

# Funeral Directors

## ASSOCIATION OF NZ

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### **Traditional elements still important as the funeral industry changes**

The Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand has today published a report <https://funeraldirectors.co.nz/assets/2023-FINAL-NZ-Funeral-Industry-Trends-Report-v2.pdf> providing a snapshot of death and the funeral industry in New Zealand. The report also captures insights into the types of funerals favoured by New Zealanders.

Funeral Directors Association Chief Executive, Gillian Boyes says for the first time in the industry women now outnumber men.

“We see this particularly in our younger workers, but we have also recently celebrated our first female long service award recipients,” says Ms Boyes.

Other industry trends include funeral workers being primarily 45 years and older and 81.5% European. Funeral homes are still predominantly independently owned although corporate ownership has increased with just under a third of registered deaths now being handled by corporate owned firms.

Key findings about types of funerals include:

- 69% overall have cremations rather than burials. However the preference for cremation is reversed amongst Pacific Peoples (72% are buried) and Māori (55% are buried)
- A maintenance of many traditional elements of a funeral with a traditional funeral service with a casket present still the most common (73% of funerals)
- A higher likelihood of a viewing of the deceased in New Zealand than reported in a similar Australian survey (65% view in New Zealand; 43% in Australia)
- An increasing use of celebrants in funeral services, again with a higher usage in New Zealand than Australia (56% celebrants in New Zealand; 37% in Australia)
- 22% of funerals being unattended with a further 15% being a ‘hybrid’ of a cremation with no service but with a viewing by the family

Deaths in New Zealand are predicted to rise over the next twenty years from 38,868 in 2022 to 52,700 and Ms Boyes says the report details factors industry needs to consider as they plan for higher numbers of deaths.

“Even as society and preferences changes, the available research on the impact of a funeral on grief in the report shows it continues to be important to have a farewell that is meaningful for the family.

“Funeral directors are hugely valued by families in helping guide decision-making, helping them ensure the funeral accurately reflects the person who has died and making sure everyone has had a chance to say goodbye,” says Ms Boyes.

**ENDS**

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The Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand represents funeral directing companies that undertake the majority of funerals in New Zealand. They are a group of caring professionals who are committed to ensuring that the families they serve receive high-quality funeral service. For more information, visit our website: [www.funeraldirectors.co.nz](http://www.funeraldirectors.co.nz)