



CiF president's office head Bartomeu Escandell and Iván Marí, chief of Formentera's fire brigade, unveiled a series of changes in the firefighting service this summer. Escandell highlighted the recent hire of an additional full-time employee, which brought the brigade's number of staff to six, four full-time professionals and two on-call workers.

Said Escandell: "For the first time our firefighters are carrying out regular daily patrols, coordinated with agents of the regional ecology bureau, to ensure we have people on the streets overseeing preventive measures at those times when wildfire risk is highest". The brigade has two fire engines and a pick-up truck fitted with a water tank and hose. Escandell, who also reported on plans to acquire a second such truck in August, said smaller vehicles like pick-ups were useful for situations in which rapid response is important.

According to the fire chief, Formentera firefighters have intervened 69 times in 2016, eight times fewer than the same dates last year. He said that decline also reflected a drop in brush fire interventions, which went from 12 to 6. Marí referred to the new GPS system in place for geolocating remote homes on the island, saying the scheme had already made a noticeable difference in the brigade's ability to arrive quickly at the scene of emergencies. Councillor Escandell took the opportunity to ask islanders to their help preventing wildfires.