Students enrolled into the program must:

- have an 80 percent attendance record of training sessions and activities over the period of the program
- take part in the practical and theory assessment process and
- be deemed competent by the program coordinator.

All equipment associated with the program is provided by the NSW RFS. Students participating in the program will be outfitted with NSW RFS personal protective clothing and equipment which is returned at the completion of the program.

Delivery the program

While the program is delivered by NSW RFS members the school is required to support the program by providing supervision during training sessions.

Schools can express interest in running the program by contacting:

NSW Rural Fire Service
Youth Development Officer
Phone 02 8741 5555 or
Email volunteer@rfs.nsw.gov.au
About the NSW Rural Fire Service

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is the world’s largest volunteer fire service – our organisation has more than 70,000 hard working, professional and dedicated volunteers in communities right across New South Wales.

Volunteers have been protecting local communities from bush and grass fires for more than 100 years. Today, our volunteers perform a wide variety of roles and attend a range of emergencies like bush and grass fires, house and structure fires, road accidents as well as provide assistance at other events like floods, storms and searches.

We also aim to reduce the impact of bush fires by reducing hazards and educating the community about fire prevention and precautions.

The Secondary Schools Cadet Program

The NSW RFS Secondary Schools Cadet Program is a great way for students to learn new skills which will last them a lifetime. The program provides Year 9 and 10 students with an insight into fire safety and prevention whilst developing practical life skills and a general appreciation of community service and volunteerism.

The aim of the program is to:
• Develop an interest in the NSW RFS and its traditions
• Provide cadets with a knowledge of fire safety and preparedness
• Develop the qualities of leadership, self-discipline, self-reliance, initiative and team work
• Encourage cadets to continue service in the NSW RFS or other community service organisations
• Provide training that can contribute to NSW RFS firefighter and other specialist training.

These qualifications can be used in later life, whether it’s for work or for joining a volunteer rural fire brigade.

The Secondary Schools Cadet Program can be linked to NSW Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) Years 7–10 Syllabus.

Program overview

The majority of the program is based on practical activities however there may be some theory involved. We encourage our members to tailor the program to suit their local community. Typically, the program will run over a 10 week period with 1–2 hours of instruction per week. Below is an example of a 10 week Secondary Schools Cadet Program.

Week:
1. Overview of the NSW RFS and fire behaviour
2. Structure of the NSW RFS, vehicles and familiarisation
3. NSW RFS rank and bush firefighting equipment
4. Emergency services in the local community
5. Bush fire survival plan and emergency drills
6. Casualty assistance
7. Practical scenarios
8. Brigade visits and extinguishers
9. Practical scenarios and revision
10. Final theory and practical assessment and presentation of certificates.

The program is primarily coordinated and delivered by NSW RFS volunteers and therefore the availability of these personnel will determine both the class size and when the program can be held.

Usually class sizes are around 15–20 students; ideally classes will be held midweek in the afternoon (1.00pm to 3.00pm for example).

During the program students will be divided into teams of five to six students, where they will develop leadership and teamwork skills.

“I have had so much fun with the NSW RFS and have learnt a lot about team work and taking responsibility”

James Petty – 2010 NSW RFS Cadet of the Year