



SERVICE STANDARD 1.5.3 NSW RFS/RFSA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Title	NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committees
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Contact	Director, Corporate Planning, Governance and Learning
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 The Commissioner relies on a variety of consultative committees for advice on the operations and management of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS).
- 1.2 This Service Standard covers the committees that operate between the NSW RFS and the Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA).
- 1.3 The committees include the Membership Services, Infrastructure Services, Operations and Community Engagement Consultative Committees.
- 1.4 The Service Standard provides information on the membership, charter and meeting procedures of the NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committees.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this Service Standard and its accompanying Charter, the following definition applies:
 - a. **Working group:** a group convened for a specific project and for a defined period of time. A working group may include NSW RFS members who are not members of a NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committee.

3 Policy

- 3.1 The membership of each NSW RFS/RFSA consultative committee shall be as follows:
 - a. A NSW RFS Executive Director (Chair);
 - b. A RFSA Director (Deputy Chair); and
 - c. Eight RFSA representatives comprising two from each NSW RFS Region (North/South/East/West).
- 3.2 RFSA representation will be sought through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to the RFSA. The eligibility criteria and accessibility to the EOI process shall be determined by the RFSA.
- 3.3 Term of appointment shall be two years, after which time a new EOI process shall determine committee membership. If a member is unable to complete their term, a replacement will be selected by the RFSA from the predetermined alternate delegates.
- 3.4 Members may sit on only one NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committee at a time.
- 3.5 Unless otherwise determined, each committee shall include volunteer and staff members. The ratio of volunteer to staff RFSA delegates of each committee shall be determined by the RFSA.
- 3.6 Committees shall provide regular reports of the main issues emanating from the committees to the Corporate Executive Group.
- 3.7 Committees may form working groups as the need arises, and shall provide such working groups with relevant terms of reference.
- 3.8 Committees shall provide advice to the Commissioner on issues falling within their charter of responsibility or on matters incidental to that charter. The Commissioner may invite any committee to provide advice on any matter.
- 3.9 Committee members are bound by this Service Standard to observe confidentiality on matters which the Chair of the committee or the Commissioner declares to be confidential. Such matters must not be communicated outside of the committee except in a form approved by the committee Chair or the Commissioner.
- 3.10 Committee members are expected to carry out the responsibilities of membership, including attendance at meetings and other tasks assigned by resolution of the committee.
- 3.11 The Commissioner may rescind the membership of a member of a committee for non-compliance with this Service Standard.
- 3.12 Generally, all consultative committee meetings shall be held at NSW RFS Headquarters at Lidcombe, with all committees meeting on the same day. Alternative arrangements may be made from time to time, with the agreement of the Commissioner and the RFSA.
- 3.13 NSW RFS managers with functional or regional responsibility for the areas of business of each committee may be invited to attend the committee as needed, at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Conflicts of Interest

- 3.14 A committee member with an actual or perceived financial or other conflict of interest in a matter before a committee must declare that interest to the chair of the committee and, if requested, must disqualify themselves from discussion of and voting on that matter. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect such a disclosure.
- 3.15 The Executive Officer of each committee shall maintain a Conflicts of Interest register.
- 3.16 The onus is on the committee member to declare a conflict of interest.
- 3.17 Cases where a conflict of interest is in doubt, or in question may be referred to the NSW RFS Professional Standards Unit for a ruling.
- 3.18 For more detail, refer to NSW RFS Policy P1.1.3 Conflicts of Interest.

Review of this Service Standard

3.19 This service standard will be reviewed every two years in line with the committee appointment cycle.

4 Links

- *Rural Fires Act 1997*
- *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*
- P1.1.3 Conflicts of Interest
- Service Standard 1.1.7 Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Service Standard 1.1.1 Management of NSW RFS Policy Documents
- Membership Charter
- Renton, N.E., (2005) *Guide for Meetings and Organisations*, Vol 2, 8th Ed, Thomson Lawbook Company, Australia

5 Amendments

AMENDMENT DATE	VERSION NO	DESCRIPTION
17 October 2001	1.0	Initial release as Service Standard 1.1.18 NSW RFS Consultative Committees
23 April 2004	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Repeals and remakes version 1.0➤ Amends clauses 1.1, 2.10.1(a) and 2.10.7(e)
1 September 2004	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Repeals and remakes version 1.1➤ Amends Heading “Issue” to include RFSAC endorsement 18 August 2004
29 May 2009	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Repeals and remakes version 1.2➤ Complete review and adoption of new format➤ Replaces references to “Non Statutory Standing Committee” with “Consultative Committee”
1 July 2014	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Repeals and remakes version 2.1➤ Reflects current committee structure
1 August 2016	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Repeals and remakes Service Standard 1.1.18 NSW RFS Consultative Committees v2.1➤ Review of Service Standard title and number – Updated to Service Standard 1.5.3 NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committees➤ Complete review➤ Updates current position titles



NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committee

<Insert name of Committee>

Charter

ESTABLISHMENT

The Committee has been established under Service Standard 1.5.3 NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committees by the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) and the Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA) to provide advice to the NSW RFS on matters pertaining to <insert appropriate business areas>.

PRINCIPAL ROLES

The principal roles of the Committee are to:

- a. Provide a forum of consultation for the development of NSW RFS initiatives, policies and future direction.
- b. Discuss and propose solutions to significant issues in relation to:
 - > <insert appropriate subject matter as bullet points>
- c. Consult and provide advice on any high level agency issues that materially affect:
 - > <insert appropriate business area as bullet points>>
- d. Form working groups as required for specific tasks.
- e. Provide a forum to discuss and provide advice on any policies and service standards released for comment.

PROCEDURES

1 Membership:

Membership of the Committee is:

- a. NSW RFS Executive Director <insert Directorate Name> (the Chair)
- b. RFSA Director (Deputy Chair)
- c. Two RFSA representatives from each of the four NSW RFS regions
- d. NSW RFS Director or other membership as determined by the Executive Director <insert Directorate name> on a needs basis, as advisors.

NOTE: There is to be no multiple membership of consultative committees.

2 Chair

The Executive Director <insert Directorate Name> of the NSW Rural Fire Service shall be the Chair.

3 Meetings

- a. Meetings shall be held three times a year, preferably in March, June and October at NSW RFS Headquarters at Lidcombe. Business shall generally be dealt with in one day, however the chair reserves the right to meet on the following day, should the need arise.
- b. Meeting agenda and minutes shall be recorded using the approved template.

4 Attendance

It is expected that members of the Committee shall make every effort to attend meetings. In the event of a committee member being unable to attend a meeting the RFSA may invite one of the predetermined alternate delegates to attend the meeting.

5 Decision making

The Committee agrees that speedy resolution of matters sent to it for determination is fundamental. It therefore accepts the principle of, wherever possible and appropriate, making decisions on those matters which are identified on the meeting agenda. Where this is not possible, the Committee should identify when a decision relating to the agenda item will be made.

6 Quorum

A Quorum shall be when 50% or more of the Committee Members including either the Chair or Deputy, are present.

7 Executive support

The <insert position title> is the Executive Officer and shall be responsible to the Chair for the following support to the Committee:

- a. The preparation and circulation of agendas, papers and minutes at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting
- b. The preparation and circulation of draft minutes on the approved template (containing responsibilities for further action) within two weeks of the meeting
- c. The recording of attendance at meetings and any supporting administrative arrangements for these meetings
- d. The preparation and submission of reports to the CEG, or as required.

8 Submission of agenda items

- a. Agenda items shall be received by the Executive Officer at least four weeks prior to the scheduled meetings.
- b. Business papers relating to agenda items submitted by the NSW RFS and RFSA shall be on the approved template and shall have the following structure:
 - i. Author
 - ii. Issue
 - iii. Background
 - iv. Present Position
 - v. Proposal
 - vi. Recommendation

9 Submission of late items

Late items of an extremely urgent nature and approved by the NSW RFS or the RFSA State Council, as appropriate, are the only items accepted as late items and require the Chair's approval in order to be tabled at the meeting.

10 Conduct of meetings

- a. The meetings shall be conducted in line with the agenda provided.
- b. Late items approved by the Chair shall be discussed during general business unless the Chair believes it is appropriate to discuss the issue at some other point on the agenda.
- c. RFSA Committee members shall be responsible for reporting to RFSA Divisional Committees on the activities of this Committee.

11 Decisions/resolutions of the Committee

- a. The recommendations of the Committee shall generally be made by consensus. Where consensus is not possible, the Chair shall determine the appropriate decision.
- b. Resolutions requiring further action are to be referred on by the Executive Officer as appropriate.

12 Other participants

- a. Where it is considered appropriate to obtain the input of a NSW RFS officer as the subject matter expert on an issue before the Committee, and with the agreement of the Chair, these officers may be asked to participate in the relevant portion of the meeting.
- b. In order to minimise inconvenience to the officer/s concerned, they shall be informed of the time they are due to speak and every effort shall be made to adhere to this arrangement.

13 Presentations

From time to time, presentations may be given to the Committee on current issues relating to the business of the Committee. Presentations shall be limited to a period of 15 minutes. Additional time may be allowed for a period of questions and answers.

14 Review

This Charter will be reviewed along with the related Service Standard 1.5.3 NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative Committees every two years in line with the two year Committee EOI cycle.