

POLICY P3.3.3

NSW RFS WORK EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Version Number	2.0
SOPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SOP P3.3.3-1 National Police Checks for Federal Government and other Work Experience Applicants ➤ SOP P3.3.3-2 Becoming a Host Organisation
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Contact	Director, Membership Services
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1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements, processes and parameters surrounding the participation of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) in Federal Government and other work experience activities such as vocational work placements and Work for the Dole programs.

2 Definitions

2.1 For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- a. **Federal Government work experience activity:** a Federal Government program such as 'Work for the Dole' where participants receive income support.
- b. **Job Seeker:** a person participating in a Federal Government work experience activity.
- c. **Student:** a person participating in a vocational work placement activity.
- d. **Vocational Work Placement:** A formal voluntary work experience activity undertaken through an institution such as schools and universities, as part of an education or training course where participants do not receive any monetary return for participation.

3 Policy

3.1 The NSW RFS supports participation in Federal Government and other work experience activities that seek to improve opportunities for job-seekers and students who want to gain skills and experience in the workplace.

Who manages Federal Government and other work experience activities?

- 3.2 The Australian Government has contracted a range of organisations to provide employment services in more than 2,000 locations across Australia. Job Services Australia providers are a mix of large, medium and small for profit and not-for-profit organisations.
- 3.3 Other institutions such as schools and universities manage vocational work placements for students to take part in as a requirement for gaining a Record of School Achievement (RoSA) or tertiary qualifications.

NSW RFS participation

- 3.4 From time to time, the NSW RFS may be approached by Job Services Australia providers, volunteer members of the NSW RFS, or members of the public seeking unpaid work in order to fulfil their work experience activity requirements that, in some cases, enables them to receive income support.
- 3.5 NSW RFS participation in Federal Government and other work experience activities is permitted, provided that the requirements of this Policy can be met and all dealings with providers and institutions are undertaken with coordination and/or overview by the Membership Coordination Unit (MCU).
- 3.6 The MCU must keep a record of all Federal Government and other work experience arrangements.

Insurances

- 3.7 The job seeker or student participating in any Federal Government or other work experience activity is required to be covered through their Job Services Australia provider or institution for all appropriate insurances, regardless of the job seeker's or students membership with the NSW RFS.

Note: the NSW RFS maintains public liability insurance to cover the Services' liability.

Background check

- 3.8 The job seeker or student regardless of any existing NSW RFS membership, is required to undergo a background check through the National Police Checking Service (NPCS). This is processed by the NSW RFS Membership Coordination Unit (MCU) and differs slightly from the normal membership application process. Refer to SOP P3.3.3-1.
- 3.9 Students who are undertaking a vocational work placement as a requirement for gaining a RoSA are not required to undergo a background check.
- 3.10 Consistent with NSW RFS policy in relation to member transfers, rejoining and applications for dual membership, existing members of the NSW RFS are required to undergo a background check if they are to participate in a Federal Government or other work experience activity (regardless of whether they have undergone a background check previously).

Type of work that can be performed

- 3.11 Duties undertaken by the job seeker are for the purpose of enhancing their skills by providing them with on the job experience and training opportunities. It is not to replace tasks undertaken by another person or role, including tasks undertaken by volunteers in District offices
- 3.12 Managers should use discretion when tasking duties to the job seeker or student to ensure that confidentiality of data and information is maintained.

NSW RFS members participating in work experience activities

- 3.13 In the event that the job seeker or student is also a member of the NSW RFS, tasks usually associated with their role as a volunteer, or tasks that would normally be undertaken by volunteers in the District, cannot be performed as a work experience activity.

Working with children

- 3.14 Job seekers and students who are not volunteer members of the NSW RFS are not permitted to undertake any child-related activities as described in NSW RFS Service Standard 1.1.9 Child Related Activities.

- 3.15 Job seekers and students who are also members of the NSW RFS may undertake child-related activities providing that:
- a. A background check has been conducted and the MCU has formally advised the Manager and the individual of a clear result;
 - b. The tasks are new and in addition to the tasks that are currently being undertaken in the District; and
 - c. Participation has been authorised by the Manager.

Conditions and approval

Conditions

- 3.15 A Manager may enter into a Federal Government or other work experience activity arrangement, provided that:
- a. The Section/District has the capacity to manage/supervise and task the job seeker or student appropriately and gainfully;
 - b. The arrangement will bring actual benefit to the Section/District;
 - c. Relevant OHS responsibilities and requirements are considered;
 - d. Relevant insurance documents are provided by the students institution for voluntary work experience placements;
 - e. The job seeker/student is provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct and Ethics service standard;
 - f. There is an avenue to terminate the arrangement, in the event this is necessary;
 - g. The job seeker/student does not have any impediments that might prevent them from being able to undertake the allocated tasks;
 - h. Access to emergency contact details are provided; and
 - i. Most importantly, consideration is given to how the participation in a Federal Government work experience activity scheme will be viewed by the broader volunteer workforce when within a District. It is a requirement that the roles tasked to the job seeker are new and in addition to the roles that are undertaken by volunteers within the District.

Approval

- 3.16 For District Offices, an arrangement may only be entered into with the consent of the Regional Manager or Regional Business Manager.
- 3.17 Approval is required from Directors for all other sections.
- 3.18 Each individual section and District will need to enter into an agreement as a host organisation with the Job Services provider for the purpose of participating in Federal Government work experience activities. Refer to SOP P3.3.3-2.

Maximum hours of work

- 3.19 In many cases the job seeker will have a work experience activity requirement that outlines the minimum number of hours they need to work in order to meet the requirements for receiving income support. Despite any existing work experience activity requirements, the NSW RFS will only support participation to a maximum of 16 hours per week for any individual participating in work experience activities with the Service.
- 3.20 If the job seeker does not have a work experience activity requirement, the hours of work will need to be negotiated between the job seeker and the Job Services Australia provider. Occasionally, the Job Services Australia provider will ask the host organisation for input during this process.
- 3.21 For students participating in a vocational work placement through an institution, the hours of work will need to be negotiated between the student and the relevant Manager to meet the required hours set by the institution with consideration given to the business unit's requirements.

Work, Health and Safety

3.21 To ensure job seekers and students are aware of any hazards in the workplace and their role in keeping the workplace safe, it is the Manager's responsibility to ensure individuals undertake the online safety induction, and to discuss any site/office specific safety and evacuation procedures on their first day.

Different types of work experience programs

3.22 There are a number of work experience programs that job seekers or students can participate in and, in some cases, obtain income support from the Government. Typically the NSW RFS might be asked to participate in the programs detailed in clauses 3.23 to 3.25 below.

Vocational Work Placements

3.23 Vocational work placements are a formal work experience arrangement that provides opportunities for students to gain skills and experience in the workplace by assisting agencies with work which is of benefit to the community.

Work for the Dole

3.24 The Work for the Dole program is a compulsory program for some job seekers that have been looking for work for an extended period of time. Work for the Dole places emphasis on structured training and opportunities that will assist the job seeker to find employment, such as work experience that will develop or enhance a job seeker's ability to work as part of a team, be guided by a supervisor, work independently, communicate effectively and improve motivation and dependability.

3.25 Job seekers can participate in the Work for the Dole program on a part-time or full-time basis; this will be determined by an assessment process and can be advised by their Job Services Australia provider (note that the NSW RFS will only support a placement up to a maximum of 16 hours p/week).

4 Related documents

- > [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013](#)
- > [Job Services Australia](#)
- > [Department of Jobs and Small Business](#)
- > [Centrelink](#)
- > [Service Standard 1.1.9 Child Related Activities](#)
- > [Service Standard 2.1.8 Criminal History and Disciplinary Records Checks for NSW Volunteers](#)

5 Amendments

AMENDMENT DATE	VERSION NO	DESCRIPTION
27 August 2011	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Initial release> Titled "NSW RFS Participation in Federal Government Work Experience Activities"
17 May 2019	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Repeals and remakes P3.3.3 v1.0> Retitled to "NSW RFS Work Experience Activities"> Updated to align with current Federal Government programs and incorporate other work experience activities

SOP P3.3.3-1

NATIONAL POLICE CHECKS FOR FEDERAL AND OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE APPLICANTS

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this SOP is to:
- Outline the National Police Checking Service (NPCS) process for job seekers and students applying to participate in a Federal Government or other Work Experience Activity with the NSW RFS; and
 - Provide information about Resource Management System (RMS) record keeping.

2 Procedures

National Police Checking Service (NPCS)

- 2.1 Job seekers and students seeking to participate in any Federal Government or other work experience program will be required to undergo a background check. This check will be conducted by the Membership Coordination Unit, (MCU) even in instances where a background check has been completed through a Job Services Australia provider or by the NSW RFS previously.
- 2.2 Whilst the principles of NSW RFS Service Standard 2.1.8 Criminal History and Disciplinary Records Checks apply, there are exceptions in relation to the process for initiating a background check for individuals seeking to participate in Federal Government and other work experience activities with the NSW RFS such as:
- The 'Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check, Application and Informed Consent Form must be completed (for participants 16 years and older);
 - The completed form and related identity documents must be sighted and verified by the Manager or delegated staff member; and
 - For Districts, the form must be forwarded to the Regional Manager (RM) or Regional Business Manager (RBM)/Regional Membership Services Manager (RMSM) who must subsequently endorse (or otherwise) the participation in the work experience activity. For all other sections, the form must be signed by the manager of the section.
- 2.3 If supported, the Manager must forward the form to the MCU to conduct a background check through the National Police Checking Service (NPCS).
- 2.4 The MCU will advise the individual and the District Manager of the result.

RMS records

- 2.5 For the purpose of RMS records, job seekers and students participating in Federal Government and other work experience activities will be categorised as 'work experience' and designated to the relevant Fire Control Centre/section within RMS, so as not to affect volunteer membership numbers. This will be completed by the MCU if the student or job seeker is approved following the background check.
- 2.6 Where a job seeker or student is an existing member of the NSW RFS, dual records will apply – i.e. their volunteer (brigade) membership records will not be altered.

3 Related forms

- *The relevant Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check, Application and Informed Consent Form will be provided by the Membership Coordination Unit.*
- [Guide to NPCS Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check Application/Consent Form](#)

SOP P3.3.3-2

BECOMING A HOST ORGANISATION

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this SOP is to provide information that will assist Sections and Districts of the NSW RFS in entering into an agreement to be a Host Organisation for the purpose of participating in Federal Government work experience activities.

2 Procedure

- 2.1 Job Services Australia providers may request a Section or District to complete paperwork for the purpose of participating in Federal Government work experience activities.
- 2.2 The Job Services Australia providers will supply the agreement form which is to be completed on a section by- section basis due to the nature of the information that is required.
- 2.3 The form requests some specific organisational questions surrounding NSW RFS insurance provisions and the information below will assist you in this regard:
 - a. The NSW RFS is a 'not-for-profit' organisation.
 - b. The NSW RFS holds public liability insurance that covers volunteers (more than \$5M).
 - c. The NSW RFS holds personal accident insurance which covers volunteer workers.

3 Related forms

- > *The relevant form will be supplied by the Job Services Australia provider*