

# SERVICE STANDARD 1.4.8

## MEDIA

Item	Description
Version Number	1.2
SOPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ SOP 1.4.8 -1 Production Assistance (Filming Policy)</li> <li>➤ SOP 1.4.8 -2 NSW RFS Advertising</li> <li>➤ SOP 1.4.8 -3 Media Accreditation</li> </ul>
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### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The media is an important partner of the NSW RFS assisting with the delivery of information and warnings to the community, raising community awareness, and promoting the work of NSW RFS members.
- 1.2 As an emergency service, the NSW RFS regularly deals with the media and is subject to media attention.
- 1.3 This Service Standard and its Standard Operating Procedures outline the responsibilities of all NSW RFS members in dealing with the media.

### 2 Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this Service Standard and its Standard Operating Procedures, the following definitions apply:
  - a. **Information** – any material such as written communication, oral communications, imagery or photographs.
  - b. **Media** – traditional communication mediums including radio, television and print (including their online or digital components) which communicate with a significant audience.
  - c. **Non-operational matters** – information relating to corporate issues or events involving the NSW RFS.
  - d. **Official comment** – information provided to the media which presents the view or position of the NSW RFS.
  - e. **Operational matters** – information which relates to incidents attended by NSW RFS members or other agencies.
  - f. **Production assistance** – requests from organisations (including media, advertising and production companies) for assistance with projects such as filming, photography or fire protection or technical services for television or film productions.

### 3 Policy

- 3.1 The NSW RFS recognises the important role that the media plays in keeping the community informed before, during and after emergency incidents.
- 3.2 While the NSW RFS encourages members to assist media organisations and media personnel, all members have responsibilities when liaising with the media as outlined in this Service Standard and its Standard Operating Procedures.
- 3.3 Any member dealing with the media is to ensure to the best of their ability that any information:
  - a. is accurate;
  - b. is issued in a timely manner;
  - c. is not of a speculative nature;
  - d. is not expressive of personal opinion;
  - e. is not of a political nature;
  - f. is issued within their area of responsibility, expertise and knowledge;
  - g. avoids criticism of individuals, groups or agencies;
  - h. does not breach an individual's right to privacy;
  - i. does not jeopardise investigations;
  - j. does not reveal sensitive or commercial information which should not be available to the public; and
  - k. is presented in a way that reflects the professional nature of the NSW RFS.
- 3.4 Information to the media on behalf of the NSW RFS is to be provided on an equal basis and not favour any one media organisation over any other, unless a request is initiated by a media organisation.
- 3.5 When information is provided about an incident where the NSW RFS is not the lead agency, information or comment should only be provided about the role of NSW RFS personnel, unless authorised by the lead control agency.

#### **Communications and Engagement (Media and Communications)**

- 3.6 The Media and Communications Unit (the Unit) has responsibility for the coordination of media activities affecting the NSW RFS and for providing media assistance to NSW RFS personnel and members of the media.
- 3.7 The Unit provides a 24-hour central point of contact for NSW RFS members and members of the media requiring assistance. After-hours contact should be made for urgent matters only.
- 3.8 NSW RFS members or members of the media requiring media assistance can contact the NSW RFS State Duty Media Officer on (02) 9898 1855. NSW RFS members may also make contact through the Operational Communications Centre (OCC).
- 3.9 The Unit may provide a Media Officer or appropriately qualified representative to attend incidents upon request through the State Duty Media Officer.
- 3.10 The Unit provides the following support:
  - a. management and coordination of the Public Liaison System and Public Liaison Unit during major incidents;
  - b. coordination and monitoring of the delivery of public warnings via the media, through agreed methods and channels (e.g. media dissemination system, public website, social media channels and media messaging service);
  - c. writing and distribution of state-wide media releases on behalf of the NSW RFS;
  - d. development, delivery and coordination of public statements on behalf of the NSW RFS;
  - e. development and implementation of state-wide media strategies and campaigns to deliver messages to the community via the media;
  - f. development of communications materials for use in media strategies and campaigns;
  - g. coordination of significant media conferences and events;
  - h. monitoring of state-wide and national media for NSW RFS related issues and events;

- i. media related issues management advice;
- j. management and approval of requests for production assistance such as film and television projects;
- k. assistance with the collection and approval process for photographs, video or other communication materials for delivery to media organisations; and
- l. delivery of media training for NSW RFS and media personnel, including identified spokespeople and training as part of the Public Liaison System during major incidents.

### **Authority to Comment**

- 3.11 Any official comment provided by a member of the NSW RFS must be within that person's area of responsibility, experience and knowledge.
- 3.12 Any official comment is to be consistent with organisational policies.
- 3.13 Only the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners or Executive Directors (or delegated persons) are authorised to speak on matters of policy or procedures.
- 3.14 Official comment and distribution of any material to media outlets relating to operational matters (including overall strategies, incident management or issues) may be made by:
  - a. the NSW RFS Commissioner;
  - b. Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners;
  - c. Identified spokespeople (e.g. Media and Communications or Public Liaison Unit personnel);
  - d. Area Commanders and District Managers;
  - e. the Incident Controller of that incident; or
  - f. a person delegated by the Incident Controller (e.g. Public Liaison Officer or Media Liaison Officer).
- 3.15 Official comment relating to non-operational matters (e.g. community safety preparedness, events or initiatives) may be made by:
  - a. those listed in 3.14 (a) to (d); or
  - b. delegated personnel requested for a specific purpose (e.g. an event, as a subject matter expert or as an identified local spokesperson).
- 3.16 Any NSW RFS member may provide general comment to the media about their role or what they have experienced.
- 3.17 Any member providing comment to the media in a personal capacity (i.e. not an official comment) must:
  - a. make clear the views they are expressing are their personal views and are not being made as a NSW RFS member or on behalf of the NSW RFS;
  - b. not wear the NSW RFS uniform, PPC or display the NSW RFS logo.
- 3.18 Members should inform the appropriate chain of command (District level and upwards) or the Media Unit in advance of such engagement, particularly if the comment relates to NSW RFS activities.
- 3.19 Members who are providing information to the media on behalf of a brigade are to ensure they have appropriate approval from the Brigade (e.g. the Brigade executive) and are encouraged to liaise with the District Manager in the first instance.
- 3.20 If a member is unsure about the appropriateness of providing information or comment to the media, they are encouraged not to provide comment and instead refer the matter to the Unit.
- 3.21 The Unit must be made aware of any requests for comment by a member on issues that could be perceived as being political, controversial or having a negative impact on the NSW RFS.

## 4 Related documents

- > [Rural Fires Act 1997](#)
- > [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)
- > [Premier's Memorandum M2014-04 Making NSW Film Friendly](#)
- > [NSW Government communications](#)
- > [NSW Government Advertising](#)
- > [SS 1.1.7 Code of Conduct and Ethics](#)
- > [SS 1.4.5 Social Media](#)
- > [SS 1.4.6 NSW RFS Websites](#)
- > [P4.1.3 Procurement](#)
- > [P7.1.10 Organisational Risk Management](#)
- > [IMP 3.04.01 Media Liaison Officer](#)
- > [IMP 3.04.01.01 Fireground Media Liaison](#)
- > [IMP 3.04.01.02 Media Escort](#)

## 5 Amendments

Amendment date	Version no	Description
7 June 2004	1.0	Initial release as SS 1.1.6 Media Relations
1 September 2004	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Repealed and remade SS 1.1.6 v1.0</li><li>&gt; Title changed to Media</li><li>&gt; Clauses 2.3.3 and 2.4.3</li></ul>
3 October 2008	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Repealed and remade SS 1.1.6 v1.1</li><li>&gt; Complete review</li><li>&gt; Align to new format</li></ul>
13 June 2012	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Repealed and remade SS 1.1.6 v2.0</li><li>&gt; Reviewed to reflect current practices</li></ul>
23 November 2015	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Repealed and remade SS 1.1.6 Media v 3.0</li><li>&gt; Renumbered to SS 1.48 to align with Service Standard Index categories</li><li>&gt; Minor updates to reflect current practices and position titles</li></ul>
21 March 2019	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Repeals and remakes SS 1.4.8 v1.0</li><li>&gt; Minor changes including to the process for approvals for production assistance</li></ul>
16 March 2022	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Repeals and remakes SS 1.4.8 v1.1</li><li>&gt; Updates role titles to align with organisational realignment</li><li>&gt; Minor changes to include Media Accreditation extensions and record keeping requirements</li></ul>

## SOP SS 1.4.8-1

### Production Assistance (Filming policy)

#### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The NSW RFS is regularly requested to provide personnel, technical guidance, equipment or other resources as part of short or long form television series, films, documentaries, videos, dramatic productions and advertisements.
- 1.2 The NSW RFS is committed to assisting and supporting the NSW film industry where appropriate.
- 1.3 This Standard Operating Procedure outlines the processes to be followed for requests for production assistance.

#### 2 Procedures

- 2.1 Requests for NSW RFS production assistance, including on-screen or behind the scenes participation, are to be referred to the Media and Communications Unit (the Unit).
- 2.2 The Unit will request the production agency to complete the NSW RFS Questionnaire for Production Agencies, available on the NSW RFS website at <http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/film-and-photo-requests>
- 2.3 Upon receiving the completed NSW RFS Questionnaire for Production Agencies, the Unit will conduct an assessment based on the following criteria:
  - a. the benefits to the NSW RFS of participating in the project;
  - b. whether the project is in line with current corporate objectives, policies and priorities;
  - c. impacts on operational capacity;
  - d. risks to the NSW RFS of either participating in, or not participating in the project;
  - e. likely costs to the NSW RFS, both financial and non-financial;
  - f. protection of the image and reputation of the NSW RFS;
  - g. whether the portrayal would meet community standards of behaviour or practice;
  - h. whether the NSW RFS will be given the power of veto in relation to final content being released;
  - i. what controls can be put in place to minimise risks to the NSW RFS and its members; and
  - j. any other issues identified.
- 2.4 The Unit will assess requests against the NSW RFS Organisational Risk Management Framework to determine the appropriateness of the proposal.
- 2.5 The relevant District where the production is to take place will be consulted, in advance of any approvals being issued. Requests for approvals for NSW RFS participation in productions will then be submitted to:
  - a. Manager Media and Communications: for fire protection arrangements and behind the scenes participation;
  - b. Director Communications and Engagement: for advertisements and small local productions; or
  - c. Executive Director People and Strategy: for major productions (e.g. ongoing commitment of resources or members; productions such as motion pictures; or those with considerable risks involved). Approval may also be sought from the Commissioner.
- 2.6 A Letter of Agreement is required prior to any production assistance services being provided which will set out:
  - a. undertakings on the part of the NSW RFS (e.g. to provide personnel, appliances, equipment, expertise etc.);
  - b. undertakings on the part of the film agency (e.g. to indemnify the NSW RFS against claims, not to interfere with operations, to gather releases or permissions for use of images etc.);
  - c. all fees; and
  - d. any requests for credits, acknowledgment, copies of final product, etc.

## Determination of Fees

- 2.7 The NSW RFS reserves the right to charge fees as cost recovery for production assistance. These will be levied in line with the NSW RFS Schedule of Fees for Film and Television Assistance (available upon request from The Unit) and in accordance with NSW RFS procurement policy.
- 2.8 Where the filming can be demonstrated to fulfil a corporate priority (e.g. assisting in the delivery of community preparedness information), a recommendation may be made to the Director Communications and Engagement to waive some or all fees.

## Technical assistance

- 2.9 The NSW RFS may provide a Technical Advisor to manage filming involving crews, brigade stations and operations.
- 2.10 The role of the Technical Advisor is to:
- a. brief NSW RFS members;
  - b. attend and monitor filming to ensure that NSW RFS policies and procedures are upheld;
  - c. liaise with the film crew;
  - d. have the authority to ask crews not to film sensitive or inappropriate material involving NSW RFS personnel or activities, or which may impact adversely on operations; and
  - e. maintain a record of actual hours worked by fire crews and any other support provided and liaise with the Unit to raise an invoice.

## 3 Related forms

- [NSW RFS Questionnaire for Film Agents](#)

## Appendix 1 Production Assistance Policy Flowchart

RESPONSIBILITY	PROCESS
1. Production Agency	Production Agency approaches NSW RFS for production assistance
1. NSW RFS Media and Communications	Production assistance request to NSW RFS Media and Communications
	Media and Communications provides production assistance pack to Production Agency
3. Production Agency	Production Agency provides completed production assistance questionnaire
4. NSW RFS Media and Communications	NSW RFS Media and Communications conducts analysis and risk assessment of proposal, contacts relevant District
	Recommendation made to either: a) Manager Media and Communications for fire protection and behind the scene participation b) Director, Communications and Engagement for advertisements and small local productions c) Executive Director, People and Strategy for major productions (eg. ongoing commitment of resources and members; or productions such as motion pictures) or those with considerable risks involved, approval may also be sought from the Commissioner
	Notification to Production Agency of decision, if approved, Letter of Agreement provided by NSW RFS Media and Communications to Production Agency
5. Production Agency	Production Agency returns letter of Agreement with evidence of Public Liability Insurance
6. NSW RFS Media and Communications	NSW RFS Media and Communications appoints Technical Advisor if required
	Production commences

## SOP SS 1.4.8-2

# NSW RFS Advertising

## 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The NSW RFS regularly uses advertising to promote programs, messages, initiatives and events.
- 1.2 As a NSW Government agency, the NSW RFS is required to comply with NSW Government guidelines and policies relating to the procurement, development, review, approval and placement of advertising material.
- 1.3 This Standard Operating Procedure sets out the requirements for NSW RFS advertising.

## 2 Procedures

### Definition

- 2.1 Advertising includes, but is not limited to, the development, production and placement of creative material, either paid or unpaid, in the media which is designed to raise community awareness, raise the profile of the NSW RFS and its members, and promote NSW RFS activities.

### Responsibilities

- 2.2 NSW RFS Communications and Engagement has responsibility for the coordination of NSW RFS advertising. This includes paid advertisements, unpaid advertisements, community service announcements and co-branded advertisements with other agencies or corporate partners.
- 2.3 All Statewide advertising is to be conducted in accordance with NSW Government advertising guidelines and relevant legislation.

### Statewide or major advertising and public awareness campaigns

- 2.4 All Statewide advertising campaigns are managed by NSW RFS Communications and Engagement.
- 2.5 The NSW Government Advertising Guidelines apply to all advertising on behalf of the NSW RFS (including requirements for peer review, research, evaluation and campaign bookings).

### Local advertising initiatives

- 2.6 Districts are encouraged to use advertising for local initiatives or safety messages.
- 2.7 Any local advertising is to be in accordance with NSW RFS policy and organisational priorities.
- 2.8 Any local advertising is to be approved by Director Communications and Engagement.
- 2.9 To ensure consistency with branding and policy, Communications and Engagement provides template-based advertisements.

### Unsolicited offers of advertising

- 2.10 All unsolicited offers of advertising shall be forwarded to Communications and Engagement for assessment, including analysis of cost, audience and relevance to organisational priorities.

### Statutory notifications and other advertisements

- 2.11 Statutory and staff recruitment advertising is not covered by this SOP, however must be conducted in accordance with relevant NSW RFS or NSW Government policy.

## SOP SS 1.4.8 – 3

### Media Accreditation

#### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The NSW RFS provides an accreditation scheme for media personnel to assist with the delivery of information to the community.
- 1.2 This Standard Operating Procedure outlines the processes for media accreditation.
- 1.3 Only accredited media will be granted access onto NSW RFS controlled firegrounds, at the determination of the Incident Controller.

#### 2 Procedures

- 2.1 Media and Communications (the Unit) is responsible for the coordination and delivery of media accreditation.
- 2.2 The Unit will conduct annual media accreditation training sessions in regional and metropolitan locations to enable media personnel (including journalists, producers, camera operators) to be accredited.
- 2.3 Accreditation will be offered to media personnel based on the following criteria:
  - a. a demonstrated need for the accreditation (e.g. employed by a media outlet or a freelance media operator who can demonstrate they produce products for a recognised media outlet);
  - b. demonstration of a sound understanding of bushfire safety and survival, as delivered during media accreditation training sessions;
  - c. acceptance of the current conditions of accreditation, as provided in the training session.
- 2.4 Upon meeting these criteria, media personnel will be provided with a photographic identification card stating that they are accredited media.
- 2.5 The card remains the property of the NSW RFS and must be surrendered upon request.
- 2.6 Media accreditation will remain current for three years.
- 2.7 Extensions may be granted for 12 months and will be considered on a case by case basis. Requests should be made in writing to the Media and Communications Unit.
- 2.8 An extension may only be granted where:
  - a. The request is made in writing to the Media and Communications Unit; and
  - b. They have held media accreditation in the previous 12 month period; and
  - c. There have been no substantial changes to the subject matter; and
  - d. There are extenuating circumstances such as where NSW RFS has been unable to conduct training;  
or
  - e. The person can demonstrate they were unable to attend a session for reasons such as maternity/paternity leave and extended sick leave.
- 2.9 The Unit will maintain records of media personnel training attendance, accreditation and extension details. As a minimum the following information will be recorded:
  - a. Surname, First name;
  - b. Organisation and role;
  - c. Contact number;
  - d. Email address;
  - e. Month and year of training session attended;
  - f. Location of training session attended;
  - g. Whether the person has been granted an extension.

- 2.10 The Unit will keep a copy of the completed NSW RFS Media Bush Fire Training Assessment sheet for a minimum of seven years.
- 2.11 Media personnel and agencies are responsible for procuring their own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), which must clearly identify them as a member of the media and distinguish them from NSW RFS personnel.
- 2.12 Media personnel are not to be issued with NSW RFS badged PPE.
- 2.13 The NSW RFS encourages members to assist, where possible, media personnel who are accredited and wearing the appropriate PPE.