



NSW RFS YOUNG MEMBERS GROUP

Information Package

October 2015

About the Young Members Group (YMG)

The number of young people within the NSW RFS is growing, and it is expected that growth will continue over coming years - particularly as we place increased emphasis on the attraction and retention of members to the age of 25 years.

By consulting young people in decision making and planning processes we will benefit as an organisation by:

- › Making better decisions simply by hearing and considering young people's opinions.
- › Helping us to understand young people's diverse needs, subsequently assisting us to develop strategies to attract and retain young members.



The Young Members Group provides an effective channel of communication between the young members of the NSW RFS and the broader membership, as well as providing an avenue for developing partnerships and leadership skills.

An advisory group for young members also sends the message that the NSW RFS:

- › respects the opinions and ideas of young members,
- › recognises the knowledge and expertise of young members,
- › is giving young members an interest or stake in the direction of the NSW RFS, and
- › does not make assumptions about the interests of young people and allows them to define what issues are important to them.

Membership

The membership of the 'Young Members Group' comprises of:

- › ten young volunteer members between the ages of 18 - 25 years,
- › an equal ratio of female and male members where possible,
- › equal representation from each of the four NSW RFS regions where possible,
- › one staff member who will provide secretariat support to the group,
- › a senior NSW RFS staff member who will act as the ex-officio member of the group, and
- › an RFSA representative who will be a conduit between the YMG and the RFSA.

Ex-Officio Member (non-voting member)

The ex-officio member is a senior member of the NSW RFS staff and is available to support and give direction to the group as required. The ex-officio is the Executive Director Membership and Strategic Services' representative on the group and ensures that the activities and conduct of the group are consistent with the Service Standards and values of the NSW RFS. The ex-officio is appointed by the Chair of the Membership Services Consultative Committee, who is the Executive Director Membership and Strategic Services.

Secretariat (non-voting member)

The Secretariat provides administrative support to the group. They are usually the first point of call for group members and make all arrangements for meetings including travel, accommodation, and meals. The Secretariat is available to assist with the preparation of advice to the Membership Services Consultative Committee. Secretariat support is provided through the Volunteer Relations and Workforce Planning section of the Membership and Strategic Services Directorate.

RFSA Delegate (non-voting member)

The RFSA delegate is appointed by the Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA). The primary role of this position is to provide a conduit between the Young Members Group and the RFSA. The Young Members Group may also seek support and direction from the RFSA delegate to ensure that the activities of the group are consistent with the direction and policies of the RFSA.

Term of Membership

The term of membership is two years. Successful applicants will begin their term at the first YMG meeting of 2016 (generally held in March) and complete it at the first meeting of 2018.

Roles and Responsibilities

As outlined in the group's charter the primary purpose of the Young Members Group is to advise the Membership Services Consultative Committee as well as other areas of the NSW RFS as appropriate.

Below is an example of some of the roles the group might undertake:

- › Provide advice on NSW RFS Service Standards open for comment that affect young members through existing Policy and Service Standard feedback processes.
- › Promote and provide advice on issues affecting young members.
- › Assist in developing strategies that might enhance the experience of young people in the NSW RFS.
- › Provide advice on recruitment and retention strategies relating to young people.
- › Raise the profile of young members within the NSW RFS.
- › Assist in developing communication strategies for young members.

Meetings

Generally, all meetings are held at NSW RFS Headquarters at Lidcombe. It is anticipated the group will meet three times a year. Meeting dates will be in line with the NSW RFS Consultative Committee meeting dates.

Alternative arrangements may be made from time to time, with the agreement of the Chair of the Membership Services Consultative Committee.

Attendance at Meetings

Before completing an application we encourage all potential applicants to bear in mind the commitment required when participating on a committee.

It is expected that group members attend all scheduled meetings. This may include meetings during weekdays and/or weekends. If required, the group's secretariat will arrange transport, meals and accommodation for scheduled meetings with the costs being met by the NSW RFS.

Criteria for Group Members

Young member representatives must:

- › be aged 18 or over and 25 or under as at 24 January 2016,
- › have at least one (1) year service history with the NSW RFS and be classified as either 'ordinary' or 'probationary' member,
- › participate regularly in their local Brigade and District,
- › show leadership qualities or capabilities,
- › be a good communicator and be prepared to promote the work of the group within their local District and Region,
- › have an active interest in the future of the NSW RFS and have the ability to identify opportunities for the betterment of the membership,
- › be willing and available to attend meetings at NSW RFS Headquarters,
- › be able to work in a committee setting, and
- › have a sound knowledge of the issues and opportunities relating to young people in the NSW RFS.

It is expected that all members of the group will:

- › have a genuine interest in opportunities relating to the development, recruitment and retention of young people,
- › participate in the group in a positive and proactive manner,
- › not use their position on the group as an avenue to drive personal agendas or local issues that would otherwise be more appropriately handled at the District, Regional or Sectional/Directorate level,
- › at all times behave in a manner that is consistent with the NSW RFS values and code of conduct,
- › observe confidentiality on matters declared confidential,
- › attend and present to the Membership Services Consultative Committee if required, and
- › agree to relevant checks through the National Police Checking Service upon appointment, if not previously checked.

Nomination Process

Applicants must complete an application form and have it endorsed by their Captain and District Manager. Completed forms should be emailed to volunteer@rfs.nsw.gov.au no later than 24 January 2016.

After the closing date, applications will be short-listed against the criteria outlined in the 'membership' section of this information package. Short-listed applicants will be asked to take place in a phone interview which will be facilitated by a panel of NSW RFS staff.

After interviews have been completed the panel will make a recommendation to the Chair of the Membership Services Consultative Committee who will endorse the successful applicants.



For further information regarding the Young Members Group, please contact Volunteer Relations & Workforce Planning on 02 8741 4969 or email volunteer@rfs.nsw.gov.au