



Media Release
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New vehicle helps remote community respond to emergencies

The keys to a new emergency response vehicle were officially handed over in July to the Arthur's Pass Volunteer Rural Fire Force.

The Toyota Landcruiser double cab has been fitted out to be suitable for use in the alpine area of Arthur's Pass and the extreme weather conditions the area experiences. The new emergency response vehicle will be used for tackling small vegetation fires, spot fires and car fires. It will also be useful to safely close off both ends of the road at crash scenes to manage traffic flows efficiently. The vehicle has medical equipment such as a defibrillator and a stretcher. It also includes fire equipment, and a water tank that holds 200 litres with a foam induction system.

Selwyn District Council's Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer, Douglas Marshall, says the council is providing the vehicle to help the Arthur's Pass Volunteer Rural Fire Force keep their community safe and provide extra assistance for the many roles they perform as volunteers.

"The Arthur's Pass Volunteer Rural Fire Force is quite different from any other volunteer service. Arthur's Pass is such a small village that the volunteers do everything - the same group of people are the firefighters, the ambulance first responders, Civil Defence volunteers and search and rescue team."

Selwyn District Council provided \$60,000 for the vehicle to be purchased, fitted out and brought up to emergency response standards. The vehicle can carry four passengers – twice as many as the old vehicle, which dated from the 1970s. The Arthur's Pass fire force also has a modern four wheel drive fire appliance, which will continue to be used alongside the new vehicle, allowing a full team of volunteers to attend emergencies. Previously volunteers used their own vehicles if additional personnel were required or for crew changes.

Arthur's Pass Volunteer Rural Fire Force Controller Nic Menary says the vehicle is a great addition. "We are immensely grateful to the council for providing us with this vehicle. It is a big step up in capability and will allow volunteers to respond to emergencies more efficiently."

He says one of the most valuable assets of the vehicle is its radio communications which allow the team to communicate with fire and ambulance services, search and rescue, Selwyn District Council Civil Defence, the Department of Conservation and helicopters. "There are very few vehicles as versatile as this one in the country."

The vehicle started service with the volunteer group at the beginning of July and has already attended car crashes.

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Photos: the new Arthur's Pass Volunteer Rural Fire Force's emergency response vehicle, and Selwyn Mayor Kelvin Coe presents Nic Menary with the keys to the new emergency response vehicle (also pictured, from left: Chris Stewart, Peter Neale and Graeme Kates)