



RFS Filming Policy (Non-operational)

Attached Form(s)

- [Questionnaire for Film Agents](#)

1. Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure outlines processes that must be followed for non-operational filming.

2. Procedures

2.1 Categories of film requests for RFS participation include:

- (a) On-camera:
 - (i) RFS personnel or appliances as featured subjects; and
 - (ii) RFS personnel or appliances as background action or extras.
- (b) Off-camera:
 - (i) Standby fire safety, or
 - (ii) other service for film stunt.

2.2 All proposals must be referred to Media Services.

2.3 All proposed filming activities must not contravene the RFS Policies, Service Standards, Standard Operating Procedures or NSW Occupational Health and Safety legislation.

2.4 Decisions on filming requests must always ensure that the reputation of the RFS is protected, and its sponsorship and endorsement policies are not contravened.

2.5 All commitments made under this filming policy must not in any way reduce the RFS' capacity to provide its usual standard of protection to the whole community.

2.6 All proposals will be assessed against the RFS' Risk Management Framework to determine appropriateness of supporting the proposal.

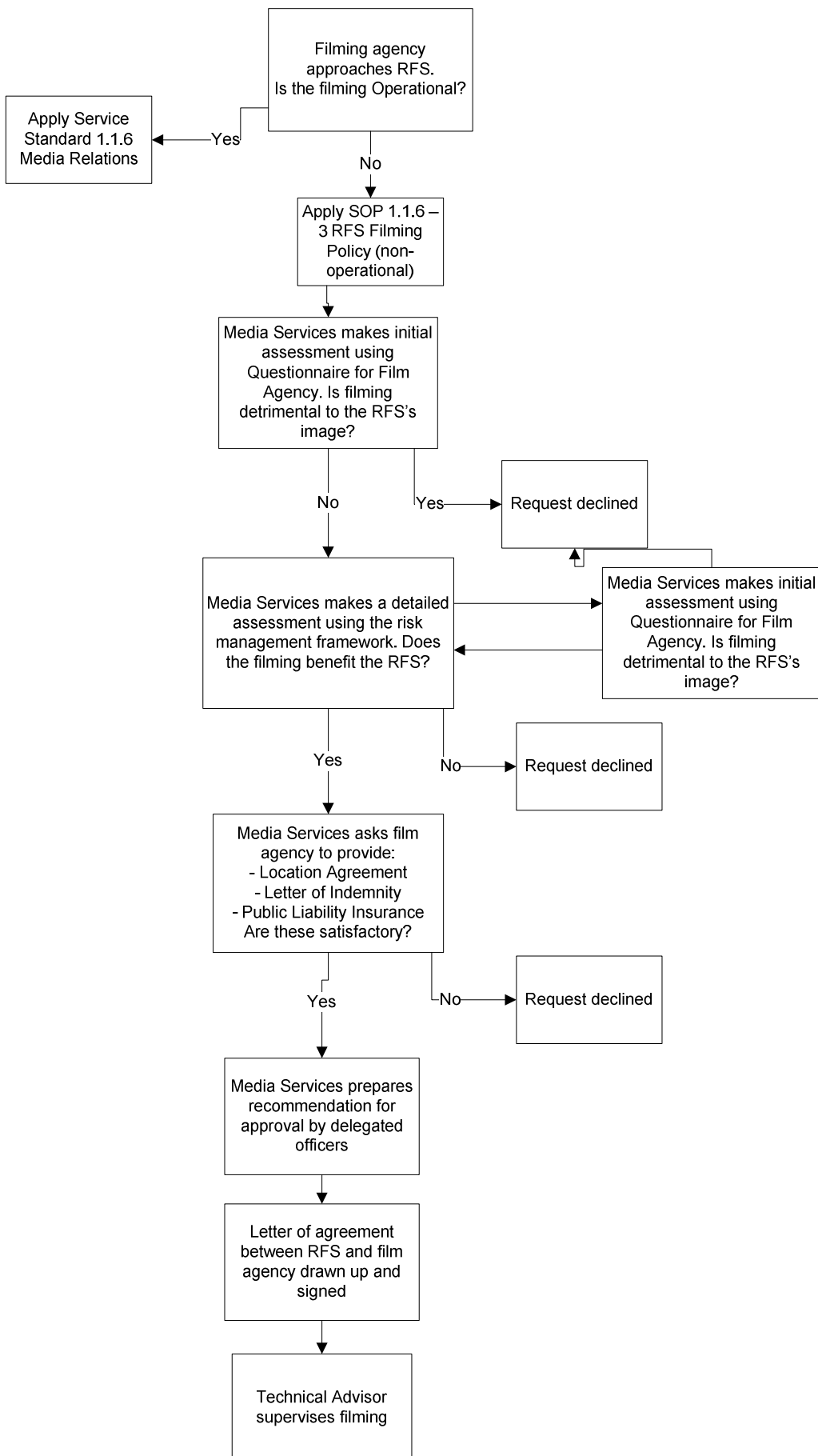
2.7 Where there is not a clearly demonstrated benefit to the RFS, a fee for services will be levied in line with RFS Schedule of Fees for Film and Television Assistance.

2.8 Where the filming can be demonstrated to fulfil a community education objective or a corporate priority, fees may be waived (at the discretion of relevant director_or regional manager whose resources are to be used).

2.9 Processes

- (a) The flowchart on the next page summarises the main processes involved in dealing with non-operational filming requests. Items in italics refer to specific documents.
- (b) Who administers filming requests?
- (i) Media Services is responsible for liaising initially with the film agency; carrying out risk assessment to determine benefit(s) to the RFS; seeking required documentation from the film agency; and preparing recommendations for approval.
- (ii) Brigade stations or district/zone/team offices contacted directly by a film agency should refer the matter to Media Services
- (c) How are requests initially assessed?
- (i) Upon receiving a request for filming Media Services will:
- Liaise directly with the agency proposing the filming (Film Agency) to ascertain the scope, genre, deadlines and requirements in detail and in writing. See '*Questionnaire for Film Agencies*' (Appendix A);
 - Request film agency to supply details of their Public Liability insurance cover (must be current and to the value of minimum \$20,000,000)
 - Outline any fees likely to be involved to the film agency at the outset;
 - Obtain a Script or Film Treatment:
 - *For scripted programs*, a complete script, or at least a script outline and relevant scenes from the film agency are required in order to assess context of RFS participation in the filming;
 - *For non-scripted genres* such as documentary, an outline is required detailing expected themes, storylines or area of research.
- (ii) The appropriate section or region expected to be involved in the filming should be consulted for initial response prior to undertaking the formal risk assessment.

NON-OPERATIONAL FILMING POLICY FLOWCHART



- (d)** How will risks be managed?
- (i)** Any request to film RFS activities must be considered on its merits.
- (ii)** Good risk management of proposed filming projects entails careful analysis of likely outcomes; preparation of clear terms of agreement; checking and clearing of legal issues, (including adequate insurance cover on part of both RFS and Film Agency for people and property); and the development of sound, equitable methods for charging fees for services. The following should be considered:
- What are the benefits to the RFS?
 - Does the proposal meet current corporate objectives and priorities?
 - If not, can the proposal be adapted so as to better meet corporate objectives?
 - What are the risks to the RFS? Are there controls to reduce these?
 - What are the likely costs to the RFS and to taxpayers of fulfilling the request?
 - What is the 'track record' or reputation of the proposing film agency?
 - The RFS has a very high reputation in the community. This goodwill and trust is vital for us to effectively provide our services and is a valuable asset. The use of the RFS' logo, uniforms, staff or vehicles must be carefully monitored in order to protect this reputation.
 - The portrayal of our operational activities also needs to be monitored so as not to compromise professional or safe work practices.
 - In broadcast television, it is rare for producers to grant editorial control or right of veto over material to a third party (in this case the RFS). Usually, the only concession offered is a screening of the final program prior to broadcast. This therefore places a high onus on the RFS to anticipate issues at script stage, to attend filming and to thoroughly brief participating personnel.
- (e)** Who will be consulted in the assessment process?
- (i)** Media Services will assess the benefits and risks of a request using the Risk Management Framework. Other officers/functional areas such as Professional Standards, Operations, Learning and Development Systems, Regional Managers, District/Zone/Team Managers and the relevant legal representative may be consulted for input prior to approval.
- (ii)** Operational Readiness will ensure that proposed filming activities comply with RFS Service Standards and Standard Operating Procedures.
- (f)** What legal issues need to be considered?
- (i)** Film Agencies will be asked to supply:
- a Location Agreement that sets out conditions for use of an RFS location and rectification procedures should damage occur to any property or equipment associated with that location.
 - a letter indemnifying the RFS against any claims for loss, injury, death, damage, liability or expense suffered by members of film crew (including direct employees and subcontractors) or third party as a result of the filming with RFS/utilising its facilities.

- (ii) Where the RFS is charging a fee for service, then the onus is on the RFS to ensure that the RFS is fully covered by the NSW Treasury Managed Funds for legal liability to any third party arising from its operations.
 - (iii) If approached by film agencies, individual firefighters should refer the matter to the RFS so that the matter can be processed through formal channels.

- (g) Who will approve the filming request?
 - (i) A *set of recommendations* outlining benefits, risks and possible conditions to mitigate these will be produced by Media Services and circulated to the appropriate officers prior to final approval.
 - (ii) Final approvals will be given by appropriately **delegated officers** (may vary from project to project) but will involve one of the following:
 - Manager Media Services;
 - Director Executive Services; or
 - Commissioner.

- (h) Are there any conditions for approval?
 - (i) Upon approval of a request, a 'Letter of Agreement' between the Film Agency and the RFS will be drawn up. It is a confirmation of negotiations surrounding conditions for approval and signed by both parties but is not intended to be a contract.
 - (ii) It should set out conditions for agreeing to the filming which may include:
 - Undertakings on the part of RFS (i.e. to provide crews, appliances, equipment, expertise etc);
 - Undertakings on the part of Film Agency (i.e. to indemnify RFS against claims, not to interfere with operations, to gather permission releases etc);
 - Fees; and
 - Requests for credits, acknowledgment, copies of final product etc.

- i) Who will supervise filming?
 - (i) A Technical Advisor or operational officer of at least inspector rank should be assigned to manage filming involving crews, fire stations and operations.
 - (ii) Their role is to:
 - brief fire crews;
 - attend and monitor filming to ensure that professional practice is maintained;
 - liaise with Film Crew;
 - have the authority to ask crews not to film sensitive/inappropriate material involving RFS personnel or activities, or to impact adversely on operations; and
 - obtain details of actual hours worked by fire crews and any other support provided and liaise with Media Services to raise an invoice.

- (j) How are fees determined?
- (i) As per Memorandum No. 2008-10 from the Premier of New South Wales, fees should only reflect costs. RFS fees for film and television assistance will take into account the following:
- Whether it is reasonable to waive fees for programs that will contribute to community fire safety or corporate priorities;
 - Ensuring fairness and equity of access to public resources;
 - Will resources be used while on-line or off-duty?
 - Administrative costs for processing the requests;
 - The impact of filming i.e. is it on a small scale or will there be a lot of people, vehicles and equipment involved?
 - Are the fees reasonable i.e. if set too high will film companies approach other fire services?
- (ii) Where a fee is being charged for resources, the rate must be calculated on a pre-determined, consistent basis, for reasons of fairness and equity.
- (iii) At present, fees are based on charges set out in the RFS Fees for Film and Television Assistance, which sets out charges for vehicles, fire fighters, equipment, infrastructure and technical advisors.
- (iv) In some circumstances it may be appropriate for two tiers of rates to apply that distinguish between:
- Firefighters being required to utilise their professional skills; and
 - Firefighters as 'bodies' i.e. 'extras' in background or accompanying a vehicle.