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Earthquake Appeal for Christchurch Firefighters Going Global

Christchurch's firefighters rushed to the aid of their communities when the 22nd February earthquake struck. Now, as the dust settles, they are tallying their own losses and many are relying on the UFBA Benevolent Fund Firefighters Earthquake Appeal, set up by the United Fire Brigades Association of New Zealand, to help them get back on their feet.

The United Fire Brigades' Association of New Zealand Benevolent Fund Firefighters Earthquake Appeal has received an influx of applications for assistance from firefighters living in Christchurch who have been affected by the 22nd February earthquake. The steady stream of claims has prompted the UFBA to reach out to the global fire, rescue, and emergency management community to raise more money for firefighters in need.

Already the New Zealand Fire Service Commission and many brigades and individuals around the country have generously rallied around the UFBA Benevolent Fund Firefighters Earthquake Appeal.

"The international fire and rescue community has taken a huge interest in the disaster in Christchurch," says George Verry, UFBA Chief Executive Officer. "We've received messages from around the world expressing good wishes for the firefighters affected by the earthquake."

"Our firefighters are struggling for many different reasons. We've had a steady stream of applications for assistance, and we expect that will continue as our people, who have been hard at work, begin to assess how the quake has affected their families, their livelihoods, and their property."

"We now have the capability of accepting credit card payments through our website, and we believe donations from overseas will put us in a position to do more for those in need."

Bank of New Zealand (BNZ) has come on board to support the fund, and will be waiving all transaction fees so that 100% of funds can go directly to the firefighters in need.

When the first earthquake struck in September, a joint welfare group consisting of representatives of both the New Zealand Fire Service and United Fire Brigades' Association of New Zealand was set up to manage welfare initiatives. That arrangement has now been reinforced and the welfare group will continue to work alongside the UFBA Benevolent Fund trustees to administer funds collected through the Firefighters Earthquake Appeal.

Anyone can make a donation to the UFBA Benevolent Fund Firefighters Earthquake Appeal by visiting www.ufba.org.nz and following the link to the donation page.

For questions on the Fund or making a donation, contact Jane Davie on +64 4 237 2683 or by email at jane@ufba.org.nz.

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