



# Position Statement Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment (HOFFE)

PS-04 Version 1.0 – Issued: 01/11/22



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Fire Protection Association New Zealand

# Position Statement PS-04

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## Significant changes from the previous version

This is the first public release of this Position Statement.

## Scope

This Fire Protection Association NZ (FPANZ) Position Statement applies generally and outlines the benefits of encouraging the more widespread use of Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment (HOFFE) in New Zealand.

HOFFE includes fire extinguishers, fire blankets, and fire hose reels.

## Background

This document has been developed to enable FPANZ members, and others, to provide a consistent approach to Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment.

## Disclaimer

Please check <https://www.fpanz.org/docs/position-statements> to ensure you are using the latest version of this document.

This document should not be relied upon as legal advice.



# Position of FPANZ

The position of FPANZ is as follows:

## FPANZ recommends the widespread use of HOFFE

FPANZ recommends the installation and maintenance of suitable Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment (HOFFE) in all public sector and commercial premises, work sites, vessels, and vehicles as well as in domestic situations such as homes, cars, caravans, and boats.

FPANZ does not support the removal of fire extinguishers from premises because this decreases the level of safety for both people and property.

## HOFFE choice must be appropriate

The HOFFE selected must be suitable for both the risks and the expected users.

## FPANZ supports FENZ recommendations for fire extinguishers

FPANZ supports the Fire & Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) Position Statement “*Fire extinguisher recommendations*” which recommends the installation and maintenance of fire extinguishers in a wide range of situations. <https://fireandemergency.nz/assets/Documents/Business-and-Landlords/Protecting-your-business-or-Property/Fire-Extinguisher-Position.pdf>

## HOFFE is an important part of the plan

Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment is an important part of an overall fire safety plan that includes fire prevention & risk management, fire detection, and fire suppression. Fire protection

systems should not be relied on in isolation – a complete strategy covering all aspects is the best approach.

HOFFE enables a fire to be extinguished in its early stages, while it is still small – reducing the risk to life, fire-fighters, property, buildings, and the environment.

## HOFFE is an unsung hero

Recent New Zealand research confirms the value of Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment. It showed that 80% of fires in non-residential situations were extinguished by the public without the intervention of fire-fighters. This matches the findings of comparable international research.

The research clearly established a positive cost benefit for a wide range of premises from having HOFFE available to limit fire damage.

There are far more good news stories than bad – but most ‘fire saves’ never appear in the news. Perceived safety risks from HOFFE use can be mitigated by training and knowing ‘when to go’ – as outlined in the FENZ position statement.

## FPANZ recommends the use of certified equipment

FPANZ recommends the selection of HOFFE products listed in the *FPANZ Hand Operated Fire Fighting Equipment Register*. By choosing listed equipment, you can be confident that it has been independently certified as compliant with performance and safety standards relevant to New Zealand’s requirements.

# Position of FPANZ

## FPANZ recommends the use of qualified tradespeople

FPANZ advocates engaging competent and qualified people to help select, install, service, and maintain Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment. We recommend the use of FPANZ members to carry out HOFFE installation and maintenance. FPANZ members are bound by the Association's Code of Ethical Conduct. We recommend you also ask for people who hold the applicable NZQA qualification *National Certificate in Hand Operated Fire Fighting Equipment (Level 3)*.

A list of FPANZ members who service and maintain HOFFE equipment is available here: <https://www.fpanz.org/membership/members-search>

## Follow legal requirements

Building owners should check the rules and guidelines that apply to their situation. There are legal requirements as well as recommendations. For example, the *Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire Safety, Evacuation Procedures, and Evacuation Schemes) Regulations 2018* require almost all building owners (except private dwellings) to maintain fire equipment in accordance with New Zealand Standard NZS 4503:2005 *Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment*.

FPANZ recommends that all Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment, no matter where it is installed, is maintained in accordance with the New Zealand Standard NZS 4503.



# References

- › Fire & Emergency New Zealand Position statement “Fire extinguisher recommendations” <https://fireandemergency.nz/assets/Documents/Business-and-Landlords/Protecting-your-business-or-Property/Fire-Extinguisher-Position.pdf>
- › New Zealand Standard NZS 4503:2005 Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment <https://www.standards.govt.nz/>
- › Survey report to NZFS: <https://fireandemergency.nz/assets/Documents/Research-and-reports/Report-148-Impact-of-HOFFE-changes-for-nonresidential-buildings.pdf>
- › FPANZ members: <https://www.fpanz.org/membership/members-list>
- › FPANZ Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment Service Agents <https://www.fpanz.org/membership/members-search>
- › FPANZ Hand Operated Fire-Fighting Equipment register <https://www.fpanz.org/docs/product-registers>