



# SERVICE STANDARD 7.1.6

## HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Version Number	1.1
SOPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ SOP 7.1.6-1: Health and Safety Management System Overview</li><li>➤ SOP 7.1.6-2: Work Health and Safety Obligations and Responsibilities</li><li>➤ SOP 7.1.6-3: Managing Work Health and Safety Documents and Records</li><li>➤ SOP 7.1.6-4: Communicating Work Health and Safety Information</li></ul>
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### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its members and others to whom it owes a duty of care under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act).
- 1.2 The NSW RFS has adopted a Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) to assist it in complying with this commitment.
- 1.3 The aim of the HSMS is to:
  - a. continually improve WHS performance;
  - b. create a framework for WHS due diligence;
  - c. manage health and safety risks;
  - d. eliminate work-related injuries and illnesses; and
  - e. ensure compliance with all applicable Work Health and Safety legislation, codes of practice and standards.

## 2 Definitions

- 2.1 A number of terms used in this Service Standard have a specific meaning defined in the WHS Act. These terms are marked with an asterisk (\*). For the purpose of this Service Standard, the following definitions apply:
- a. **Due diligence\***: an Officer (as that term is defined in the WHS Act) must exercise due diligence to ensure the NSW RFS complies with its WHS obligations. See section 27 of the WHS Act.
  - b. **Health and Safety Management System (HSMS)**: that part of the overall management system which includes the organisational structure, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining the WHS Statement, and so managing the risks associated with the NSW RFS.
  - c. **Next in charge**: the supervisor or manager directly in charge of a NSW RFS member e.g. In the case of volunteer members, for an officer or member of a brigade this would be the captain and for a captain or group officer the district manager.
  - d. **Member**: a volunteer or staff member of the NSW RFS.
  - e. **Officer\***: for the purposes of the WHS Act, an Officer is a person who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the NSW RFS. See section 247 of the WHS Act.
  - f. **WHS**: Work Health and Safety.
  - g. **WHS incident**: an incident that adversely affects the health or safety of a member or other person to whom the NSW RFS owes a duty of care under the WHS Act.
  - h. **WHS Act**: *Work Health and Safety Act, 2011* (NSW) and the regulations made under that Act.
  - i. **Work Health and Safety Statement (WHS Statement)**: a statement issued by the Commissioner which outlines the NSW RFS' commitment, intentions and principles in relation to work health and safety performance, provides a framework for action and for the setting of its work health and safety objectives.
  - j. **Worker\***: any person who carries out work for the NSW RFS in any capacity, including an employee, volunteer, cadet, contractor or subcontractor and their employees, a labour hire employee, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee or a student gaining work experience.
  - k. **Workplace\***: is any place where a member of the NSW RFS works or goes while at work. This includes:
    - i. all NSW RFS offices, stations, other facilities, vehicles, boats and aircraft; and
    - ii. any other place where members go or are likely to go while engaged in an NSW RFS activity.

## 3 Policy

- 3.1 The WHS Statement reflects the commitment of the NSW RFS to the work health and safety of its members and all others to whom it owes a duty of care under the WHS Act.
- 3.2 Work health and safety considerations must be included in all NSW RFS planning processes, including strategic, corporate, operational and section business plans.
- 3.3 The NSW RFS will take a proactive approach to investigating WHS incidents, near misses and other incidents affecting the health and safety of members or others to whom the NSW RFS owes a duty of care under the WHS Act and ensure that corrective action is taken where appropriate and that any lessons learnt are shared appropriately with members and others.

### Health and Safety Management System

- 3.4 The NSW RFS will utilise AS/NZ 4801 and AS/NZ 4804 (see Section 4 - Related Documents for full titles) in developing and implementing the HSMS.

- 3.5 Components of the HSMS may be integrated into other NSW RFS systems and documentation. These may include operational doctrine, incident management procedures, training materials, procurement procedures and asset management procedures.
- 3.6 The NSW RFS will measure and evaluate the implementation of the HSMS through audits, self-assessment, inspections and testing, in accordance with guidance material provided by the Health, Safety and Welfare Section.
- 3.7 Key health and safety performance indicators will be developed as part of the HSMS and monitored by the Commissioner and Executive Directors to assess the effectiveness of the HSMS and identify areas for improvement.

### **Breaches of WHS Obligations**

- 3.8 A failure to comply with this Service Standard may constitute:
  - a. a breach of discipline in the case of a volunteer member - see Service Standard 1.1.2 *Discipline*; or
  - b. misconduct in the case of a staff member - see s.69 of the *Government Sector Employment Act, 2013* (NSW).
- 3.9 The Commissioner, senior executives, Directors, Managers and next in charge must take action in a timely manner in relation to any unsafe work practice or breach of a WHS obligation on the part of a member or other person to whom the NSW RFS has WHS obligations of which they become aware. This may include:
  - a. advising the person of the specific work practices which are unsafe;
  - b. ensuring the person understands the safe work practices that are required;
  - c. arranging further training, briefing, mentoring or supervision of the person as required; or
  - d. in the case of a serious breach or repeated breaches of WHS obligations, initiate disciplinary or misconduct action as appropriate.
- 3.10 A member must not take any reprisal or other detrimental action against a person who reports or discloses a genuine breach of the WHS Act, a hazard that affects the health and safety of any person or a WHS incident.

### **Review of WHS Statement and Service Standard**

- 3.11 The NSW RFS Work Health and Safety Statement will be reviewed by the Commissioner in consultation with members every 2 years.

## **4 Related documents**

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#)
- [Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002](#)
- [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)
- [Government Sector Employment Act 2013](#)
- [NSW RFS Work Health & Safety Statement](#)
- [NSW RFS Health, Safety and Welfare Handbook](#)
- AS/NZ 4801:2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems - specification with guidance for use
- AS/NZ 4804:2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems - general guidelines on principals, systems and supporting techniques
- [Policy P5.1.6 Records Management](#)
- [Service Standard 1.1.2 Discipline](#)
- [Service Standard 1.1.14 Personal Information and Privacy](#)
- [Service Standard 7.1.8 Work Health and Safety Consultation and Issue Resolution](#)

## 5 Amendments

AMENDMENT DATE	VERSION NO	DESCRIPTION
22 February 2019	1.0	Initial release
16 June 2020	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Repeals and remakes SS 7.1.6 v1.0</li><li>➤ Minor amendments, including updating review cycle to 5-yearly instead of 2-yearly.</li></ul>

# SOP 7.1.6-1

## HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

### 1 Purpose

1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure outlines the components that make up the HSMS.

### 2 Procedures

#### Work Health and Safety Statement

- 2.1 The Work Health and Safety Statement is issued by the Commissioner.
- 2.2 Each NSW RFS Directorate is responsible for ensuring the NSW RFS Work Health and Safety Statement is available to all members and others, including suppliers, external contractors, and people visiting NSW RFS workplaces.
- 2.3 The Work Health and Safety Statement must be displayed:
  - a. on the NSW RFS Intranet, MyRFS and the NSW RFS public website;
  - b. in the reception areas and on notice boards of all NSW RFS offices; and
  - c. in all rural fire brigade stations and other NSW RFS facilities.

#### Health, Safety and Welfare Handbook

- 2.4 The NSW RFS will develop and maintain a Health, Safety and Welfare Handbook (**HSW Handbook**) which consolidates references and links to all policy documents, procedures, guidance documents and other tools which make up the HSMS.
- 2.5 The HSW Handbook will be updated regularly to reflect new, updated and superseded documents.
- 2.6 The HSW Handbook is the first point of reference for all health, safety and welfare matters.

#### Policy documents (Policies, Service Standards and SOPs)

- 2.7 Service Standard 7.1.6 and the associated SOPs outline the high-level requirements of the HSMS.
- 2.8 Additional Service Standards, SOPs and Policies may be developed to support the HSMS.

#### Health, Safety and Welfare Guidelines

- 2.9 Health, Safety and Welfare Guidelines (**HSW Guidelines**) will be developed by the Health, Safety and Welfare Section (**HSW Section**) where more detailed guidance is required to implement components of the HSMS.
- 2.10 HSW Guidelines will be updated regularly to reflect changes in legislation, operational requirements and to ensure continuous improvement in health and safety management.
- 2.11 The HSW Section will consult with relevant workers and others in relation to the HSW Guidelines. Feedback and comments from members and others will be taken into account when reviewing HSW Guidelines.
- 2.12 HSW Guidelines will be approved by the Executive Director, Membership and Strategic Services.
- 2.13 Compliance with HSW Guidelines is mandatory.

#### Additional information

- 2.14 The HSW Section may develop other documents to support the process and practices within the NSW RFS HSMS. These may include forms, fact sheets, checklists, tools and safety communications.

- 2.15 The HSMS includes documents and processes which are not managed by the HSW Section, but which meet obligations under the WHS Act. This includes but is not limited to procedures relating to operations (e.g. operational protocols), facilities management, asset management, learning and development, records management and procurement.
- 2.16 Key information will also be made available to members through the NSW RFS Firefighters' Pocket Book.

### **3 Related Forms**

- None

# SOP 7.1.6-2

## WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 This Standard Operation Procedure outlines the WHS obligations and responsibilities of members and others.

### 2 Procedures

- 2.1 All members and others in NSW RFS workplaces, have a role to play in ensuring both their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace.
- 2.2 While this SOP identifies a number of WHS specific obligations and responsibilities that are imposed on members and others it must be read and applied in conjunction with the WHS Act and the duties it imposes on the NSW RFS and others.
- 2.3 Additional obligations and responsibilities may be identified in NSW RFS HSW Guidelines.
- 2.4 All members must comply with their WHS obligations and responsibilities.

#### Commissioner and senior executives

- 2.5 The Commissioner and senior executives who are Officers for the purpose of the WHS Act have specific duties under the WHS Act.
- 2.6 The Commissioner and senior executives who are Officers for the purpose of the WHS Act must:
- comply with their obligations under the WHS Act, including exercising due diligence to ensure that the NSW RFS complies with its duties and obligations under the WHS Act;
  - ensure that the NSW RFS Health and Safety Statement is regularly reviewed and reflected in strategic and operational objectives;
  - provide leadership in work health and safety by modelling positive safety behaviour and fostering a strong safety culture throughout the NSW RFS;
  - ensure that the necessary resources are available to maintain the Health and Safety Management System (**HSMS**);
  - ensure that the HSMS is implemented throughout the NSW RFS;
  - regularly review and respond appropriately to WHS activity reports and performance statistics;
  - respond appropriately to WHS incidents, WHS incident investigations and any recommendations flowing from an investigation; and
  - oversee the development and regular review of WHS strategic plans, to ensure continuous improvements in health and safety performance.

#### Directors, Managers and Next in Charge

- 2.7 Directors and Managers must:
- ensure that the HSMS and all relevant WHS policy, procedures and HSW Guidelines are implemented in their area of control;
  - provide leadership in work health and safety by modelling positive safety behaviour and fostering a strong safety culture in their workplaces;
  - ensure that safe systems of work are implemented in their area of control;

- d. ensure that members and others in their area of control are appropriately supervised and receive appropriate training and information to safely perform their duties;
- e. ensure that WHS incidents and near misses are reported, appropriately investigated and any appropriate action taken to prevent further incidents from occurring;
- f. ensure that appropriate health and safety consultation, communication and dispute resolution processes are maintained; and
- g. ensure that site management and emergency response plans are maintained.

2.8 Next in charge must:

- a. provide WHS leadership and encourage participation in work health and safety by the members they lead;
- b. ensure that WHS obligations and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by the members they lead;
- c. ensure that all relevant WHS policy, procedures and guidelines are implemented by the members they lead; and
- d. ensure that WHS incidents and near misses are reported in accordance with the relevant procedure.

### **NSW RFS members and other workers**

2.9 All members are encouraged to be actively involved in health and safety in their workplace.

2.10 Members and other workers in NSW RFS workplaces must:

- a. comply with their obligations under the WHS Act;
- b. take reasonable care for their own health and safety;
- c. report to their next in charge anything that may impact on their ability to safely perform their work;
- d. take reasonable care that their actions or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others;
- e. comply with all relevant WHS policy, procedures and HSW Guidelines;
- f. comply with any reasonable direction that is given by the NSW RFS;
- g. complete WHS related training as required for their role and the work they undertake;
- h. report all WHS hazards and incidents (injuries and near misses) to their next in charge as soon as possible; and
- i. cooperate with HSMS processes, including WHS incident investigations, emergency response planning and managing WHS risks relevant to their role.

### **Visitors**

2.11 Visitors to NSW RFS workplaces must:

- a. comply with their obligations under the WHS Act;
- b. take reasonable care for their own health and safety;
- c. take reasonable care that their actions or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others; and
- d. comply with any reasonable direction that is given by a NSW RFS representative.

### **Others with specific WHS obligations and responsibilities**

2.12 Members who engage or manage contractors have specific responsibilities which are outlined in the WHS Act and the HSW Guidelines for Managing Contractors (under development).

2.13 Elected Health and Safety Representatives (**HSRs**) have specific responsibilities, powers and functions, which are found in the WHS Act, [Service Standard 7.1.8 Work Health and Safety Consultation and Issue Resolution](#) and NSW RFS HSR Guidelines.

- 2.14 Members who create documents with WHS implications, including Service Standards, policies, operational doctrine, incident management procedures and training materials, must ensure they comply with the WHS Act, codes of practice, standards, and the HSMS.
- 2.15 In some situations, the NSW RFS may share WHS responsibilities with others, for example:
- a. other agencies whose members/employees perform work with members or under the direction of the NSW RFS;
  - b. other agencies whose members/employees direct the work of members;
  - c. other agencies or employers in whose workplace members work;
  - d. controllers and co-tenants of premises where members work; and/or
  - e. labour hire agencies and contracted workers who are engaged by members on behalf of the NSW RFS.
- 2.16 In circumstances where the NSW RFS shares WHS obligations with others the, NSW RFS must consult with the relevant employer or other entity to ensure WHS risks are managed effectively.

### **Membership and Strategic Services**

- 2.17 The Membership and Strategic Service Directorate, through the Health, Safety & Welfare Section (HSW Section), is responsible for providing strategic and operational advice on health, safety and wellbeing, and is responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of the HSMS.
- 2.18 The HSW Section will:
- a. develop and regularly review the HSMS;
  - b. provide advice on WHS risk management, workers compensation, member welfare and related matters;
  - c. develop and regularly review WHS documents including policies, Service Standards, Standard Operating Procedures, the HSW Handbook and HSW Guidelines for approval by the relevant Executive Director;
  - d. develop strategies for continual improvement in WHS performance, and facilitating WHS strategic planning at the corporate level;
  - e. manage and maintain a WHS incident reporting and recording system;
  - f. liaise with relevant external authorities, including SafeWork NSW and the State Insurance Regulatory Authority;
  - g. oversee and report on investigations of serious WHS incidents;
  - h. facilitate workers compensation claims by members;
  - i. advise on health and welfare issues for members, including return to work assistance for injured/ill members;
  - j. provide periodic reports to the Commissioner, Executive Directors and the Audit and Risk Committee on the performance and effectiveness of the HSMS, including recommendations for its improvement;
  - k. manage Counselling and Support Services, Member Assistance Program and Employee Assistance Program; and
  - l. develop and implement health and wellbeing strategies and plans for the NSW RFS.

## **3 Related Forms**

- None

# SOP 7.1.6-3 MANAGING WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

## 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The objectives of this SOP are:
- to establish the requirements for creation, publication, review and withdrawal of health and safety documents; and
  - to establish the requirements for creation, review, retention and disposal of health and safety records.

### Definitions

- 1.2 **Health and Safety Documents** are those documents that form part of the Health and Safety Management System and which are managed by the Health, Safety and Welfare Section including:
- WHS Statement;
  - Relevant Service Standards and Policies;
  - Relevant Standard Operating Procedures;
  - HSW Guidelines;
  - HSW Fact Sheets; and
  - HSW forms and templates.
- 1.3 A **Health and Safety Record** is a document that is generated as a result of following a health and safety procedure and includes:
- WHS incident (injury or near miss) reports and hazard reports;
  - documents relating to WHS incident investigations;
  - WHS risk assessments;
  - site management plan (SMP) records (e.g. record of testing emergency response procedures, site inspections);
  - WHS induction records;
  - health monitoring records;
  - WHS plans;
  - WHS performance reports; and
  - externally generated reports and correspondence related to WHS matters.

## 2 Procedures

### Managing HSMS Documents

- 2.1 WHS documents must comply with the WHS Act, workers compensation legislation and NSW Public Service Commission directives.
- 2.2 WHS policy documents, including the WHS statement, policies, Service Standards and Standard Operating Procedures must be managed in accordance with Service Standard 1.5.1 *Management of NSW RFS Policy Documents*.
- 2.3 Appropriate document controls must be applied to other WHS documents, including, as a minimum, a unique document name, issue date and version control, and must be identifiable as NSW RFS documents.
- 2.4 WHS policy and guidance documents must only be available electronically to ensure currency. Printed documents are uncontrolled documents.

2.5 Obsolete or superseded documents must be removed from circulation.

### **Managing WHS Records**

- 2.6 WHS records, other than those with specific record-keeping systems, must be retained in accordance with Policy P5.1.6 *Records Management*.
- 2.7 WHS incident and hazard reports must be recorded in accordance with the WHS incident reporting system prescribed by the HSW section.
- 2.8 Business sections may retain WHS incident and hazard records on the corporate record-keeping system (currently HPE) in accordance with Policy P5.1.6 *Records Management*, provided that confidentiality requirements are met.
- 2.9 Confidential information, including medical/health records must be managed in accordance with any relevant privacy legislation and Service Standard 1.1.14 *Personal Information and Privacy*, with access limited to essential personnel.
- 2.10 Workers compensation records are only to be maintained by the HSW Section on confidential files.
- 2.11 Site Management Plan (SMP) documents must be retained as WHS records.
- 2.12 WHS training records must be maintained in the corporate recordkeeping system.
- 2.13 Equipment and facility testing and maintenance records must be retained in accordance with any systems or procedures specified by the NSW RFS Infrastructure Services Directorate.

## **3 Related Forms**

- > None

## SOP 7.1.6-4

# COMMUNICATING WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

## 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The objective of this SOP is to outline the NSW RFS approach to communicating WHS information.

## 2 Procedures

### Communicating WHS Information

- 2.1 All members must have access to the WHS information required to perform their role safely, and meet their responsibilities and obligations under the WHS Act and SOP 7.1.6-1.
- 2.2 Information which must be made available to all members includes:
- the Work Health and Safety Statement;
  - health and safety related policy documents and procedures relevant to the work performed;
  - information on how to report WHS incidents and hazards;
  - emergency response procedures and information on accessing first aid;
  - safety data sheets for hazardous chemicals;
  - contact details for their HSR (if applicable); and
  - information on safe use and maintenance of PPE/PPC.
- 2.3 The [Health, Safety and Welfare Handbook](#) is the first point of reference for WHS matters.
- 2.4 MyRFS, or the applicable NSW RFS web based systems, must be the primary method of accessing WHS information.
- 2.5 Key WHS information must also be made available to members through the NSW RFS Firefighter Pocketbook. Regular updates will be made to the electronic version of the Firefighter Pocketbook. Printed versions are uncontrolled.
- 2.6 Supplementary information may be made available to members through alternative means where appropriate including posters, brochures, safety alerts and social media posts.
- 2.7 WHS must be included as an agenda item at all team meetings, including Brigade meetings, to provide opportunities for communicating WHS information, and for raising and discussing WHS matters.
- 2.8 The State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) poster *If You Get Injured at Work* must be displayed in a prominent place in all NSW RFS stations, offices and other facilities. It is currently available on the NSW intranet and from the SIRA website.

## 3 Related Forms

- ["If You Get Injured at Work" poster](#) - NSW State Insurance Regulatory Authority.