 2, rural, and tanker appliances.

The Fleet Asset Management Plan provides for further improvement by 2035/36. Under the plan, the proportion of Type 1 appliances outside target age is expected to reduce from 34 percent in 2026/27 to 17 percent in 2035/36. FENZ said that all Type 2 appliances are expected to be within target age by 2035/36.

Investment in urban and specialist appliances fell behind

Investment in larger urban and specialist appliances did not keep pace with addressing the de-ageing of the rural fleet. FENZ said that a prolonged gap in Type 3 procurement left that fleet older than planned.

The Fleet Asset Management Plan provides for 122 Type 3 appliances to be replaced from 2026/27 to 2035/36. FENZ said that this would bring 86 percent of the Type 3 fleet within its 20-year target age by 2035/36, but would not bring the whole Type 3 fleet within target age.

The aerial fleet was also identified as an investment priority. FENZ said that it had not replaced any aerial appliances since its establishment. Four Type 5 appliances and one Type 6 appliance were on order and expected to be delivered in the third quarter of 2026/27. At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said that final inspection and acceptance had not been completed and that outstanding matters included vehicle weight and configuration.

Fleet investment competes with other asset needs

FENZ said that fleet investment must be balanced against investment in property, equipment, and information and communications technology. At the 13 May hearing, its chief financial officer said capital investment over the previous eight years had been distributed approximately as follows:

- 40 percent for property
- 20 percent for fleet
- 20 percent for equipment
- 20 percent for information and communications technology.

At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said that the balance would change in response to its asset management plans. By 2034/35, it expected the allocation across capital and related spending to be approximately:

- 53 percent for property
- 27 percent for fleet
- 16 percent for information and communications technology
- 4 percent for equipment.

FENZ said that the proportions would vary between years according to the needs identified in each asset management plan.

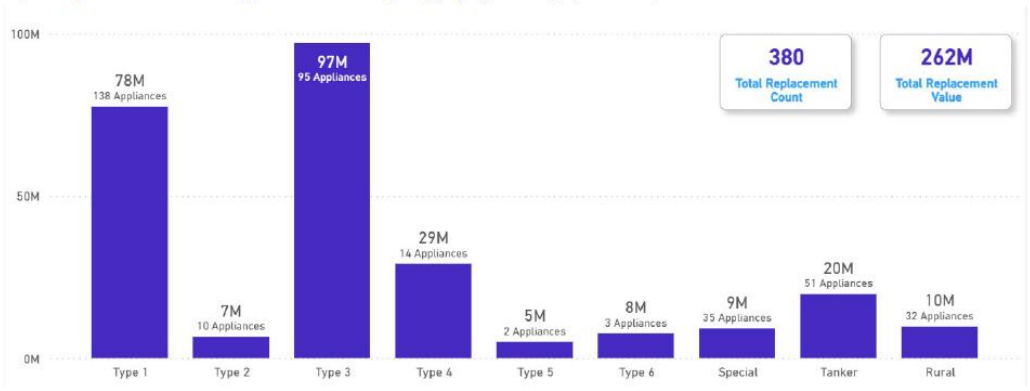
FENZ said that its asset management plans identify the consequences of funding choices, including deferred renewal, increased maintenance, and a greater risk of asset failure. It told us that, based on current financial projections and investment priorities across its asset classes, it expected to invest $356 million in fleet renewal over the next 10 years. However, it estimated a funding shortfall of $154 million if the objective was to bring the entire fleet within target age over that period.

At the 20 July hearing, we asked whether the level of fleet investment since 2017 had been sufficient. FENZ said it had balanced fleet investment against other asset needs and considered the overall balance appropriate. It said the condition of the Type 3 fleet reflected procurement and delivery problems, rather than only the amount invested.

Current funding will not bring the entire fleet within target age

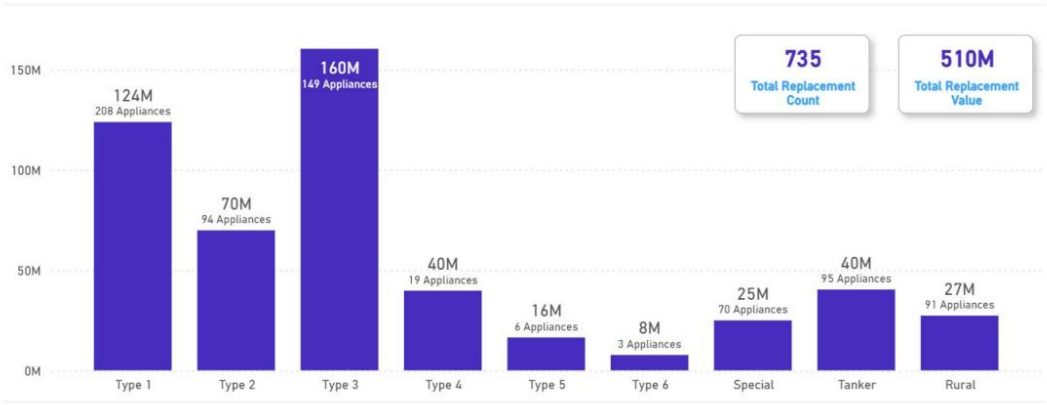
FENZ estimates that replacing all the appliances that are beyond target age in 2026/27 would cost about $262 million.

Graph 9: Replacement cost for all appliances outside target age, by appliance type, as at 2026/27

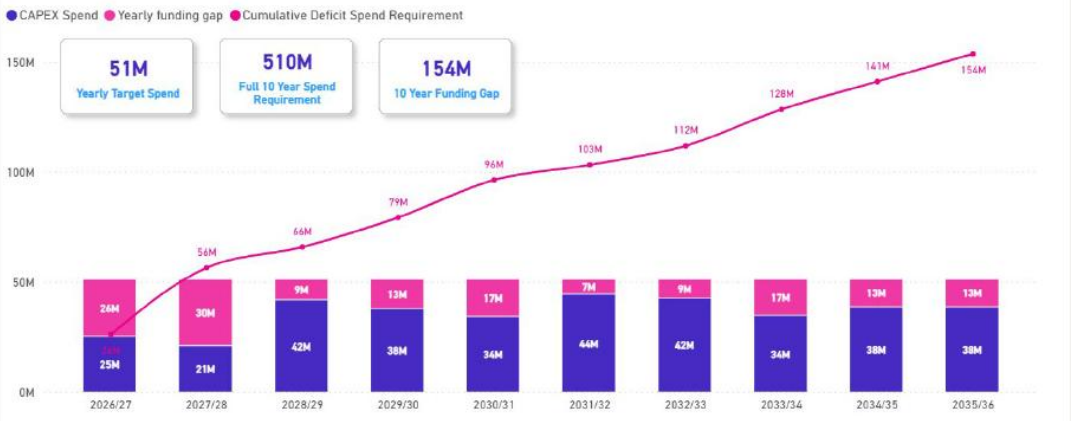


FENZ estimates that $510 million would be needed over the 10 years to 2035/36 to replace appliances as they move beyond target age. It projected that $356 million would be available for fleet investment, leaving an estimated funding difference of $154 million. The projected investment assumes no material reduction in fire levy revenue over that period. FENZ did not identify a specific proposal to close the projected $154 million fleet funding shortfall.

Graph 11: Replacement cost by appliance type over 10 years to 2035/36



Graph 10: Replacement cost over 10 years to bring the fleet inside target life



The estimate is based on the existing number and mix of appliances. As discussed in chapter 1.2, the funding requirement may change once FOC has identified the capability FENZ requires.

Levy funding

FENZ is mainly funded through the Fire and Emergency levy, which is charged on insurance contracts covering fire risk, including property insurance and motor vehicle insurance. The levy provides about 95 percent of FENZ's funding, with the remaining funding coming from sources such as Crown funding and other operational revenue. Although the levy is collected from property insurance, it funds FENZ's full range of statutory functions. At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said that that around 45 percent of its work now relates to medical and motor vehicle crash incidents. During the hearing on the 2026/27 Estimates for Vote Internal Affairs, the Minister of Internal Affairs told us that she is reviewing the funding model.

We note that levy decisions have been made only for the 2026–2029 funding period. Levy rates are reviewed every 3 years, and no decisions have yet been made on levy rates or revenue beyond 30 June 2029. As a result, estimates of capital investment requirements over a 10-year period are based on assumptions about future levy revenue and future investment decisions.

At the 13 May hearing, we asked whether FENZ's proposal for a 5.2 percent increase in overall levy revenue would have closed the estimated $154 million fleet-funding difference over 10 years. The Government instead approved a 2.2-percent increase. FENZ said it would not have fully closed the difference because the additional levy revenue was intended to support a wider range of organisational initiatives, rather than fleet investment alone. FENZ was unable to say what the remaining fleet-funding difference would have been if the proposed increase had been approved.

FENZ made the decision to pause Type 3 production

At the 13 May hearing, we asked whether Cabinet had directed FENZ to pause investment in Type 3 appliances. FENZ said Cabinet's 2017 initial direction was to focus on the rural fleet. However, FENZ itself decided to pause further Type 3 production after structural cracking was identified in existing MAN/Fraser appliances.

We do not consider that Cabinet's direction to focus on the rural fleet was a factor in the decision to pause the Type 3 programme. The pause occurred in response to structural cracking identified in the MAN/Fraser Type 3 appliances.

We also asked whether FENZ had advised Cabinet that investment was needed in Type 3 and aerial appliances while rural investment was being prioritised. FENZ said it had not pushed back and specifically flagged the need to invest in Type 3 appliances.

Fleet renewal needs to be phased

FENZ said that replacing all appliances beyond target age in one year would not be feasible. Procurement lead times, supplier capacity, and the time required to test, commission, and introduce appliances into service would constrain delivery.

A one-off replacement programme would create an immediate procurement spike. FENZ said it would also create another concentrated replacement problem in 20 to 25 years, when the same group of appliances reached end of life at about the same time.

FENZ favours a phased replacement programme. It said this approach helps manage procurement, supplier, and lifecycle risks. However, under current projections, part of the

fleet would remain beyond target age. Those appliances would continue to create higher maintenance needs and renewal pressure.

What submitters told us

Submitters said that investment in fleet replacement had not kept pace with the age and condition of the fleet. Older appliances were remaining in service for longer than intended. Submitters also said replacement programmes had not addressed the growing number of ageing vehicles. Submitters questioned whether enough new appliances were entering service to keep pace with operational demand and the ageing of the existing fleet. Several submitters linked fleet condition and reliability problems to wider resourcing and investment decisions.

Committee opinion

We acknowledge the early work done to renew volunteer appliances, and that is commended. But the lesson of this inquiry is that fleet renewal must be consistent and enduring. The same emphasis needs to be placed on all types, at all times, including ongoing replacement of volunteer appliances.

We do not accept FENZ's position that 86 percent of the Type 3 fleet would be within age limits within 10 years. It has a track record of not delivering, and all current projects fall well short of this number. A rapid reset of leadership culture is required to deliver fleet outcomes, not just in terms of prioritising funding but in delivering projects.

Aerial appliances are currently being refreshed, but all projects are delayed. The Type 4 replacements are not even at the procurement stage, and all projects appear beset with shifting goalposts which increase costs and slow delivery. It would be far better to deliver an 80-percent solution quickly and on budget, than wait for a gold-plated appliance that may or may not turn up.

FENZ's answers on the split of capital funding to various projects appear arbitrary. There is no evidence to support them, and the projects are not producing results. The cost of new stations has increased dramatically, with some appearing over-specified, and ICT has been plagued with problems and failed projects.

We note that FENZ does not believe its current budget will be sufficient to cover the assets it needs in the next 10 years. However, it has no proposal to address that funding gap. We accept the need to phase replacements to avoid a one-off spike, which would only create a similar problem in 20 years' time. However, we believe that resourcing is not the biggest hurdle. FENZ's budget has almost doubled over 10 years, but outputs have not. We want to see a focus on prioritising operational outcomes, and better use of the existing budget before additional levies are considered. As a guide, the current cost of a Type 3 is $1 million. FENZ needs 10 per year, so the cost for 10 years of Type 3s should be $100 million. It is hard to see how the cost reaches the $510 million estimated by FENZ across all types, particularly if large, sustained contracts were secured.

1.3 Recommendation

4. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to engage in long-term (10-year) replacement contracts to ensure a rolling pipeline of new appliances each year, and a consistent variant being rolled out each year.

2 Appliances

FENZ operates a diverse fleet of pumping, aerial, rural, tanker, specialist, relief, and support vehicles. These vehicles provide different levels of pumping, rescue, water-carrying, access, and specialist capability.

This chapter examines the condition and capability of the main parts of the fleet. It focuses on Type 3 and aerial appliances, other operational and support vehicles, and the reliability, availability, and operational resilience of the fleet.

2.1 Type 3 appliances

Overview of the Type 3 fleet

Type 3 appliances come in two forms: "Rescue Tenders" and "Pumps". All Type 3s have a pump and firefighting equipment, but Rescue Tenders carry specialist equipment for responding to motor vehicle accidents, and Pumps have additional specialist firefighting equipment. They are mainly operated from full-time fire stations and respond to a wide range of incidents. These include structure fires, motor vehicle crashes, rescues, and incidents near heavy industry.

A Type 3 appliance carries a crew of four and has a pumping capacity of 1,000 gallons per minute. It has a 1,400-litre water tank, two high-pressure hose reels, and a roof-mounted monitor (water nozzle). FENZ estimates that each Type 3 appliance would cost about $1.1 million to replace. Type 3 appliances have a target age of 20 years.

As at 1 May 2026, FENZ recorded 196 Type 3 appliances in its fleet.

Three overlapping procurement tranches

FENZ said that the current position of the Type 3 fleet reflects three overlapping procurement tranches undertaken over more than a decade. Decisions made by the former New Zealand Fire Service and FENZ, together with delays across the three tranches, affected the rate at which new appliances entered operational service.

The three tranches are:

- **Tranche 1**: 47 MAN/Fraser appliances ordered before FENZ was established
- **Tranche 2**: 30 MAN chassis ordered in 2019, comprising two prototypes (one SEM and one Angloco) and 28 appliances using the Angloco body design
- **Tranche 3**: the Next Generation Type 3 programme, which uses Scania cab-chassis and includes Emergency One and Angloco body designs.

A detailed chronology of these procurement tranches is set out in Appendix D.

Selection on the MAN NA16 chassis

The New Zealand Fire Service selected the MAN cab and chassis in 2012 following a full process involving headquarters staff and New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union

(NZPFU) representatives. Fraser Fire and Rescue in Lower Hutt won the contract to build the body in New Zealand, and all 47 were delivered between 2014 and 2017. FENZ has defended the process that led to selecting the MAN chassis; however, it has not been willing to say if, with the full benefit of hindsight, the chassis was the right decision. Most submitters told us it was the wrong decision: it is too light, under-powered, and while it could be used for a Type 1 body, it is the wrong selection for a Type 3 appliance.

Structural cracking affected Tranche 1 appliances

FENZ said that structural cracking was identified in the bodywork of 28 of the 47 MAN/Fraser Type 3 appliances in October 2019. Further cases were identified over time, bringing the total affected to 40 appliances by July 2026. FENZ said that the cracking had been repaired and all 47 MAN/Fraser appliances were operational as at July 2026. The cracking affected the body built onto the MAN cab-chassis, rather than the cab-chassis itself. FENZ paused further Type 3 body production while it worked with the supplier to identify a solution.

At the 13 May hearing, the chief executive said that, in hindsight, the pause had significantly affected the current position of the Type 3 fleet. FENZ said that finding and implementing a solution took considerably longer than anticipated.

Tranche 2 initiation

In 2019, FENZ were "cold-called" by Penske, the New Zealand representatives of MAN trucks. It offered a purchase of an additional 36 chassis, which was accepted, despite another project, "Next Generation", having been started in 2018, in which a MAN chassis was not used in any of the proposals. There was no procurement or competitive process engaged, but rather all 36 were purchased, with six subsequently sold to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). Two months after accepting this offer, the cracking issue was discovered in the Tranche 1 appliances. The chassis purchase was continued with regardless, but FENZ paused production of new Type 3 bodies for Tranche 2.

In May 2020, FENZ engaged an Australian manufacturer, SEM, to build a partial trail appliance on a Tranche 2 chassis to better understand cracking and how a body could be built. Again, there was no full procurement process, but FENZ told us this was "driven by the need to be fast". In January 2021, this evolved into the build of a full prototype appliance for Tranche 2. Despite the need to be fast, this prototype was not delivered until June 2024.

In July 2021, Angloco submitted an "unsolicited proposal" to build a second prototype. At the time Angloco also had the contract to build two prototypes for the Next Generation tranche, albeit on a different chassis. There was no competitive process, and the appliance was due to be delivered in February 2022. It arrived in December 2022.

FENZ conducted acceptance testing of the Angloco appliance during February and March 2023. At this point, the SEM trial appliance had still not arrived in New Zealand. In March 2023, FENZ selected Angloco to build the remaining 28 Tranche 2 appliances.

Operational testing of the Angloco appliance was conducted in May 2023, after the contract for the final 28 had already been awarded. It was a very short period of testing, and FENZ told us that the appliance spent most of the time from March 2023 to July 2026 "in workshops".

From their arrival in 2020 until early 2024, the remaining 28 chassis sat in storage at a cost of $218,175. They were then freighted back to the UK for the body build, and then freighted back to New Zealand again. They started to arrive in July 2025, but arrived behind schedule, with the final appliance arriving in November 2025.

Despite the changing answer as to how many appliances were in use as mentioned in our introduction, as of July 2026 none of the 30 Tranche 2 appliances were in operational use.

FENZ said that several factors contributed to the delay. These included:

- the production pause
- limited supplier capacity
- the COVID-19 pandemic
- manufacturing problems
- the time required to test completed appliances.

Table 4: Type 3 appliances, recording when appliance was received by Fire and Emergency, including the dollar value of the investment

	2015 to 2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total number of appliances	Total $'m on new purchases
47 MAN Fraser	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**47**	27.4
17 MAN Angloco + 1 MAN SEM	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	16	**18**	18.5
2 Scania E1, 2 Scania Angloco	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	**4**	3.4
Total	**47**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**16**	**69**	**49.3**

FENZ's assessment of the Tranche 2 programme

FENZ told us that Tranche 2 was marked by its own "reactive and poorly planned procurement decisions." FENZ acknowledged significant shortcomings in the planning, procurement, and delivery of the Tranche 2 programme. It said that some procurement decisions were made under operational pressures and were not supported by sufficiently robust procurement processes, testing, documentation, or contract management. FENZ also said that practical and operational objectives had at times been prioritised ahead of best-practice procurement and contract-management processes.

FENZ's written evidence showed that it bought the 30 MAN cab-chassis before finalising the body-build solution. This decision limited its later procurement options and created risks when integrating the chassis and body. At our hearing on 20 July, FENZ acknowledged that buying the chassis and body separately had not provided the intended timeliness, reliability, or clarity of accountability. It told us that it would now approach parts of the programme differently. Where practicable, it would use a more integrated or turnkey procurement model for future complex appliances.

FENZ said that these decisions were made in good faith and under pressure to reduce the age of the Type 3 fleet. Manufacturer and supplier delays, faults, and other external factors also contributed to the programme's difficulties. However, FENZ accepted that it "should have, and could have, done better".

We note that the New Zealand Defence Force had its six Tranche 2 chassis in full service in 2024, using a Fraser Fire and Rescue body. This demonstrates that despite the challenges of a poor chassis selection, another agency was able to use the same body builder as Tranche 1 and deliver operational appliances more than a year before FENZ had even 1 of the 28 appliances returned to New Zealand ready for acceptance testing, and two years before any FENZ Tranche 2 were in operational service.

Chapter 3 discusses FENZ's procurement, supplier, and contract-management practices in more detail.

Delivery does not mean an appliance is ready for operational use

FENZ distinguished between delivery, contractual acceptance, and entry into operational service. Delivery occurs when an appliance enters FENZ's possession. It does not mean that FENZ has contractually accepted the appliance or that it is ready for operational use. After delivery, FENZ undertakes contractual acceptance testing to determine whether an appliance complies with the agreed specifications and requirements. An appliance must then complete fit-out, crew training, operational-readiness checks, and any required defect remediation before entering operational service.

At the 13 May hearing, FENZ said that none of the 30 Tranche 2 appliances were in operational use. The appliances were at different stages between manufacture and entry into operational service. Once operational, an appliance may subsequently be removed from service for maintenance, upgrades, repairs, or defect remediation.

Testing identified a large number of defects

FENZ recorded defects at several stages of the Tranche 2 introduction process. It reported 582 issues at acceptance, 120 during fit-out, and 146 during operational-readiness checks across the MAN/Angloco appliances. Issues included monitor risers, inlet strainers, electrical systems, radio interference, and pump programming.

FENZ said that its testing and readiness processes had identified issues before appliances entered operational service. Suppliers were required to remedy defects, and some appliances were conditionally accepted while outstanding matters were addressed.

Radio Frequency Interference was a significant issue. We understand this issue was resolved in the UK, but there may have been issues incorporating FENZ's three bands (FM, VHF, and UHF) of radios into the appliances.

At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said that three MAN/Angloco appliances had entered operational service but had since been withdrawn. It described the withdrawal as a precaution while it investigated an issue involving the high-pressure delivery system. FENZ said that the appliances would return to service once it had confirmed they were safe and operationally ready. This issue is a significant safety concern as water could become unavailable when firefighters were in a fire and reliant on it in certain circumstances.

The Next Generation programme uses a more integrated procurement model

The Next Generation Type 3 programme uses Scania cab-chassis and includes Emergency One and Angloco body designs. The programme uses a more integrated procurement approach than the separate cab-chassis and body-build model used for Tranche 2.

Four prototype appliances entered operational trials. Two were later removed from operational use for maintenance and fault investigation.

FENZ's initial submission said that 14 Scania/Emergency One Type 3 appliances were on order as at 1 May 2026. In later evidence, FENZ stated that a further 14 appliances had subsequently been ordered, bringing the total programme to 28 appliances.

What submitters told us

Submitters raised concerns about the age and reliability of Type 3 appliances and the time taken to introduce replacements. We heard about repeated mechanical failures affecting frontline appliances, including air leaks in braking systems, pressure-relief faults, foam-system failures, and electrical and control-system faults.

Some submitters raised specific concerns about the MAN/Angloco Type 3 appliances. The issues they reported included body cracking, coolant problems, chassis damage, door-locking faults, brake failures, pump performance, and unsafe equipment storage. One submitter reported that loose equipment had fallen from an appliance locker and caused an injury.

We also heard concerns about the time taken to introduce the MAN/Angloco appliances into operational service. Some submitters referred to appliances being "parked up" for extended periods during the introduction trial. They questioned why completed appliances were not available for frontline use while older Type 3 appliances remained in service.

Committee opinion

Issues with type 3 appliances have been poorly managed, and poorly communicated to this committee. The incorrect and constantly changing answers provided to us over three successive hearings, including an extraordinary hearing in March 2026, are a direct cause of this inquiry. We are yet to see full acceptance and acknowledgement of this from FENZ, or a truly transparent approach to answering questions.

It is clear to us that 10 new replacement Type 3 appliances are needed every year, whereas only 47 have been delivered in the past 10 years.

For Tranche 1, the former NZFS ran an appropriate process but due to the chassis problem, and some aspects of the resultant body build, procurement was plagued with delays and repairs. We are pleased to see that the repair designed and implemented by Fraser Fire and Rescue has stood the test of time so far. Although the decision to pause production responded to the risks identified, we consider that it should have been reviewed sooner. We also consider that FENZ could have considered a New Zealand-built body for Tranche 2 once the solution for Tranche 1 was implemented in 2020.

Tranche 2 was reactive and inappropriately managed. The decision to purchase the chassis was not thought through, and while the need for more appliances is understandable, it only served to create more time and cost blow-outs. There was no transparency in the selection of chassis or body manufacturers, timelines were excessively extended (beyond what could reasonably be attributed to COVID-19), and ultimately we are yet to see appliances in regular operational use.

More concerning is the apparent lack of oversight. We asked the board of FENZ to provide evidence of when it had discussed Type 3 issues. No evidence could be provided after December 2023. This is a gross failure at a governance level, as well as management failures within FENZ.

2.1 Recommendations

5. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to move to a consistent variant and layout of Rescue Tenders (RT) and Pump Type 3s across all stations.
6. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to purchase off-the-shelf Type 3 appliances with consideration given to those already in use in other countries, and be willing to compromise on the extent of customisation to ensure on-time delivery.

2.2 Aerial appliances

Aerial appliances provide specialist urban and industrial capability

FENZ operates three main types of aerial appliances. Type 4 appliances combine pumping capability with a 17-metre aerial ladder. Type 5 appliances provide a non-pumping aerial platform with a reach of about 32 metres. Type 6 appliances combine pumping capability, an extended crew cab, and a 32-metre aerial platform.

Aerial appliances provide elevated access, rescue, and water-delivery capability at major urban and industrial incidents. Type 5 appliances require support from a pumping appliance. Type 6 appliances provide pumping and aerial capability from the same vehicle.

FENZ described the aerial fleet as small but critical. These appliances are concentrated in major urban centres and other locations requiring elevated capability. Relevant factors include building height, population density, industrial activity, and incident complexity.

No aerial appliances have been replaced since FENZ was established

As at May 2026, FENZ had 19 Type 4 appliances, six Type 5 appliances, and four Type 6 appliances. FENZ estimated that each Type 4 appliance would cost about $2 million to replace. It estimated a replacement cost of about $2.5 million for each Type 5 or Type 6 appliance. FENZ said it had not replaced any aerial appliances since the organisation was established.

The age profile of the aerial fleet is discussed in chapter 1.2. The operational effects of specialist-appliance outages are discussed in chapter 2.4.

Type 5 and 6 replacement aerial appliances are on order

The board approved extending the procurement of four heavy vehicle appliances to five in December 2022, and in July 2023, four Type 5 appliances and one Type 6 appliance were ordered. The combined value of the orders is $12.5 million. FENZ said the appliances are intended for Parnell, Hamilton, Thorndon, Christchurch, and Dunedin. FENZ said deploying the five appliances would allow it to retire five existing Type 5 appliances and one Type 6 appliance. It expected this to bring all Type 5 and Type 6 appliances within their 25-year target age.

Despite FENZ stating that the final inspections for these were completed by July 2025, these appliances are still with manufacturers, and require further inspections prior to acceptance and delivery and payment issues to be resolved.

Type 4 replacements

A separate procurement process is under way for a future supplier of Type 4 appliances. FENZ said a request for information (RFI) had been completed to inform the project. This is still in the design requirements phase. We heard from submitters, and from FENZ under additional questioning, that the committee which is meant to meet monthly to develop these has only met once this year. It is difficult to anticipate rapid progress when the design requirements are not yet known and six scheduled meetings have been cancelled.

Delivery has been affected by design and compliance challenges

FENZ said the aerial programme had involved ongoing refinement of specifications and design requirements. Vehicle weight and compliance with New Zealand axle limits were significant constraints.

Equipment lists, vehicle configuration, and operating requirements affected whether the completed appliances could meet regulatory weight limits. The programme also needed to address differences in compliance requirements between Australia and New Zealand.

At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said final inspection and acceptance had not been completed. It expected the five appliances to be delivered in the third quarter of the 2026/27 financial year. Outstanding matters included vehicle weight and configuration.

It is apparent to us that the design requirements (described by FENZ as "not static inputs") have shifted throughout the process and this has caused delays and additional cost.

Substitution of Type 4 appliances

FENZ told us that where a Type 4 appliance is unavailable and no relief Type 4 is available, the normal approach is to deploy a Type 3 appliance. However, a Type 3 does not provide the same aerial capability as a Type 4, and FENZ confirmed that a replacement Type 3 does not automatically carry a 464 ladder (15m ladder). FENZ further advised that only 5 of the 19 stations with Type 4 appliances have a Type 3 appliance equipped with a 464 ladder. In Palmerston North, for example, no 464 ladder is available locally, with the nearest located in Masterton.

FENZ maintained that there is no material risk to community safety or emergency response capability arising from appliance unavailability. However, it also advised that it does not hold data showing how often a preferred appliance is unavailable and substituted by another appliance type, or how often the closest appliance cannot be dispatched due to maintenance or mechanical issues.

We also heard concerns about whether appliance unavailability could affect response times in growing urban areas, including South Auckland. FENZ said it relies on a network response model, with the next available appliance dispatched when a local appliance cannot respond.

FOC will inform future aerial requirements

At the 20 July hearing, we asked whether the current number and distribution of aerial appliances remained appropriate given population growth, urban intensification, and changing street layouts. FENZ said its Future Operating Capability work would assess the number, mix, and location of aerial appliances required.

We heard concerns that growing urban centres may require greater specialist aerial capability in future. Hamilton was raised as an example of a city with increasing numbers of multi-storey buildings, while still relying on an ageing aerial fleet. FENZ acknowledged that future operating capability work would need to consider changing urban environments, building forms, and risk profiles when assessing future aerial requirements.

What submitters told us

Submitters raised concerns about the reliability and availability of aerial appliances. Brown Watch at Seaview Station told us that its aerial appliance was often unavailable because faults could not be addressed promptly. It attributed this to a lack of replacement appliances, parts, or repair personnel.

We also heard concerns about the absence of a national aerial appliance strategy. Some submitters questioned whether replacing existing aerial appliances with the same number and type would meet future needs.

Some submitters questioned the operational suitability of the aerial appliances on order. Concerns included water-flow capability, reliability, and whether the appliances would meet New Zealand's operating conditions. Others referred to urban growth, high-rise buildings, narrowing streets, cycle lanes, road humps, and changes in street design that could affect appliance access and reach.

Access to aerial capability was also raised by submitters from regions outside the main metropolitan centres. A submission on behalf of Whangārei Fire Station said the station provides aerial and other specialist capabilities across Northland, with limited support from the nearest coloured-watch stations in Auckland. Other submitters said geographically isolated regions may have limited access to replacement specialist capability when the local appliance is unavailable.

Committee opinion

The aerial fleet has received the most publicity and, due to its small size, has created some high-profile instances of failure. We wish to express our concern about two key aspects regarding the aerial fleet.

First, we are concerned about the accuracy and, again, the transparency of answers. For example, we asked whether Type 3 appliances ever take the place of Type 4 appliances using a Type 4 callsign, and if that could inflate response statistics more than is appropriate. We were told that this does not occur, with a very specific answer about a "213" callsign. The answer was wrong. Aside from "213" not existing in the example, we are aware—and FENZ has since confirmed—that on occasion this does in fact occur.

Further, we were told that Type 3s which take the place of Type 4s carry a 464 ladder. We summoned FENZ back for a 5th public hearing this year to confirm whether this was correct, during which it told us that in 14 out of 19 Type-4 locations there is no 464 ladder available.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to understand what is intentional misinformation and what are unintended errors due to FENZ representatives not fully knowing or understanding their own organisation.

We also consider that FENZ needs a clear, long-term plan for the aerial fleet. The plan should identify the number, type, and location of aerial appliances needed across the country and provide a credible programme for their renewal. It should take account of population growth, urban intensification, changes in the built environment, and street layouts that may affect appliance access.

We are concerned about the reporting of aerial response rates. This is covered below as it also applies to other types.

2.2 Recommendations

7. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to cease a culture of changing design requirements mid-project to avoid unforeseen escalating costs and the inconsistency of coordination.
8. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to purchase off-the-shelf aerial appliances with consideration given to those already in use in other countries, and be willing to compromise on the extent of customisation to ensure on-time delivery.

2.3 Other appliances

Information from FENZ

Type 1 and Type 2 appliances support smaller urban and provincial communities

Type 1 appliances are light pumping appliances mainly used by volunteer brigades. As at May 2026, FENZ had 361 Type 1 appliances. Their average age was 18 years, and their target age was 25 years. FENZ estimated that each would cost about $550,000 to replace.

FENZ said 28 Type 1 appliances were on order for delivery over the next two financial years. Iveco was to supply the cab-chassis, with Fraser Fire Rescue completing the body build in New Zealand.

Type 2 appliances provide medium-capacity pumping and rescue capability. They generally carry more rescue equipment than Type 1 appliances and are designed for small to medium-sized population centres. As at May 2026, FENZ had 219 Type 2 appliances. Their target age was 25 years, and their estimated replacement cost was about $650,000 each.

Rural appliances and tankers provide vegetation-fire and water-supply capability

Rural appliances are four-wheel-drive pumping appliances designed mainly for vegetation-fire attack and rural structural response across varied terrain. As at May 2026, FENZ had 188 rural appliances. Rural appliances have a target age of 25 years. FENZ estimated that each would cost between $250,000 and $350,000 to replace.

Tankers carry bulk water to incidents in areas without a reticulated water supply. The tanker fleet comprised 179 appliances. Their target age is 25 years, and their estimated replacement cost ranges from $380,000 to $550,000.

FENZ said rural fleet requirements depend on several factors. These include terrain, vegetation-fire risk, travel distances, water availability, and the incidents that brigades are expected to attend.

Specialist appliances support a range of emergency functions

FENZ had 95 specialist appliances as at May 2026, including vehicles used for:

- hazardous-materials response
- urban search and rescue
- incident command
- decontamination
- logistical support.

FENZ estimated that each specialist appliance would cost between $80,000 and $500,000 to replace, depending on its purpose.

Specialist appliances are generally located in metropolitan or strategically selected areas. They may also respond across district boundaries. FENZ said their small numbers and specialised roles can make them more difficult to substitute when unavailable.

The white fleet supports prevention, readiness, response, and recovery

FENZ's "white" fleet includes cars, vans, utility vehicles, and other support vehicles. These are used by operational managers, trainers, investigators, support staff, and incident-management personnel. As at 1 May 2026, FENZ had 1,056 white fleet vehicles. These vehicles do not generally provide frontline pumping or rescue capability. However, they support prevention, readiness, response, recovery, training, investigation, and incident-management functions.

FENZ's initial fleet data excluded many cars and utility vehicles because a significant proportion are leased. The Fleet Asset Management Plan and future fleet strategy are intended to cover both the operational red fleet and support white fleet.

Some brigade-owned assets fall outside FENZ's main fleet data

FENZ's fleet data includes vehicles it owns and vehicles it has a right to use. It excludes vehicles owned directly by brigades where FENZ has no right to use them, such as vehicles a brigade has purchased or received as a donation in its own right. Historical and vintage vehicles are also excluded.

The data set of 1,267 appliances therefore does not represent every vehicle owned or held by individual brigades.

What submitters told us

Some submitters raised concerns about differences between the appliances and equipment available to coloured-watch and volunteer stations. They said Type 1 and Type 2 appliances

generally have less pumping and equipment-carrying capacity than Type 3 appliances. Some considered that these differences could limit the response available in larger provincial towns, industrial areas, and other communities served by volunteer brigades.

Submitters recognised that different appliance types may be appropriate for different communities. Factors they identified included population, building density, road size, driver-licensing requirements, available training, and the type of incidents a brigade attends. However, some considered that local risk should be given greater weight when deciding what capability to allocate to volunteer stations.

Rural capability was another concern. Submitters referred to vehicle-weight limits, restricted equipment storage, reduced hose capacity, and the removal of specialist vegetation-fire equipment from some rural vehicles. We heard that standardised vehicle designs may not always reflect rural terrain, limited water supplies, or the requirements of vegetation-fire response.

Some submitters also raised concerns about specialist appliances. They said vehicles adapted from general-purpose fleet vehicles, rather than being purpose-built for rescue disciplines, did not always provide suitable storage, ergonomics, weight distribution, or safe access to technical rescue equipment.

We also heard concerns about the white fleet. The joint submission from the New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union and the Public Service Association described the white fleet as important to prevention, readiness, response, recovery, and fire investigations. Their survey identified concerns about vehicle age, maintenance, reliability, suitability, and the use of two-wheel-drive vehicles in situations where four-wheel drive was needed.

Views differed on the appropriate level of standardisation. Some submitters supported greater consistency and interoperability, while others considered that appliance design and allocation should better reflect local operating requirements.

Committee opinion

FENZ has made good progress on Type 1 and 2 fleets in the last nine years. This report is generally critical of FENZ's performance over the last seven years, but it should be noted that we were told that volunteer stations, and in particular rural communities, "have never been better equipped."

We hear the concerns about the white fleet and axle weights. The white fleet lease policy has changed in recent years. We note the cost of extending vehicles beyond expected parameters while leased, but we also think FENZ needs to be allowed to manage a range of factors when considering whether a lease should be extended or replaced. The axle weight issue does appear to affect the white fleet (for example lines rescue teams) and rural vehicles, but it is an issue for all appliances. This is addressed separately below.

2.4 Fleet availability and resilience

Older appliances create reliability and maintenance pressures

Older appliances generally require more maintenance. At the 13 May hearing, we heard that mechanical issues were expected to increase as the fleet aged. Reducing the age profile

should in turn reduce maintenance requirements. However, age alone does not determine whether an appliance is safe or suitable to continue operating. Its condition, service history, type, and intended role must also be considered.

FENZ reported high response-related availability

FENZ reported that its fleet was available for 99.72 percent of relevant responses in 2024/25. Its analysis identified 246 mechanical issues while appliances were responding to 88,805 incidents.

The measure used information from the Computer Aided Dispatch system and Station Management System. FENZ counted a response as affected where an appliance was recorded as unavailable and a review of the incident information identified a mechanical cause. FENZ cautioned that the analysis relied partly on free-text information entered by firefighters. Some records contained limited information.

At our 20 July hearing, FENZ clarified that the 99.72 percent measure covers mechanical issues affecting appliances after they have been assigned to an incident. It does not include appliances that were unavailable before dispatch and were therefore not assigned to an incident.

Network arrangements reduce the effect of appliance outages

FENZ operates a network-based response model. This means resources may be dispatched from more than one station, depending on the location and nature of the incident. Predetermined attendance arrangements specify the number and type of resources dispatched to different incidents.

Multiple appliances are sent to most incidents. If the first appliance is unavailable, the next closest appropriate appliance can be dispatched. FENZ also moves appliances between stations when required to maintain geographical coverage. Where there is advance warning of a significant event, FENZ may pre-deploy appliances and specialist personnel to areas expected to be most affected.

FENZ said that its full-time-firefighter network retains substantial surge capacity. It presented utilisation analysis showing that daytime utilisation exceeded 50 percent on only one occasion in the preceding 10 years, during the International Convention Centre fire on 23 October 2019. FENZ noted that this measure only covered incident workload. It did not include training, prevention, equipment maintenance, or community engagement.

The relief fleet supports continuity during maintenance and breakdowns

FENZ has 93 relief appliances. These temporarily replace frontline vehicles undergoing planned maintenance, repairs, or other work.

At the 20 July hearing, FENZ said that the relief fleet and network arrangements help reduce the effects of appliance unavailability. However, these arrangements do not remove the need for reliable appliances, particularly where the unavailable vehicle provides specialist capability.

Appliance outages can have significant local effects

FENZ said that mechanical breakdowns do not necessarily mean a community receives no response, because other appliances can be dispatched. However, a breakdown can have a significant local effect. This is particularly the case for the firefighters involved or where the unavailable appliance provides specialist capability.

At the 13 May hearing, FENZ described it as "gut-wrenching" when an appliance arrived at an incident but its equipment did not work. It said network resilience did not remove the operational and personal effects of a local failure.

Older and specialist appliances may also be more difficult to substitute. Aerial, hazardous-substances, rescue, and other specialist functions may be concentrated in a limited number of locations.

What submitters told us

Submitters said the age and reliability of appliances were significant concerns. Older appliances were described as showing substantial wear and tear, having outdated safety features, and becoming difficult to service because replacement parts were not always available. Some submitters referred to workarounds being used where parts could not be sourced, appliances breaking down again after repairs, or appliances being returned to stations without faults being resolved.

Submitters also raised concerns about reliance on relief appliances. They said increased repairs and servicing of frontline appliances had led to older relief appliances being used at busy stations. Some considered these appliances unsuitable for high workloads because they were at, or near, the end of their intended lives.

Some submitters questioned whether the cascade model accurately reflected appliance workload and local risk. They said the model could place too much emphasis on call volumes and insufficient weight on incident complexity, geographical isolation, and access to backup appliances. Submitters also said an appliance may respond under another appliance's callsign, meaning its actual workload may not be fully reflected in recorded call data.

Local availability was a particular concern for isolated communities. Submitters said the nearest replacement or supporting appliance could be several hours away when a local appliance was undergoing maintenance or had broken down. They considered that national availability figures might not reflect the risks faced by individual stations or communities.

Submitters said uncertainty about whether appliances and equipment would work affected firefighters' confidence and morale. They described unnecessary stress before and during incidents and considered that unreliable appliances could increase risks for firefighters and communities.

Committee opinion

We do not accept the 99.72 percent response rate as being truly reflective of the current state of FENZ's response. We were told that it only measures response when an operational appliance is available and has left the station to respond. It does not capture situations where an appliance is not available at all, or where an appliance trying to respond does not

start or is unable to leave the station. We think the information given to us by FENZ is misleading as to the true situation. We also think we should not have to prosecute detailed lines of questioning in a committee-initiated inquiry for the public to get this level of reporting about the current state of affairs.

Further, through more detailed questioning we learned that only certain types of responses are measured. For example, Rescue Tenders (RT) sent to a motor vehicle accident (MVA) are recorded, but Pumps sent to an MVA are not. So, if an RT is not available and a Pump is sent but takes longer because it is based further away, it will not be recorded. The person at the accident scene wants a response, and the time taken for this response should be recorded, not given a technical exemption.

FENZ continues to cite a 99.72 percent response rate, both to us and in the media. This appears intentionally misleading. New Zealand firefighters, whether volunteer or paid, do an excellent job responding to incidents, and we accept that the well-publicised "network approach" does achieve some form of response that is impressive given that small volunteer stations serve large rural communities. However, FENZ will not make progress in some of these areas and achieve even better results unless it is willing to lay all the facts on the table and acknowledge the reality and challenges that the service faces (and to some degree always will).

2.4 Recommendation

9. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to record the true state of responsiveness of all types of appliances for all types of incidents, including when appliances are not available due to unserviceability or scheduled maintenance with no replacement.

3 Procurement and maintenance

Fleet assets represent a significant investment and are critical to FENZ's ability to respond effectively to emergencies across New Zealand. Effective procurement and maintenance help ensure that appliances are available, fit for purpose, and provide value for money throughout their service lives.

This chapter examines FENZ's procurement, supplier- and contract-management, maintenance, and fleet-information arrangements. It also considers lessons from recent fleet projects.

3.1 Procurement practices

Procurement practices have not always been sufficiently mature

Fleet procurement is guided by FENZ's procurement policy and the Government Procurement Rules. Where a new market process is required, FENZ generally advertises a request for proposals through the Government Electronic Tender Service. It may also procure directly where an exemption under the rules applies.

FENZ acknowledged that its procurement governance and practices have not always been sufficiently mature. The second tranche of MAN Type 3 appliances illustrated these shortcomings. Subsequent reviews identified inadequate planning relative to the procurement's value, risk, and complexity. Some procurement decisions were documented retrospectively, and reviews identified deficiencies or inconsistencies in the records supporting direct procurement decisions for the prototypes and the remaining 28 body builds.

FENZ said the programme was affected by pressure to replace ageing appliances, problems with the earlier MAN-Fraser vehicles, limited supplier options, and the need to use the MAN chassis it had already purchased. FENZ also accepted that it had not struck the appropriate balance between practical delivery and robust procurement practices.[6]

Procurement arrangements have changed

Following reviews of its procurement practices, FENZ introduced a four-year procurement improvement programme. The programme focused on improving procurement maturity, compliance, transparency, information management, and the clarity of roles and responsibilities. The programme's roadmap was completed in mid-2025.

A more centralised procurement operating model was introduced in 2022. However, FENZ subsequently concluded that the organisation was not sufficiently mature to support it. Responsibilities between procurement personnel and operational business units became blurred, and some work was duplicated.

6 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 47, para 5.4.

FENZ developed a new procurement structure in 2025. Under this structure, business units and asset teams are responsible for planning, requirements definition, technical specifications, operational requirements, and supplier performance management. The sourcing team provides commercial advice, manages procurement processes, leads market engagement and negotiations, and helps ensure compliance with government procurement requirements.

A market with limited suppliers affects procurement options

New Zealand has a limited market for specialist fire appliances. There are no New Zealand-based manufacturers of cab-chassis or fixed firefighting equipment, although New Zealand businesses manufacture appliance bodies and undertake other specialist work. FENZ identified Fraser Fire and Rescue and Mills Tui as the main New Zealand-based body builders with expertise in large firefighting appliances.

FENZ therefore relies heavily on overseas manufacturers. This exposes procurements to international production constraints, shipping delays, and the need for overseas inspections. FENZ said it would welcome greater involvement from New Zealand businesses where they can meet its requirements and the Government Procurement Rules.

FENZ is moving towards turnkey and more standardised procurement

In 2011, the New Zealand Fire Service adopted a two-stage procurement approach for Type 3 appliances. This was intended to provide direct control over chassis selection, avoid additional supplier mark-ups, and ensure that a suitable range of chassis options was considered.

Purchasing the chassis separately meant that later procurement decisions were influenced by the need to use the 30 chassis already acquired. FENZ later concluded that the two-stage approach had been more difficult than anticipated and contributed to challenges in managing design, delivery, and accountability for the completed appliance.

Recent projects have increasingly used turnkey procurement. These include the next-generation Type 3 appliances and the Type 5 and Type 6 aerial appliances. Under this approach, a single supplier is responsible for delivering a complete operational appliance. FENZ said this provides clearer accountability, reduces design and integration risks, and reflects lessons learned from earlier projects where separate chassis and body-build contracts contributed to delays, complexity, and uncertainty over responsibility.

However, turnkey procurement involves trade-offs. Because no New Zealand business manufactures suitable cab-chassis, the principal supplier may select its own body-building subcontractor. This could reduce opportunities for New Zealand businesses.

Established international designs may also need to be modified to meet New Zealand's axle-weight limits and FENZ's operational requirements. The organisation intends to align its requirements more closely with international standards and reduce bespoke features where practicable. FENZ said this should facilitate the use of more standardised appliance designs.

Recent projects have highlighted the importance of clear requirements

The Type 3 and aerial programmes demonstrated the challenges of developing operational and technical requirements during complex procurement projects. In both programmes, aspects of the designs continued to evolve after procurement activity had begun.

The aerial programme initially sought a proven turnkey solution, but operational, technical, and regulatory requirements continued to develop after procurement began.

The next-generation Type 3 project incorporated lessons from earlier procurements. It used an open competitive process, established a long-term supplier panel, involved operational staff and unions, tested prototype appliances, and adopted turnkey contracts. Audit New Zealand found that the procurement complied with the Government Procurement Rules, while identifying opportunities to improve its management and administration.

FENZ said future procurements should have clearer requirements, stronger governance, appropriate testing stages, and earlier involvement from operational users and technical specialists.

What submitters told us

Submitters raised concerns about delays in decision-making, procurement costs, appliance design, and whether enough new appliances were being acquired. They wanted firefighters to be involved earlier in procurement and design so that problems with axle weights, water capacity, equipment storage, ladder height, ergonomics, and specialist or rural capability could be identified before requirements were finalised.

Views differed on whether appliances should be sourced domestically or overseas. Some submitters supported overseas procurement because it provided access to established designs already tested in operational use. Others preferred New Zealand manufacturing because they considered it could reduce costs and delivery times and produce appliances better suited to local conditions.

Some submitters referred to the Treaty of Waitangi and emphasised the importance of equitable emergency-response capability, including for rural communities.

Submitters sought greater transparency about procurement decisions and delivery plans. They wanted clearer information about replacement programmes, maintenance and training requirements, and when stations could expect to receive new appliances.

Committee opinion

Procurement processes have evolved and improved, but ultimately will be judged by their ability to deliver appliances. The numbers of Type 3/4/5/6 appliances tell a sad story.

The shift to turnkey is understood, and likely a positive move, and New Zealand companies that build bodies are working actively to build relationships with chassis manufacturers so there is still a pathway to New Zealand-built appliances. The overarching need to de-risk FENZ acquisitions seems a key driver here, and we support this aim.

The complete lack of record-keeping for key decisions (in some cases almost all decisions) in significant projects is extremely concerning. Equally concerning is that it took until this

inquiry to bring some of this to light. FENZ assured us that processes have improved. This is encouraging on paper; however, what has not improved is the ability to deliver. For example:

- at least 36 of 47 Tranche 1 appliances suffered cracking
- none of the 30 Tranche 2s are in service after seven years
- none of the Type 5/6 have been accepted
- Type 4 design requirements are still not agreed.

During this inquiry, we questioned some key decisions taken by FENZ, including the decision to go with the NA16 chassis, the decision to accept an unsolicited proposal for Tranche 2, and the decision to accept an unsolicited proposal for body builds of Tranche 2. With a lack of record keeping (described by FENZ as a lack of "contemporaneous recording keeping"—in other words, people are trying to remember now and write something down) we can only work on trust. Trust is lacking due to the nature of other answers during this inquiry.

We would like to see FENZ move faster to agree on design specifications, and then leave them constant through procurement. An 80 percent solution delivering 100 percent of the fleet on time is better than a 100 percent solution which is yet to deliver any appliances. Shifting goalposts increases wait times and cost.

As part of this, FENZ should consider off-the-shelf products, not customised appliances. This will make them cheaper and faster to arrive.[7] This is about valuing excellence over perfection. Perfection has taken too long to arrive, and in most cases never arrived at all.

FENZ will need to demonstrate strong leadership when coordinating design requirements, as it is not just headquarters staff who change requirements. We were told that operational staff and New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union representatives also contribute to design requirements.

We were concerned to hear that Type 3 appliances are configured differently in each town, and in some cases in each station. It is very difficult to deliver a consistent product when user requirements change. An ultimate compromise and strong leadership seem necessary to deliver this. We note that NZDF vehicles are all configured identically. This would aid in delivery of new fleet, avoid changes when vehicles cascade, and give consistency for staff who move across stations, or when relief appliances move between stations.

We note that NZDF and other government organisations conduct large procurement processes. It is possible that having another agency conduct procurement for FENZ would add the expertise that FENZ has not demonstrated. Equally, large commercial operators like TR Group and Fonterra manage large fleets of similar vehicles and may be able to add value.

[7] By "off-the-shelf" appliances, we mean appliance designs that are already in operational service overseas and require only limited modification to meet New Zealand requirements.

3.1 Recommendations

10. We recommend that the Government consider whether FENZ is best placed to conduct its own procurement, or if further support is required from another government department or agency.

3.2 Supplier and contract management

Selection and management of Angloco

Angloco approached FENZ with an unsolicited proposal in July 2021, after learning about cracking in the earlier MAN appliances. FENZ directly sourced a prototype from Angloco and approved the proposal in September 2021. It did not invite other suppliers involved in the next-generation Type 3 procurement to submit proposals for this work. FENZ said it urgently needed a workable body design for the 30 MAN chassis it had already bought.

FENZ prepared a procurement plan in February 2023 to directly source body builds for the remaining 28 MAN chassis from Angloco. Initial acceptance testing of the Angloco prototype took place during February and March 2023, followed by functional testing with operational staff in May 2023. The procurement plan recorded that SEM was not considered a viable alternative because it had not delivered its prototype. It considered Angloco the only supplier able to deliver the bodies within the timeframe needed to bridge the gap before the next-generation Type 3 appliances arrived. The board approved the direct-source approach and delegated authority to the chief executive in March 2023. It gave final approval to place the order through an out-of-cycle board process in December 2023, following prototype testing and updated pricing assessments.

At our hearing on 20 July, we questioned why FENZ had progressed the procurement approach before completing operational testing or receiving the SEM prototype. FENZ acknowledged that progressing the selection without completing testing was not normal. It also accepted that decisions could have been supported by stronger procurement processes and greater rigour.

Contract and supplier oversight is being strengthened

FENZ acknowledged that its historical contract-management practices were not sufficiently robust. Reviews identified weaknesses in documentation and record-keeping, information management, and the recording of key decisions. Its procurement improvement programme includes updated policies and guidance, contract-management training, and improvements to its central contract-management system. A Contract Management Improvement Plan has also been developed to strengthen oversight throughout the life of a contract.

Oversight of major fleet contracts can include progress meetings, design reviews, factory inspections, acceptance testing, and engagement with suppliers about technical issues.

Supplier delays affected major fleet projects

As we noted in our introduction, several fleet projects did not meet their contracted delivery dates. Under the MAN/Angloco contract, the first Type 3 appliances were due in September 2024 and the final batch in September 2025. As at 28 July 2025, 10 appliances had been delivered, compared with the 24 due.

The aerial programme also experienced delays. FENZ said the supplier had not met the contracted delivery requirements for the new Type 5 appliances. As at July 2026, the Type 5 and Type 6 appliances were expected in the third quarter of 2026/27, although a formal delivery date had not been agreed.

Some appliances were accepted with known issues

Defects identified during acceptance, fit-out, and operational-readiness checks delayed the introduction of the MAN/Angloco appliances. Some MAN/Angloco appliances were accepted while known issues remained. The acceptance certificates preserved FENZ's legal rights and the supplier's obligation to remedy defects. FENZ said this reflected an attempt to balance operational needs with strict contractual compliance.

FENZ said acceptance did not remove the supplier's responsibility to complete remedial work. However, accepted appliances still required further remedial work, testing, and readiness activities before they could enter or remain in operational service.

Delays also affected warranty coverage. The body-build warranty remains in place, but the chassis warranty never came into effect because too much time passed between delivery of the chassis and completion of the appliance.

Suppliers' performance reporting has been incomplete

Recent appliance contracts include delivery dates and payment milestones. Suppliers must meet the criteria attached to a milestone before payment is made. Performance is also reviewed at project completion against measures such as timeliness, quality, and cost.

More recent contracts include measures of in-service performance. For example, the next-generation Type 3 agreements include service levels for mean time between defects, time to fix defects, and service-agent requests. FENZ said that this information would help inform future orders.

However, performance information has not been consistently maintained or reported over the life of a contract. FENZ monitored Angloco's performance during the build and provided regular reports to internal project owners, but the meetings and associated reporting ceased after the appliances arrived in New Zealand. No current written supplier-performance report was available when FENZ responded to our enquiry.

FENZ said that its Contract Management Improvement Plan is intended to address these gaps and provide more consistent monitoring and reporting from contract establishment to project closure.

What submitters told us

Submitters raised concerns about the quality of appliance builds and the resolution of defects. Reported issues concerning Type 3 appliances included body cracking, coolant and braking problems, door-lock failures, pump performance, and inadequate locker storage.

Some submitters were also concerned about the time the MAN/Angloco appliances remained out of operational service following testing and introduction-into-service activities. These concerns reflected wider frustration about the time taken to resolve faults and introduce new appliances into frontline service.

One submitter considered that suppliers and maintenance providers might be reluctant to provide candid evidence about fleet contracts because they could perceive a risk to future work or commercial relationships if they criticised procurement specifications, appliance quality, or maintenance arrangements.

Committee opinion

Most projects will inevitably come with minor faults that could not be avoided or anticipated. This is accepted and FENZ should not be blamed for these. Some submissions appeared to blame FENZ for every minor issue and set unrealistic expectations of what should be delivered.

We also note that there are commercial disputes with Tranche 1, Tranche 2, and aerial fleet procurement. This is very concerning. A dispute on one project is understandable, but three from three is not. This may be a factor of design requirements evolving (discussed above), but strong commercial contract management is clearly needed and FENZ appears unable to fulfil this currently.

Our report does not go into specifics, to protect commercial aspects of various projects. However, relationships are key, particularly for appliances that need long-term sustainment contracts. Better contract management expertise, coupled with better procurement as detailed above, could enhance this dramatically.

As it stands, commercial and legal disputes are directly stopping new appliances getting to the frontline and this is a deep shame.

We are not satisfied that FENZ maintains robust oversight throughout the life of its fleet contracts. Decision-making was not consistent and did not follow proper process.

Contractual milestones payments, remedies, and escalation processes were not strong enough to address supplier delays and non-performance. As at 30 June 2026, FENZ had paid 92.5 percent of the contract price for the 12 Angloco MAN Type 3 appliances, leaving only 7.5 percent payable following acceptance. This left FENZ with limited financial leverage despite the last 12 appliances being withheld from FENZ.

3.3 Fleet maintenance

Maintenance is delivered through a national network of providers

FENZ uses planned and unplanned maintenance to keep appliances operational. As at 13 July 2026, repairs and servicing were carried out by 22 contracted fleet-maintenance providers across New Zealand. The providers are responsible for acknowledging, progressing, and completing repairs. FENZ said this nationally distributed model enables firefighters to contact providers directly and is intended to return appliances to service quickly.

Maintenance includes scheduled servicing and responses to faults

Planned maintenance is carried out in accordance with manufacturers' requirements and FENZ's maintenance standards. It includes three levels of scheduled servicing, ranging from

basic checks to comprehensive servicing. Most appliances, excluding aerials, are serviced on two-year or four-year cycles and receive a certificate of fitness every six months.

Unplanned maintenance occurs when an appliance is damaged, develops a fault between scheduled services, or an unexpected issue is found during servicing. Urgent faults are reported directly to a maintenance provider or through the Communication Centre, depending on whether they occur during or outside normal business hours. Where an immediate repair is not possible, a relief appliance may be deployed.

Minor faults are entered in the appliance logbook and generally addressed at the next service or maintenance opportunity.

An ageing fleet is increasing maintenance pressure

FENZ said an ageing fleet generally requires more maintenance and creates increasing pressure on reliability and maintenance costs. This is particularly relevant to the Type 3 and aerial fleets, which have older age profiles than other appliance types. At the 13 May hearing, the chief executive said mechanical issues were expected to increase as the fleet aged and that reducing the age profile should reduce maintenance requirements. The average time appliances spent in workshops tripled from 21 days in 2022 to 64 days in 2025.

Age is not the only factor affecting maintenance. Appliances are heavy vehicles used in demanding and hazardous environments, which can damage bodywork, mechanical components, and fitted equipment.

FENZ's analysis of maintenance invoices from 2022/23 to 2025/26 identified electrical and pump work as common maintenance categories for Type 1, Type 2, and Type 3 appliances, tankers, and rural appliances. Electrical work was also a significant category for aerial and specialist vehicles. FENZ cautioned that this analysis was indicative rather than a formal asset-management classification. Chapter 3.4 discusses the underlying data limitations.

Maintenance costs vary across the fleet

FENZ reported maintenance costs of $18.9 million for the 12 months from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. Type 3 appliances accounted for $7 million of this total, the highest amount of any appliance type. Type 1 appliances cost $3.3 million to maintain, Type 2 appliances cost $2.8 million, and Type 4 appliances cost $1.5 million. The remaining appliance types each cost between $0.4 million and $1.5 million.

FENZ said higher maintenance costs and reduced reliability are likely while its replacement programme is implemented, as meanwhile appliances will remain beyond their target age.

What submitters told us

Submitters said appliances are becoming harder to maintain as they age. They reported difficulties obtaining replacement parts, the use of temporary workarounds, appliances breaking down again soon after repairs, and some vehicles being returned to stations without faults being resolved. They also said prolonged repairs increased reliance on relief appliances.

Reported faults included air leaks in braking systems, pressure-relief problems, foam-system failures, and electrical, wiring, and control-system faults. Submitters also said some older

vehicles had outdated safety features and components that were no longer fit for purpose. Concerns extended to aerial, specialist, and white-fleet vehicles.

Submitters questioned whether maintenance arrangements consistently resolved reported faults. Submitters described uncertainty about the status of repairs, limited access to replacement parts and specialist repair personnel, and older relief appliances being used in demanding frontline roles while primary vehicles underwent servicing or repair.

Committee opinion

The significant amount of time that appliances have been spending in the workshops is concerning. This is in part a function of the age of appliances, but there are wider concerns about the approach taken to measuring, managing, and maintaining the fleet.

3.4 Fleet information and reporting

Existing systems provide limited fleet information

Fleet information is held across several systems. The financial fleet asset register records information used for accounting and planning, including the date of manufacture for each appliance. The asset-management system schedules routine maintenance, while the financial-management system records maintenance costs and stores copies of invoices. However, FENZ said that these systems do not provide a complete view of fleet condition, faults, repairs, and maintenance history.

The distributed maintenance model also affects the consistency of the information held centrally. Repairs are carried out by providers throughout New Zealand, and invoice descriptions and fault terminology can vary. FENZ said that these differences make it difficult to classify maintenance work and identify fault trends across the fleet.

Defect information has relied on logbooks and manual analysis

Each appliance has a logbook in which firefighters record minor faults. These issues are generally addressed at the next service or maintenance opportunity. Urgent faults are reported directly to a maintenance provider or through the Communication Centre. If a mechanical issue affects an incident response, the crew records an "unavailable" or "unable to proceed" code through the Computer Aided Dispatch system.

These processes record information for different operational purposes, but FENZ said fault information was not captured centrally in a consistent way. FENZ acknowledged that it had not maintained sufficient central oversight of fleet faults. At the 13 May hearing, it said information prepared for the inquiry required substantial manual work because its systems could not produce the required reports directly.

A new system is intended to improve fault reporting

FENZ is implementing a fleet fault-management application using the ServiceNow platform. The application is intended to standardise how faults are logged, assessed, tracked, and reported, and to create a more complete and auditable maintenance record.

The system has been built and tested with operational users. Its phased implementation began in July 2026, with onboarding and training being carried out district by district. FENZ expected the national rollout to be completed by December 2026.

Once fully implemented, the system is intended to provide consistent, real-time information about faults, breakdowns, unscheduled maintenance, and fleet-performance trends. FENZ said this should make repeat failures and systemic issues easier to identify, support faster repairs, and improve asset-management decisions.

Reporting to management and governance bodies has been inconsistent

Operational information is reported through several channels. FENZ said information about fleet condition, maintenance, faults, procurement, and asset performance is held across a range of operational, financial, and asset-management systems.

The FENZ board has received fleet information through board meetings and its Financial Sustainability and Investment Committee. FENZ provided examples of board requests for information and assurance about fleet investment, Type 3 appliances, procurement, and asset-management planning between 2017 and 2024.

However, reporting has not always provided a complete picture. Historical fleet information was spread across multiple systems, and some analysis required manual review of maintenance records, invoices, incident reports, and dispatch-system data.

FENZ said that the new fault-management application, improvements to contract reporting, and stronger project governance are intended to improve the quality and visibility of information provided to management and governance bodies.

What submitters told us

Submitters raised concerns about the absence of a consistent national system for recording and monitoring faults. They said reliance on appliance logbooks and local processes created uncertainty about whether faults had been addressed.

Submitters supported introducing a national electronic record covering faults, breakdowns, servicing, repairs, and completed remedial work. One submitter also proposed using a fleet-management system to collect information about vehicle use, driving behaviour, registration, road-user charges, and routine maintenance.

Concerns were also raised about whether existing data accurately represented the use of individual appliances. One submission said activity was recorded against an appliance callsign rather than the physical vehicle, which could understate the workload of older relief appliances when they temporarily replace frontline vehicles. Submitters also wanted clearer and more consistent reporting about fleet condition and the resolution of reported faults.

Committee opinion

It was surprising to learn that in 2026 fleet maintenance is tracked in a paper notebook, with no record of whether a fault is confirmed, whether it has been repaired, which components have been replaced, and whether the vehicle is now fully operational. All that happens is the line in the notebook gets ticked off with no other record.

There is no log to measure operational time in use, calendar time in use, or distance (km) of use for components, which seems remarkable. Appliances that are each worth $1.1 million deserve better.

Some stations have built their own digital log, and while FENZ tells us it is working on this, we are aware that other users (for example NZDF with its 6 Tranche 2s) use SAP, the NZDF's logistic IT system, to track similar metrics.

3.4 Recommendations

11. We recommend that the Government direct FENZ to adopt and rapidly implement a digital fleet maintenance management system.

4 Other matters

This chapter considers other matters raised during the inquiry, including governance and oversight of fleet management, and the impact of fleet issues on firefighters, operational capability, and public confidence. It also considers the training required to support the safe and effective use of fire appliances.

4.1 Governance and oversight

The board oversees the fleet through its governance committees

The board's role and effectiveness have become a growing concern.

FENZ said the board receives information about fleet matters through board reporting and its Financial Sustainability and Investment Committee. The committee provides oversight of financial sustainability, investment decisions, and fleet programmes.

When asked for examples, FENZ was able to provide examples up until December 2023 but nothing since that time. It told us during public hearings that subcommittees considered these matters. This is a significant concern.

In March 2023, the board sought assurance that the proposed procurement approach for the MAN Type 3 appliances was appropriate, that relevant representative groups had been engaged, and that due diligence had been carried out on alternative suppliers. In December 2023, it required an out-of-cycle paper confirming the revised budget and delegation arrangements before approving the purchase of the remaining Angloco appliances.

There was no evidence of recorded board discussion of the MAN Type 3 programme after December 2023. At the 20 July hearing, we noted that the material provided did not contain records of board questions about the programme after 2023. FENZ said that the board had continued to receive updates through its Financial Sustainability and Investment Committee.

Management responsibilities are divided across the organisation

Fleet management sits within the Assets and Programme Delivery branch. Fleet staff report through the Deputy Chief Executive of Assets and Programme Delivery to the chief executive. There is no direct reporting line between fleet-management staff and the National Commander, although the chief executive and National Commander roles are currently held by the same person.

As at 18 June 2026, 22 staff worked directly in fleet management. Their responsibilities included procurement, introducing appliances into service, and maintaining and managing the existing fleet. Fleet-related work is also supported by project and steering groups that include representatives from fleet, operations, and other relevant areas.

Operational personnel contribute to decisions about appliance requirements, allocation, testing, training, and readiness for service. These activities require coordination between

fleet, operational, technical, procurement, and contract-management personnel throughout a fleet programme.

Governance and assurance arrangements are being strengthened

FENZ acknowledged that significant fleet programmes require clear accountability, timely escalation of risks, reliable information, and independent assurance. It said its past arrangements did not always provide decision-makers with sufficient visibility of fleet risks and delivery performance.

FENZ's Enterprise Portfolio Management Office has been involved in all fleet-delivery projects since January 2026. Senior project-management and project-control resources have been assigned to major capability projects, and vehicle-engineering and asset-strategy capability has been added to the fleet team.

An independent adviser is being appointed to examine the organisational, commercial, operational, and governance factors contributing to the state of fleet management. The adviser is expected to provide independent challenge and assurance to the chief executive and board, assess management's response to identified issues, and review the effectiveness of the arrangements supporting the full fleet lifecycle.

The new board chair, Raveen Jaduram, told us that future oversight should include clearer escalation of risks, better information about faults, stronger assurance, and greater board visibility of major programmes. When questioned about whether the board had the appropriate skills and experience, he said it was too early in his tenure to make that assessment, but he did note there was an expectation of better performance from the board.[8]

DIA and Minister receive information about fleet investment

FENZ is monitored by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), which advises the Minister of Internal Affairs on the organisation's performance, funding, and accountability arrangements.

As discussed in chapter 1.3, FENZ has provided DIA and the Minister with information about its capital requirements and funding pressures. DIA is developing an updated monitoring agreement to improve information sharing, engagement, and the escalation of significant issues. There is little monitoring and reporting, outside of finance, conducted by DIA.

DIA advised that FENZ's quarterly reporting provides a high-level picture of performance against its Statement of Performance Expectations, but does not focus on fleet management and instead reports capital expenditure against forecast. DIA said that fleet-specific information has generally been provided in response to requests from the department or the Minister, including information on breakdowns, reliability, fleet condition, and the delivery of new appliances.

What submitters told us

Submitters raised concerns about the absence of a published national fleet strategy and the effect this had on direction, oversight, and accountability. Some questioned why

[8] Hansard transcript (hearing with Fire and Emergency New Zealand), 20 July 2026, pp 50–51.

longstanding matters, including aerial-appliance planning and fleet replacement challenges, had not been resolved.

Submitters also called for stronger scrutiny of FENZ's governance and management of delayed or unsuccessful projects. Suggestions included greater external accountability and more direct ministerial oversight.

Committee opinion

Governance has been concerningly poor. DIA's monitoring has been, primarily focused on finance. It was described to us that DIA monitored FENZ's budget and that initially, FENZ was not spending all of its funding, but it now is. This is not an appropriate level of monitoring. The goal of any department should never be to ensure all the money gets spent, but rather that all the outputs get delivered. As a result, we have not been shown any evidence that the Minister has been receiving the level and detail of information that some members might have expected. In our 2026/27 Estimates hearing for Vote Internal Affairs with the Minister for the Public Service and Digitising Government, the Minister told us that historically, and across all government departments, the monitoring of Crown agencies has not been good enough.

The board has much to answer to. The complete lack of attention to Tranche 2 between December 2023 and June 2026 is inexplicable. It is difficult to see how board members who served during that time could continue to serve and give the Minister confidence that the board has the skills, experience, and capability to fulfil its important function. Board members exist to provide governance oversight on behalf of all those who pay insurance levies, and we cannot see how they have met expectations.

We commend the Minister for commencing the process for refreshing the board. We are pleased to see a different approach from the new chairperson, which gives us an initial hint of confidence that governance can improve.

4.1 Recommendations

12. We recommend to the Government that the responsible Minister review the membership of FENZ's board, given this committee's lack of confidence in the current board.
13. We recommend that the Government consider whether additional oversight of FENZ is required and assess how effectively ministries oversee Crown agencies more generally.

4.2 Training for firefighters

Training is required before an appliance enters operational service

Firefighters must complete training before a new appliance enters operational service. Training covers the vehicle's operation, equipment, safety features, and any differences from existing appliances. Maintenance providers also receive training to support the servicing and maintenance of the appliance.

FENZ uses a train-the-trainer model. Selected trainers receive initial training and then deliver the programme at the stations receiving the appliances. Training is generally carried out while crews are rostered on shift, so it must be scheduled and delivered progressively. This

means training can affect the time required to introduce new appliances into operational service. Training is one of the requirements that must be completed before an appliance enters operational service.

Complex appliances require more extensive training

Training requirements vary according to the type and complexity of the appliance. FENZ said the MAN/Angloco Type 3 appliances required more extensive training than previous Type 3 models because their pump operation differed from appliances already in use. The additional training contributed to the time required to introduce the appliances into operational service.

Aerial appliances also require more extensive training. FENZ said these vehicles contain advanced mechanical, hydraulic, and safety systems and are used for working at height and other specialist operations. Firefighters must be trained to operate this equipment safely before the appliance enters service.

Training needs to be considered during fleet planning

FENZ said appliance procurement involves introducing an operational capability, not just purchasing a vehicle. Training requirements need to be considered when operational requirements are developed and when introduction-into-service plans and delivery schedules are prepared.

FENZ told us that training challenges extend beyond the introduction of new appliances. It said the organisation inherited a range of training systems and approaches when FENZ was established and is now undertaking a multi-year programme to redesign its training framework. FENZ identified training as an area for reinvestment and said improving training capability is a focus for both management and the board.

FENZ said its workforce of approximately 14,000 personnel, including around 11,800 volunteers, creates additional challenges for training delivery and scheduling. It told us that introducing new appliances requires personnel to understand new technology, equipment, and operating procedures, and that training is an essential part of ensuring appliances can be operated safely when they enter service.

What submitters told us

Submitters raised concerns about differences in training opportunities and specialist capability between full-time and volunteer brigades. They noted that volunteers generally complete training alongside employment and other commitments, which can limit the time available to develop and maintain specialist proficiency.

Some submissions also raised concerns about the condition of training facilities and the wider resources available for firefighter training. These matters were outside our inquiry's primary focus, but we note submitters' view that they affected firefighters' ability to train safely and maintain operational capability.

Committee opinion

Training in general is another area that many have raised concern about. Recruit training, live fire training, and other general training issues fall outside the scope of this inquiry but are worthy of consideration.

We also learned that firefighters receive no training in driving appliances at speed before the first time they drive to a working incident. While they are trained to drive the appliance, we were surprised that, unless they happen to have access to a motorsport track, there is no training for driving a heavy appliance at speed through traffic and narrow streets.

We acknowledge the need to train firefighters on new appliances. This is one of the reasons the faults with the High Pressure Delivery on Tranche 2 appliances were found, albeit too late. Different configurations of the same type of appliance, discussed in chapter 2.1 of this report, potentially increase the training requirements.

Firefighters receive very little structured training after leaving the training school. We support any additional training they have the opportunity for while posted on station.

4.3 Use of consultants and contractors

We were shocked to learn that FENZ had spent more than $275,000 on lawyers and PR consultants to assist in this inquiry. We understand that there was a need to compile documents for us, but we also expected that we were asking for information that should have been readily available. It would be a surprise if this information was not easily available or known by FENZ. While a small amount of support may have been understandable, having consultants come and lobby committee members was a poor decision.

4.4 Other matters outside the inquiry's scope

This inquiry has focused on FENZ's fleet management and related issues. Through the submission process, we received a lot of feedback that was outside this scope, and did not proceed any further. This included, but was not limited to:

- the state of fire stations
- the state of training facilities, including lack of live fire training
- reduction of recruitment courses
- minimum crewing levels
- excessive amount of overtime worked.

Committee opinion

The number of additional issues raised that sit outside the scope of this inquiry points to a potential wider issue within FENZ that is of concern. This significant and serious issue with the fleet must be addressed with urgency, but it is likely that it is a symptom of a wider issue regarding the capacity and capability of FENZ that has developed over its nearly 10 years of existence.

4.4 Recommendations

14. We recommend that the Government take action on the out-of-scope issues identified in this inquiry.

Summary

Why fleet?

This inquiry has focused on fleet issues for three reasons.

Firstly, specific answers given by FENZ leadership over three select committee hearings from 2024 to 2026 were factually wrong, and perceived to be intentionally misleading. We came to believe that FENZ was either hiding, or hiding from, the truth. We believed the only way to find progress was to bring these issues into the public domain with clarity and transparency. It has been difficult to get that level of transparency through this inquiry.

Secondly, fleet issues were the most prominent and public issue at the time, and firefighters and their representatives that committee members met with consistently told us that fleet was the number one issue to address. Appliances are critical to emergency response; the state of appliances, particularly Types 3 to 6, was and remains such that the issue could not be overlooked.

Finally, due to the time available in this parliamentary term, a focused inquiry was needed. This would ensure it could be completed on time and with tangible recommendations that would give FENZ the opportunity to improve delivery, and give all levels of management and governance the ability to bring dramatic improvement. Improvement could include a refreshed board and a re-focused DIA team providing stronger oversight.

Transparency

We were concerned by answers that were wrong. Mistakes can happen, but more concerning has been the perception created that FENZ is hiding from the truth or hiding the truth from this committee.

There has been a pattern of both incorrect and misleading answers. Examples include progress of Tranche 2 Type 3 appliances, and the 99.72 percent response rate. FENZ leaders would be far better placed if they just owned the mistakes made in the past (and during this inquiry), laid all their cards on the table, and started the recovery from a place of brutal honesty.

FENZ leaders have told us their intent is to be transparent. That is the right thing to say, but the same hearing included answers, such as the provision of 464 ladders at Type 4 stations, that again appeared to mask, hide, or mislead. There is some kind of cultural block which is stopping direct answers being given.

We believe FENZ officials when they say they want to do the right thing, and that they are not deliberately trying to hide the truth. However, this appears to have manifested as a repeated pattern of trying to make the organisation look like it is performing well, rather than answering direct questions well.

Appliance replacement

Replacement plans for Type 3 appliances are well behind. Recent projects have been poorly managed, with questionable decisions, poor or no record keeping, and significant delays. Type 5 and 6 replacements are significantly delayed, and appear to be held up by design changes mid-project. Type 4 replacements have not yet been ordered as design specifications have not been agreed.

Long-term contracts to deliver rolling replacements are needed. The intention to focus on a Future Operating Concept is valid and could be what FENZ needs for the 2030s and 2040s. But this cannot be at the expense of what FENZ needs in the 2020s. Action is needed now and in the delivery of significant numbers of new appliances each and every year.

Funding is cited as one issue. We do not accept that budget is or has been the limiting factor. FENZ's budget has almost doubled over nine years; the issue is not how much it has, but how it uses it. As one example, sustained replacement of enough Type 3s so that no appliance is over 20 years old would cost $11 million a year, or 1.3 percent of its budget.

Headquarters and project staff

It is important to us to acknowledge that many FENZ employees have served and continue to serve in National Headquarters. These individuals undoubtedly arrive at work each day wanting to do their best to support frontline firefighters and to make a difference for their community. We have heard from some of them during this inquiry. This inquiry and the findings in this report may be difficult to have heard, and now to read, for some of the FENZ team. As a committee we are seeking to strike the difficult balance between shining a light on areas that need improvement, while not wanting to diminish the work and the good intent that is poured into FENZ, and fleet issues in particular. It is our wish that FENZ National Headquarters continues to develop into an organisation where people can find purpose and meaning, where Kiwis want to serve over a long period of time, with the goal of serving their community through service at fire stations across New Zealand.

Leadership

Leadership can delegate responsibility but not accountability.

It would be unfair to single out one individual for every wrong decision that was made, or every error and omission. Equally, it would have been unreasonable for us to expect any single individual to have the perfect answer to every question asked during this inquiry. However, FENZ leadership as a collective should have had more information available than us, yet some of our committee members were able to research and understand these issues to a level that FENZ could not answer. Not having an answer may be acceptable; appearing to intentionally give the wrong answer is never acceptable.

Leaders are given high levels of authority and remuneration because they shoulder significant levels of responsibility. The public expects leaders to own that responsibility, but we have not heard direct statements where leaders take accountability for the current state of FENZ.

We have continually heard about what FENZ "inherited" from the New Zealand Fire Service. Many who lead FENZ today were those with leadership roles in the NZFS: the name

changed but many of the people did not. It is no longer acceptable to point to the 2010s and point the finger; it is time for accountability to be owned.

Use of consultants and contractors

FENZ spending more than $275,000 on lawyers and PR consultants appears excessive to us. We believe most of the information requested should have been more easily available or known by leaders and subject matter experts within FENZ. While a small amount of support may have been understandable, having consultants come and lobby committee members was a poor decision. Even with the help of those consultants, FENZ failed to give this committee confidence.

Governance

The governance of FENZ has been unacceptable. The board should be reviewed, and DIA needs to provide a significantly enhanced oversight and monitoring function that is based on delivery of outcomes, not expenditure of budget.

FENZ is a unique organisation in not being funded through the Crown's Budget but through insurance levies. The public relies on FENZ every day of the year in every community in New Zealand, but has only the board as a mechanism for full public oversight. This responsibility needs to be taken seriously.

Conclusion

This inquiry has found that the poor state of the FENZ fleet is due sustained and significant failings of FENZ leadership, and the board over many years that have led to the organisation being in a worse position than it was in 2017.

The extraordinary amount of incorrect information that has been provided to this committee from FENZ's leadership has left us with little confidence. The use of external public relations consultants by FENZ management for this inquiry continued to erode confidence in FENZ senior management's ability to be open and honest with the committee.

The state of the fleet in 2017 is accepted, but for Types 3–6 it has got worse. The number of new appliances that have become operational since 2017 is unacceptable. The level of DIA's monitoring has most likely resulted in the Minister receiving inadequate information. We are pleased to see that during this inquiry the Minister and DIA have addressed this issue; we note the timing was while this inquiry was under way.

FENZ's fleet faces significant challenges, but they are not insurmountable. Putting long-term rolling contracts in place could give certainty to volunteer and paid firefighters, and to every community across the country, that they will be equipped with the necessary tools of the trade.

Putting emphasis on a fast and effective 90 percent solution (for example aerial appliances delivered on time and in sufficient numbers) could prove far more effective than delayed appliances that hunt for perfection but have yet to achieve it. There is an opportunity here to deliver quick wins in the upcoming Type 4 replacements.

Governance improvements could be delivered quickly, and in turn leadership that takes responsibility for the situation today could be a change that opens the door to a culture of transparency and pragmatism on which the future of FENZ can be built.

As we close, we note that none of the 30 MAN cab-chassis purchased in 2019 for Type 3 appliances are in operational service.

There is one rock of confidence in which every Kiwi citizen should take heart: Fire Stations across New Zealand are manned by thousands of firefighters who give up their time, their work, their family, and their holidays to serve New Zealand. The vast majority of them are unpaid. Businesses release staff to serve during paid periods of work, and partners hold the family together while another firefighter runs out in the middle of a significant family occasion or at the worst moment dealing with the pressures of family life. These Kiwi heroes continue to serve day in and day out, regardless of which truck is parked at the station. New Zealand will always rely on a culture of service to respond to fires, motor vehicle accidents, medical events, and civil emergencies. We should all take heart that no matter how old the appliance is, the men and women who staff it maintain the finest Kiwi tradition of service and sacrifice, of hard work through adversity, and of finding a way to get the job done no matter how challenging the circumstance.

As a committee, we want to conclude our report by thanking all of those who serve within FENZ. Firefighters and operational support, those who work on the frontline and those who work behind the scenes, including those who work in National Headquarters: thank you for your service.

Appendix A—Committee procedure

Committee procedure

We met between 1 April 2026 and 16 September 2026 to consider the inquiry. We called for public submissions with a closing date of 30 April 2026. We received submissions from 132 organisations and individuals and heard oral evidence from 15 submitters.

We received advice from the Department of Internal Affairs as the department responsible for fire services policy and for monitoring Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

Committee members

Hon Jan Tinetti (Chairperson)
Tim Costley
Mike Davidson
Andy Foster
Hon Melissa Lee
Hon Dr Shane Reti (from 13 May 2026)
Tom Rutherford (until 13 May 2026)
Lemauga Lydia Sosene

Related resources

The documents we received as advice and evidence for this inquiry are available on the Parliament website.

- Department of Internal Affairs (Departmental report)

Hansard transcripts of our hearings can be accessed at the following links:

- Hearing with FENZ on 13 May 2026
- Hearing with FENZ on 20 July 2026.

Recordings of our hearings can be accessed at the following links:

- Hearing on 13 May 2026 part 1
- Hearing on 13 May 2026 part 2
- Hearings on 20 May 2026
- Hearings on 27 May 2026
- Hearings on 3 June 2026
- Hearing on 20 July 2026
- Hearing on 29 July 2026.

Appendix B—Terms of reference

The terms of reference for the inquiry are:

Current state

- Understanding the current status of FENZ professional and volunteer appliance fleet.
- Understanding any current shortfalls or opportunities.
- Understanding the lifespan of different appliances and the projected rate of replacement to meet current and future demand.
- Examining any current faults, breakdowns and serviceability issues with the current fleet.
- What are the emergency response capacity differences between the professional and volunteer appliance fleets?

Current and future needs

- Assessing the current fleet requirements to meet the needs of all New Zealand communities across all five FENZ outputs classes.
- This includes volunteer and paid output classes, and all types of appliances, including aerial.
- Understanding the future needs of FENZ over the next 5–10 years.

Procurement issues

- Reviewing procurement procedures and systems, including opportunities, capacity and challenges.
- Understanding the opportunities for New Zealand businesses to be part of new acquisitions.
- Understanding the cost/benefit of overseas purchases, including associated travel and transportation costs and logistical through-life support.
- Investigating opportunities for cost-effective and timely future procurement.

Introduction into, and return to, service

- Investigating the reason for delays with current Type 3 Appliances, including the cost of "parking up" vehicles for a number of years.
- Investigating projected timelines and requirements to fully introduce into service or retire all current FENZ appliances.
- Understanding acceptance issues, body cracking, and other unfit-for-purpose issues.
- Understanding all aspects of new aerial appliance introduction.
- Reviewing broader introduction into service for all types.

Communication

- Investigating the reasons for variations in answers to questions over recent months.

Appendix C—Appliance types

Type 1: 	• Medium capacity pumping appliance, designed to be operated in small to medium population centres and used for all types of incidents. • 361 currently in the fleet. • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $550,000. • Average age of 18 years. • Target life: 25 years.
Type 2: 	• Medium capacity pumping and rescue appliance with specialist equipment. Designed for small to medium population centres. • 219 appliances currently in the fleet. • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $650,000. • Target life: 25 years.
Type 3: 	• Heavy pumping appliance designed for metropolitan areas or near heavy industry, including responding to motor vehicle accidents. • 196 appliances in the fleet. • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $1 million. • Primary response appliance for paid urban fire stations and used for all types of incidents. • Target life: 20 years.
Type 4: 	• Pumping appliance with integrated 17-metre aerial ladder. Provides elevated access and water delivery capability for urban areas. • 19 currently in the fleet. • Estimated replacement cost: $2 million. • Larger aerial appliance with similar capability to a Type 3 pumping appliance with the addition of a tall (17-metre) ladder. • Target life: 20 years.

Type 5: 	• Larger aerial appliance with a tall ladder and elevating platform carrying 2 crew. Current versions have a 32-metre height capability. • 6 appliances currently in the fleet. • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $2.5 million. • Target life: 25 years.
Type 6: 	• Larger appliance with similar capability to a Type 3 with a 32-metre-tall ladder and elevating platform carrying a crew of four • 4 appliances in the fleet • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $2.5 million • Target life: 25 years
Rural: 	• Four-wheel-drive rural pumping appliance with medium water capacity. Designed for vegetation fire attack and rural structural response across varied terrain. • 188 appliances in the fleet. • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $250,000 to $350,000. • Target life: 25 years.
Tanker: 	• High-capacity water transport appliance for rural operations. Supports fire suppression in areas without reticulated water supply. • 179 appliances in the fleet. • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $380,000 to $550,000. • Target life: 25 years.
Special: 	• Specialist response appliances configured for hazardous-materials management, incident command, or decontamination. • 95 appliances in the fleet. Range of different appliances. • Estimated per-appliance replacement cost: $80,000 to $500,000. • Target life: 25 years.

Appendix D—Timeline of Type 3 replacements

2010	
	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) identified a need to purchase Type 3 appliances. NZFS adopted a two-stage procurement process. It decided to purchase the cab chassis and body build separately.
2011	
August 2011	NZFS published a request for tender on the Government Electronic Tender Service to procure the cab chassis. It received responses from 8 tenderers.
2012	
	The NZFS evaluation team, which included NZPFU representatives, selected MAN as the preferred supplier for the cab chassis.[9] MAN was not the cheapest option, but it offered the best technical and operational solution.
November 2012	NZFS entered a 3–year contract with MAN to supply 47 cab chassis (Tranche 1).[10]
2013	
January 2013	A separate request for tender was issued for the supply of Type 3 body builds. NZFS enter in a contract with Fraser Fire and Rescue (FFR) to design and supply 47 body builds, with a June 2019 expiry date.[11] FFR starts building bodies (Tranche 1).
2014	
April 2014	FFR raised concerns with NZFS about the suitability of the MAN cab chassis. FFR considered that additional design and engineering work was needed. FFR and NZFS agreed to an in the per-appliance price as "full and final" settlement to resolve the suitability problems.[12] Tranche 1 cab chassis and body builds started to arrive.[13]

9 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Initial submission), p 21.

10 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 48, para 5.11.

11 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Initial submission), p 21.

12 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 48, para 5.15.

13 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fleet Timeline).

2015	
	Tranche 1s are incrementally introduced into operational use.[14]
	A range of operational and technical issues were identified with the appliances, including problems with the rear doors and pumps disengaging.[15]
2017	
	FFR was told it needed to build a "coffin box" (specialised storage bins mounted on the upper roof) on the body builds. Tranche 1 coffin boxes could not be spring mounted because of the type of chassis. FFR had to build a second strengthened chassis over the top of the MAN chassis.
2018	
	All tranche 1 appliances in use following sign off by FENZ and NZFPU.[16]
	Procurement of 47 Next Generation Type 3 appliances started (Tranche 3).[17]
2019	
July 2019	The contract with FFR was extended to December 2022 to continue supplying Type 3 appliance body builds while the Next Generation appliances were being built.[18]
August 2019	FENZ ordered a further 30 MAN cab chassis on the advice of Penske New Zealand that the MAN cab chassis would cease to be available, with final orders place before mid-August.
October 2019	Structural cracks were found in the body work of 28 of the MAN and FFR Tranche 1 appliances. The operation of newly delivered Tranche 2 appliances was put on hold pending the investigation and rectification of the body cracking.[19]
2020	
	Formal dispute with FFR commenced.[20]
	First FFR repairs for body cracking commenced.[21]

[14] Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 48, para 5.12.
[15] Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 48, para 5.13.
[16] Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 49, para 5.18.
[17] Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fleet Timeline).
[18] Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 48, para 5.11.
[19] Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fleet Timeline).
[20] Ibid.
[21] Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 50, para 5.23.

May 2020	SEM Fire and Rescue was approached to do a design and partial build to advise FENZ on its discussions with FFR about the cracking problems. FENZ decided SEM should complete a full build.[22]
	Mid-2020, the procurement process commenced for the Angloco and Emergency One appliances (Tranche 3).
August 2020	FENZ published a request for tender on the Government Electronic Tender Service to procure the Next Generation Type 3 appliances, receiving four responses.[23]
2021	
January 2021	A prototype for a Tranche 2 appliance to be designed and built by SEM commenced.[24]
	Mid–2021, FENZ commissioned 4 trial Next Generation appliances (Tranche 3): 2 by Angloco, 2 by Emergency One.[25]
June 2021	The design and build of a prototype for a Tranche 2 appliance by Angloco commenced.[26]
July 2021	FENZ received an unsolicited proposal from Angloco to build and test a Type 3 prototype appliance on a MAN cab chassis.[27]
September 2021	Angloco's proposal was approved by FENZ.[28]
November 2021	FENZ asks SEM to build a trial appliance on a MAN cab chassis already owned by FENZ.[29]
2022	
January 2022	FENZ entered into a Type 3 supply panel agreement with Angloco and Emergency One (Tranche 3).[30]
February 2022	Angloco and Emergency One were procured to supply two prototype appliances each on a Scania P360 chassis.[31]
	FENZ worked with FFR and engaged alternative engineering advisers to repair cracks to Tranche 1 Type 3 appliances.[32]
December 2022	Angloco Tranche 2 prototype appliance delivered to FENZ.[33]

22 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 53, para 5.41.

23 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Post hearing questions 1-41 and additional information requested by the committee), question 10.

24 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 51, para 5.27(a).

25 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fleet Timeline).

26 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 51, para 5.27(b).

27 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 54, para 5.54.

28 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 54, para 5.59.

29 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fleet Timeline).

30 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 63, para 5.105.

31 Ibid.

32 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 50, para 5.23.

33 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 51, para 5.27(b).

2023	
February 2023	Procurement plan to purchase body builds for remaining 28 MAN chassis via direct source from Angloco.[34]
February 2023	Acceptance testing of the Angloco prototype appliance and testing of fault fixes (Tranche 2).[35]
March 2023	Body cracking identified in 37 of the 38 MAN FFR appliances (Tranche 1).[36] A core factor of the cracking was determined to be stiffness in the locker support design. As a result, when the chassis twisted in normal use, the stress is forced into weaker parts which eventually cracked.
April 2023	Trial appliances from Angloco and Emergency One on the Scania P360 chassis arrived (Tranche 3).[37] Trial outcomes used to inform final design and preferred supplier.
May 2023	Further functional testing of Angloco prototype with the aim of identifying desirable improvements for remaining 28 MAN chassis.[38]
December 2023	SEM prototype tested at the factory in Australia, but not in New Zealand.
December 2023	FENZ placed order with Angloco to build remaining 28 MAN chassis (Tranche 2).[39]
2024	
June 2024	SEM Tranche 2 prototype appliance delivered to FENZ.[40]
September 2024	Angloco Type 3 appliances due to be delivered (Tranche 2).[41]
October 2024	Emergency One chosen as the preferred supplier of the Next Generation Type 3 appliances (Tranche 3).[42]
2025	
February 2025	FENZ ordered 14 Next Generation Type 3 appliances from Emergency One (Tranche 3).[43]

34 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 55, para 5.64.

35 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Post-hearing questions 1-41 and additional information requested by the committee), question 19.

36 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 49, para 5.20

37 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 63, para 5.105

38 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Post-hearing questions 1-41 and additional information requested by the committee), question 19.

39 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fleet Timeline).

40 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 51, para 5.27(a).

41 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 56, para 5.66.

42 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 63, para 5.107.

43 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 63, para 5.107.

July 2025	Only 10 Angloco Type 3 appliances have been delivered (Tranche 2) by 28 July. Under the supply order, 24 vehicles were due for delivery by 20 July 2025.[44]
September 2025	Final Angloco batch of Type 3 appliances due (Tranche 2).[45]
November 2025	Contractual acceptance of first batch of Angloco Type 3 appliances (Tranche 2). Appliances undergo work to prepare for use in New Zealand.[46]
2026	
	Two trial Emergency One Scania Next Generation prototype appliances have been accepted and are undergoing further checks and modifications.[47]
April 2026	Two trial Angloco Scania Next Generation prototype appliances in use.[48]
June 2026	FENZ ordered a further 14 Next Generation Type 3 appliances from Emergency One (Tranche 3).[49]
July 2026	All of the 47 MAN FFR appliances are in operational use (Tranche 1). The Angloco MAN prototype, SEM MAN prototype, and 16 Angloco MAN type 3 appliances have been accepted by FENZ. Only 2 of the Angloco MAN Type 3 appliances are in operational use, with the remaining to be in operational use by 7 August 2026. Both prototypes are due to be operational by end of August 2026.

44 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 56, para 5.66.

45 Ibid.

46 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 68, para 6.5.

47 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 65, para 5.114.

48 Ibid.

49 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Further information on fleet management processes), p 63, para 5.107.