



Service Standard 9.1.2 External Service Awards

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 All members of the NSW RFS as defined by the *Rural Fires Act, 1997* are eligible to be nominated for the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) and the National Medal under the Australian and Honours Awards Systems.
- 1.2 This service standard and associated Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the criteria and nomination process for each of the external awards.

2 Policy

The Australian Fire Service Medal

- 2.1 The Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) was established on 12 April 1988 by Letters Patent published in Gazette S161 of 10 June 1988 and is awarded for distinguished service to the NSW RFS.
- 2.2 The AFSM is awarded for distinguished service by a member of an Australian fire service. In NSW there is an apportionment of nominations for the AFSM between the NSW RFS and Fire and Rescue NSW.
- 2.3 In keeping with the schedule for Government Investitures, the NSW RFS Headquarters will issue a request for nominations for the AFSM. Nominations should address the following criteria:
 - (a) leadership;
 - (b) commitment;
 - (c) dedication;
 - (d) achievement; and
 - (e) promotion of the NSW RFS.
- 2.4 Administrative responsibility for nominations for the AFSM rests with the Awards Section of the Membership and Strategic Services Directorate.

- 2.5** The District Office is responsible for ensuring all information on the nomination form is correct.
- 2.6** The nominator should be aware that the nominees details will be forwarded to the Honours Secretariat in Canberra and if successful, posted on the awards data base at the website www.itsanhonour.gov.au.

The National Medal

- 2.7** The National Medal was one of three awards instituted in 1975 which formed the basis of the Australian honours system.
- 2.8** The National Medal is awarded for diligent service to the NSW RFS.
- 2.9** Administrative responsibility for nominations for the National Medal rests with the Awards Section of the Membership and Strategic Services Directorate.
- 2.10** The District Office is responsible for ensuring all information on the nomination form is correct.
- 2.11** The Medal recognises long service in organisations that protect life and property at some risk to their members. Fifteen years diligent service is necessary to apply for the Medal. Clasps are available for each additional 10-year period of diligent service.
- 2.12** Members should be aware recipients of the National Medal have their name, date of award and the award provided to the Honours Secretariat in Canberra and posted on the awards data base at the website www.itsanhonour.gov.au.

3 Links

- Service Standard 8.1.3 Ceremonies and Events
- www.itsanhonour.gov.au
- Letters Patent published in Gazette S395 of 11 August 1998

4 Who is responsible for implementing the Service Standard/Policy?

- Director Membership and Strategic Services

5 Amendments

- Minor amendment made at SOP9.1.2-3 clause 2.16 4 August 2014

SOP 9.1.2 - 1

Nomination Process

for the Australian Fire Service Medal

This SOP forms part of	Service Standard 9.1.2 External Service Awards
Related forms	Nomination for an Australian Fire Service Medal

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) details the complete nomination process for the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) and the roles and responsibilities of members.

2 Procedures

Who can be nominated?

- 2.1 All members of the NSW RFS are eligible to be nominated for the AFSM. Section 8 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* defines members as the Commissioner and other staff of the Service and volunteer rural fire fighters.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this award, “contract” or “temporary” or other agency staff members are not members of the NSW RFS and are therefore not eligible to be nominated for an AFSM.

Who can nominate a member of the NSW RFS for an AFSM?

- 2.3 Any member of the NSW RFS may nominate any other member of the NSW RFS for an AFSM.
- 2.4 Self nominations are not acceptable and will not be processed.
- 2.5 The Commissioner can nominate a member of the NSW RFS for the AFSM.
- 2.6 Nominations close on 6 February and 6 August annually.

How do I nominate a member of the NSW RFS for an AFSM?

- 2.7 Members of the NSW RFS must be nominated for an award using the prescribed Nomination Form and meet the criteria set out in these SOPs.

How do I prepare a nomination?

- 2.8 When completing the Nomination Form the following details are to be provided:
- (a) contact details of the person being nominated for an award;

- (b) contact details for the person submitting the nomination;
- (c) contact details for any other persons who would validate your nomination or who would be willing to provide a reference in support of your nomination.

- 2.9** Include detailed examples that show how the nominee has demonstrated distinguished service and achievements that are outstanding and worthy of recognition through the External Awards system.
- 2.10** Nominations must be submitted to the Awards Section by 6 February annually for the following Queen's Birthday Honours and 6 August annually for the following Australia Day Honours and Awards List.

Are nominations confidential?

- 2.11** All nominations are strictly confidential and the information provided will be used only to assist the Chairman of the Awards Committee and the Commissioner in considering the merits of the nomination.
- 2.12** The person nominated *should not* be approached for information or advised of his or her nomination at any stage.
- 2.13** The process follows those used by the Honours Secretariat in Canberra and the Awards Section will not release information concerning the process or progress of a nomination.
- 2.14** The Awards Section will acknowledge receipt of a nomination. There will then be no further correspondence in relation to the nomination. The Awards Section is unable to provide any information on the success or otherwise of nominations.
- 2.15** If a nominated person does not receive an award, then clearly the nomination was unsuccessful. However, unsuccessful nominations for an award may be renominated in the following year.

How are nominations assessed?

- 2.16** The Chairman of the NSW RFS Awards Committee considers all nominations made for the AFSM twice yearly in order to meet the submission deadlines set by the Honours Secretariat in Canberra. Nominations for the AFSM are announced on Australia Day and on the Queen's Birthday each year.
- 2.17** The Chairman makes recommendations to the Commissioner on the nominations for the AFSM.
- 2.18** In considering nominations, the Chairman of the Awards Committee seeks to determine that the person concerned:
- (a) has given distinguished service and has made a significant contribution to the NSW RFS;
 - (b) has made a contribution that stands out from others who may have also made a valuable contribution; and

(c) demonstrated all of the eligibility requirements of the AFSM.

2.19 The degree and value of the contribution, rather than merely length of service is the primary focus for distinguished service.

2.20 Once the nominations have been assessed they are forwarded to the Minister of Emergency Services who will make the final recommendation to the Honours Secretariat.

How are recipients told of their award?

2.21 Recipients of an AFSM are advised in writing by the Honours Secretariat in Canberra of the offer of the AFSM. The names of successful nominees are published annually on Australia Day and on the Queen's Birthday.

2.22 Members of the NSW RFS may or may not accept a nomination and this will remain a matter between the Commissioner, the nominated member and the Honours Secretariat.

What part does management play?

2.23 Managers play a vital part in the External Awards process. Managers and Regional Managers endorse nominations and confirm the nominee is worthy of the award they are nominated for.

2.24 Managers check the nomination form to ensure:

- (a) the completeness and appropriateness of the nomination;
- (b) detailed examples of the nominee's contribution to the RFS are provided.
- (c) that the appropriate signatures have been obtained and affixed to the Nomination Form and that all details are correct.

2.25 Managers consider the nomination and make a recommendation regarding the nominee.

2.26 Regional Managers are to consider the nomination based on its merits and make a recommendation.

Management recommendations

2.27 Where managers are not recommending a nomination, they should attach their written reasons to the Nomination Form and forward it to the next level in the NSW RFS chain of command. This will ensure that the Commissioner is privy to all of the information concerning a particular proposal for an award.

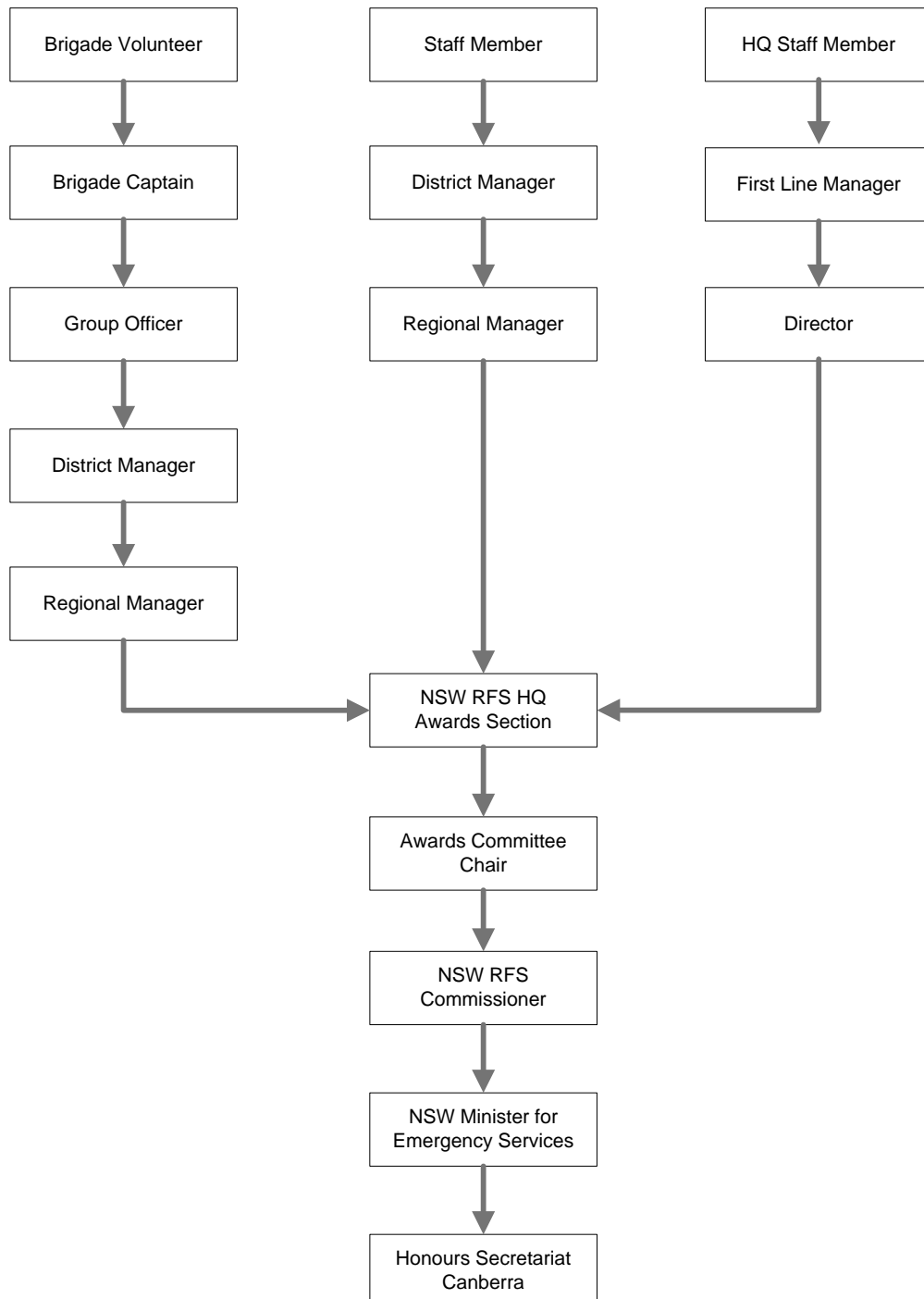
For further information or help

2.28 If you have any further questions, or require guidance in the preparation of a nomination, please contact your first line manager or the Awards Section by telephone, by emailing awards@rfs.nsw.gov.au or by writing to the Awards Section, Headquarters, NSW Rural Fire Service, Locked Mail Bag 17, Granville NSW 2142.

More information is also available on the Honours Secretariat Website
www.itsanhonour.gov.au.

Chain of Command for signatures on Nomination Forms

From the point of origin of the nomination:



SOP 9.1.2 - 2

Protocols for AFSM Awards

This SOP forms part of	Service Standard 9.1.2 External Service Awards
Related forms	None

1 Purpose

1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) defines the protocols for the Australian Fire Service Medal.

2 Procedures

Conditions for award of the Australian Fire Service Medal

2.1 The Australian Fire Service Medal is awarded by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the responsible Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers.

2.2 Each year the following awards may be made:

- (a) one award for each 1,000, or part of 1,000, full-time permanent members of the fire service or combined fire services (as the case may be) of that State serving on 30 June in the year immediately preceding that calendar year;
- (b) one award for each 5,000, or part of 5,000, part-time, volunteer or auxiliary members of the fire service or combined fire services (as the case may be) of that State serving on 30 June in the year immediately preceding that calendar year; and one additional award.
- (c) one award of the Medal shall be made in each calendar year in respect of the fire services or combined fire services (as the case may be) in each of the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory of Australia.
- (d) one award of the Medal shall be made in each calendar year in respect of a Commonwealth fire service, and
- (e) an occasional award (not exceeding one per calendar year) may be made in respect of the fire service of an External Territory as determined by the responsible Minister.
- (f) The awards are announced on Australia Day (January 26) and the Queen's Birthday (June) of each year.

Post Nominal

2.3 A person to whom the medal has been awarded is entitled to have the post nominal 'AFSM' placed after his/her name on all occasions when the use of such letters is customary.

Insignia Design

- 2.4** The Australian Fire Service Medal is a circular copper-nickel medal. It is ensigned with the Crown of St Edward. The front of the medal displays an image of the Queen superimposed over a seven-pointed star of flames. The back of the medal is inscribed with the words 'Australian Fire Service Medal', and 'For Distinguished Service' on a background of flames. The medal ribbon is a 32 millimetre-wide ribbon with a central vertical band of gold, which is superimposed with a red pattern symbolising flames. The two outer vertical bands are green.

Wearing Awards

- 2.5** On presentation of their award, recipients are given a booklet that includes information concerning the Award diagram guide to wearing insignia.
- 2.6** As an external award, the manner of wearing the medal is determined by the Governor General. All national awards are worn on the left breast.
- 2.7** Full-sized insignia will be worn on left breast, whenever full-size medals are deemed appropriate and in accordance with Service Standard 8.1.3 Ceremonies and Events.
- 2.8** Full sized insignia are only displayed on formal occasions when full NSW RFS dress is worn such as official or ceremonial parades, formal daytime receptions and when directed by the Commissioner or advised by the NSW RFS Protocol Officer. The Medal is worn 1mm and centrally placed above the top of the left pocket.
- 2.9** Miniature insignia are displayed on formal mess or evening dress.
- 2.10** A ribbon bar may be worn on the left breast for all other occasions. The bottom edge of the bar is placed 1mm above the left breast pocket.

Conditions Governing Awards

- 2.11** The AFSM Medals are worn according to the Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards, which is available from the Honours Secretariat Website: www.itsanhonour.gov.au.
- 2.12** The Awards Section will also maintain a Register of Awards.
- 2.13** The Governor General may cancel the AFSM and may restore the award so cancelled. If an award is cancelled, the name of the person to whom the award was made shall be erased from the Register and the person shall return the Medal to the Registrar at the Honours Secretariat. If a previously cancelled award is reinstated, the Registrar shall restore the entry in the Register that has been erased.

The Awards Ceremony (Investiture)

- 2.14** The State Governor normally presents the Medal at Government House at an investiture ceremony. The investiture ceremonies occur twice a year following the publication of the Australia Day and Queen's Birthday Honours List.

SOP 9.1.2 - 3

Nomination Process for the National Medals

This SOP forms part of	Service Standard 9.1.2 External Service Awards
Related forms	Nomination for a National Medal

1 Purpose

1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) defines the complete nomination process for the National Medal and the roles and responsibilities of all members.

2 Procedures

- 2.1 The National Medal was established in 1975 as one of the first three elements of the Australian honours system.
- 2.2 When the medal was first introduced it recognised 15 years of diligent service by members of the Australian Defence Force, Australian police forces, fire and ambulance services.
- 2.3 In 1982, eligibility changed. The Defence Force Service Awards were introduced recognising long service in the Australian Defence Force. Eligibility for the National Medal progressively expanded to include people who had participated in part-time and volunteer service, members of the Australian Protective Service and correctional and emergency services.
- 2.4 In 1997 the government commissioned a review of the National Medal. Two significant features were added:
- (a) eligibility was extended to include members of qualifying volunteer search and rescue groups and;
 - (b) provision was made for an individual's service to be aggregated more easily across different qualifying organisations
- 2.5 The new regulations were formally introduced on 18 June 1999 by Letters Patent.

Nominations

Who can be nominated?

- 2.6 All members of the NSW RFS are eligible to be nominated for the National Medal.
- 2.7 For the purposes of this award, contract or temporary or other agency staff members are not members of the NSW RFS and are therefore not eligible to be nominated for a National Medal.

Who can nominate a member of the NSW RFS for a National Medal?

- 2.8** Any member of the NSW RFS may submit a nomination for another member of the NSW RFS for the award of a National Medal.
- 2.9** Self nominations are not acceptable and will not be processed.
- 2.10** The Commissioner can nominate a member of the NSW RFS for the National Medal.

How do I nominate a member of the NSW RFS for a National Medal?

- 2.11** Members of the NSW RFS must be nominated for a National Medal using the prescribed Nomination Form and in line with the criteria set out in these SOPs.

Nomination Process for Volunteers

- 2.12** A nomination generated by a brigade member requires the endorsement of the Brigade Captain or Group Captain, and then the nomination must be endorsed by the District Manager. The District Manager may seek further information to assist them in their determination.

Nomination Process for District Managers

- 2.13** A nomination generated by a District Managers requires a Regional Manager's endorsement on the nomination form. The Regional Manager may seek further information to assist them in their determination.

Nomination Process for Staff

- 2.14** A nomination generated by a staff member requires the immediate Supervisor's endorsement on the nomination form. The nomination form must be forwarded to the appropriate Manager, and then to the Director for their endorsement. The nomination is then sent to the Commissioner through the Awards Section.

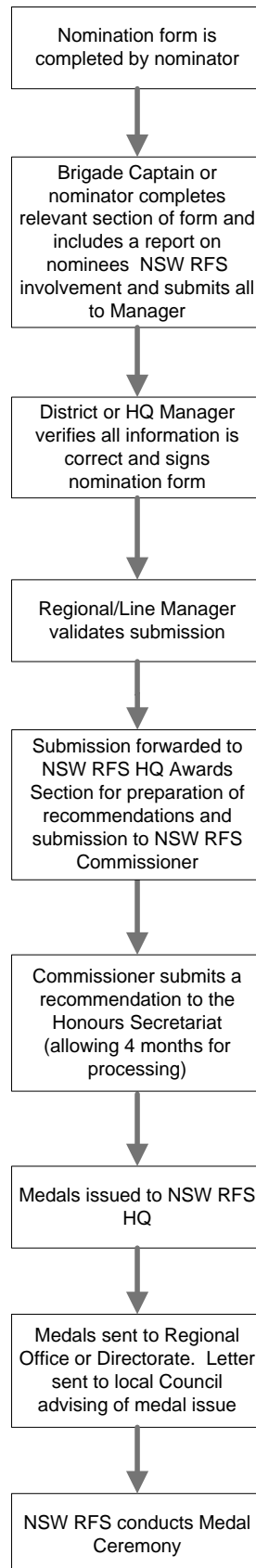
How do I prepare a nomination?

- 2.15** When filling out the Nomination Form you must provide the following details:
- (a)** contact details of the person being nominated for an award;
 - (b)** the person's first, middle and surname must be provided e.g. John William Ruckman;
 - (c)** if prior recognition of service is required, nominees must provide a copy of their Certificate of Service from any other recognised organisation e.g. police, army, fire brigade etc;
 - (d)** contact details for the person submitting the nomination;
 - (e)** contact details for any other persons who would validate your nomination or who would be willing to provide a reference in support of your nomination;

- 2.16** Include examples that show how the nominee has demonstrated diligent service and detail why the nominee's service and achievements are worthy of recognition through the External Awards System.
- 2.17** Should further guidance be required members should contact the Awards Section.

How are nominations assessed?

- 2.18** The National Medal may be awarded to a person who has:
- (a)** served diligently as a member of an Australian Fire Service on or after 14 February 1975.
 - (b)** has served in a service organisation for at least 15 years, or for periods, that in the aggregate, amount to at least 15 years
 - (c)** has during the period of service:
 - i.** maintained a level of training sufficient to fulfil the primary function of the service organisation;
 - ii.** maintained a level of physical fitness sufficient to fulfil the primary function of the service organisation; and
 - iii.** performed, or been ready to perform the primary function of the NSW RFS.
 - (d)** A clasp to the National Medal is not automatically awarded after the completion of each further period of ten years continuous service. The medal holder must be nominated to receive an additional clasps for the National Medal.
- 2.19** For the purposes of determining eligibility for this award a person has served the organisation "diligently" if, in the opinion of the Commissioner of the NSW RFS:
- (a)** the service given by the person has been conscientious and of good standard: and
 - (b)** in the performance of the service, the person showed good conduct as a member of the NSW RFS.
- 2.20** The following flowchart shows the nomination process:



Are nominations confidential?

- 2.21** Nominations are not confidential. However the information provided to assist the Commissioner in considering the merits of each nomination is strictly confidential.
- 2.22** The processes followed are those used by the Honours Secretariat in Canberra and the Awards Section will not release information concerning the progress of a nomination.
- 2.23** The Awards Section will acknowledge receipt of a nomination for an award to the nominee with a copy being provided to the appropriate Regional Manager.
- 2.24** If a nominated person does not receive an award, then it can be assumed the nomination was unsuccessful.
- 2.25** Members of the NSW RFS may or may not accept a nomination and this will remain a matter between the Commissioner, the nominated member and the Honours Secretariat.

What is the estimated timeframe for receiving this award?

- 2.26** As National Medals are externally issued a minimum of 4 months needs to be allowed for nomination to be processed.

What part does management play?

- 2.27** Managers play an important role in the External Awards process. Managers and Regional Managers are to endorse nominations and confirm the nominee is worthy of the award for which they are nominated.
- 2.28** Managers check the Nomination Forms for:
 - (a)** completeness and the appropriateness of the proposed award
 - (b)** accuracy and the appropriateness of the statement for the award.
 - (c)** the correct signatures have been obtained and affixed to the Nomination Form.
- 2.29** Managers are to consider the nomination and make a recommendation to their Regional/Line Manager.
- 2.30** Regional Managers should also endeavour to prioritise those nominations originating from within their respective District.

Management recommendations

- 2.31** Where Managers are not recommending a nomination their written reasons are to be attached to the Nomination Form to ensure that the Commissioner is privy to all of the information concerning a particular proposal for an award.

SOP 9.1.2 - 4

Protocols for the National Medal

This SOP forms part of	Service Standard 9.1.2 External Service Awards
Related forms	None

1 Purpose

1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) defines the protocols for the National Medal.

2 Procedures

Insignia Design

2.1 The National Medal is a circular bronze medal ensigned with the Crown of St Edward. The front of the medal features the Commonwealth Coat of Arms in a recessed circle. The rim of the medal carries the inscription 'The National Medal'. The ribbon is 32 millimetres wide and has 15 alternating gold and blue vertical stripes.

Wearing Awards

- 2.2 On presentation of their award, recipients are given a booklet that includes information concerning the Award diagram guide to wearing insignia.
- 2.3 As an external award, the manner of wearing the medal is determined by the Governor General, and it is worn according to the Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards, which is available from the Honours Secretariat Website www.itsanhonour.gov.au.
- 2.4 All national awards are worn on the left breast.

Cancellation and Reinstatement

2.5 The Governor General may cancel the Award of the National Medal or the clasp to the medal and may restore the award so cancelled. If an award is cancelled, the name of the person to whom the award was made shall be erased from the Register and the person shall return the Medal to the Registrar at the Honours Secretariat. If an award that has been cancelled is reinstated, the Registrar shall restore the entry in the Register that has been erased.

The Awards Ceremony

2.6 The National Medal is presented by the Commissioner or designated representative of the NSW RFS. Full details of the Ceremonies and Events relating to the presentation of the National Medal is found in Service Standard 8.1.3 Ceremonies and Events.