

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MEDIA RELATIONS

Media policy 2003-2008

1 Policy

Fire and Rescue NSW's *Media policy* has been developed to provide firefighters with guidelines on the release of information to the media. This policy applies to all media liaison and public comment on television, radio, print, Internet media as well as public presentations. It applies to all employees including those on suspension, sick leave and leave without pay.

The *Media policy* is available in the *Media kit* (see below) and on the [Intranet](#).

2 Guidelines

The Media, Ministerial and Communications Unit (MMCU) has guidelines for dealing with the media and preparing media releases and media statements as well as preparing for interviews. The Operational Media Coordinator provides advice on dealing with the media in regard to all incidents. The Public Affairs Officers provide advice in regard to all other non-operational media requests. The Operational Media Coordinator and the Public Affairs Officers form part of the MMCU team.

Contact Officer: Manager, Community and Media Relations, (02) 9265 2612 or 0418 410 753

File Reference: CHO/00188 *In Orders 2004/20, with amendments*

Media kit

The *Media kit* is a resource to support firefighters in dealing with the media. It includes guidance on how to handle an interview, develop written media materials, and advice on the *Media policy*.

The *Media kit* is a folder which contains:

- the *Media policy*
- template media releases
- guides on getting to know and dealing with the media
- examples of good stories, and
- sections for media contacts, issued media releases, safety fact sheets and community safety campaign materials.

The *Media kit* has been distributed to all fire stations and zone offices and its contents can also be downloaded from the [Intranet](#).

Contact Officer: Public Affairs Team Leader, (02) 9265 2631 or 0408 877 479

File Reference: CHO/07997 *In Orders 2004/20, with amendments*

Requests for non-operational filming of Fire and Rescue NSW

1 Introduction

Television crews attend emergency incidents throughout the State for news and feature purposes. This is a legitimate and ongoing activity of the media and Fire and Rescue NSW personnel should support and assist the media in its task of informing the public of Fire and Rescue NSW operations.

However, from time to time, fire stations receive requests from the media and other organisations to film Fire and Rescue NSW for advertising, feature production or other purposes. Any such filming, not directly related to an incident, is deemed to be non-operational filming.

It is important that TV scripts for commercials or feature films be carefully edited prior to screening so that the image and good name of Fire and Rescue NSW is protected and that Fire and Rescue NSW's sponsorship and endorsement policy is not contravened. Equally, some opportunities should be seized to promote the image of Fire and Rescue NSW. In certain circumstances, eg where there is not a clearly demonstrated benefit to Fire and Rescue NSW, a fee for services may be levied.

2 Requests for non-operational filming

Any requests to fire stations for non-operational filming should be referred to the appropriate delegated officer (see the [Delegations manual](#)) or functional area so that the request can be properly considered and approval given in a timely manner in conjunction with the Multimedia Officer on (02) 9265 2904 or fax (02) 9265 2882. Approvals may be subject to certain conditions and charges.

3 Follow up action

Upon receiving a request for non-operational filming the Media, Ministerial and Communications Unit (MMCU) should take the following action:

1. Liaise directly with the film company or advertising agency to ascertain the scope of the request, the deadlines and the filming arrangements. Any fees or charges should be outlined at the outset.
2. Obtain a script, film treatment or film concept.
3. In conjunction with the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, examine the material provided by the film company or advertising agency and, if necessary, gain approval for the project to proceed. MMCU is then to advise the company, in writing, of any limitations, conditions, or charges that will be levied in connection with the filming.
4. Appoint an officer for coordination and liaison purposes, where necessary. The right of final edit on any film product prior to screening will be retained by Fire and Rescue NSW unless otherwise agreed.
5. Produce identification for film crews if necessary, and brief them on fireground protocols.
6. Liaise with the delegated officer to obtain approval for use of resources.
7. Obtain details of actual hours worked by fire crews and any other support provided, and arrange for the Accounts Section to raise an invoice.

Contact Officer: *Multimedia Officer, (02) 9265 2904*
File Reference: *CHO/02709*

In Orders 1999/1, with amendments

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Contributing to external publications, conferences and seminars

1 Policy

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to contribute articles or other material to reputable publications and to give papers at relevant conferences or seminars. To ensure that the professional reputation of Fire and Rescue NSW is maintained, the submission of material to external publications and presentations at conferences or seminars must be approved beforehand.

2 Scope and application

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers:

- submitting abstracts, articles, papers, audiovisual or other material to an external publication such as a book, website, online service, multimedia product or journal.
- making a presentation or participating in an activity at an external conference or seminar
- submitting abstracts, papers, presentations or posters to an external conference or seminar

This policy does not apply to media articles and interviews, which are covered by the [Media policy](#).

Fire and Rescue NSW acknowledges that employees who are members of a union may from time to time submit articles to the journal or other publications produced by their union. In such cases, articles will be considered appropriate, provided it has been authorised by the relevant union.

3 Conferences and seminars

In accordance with Premier's Department Circular C2005-40, [Speaking and attendance at commercial conferences and seminars](#), strong preference will be given to approving presentations at conferences and seminars run by government agencies, professional associations and other organisations with specialist knowledge in fields associated with the fire and emergency industry. It is recognised that commercially run conferences may sometimes serve other valuable organisational purposes such as showcasing Fire and Rescue NSW to a broadly constituted audience. On these occasions the Commissioner may authorise speaking at these conferences.

Staff or volunteers approved by the Commissioner to address a commercially run conference should negotiate, through ComSafe Services, a fee payable to Fire and Rescue NSW, and for their expenses to be met by the conference organiser. Where it is not possible to negotiate a fee, a suitable number of places should be negotiated for staff or volunteers to attend the conference free of charge.

The Minister's office should be advised of any speaking engagements approved at any conferences (including not for profit conferences) which are likely to gain a high profile.

4 Payments for publication

All payments for contributions to external publications by staff or volunteers in the course of their duties must be paid to Fire and Rescue NSW.

5 Photographs and videos

The use of photographs and videos must comply with the policies on:

- [Photographs and videos of dead or injured people](#) on page 613, and
- [Photographic images of rescue incidents](#) on page 615.

6 Approval process

- 6.1 All contributions or presentations must be approved by the appropriate Director, the Deputy Commissioner, the Deputy Chief Executive, or the Commissioner if appropriate. If a contribution or presentation relates to the responsibilities of more than one area, it must be approved by all relevant Directors.
- 6.2 Contributions or presentations that involve sensitive issues must be approved by the Commissioner and may need to be approved by other agencies or the Minister's office.
- 6.3 Any contribution or presentation which relates to terrorism will be referred to the Police Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command for approval.
- 6.4 Any contribution or presentation which relates to consequence/emergency management or critical infrastructure will be referred to the Chair of the State Emergency Management Committee for approval.

7 AFAC Knowledge Web

Fire and Rescue NSW supports the sharing of information through the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) [Knowledge Web](#).

The AFAC Knowledge Web has public and restricted areas. Public areas can be viewed by anyone with access to the Internet. The members' area can only be viewed by members of the AFAC Knowledge Web, who must be volunteers or staff members of an AFAC member agency, an AFAC partner agency or an industry researcher.

Only Lessons Learned Centre staff are authorised to upload information to the public and members' areas of the AFAC Knowledge Web.

To submit information to the AFAC Knowledge Web:

- decide whether the information should be posted on the public or members' areas of the AFAC Knowledge Web
- obtain approval for publication in accordance with Section 6 above
- email the information and evidence of approval to LessonsLearned.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au.

The Lessons Learned Centre will inform you when the information has been posted.

8 Advice and assistance

It is strongly recommended that anyone considering contributing to an external publication or giving a presentation at a conference or seminar contact the Public Affairs Officers in the Media, Ministerial and Communications Unit on (02) 9265 2907 for advice and assistance before making a commitment.

9 Copy for the Library

If you have articles, papers or other material published in an external publication, you must send a copy of, or the hyperlink to, the publication to the Fire and Rescue NSW Library at Alexandria, Library.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au.

If you attend a conference, seminar or other activity where papers are available you should ensure a copy of the papers is placed in the Library.

Contact Officer: Assistant Director Media and Ministerials, (02) 9265 2804

File Reference: CHO/01654, NFB/04340 and NFB/02211 In Orders 2009/15, with amendments

Sponsorship policy

1 Introduction

Fire and Rescue NSW's [Sponsorship policy](#) is available on the intranet.

2 What is sponsorship?

Sponsorship, as defined by the [ICAC](#), is a contribution in money or kind, generally by the corporate and government sectors, in support of a Fire and Rescue NSW community related activity, in return for agreed benefits.

Sponsorship does not include the selling of advertising space, joint ventures, consultancies, gifts or donations where the reciprocal benefit provided by Fire and Rescue NSW does not extend beyond some modest acknowledgment.

3 Why we have a sponsorship policy

Fire and Rescue NSW actively seeks financial and/or in-kind sponsorship from commercial organisations, government agencies and associations to support community safety programs that engage and educate the public about fire related risks.

The purpose of the *Sponsorship policy* is to offer best practice guidance for staff and volunteers in understanding, implementing and delivering the processes of sponsorship. These guidelines help ensure that sponsorship activities align with corporate objectives and that Fire and Rescue NSW makes consistent and appropriate approaches to sponsors.

The policy clarifies the basis upon which Fire and Rescue NSW pursues and manages sponsorships. It discusses commercial advantages, selection criteria and sound sponsorship management practices that Fire and Rescue NSW needs to observe. It aims to ensure that probity is maintained in the selection and appointment of sponsors and in managing sponsorship agreements.

4 Enquiries

All sponsorship enquiries should be referred to the Sponsorship and Marketing Manager, Community Engagement and Development Unit, at Greenacre.

Contact Officer: Sponsorship and Marketing Manager, (02) 9742 7358

File Reference: CHO/00243 and NFB/02578 In Orders 2008/24, with amendments

Fundraising calendars

As part of Fire and Rescue NSW's commitment to community engagement and helping the community recover after emergencies, Fire and Rescue NSW staff participate in a range of major fundraising activities for key organisations such as the Burns Unit at The Children's Hospital Westmead.

Firefighter calendars are one form of fundraising in which Fire and Rescue NSW has been asked to participate at times. While supporting the aims of such projects, Fire and Rescue NSW does not permit staff involvement in such publications. The images are often not appropriate for Fire and Rescue NSW as it seeks to present itself as a modern diverse organisation serving all sections of the community. The images do not usually publicise our work and activities, nor do they promote safety messages. As well, Fire and Rescue NSW does not usually have control over how such images are used and edited, nor the context in which they appear.

Accordingly Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters, staff and volunteers are not to appear in fundraising calendars using Fire and Rescue NSW uniforms, appliances, equipment or fire stations, or implying Fire and Rescue NSW involvement. Items featuring the Fire and Rescue NSW name, logo, etc, are also not to be featured in these calendars, to avoid implying Fire and Rescue NSW endorsement.

Contact Officer: Assistant Director Media and Ministerials, (02) 9265 2804

File Reference: NFB/01438

In Orders 2008/6, with amendments

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Working with Aboriginal people

A key focus area for Fire & Rescue NSW is the establishment of strong community relationships, by building trust and rapport, through mutual respect and a shared focus on community safety.

Our [Reconciliation action plan](#) provides a framework which details the practical actions we will take to strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal people across NSW, and to improve our service delivery to Aboriginal communities.

To put our Plan to action, the following documents have been developed to provide guidance and assistance to staff.

These documents can be accessed on [Aboriginal Resources site](#) on Station Portal.

Statement of commitment to reconciliation

The [Statement of commitment to reconciliation](#) rescinds the previous Statement signed by the Commissioner on 30 January 2008.

The revised statement serves as a reminder of our direction and commitment as we continue to work towards meeting the needs of the Aboriginal community.

Note: Copies of the revised *Statement of commitment to reconciliation* will be sent to all stations and sections shortly. The statement must be displayed in all FRNSW workplaces.

Working with Aboriginal people protocol

The [Working with Aboriginal people protocol](#) has been developed to provide information and guidance in relation to contacting, consulting and communicating with, and engaging members of the Aboriginal community.

Welcome to and acknowledgement of country guidelines

The [Welcome to and acknowledgment of country guidelines](#) have been developed to assist staff with the appropriate acknowledgement of Aboriginal people as the original owners of the land.

The Guidelines are to be used at official FRNSW events.

Contact Officer: Manager Planning and Performance Evaluation, (02) 9265 2965

File Reference: NFB/07693

Commissioner's Orders 2012/9

Customer cards

1 Policy

Customer cards are for crews to use as business cards to give members of the public details of how to contact their local fire station:

- after an incident;
- after inspections or pre-incident planning exercises;
- after public education exercises and public relations events; and
- as business cards when crews want to give someone their details.

The *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* requires Fire and Rescue NSW to inform people that personal information is being collected about them, and that the information may be disclosed to other organisations such as insurance companies and law enforcement agencies. This information has been included on the customer card.

A customer card must therefore be given to any individual about whom information has been collected. For example the owner and/or occupier of a building, vehicle or vessel, or any person who suffers injuries at an incident.

2 Format

Cards are supplied in blocks of 200, preprinted with the station name and address. There is a space on the back of the card to write messages. The cards are designed to be carried in the glove box of the appliance.

3 Replacement issue

[ESCAT](#) gives details for ordering replacement cards.

Please note that on each occasion an order is placed, confirmation of the station's current name, address and telephone number will be required before reprinting starts.

Contact Officer: Director Operational Capability, (02) 9265 2713

File Reference: CHO/05883

In Orders 2001/9, with amendments

Awareness of cultural and religious protocols when visiting premises

1 Introduction

The NSW community includes a diverse range of cultures and religions. All cultures and religions have customs and protocols about people entering premises, eg whether headwear or footwear is removed or retained. In places of worship, there are often rituals or observances that people are expected to follow.

2 Policy

Staff should be aware of and sensitive to cultural and religious protocols when visiting premises. Without compromising operations, staff should observe protocols normally observed by the occupants of the premises, in accordance with the following guidelines.

3 Community activities

When carrying out community activities such as risk management programs, pre incident planning, education activities or similar exercises, cultural and religious protocols should be observed, provided that safety and the ability of crews to respond to incidents are not compromised.

If you are not sure what cultural or religious protocols may apply, ask the advice of a member of the community concerned, perhaps when making the appointment. The Cultural and Linguistic Diverse (CALD) Coordinator can also be consulted on 0408 228 740.

4 When attending incidents

When attending incidents, crews should be aware of cultural and religious issues, however crews must not allow cultural or religious issues to prevent:

- the investigation of the circumstances to which Fire and Rescue NSW has been called
- the protection of life, property or the environment
- personnel wearing the correct personal protective equipment for the incident.

Contact Officer: CALD Coordinator, (02) 9742 7143 or 0408 228 740

File Reference: CRM/POL/000038

In Orders 2006/4, with amendments

Interpreters

The Community Relations Commission's Interpreter Card was launched on 26 March 1992.

The purpose of the card is to assist people of non-English speaking background in their dealings with government agencies and when dealing with police or other emergency services in times of crisis.

The card is a wallet sized plastic card which identifies the bearer as a person from a non-English speaking background who needs an interpreter. The card also identifies the language spoken by the bearer. The cards have been distributed through community groups to people who need them.

If a person presents this card, members should, if an interpreter is not arranged by local police, when practicable, arrange for one to be provided, via R/T or telephone.

In non-emergency situations members should contact the Community Relations Commission's [Language Service](#) on 1300 651 500, a 24 hour service.

Police officers have access to after hours emergency telephone numbers for interpreters.

In Orders 1992/16, with amendments

Community Language Allowance Scheme

Introduction

The Community Language Allowance Scheme (CLAS) provides non-English speaking people with equal access to government services. Under CLAS, employees who speak a community language may be paid an allowance if they are in direct contact with the public and they regularly use their community language in carrying out official Fire and Rescue NSW work. CLAS recipients are to be viewed as 'language aids' and not as fully qualified interpreters and/or translators.

Fire and Rescue NSW has a register of all employees who are bi- or multi-lingual (this includes the deaf sign language). This register is used to enable us to provide non-English speaking people with improved access to services provided by Fire and Rescue NSW and to identify possible CLAS recipients.

Placement on the register can give an employee an increased opportunity to carry out a variety of duties and increase skills in dealing with different Fire and Rescue NSW functions. It is not intended to force employees into a situation where they are forced to carry out such duties or transfer into locations where there are substantial numbers of an ethnic community who communicate in a language comparable with the employee's other language(s). Existing policies on other issues remain unaltered by the introduction of CLAS.

Fire and Rescue NSW encourages bi- or multi-lingual employees to place themselves on the language register and apply for the CLAS allowance to allow us to better serve the community of New South Wales.

Language Register

All bi-lingual employees, whether or not they intend to apply for the CLAS allowance, are urged to place their names on the language register. Placement on the language register is a prerequisite for payment of the CLAS allowance.

To place yourself on the language register you should send a short memorandum to the Senior Human Resources Officer, Employee Relations Branch, Level 11, 227 Elizabeth Street, Sydney. This memorandum must contain the following information:

- your full name, current location, rank; and
- the language or languages you can communicate in, and whether you can both speak and write in that language; and
- any special areas of interest relevant to Fire and Rescue NSW functions.

Your placement on this register will be confirmed in writing.

Allowance Eligibility

To be eligible for payment of the CLAS allowance the following procedure should be followed.

1. You must have yourself listed on the language register.
2. You should then send a memorandum through your Zone Commander/Branch Manager stating that you are currently on the language register and detailing the number of occasions that you have used your second language in the course of your duties. It will generally be considered that to justify regular usage of the second language you would need to use those skills on at least seven occasions annually in dealing with different members of the community.

3. Your Zone Commander/Branch Manager should then provide comments on your application including a recommendation as to whether the allowance should be paid.
4. The application is then to be forwarded to the Assistant Director Employee Relations, Level 11, 227 Elizabeth Street, Sydney.
5. If appropriate, arrangements will then be made for you to attend a test conducted and arranged by the Community Relations Commission's Language Services Division. The test will consist of three parts:
 - free conversation in English and the community language(s);
 - comprehension - a passage to be read aloud by you in the community language, followed by a simple form to be completed in English, using the information supplied in the passage;
 - a short passage in English, with the content to be explained in the community language.

Employees who have a current National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) certificate (levels 1-5) and who satisfy the other criteria for a CLAS allowance do not need to undergo this test.

6. Written advice will then be forwarded to you on the results of your application with a copy being sent to your Zone Commander/Branch Manager.

It should be noted that a CLAS allowance will only be paid while you continue to satisfy the criteria necessary for payment. As part of this process CLAS allowances will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Amounts Payable for a CLAS Allowance

The current base rate for a full-time employee who satisfies the criteria for the payment of a CLAS allowance is \$1036.00 per annum.

Retained Firefighters who satisfy the criteria for the payment of a CLAS allowance will be paid a proportion of the rate applicable to full-time staff dependent upon the average number of hours worked in the past 12 months as a proportion of the standard 38 hour week.

Part-time staff who satisfy the criteria for the payment of a CLAS allowance will be paid a proportion of the rate applicable to full-time staff dependent upon the average number of hours currently being worked as a proportion of the full-time hours for that classification.

Further Information

If you have any enquiries or require further information on the above please contact the Senior Human Resources Officer on (02) 9265 2871.

In Orders 1996/14, with amendments

