

# management and governance

**Management and governance**

**Organisational chart**

**Principal officers**

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is the lead combat agency for bush fires in NSW. Working closely with other agencies we respond to a range of emergencies including structure fires, motor vehicle accidents and storms that occur within rural fire districts.

The NSW RFS is widely acknowledged as the largest volunteer fire service in the world. Members of the NSW RFS are trained to very high levels of competence to ensure they know what to do in an emergency. The Service aims to reduce the likelihood and consequence of fires occurring. This involves comprehensive risk management programs to reduce bush fire hazards, reduce fire ignitions and the development regulations for bush fire prone areas.

For over 100 years we have been a significant part of the history and landscape of NSW. Our organisation is made up of more than 70,000 volunteers operating in over 2,000 brigades, supported by around 900 staff.

### Legislation

The management and operational responsibilities of the NSW RFS are set down clearly in the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and can be summarised as follows:

- Protection of life and property for all fire-related incidents within all rural fire districts in the State
- Safety and welfare of all volunteers
- Provision of effective training and resources to rural fire brigades
- Provision of emergency assistance to other emergency service organisations.

A number of amendments were made to the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and introduced in December 2010. The amendments formalised arrangements for Neighbourhood Safer Places and the responsibility of the NSW RFS Commissioner to issue warnings to the public about bush fires.

### NSW RFS Commissioner

The Commissioner is responsible for managing and controlling the activities of the Service and has other functions conferred or imposed on him by or under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. It is the Commissioner who invokes Section 44 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* in order to declare a bush fire emergency.

### NSW RFS Executive

The day to day management of the Service is carried out under the direction of the NSW RFS Executive. The Executive consists of the Service's Directors and a profile of each of these principal officers can be seen on the following pages.

► *Details appear on page 20-23.*

### Corporate Executive Group

The Corporate Executive Group (CEG) comprises the Executive and senior managers of the Service and representatives of the NSW Rural Fire Service Association. Its principal role is to consider and provide advice to the Commissioner on strategic issues affecting the Service. Details of representation and attendance at this Group are set out in Appendix L.

► *Details appear in Appendix L.*

### Governance Committees

Three bodies are empowered by legislation to assist in the operations of the NSW Rural Fire Service, they are: the Rural Fire Service Advisory Council, the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee and the Fire Services Joint Standing Committee.

### Rural Fire Service Advisory Council

The Rural Fire Service Advisory Council (RFSAC) is established under the provisions of Part 6 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. The Council advises and reports to the Minister and the NSW RFS Commissioner on any matters relating to the administration of the Service. It also provides advice to the Commissioner on public education, programs relating to rural fire matters, the training of rural firefighters

and Service Standards. Details of representation and attendances at the Council are set out in Appendix L.

► *Details appear in Appendix L.*

### Bush Fire Coordinating Committee

The Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC) is established under the provisions of Section 46 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. The Committee is chaired by the NSW RFS Commissioner and supported by the Service.

The BFCC is responsible for planning in relation to fire prevention and coordinated bush firefighting. It also advises the Commissioner on bush fire prevention and mitigation and coordinated bush fire suppression.

The BFCC constitutes Bush Fire Management Committees (BFMC) for all rural fire districts and areas with significant risk of bush fire. It also approves operations coordination and Bush Fire Risk Management Plans that are prepared by the BFMCs.

► *Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix L.*

### Fire Services Joint Standing Committee

The *Fire Services Joint Standing Committee Act 1998* provides for the establishment of the Fire Services Joint Standing Committee (FSJSC).

The major functions of the Committee are to develop and submit to the Minister strategic plans for the coordinated delivery of urban and rural fire services at the interface; to undertake periodic review of fire district boundaries; the minimisation of duplication and the maximisation of compatibility between the NSW RFS and Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW).

The Committee is chaired alternately by the Commissioners of FRNSW and the NSW RFS.

► *Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix L.*

## Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee provides assistance to the NSW RFS Commissioner by overseeing and monitoring the governance and accountability requirements of the NSW RFS. The Committee is chaired by an independent member and advises the Commissioner on a range of matters including: the effectiveness of the Service's internal audit function within the Service; legislative compliance; the financial statements and financial reporting of the Service; risk and control frameworks; business continuity, and corruption prevention activities.

► *Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix L.*

## Bush Fire Arson Taskforce

The Bush Fire Arson Taskforce (BFAT) evolved as a result of issues arising from the 2009 Black Saturday Fires in Victoria and the subsequent Federal Attorney General's Workshop on the Prevention of Arson.

Membership comprises of NSW RFS, NSW Police Force, FRNSW, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Juvenile Justice personnel. The primary role of the BFAT is to reduce the incidence and impact of arson and deliberately lit bush fires throughout NSW by:

- Ensuring there is a flow of information between agencies pertaining to arson and deliberately lit bush fires
- Utilising a joint and uniform approach to investigation, training and research that is relevant to each agency
- Developing prevention programs designed to reduce the incidence of arson and deliberately lit bush fires at the local, regional and State level
- Developing strategies to assist in the apprehension of those responsible for arson and deliberately lit bush fires
- Facilitating networking and a collaborative response to the multifaceted aspects of arson and deliberately lit bush fires

## Consultative and Stakeholder Committees

Consultation with our stakeholders and related agencies plays a key role in the governance of the NSW RFS.

### Rural Fire Service Consultative Committees

The Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA) is a State-wide non-partisan member association and a valued partner of the NSW RFS. The NSW RFS Commissioner relies on a number of consultative committees for advice on the NSW RFS operations and management.

The Committees that met in the reporting period are: Community Engagement, Membership Services, Regional Services, Infrastructure Services and Operational Services.

► *Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix L.*

### Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW Liaison Committee

The principal roles of the Committee are to discuss and resolve significant issues of a strategic nature that are of mutual interest to local government and the Service. Its members consider and report upon issues referred to it by the Minister.

► *Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix L.*

### Stakeholder liaison and collaboration

The Service is also represented on a number of external organisations:

- Australasian Fire and Emergency Authorities Council and its various Committees
- Association of Environment Education (NSW) Border Liaison Committees
- Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre
- District Emergency Management Committees
- District Rescue Committees

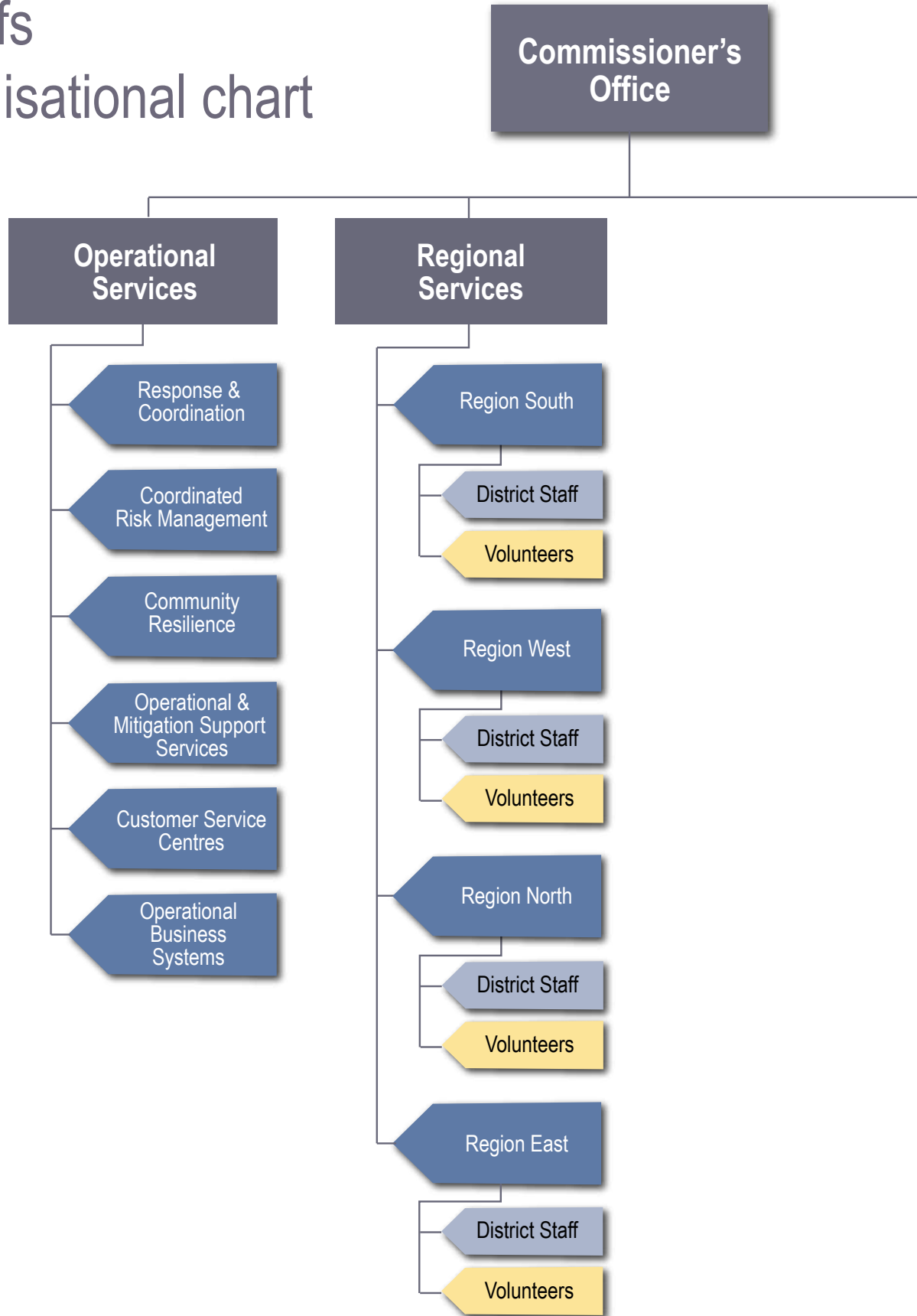
- Emergency Services Communications Working Party
- Emergency Services Industry Reference Group
- Emergency Services Personnel Support Advisory Group
- Environmental Education Officers' Group
- Fire Protection Association
- Museum Education Officers' Group
- National Aerial Firefighting Centre
- NSW Health Disaster Management Committee
- Public Sector Occupational Health and Safety Group
- Standards Australia – various committees
- State Emergency Management Committee
- State Rescue Board
- National Emergency Management Committee
- Fuel Loads Management Working Group
- The National Bushfire Arson Prevention Working Group

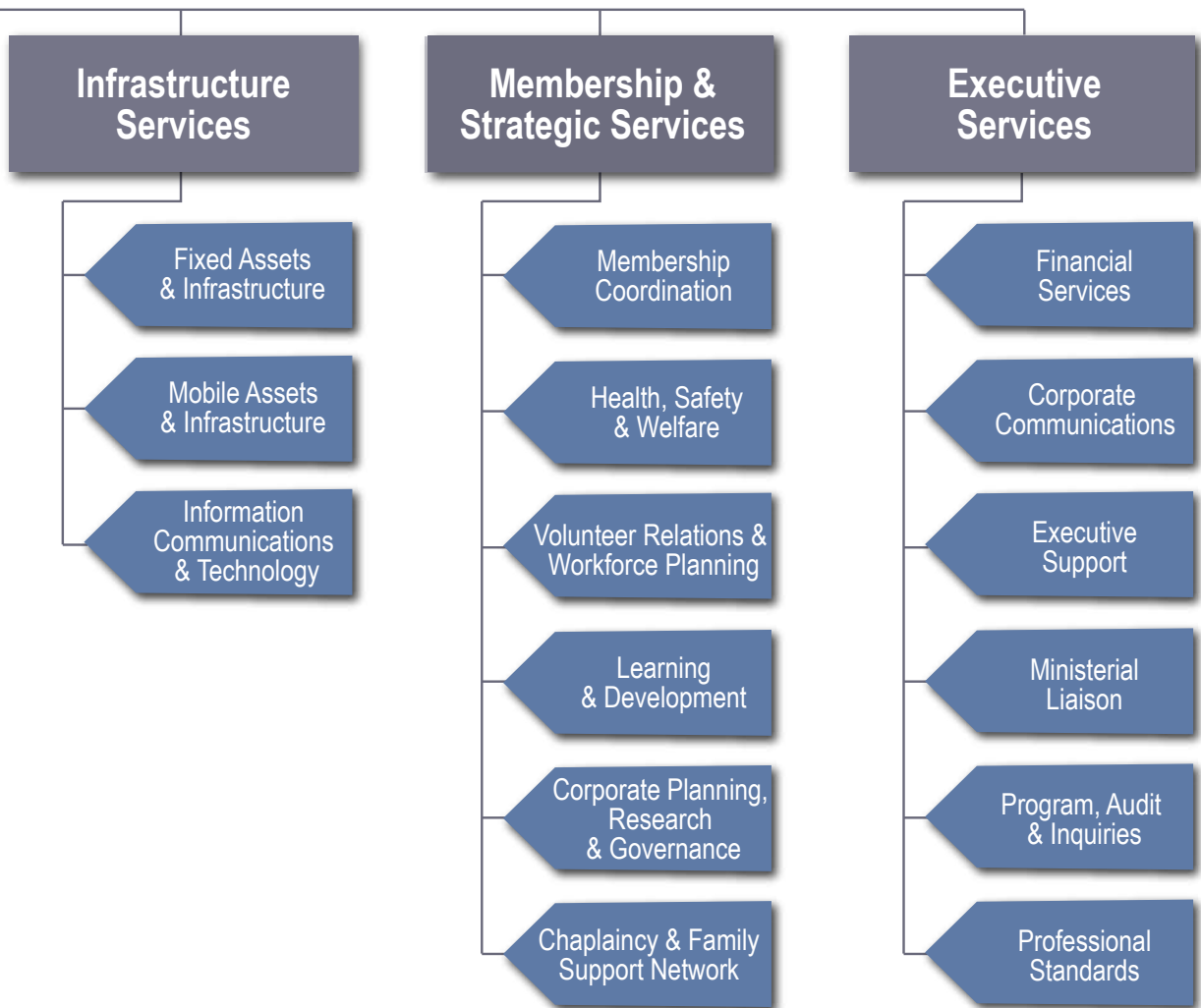
## Governance and Ethical Standards

The Service remains committed to the highest level of ethical behaviour and satisfactory conduct being displayed at all times by its members. All day-to-day activities of the Service are supported by the Service's Code of Conduct and Ethics SS 1.1.7 which applies to volunteer and salaried members alike. There were no changes to the Code during the reporting period.

The Service's Professional Standards Unit also provides advice, education, training and mentoring relating to fraud prevention and corruption prevention issues. It is designed to ensure the community's ongoing trust in the NSW RFS by maintaining the highest standards of ethical behaviour among our members.

# nsw rfs organisational chart







# principal officers



## NSW RFS Commissioner Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, AFSM

Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons was appointed Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service in September 2007. Prior to taking on the role as Commissioner he was Executive Director Operations and Regional Management.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons has been a member of the Service since 1984 when he joined the Duffys Forest Brigade and where he remained as a member for ten years, at various times holding the positions of Captain and Deputy Group Captain.

In 1994 he was appointed Regional Planning Officer in Central East Region, eventually progressing to the position of Regional Coordinator before being appointed State Operations Officer. In 1998 Commissioner Fitzsimmons was appointed Assistant Commissioner Operations.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons has represented the Service at international meetings in the United States, Singapore and Malaysia.

He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 2001.

## Director Operational Services Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers, AFSM

Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers joined the NSW Rural Fire Service in 1979 as a volunteer member of the Belrose Brigade. In 1995, Deputy Commissioner Rogers commenced his career as a salaried officer as Deputy Fire Control Officer for the Greater Taree District. Since 2002, he has held various Executive positions responsible for Regional Management, Risk Management, Community Safety and Operational Services.

In 2004, he was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal.

In July 2008 Deputy Commissioner Rogers was appointed Director Operational Services which brought together the two service delivery areas of Community Safety and Operations into a single cohesive team. In 2011 he was appointed Deputy Commissioner.

During the reporting period, Deputy Commissioner Rogers continued to provide leadership and direction to several ongoing key initiatives including: the implementation of three Customer Service Centres at Batemans Bay, Coffs Harbour and Glendenning; the refinement of Rapid Area Response Teams to increase the response capability of the Service; and the continued enhancement of Remote Area Firefighting Teams to ensure consistency of equipment, training and practice across the State.



**Director Regional Services**  
Assistant Commissioner  
Dominic Lane, AFSM

Assistant Commissioner Dominic Lane is a longstanding member of the Service having joined the Milbrulong Bush Fire Brigade in 1984 just after leaving school.

Assistant Commissioner Lane was appointed to the position of Director, Regional Services in October 2008. In this reporting period Assistant Commissioner Lane oversaw the final phases of the District and Regional Realignment Project including the alignment the District positions into the functional areas of Membership, Infrastructure and Operations.

Assistant Commissioner Lane travelled throughout the State to attend 32 Regional Forums from Glenn Innes to Coonabarabran to Bourke and Deniliquin. More than 1,000 volunteers were consulted during the latter half of the reporting period and the project is continuing into the next year.

Assistant Commissioner Lane chaired of the newly established Regional Services Consultative Committee which oversaw several organisational-wide initiatives such as NSW RFS Rank Review and District Support Brigade Review.

He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 2004.



**Director Infrastructure Services**  
Assistant Commissioner  
Keith Harrap, AFSM

Assistant Commissioner Keith Harrap joined the Service as a member of Ku-ring-gai Brigade in 1968 and has held various positions ranging from volunteer to Assistant Commissioner.

He was appointed as Deputy Fire Control Officer for Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai in 1988 and then as Fire Control Officer in 1993. Assistant Commissioner Harrap was elected to the position of Vice President (Salaried Officers) of the Rural Fire Service Association in 1994 and held that position until 1997.

He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 1999.

From 2001 to 2004 Assistant Commissioner Harrap held consecutively the positions of Staff Officer and Acting Executive Director Operations Support. He was appointed to the position of Executive Director, Corporate Communications in 2004, appointed Executive Director, Operational Support in 2006 and appointed as Director Infrastructure Services in 2008.

Assistant Commissioner Harrap was a long standing member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and a past Director of the International Association of Wildland Fire and was also an international representative on the IAFC Wildland Fire Policy Committee.

Following 44 years of commitment to the Service, Assistant Commissioner Harrap retired in July 2012.





### Director Membership and Strategic Services Bronwyn Jones

Ms Bronwyn Jones was appointed to the position of Director, Membership and Strategic Services in August 2010. Her employment with the Service commenced in November 2008 when she was recruited in the new role of Director, Membership Services following the realignment of the Headquarters structure in that year.

Prior to joining the Service, Ms Jones had extensive senior level experience in strategic planning and reporting, human resource management and project delivery gained in various public sector agencies, including the Premier's Department, the Department of Community Services, NSW Police Force and IAB Services.

She holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Labour Relations and the Law (University of Sydney); a Master of Arts (Interdisciplinary Studies) degree and a Master of Commerce (Human Resource Studies) degree, both from the University of NSW.



### Director Executive Services Richard Lyons

Mr Richard Lyons has been employed in the NSW Public Sector since 1979.

Over his career he has principally worked in policy-related areas in the Health and Attorney General's Departments, the Ministry of Police and, prior to his appointment to the Service in August 2008, he held the position of Director, Office for Emergency Services for the 13 years.

Mr Lyons holds tertiary qualifications in Science and Law and has responsibility for managing the Directorate of Executive Services.