



SERVICE STANDARD 1.2.1 NSW RFS RANKING AND RANK INSIGNIA

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Version Number	v4.3
SOPs/Annexures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Annexure 1 – Instrument of Determination, NSW RFS Rank and Insignia➤ SOP 1.2.1-1 Assignment of Rank➤ SOP 1.2.1-2 Criteria for Operational Ranks in the NSW RFS➤ SOP 1.2.1-3 Collection of NSW RFS Ranking and Insignia➤ SOP 1.2.1-4 Retirement and Retention of Ranking and Insignia
Owner	Deputy Commissioner Field Operations
Contact	Director State Operations
Approved Date	22 November 2023
Effective Date	22 November 2023
Next Review Date	14 June 2027
Document Control	Electronic - Printed Copies are Uncontrolled

1 Purpose

- 1.1 Effective operational performance requires the development of a clearly defined and easily understood command structure. Section 12(4) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* (the Act) provides for the Commissioner to determine the ranks of members of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS).
- 1.2 The use and display of the official crest of the NSW RFS can only be permitted as approved by the Commissioner. This Service Standard and Service Standard 1.4.2 NSW RFS Brand set out those conditions and approvals.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this service standard, the following definitions apply:
 - a. **May bear:** Means the wearing of a rank or insignia.
 - b. **Insignia:** Means a symbol or other embellishment not of rank approved by the Commissioner found within Annexure 1 of this standard.
 - c. **Rank:** Means a symbol or other embellishment not of insignia approved by the Commissioner found within Annexure 1 of this standard.

3 Policy

- 3.1 The Commissioner may determine by Instrument, pursuant to s12(4) of the Act the ranks of members of the NSW RFS. The members as designated in any Instrument may bear up to the rank assigned to that position.
- 3.2 The assignment of rank to a member shall be in accordance with SOP 1.2.1-1.
- 3.3 Holders of rank must achieve minimum competencies prescribed (unless approved otherwise) in accordance with SOP 1.2.1 – 2.
- 3.4 Applications for Eligibility for Rank for salaried members are to be submitted to the Director State Operations for processing, who will ensure a central register is maintained.
- 3.5 Salaried members who do not meet the minimum competency may be appointed to a lower rank commensurate with their level of competence and experience.
- 3.6 A District Manager is delegated to appoint volunteer ranks in accordance with Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers and Service Standard 1.3.1 Operational Delegations and Authorisations.
- 3.7 Any rank assignment made by the Commissioner is subject to the ongoing good conduct, demonstration and maintenance of competency and qualifications as determined by this standard current and as amended.
- 3.8 The rank insignia to be worn by members of the NSW RFS is shown in graphical format and detailed in Annexure 1.
- 3.9 Version 4.3 of this Service Standard dated 14 June 2022 terminated any transitional arrangements embodied in previous versions of the standard.

Rank Appointment for Area Mitigation Crew Leaders

- 3.10 Area Mitigation Crew Leaders may be appointed to the rank of Area Mitigation Crew Leader. Due to the nature of this role, the appointment of staff rank does not affect or interfere with the appointment of an Area Mitigation Crew Leader's volunteer rank.
- 3.11 Area Mitigation Crew Leader rank insignia is only to be displayed whilst on duty with the mitigation crew.
- 3.12 Area Mitigation Crew Leaders may only wear Area Mitigation Crew Leader rank whilst on mitigation duty regardless of any other volunteer rank held.
- 3.13 The Directors Area Operations is delegated by this Service Standard to appoint Area Mitigation Crew Leader ranks.

Rank Appointment for Operational Communications Centre

- 3.14 Operational Communications Centre (OCC) Senior Operators and Operators may be appointed a rank up to a rank designated in the Commissioners instrument.
- 3.15 OCC rank insignia is only to be displayed whilst on duty as an OCC operator.
- 3.16 OCC operators may only wear OCC rank whilst on duty regardless of any other staff / volunteer rank held.
- 3.17 The Director State Operations is delegated by this Service Standard to appoint OCC ranks.

Retirement and Rank Retention

- 3.18 Members assigned a rank of Captain and above may in accordance with SOP 1.2.1-4 be eligible to apply to the Commissioner for and be granted, retired rank status.
- 3.19 A volunteer or salaried member who is granted retired rank status may only bear the substantive rank of the officer at time of retirement.
- 3.20 A volunteer or salaried member with retired rank status may only bear their rank for display / ceremonial purposes only, cannot be worn in any operational capacity and must comply with the Code of Conduct.

Collection of NSW RFS Ranking and Insignia

- 3.21 A person must not, without the approval of the Commissioner:
 - a. Use or display an official emblem of the NSW RFS; or
 - b. Sell, hire, lend or otherwise surrender possession of an insignia of the NSW RFS to a person who is not a member of the Service.

- 3.22 Such approval may be given unconditionally or subject to conditions determined by the Commissioner.
- 3.23 This Service Standard gives the approval of the Commissioner for bona fide collectors of emblems, insignia and similar memorabilia to acquire and display sample NSW RFS crests or insignia as part of their collection and in accordance with SOP 1.2.1 – 3.

4 Related documents

- [State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989](#)
- [Rural Fires Act 1997](#)
- [Service Standard 1.3.1 Operational Delegations and Authorisations](#)
- [Service Standard 1.3.2 Powers of Officers](#)
- [Service Standard 1.4.2 NSW RFS Brand](#)
- [Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers](#)
- [Service Standard 6.1.2 Qualifications for NSW RFS Members](#)

5 Amendments

AMENDMENT DATE	VERSION NO	DESCRIPTION
1 September 1999	1.0	Initial release
1 July 2001	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Repealed and remade SS 1.2.1 v1.0 ➤ Amended clauses 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 and Determination
11 September 2007	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Repealed and remade SS 1.2.1 v2.1 ➤ Amalgamation of Service Standards 1.2.1 Ranking and Insignia and 1.2.2 Collection of RFS Insignia – intent/content remains unchanged ➤ Ranking schedule on pages 4 and 5 updated
2 November 2007	3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Repealed and remade SS 1.2.1 v3.0 ➤ Amendment to Ranking Chart (<i>cadet epaulette</i>)
2 December 2012	4.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Repealed and remade SS 1.2.1 v3.1 ➤ Amended as a result of the NSW Rural Fire Service Rank Review 2011/2012 ➤ Formatted and amended to reflect current practice
18 August 2013	4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Repealed and remade SS 1.2.1 v4.0 ➤ SOP 1.2.1-1 Table A amended to include appointment of Assistant Commissioner to positions other than Director.
14 June 2022	4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Repeals and remakes SS 1.2.1 v4.1 ➤ Includes provisions for retired rank status ➤ Removal of Senior Assistant Commissioner and CISS rank ➤ Includes provisions for temporary rank assignment ➤ Addition of OCC ranking structure and qualification matrix ➤ Removal of Cadet Adult member and term “Ordinary” member ➤ Definition of Operational Support Brigades limited to Communications, Catering, Support and CISS for epaulettes ➤ Minor amendments to minimum general and operational requirements
22 November 2023	4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Minor amendments to SOP 1.2.1-2 to align matrix with Operational Training Program ➤ Instrument of Determination dated 14 June 2022 remains in effect

Annexure 1 – Instrument of Determination, NSW RFS Rank and Insignia

DETERMINATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 12(4) OF THE RURAL FIRES ACT 1997 IN RELATION TO RANKING

In accordance with the provisions of section 12(4) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, I, Rob Rogers AFSM, Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service, hereby:

Determine that the rank and insignia for members of the NSW Rural Fire Service to be as specified within the below table:

Maximum Attainable Rank	Insignia (Epaulette)	Insignia (Helmet)	Position/s
Commissioner	 Crown, Impeller, Crest		Commissioner
Deputy Commissioner	 Crown, Crest		As determined by the Commissioner
Assistant Commissioner	 Crest		Directors as determined by the Commissioner
Chief Superintendent	 Crown, Two Impellers		State level Field Operations Managers Area Commanders Other Officers as determined by the Commissioner
Superintendent	 Crown, Impeller		State level Field Operations Supervisors (2IC) District Manager Area Command Managers Other officers as determined by the Commissioner
Inspector	 Crown Large		District Staff (2IC) Other officers as determined by the Commissioner

Maximum Attainable Rank	Insignia (Epaulette)	Insignia (Helmet)	Position/s
Group Captain Officer L3	 Three Impellers (Large)		District Manager is delegated to appoint volunteer ranks in accordance with <i>SS 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers</i> Rank for staff positions as determined by the Commissioner
Deputy Group Captain Officer L2	 Two Impellers (Large)		District Manager is delegated to appoint volunteer ranks in accordance with <i>Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers</i> Rank for staff positions as determined by the Commissioner
Officer L1	 One Impeller (Large)		Rank for staff positions as determined by the Commissioner
Captain	 Three Bars		District Manager is delegated to appoint volunteer ranks in accordance with <i>Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers</i>
Senior Deputy Captain	 Two Bars		District Manager has delegation for the appointment of volunteer ranks in accordance with <i>Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers</i>
Deputy Captain	 One Bar		District Manager is delegated to appoint volunteer ranks in accordance with <i>Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers</i>
Mitigation Crew Leader	 One Bar (Yellow)		Area Mitigation Crew Leaders as determined by the Directors Area Operations.

Brigade/Area/Type	Rank/Position	Insignia (Epaulette)	
Operational Brigades	Firefighter		Brigade/staff member holding minimum qualification of BF
	Member		Brigade member not holding firefighter qualifications.
	Member Firefighter 16 -18 years		For regular young members 16 - 18 years of age who are part of a brigade and have attained BF
	Member 16-18 years		For regular members 16 - 18 years of age who are part of a brigade and have not yet attained BF
Operational Support Brigades include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • Catering • Support 	Captain	 Three Bars (Small)	Include brigade type e.g. communications
	Senior Deputy Captain	 Two Bars (Small)	Include brigade type e.g. communications
	Deputy Captain	 One Bar (Small)	Include brigade type e.g. communications
	Member		Include brigade type e.g. communications
Chaplaincy	Senior Chaplain	 White symbol of faith of Chaplain within a Wreath (dependant on denomination)	

Brigade/Area/Type	Rank/Position	Insignia (Epaulette)	
		CHAPLAIN	
	Chaplain	 <p>White symbol of faith of Chaplain</p> <p>CHAPLAIN</p>	
State Protocol	State Protocol Officer		
	Deputy State Protocol Officer		
	Member		
Cadets	Cadet Coordinator	 <p>Three bars (Small) CADETS</p>	Adult member
	Cadet Deputy Coordinator	 <p>Two bars (Small) CADETS</p>	Adult member
	Cadet Leader	 <p>One bar (Small) CADETS</p>	Adult member
	Cadet Captain	 <p>Three bars (Large) CADETS</p>	<18 years of age. Captain of a dedicated cadet brigade

Brigade/Area/Type	Rank/Position	Insignia (Epaulette)	
	Cadet Senior Deputy Captain	 Two bars (Large) CADETS	<18 years of age. Senior Deputy Captain of a dedicated cadet brigade
	Cadet Deputy Captain	 One bar (Large) CADETS	<18 years of age. Deputy Captain of a dedicated cadet brigade
	Cadet	 CADETS	<18 years of age. Worn by a member of a dedicated cadet brigade or SSCP
	Junior Member under 16 years of age		For regular young members <16yrs who are part of a Brigade but have not yet attained BF

Brigade/Area/Type	Rank/Position	Insignia (Epaulette)	
Operational Communications Centre (OCC)	OCC Senior Operator		OCC Operator holding prescribed qualification and performing the role of Senior Operator
	OCC Operator		OCC Operator holding prescribed qualification.

Notes:

1. With the exception of the insignia for Group Captain, Deputy Group Captain and Officers Level 1-3, all other impellers are medium sized.
2. Brigade Captain, Brigade Senior Deputy Captain and Brigade Captain epaulette slides are navy blue with broad silver bars.
3. Operational Support epaulette slides are navy blue with thin light blue bars including functional description at the base using the identified functions only.
4. Senior Chaplain epaulette slides are purple and Chaplain epaulette slides are navy blue.
5. Cadet ranking insignia will be similar to regular NSW RFS insignia with the exception that all Cadet Epaulette slides are green and have the words "CADETS" at the base of the epaulettes.
6. Cadet Adult Officer, Leader or Member epaulette slides are navy blue with thin light blue bars and have the words "CADETS" at their base.

7. Junior members under 16 years of age who are not a member and have not attained BF, epaulette is green with the words "NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE" at the base.
8. Ordinary Members 16 – 18 years of age who are part of a brigade and have attained BF, epaulette is light blue with the words "FIREFIGHTER" at the base.
9. Members 16 – 18 years of age who have not attained BF, epaulette is light blue with the words "RURAL FIRE SERVICE" at the base.

Rob Rogers AFSM
Commissioner

Date ____/____/____

SOP 1.2.1-1

Assignment of Rank

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides guidance when assignment of rank or insignia is required.

2 Procedures

- 2.1 Volunteer members are appointed their ranks by the District Manager in accordance with Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers.
- 2.2 Application for Eligibility for Rank for salaried members are to be submitted to the Director State Operations for processing who will ensure a central register is maintained.
- 2.3 Salaried members occupying an Operational Officer (OpO) position shall have their rank automatically processed for the consideration of the Commissioner.
- 2.4 The template for permanent or temporary appointment rank can be accessed from OneRFS.
- 2.5 An officer performing in a position with a maximum attainable rank of Inspector and below for a period greater than three months, may by approval of the Deputy Commissioner Field Operations bear up to the maximum attainable rank for that position.
- 2.6 The submission must be supported by the staff member's Area Commander and/or Director.
- 2.7 An officer performing in a position with a maximum attainable rank of Superintendent and above (excluding the Commissioner rank) for a period greater than three months, may by approval of the Commissioner bear up to the maximum attainable rank for that position.
- 2.8 The submission must be supported by the staff member's Deputy Commissioner/Executive Director and requires the approval of the Commissioner.
- 2.9 The original signed assignment of rank letter is to be retained by Membership Services and a copy retained by the appropriate Directorate.
- 2.10 Annexure 1 articulates the types of positions which have operational rank assigned.

3 Related forms

- Application for Eligibility of Rank

SOP 1.2.1-2

Criteria for Operational Ranks in the NSW RFS

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the ranks of the NSW RFS and the minimum criterion for award.

2 Procedures

- 2.1 Table C below sets out the Commissioner's determination of NSW RFS rank and the minimum criterion for appointment.
- 2.2 Table C has been prepared, in consideration of applicable standards and service needs, to show ranks and minimum criterion for appointment.
- 2.3 Qualifications required by volunteer and salaried members are noted in Table C, other than for OCC operators noted in Table D.
- 2.4 A District Manager may amend the minimum qualification set for volunteer officer ranks in Table C provided it is in conjunction with Service Standard 6.1.2 Qualifications for NSW RFS Members.
- 2.5 District Managers who amend the minimum qualification for volunteer officers in Table C shall seek review from the Area Commander and must have documented a plan to meet the minimum requirement.
- 2.6 In making a recommendation to the Commissioner for the allocation of a rank, a Director may take into account the applicant's core firefighting capability, qualifications in specialist streams and the principles of competency-based evidence and experience. The Director may also take into account evidence that demonstrates the applicant is working towards the required qualification.
- 2.7 Where an application for eligibility is received, an assessment and recommendation shall consider time served at current rank (if applicable) to ensure competence, currency and capability.

3 Related forms

- Application for Eligibility of Rank

Table C Minimum General and Operational Qualifications

	Minimum General Qualification					*Other	Minimum Operational Qualification									Operational Roles
	Tertiary	Advanced Diploma	Diploma	Cert IV	Cert III		S44/ICMI	CTR	OPS	LOG	PLN	GL	Intro to ICS	CL	BF/BFA	
Area Mitigation Crew Leader (Employee)														✓	✓	Control a single crew / resource
Deputy Captain (Volunteer)														✓	✓	Control a small scale Incident Control a small sector
Senior Deputy Captain (Volunteer)														✓	✓	Control a strike team or taskforce Control a level 2 staging area
Captain (Volunteer)														✓	✓	
Officer L1 (Employee)					✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	
Deputy Group Captain (Volunteer)													✓	✓	✓	Control medium scale incident Control a division or large sector Control a level 3 staging area
Officer L2 (Employee)					✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	
Group Captain (Volunteer)													✓	✓	✓	
Officer L3 (Employee)				✓		✓			Any one of the following			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Inspector (Employee)			✓			✓		✓	Any one of the following			✓	✓	✓	✓	Control a large scale incident Deputy Incident Controller (s44) Regional / State Incident Liaison
Superintendent (Employee)		✓				✓	✓	✓	Any one of the following			✓	✓	✓	✓	Incident Controller (s44) Major Incident Coordination (MIC)
Chief Superintendent (Employee)	✓					✓	✓	✓	Any one of the following			✓	✓	✓	✓	Multiagency District/State ESLO
Assistant Commissioner	Qualifications and operational experience at the discretion of the Commissioner and subject to appointment processes														State wide emergency coordination	
Deputy Commissioner																
Commissioner	Qualifications and operational experience at the discretion of the Minister and subject to appointment processes														Declare Section 44 emergencies Appoint Section 44 Incident Controllers	

* The Commissioner for the assignment of a rank, may take into account the applicant's core firefighting capability, qualifications in specialised streams and the principles of competency-based evidence and experience (SOP1.2.1-2).
For Officer L1, L2 and L3 ranks 'other' qualifications are those described in the Operational Training Information Booklet.

Table D Minimum General and Operational Qualifications for OCC Communications Officers

Rank	Minimum General Qualification					Minimum RFS Operational Qualification						
	Tertiary	Advanced Diploma	Diploma	Cert IV	Cert III	*Other	INT	SSOps	IMA	CSA	ARO	I-ICS
OCC Senior Communications Officer					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OCC Communications Officer								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* The Commissioner for the assignment of a rank, may take into account the applicants core firefighting capability, qualifications in specialised streams and the principles of competency-based evidence and experience (SOP 1.2.1-2)

Key

I-ICS	Introduction to ICS	SSOps	Small Scale Operations
ARO	Aviation Radio Operator	IMA	Incident Management Awareness
CSA	Community Safety Assistant	INT	Intelligence

SOP 1.2.1-3

Collection of NSW RFS Ranking and Insignia

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the requirements associated with the collection of NSW RFS ranking and insignia.

2 Procedures

- 2.1 A person who is a bona fide collector of emblems, insignia and similar memorabilia may display samples of NSW RFS crests or insignia, provided it is clear to an observer that they are part of a collection and do not indicate membership of the NSW RFS.
- 2.2 A person who can show evidence of being a bona fide collector of emblems, insignia and similar memorabilia may acquire samples of NSW RFS crests or insignia, provided it is done with the written permission of the Commissioner.
- 2.3 In all other cases, the specific approval of the Commissioner is needed for persons who are not members of the NSW RFS to acquire, wear or display NSW RFS crests or insignia.
- 2.4 Enquiries relating to the collection of NSW RFS insignia are to be directed to the People and Strategy Directorate.

3 Related forms

- None

SOP 1.2.1-4

Retirement and Retention of Ranking and Insignia

1 Purpose

- 1.2 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the requirements associated with retainment of a rank upon retirement from employment or volunteer operational service to the NSW RFS.

2 Procedures

- 2.1 A member who applies to the Commissioner for and is granted retired rank status cannot use their retired rank in any operational capacity.
- 2.2 A member who applies for and is granted retired rank status may bear their rank for ceremonial and NSW RFS official events and functions.
- 2.3 A salaried member ranked Officer Level 1 and above, upon notification of retirement to the NSW RFS, may apply to the Commissioner for retired rank status.
- 2.4 A volunteer member ranked Captain and above, upon notification to the District Manager of retirement from operational service, may apply to the Commissioner for retired rank status.
- 2.5 A salaried member seeking retired rank status must have the support of their Director, or the Director Area Operations in the case of volunteer members.
- 2.6 The Commissioner may impose conditions or revoke a retired rank status.

3 Related forms

- Application for Retirement and Retention of Rank