

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

### POLICIES

#### Information management policy

##### 1 Information management principles

###### 1.1 Our core business

Fire and Rescue NSW is a service organisation dedicated to minimising the impacts of emergency incidents on the community. These reductions are achieved by:

*Prevention* - the education of the public and the development and assistance with implementation of safety regulations,

*Fire suppression* - rapid turnout of suitably equipped appliances and highly trained crews,

*Hazmat* - control and management of toxic and hazardous materials incidents throughout the State, and

*Rescue* - provision of land based rescue services.

These four areas represent our core business. The purpose of all elements of the organisation is to ensure that these four core areas of service to the community are constantly improved. Results of Fire and Rescue NSW's performance and value to the State Government are reported periodically.

###### 1.2 Information is a strategic resource

Fire and Rescue NSW recognises that information is a strategic resource which must be conveniently available to its members when they require it to fulfil their roles in the full knowledge of the activities and responsibilities of those around them. Fire and Rescue NSW also recognises the essential role that feedback plays in improving performance. Lives depend upon our ability to learn from incidents, the environment and from the people around us. Performance improvement is conducted after valid feedback.

The purpose of information is to:

- allow assessments and communication of situations,
- provide control instructions, and
- gain feedback about actions with a view to making performance improvements.

Using an overview of the whole organisation and its four core businesses, these three factors will be used to underpin Fire and Rescue NSW's improvements in information management.

To achieve superior outcomes, Fire and Rescue NSW needs to:

- build a better understanding of what the community needs,
- understand what actions Fire and Rescue NSW can take to meet those needs, and
- collect information about Fire and Rescue NSW's effectiveness to provide a basis for further improvement.

By acting to build such an understanding with its information management program, Fire and Rescue NSW will be able to build its structure, strategies and services to effectively influence the key variables that affect the impact of emergency incidents on the community. By communicating this to staff, Fire and Rescue NSW can then focus the activities of staff on either:

- improving the community situation by developing strategies to influence the variables that affect the community, or
- learning and thus improving the quality of Fire and Rescue NSW and its services.

To support our core activities, our information systems will be prioritised to:

- **protect the community** by identifying hazards, devising methods of reduction and protecting the community from threats, and to **protect our firefighters** who must have access to all necessary information as well as the capability to enable them to effectively protect our community,
- **provide useful, timely and accurate performance feedback** to enable us to learn from experience and for our firefighters around the State to use those lessons to continuously improve our effectiveness,
- **enable the superior use of resources** to assure efficiency of our operations, and
- **report to government** so that our actions and decisions are fully accounted for, whilst being entirely aware of government and community needs.

An integrated management approach to information will incorporate information systems, information technology and information collections. An Information System is any process or structure which is specifically designed to handle information. Information Technologies are technologies explicitly designed for storing, collecting, transferring or processing information, including computers and telecommunications. An Information Collection is any organised collection of information.

Fire and Rescue NSW will use Risk Management and develop and maintain a Disaster Recovery Plan to protect its investment in information, systems and technologies.

### 1.3 Ownership of information

Information collections are only funded by Fire and Rescue NSW on the understanding that they are the property of the Fire and Rescue NSW and on the pre condition that they will be managed and used in a way consistent with Fire and Rescue NSW's Information Management Policy.

All original material, including inventions, designs, ideas, drawings, circuit layouts etc, whether readable by persons or machines, created by employees and/or temporary personnel whilst working for Fire and Rescue NSW, is the sole and exclusive property of the Government of NSW, free from any claim or retention of rights thereto on the part of those employees or temporary personnel.

Intellectual property, being all material relating to scientific works, discoveries, industrial designs, trademarks, service marks, commercial names and designations, ideas, drawings and circuit layouts in relation to equipment or systems assigned, supplied, contracted or purchased by Fire and Rescue NSW must be strictly preserved.

Employees and temporary personnel have no right to disclose or use any such original material for any purpose whatsoever other than in the course of their duties.

Computer software is considered as intellectual property and staff must not make unauthorised copies of computer programs whether for personal use or distribution. Computer software is the property of either Fire and Rescue NSW, or of other persons or companies which created the computer software.

#### **1.4 Access to information**

Fire and Rescue NSW recognises that people cannot act on information which they cannot access. It therefore follows that, provided Fire and Rescue NSW's commercial-in-confidence and contractual obligations and individual's rights to privacy and confidentiality are observed, all Fire and Rescue NSW members are entitled to have access to performance, responsibility, operational and feedback information for use within Fire and Rescue NSW. External access to Fire and Rescue NSW's information may be subject to controls in the interests of public safety, security and privacy.

See also the [Information security policy](#) on page 554 and the [Privacy policy](#) on page 616

#### **1.5 Accuracy of information**

Fire and Rescue NSW recognises that actions will be flawed if information is inaccurate. We therefore intend that all information which may affect our performance in assisting the community will be up to date and accurate. It is the clear responsibility of each person creating and recording information to be able to attest to its accuracy and currency, as well as to its completeness for the purpose for which it is intended.

#### **1.6 Use of information technology**

Fire and Rescue NSW appreciates that many improvements are possible with the appropriate design and use of information technologies which:

- allow wide distribution of information,
- allow information to be sorted and processed in useful ways, and
- provide access to internal and external sources of data.

Fire and Rescue NSW believes that the power of information technologies must be used to support our operational core businesses and to allow our staff to learn no matter where they are in our State. To achieve this we believe that technologies should be easy-to-use and accessible by our operational people at the local level. The investment in such technologies must provide a clear contribution to Fire and Rescue NSW's effectiveness.

## **2 Information trustees**

Fire and Rescue NSW is the ultimate owner of all information funded by Fire and Rescue NSW. The term 'Information Trustee' in this policy refers to any person who collects or develops or maintains a collection of information for use in the course of Fire and Rescue NSW's business. Where several people are engaged in building or maintaining a collection, they will nominate an Information Trustee who will assume the appropriate responsibilities.

An Information Trustee is responsible for distribution and release of information and for keeping the information relevant, current and in a form which is accessible by the organisation. They are also responsible for ensuring that information meets Fire and Rescue NSW's standards such as the [Recommended practice for writing and publishing FRNSW documents](#). Information Trustees are expected to maintain the information collection through appropriate budget, resource and other support, on behalf of the whole organisation.

Information Trustees must ensure that Information Providers have the approval of their managers to divert effort into providing information. When staff are asked to provide information, approval must be obtained through the appropriate management structure.

### 3 Information providers and users

An Information Provider is any person who provides information to an Information Trustee for use by Fire and Rescue NSW. Information Providers are key people in building information collections and wherever possible should ensure that Information Trustees are fully informed about all useful aspects of the data provided, including advising the Trustee of the accuracy, currency, relevance and source of the data provided.

An Information User is any person who uses the information in an Information Trustee's information collection. Information Users are responsible for ensuring that the information they use is relevant and current and that they understand any special constraints or problems in using, distributing or releasing the information by checking with the Information Trustee prior to reaching conclusions.

*Contact Officer: Director Information Technology, (02) 9265 2645*

*In Orders 1996/21, with amendments*

### Records management policy

The [Records management policy](#) is available on the [Administration Policies page](#) of the Intranet.

The *Records management policy* ensures that full and accurate records of all activities and decisions of FRNSW are created, managed and retained or disposed of appropriately, and in accordance with relevant legislation. This will enable FRNSW to achieve information accessibility, business enhancement and improvement. This policy applies to all FRNSW employees.

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Management, (02) 9265 2867*

*File Reference: NFB/00356*

*Commissioner's Orders 2012/13*

### Information security policy

The [Information security policy](#) is available on the Intranet.

*Contact Officer: Information Security Manager, (02) 9265 2834*

*File Reference: NFB/00209*

*Commissioner's Orders 2011/15*

## Intellectual property policy and implementation guidelines

### Policy

The intellectual property (IP) held by Fire and Rescue NSW is a major resource for the agency and a valuable asset for the NSW Government and the people of NSW.

Fire and Rescue NSW is committed to ensuring it manages the creation, use, sharing, protection, and commercialisation of IP in accordance with best practice.

Anything Fire and Rescue NSW employees develop, invent or create (alone or in collaboration with others) in the course of their employment with Fire and Rescue NSW automatically becomes and remains the property of Fire and Rescue NSW, except where there is a formal agreement otherwise.

In addition, anything employees develop, invent or create (alone or in collaboration with others) using information gained in the course of their employment with Fire and Rescue NSW automatically becomes and remains the property of Fire and Rescue NSW, except where there is a formal agreement otherwise.

Intellectual property created by Fire and Rescue NSW employees or contractors or purchased by Fire and Rescue NSW must be strictly protected.

Employees, contractors and temporary personnel have no right to disclose or use any Fire and Rescue NSW intellectual property for any purpose other than in the course of their Fire and Rescue NSW duties, unless expressly authorised to do so.

As a Fire and Rescue NSW employee or contractor, you are required to act in accordance with this policy to safeguard the resources of Fire and Rescue NSW. You also have an obligation to respect the IP rights of other people or organisations dealing with Fire and Rescue NSW.

The guidelines accompanying this policy explain how the policy is to be implemented, and must be followed.

### Policy framework

#### Scope

This policy applies to all Fire and Rescue NSW employees, volunteers, contractors and suppliers.

It is based on the following legislation and policies:

- NSW Government's *Intellectual Property Management Framework for the NSW Public Sector*
- relevant legislation, including the *Copyright Act 1968*, *Trade Marks Act 1995*, *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, *State Records Act 1998* and
- Fire and Rescue NSW [Code of conduct](#) on page 361.

This policy is related to the following Fire and Rescue NSW policies:

- various policies for employees including Information Security, Use of Logo, Use of Uniforms, Information Management, and Secondary Employment Policy for Fire and Rescue NSW staff employed under the Public Sector Management Act

- various policies for employment of contractors and consultants including Terms and Conditions of Skill Engagement Hire, Statement of Business Ethics, Terms and Conditions of Consultancy
- various policies for dealing with suppliers including Terms and Conditions of Contract.

## **Definitions**

### **Intellectual property**

Broadly speaking, intellectual property (IP) is a general term which covers the various rights protecting economic investment in creative effort. Examples of IP include:

- copyright and related rights in relation to manuals, publications, educational resources, databases, digitised material (including CD ROM products), software, archives, and manuscripts
- patents for the invention of new devices or processes
- trade marks which protect brand names and business, company, or domain names
- designs such as the design for a product, and
- trade secrets and confidential information.

### **Moral rights**

Moral rights are generally applied to artistic works, including photographs. They are rights provided to creators under copyright law in order to protect both their reputation and the integrity of their work, including:

- the right of attribution of authorship, for example acknowledgement for photographs
- the right not to have authorship of their work falsely attributed, and
- the right of integrity of authorship. This protects creators from their work being used in a derogatory way that may negatively impact on their character or reputation.

### **Copyright**

‘Copyright’ protection gives owners exclusive rights to license other people or organisations to copy, perform in public, communicate, publish, or make an adaptation of their work. Exclusive rights apply also to sound recordings, cinematograph films, broadcasts and published editions of works.

### **Fire and Rescue NSW intellectual property assets**

Fire and Rescue NSW creates and acquires IP in relation to various subjects. These include (but are not limited to):

- Fire and Rescue NSW policies, procedures, publications and manuals
- Fire and Rescue NSW training materials and educational resources
- ComSafe training materials
- Fire and Rescue NSW databases, data and archives

- research, including jointly developed research findings and materials
- IT and software developed by or for Fire and Rescue NSW
- branding, including Fire and Rescue NSW logos, website and intranet, domain names, program names, social media
- images and photographs
- film footage
- songs and music
- engineering designs, drawings and specifications
- technical reports and technical documents
- technical specifications and operator manuals (such as, for fire appliances and other equipment).

### **Implementation principles and guidelines**

The following general principles guide the management of IP in Fire and Rescue NSW.

#### **Principle 1 - management of IP will be based on risk assessment principles and incorporated into Fire and Rescue NSW planning processes**

IP management will be incorporated into Fire and Rescue NSW planning processes and directly linked to service delivery outcomes. That is, management will be integrated with existing corporate systems, policies and objectives and be aligned with asset management obligations, as set out in:

- Corporate and Results and Services Plans
- Total Asset Management (TAM) Policy (in relation to tangible assets)
- *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and the *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2000*
- *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002*, and
- annual reports legislation.

Protection of significant IP may involve key staff signing agreements to maintain the confidentiality of secret information both during and after employment with Fire and Rescue NSW.

#### **Principle 2 - Fire and Rescue NSW will specifically address the ownership of IP whenever it is created or acquired**

IP may be created or acquired in the context of employment, out-sourcing, grants, procurement, consulting, and contracting agreements.

Fire and Rescue NSW automatically owns anything its employees develop, invent or create (alone or in collaboration with others) in their role in Fire and Rescue NSW. This fact should be highlighted during induction of new staff, and reaffirmed to existing staff whenever IP issues arise.

Fire and Rescue NSW will seek to own all intellectual property created in the course of other activities, including:

- Negotiating with contractors to own all IP created under a contract, co-funding or partnership agreement where possible.

- Negotiating with providers under any grant funding agreement:
  - to own all intellectual property created, or
  - to hold a royalty-free unlimited licence to use or disseminate intellectual property that is required for Fire and Rescue NSW operational needs and goals in the context of the grant funding agreement.

**Principle 3 - Fire and Rescue NSW will identify and record any significant IP it owns, controls, or uses in its IP Register**

Significant Fire and Rescue NSW IP should be identified and recorded. Examples of significant IP include (but are not limited to):

- IP which it is mandatory for Fire and Rescue NSW to record
- IP which costs over a significant amount to generate
- IP worth a significant amount to Fire and Rescue NSW
- the cost to Fire and Rescue NSW of losing the IP and the cost of alternatives
- IP which is valuable to Fire and Rescue NSW, for example its reputation, and
- IP which plays an important role in the operation of Fire and Rescue NSW or in the services it provides.

The Chief Financial Officer should be consulted to help determine what IP is significant for Fire and Rescue NSW.

The IP Register will include the following information:

- a description of the IP and its location
- ownership details
- any specific contractual clauses in relation to the development or licensing of the IP
- the names of those responsible for the IP
- any IP related rights issues, for example, whether the IP is protected, the status of the protection, and the expiry date
- any potential or current risks associated with the IP
- in cases where IP is licensed out: details of the licence (including the expiry date), licensee, and payments
- where Fire and Rescue NSW has a licence to use someone else's IP: details of the licence, licensor, expiry date, and payments
- the costs and revenue associated with IP, and
- arrangements for the review of the IP.



The IP Register will be managed by the Corporate Risk Unit.

#### **Principle 4 - Fire and Rescue NSW will take active steps to protect its IP rights**

Fire and Rescue NSW should actively protect its IP rights by appropriate means. This will preserve the integrity of public sector information and ensure that this information is not misused or misrepresented. It will also enable commercialising of works that are identified as having strategic or commercial value for the benefit of the people of NSW.

Mechanisms to protect IP include:

- inclusion of suitable clauses in employment and supply contracts
- registration of trademarks and designs
- inclusion of copyright statements
- establishment of suitable licensing arrangements, and
- implementation of confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements.

Where a breach of Fire and Rescue NSW rights is suspected, this should be investigated promptly. If a breach is found to have occurred, then appropriate action should be taken to address the breach.

Fire and Rescue NSW, through its participation in the AFAC Knowledge Web, shares information with other Australasian fire and emergency service agencies. However agreements are in place to ensure that each agency retains copyright of information shared through the Knowledge Web.

Fire and Rescue NSW publications and information products must contain the appropriate standard copyright statements as set out below. This has the following advantages:

- it lets the public know the extent to which they may freely reproduce and use a work protected by copyright
- it protects Crown copyright by specifying the circumstances in which the work may not be copied and distributed
- it assists in the internal management of intellectual property.

#### **Principle 5 - Fire and Rescue NSW will take active steps to avoid infringing IP rights of other people and organisations**

Before using material created by someone else Fire and Rescue NSW will conduct appropriate searches for trademarks, business and domain names, patents, and designs (using, for example, the IP Australia website search databases: [www.ipaustralia.gov.au](http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au)) in order to identify the owner of the IP.

You should always consider firstly whether suitable alternative materials are owned by other government agencies, or freely available for use.

If you wish to use IP that belongs to another person or organisation, you should check what restrictions apply (for example, by examining the copyright statement on the publication). If consent is required, you should obtain the consent in writing and retain and record it in the IP Register. Publications which use other people's IP must contain the appropriate standard statements as set out below.

Where the ownership of IP is not clear, you should seek appropriate legal advice (using established Fire and Rescue NSW procedures for obtaining legal advice).

**Principle 6 - Fire and Rescue NSW will make decisions about the commercialisation of IP on the basis of appropriate legal, financial, and commercial advice**

‘Commercialisation’ of IP means selling or trading the results of innovation and creativity, including related IP rights, or the licensing for the sale of IP for profit.

When Fire and Rescue NSW makes a decision about commercialising IP it must be satisfied that the people of NSW will obtain the maximum benefit. In some cases it may be in the best interest of NSW to transfer the IP to another government agency, or private industry, either for a fee, a non-commercial fee, or free of charge.

This decision should be made by the appropriate Director and in consultation with the relevant Fire and Rescue NSW contacts below. Any decisions or approvals on commercialisation should be made in line with financial delegations. If necessary, external advice should be sought, including:

- legal advice
- advice from specialist subject matter experts, and/or
- advice from the NSW Department of Industry and Investment.

If Fire and Rescue NSW intends to sell the publication or material, and does not wish the owner to freely reproduce and distribute the product to others, it must contain the appropriate standard statements set out in the procedures below.

**Contacts within Fire and Rescue NSW**

For advice and information on the IP Register and risk management contact:

Marc Turner  
Manager Corporate Risk Unit  
Strategy and Innovation Directorate  
Phone: 9265 2864  
Email: marc.turner@fire.nsw.gov.au

For advice on copyright and publication in general contact:

Peter Walker  
Manager Corporate Communications Capability/Copyright Officer  
Strategy and Innovation Directorate  
Phone: 9265 2667  
Email: peter.walker@fire.nsw.gov.au

For legal advice consult:

Peter Hearne  
Senior Legal Officer  
Phone: 9265 2950  
Email: peter.hearne@fire.nsw.gov.au

For consultation on making decisions about significant IP contact:

Richard Host  
Chief Information Officer  
Director Information Technology  
Phone: 9265 2645  
Email: richard.host@fire.nsw.gov.au

### External contacts

The NSW Department of Justice and Attorney General can provide general advice about copyright issues.

NSW Department of Justice and Attorney General  
160 Marsden St  
Parramatta NSW 2124  
Phone: 8688 7777 or 1800 684 449  
Website: [http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/Corporate/ll\\_corporate.nsf/pages/attorney\\_generals\\_department\\_index](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/Corporate/ll_corporate.nsf/pages/attorney_generals_department_index)

NSW Procurement at the NSW Department of Services, Technology and Administration develops and manages procurement contracts for a wide range of goods and services used by government. In addition to establishing standard contracts, they can also assist, on a fee-for-service basis, in the development of one-off contracts for specific circumstances.

NSW Department of Services, Technology and Administration  
24 Rawson Place  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Phone: 9372 8877  
Website: [www.services.nsw.gov.au/inside-dsta/nsw-procurement](http://www.services.nsw.gov.au/inside-dsta/nsw-procurement)

The NSW Department of Industry and Investment can provide advice to Government agencies who wish to commercialise their IP and products and take them to market.

NSW Department of Industry and Investment  
Level 47, MLC Centre,  
19 Martin Place, Sydney  
Phone: 9338 6605  
Website: [www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/commercialisation](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/commercialisation)

The Australian Copyright Council is an independent non-profit organisation providing information, advice and training about copyright in Australia, including a range of comprehensive online information sheets.

Australian Copyright Council  
245 Chalmers Street  
Redfern NSW 2016  
Phone: 8815 9777  
Website: [www.copyright.org.au](http://www.copyright.org.au)

## Copyright statements for Fire and Rescue NSW publications and information products

When documents and other information products are created, they should be classified according to the [Information security policy](#) on page 554. This classification indicates whether they can be released externally. The relevant manager of the area who is the data custodian for this information approves the classification and thus release of the information.

### General Copyright Notice

This General Copyright Notice should be placed on the internet as a reference.

<b>General Copyright Notice</b>
<p>Copyright in the material which appears [in this publication/on this website] is subject to the operation of the Copyright Act 1968, vested in the Crown in the right of the State of New South Wales. You are not permitted to use any trademark from this site, including Fire and Rescue NSW's logo, without the express permission of Fire and Rescue NSW.</p> <p>In keeping with the NSW Government's commitment to encouraging the availability, dissemination and exchange of information (and subject to the operation of the <a href="#">Copyright Act 1968</a>), you are welcome to reproduce the material for personal, in-house or non-commercial use, without formal permission or charge, providing the source is acknowledged.</p> <p>If you wish to reproduce, alter, store or transmit the material which appears on Fire and Rescue NSW's website for a purpose other than personal, in-house or non-commercial use, you can apply to Fire and Rescue NSW for formal permission:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Commissioner Fire and Rescue NSW PO Box A249 SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232 or by email to <a href="mailto:info@fire.nsw.gov.au">info@fire.nsw.gov.au</a>.</p>

### Copyright statements for material that may be freely reproduced

Most information produced by Fire and Rescue NSW is freely available to be copied, distributed, displayed or downloaded.

Copyright statements should appear on the front page of all publications for this type of material, including in the footer of websites, to identify Fire and Rescue NSW as the owner. The notice may be displayed in small print and may appear:

- on the inside front cover of a publication,
- at the end of a publication (if not in book form), or
- any other appropriate location.

The following table contains the suggested format:

Type	Copyright Statement
Long-form standard copyright statement	© State of New South Wales through Fire and Rescue NSW, [year of first creation or publication]. You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this work for any purpose, provided that you attribute Fire and Rescue NSW as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to (1) charge others for access to the work (other than at cost), (2) include the work in advertising or a product for sale, (3) modify the work or (4) publish the work to a website.
Short-form standard copyright statement	© State of New South Wales through Fire and Rescue NSW, [year of first creation or publication]. This work may be freely reproduced and distributed for most purposes, however some restrictions apply. See the General Copyright Notice on <a href="http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au">www.fire.nsw.gov.au</a> or contact Fire and Rescue NSW.

### Copyright Statements for material for sale

If Fire and Rescue NSW intends to sell the publication or material, and does not wish the owner to freely reproduce and distribute the product to others, then the following copyright notice should appear on the material:

Type	Restricted copyright notice
Prevents making additional copies, except as otherwise permitted by the Copyright Act.	© State of New South Wales through Fire and Rescue NSW, [year of first creation or publication]. All rights reserved.
Limits the private sector's use and reproduction of a publication, but allows (and does not expect remuneration for) copying and distribution for personal use or by educational or government bodies.	© State of New South Wales through Fire and Rescue NSW, [year of first creation or publication]. This work may be freely reproduced and distributed for personal, educational or government purposes. Permission must be received from Fire and Rescue NSW for all other uses.

### Acknowledgement statements

The following table contains suggested acknowledgement statements.

Type	Acknowledgement Statement
Permission granted from a third party for use of their IP	© [owner], [year of first publication]. This item has been reproduced with kind permission of [owner]

### Disclaimer statements

Based on the example set by the NSW Attorney General, a disclaimer statement in the following terms should appear on any formal publication or information product (including websites and multimedia) except where it is impractical or inappropriate to do so:

Type	Statement
Disclaimers for publications	This [publication/ website] contains information, data, documents, pages and images prepared by Fire and Rescue NSW designed for [purpose]. It does not offer, or replace, legal advice in relation to intellectual property matters. The material it contains may be incomplete, inaccurate, or out of date. The State of NSW accepts no responsibility or liability in relation to the use of any information contained in this document.
Additional disclaimers for websites	The search engines provided on this website are to assist Internet users to locate resources more quickly. However, Fire and Rescue NSW takes no responsibility for the accuracy, currency, reliability and correctness of its search facilities or any linked sites.

### Review of policy and guidelines

This policy should be reviewed every two years, with the Strategy and Innovation Directorate coordinating this review.

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

*File Reference:* NFB/08699

*In Orders 2010/21, with amendments*

## Fire and Rescue NSW logos

### 1 Introduction

The Fire and Rescue NSW logo defines Fire and Rescue NSW's identity in the community. Its correct use and appearance is essential in order to maintain Fire and Rescue NSW's good image and high visibility in the community.

### 2 Trademark registration and copyright

The current logo is registered under the *Trademarks Act 1995* to the Crown in right of the State of NSW as the heraldic symbol of Fire and Rescue NSW.

Current and old logos are protected under the *Copyright Act 1968*.

### 3 Offences under the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act

Under [Section 63B](#) of the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act*, it is an offence to:

- manufacture, sell, exchange or hire Fire and Rescue NSW logos without authority
- use or display Fire and Rescue NSW logos with the intention to deceive.

For more information see the policy on [Use of Fire and Rescue NSW uniforms and insignia](#) on page 675.

## 4 Use of Fire and Rescue NSW logos

No person or organisation may use Fire and Rescue NSW logos for any purpose without the written permission of the Commissioner.

Individuals or organisations seeking approval to use Fire and Rescue NSW logos must make a written submission to the Commissioner specifying the purpose, design, location, quantity and costing of the project.

Use of Fire and Rescue NSW logos on any items of clothing except official Fire and Rescue NSW uniform is not permitted.

*Contact Officer: Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, (02) 2965 2932*

*File Reference: CHO/00011, CHO/06634 and CHO/06635*

*In Orders 2005/27, with amendments*

## Policy development, authorisation and dissemination

The [Policy development, authorisation and dissemination policy](#) and [associated templates](#) have been published on the Administration Policies page of the Intranet.

This policy and its associated procedures establish the principles and practices to be adopted when developing, documenting, authorising and implementing operational and administrative policies and procedures - and documents that support their implementation.

The policy applies to all documentation prepared within FRNSW that directs or guides staff in operational and administrative decision-making. All authors of policy and procedure documents need to be aware of and comply with this policy and its associated procedures.

*Contact Officer: Assistant Director Governance, (02) 9265 3914*

*File Reference: NFB/12092*

*Commissioner's Orders 2011/21*

## Information distribution policy

### 1 Policy

Information should be distributed using the most effective and efficient methods available.

Where possible, information should be distributed using email and the Intranet rather than by facsimile or post. Facsimile should be used only when other distribution methods are unavailable or inappropriate.

### 2 Routine messages

Routine messages to all staff should be posted on the Intranet or sent by electronic mail rather than by facsimile or hard copy.

A routine message must not be sent by facsimile if it has been sent by electronic mail or posted on the Intranet, except to overcome identified problems with the computer network, on a one-off basis (see 7).

### 3 Urgent messages

An urgent message is one that contains information that has an immediate impact on the safety of personnel or Fire and Rescue NSW's ability to:

- respond to incidents
- conduct fire and other emergency operations, or
- communicate with operational units.

Urgent messages can be sent:

- using FireCAD to station printers and to pagers
- by email
- by asking Zone Offices to notify Captains of the message by telephone, and
- by broadcasting a network server message.

To send a FireCAD message, contact your Zone Commander or Manager who will liaise with the Response Coordinator.

**Note:** FireCAD is only suitable for short messages. If a long message is necessary, a short message should be sent on FireCAD giving the gist of the issue and advising that a longer message will be sent by email or posted on the Intranet.

### 4 Publication distribution

There is a range of publications, such as manuals and videos, that because of their function and nature will continue to be distributed in hard copy to selected users, even if electronic copies are available. The managers of these publications should continuously assess the cost effectiveness of their publication methods.

Newsletters, Commissioner's Orders, Commish's Corner, Safety Bulletins and similar publications should be distributed electronically. They will no longer be faxed.

### 5 Responsibilities of commanders and supervisors

It is the responsibility of commanders and supervisors to ensure that all staff in their area of responsibility are aware of information relevant to them, including Safety Bulletins, Commissioner's Orders, Standard Operational Guidelines, etc.

Station Commanders are to ensure that the Intranet and email are checked at least once per shift at permanent stations and at least once a week at retained stations to ensure that new items are received and communicated to their crews.

### 6 Responsibilities of all staff

All staff are responsible for checking their email and the Intranet regularly for information and messages relevant to themselves.

All staff are also responsible for using email in accordance with the [Electronic mail and messaging policy](#) on page 604 and the [Recommended practice for the use of electronic mail](#) on page 606.



## **7 If the computer network is unavailable**

If a station computer cannot access email or the Intranet, the Station Commander should inform the IT Help Desk on (02) 9265 2833 and their Zone or Area Office.

The Zone or Area Office will forward messages and publications such as Commissioner's Orders and Safety Bulletins until the computer is working again.

Managers of electronic publications must have contingency plans in place for the distribution of their publication during prolonged network outages. These plans may include distribution by facsimile.

*Contact Officer: Manager Business Analysis and Projects, (02) 9265 2672*

*File Reference: CHO/04185 and CHO/07946*

*In Orders 2004/21, as amended by  
In Orders 2007/8, with amendments*

## **Databases and computer programs created by employees**

### **1 Fire and Rescue NSW ownership of databases and computer programs**

The *Fire Brigades Act 1989* created Fire and Rescue NSW as a NSW Government Department. All permanent and retained firefighters and administrative and support staff are employed by the NSW Government in the service of the Crown.

All databases and computer programs created by permanent or retained firefighters or by administrative and support staff while in any way associated with their employment with Fire and Rescue NSW are owned by Fire and Rescue NSW.

### **2 Fire and Rescue NSW ownership of copyright in databases and computer programs**

The Crown owns all copyright property from the databases or computer programs created by permanent or retained firefighters or by administrative and support staff while in any way associated with their employment with Fire and Rescue NSW.

Copyright is an intangible property, which allows the copyright owner the exclusive right to use the work and prohibit others from copying the work.

Copyright protection does not depend on formalities such as registration or notice. Copyright is automatic from the moment the work is embodied in a material form. Copyright applies to databases and computer programs.

### **3 Exception**

The only exception is where the Commissioner gives written approval to the employee for the employee to own the database or computer program or the copyright on the database or computer program.

*Contact Officer: Senior Legal Officer, (02) 9265 2950*

*File Reference: CHO/06020*

*In Orders 2000/24, with amendments*

## Managed document version control

### Policy

The [Recommended practice for NSW Fire Brigades managed document version control](#) is available on Station Portal.

All staff, and consultants and contractors working on Fire and Rescue NSW documents, should use the *Recommended practice* for version control of documents.

*Contact Officer: Documentation and Change Manager, (02) 9265 2854*

*File Reference: CHO/09033*

*In Orders 2006/28, with amendments*

### New forms

Any proposal to introduce a new form has to meet the requirements of the [Information management policy](#) on page 551. A form is a means of collecting information which must be integrated with a system for collating and managing information and for providing feedback to the people who have to fill in the form.

*In Orders 1996/28, with amendments*

## COMMISSIONER'S ORDERS

### 1 Policy

Commissioner's Orders (called In Orders before 1 January 2011) is the medium for official communication between the Commissioner and Fire and Rescue NSW staff. Commissioner's Orders and Standing Orders are the only Fire and Rescue NSW information systems authorised by legislation. Clause 4 of the *Fire Brigades Regulation 2008* states:

#### **(4) Commissioner's Orders**

- (1) The Commissioner may, by order in writing, issue instructions with respect to the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of firefighters.*
- (2) The instructions may be published under the title of "In Orders" or "Standing Orders".*
- (3) The Commissioner must take steps to ensure that all current In Orders and Standing Orders are brought to the attention of all firefighters.*

And clause 15 (1) states:

- (1) A firefighter must acquire and maintain a thorough knowledge of, and must comply with the requirements of, the Act, this Regulation and the Commissioner's Orders.*

The publication of Commissioner's Orders:

- enables the Commissioner to issue instructions and publish official notices which must be brought to the attention of all staff
- promulgates new and amended policy and procedures
- publishes personnel notices as required under Government guidelines and awards

- provides an authoritative source of information
- reinforces the dissemination of information normally promulgated through other information systems, eg the *Standard Operational Guidelines*, and
- publishes the names of recipients of awards, medals and commendations.

Current operational policies and procedures that have been published in Commissioner's Orders are consolidated annually into Standing Orders for reference.

## 2 Publication

Commissioners Orders are published every second Wednesday. This schedule may vary over the Christmas/New Year period or at the Commissioner's discretion.

Commissioner's Orders are published on the [Intranet](#) and an email notification is sent to all staff.

## 3 Awareness of Commissioner's Orders

Commanders and supervisors must ensure that all staff under their supervision read each issue of Commissioner's Orders as soon as possible after publication, so that the information is available to staff and Fire and Rescue NSW's commitments to occupational health and safety and equal employment opportunity are met.

Under the *Fire Brigades Regulation 2008* all firefighters must acquire and maintain a knowledge of Commissioner's Orders. Administrative and technical support staff also need to keep themselves informed of issues relating to their areas of responsibility and employment conditions.

## 4 Submitting drafts for publication

Instructions on submitting drafts for publication in Commissioner's Orders are available on the [How to publish page](#) of the Lessons Learned Intranet site. All drafts must be authorised for publication in accordance with these instructions.

The deadline for submission of drafts is 1700 hours on the Friday before the publication date of Commissioner's Orders, unless otherwise notified.

For assistance with drafting Commissioner's Orders, contact the Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 2971, or [InOrders.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:InOrders.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au).

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 2971*

*File Reference: NFB/05127 In Orders 2010/18 as amended by In Orders 2010/27, with amendments*

## Standing Orders

### 1 Policy

[Standing Orders](#) is a reference book of the current operational policies and procedures published in In Orders or Commissioner's Orders. Standing Orders is compiled from In Orders and Commissioner's Orders. Each item of information has a reference to the Orders in which it was published.

To ensure that staff have access to current information on legislative and occupational health and safety requirements, policies and procedures, Standing Orders is updated and published on the [Intranet](#) as soon as possible after Commissioner's Orders are issued each fortnight.

## **2 Standing Orders online**

[Standing Orders](#) is published in electronic form on Station Portal on the Intranet.

## **3 Standing Orders in hard copy**

Standing Orders is no longer published in hard copy format. The last hard copy edition was 2005, which is rescinded and should be discarded.

## **4 Version control**

The current version of Standing Orders is the one posted on Station Portal on the Intranet. The version number and the date of publication are give on the title page and in the footer of each page. To ensure that you are aware of current policies and procedures, you should always use the current version of Standing Orders.

If you have printed or downloaded a copy of Standing Orders, check that you have the current version by comparing the version number and date with those of the document on Station Portal.

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 2971*

*File Reference: NFB/00020*

*In Orders 2007/8, with amendments*

## REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

### How to respond to requests for information

Staff are often approached by people from outside Fire and Rescue NSW with requests for information about Fire and Rescue NSW, our people or our activities. For example, a station was recently approached by someone asking to view personal information in old occurrence books.

All staff should ensure that they are aware of Fire and Rescue NSW's policies about access to Fire and Rescue NSW information, which explain when you can and can't give information to people outside Fire and Rescue NSW. There are times when it is appropriate to give information, and there are other times when information should be kept confidential to protect the interests of the NSW Government, Fire and Rescue NSW, and the privacy of our staff and the people we deal with.

A summary of the policies and contact officers who can assist you with enquiries is given below.

### Information security

The [Information security policy](#) explains your responsibilities in relation to keeping information secure and security classifications used by Fire and Rescue NSW.

### Publicly available information

You can give information that Fire and Rescue NSW has made publicly available to anyone who asks for it. Anything on our internet site [www.fire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au) is publicly available. This includes our Annual Report, Corporate Plan, Code of Conduct, community safety materials and recruitment information.

If you are unsure if something is publicly available information, contact the Media, Ministerial and Communications Unit (MMCU) on (02) 9265 2907.

### Media requests

The [Media policy](#) gives clear guidelines on talking to journalists and media representatives. If you are not authorised to give information to the media, or are not sure if you should answer an enquiry, refer the enquiry to MMCU on (02) 9265 2907.

### Right to Information

The [Government Information \(Public Access\) Act 2009](#), gives members of the public the right to access non-personal information from Fire and Rescue NSW. There are instructions on how to do this on our [internet site](#).

For further information contact the Right of Information Officer on (02) 9265 3959.

### Incident information

The [Media policy](#) gives clear guidelines on talking to the media about incidents. Contact the Operational Media Coordinator on (02) 9265 2948 or 0418 181 000 if you need advice.

People requesting information from AIRS need to fill in and submit the [Request for incident information form](#) on our internet site. In Orders 2009/26, *AIRS policy*, section 12, [Disclosure of AIRS information](#) on page 583, gives more information on this process.

Requests for Communication Centre information such as data logs or voice recordings should be referred to the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response on (02) 9265 2578.

## Personal information

Personal information about Fire and Rescue NSW employees and volunteers and about members of the public who have dealings with Fire and Rescue NSW must be kept confidential in accordance with the [Privacy policy](#) on page 616.

Further guidance on responding to requests for personal information is given in the following policies:

- In Orders 2006/18, *Privacy and confidentiality of personnel information*, Section 3, [Giving information to people outside Fire and Rescue NSW](#) on page 596
- In Orders 2006/18, [Use and disclosure of personal information in Occurrence Books](#) on page 595
- In Orders 2001/6, [Disclosure of information to banks or other financial institutions](#) on page 622

The Privacy Contact Officer, (02) 9265 2867, can give further advice on privacy issues.

## Members of Parliament

If a Member of Parliament requests information, inform them that their request will be referred to the Minister for Emergency Services and follow the procedure for [Provision of Information to members of parliament](#) on page 574.

For further advice contact the Ministerial Liaison Officer on (02) 9265 2921.

## ICAC, WorkCover and other investigations

There are a number of federal and state government agencies that have powers to collect information and evidence. For example, the ICAC has [statutory powers](#) to compel the production of documents and other things, compel a public authority or public official to provide information and enter the premises of a public authority or public official to inspect and copy documents. [WorkCover inspectors](#) also have powers to enter and inspect premises.

An agency representative should always be able to provide you with proof of their identity and evidence of authorisation to access information. If you have any doubts about an investigator's identity or authorisation, contact the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct on (02) 9265 3923.

## Subpoenas and police statements

The policy on [Subpoenas](#) on page 591 explains the process for responding to subpoenas. If you have any questions, contact the Senior Legal Officer on (02) 9265 2950.

The policy on [Court Statements](#) on page 589 explains when and how to provide statements for the Police. For advice, contact the Fire Investigation and Research Unit on (02) 9742 7395.

## Consultants and contractors

Fire and Rescue NSW frequently employs external consultants and contractors to undertake projects, such as designing new computer systems or developing new policies, and investigations, including audits and disciplinary inquiries.

Any contractor or consultant working for Fire and Rescue NSW should be able to provide you with evidence of authorisation to collect information and the name of the Fire and Rescue NSW manager they

are working for. If you have any doubts about providing information to one of these people, contact the responsible manager or the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct on (02) 9265 2826.

## Standing Orders

All the In Orders referred to above are in the *Information management* chapter of [Standing Orders](#). Reading this chapter is a good way to get an overview of information management issues and improve your knowledge of how to deal with requests for information.

## Contact Officers

If you are still not sure whether to respond to a request for information, contact one of the following:

Media, Ministerial and Communications, (02) 9265 2907  
Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, (02) 9265 3923  
Privacy Contact Officer, (02) 9265 2867  
Right of Information Officer, (02) 9265 3959  
Senior Legal Officer, (02) 9265 2950

*Contact Officer:* Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, (02) 9265 3923

*File Reference:* NFB/00209 *In Orders 2010/7, as amended by In Orders 2010/16,  
with amendments*

## Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

The [NSW Government Information \(Public Access\) Act 2009](#) came into force on 1 July 2010. It replaces the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*.

The aims of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) are to:

- create new rights to government information that meet community expectations of a more open and transparent government
- encourage the routine and proactive release of government information, and
- provide rights of appeal in connection with the release of information.

There are four ways to access government information under the GIPA Act. They are:

- **Mandatory disclosure of open access information.** Open access information is information that is readily available on our [internet site](#).
- **Proactive release** of information. Information that is of interest to the public, for example, information regularly sought under access applications, will be made available on our internet site.
- **Informal release.** Information released in response to an informal request for information. Informal requests can be oral or written, are not required to refer to the GIPA Act and do not attract an application fee. For example, requests for routine information or for personal information about the person requesting the information would be informal requests.
- **Formal access** application. This is the last resort, and would only be required in a small number of circumstances. For example, requests for sensitive information or information about a third party, or requests that require significant resources to provide the information, would require a formal application.

Our [internet site](#) contains information for members of the public seeking to access Fire and Rescue NSW information under the GIPA Act. More information about the GIPA Act is also available from the website of the [Office of the Information Commissioner](#).

The Manager Executive and Ministerial Services has been appointed as Fire and Rescue NSW's Right of Information Officer. Enquiries should be directed to:

Right of Information Officer		
Fire and Rescue NSW	Phone	(02) 9265 3959
PO Box A249	Facsimile	(02) 9265 2988
Sydney South NSW 1232	Email	<a href="mailto:gipa@fire.nsw.gov.au">gipa@fire.nsw.gov.au</a>

*Contact Officer:* Manager Executive and Ministerial Services, (02) 9265 3959

*File Reference:* NFB/06914

*In Orders 2010/16, with amendments*

## Provision of Information to members of parliament

### 1 Introduction

The Department of Premier and Cabinet's Circular C2006-46, [Provisions of information to Members of Parliament](#), sets out the NSW Government policy on this issue.

### 2 Requests for information about Fire and Rescue NSW

It is accepted custom and practice in New South Wales that Members of Parliament (MPs) contact the Minister for Emergency Services when seeking information from Fire and Rescue NSW. Alternatively, a written request may be made to the Commissioner.

If you are contacted by an MP, irrespective of their political party, with a verbal or written request for information on a Fire and Rescue NSW matter, inform the MP that their request will be relayed to the Minister for Emergency Services. The Minister's office will make contact with the MP.

Refer the request for information to your Zone Commander immediately. The Zone Commander will contact the Manager Commissioner's Unit at Head Office, who will liaise with the Minister's office.

### 3 Requests to visit Fire and Rescue NSW fire stations - local Members of Parliament

Local Members of Parliament, irrespective of political party, may visit government facilities in their electorate. Local MPs may communicate directly with local Station Commanders and arrange inspections of Fire and Rescue NSW fire stations or offices by direct contact with the officer in charge.

Your Zone Commander should be advised of such requests prior to the inspection.

### 4 Requests to visit Fire and Rescue NSW fire stations - other Members of Parliament

MPs (other than local MPs), should contact the Minister for Emergency Services seeking permission to visit fire stations or other Fire and Rescue NSW premises outside their electorate. If you receive such a request, it should be referred to your Zone Commander who will contact the Manager Commissioner's Unit at Head Office, who will liaise with the Minister's office to arrange the visit.

*Contact Officer:* Manager Executive and Ministerial Services, (02) 9265 3959

*File Reference:* CHO/09360

*In Orders 2008/26, with amendments*



## HISTORY

Fire and Rescue NSW's historian collects and manages material relating to the history of Fire and Rescue NSW. Any member of the Service in possession of, or aware of, articles of historical value or interest to Fire and Rescue NSW can facilitate the preservation of such items by contacting the historian.

Items accepted for inclusion in the collection will be catalogued and the name of the donor recorded. Donations will become the property of Fire and Rescue NSW and will be lent to the Museum of Fire for preservation or display. Inquiries to:

Historian	
Fire and Rescue NSW	PO Box 400
Museum of Fire	PENRITH NSW 2751
Castlereagh Road	Phone (02) 4732 2061
PENRITH NSW 2750	

*In Orders 1996/15, with amendments*

## OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

### Honesty and truthfulness in official documents

When making statements in official documents, such as occurrence books, timesheets and reports, or when signing official documents as certifying officer, members are required under [Clauses 16\(1\) and 16\(2\)\(b\)](#) of the *Fire Brigades Regulation 2008* to ensure that all statements made are honest and truthful.

Any member who is uncertain about making or signing a statement in an official document must refer the matter to a more senior officer for resolution.

*In Orders 1996/15, with amendments*

### Signing books or documents

#### 1 Introduction

A signature is a person's mark on a document which indicates his or her intention to be bound by its contents.

#### 2 Signing books or documents

Employees must sign all books or documents in the written form when acting in their capacity as Fire and Rescue NSW employees.

A rubber stamp is not an acceptable alternative to a signature.

*Contact Officer: Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, (02)9265 3923*

*File Reference: CHO/03012*

*In Orders 2003/14, with amendments*

## Statutory declarations

### 1 Introduction

A statutory declaration is a written statement which the person making the declaration claims to be true. The declaration must be made in the required form as prescribed by the relevant legislation. It is made in writing for the purpose of allowing a person to declare the truth of certain facts, otherwise than through the taking of an oath or the making an affirmation.

A person who wilfully makes a false statement in a Statutory Declaration is guilty of an offence.

### 2 Offences under the NSW Oaths Act 1900

The following are offences under the NSW [Oaths Act 1900](#).

#### 2.1 False declaration

Any person who wilfully and corruptly makes and subscribes a false declaration, knowing the same to be untrue in any material particular, shall be guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for 5 years ([Section 25](#) of the NSW *Oaths Act 1900*).

#### 2.2 False declaration for material benefit

Any person who wilfully and corruptly makes and subscribes any such declaration, knowing the same to be untrue in any material particular, and who derives or attempts to derive a material benefit as a consequence of the untrue particular is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 7 years ([Section 25A](#) of the NSW *Oaths Act 1900*).

#### 2.3 Taking and receiving statutory declaration without authority

Any person who, not being by law authorised to take and receive a statutory declaration:

- falsely pretends to be so authorised, or
- takes and receives a statutory declaration,

is guilty of an offence against [Section 21A](#) of the NSW *Oaths Act 1900* and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to a penalty not exceeding 2 penalty units.

### 3 Procedure for making a statutory declaration

Statutory declarations in NSW are required to be witnessed by a solicitor or Justice of the Peace or other person authorised by the NSW *Oaths Act 1900* and to take either of the following forms:

#### Example A

Eighth Schedule NSW *Oaths Act 1900*

I, ..... (full name)  
 of ..... (address) being a ..... (occupation)  
 do solemnly and sincerely declare that: (set out statements)  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of the *Oaths Act 1900*.

**Example B**

Ninth Schedule NSW *Oaths Act 1900*

I, ..... (full name)  
of ..... (address) being a ..... (occupation)  
do solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that: (set out statements)  
.....  
.....  
.....  
and I make this solemn declaration, as to the matter (or matters) aforesaid, according to the law  
in this behalf made, and subject to punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement  
in any such declaration.

At the end of the declaration, both the declarant and the authorised person must complete and sign the declaration at the same time and in front of each other as follows:

Declared at ..... (place) )  
This ..... day of ..... 200... )  
Before me )  
(signature of Solicitor or Justice of the Peace or )  
other authorised person) ).....  
..... Signature of declarant  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
(the solicitor or Justice of the Peace or other authorised person must print name, address and  
registration number)

A Justice of the Peace must print their name and address and also their registration number if appointed since 1992 or if possessing a registration number.

**4 Acceptance of statutory declarations**

Fire and Rescue NSW will not accept statutory declarations which do not comply with the provisions of the NSW *Oaths Act 1900*. Statutory declarations made under the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* (an act of the Commonwealth Parliament), do not comply with the NSW *Oaths Act 1900*.

If a Fire and Rescue NSW employee submits a statutory declaration in connection with their employment with Fire and Rescue NSW which is not signed by a person authorised by the NSW *Oaths Act 1900*, or if the statutory declaration otherwise does not comply with the provisions of that Act, the document will not be accepted. The matter may be referred to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct.

Where it is suspected that a Fire and Rescue NSW employee has made a false declaration, has made a false declaration for material benefit, or has taken and received a statutory declaration without authority, the matter will be referred to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct.

Such matters must also be reported to the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Police.

The NSW *Oaths Act 1900* makes provision for offences and penalties for taking and receiving statutory declarations without authority, making false declarations or making false declarations for a material benefit.

Contact Officer: *Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, (02) 9265 3923*

File Reference: *CHO/07284*

*In Orders 2004/6, with amendments*

## **INCIDENT REPORTS**

### **AIRS policy**

#### **1 Introduction**

Fire and Rescue NSW uses the Australasian Incident Reporting System (AIRS) to collect, record and report information on responses to incidents and emergencies attended to by fire crews. Data collected in AIRS is in accordance with a nationally agreed standard for collecting fire service incident response data. Most other fire services around Australia collect similar incident data.

#### **2 Scope and application**

This policy applies to all staff who use the AIRS application, including operational staff reporting response details to incidents and support staff who may access data contained in AIRS. It covers:

- purpose for the collection of data
- data collection, reporting and submission of reports
- accuracy of information
- alteration of information
- disclosure of information
- security of information.

The [AIRS Reference Manual](#), or data dictionary, provides information about AIRS data. It defines the basic organisation of the AIRS data and includes data element definitions, application, classification and coding schemas.

The [AIRS Step by Step Guide Instruction Manual](#) provides data entry instructions. Both manuals are available on the Intranet through Station Portal.

#### **3 Purpose of collecting AIRS information**

Changes to social, economic, environmental and infrastructure landscapes mean that Fire and Rescue NSW requires information to support evidence-based planning and better decision making, in turn delivering more responsive and cost effective services to businesses and the community.

AIRS data is a key Fire and Rescue NSW information asset and is used to support Fire and Rescue NSW operations as set out in the *Fire Brigades Act 1989*.

AIRS data is used to:

- assist people and organisations to recover from the effects of emergency incidents
- develop policy and risk management strategies
- improve services to meet current and emerging community needs

- develop programs to reduce the impact of incidents on the community and evaluation criteria to determine their success
- improve organisational and business systems and processes
- plan and efficiently allocate resources
- provide reporting on Fire and Rescue NSW activities to the Minister and other stakeholders and meet accountability reporting requirements.

Statistical information from AIRS is available to staff through the [SRS](#) application on the Intranet. The public also have access to statistical information sourced from AIRS through the [Internet site](#).

## **4 Creation, completion and submission of AIRS reports**

An AIRS report is automatically generated after the last appliance leaves the incident. The FireCAD system passes basic information about the incident, such as date and time of call, attending stations and Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) codes, to the central AIRS database. The AIRS report is usually available 10 minutes after it is generated by the FireCAD system.

Every station that responds to an incident receives either an Initial AIRS Report or an Attendance Report. In the case of incidents attended by multiple stations, the first arriving station receives the Initial AIRS Report, while every other attending station or unit receives a copy of an Attendance Report.

### **4.1 Initial AIRS Reports**

The first station arriving at the incident (referred to as the reporting station) receives the Initial AIRS Report.

The Initial AIRS Report requires the reporting station to collect and record incident details such as incident type, casualties, rescues and evacuations, property information, owner and occupier information, fire cause and behaviour and firefighting details.

The type of incident code entered by the Reporting Officer in the *Call Details 1* section of the Initial AIRS Report determines which subsequent sections of the Initial AIRS Report have to be completed.

The information required to complete most fields in the Initial AIRS Report consists of a series of codes which are detailed in the [AIRS Reference Manual](#). Some of the fields on the Initial AIRS Report are prepopulated by the FireCAD system.

### **4.2 Attendance Reports**

Additional reports known as Attendance Reports are created in AIRS for each station attending an incident other than the reporting station.

Each attending station receives a copy of the Initial AIRS Report including their Attendance Report.

The Attendance Report requires the Reporting Officers from each attending station to provide details about the personnel who attended the call, rescue and/or hazmat details (if applicable) and kilometres travelled. Reporting Officers are also required to confirm that data provided by the FireCAD system are correct.

### **4.3 Merged report**

When both Initial AIRS Report and Attendance Reports are sent back to the central database the details are merged into one report within the AIRS database.

#### 4.4 Prepopulated data on the AIRS Report

The data fields prepopulated on the AIRS Report are:

- FireCAD number
- call date
- call time
- reporting brigade
- method of notification
- address details
- latitude and longitude (when the latitude and longitude are visible, the Universal Map Grid Reference is not required)
- AFA provider or transponder ID number
- AFA ID
- call signs of attending resources.

Call date, time, latitude/longitude, incident number and FireCAD details cannot be altered.

The other prepopulated fields can be changed if, in the opinion of the Reporting Officer, they are not correct.

**Note:** It is critical at this time to confirm that the address and other details are accurate.

In some cases the latitude and longitude may not be transferred from FireCAD to AIRS. When this information has not been transferred, the Reporting Officer needs to complete the Universal Map Grid Reference.

#### 4.5 Attendance of senior officers, operational support personnel and specialist appliances

It is the responsibility of the Reporting Officer to ensure that *Particulars of Attendance Details* for senior officers of the rank of Inspector and above and any operational support personnel are recorded in the Initial AIRS Report. The Reporting Officer must also provide the kilometres travelled and the names of those who attended the incident in the *Personnel* section. If a rescue or hazmat incident was attended, the *Rescue Equipment Used* section or the *Hazmat Equipment Used* section needs to be completed.

#### 4.6 Submission of AIRS reports

It is critical that reports are lodged as soon as possible after the incident. Timely submission of reports ensures that Fire and Rescue NSW is able to respond to enquiries and provide details for insurance settlement claims.

At permanently staffed stations, reports must be lodged before the end of the next shift. For example, if the last incident attended was at 0730 hrs on the last night shift the report must be completed and sent back by the end of the first day shift.

If the Reporting Officer is going on annual or long service leave they must complete and send back the reports before commencing leave. The Reporting Officer should discuss with their Duty Commander if this is likely to incur overtime.

On completing the report, the Reporting Officer must send it back to the AIRS central database. The Reporting Officer may elect to do this on an incident by incident basis, or by sending back multiple incidents at once.

#### **4.7 Use of free text field (Description of Incident)**

The *Description of Incident* section allows you to enter information not captured elsewhere in the AIRS report. It should also be used to provide context and key words to help identify areas of interest which may be subject to further analysis and research. For example, information on a fire caused by a faulty appliance or other information that may assist later trend analysis.

The information entered into *Description of Incident* should be comprehensive and may include:

- observations on arrival
- actions taken
- damage
- cause and origin
- personal details - owner, occupant
- problems encountered
- injuries.

Comprehensive remarks may reduce the likelihood of your being requested to attend court.

## **5 Transferring reports between stations**

There are some circumstances when it will be necessary to transfer the Initial AIRS Report between stations. This may occur when the Initial AIRS Report has been sent to an incorrect station.

The [AIRS Step by Step Guide Instruction Manual](#) provides instructions on how to transfer reports.

### **5.1 Relieving and recalled firefighters**

If a relieving firefighter or officer is unable to complete a report before the end of their shift at a station, basic details should be captured to enable them to finalise the report from another station.

Before leaving the station where the relief is being undertaken, they should download the new incident, open the report and enter their name in the *Reporting Officer* field in *Personnel* details. The report should then be closed and sent back to the AIRS central database. They will be able to download the Initial AIRS Report from any station by searching for 'incomplete incidents' or by using the AIRS incident number.

## **6 Reporting responsibilities**

The most senior officer at an incident is responsible for ensuring that the Initial AIRS Report and Attendance Reports are completed. However, the Reporting Officer may be any firefighter or officer who attended the call and has direct knowledge of the incident. The Reporting Officer is the owner of the report and its contents and is responsible for ensuring that the data is accurate. The Reporting Officer may be called upon to give evidence in the Coroner's, criminal or civil courts, and may be requested to provide additional information to insurance companies and loss adjusters. If the report details are incorrect, the report may be sent back to the Reporting Officer for correction.

For large or protracted incidents the Incident Controller or FRNSW Commander is responsible for facilitating the coordination of information for the AIRS Report, and for sending the information to the Reporting Officer.

## 7 Reporting on ignition factors and dollar loss

The Reporting Officer is to apply reasonable judgement in determining the:

- area of fire origin
- type and form of materials first and subsequently ignited
- form of heat of ignition, and
- ignition factor.

The report must be as accurate as possible based on the information available at the time the report was prepared. This includes the suspected cause and origin and the estimated property value and dollar loss. This is the opinion of the Reporting Officer based on the information available at the time and does not necessarily have to be supported by irrefutable evidence.

## 8 Alteration and amendment of AIRS reports

The Reporting Officer must ensure that the information in the report is accurate, relevant, up-to-date, complete and not misleading. The Reporting Officer may alter or amend the report at any time before it is submitted. If the information is incomplete at the time of submission, or if further details are received after the report has been submitted, every endeavour must be made to amend the report to reflect the up-to-date information for that incident.

If the report is incomplete, the Reporting Officer can download the report for alteration or amendment at any time. If, however, the report has been sent back as complete, then the Reporting Officer must contact the AIRS Help Desk via the IT Service Desk on (02) 9265 2833, and clearly indicate the fields to be updated and the relevant information to be changed. When the report is changed on the database, the date, time and name of the person making the changes are automatically logged in the *Management Details* section of the AIRS Report.

The Fire Investigation and Research Unit, Rescue Section and Hazmat Response Unit also have access to the AIRS report and can add information on their operations and investigations when necessary.

## 9 Retention, disposal and security of AIRS information

Reports are stored on a central database in Head Office. Strategic Information Services is the custodian of AIRS and is responsible for management and security of the database. The information in the database is kept indefinitely.

This database is available to authorised users of AIRS on the Fire and Rescue NSW computer network. Anyone who has access to the database is responsible for keeping the database secure by:

- complying with the policy on [Password security](#) on page 637
- logging off promptly after finishing a session on the AIRS database, and
- ensuring that unauthorised people do not get access to the computer.

## 10 Business continuity

The data in the AIRS database is backed up on a nightly basis and copies taken off site five days a week. In the event of business disruption data can be restored from these backups.



## 11 Privacy and AIRS information

As a Government department, Fire and Rescue NSW is bound by the provisions of the NSW *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*. Personal information in AIRS must be protected in accordance with the [Privacy policy](#) on page 616.

AIRS Reports include personal information such as the names and addresses of owners, occupants, and witnesses, and the names of attending and reporting firefighters and members of other attending services. They may also contain health information, such as data on injuries and fatalities.

When firefighters gather this information for the AIRS Report they are to take reasonable steps to inform the people involved that the details will be included in the incident report. They should be informed that this information is used to help Fire and Rescue NSW improve services to the community and may be disclosed, within strict guidelines, to third parties to assist in the recovery from the incident.

## 12 Disclosure of AIRS information

Fire and Rescue NSW has long had a commitment to working with the insurance industry and the community to assist people and organisations to recover from the effects of emergency incidents. One of the ways Fire and Rescue NSW does this is by providing incident information to the community from the AIRS incident records database.

Information from AIRS may not be disclosed to any person or organisation outside Fire and Rescue NSW except where:

- the purpose of the disclosure has been established
- the legal authority has been clarified or evidence of consent by the person concerned has been provided, and
- the bona fides of the person and organisation requesting the information have been established.

The process for the provision of incident information from AIRS to people or organisations outside Fire and Rescue NSW is as follows:

1. Requests for incident information from AIRS must be addressed to the Commissioner and must be sent on the *Request for Incident Information form*. A copy of the form is available on Fire and Rescue NSW's Internet site at [http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/gallery/files/pdf/forms/incident\\_information\\_form.pdf](http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/gallery/files/pdf/forms/incident_information_form.pdf) or through Station Portal (under Forms section).
2. Fire and Rescue NSW will only be able to process the request if the inquirer indicates on the form that they have obtained the consent of the individual concerned to release information about the incident.
3. Fire and Rescue NSW will send the inquirer a response containing the following information about the incident:
  - time
  - date
  - address
  - description of incident
  - area of origin (if applicable)

- probable ignition factor (if applicable)
- attending brigades, and specialist units.

Experience has shown that this information satisfies most inquiries.

4. If the inquirer requires clarification of this information, they must send another request form indicating their requirements for further information. Fire and Rescue NSW will endeavour to satisfy the inquirer's needs, within the bounds of the organisation's responsibilities.

Information from AIRS should not be provided verbally either in person or over the telephone. Interviews with firefighters in relation to incident information from people outside Fire and Rescue NSW are no longer available. This restriction has been imposed to ensure better quality control of information and compliance with legal requirements.

Information about employees contained in AIRS reports may only be provided to courts or legal representatives, whether by written request or subpoena, in accordance with the policy on [Privacy and confidentiality of personnel information](#) on page 620.

### 13 Further information

Inquiries about the AIRS database or suggestions for improvements to the AIRS system should be sent to the Manager, Strategic Information Unit, at Head Office.

*Contact Officer: Manager Strategic Information Unit, (02) 9265 2962*

*File Reference: CHO/02598*

*In Orders 2009/26, with amendments*

## Recording fires caused by cigarettes

### 1 Introduction

Under the [Trade Practices \(Consumer Product Safety Standard\) \(Reduced Fire Risk Cigarettes\) Regulations 2008](#), from 23 September 2010 only reduced fire risk (RFR) cigarettes can be produced, imported or sold in Australia.

RFR cigarette packs must be labelled:

AUSTRALIAN FIRE RISK STANDARD COMPLIANT.  
USE CARE IN DISPOSAL.

### 2 Monitoring the regulation's effectiveness

The aim of the RFR cigarette legislation is to reduce the risk of fires and consequent loss of life, injuries and property destruction.

To monitor the effectiveness of the legislation, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority Council (AFAC) is asking all agencies to record in AIRS whether or not RFR cigarettes were present at a fire.

### 3 Changes to AIRS

The data field Form of heat of ignition has been changed as follows:

<b>COD E</b>	<b>MAJOR DIVISION HEAT FROM SMOKERS' MATERIALS INCLUDED IS HEAT FROM MATERIALS IN USE OR AFTER USE. EXCLUDED ARE MATCHES AND LIGHTERS (450 &amp; 460)</b>	
310	Cigarette	Code removed (retired)
311	Cigarette - No cigarette pack found RFR or otherwise	New Code
312	Cigarette - Cigarette pack found with RFR labelling	New Code
313	Cigarette - Cigarette pack found without RFR labelling	New Code
314	Cigarette - Both RFR and non-RFR cigarette packs found	New Code
320	Cigar	Current code
330	Pipe	Current code
390	Heat from smokers' materials not classified above	Current code
300	Heat from smokers' materials; insufficient information to classify further	Current code

### 4 Reporting fires caused by cigarettes

When a fire has been, or has probably been, caused by a cigarette:

1. Search the fire scene and surrounding area for cigarette packs, and ask the occupants what type of cigarette they used.
2. Check the cigarette pack and note whether it was labelled AUSTRALIAN FIRE RISK STANDARD COMPLIANT.
3. Record the results in the AIRS data field Form of heat of ignition using the most appropriate code.

If there was a fatality, serious injury or significant structural loss, include additional observations and findings in the Remarks section of the AIRS report.

### 5 Further information

For further information, see the [AIRS Intranet site](#).

Contact Officer: Manager Strategic Information Unit, (02) 9265 2962

File Reference: NFB/07386

*In Orders 2010/21*

## Access to Communication Centre information

Members are advised that any enquiries from the public, Police, other authorities or media for access to information contained on Communication Centre tape recordings are to be answered under the following protocol:

1. If the enquiry is from the public in respect to the identification of hoax callers or similar requests they are to be advised to report the matter to the Police in the first instance.
2. The public will not be not permitted access to Fire and Rescue NSW tapes unless accompanied to the Communication Centre by a Police officer, following approval being given by the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response.
3. Requests from Police, other authorities or media for access to information on tapes are to be referred to the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response, in the first instance, to establish the reasons for the request and the proposed usage of the information.
4. Under no circumstances are recorded transcripts to be taken from the tapes without the express permission of the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response.
5. Where recording of transcript is permitted, the person and/or authority seeking the transcript is to be advised by Assistant Director Preparedness and Response or by the officer supervising the recording that under no circumstances is the information to be used or released for any other purpose than that for which approval was given, without Fire and Rescue NSW's permission.

*In Orders 1990/4, with amendments*

See also [Recording of radio, telephone and paging messages](#) on page 770.

## INCIDENT NOTEBOOKS

### 1 Introduction

To assist operational firefighters in gathering information and recording decisions or important radio messages at incidents, an Incident Notebook is issued to operational personnel on request.

### 2 Purpose

The notebook is used for recording information at all types of incidents, inspections and other activities so that personnel can better prepare themselves to:

- complete reports,
- complete court statements (which may be asked for several years after the incident) or give evidence,
- provide useful information to Fire and Rescue NSW and Police investigators,
- collect accurate and more detailed information for entry into the Australian Incident Reporting System (AIRS).

The notebook is not to be used to record performance appraisal information about individual employees.

### 3 Description

The Incident Notebook is pocket size and is similar to the Police Officer's Official Notebook:

- each notebook has a registered number;
- pages are numbered;
- details regarding issue and the dates of the first and final entries are recorded inside the front cover.

### 4 Entries

The dates of the first and final entries must be recorded, inside the front cover, by the person issued with the notebook.

Operational personnel should carry the notebook when on duty. It is for official use only. Write neatly, only in ink. Do not make notes elsewhere. Use the notebook to record particulars of incidents and/or issues relating to fire prevention and safety, etc.

Start entries with the date, time and FireCAD incident number. Make entries in chronological order, use double spacing, and sign off the entries for each incident, or activity, as they are completed. Include any additional details or information that will be required for AIRS. The more information that is collected at the incident the more useful the notebook.

Checklists for fires, motor vehicle accidents, deaths and hazmat incidents are included in the notebook as guides, or prompts, for information gathering and scene preservation. The Hazchem Chart is also included.

### 5 Alterations

If you make an alteration, put a line through the original, leaving it legible. Then make the new entry. Do not tear out any part of the notebook or erase any entry.

### 6 Privacy guidelines

The Incident Notebook could be subpoenaed by courts and judicial bodies. When recording details about individuals, make sure the entries are not frivolous or vexatious. Entries must be honest and recorded in good faith.

Treat the notebook as a confidential document. Before giving out information that you have recorded in your notebook check the guidelines on [Disclosure of AIRS information](#) on page 583.

### 7 Attending court

When attending court about an incident, always take the notebook containing the details of that particular incident with you.

### 8 Issue

Station Commanders are responsible for the ordering, issue and return of notebooks. Each notebook is barcoded and assigned to firefighters using individual service/payroll numbers as a reference.

Incident notebooks remain the property of Fire and Rescue NSW but are the responsibility of the person to whom they are issued.

## **9 Delivery and receipt of notebooks**

Notebooks will be delivered individually, by prepaid postage services, directly to the person requesting the notebook.

## **10 Archiving**

Completed notebooks must be kept in a secure place for 10 years. Preferably, they should be forwarded to the Records Manager/Archivist (RM/A) at Head Office for archiving. Incident Notebooks can be subpoenaed whether they have been archived or not. Archived notebooks will be treated in the same way as personal files. Only the person issued with the notebook and the Assistant Director Operational Personnel have authorised access.

Notebooks forwarded for archiving will be archived for ten years and during that time can be retrieved whenever necessary, within 48 hours, by contacting the RM/A on (02) 9265 2842.

## **11 Replacement notebooks**

When your notebook is nearing completion, arrange with your Station Commander to be issued with another.

Station Commanders may order replacement incident notebooks through [ESCAT](#).

## **12 Transfers, resignations and retirements**

If transferred, take your notebook with you. On leaving the service, all notebooks are to be returned to the RM/A at Head Office for archiving.

## **13 Lost or destroyed notebooks**

If your notebook is lost or destroyed, make an appropriate entry in the station Occurrence Book and immediately notify the RM/A. This will enable the loss to be recorded in the Incident Notebook Register. To assist people who find lost notebooks, each notebook has the RM/A's return address printed on the back cover.

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

*File Reference:* CHO/02437

*In Orders 1998/25, with amendments*

## LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

### Court Statements

#### 1 Purpose of a court statement

The purpose of submitting a court statement is to provide evidence to a Coroner's inquest or to a criminal or civil proceeding.

#### 2 Why are statements required?

The NSW Coroner is charged, amongst other things, with the task of determining the circumstances surrounding fires and explosions and any resulting deaths or serious injuries. The Coroner's role is to inquire into all the aspects of the incident so that recommendations can be made to limit the possibility of them occurring again.

The Police are required to gather information on fires, and submit a report to the Coroner, when:

- there is a fatality or serious injury
- the property value or destruction exceeds \$100 000 and/or the property is destroyed or damaged by an explosion
- the fire is high profile or of special interest.

**Note:** The Police may also ask for a statement if evidence of a crime is found.

Fire and Rescue NSW personnel, by the very nature of the work they perform, can provide key critical information to the Coroner which can be used to identify chronological events during an incident. Firefighters' specialised skills and training in fire behaviour can also provide useful observations.

The court statement is used to provide relevant information to the Coroner, and outlines your actions and observations at the incident. Providing as much information as you can in a clear and concise manner may also mean you don't have to attend court. If you do have to attend court, putting everything down clearly in your statement will help you recall the event and present your evidence in court in a professional manner.

#### 3 When will I need to do a court statement?

You only need to do a court statement when you receive a formal request (eg a written or emailed request from:

- the Coroner
- a member of the NSW Police Force (including the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions), or
- a staff member from the Fire Investigation and Research Unit (FIRU).

**Note:** Do not do a court statement if requested by a building owner/occupant, an insurance agency representative, or a private investigator. Direct such requests to either FIRU or the Right of Information Officer.

If you were the first arriving officer at:

- a fire where the damage exceeds \$100 000
- a fire where the circumstances are unusual, or
- a fatal incident,

it is highly likely you will be asked to provide a statement. After such incidents, it is strongly recommended that you make detailed notes in your incident notebook and in the AIRS comments section for reference.

When submitting the statement to FIRU, the person requesting the statement must be clearly identified so that the signed statements can be transmitted to the right addressee.

#### **4 Court statement template**

Fire and Rescue NSW has developed a Microsoft Word [template](#) for court statements which should be used when preparing a statement. This court statement template can be accessed in one of the following ways:

- the Fire and Rescue NSW template menu in Microsoft Word,
- [Station Portal](#) - in the Filing cabinet under 'Court Statement',
- [FIRU intranet site](#) - which can be accessed from the 'Community Safety' link on the intranet home page.

#### **5 How do I write a court statement?**

Detailed guidelines for writing court statements are given in the [Recommended practice for writing court statements](#), available on Station Portal.

#### **6 How do I submit a completed statement?**

When you have finished drafting your court statement, review it from start to finish, ensuring that the information you have provided is correct to the best of your recollection.

When you are happy with the contents, forward your statement to FIRU by sending it as an attachment to an email.

The Duty Fire Investigator will review your statement. If necessary, they will either mark up suggested changes and email them back to you, or contact you by phone to discuss your statement.

When the statement is finished, print four copies of the statement. Each copy of the statement must be individually signed on every page by yourself and by a witness.

**Note:** The witness does not have to put their address or telephone number on the statement.



Mail three signed court statements to:

FIRU Administrative Services Officer  
Fire Investigation and Research Unit  
Fire and Rescue NSW  
Locked Bag 12  
Greenacre NSW 2190

Never hand your statement directly to a Police Officer or any other agency.

**Note:** The fourth copy of the statement is for you to keep as a reference should you ever be required to give evidence in court.

*Contact Officer: Manager Fire Investigation and Research, (02) 9742 7391*

*File Reference: CHO/02437*

*In Orders 2008/25, with amendments*

## **Subpoenas**

### **1 What is a subpoena?**

A subpoena is a court order requiring the person to whom it is directed to attend a court at a certain place and time to give evidence, or to produce documents, or both. The subpoena is served on the person concerned by a Police officer, solicitor or court officer.

If you fail to obey a subpoena, you may be found in contempt of court and be subject to a penalty.

### **2 Service of subpoenas**

Subpoenas requiring the personal attendance of an employee may be served on the employee personally, or on the Commissioner at Head Office.

Subpoenas requiring the production of Fire and Rescue NSW documents only are not served on individual employees but must be sent to the Commissioner at Head Office.

The address for the service of subpoenas on the Commissioner is:

The Proper Officer  
Fire and Rescue NSW  
Level 10  
227 Elizabeth Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

If subpoenas for documents are received anywhere else, they must be sent, with the attached cheque, to the Records Manager/Archivist at Head Office immediately.

### **3 Check the subpoena**

When you receive a subpoena, read it carefully to determine whether it calls for:

- personal attendance to give evidence, or
- production of records or documents, in which case send it to the Records Manager/Archivist at Head Office.

#### 4 Attendance at court

The policy on [Attendance at court](#) on page 326, gives the procedures to follow if the subpoena requires you to attend a court.

A subpoena will list the trial commencement date as the day to attend court. However, this is not always the day on which you will be required to give evidence. Before attending court, you should check with the Police officer, solicitor or court officer handling the case, to check:

- the exact date on which you are required to attend, and
- any doubts or inquiries you have about the subpoena.

**Note:** for information about entitlements for leave and expenses, see the policy on [Attendance at court](#) on page 326.

#### 5 Production of documents

The Records Manager/Archivist coordinates the collection of documents for the court.

For information on ...	The Records Manager/Archivist will contact the...
pay and salaries	Payroll Office
employment details or information from personal files	Personnel Section, Head Office Administrative Services Officers
medical records	Health and Safety Branch
workers compensation	Workers Compensation Unit
AIRS reports	Strategic Information Services, Head Office
fires and other incidents	Fire Investigation and Research Unit
photocopies of relevant pages in Occurrence Books	Station Commander
Triple Zero calls and ComCen logs	Assistant Director Preparedness and Response

Details of the documents provided are recorded in the records management system. To alert courts to the sensitivity of personal information, a note is attached to the cover of documents sent to court requesting the judge, coroner or magistrate to only disclose personal information to the court when it is relevant to the proceedings.

*Contact Officers:* Senior Legal Officer, (02) 9265 2950, or Records Manager/Archivist,  
(02) 9265 2842

*File Reference:* CHO/00003 and CHO/00568

*In Orders 2006/18, with amendments*

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITY REPORTING SYSTEM

### 1 Purpose

The Community Activity Reporting System (CARS) collects data to support Fire and Rescue NSW's purpose in *understanding community needs, promoting community safety, quality of life and confidence by preventing or reducing the risk of fire and emergency incidents on the people, environment and economy of NSW.*

CARS is intended to provide transparent evidence that Fire and Rescue NSW is meeting its legislative requirements and obligations under Section 6 of the *Fire Brigades Act 1989*:

*It is the duty of the Commissioner to take all practicable measures for preventing and extinguishing fires and protecting and saving lives and property in any Fire District.*

CARS complements AIRS, which collects information on incidents.

CARS is used by firefighters to report a range of activity types, from established programs such as FireEd and SABRE through to local initiatives such as displays in shopping malls or joint training exercises with other emergency services.

### 2 Background

In the past, we had various methods of collecting data about non-response activities. These varied between Regions and did not capture the same information across the organisation. Without reliable information about what we are doing it is difficult to plan and fund new or expanded programs or to demonstrate to the community how effective our prevention and preparedness activities are.

The CARS has been developed by the Community Safety Advisors in consultation with the Strategic Information Services Unit. Firefighters' input was sought during the development process, which included a trial at selected stations.

### 3 Submitting reports

CARS reports are submitted [online](#) through the system on Station Portal.

A *CARS Reference Manual* containing instructions, a data dictionary, policy and guidelines has been distributed to all stations and is also available [online](#).

### 4 When to submit a CARS report

A CARS report is required whenever Fire and Rescue NSW participates in programs or events that are designed to prevent or reduce the risk or severity of fires or other emergency incidents.

The *CARS Reference Manual* identifies the types of activities that should be reported.

A CARS report should be submitted within 24 hours of the completion of the activity.

### 5 Who can submit a CARS report

Any member of the crews participating in the activity can complete the report, provided that they have direct knowledge of the information they are submitting. As with AIRS, only one report is required per activity attended, even where multiple stations were involved.

## 6 Assistance

For assistance with completing CARS forms contact the IT Help Desk on (02) 9265 2833.

*Contact Officer: Manager Community Engagement and Development, (02) 9742 7405*

*File Reference: CHO/04490*

*In Orders 2001/26, with amendments*

## STATION RECORDS

### Occurrence books

#### Identification

Station Commanders are to ensure that occurrence books are properly identified by displaying the following information on the front external cover:

- number and name of station
- day and date of *first* occurrence book entry
- day and date of *last* occurrence book entry

A black ink pen is to be used to display the above information which assists in managing archival records.

*In Orders 1991/9, with amendments*

### Roster entries

As from 0800 hours on 3 October 1997 the following procedures are to be adopted:

1. The roster is to indicate only the current Platoon on duty. No entries are to be made regarding staff on other Platoons.
2. All members attached to the current Platoon are to be entered by number and name.
3. Members present are to place their signatures next to their names.
4. Members attached to the Platoon who are absent for any reason, ie. annual leave, long service leave, sick leave, consolidated leave, etc., are to be entered on the Roster stating their numbers and names and the reason for their absence.
5. No entries are to be made on the Roster in respect to key cabinets or uniforms and accoutrements. Entries are to follow the Roster.
6. Entries regarding appliances shall be limited to their condition, ie. checked and correct, or checked and problem indicated.
7. The movement of all personnel on duty shall be recorded and any other personnel who commence duty shall be entered in the Occurrence Book and the Firefighter shall sign as being on duty.

An example of the Roster and entries is listed below.

Special Items	Hour	Occurrence		
Roster	0800	A Platoon dismissed		
C		C Platoon on duty		
Day two		Watchroom Duty	8246 T Green	Signature
		7966 SO A Fuller		Signature
		8005 SF T Brown		Signature
		8100 QF D Dennis (A)	Standing by	Signature
		9100 L4 B Smith		Signature
		8500 L3 A McDonald		Signature
		Long service leave	8600 L3 M Jones	
		7966 Signature		
		Station Commander		
	0830	No. 109 P. checked & correct	8005 T Brown	
		No. 9 TTL checked & correct	8426 A Smith	
	1000	8100 QF D Dennis	dismissed	
	9010	SF C Lyons arrived		Signature

*In Orders 1997/19, with amendments*

## Use and disclosure of personal information in Occurrence Books

### 1 Policy

Occurrence Books are a record of all occurrences and happenings affecting the station, personnel and appliances. This record is kept to ensure that stations, personnel and appliances are operating effectively and so that, if any question arises about what happened, an accurate answer can be given.

Occurrence Books contain personal information about staff and members of the public. Personal information means information that relates to an identifiable individual, for example entries about staff at the station, details of visitors or information about people involved in incidents.

Personal information must be managed in accordance with the [Privacy policy](#) on page 616. To assist staff with the management of personal information in Occurrence Books, advice on use and disclosure of this information is given below.

### 2 Internal use of information

Personal information from Occurrence Books can be used in Fire and Rescue NSW for the purposes for which it was collected, such as:

- the management of staff, stations and appliances, and
- the resolution of disputes or issues about activities at the station.

If you are unsure whether you can use the information, check with your supervisor or the Privacy Contact Officer.

### 3 Giving information to people outside Fire and Rescue NSW

You can only give personal information from Occurrence Books to people outside Fire and Rescue NSW:

- with the consent (preferably in writing) of the person concerned, or
- to a Police officer in connection with proceedings for an offence or for law enforcement purposes, or
- in response to a subpoena, search warrant or statutory instrument, or
- in accordance with the [Industrial Relations Act 1996](#), or
- with other lawful authority, or
- to prevent or lessen a serious or imminent threat to life or health.

If you are unsure whether you should release information from an Occurrence Book:

- get the person requesting the information to put their request in writing (if they have not already done so), stating why they want the information and what authority they have to receive it, then
- consult your supervisor, the Senior Legal Officer on (02) 9265 2950 or the Privacy Contact Officer.

Occurrence Books should be kept in a location where they are secure from unsupervised access by members of the public.

### 4 Further information

For further information or advice about use or disclosure of personal information in Occurrence Books contact:

Privacy Contact Officer	Ph (02) 9265 2867
Fire and Rescue NSW	Fx (02) 9265 2684
PO Box A249	
Sydney South NSW 1232	

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Management, (02) 9265 2867*

*File Reference: CHO/00568*

*In Orders 2006/18, with amendments*

#### Occurrence Book entries for incidents

In accordance with the [AIRS policy](#) on page 578, detailed information on all incidents is recorded in the AIRS system.

It is therefore no longer necessary to keep detailed information on incidents in the Occurrence Book.

Occurrence Book entries for incidents should now be made as shown in the table below. Recording any information additional to these basic details, eg Stop messages, is at the discretion of the Station Commander.

Column	Colour	Information to be entered
Special Items	Red	FireCAD Incident Number and incident type, eg CAR FIRE, STRUCTURE FIRE 2ND ALARM, STANDBY, HAZMAT INCIDENT, etc
Hours/mins	Blue or black	Time of call as given on the FireCAD printout
Occurrence	Blue or black	Address, vehicles responded from your station and a brief description of the incident

**Note:** Stations with Retained Firefighters are still required to enter the signed list of Retained staff who attended the incident in the Occurrence Book.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director Preparedness and Response, (02) 9318 4353

*File Reference:* CHO/03012

*In Orders 2004/2*

### Abbreviations

The old *Manual of Instruction* lists acceptable abbreviations for use in occurrence book entries.

However, in future, the abbreviation 'W' is to be used to denote 'water tanker' instead of 'WT' or 'T'

The following instructions are also to be adhered to in respect to occurrence book entries:

1. the abbreviation 'T' is only to be used to denote 'internal telephone' communication ie PAX - PABX - tie lines between stations - teleprinter phone;
2. abbreviation 'LE' refers to 'local exchange' external telephone network;
3. abbreviation 'DL' refers to 'direct line' between fire stations and other premises and/or emergency services.

For record purposes it is essential that the entries identify from whence the calls are initiated and the identity of any appliances involved.

*In Orders 1983/3*

### Corrections

When a mistake is made in recording information in records books, such as occurrence books, the person making the entry is to rule out the error, initial same, together with Brigades official number, and then record the correct entry.

Where a page, or pages, are missed inadvertently these must be ruled off, initialled and numbered in the same manner, by the person concerned. The Station Commander will also initial, number and date the page or pages.

Where it is found that a blank page, or pages, have in some way been mutilated or disfigured so as to render them unusable or unsightly, the attention of the Station Commander must be immediately drawn to the fact. The blank pages must be ruled off as indicated above.

Where it is found that pages have been removed from record books the Duty Commander is to be immediately notified.

*Consolidated In Orders, page 33, with amendments*

### **Station register books**

The purpose of the station register is to provide:

- a ready assimilation of station record keeping procedures by all members;
- a ready retrieval of information;
- improved accuracy of records;
- improved presentation and availability of information for inspecting officers;
- the elimination of record duplication.

The register consists of a single hard cover book which has an adjustable binding system designed to allow for a variation of thickness according to individual station needs. This will permit the insertion and/or removal of individual pages from any part of the book. A detailed index was included in the initial issue which outlined the purpose of each page. Replacement pages can be ordered through [ESCAT](#).

*In Orders 1983/6, with amendments*

### **Retention and disposal of zone office and station records**

The policy and procedure [NSW Fire Brigades records retention and disposal: zone office and station records](#) is published on the [Information Management Unit](#) area of the intranet.

The policy and procedure covers the retention and legal destruction and archive of official paper files, occurrence books, registers, forms and other official paper records stored at zone offices and stations, in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

*Contact Officer: Records Manager/Archivist (02) 9265 2893*

*File Reference: NFB/000356*

*In Orders 2010/7*



## FORMS OF ADDRESS

### 1 Addressing officers

Firefighters should address officers as:

- 1.1 Sir or Madam (pronounced Ma'am), or
- 1.2 Rank and surname, eg Station Officer Smith or Captain Smith, or
- 1.3 Conventional title and surname, eg Mr Smith, Mrs, Miss or Ms Smith (according to the officer's preference), Dr Smith, etc.

Any exceptions are at the discretion of the officer.

### 2 Answering telephones

When answering telephone calls from the public, you should not assume that the caller is male.

Telephone calls should be answered by giving:

- Station name or Unit name, and
- the name of the person answering the telephone.

For example, 'Crows Nest Fire Station, Firefighter Smith speaking.'

### 3 Correspondence

When addressing formal correspondence to Fire and Rescue NSW employees, the following conventions should be observed:

- 3.1 Firefighters are addressed by their rank, given names or initials, surnames and any postnominals. Ranks may be abbreviated in accordance with the policy on [Rank structure](#) on page 255.
- 3.2 For permanent firefighters below the rank of Inspector, the address should include their service number before their rank.
- 3.3 If the firefighter holds a position, the title of which differs from their rank, the title of the position appears on the next line of the address.
- 3.4 In the salutation of a formal letter, firefighters are given conventional titles (Mr, Ms, Mrs or Miss), followed by their surnames, although officers of the rank of Inspector or above may be addressed in the salutation by their rank alone, without their name.
- 3.5 Members of the administrative and technical staff are addressed by conventional titles (Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss, Dr, etc.), their given names or initials, surnames and any postnominals.
- 3.6 The title of the position held by the staff member appears on the next line of the address.
- 3.7 In the salutation of a formal letter, administrative and technical staff should be addressed by title followed by their surnames.

In less formal correspondence, particularly where the sender and addressee know each other personally, firefighters or technical or administrative staff may be addressed by their given name.

## 4 Examples of addresses and salutations for formal letters

**Address:** Chief Superintendent Paul Rugg AFSM  
Area Commander Metropolitan South  
Fire and Rescue NSW  
Suite 1/45 Montgomery Street  
KOGARAH NSW 2217

**Salutation:** Dear Mr Rugg or Dear Chief Superintendent

**Address:** 9999 SO J Smith  
Station Commander  
36 Crows Nest Fire Station  
Fire and Rescue NSW  
99 Shirley Road  
CROWS NEST NSW 2065

**Salutation:** Dear Mr Smith

**Address:** Mr Adam Summons  
Director Finance  
Fire and Rescue NSW  
PO Box A249  
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232

**Salutation:** Dear Mr Summons

*In Orders 1997/17, with amendments*

## CORRESPONDENCE

### General requirements

#### 1 Responsibility for correspondence

If you sign a letter, memorandum or any other form of correspondence, you must be prepared to take responsibility for the contents. Your correspondence may be subject to public scrutiny. Write only what you are prepared to be called to account for by your supervisor or the courts.

If you are not sure whether you ought to write something, or whether you should be signing a letter, consult your supervisor.

#### 2 Templates

The Information Technology Training Section has developed Word templates for letters, memorandums, facsimiles and other standard documents. The templates automatically insert the headings, page numbers, logos and other formats appropriate for each form of correspondence.

Using the templates ensures that all Fire and Rescue NSW correspondence presents the same image and uses the same styles. All staff must use these templates for the preparation of correspondence.

For assistance with using the templates, contact the Information Technology Training Section on (02) 9265 2813 or [ITTraining.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ITTraining.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au).

### **3 Fonts and colours**

Times Roman 12 point is the approved font for the body text of all correspondence. To keep a consistent Fire and Rescue NSW image, do not alter the fonts and headings of the templates.

Colour is unnecessary in ordinary correspondence. It might be justified for communicating financial or statistical information.

### **4 Dates**

The date must be included in all correspondence. The style for writing dates is day month year, eg 21 July 2006.

### **5 Spelling**

Spelling and grammatical errors are unprofessional. Run a spell check before printing the correspondence, and read it through as well to pick up errors the spell check will miss. The *Macquarie Dictionary* is the authority for spelling.

### **6 Recordkeeping**

The file number must appear on all correspondence and a copy of the correspondence must be placed on the appropriate file. The file copy of letters should be on yellow paper, so it will stand out on the file.

For assistance with identifying relevant files, or with other aspects of records management, contact the Records Section on (02) 9265 2893.

## **Letters**

### **1 Professional image**

Letters are used for correspondence with individuals and organisations outside Fire and Rescue NSW. To preserve Fire and Rescue NSW's professional image, all letters must demonstrate the highest standards of quality and courtesy.

Before sending out a letter, always check it to be sure it is clear, concise and free of spelling or grammatical errors. It is always a good idea to have someone else read your letter before you send it.

### **2 Letterhead**

The first page of all letters must be printed on letterhead. Second and subsequent pages are printed on plain paper.

From 1 January 2007 there will be one standard printed letterhead for use throughout Fire and Rescue NSW. Sections, areas, zones and stations are not permitted to design their own letterhead. For supply information, see ESCAT.

The letterhead should be used in conjunction with the letterhead templates in Word which add the contact details for each section/area/zone. Staff in fire stations should use the Word letterhead template customised for their station.

### **3 Contact officer**

Letters must give the name and telephone number of a person whom the recipient can contact for further inquiries.

#### 4 Who can sign letters?

Members of staff may sign letters that relate to their area of responsibility. If the letter relates to a special or important matter it should be referred up the chain of command to the appropriate level.

**Note:** It is not longer a requirement that all letters be addressed to or signed of as being from the Commissioner. Only correspondence that the Commissioner has actually signed should have 'Commissioner' in the sign off.

Generally, letters should be exchanged between people of more-or-less equal status. For example, if a Station Commander needs to get information from an Assistant Commissioner in the Police Force, the request should be sent under the signature of the Station Commander's Director.

Some letters can only be signed by people in positions with appropriate delegations or authority, eg fire safety correspondence, statements of earnings. Check with the appropriate manager if you are not sure if you have the required authority.

In some sections there are protocols for signing particular forms of correspondence. These protocols must be followed by staff in the section.

Directors can sign letters to trade unions on routine matters which fall within their area of responsibility. Letters to trade unions relating to awards, or to contentious or important matters, must be signed by the Commissioner.

#### 5 Guidelines for writing letters

Letters should be written in accordance with the [Recommended practice for writing letters](#) which is available on Station Portal. This recommended practice explains Fire and Rescue NSW's standards for style and layout of letters including:

- authority and responsibility
- letters and email
- using the templates
- reference numbers
- contact officers
- opening and closing letters
- signing off
- page layout
- planning your letter
- replying to correspondence
- spelling, grammar, etc
- security
- recordkeeping
- sample letters.

*Contact Officer:* Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 2971

*File Reference:* CHO/01097

*In Orders 2006/27, with amendments*

## Memorandums and emails

### 1 Introduction

In the past, firefighters have used brigade reports to communicate up the chain of command, while communications down the chain of command and in administrative and support areas have been made by memorandum (memo) or email.

So that everyone in Fire and Rescue NSW is using the same methods for internal communication, brigade reports are replaced by memos and emails from 9 May 2008. Memorandums do not require a cover sheet.

### 2 When to use a memo or an email

You may use memos or emails to communicate internally.

You should use a memo instead of an email when:

- communicating information that needs a high level of security, ie that is classified X-in-Confidence, Protected, or Highly Protected, and you cannot be sure that an email will be handled securely by the recipient/s
- making a complaint under [Clause 36](#) of the *Fire Brigades Regulation 2008*
- the communication requires a written signature (eg formal or binding correspondence)
- you want to give an internal communication more formality than an email
- communicating about sensitive personal issues where an email would not be appropriate
- you do not know the name of the person who occupies the position you need to communicate with
- you have received a specific instruction to do so.

If you are not sure whether to use a memo or an email, ask your supervisor.

### 3 Memos and emails are official documents

Memos and work related emails are official documents. They are ‘for the record’ and should be filed in accordance with the [Records management policy](#) and the [Electronic mail and messaging policy](#) on page 604.

**Note:** Memos or emails relating to individual permanent and retained firefighters must be managed in accordance with Clause 38 of the *Crown Employees (NSW Fire Brigades Permanent Firefighting Staff) Award 2008* and Clause 22 of the *Crown Employees (NSW Fire Brigades Retained Firefighting Staff) Award 2008*.

### 4 Writing memos

A template for memos is available in Word. All staff should use the template when writing memos.

A [Recommended practice for memorandums](#) has been published on Station Portal. The recommended practice covers:

- when to use a memo
- preparing to write your memo
- using the template
- using headings
- spelling, grammar, etc
- sign offs and approvals
- recordkeeping.

## 5 Writing emails

Guidelines for using and writing emails are given in the [Electronic mail and messaging policy](#) on page 604 and the [Recommended practice for the use of electronic mail](#) on page 606.

## 6 Further information

For further information on using the Word template for memos, contact IT Training on (02) 9265 2813 or [ITTraining.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ITTraining.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au).

For further information on records management, contact the Information Management Unit on (02) 9265 2895.

For further information on the recommended practices for memos and emails, contact Anne Pickles, Manager Information Coordination, on (02) 9265 2971.

*Contact Officer: Director Regional Operations, (02) 9265 2702*

*File Reference: CHO/01097*

*In Orders 2008/10, with amendments*

## Electronic mail and messaging policy

This policy is based on the NSW Government *Guidelines for the use of the Internet for Electronic Messaging*.

### 1 The purpose of electronic mail in Fire and Rescue NSW

Fire and Rescue NSW makes electronic mail available to its staff so that they may efficiently share and exchange information in the pursuit of Fire and Rescue NSW's goals and objectives. As Fire and Rescue NSW is a decentralised organisation, and one in which staff work varying hours, electronic mail allows us to overcome the barriers of time and space in our communications.

### 2 Appropriate uses of electronic mail

Appropriate uses of Fire and Rescue NSW's electronic mail network include:

- when making an inquiry and explaining the information you want
- when requiring a record of an instruction or request

- sending messages to someone you cannot reach by telephone
- commenting on a document or issue
- for sending information to groups
- arranging conferences and meetings
- when fax or mail is inappropriate
- distributing documents as an alternative to mail, fax or courier

### **3 Inappropriate uses of electronic mail**

Inappropriate uses of Fire and Rescue NSW's electronic mail network include:

- uses that violate the *Code of Conduct*, the *Fire Brigades Act and Regulation*, or any other NSW or Federal laws, including laws relating to copyright, privacy, defamation, obscenity, misrepresentation, freedom of information and discrimination
- using electronic mail for non-work related purposes
- using electronic mail for mischievous, offensive or gossip dissemination purposes
- using electronic mail to distribute rumours or personal opinions that do not contribute to the pursuit of Fire and Rescue NSW's goals and objectives
- distributing junk mail
- using electronic mail as a substitute for supervisory tasks that are more appropriately handled as face to face contact

Misuse of electronic mail is regarded as a serious disciplinary offence under [Clause 18\(1\)\(g\)](#) of the *Fire Brigades Regulation 2008* and under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002*.

### **4 Ownership of electronic mail messages**

All electronic messages created by Fire and Rescue NSW staff and other people working for Fire and Rescue NSW on Fire and Rescue NSW's electronic mail network are the property of the Government of NSW.

### **5 Privacy of electronic mail**

Fire and Rescue NSW cannot guarantee the privacy or confidentiality of any electronic mail message sent internally or via the Internet. Systems administrators will not monitor the contents of electronic mail messages as a routine procedure, but Fire and Rescue NSW reserves the right to inspect, copy, store and disclose the contents of electronic mail messages at any time. Such procedures may only be undertaken by IT Infrastructure Branch staff with the specific authorisation of the Commissioner or the Chief Information Officer.

Note that electronic mail sent to external recipients may be recorded or monitored by the recipient's organisation or by organisations or individuals involved in the transmission of the message.

## 6 Electronic mail messages are official records

Electronic mail messages are official records of Fire and Rescue NSW's business. Legislation requires us to be accountable for that business. Messages that help show:

- what happened
- what was decided
- what advice was given
- who was involved
- when it happened
- the order of events and decisions

should be printed and placed on the appropriate file as a permanent record. To assist this process, the file number should be included in the message. As official records, electronic mail messages may be required to be presented during legal processes, and the author can be called to account for their content.

## 7 Standards for electronic mail

The same standards apply to electronic mail as apply to other internal and external correspondence, including requirements to acknowledge and reply to correspondence promptly. Refer to next item, *Recommended practice for the use of electronic mail*, for further guidance on this subject.

## 8 Responsibility for electronic mail

It is the ongoing responsibility of Managers, Supervisors and Commanders to ensure that all staff are aware of, and abide by, this policy.

Furthermore it is the Managers', Supervisors' and Commanders' responsibility to ensure that staff at all levels are made aware that each individual is responsible for their own electronic mail account and under no circumstance shall they access or use another staff member's electronic mail account.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director IT Infrastructure, (02) 9265 2856

*File Reference:* CHO/03303 and CHO/01973

*In Orders 1997/25*

*as amended by In Orders 2002/8, with amendments*

## Recommended practice for the use of electronic mail

This recommended practice is based on the NSW Government IM&T *Guideline on the use, etiquette and ethics for effective electronic messaging*.

### 1 Electronic mail messages are official documents

It is important to remember that electronic mail messages are official documents and they are subject to the same laws as any other form of correspondence. This means that they can be subpoenaed or 'discovered' during legal process, and if you make libellous or defamatory statements in messages you are liable to be called to account. Furthermore, many other messages that seemed a good idea at the time can make an agency or author look extremely unprofessional in the cold light of a court and may give an opposing counsel an undeserved opening.



## **2 Do unto others as you would have them do unto you**

Use good judgement by not sending messages that are libellous, defamatory, abusive, obscene or in bad taste. Remember to be courteous and refrain from the use of inflammatory or offensive language.

Never forget that another person is at the other end. It is very easy to make critical or intemperate comments across electronic mail because the recipient of the comments is not in front of you.

## **3 Etiquette for electronic mail senders**

### **3.1 Use electronic mail responsibly**

Do not waste resources by sending frivolous messages and do not accumulate large amounts of electronic mail that are no longer required. Try to avoid irrelevancies and to keep messages short and succinct. Focus on one subject in each message. Always state the message's topic in the subject header to make it easy for the recipient to review their message queue quickly. Add the file number to your message so that the recipient can check the file for related information and to make record keeping easier.

### **3.2 All capital letters give the effect of SHOUTING!**

Many people interpret capitalised text as shouting, anger or rudeness. Shouting, like swearing, is most effective if it is reserved for special occasions. Note that ergonomic studies show that proper use of upper and lower case text helps word recognition and makes a message easier to read and understand. Capitalise words only to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading.

### **3.3 Be courteous**

Conciseness is good, but it should never be at the expense of common courtesy.

### **3.4 Things you may regret**

Be professional and careful in what you say about others in electronic mail. You should say clearly in the message if you do not want all or part of it forwarded to others. Even so, you cannot be sure that the message will not be read by others.

### **3.5 Handle humour carefully**

An electronic mail message may contain words that the author intended humorously. However, without the expression or inflection that accompanies spoken words they may seem insulting to the recipient. Remember too that your message might be forwarded to another recipient. If you must use sarcasm or express emotion in a message then clearly label it. A common convention is to place a smiley face icon :- ) (look at it sideways) at the end of non-serious passages, but these should be used sparingly. So beware of dry humour unless you know the recipients well; it will inevitably be taken the wrong way.

### **3.6 Sign off your messages**

Put your name at the end of the message. If any recipients do not know who you are, then include details of your position.

### **3.7 Review before sending**

Always reading a message before sending it will reveal spelling and grammatical errors. Using the spell checking facilities helps. However, if you also put yourself in the recipient's place you will detect if your message is sensible and if the recipient is likely to understand it fully. Human conversation uses non-verbal cues, such as gesture and tone to convey meaning so you must take account of their absence. Remember too that electronic mail is not confidential; it is neither absolutely private nor absolutely secure. In general, if the contents are sensitive, do not use electronic mail.

### **3.8 Do not over-distribute messages**

Keep the list of recipients, carbon copies (CC) and blind copies (BC) to a minimum. If you are the recipient of a message that has been distributed to lots of people, do not reply to everyone if it is not necessary. Send replies to notices of meetings only to the person arranging the meeting, not to everyone invited. A single reply to the sender of the message reduces traffic on the network and ensures that other people do not get messages they do not want. It is too easy to distribute 'junk mail', messages that have little or no interest to recipients.

Be careful when sending messages to mailing lists and bulletin boards. It is better to target your message to a specific group of stakeholders than to broadcast it to everyone in the hope that interested people will read it. Responses to bulletin board messages should be sent directly to the person who posted the message on the bulletin board, rather than back to the bulletin board, unless your reply is of general interest.

### **3.9 Do not attach large files**

Do not distribute electronic mail with large attachments, particularly to mailing lists. Always check that the recipient will be able to handle the attached file, ie that they have the network capacity to receive it, appropriate software to read it, and the space on their PC to download it.

Be aware that fire stations, other local area networks and external recipients may not have the same software as you do. Where possible, put all you want to say in the actual electronic message rather than attaching a file. If it is necessary to distribute a large file, consider putting it in a shared directory, on the Intranet, or sending it on a floppy disk through normal mail channels.

Contact the IT Help Desk (telephone (02) 9265 2833) for help with distributing files.

### **3.10 Do not plagiarise**

Do not extract and use text from someone else's message without acknowledgment. Also, do not change the content of someone else's message and pass it on without making clear where you have made the change. Be aware of copyright law provisions when sending copied text, graphics or software.

## **4 Etiquette for electronic mail recipients**

### **4.1 Read and respond to messages**

The instructions headed [Replying to correspondence](#) on page 611, and the Awards for both permanent and retained firefighters, set standards for acknowledging correspondence. Fire and Rescue NSW is committed to replying to all external correspondence within 14 calendar days. These standards apply to electronic mail, but the speed of the medium should let most people give a much higher level of service. It is good practice to check your electronic mail regularly, preferably once a day or at least once each shift.

See also the [Information distribution policy](#) on page 565 on responsibility for reading electronic mail.

### **4.2 Assume the competence and honesty of the sender**

Giving the sender the benefit of the doubt is a good rule of thumb; especially if you do not know them. Replies that assume the sender is incompetent or an idiot when the recipient has misunderstood the context or intent of the message are discourteous, reflect badly on the original recipient and are a poor way to develop a relationship.

### **4.3 Think before forwarding someone else's message**

Before forwarding messages that you have received, think about any possible damage or embarrassment to the originator. It may be possible to remove sensitive parts of the message before sending it on to others. However, never edit and re-send a message you received without indicating that you made changes to the original. Personal information that should remain private and confidential should not be forwarded without the consent of the person involved.

### **4.4 Be aware of viruses**

Attachments to electronic messages received from external sources may contain viruses. Rather than downloading them to the network, you should download them onto a floppy disk and run a virus check before using the files. Contact the IT Help Desk if you have any concerns about viruses.

## **5 Follow through on messages**

### **5.1 Use receipts**

If a message is important you need to be sure that it was received and read by asking the system for a message receipt. This will cause it to automatically send receipts to you when the recipients receive or read the message. You can also ask the recipients to send you an acknowledgment.

### **5.2 Schedule a reminder**

Use your diary to schedule a reminder to check the status of important messages after an appropriate time. If you do not get a receipt or acknowledgment of an important message, contact the recipient by other means.

### **5.3 Keep a copy**

Before deleting messages, make sure that you have kept a copy and put it on the appropriate file.

### **5.4 Unforeseen use**

What you write can be used in evidence for or against you. Keep this in mind before you click the Send or Delete buttons. Even if you do not think the matter important enough to keep a copy, your recipient may. Remember too that people may not show when they have modified a message before forwarding it to someone else. Assume that any message you send is permanent and could be modified and forwarded anywhere without your knowledge or consent.

### **5.5 Are you getting frequently asked questions?**

If you are constantly getting electronic mail enquiries for the same information, consider placing the information on the Intranet or Internet as a frequently asked question (FAQ). This could provide clients with a quicker way to get the information at the same time as reducing your workload.

### **5.6 That strange message**

Does the content seem reasonable from the sender? If you doubt the message's authenticity, return it to the sender and ask for confirmation that they sent it.

## **6 Contact officers**

### **6.1 Problems with the electronic mail system**

If you have a problem with the software or hardware related to electronic mail, contact the IT Help Desk on (02) 9265 2833

## 6.2 Complaints of misuse of electronic mail

Complaints of misuse of electronic mail should be handled in the same way as any other complaint of misconduct about an employee. Generally, the first point of contact for such a complaint is your supervisor. Supervisors should ensure that appropriate grievance handling and dispute resolution procedures are used if necessary.

## 6.3 Suggestions about this recommended practice

Suggestions for changes or improvements to this recommended practice should be sent to the Assistant Director IT Infrastructure at Head Office.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director IT Infrastructure, (02) 9265 2856

*File Reference:* CHO/03303

*In Orders 1997/25, with amendments*

## Reports

A [Recommended practice for writing reports](#) has been published on Station Portal. The recommended practice is a style guide for staff who write formal reports on issues, incidents, research, projects or other activities. The reports may be for either internal or external distribution.

This recommended practice does not apply brigade reports, they have been replaced by memorandums and emails (see [page 603](#)).

The recommended practice covers:

- the purpose of reports
- types of reports
- writing your report
- layout and style
- headings
- legal and other responsibilities
- submitting reports
- checklists

*Contact Officer:* Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 2971

*File Reference:* CHO/05612

*In Orders 2008/3, with amendments*

## Facsimiles

All facsimiles must contain enough information for the recipient to identify:

- the sender of the facsimile
- the sender's address, facsimile and telephone numbers
- the number of pages sent

- the subject of the facsimile
- who else has been sent the facsimile, and
- a confidentiality disclaimer.

The facsimile template gives all these details. It can either be used like a memorandum, or as a cover sheet.

Wherever possible, information should be distributed by email or the Intranet rather than facsimile. For more information see the [Information distribution policy](#) on page 565.

## Ministerial correspondence

There are special standards and conventions for drafting correspondence for the Minister. Contact the Manager Executive and Ministerial Services on (02) 9265 3959 for assistance with ministerials.

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 2971*

*File Reference: CHO/01097*

*In Orders 2006/27, with amendments*

## Replying to correspondence

### 1 Introduction

All correspondence should be actioned as soon as possible. This ensures that issues are dealt with promptly and the originators of the correspondence feel that they have been treated with respect.

### 2 Letters

Letters should be answered within 14 calendar days of receipt.

If a matter will take longer than 14 days to resolve, send the correspondent a letter of acknowledgement indicating when a full reply can be expected and who the contact officer is for the issue.

**Note:** Ministerial correspondence has specific deadlines. For advice, contact the Ministerial Liaison Officer at Head Office on (02) 9265 2921.

### 3 Internal correspondence

Internal correspondence (memorandums, emails, etc) should be answered within 14 calendar days of receipt. If the matter will take longer to resolve the correspondence should be:

- acknowledged within 14 calendar days of receipt
- answered within 28 calendar days from the date of acknowledgement.

If the correspondent is a firefighter, the provisions of Clause 37 of the *Crown Employees (NSW Fire Brigades Permanent Firefighting Staff) Award 2008* and Clause 23 of the *Crown Employees (NSW Fire Brigades Retained Firefighting Staff) Award 2008* apply, as follows:

- (1) *When an employee makes an application or a report in writing, to the proper officer, the employee shall be sent an acknowledgment of its receipt, noting the matter contained therein.*

- (2) *The result of an application shall be communicated to the employee no later than fourteen days after a decision has been reached. In cases where no decision has been reached within one month the reason for the delay shall be communicated in writing to the employee.*
- (3) *The provisions of this clause shall not apply in cases where other procedures are specifically stipulated (eg, in Standing Orders or In Orders).*

Acknowledgements should include the name of the station or section, the subject of the correspondence, the date of receipt and a contact officer.

#### **4 While you are absent**

If you are going to be absent from your station or section and unable to deal with your correspondence, it is your responsibility to make arrangements for your correspondence to be dealt with in your absence.

For assistance with redirecting your email, contact the IT Service Desk on (02) 9265 2833.

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 9271*

*File Reference: CHO/01097*

*In Orders 2008/10*

#### **Envelopes with postage paid imprint**

Fire and Rescue NSW envelopes have a 'postage paid' imprint in the top right corner. *This imprint is valueless* unless used in the correct manner and *applies only* to 'bulk mail' from Fire and Rescue NSW's offices, which is processed through official channels. *All other mail*, for which these envelopes are used, requires stamps to be affixed.

All mail from fire stations, etc, must have the correct amount of postage stamps affixed to the envelope, obliterating or partially obliterating the imprint.

*In Orders 1970/8, with amendments*

### **COMMITTEES**

#### **Recommended practice for committees**

A [Recommended practice for NSWFB committees](#) has been published on the Intranet. The recommended practice assists committee members to perform their roles. It applies to all internal standing committees, that is committees that are established to perform a function on an ongoing basis.

The recommended practice covers:

- establishing a committee, including terms of reference and authority to make decisions
- roles of committee members
- reporting and communicating
- conduct, ethics, security and confidentiality

- processes and templates for running meetings effectively, including ground rules, setting agendas, taking minutes, and using action and issues lists.

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Coordination, (02) 9265 2971*

*File Reference: NFB/00670*

*In Orders 2007/24, with amendments*

## **PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS**

### **Photographs and videos of dead or injured people**

#### **1 Introduction**

At incidents, we do everything we can to minimise the impact of the incident on the people involved. Fire and Rescue NSW has an excellent reputation for saving lives and providing help to the injured and distressed. It is important that this care for people is not jeopardised by invading their privacy unnecessarily or by displaying or publishing material that causes distress to the people involved, or their friends or relations.

Photographs or videos of dead or injured people are distressing to many people, including to firefighters. It is therefore the responsibility of everyone to consider the implications carefully before taking, using or displaying this type of image.

Employees who take or use such images inappropriately may breach laws such as the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* or the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*, or render themselves subject to internal disciplinary action.

#### **2 When is it appropriate to take these images?**

In most circumstances, there is no legitimate reason for employees to take photographs of dead or injured people at incidents.

There are a limited number of circumstances where it is appropriate:

- Fire Investigators accredited by the Fire Investigation and Research Unit are permitted to take photographs or videos for the purpose of collecting evidence at a fire; and
- the Director Operational Capability may give permission for photographs or video footage to be taken at a major incident where there is an operational need.

At non-fire incidents it is not Fire and Rescue NSW's responsibility to take photos or video footage for evidence.

**Note:** the State Rescue Board's [\*Policy on the taking and use of photographic images at and from a rescue incident\*](#), available on the Intranet, applies to rescue incidents.

#### **3 Ownership of photographs and videos**

All photographs and videos taken by employees when on duty are the property of Fire and Rescue NSW.

#### **4 Public display of images**

It is not acceptable to publicly display any images of dead or injured people. The only exceptions are when such images are presented in court or with the written permission of the Commissioner.

Public display includes:

- publication in Fire and Rescue NSW books, manuals, journals, videos, or other publications intended for use outside Fire and Rescue NSW,
- publication in external publications such as newspapers, journals or conference papers,
- use of images on display stands at events,
- images displayed in Fire and Rescue NSW premises, including notice boards, lockers, etc,
- images on internet sites, and
- any other use where the images would be accessible by the public.

**Note:** An image does not have to contain a picture of a dead or injured person to be distressing. Consider the feelings of the people who may be viewing the image before using any image. In some cases, warnings may be appropriate.

## 5 Using images for training

The Manager Capability Training, in consultation with managers of specialist sections where appropriate, must approve any use of images of dead or injured people for training purposes.

The production of any training materials containing such images must be done through the Quality Education Development Unit.

## 6 Storage of images

Images of dead or injured people must not be kept at fire stations or on station computers. Station Commanders must check their stations for images of dead or injured people and ensure that any such photographs, videos or electronic files are destroyed.

If the Station Commander believes that an image may have some particular training value, they should contact the Manager Capability Training on (02) 9318 4303.

Any specialist section that is required to keep images of dead or injured people must ensure that:

- accurate records are kept of the images held,
- they are kept in a secure place,
- access to the images is restricted,
- film processing contractors are warned of the content of the film,
- users are warned of the content of the images before use, and
- images are securely destroyed when no longer required.

*Contact Officer: Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, (02) 9265 3923*

*File Reference: CHO/00568*

*In Orders 2002/18, with amendments*



## Photographic images of rescue incidents

The State Rescue Board has released a [Policy on the taking and use of photographic images at and from a rescue incident](#). This policy applies to all Fire and Rescue NSW personnel whether or not attached to accredited rescue units.

The State Rescue Board's policy should be read in conjunction with the policy on [Photographs and videos of dead or injured people](#) on page 613. The State Rescue Board's policy is available on the [Intranet](#) under Specialised Operations, Rescue.

*Contact Officer: Manager Rescue, (02) 9742 7337*

*File Reference: CHO/02154*

*In Orders 2005/6, with amendments*

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

### Privacy policy

#### 1 Introduction

Fire and Rescue NSW respects the privacy of members of the public who use our services and of our employees and volunteers. As an emergency service, we know that protecting people's privacy is an important part of maintaining the trust of the community in Fire and Rescue NSW so that we can help them in times of need.

As a NSW government agency, Fire and Rescue NSW must meet the requirements of the [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#) and the [Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002](#). These two acts establish principles for the management of personal and health information by NSW government agencies. They set out our obligations in relation to the collection, retention, security, access, use and disclosure of personal and health information.

This policy gives the framework under which Fire and Rescue NSW manages personal and health information and is a guide for decision making in the daily use of this information.

#### 2 Who is responsible for privacy?

It is the responsibility of everyone in Fire and Rescue NSW to protect the privacy of members of the public, our employees and volunteers by managing personal and health information in accordance with this policy.

It is the responsibility of commanders and managers to build privacy into the management of personal and health information in their areas of responsibility by making sure their staff are aware of the privacy principles and incorporating privacy considerations in policies, procedures and systems.

#### 3 What is personal information?

Personal information is any information that relates to an identifiable person. Personal information may be held not only in paper records, but also electronic records, audio or video recordings, photographs and biometric information such as fingerprints.

A person's name need not be included in the information to make it personal information. If the person can be reasonably identified from the information, then it is personal information. For example, a photograph including a vehicle registration number may be personal information.

#### 4 What is health information?

Health information is a particular type of personal information. Health information is personal information or an opinion about:

- a person's physical or mental health or disability, or
- a person's express wishes about the future provision of health services for themselves, or
- a health service provided, or to be provided to a person, including information collected in relation to the provision of that health service.

#### 5 What sorts of personal and health information does Fire and Rescue NSW hold?

The following is an overview of the types of personal and health information that Fire and Rescue NSW collects.

## Incident information

In order to provide emergency response services, Fire and Rescue NSW collects information about members of the public affected by incidents. This information is used to respond to and deal with the incident and may also be used to assist people to recover from an incident. Examples of information we collect include Calling Number Identification and voice recordings from Triple Zero calls, and information required for incident reports, court statements, investigation reports and approved research projects. In some cases this may include health information about a person affected by an incident, such as the fact that they were injured.

## Risk management services

In order to provide risk management services such as Smoke Alarm Battery Replacement for the Elderly, Intervention and Fire Awareness Programs, the Static Water Supply program, etc, we collect personal information about the clients of these services. In some cases this may include health information where a person's health status is pertinent to the provision of the service.

## Employee and volunteer information

We collect personal and health information about our employees and volunteers in order to manage their employment and volunteer service with Fire and Rescue NSW.

## 6 Privacy principles

The *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* sets out 12 Information Protection Principles. The *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* sets out 15 Health Privacy Principles. Fire and Rescue NSW must follow these principles for collecting, storing, using and disclosing personal and health information.

Sections 7 to 12 of this policy set out Fire and Rescue NSW's approach to these principles. Specific applications of these principles should be built into the policies and procedures of each area of Fire and Rescue NSW that collects, stores, uses or discloses personal or health information.

## 7 Collection

**Lawful** - Fire and Rescue NSW will only collect personal or health information for a lawful purpose. The information must be directly related to Fire and Rescue NSW's activities and necessary for that purpose.

**Relevant** - Fire and Rescue NSW will ensure that personal and health information that it collects is relevant, not excessive, accurate and up to date. We will not unnecessarily intrude into the personal affairs of the individual.

**Direct** - Fire and Rescue NSW will collect personal and health information directly from the person concerned, unless they have given consent otherwise or unless we are responding to an incident.

**Open** - Fire and Rescue NSW will take reasonable steps to inform people why we are collecting information about them, what we will do with it and who else might see it. We will also inform them how they can see and correct the information. However, in an emergency situation it may not be reasonable for us to individually notify people affected by the emergency.

## 8 Storage

**Secure** - Fire and Rescue NSW will ensure that personal and health information is stored securely, not kept any longer than necessary, and is disposed of appropriately. Information must be protected from

unauthorised access, use or disclosure. The [Information security policy](#) on page 554 applies to personal and health information.

## 9 Access

**Transparent** - Fire and Rescue NSW will take reasonable steps to explain to people what personal or health information about them is being stored, why it is being used and any rights they have to access it.

**Accessible** - Fire and Rescue NSW allows people to access their personal or health information without unreasonable delay or expense.

**Correct** - Fire and Rescue NSW allows people to update, correct or amend their personal or health information where necessary.

## 10 Use

**Accurate** - Fire and Rescue NSW will take reasonable steps to ensure that personal and health information is relevant and accurate before using it.

**Limited** - Fire and Rescue NSW will only use personal or health information for the purpose for which it was collected, or a directly related purpose that the person would expect. We may use personal and health information without consent in order to deal with a serious and imminent threat to any person's health or safety. Otherwise we will get the person's consent.

## 11 Disclosure

**Restricted** - during an emergency Fire and Rescue NSW may disclose personal and health information without consent in order to deal with a serious and imminent threat to any person's health or safety. Fire and Rescue NSW may also disclose personal or health information to a third party who has lawful authority to collect the information, to investigative agencies, to law enforcement agencies, or to our Minister or the Premier. When somebody affected by an emergency incident lodges an insurance claim, we may disclose information about the incident to the insurance company or to loss adjusters for the purpose of verifying the claim.

Apart from the above, Fire and Rescue NSW will only disclose personal or health information for the purpose for which it was collected, or a directly related purpose that the person would expect. Otherwise, we will get people's consent to disclosures.

**Sensitive information** - Fire and Rescue NSW will not disclose sensitive personal information, for example information about a person's ethnic or racial origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs or trade union membership without consent or lawful authority, unless there is a serious or imminent threat to any person's health or safety.

## 12 Additional requirements for health information

**Identification** - Fire and Rescue NSW allocates unique numbers to its employees and volunteers in order to manage their records effectively. Fire and Rescue NSW does not use numbers issued by other government agencies to identify employees, volunteers or members of the public who receive health services from Fire and Rescue NSW.

**Anonymous** - Fire and Rescue NSW will give people the option of receiving health services anonymously, where this is lawful and practicable.

**Transfers** - Fire and Rescue NSW does not normally transfer health information outside NSW, however, if there is a requirement to do so, we will make sure that substantially similar privacy laws apply in the receiving jurisdiction.

**Linking health records** - if Fire and Rescue NSW becomes a party to any system that links our health records with those of another organisation, we will get express consent to participation from anyone involved.

### 13 Accessing personal information

Members of the public who wish to access incident information should use the [Request for incident information form](#) on our internet site.

Members of the public who wish to access other personal information we hold about them should contact the Records Manager/Archivist, Fire and Rescue NSW, PO Box A249, Sydney South NSW 1232, phone (02) 9265 2893.

Employees who wish to access their personnel records should contact their Human Resources Manager. For access to health records contact the Health and Safety Branch on (02) 9265 2800.

### 14 Privacy complaints

If you think your privacy has been breached by Fire and Rescue NSW, you should seek an internal review by sending a written application to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct, Fire and Rescue NSW, PO Box A249, Sydney South NSW 1232, within six months of your first becoming aware of the conduct or decision you are complaining about.

You may use the internal review application form on the [Privacy NSW website](#) or you may simply write a letter.

The internal review will be done by someone other than the person responsible for the conduct or decision you are complaining about, and it will be overseen by Privacy NSW.

If your internal review is not completed within 60 days, or if you are unhappy with the results, you can ask the [Administrative Decisions Tribunal](#) to review the conduct or decision.

The Tribunal will assess whether or not Fire and Rescue NSW complied with its privacy obligations. If it decides that there is a breach of privacy, the Tribunal may order Fire and Rescue NSW to change its practices, apologise to you, or take some steps to remedy any damage you suffered.

For more information on how to lodge a privacy case in the Tribunal, contact the Tribunal on (02) 9223 4677.

### 15 Further information

An online Privacy Training Program developed by Privacy NSW to explain the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* is available on the [Intranet](#). There is also information available on [Privacy NSW's website](#), including a *Handbook to Health Privacy*.

For more information about privacy, the operation of the privacy laws, the Privacy Training Program, or for advice about policies and procedures, contact:

Privacy Contact Officer                      Ph (02) 9265 2867  
Fire and Rescue NSW                         Fx (02) 9265 2684  
PO Box A249  
Sydney South NSW 1232

*Contact Officer:    Manager Information Management, (02) 9265 2867*

*File Reference:    CHO/00568*

*In Orders 2005/18, as amended by  
In Orders 2008/6, with amendments*

## **Privacy and confidentiality of personnel information**

### **1     Policy**

Fire and Rescue NSW collects personal information about its employees, volunteers, contractors and temporary staff in order to manage human resources and occupational health and safety functions and for recalling personnel during emergencies.

Personnel information includes information such as:

- recruitment, selection and appointment information
- private address and contact details
- payroll information
- attendance and leave information
- conduct and performance information
- training records
- workers compensation information
- health information.

All staff must respect the confidentiality and privacy of information about past and present personnel.

Personnel information must only be used or disclosed by authorised staff for authorised purposes. Any staff member who uses or discloses personnel information without authority will be subject to disciplinary or legal proceedings.

### **2     Giving personnel information to people outside Fire and Rescue NSW**

You can only give personnel information to people outside Fire and Rescue NSW:

- with the consent (preferably in writing) of the person concerned, or
- to a Police officer in connection with proceedings for an offence or for law enforcement purposes, or
- in response to a subpoena, search warrant or statutory instrument, or
- in accordance with the [\*Industrial Relations Act 1996\*](#), or
- with other lawful authority, or
- to prevent or lessen a serious or imminent threat to life or health.

For advice on responding to subpoenas, see the procedure for [Subpoenas](#) on page 591. If you receive a search warrant or other statutory instrument, contact the Legal Services Officer on (02) 9265 2950.

If you are contacted by a bank or other financial institution about an employee's financial details, refer them to the Payroll Section or to the Business Manager for your Area, in accordance with the policy on [Disclosure of information to banks or other financial institutions](#) on page 622.

There is a range of lawful reasons for releasing personnel information to courts, law enforcement agencies, WorkCover, social security agencies such as Centrelink, and other organisations. If you are not sure whether a request has lawful authority, seek advice from the contact officers given in section 6 below.

### 3 Giving information to representatives

A person (for example, a family member, legal representative or union representative) claiming to represent a Fire and Rescue NSW employee, volunteer, contractor or temporary staff member must provide evidence in writing that:

- they represent the person concerned, and
- the person concerned has consented to them accessing their personnel information

before being given access to personnel information.

If there is any doubt about the above, contact the person concerned to verify consent before disclosing the information.

### 4 Keep a record

Requests for Fire and Rescue NSW to disclose personnel information should be made in writing. The person requesting the information should state why they want the information and what authority they have to receive it.

Disclosures of personnel information should also be made in writing and a record kept on the appropriate file.

**Note:** If it is not possible to get the request or make the response in writing, make a note in the Occurrence Book or put a note on the appropriate file giving the above details and detailing what information was disclosed and by whom.

### 5 Requests for contact information

If a person outside Fire and Rescue NSW contacts you and asks for the private contact details of a Fire and Rescue NSW past or present employee, volunteer, contractor or temporary staff member:

- ask them to give you their name and contact details, and
- say you will contact the person concerned (if you can) and pass the enquiry on to them.

Pass the enquirer's contact details on to the person concerned so that they can contact the enquirer if they wish.

**Note:** You can give out Fire and Rescue NSW contact details in response to legitimate business enquiries. For example, if a Council staff member needed to know the contact details for their

local Zone Commander in relation to a planning issue. If you are unsure whether it is a legitimate business enquiry, follow the procedure above.

## 6 Further advice

Policies and guidelines for the management of personnel information are given in:

- the [Privacy policy](#) on page 616
- [Disclosure of information to banks or other financial institutions](#) on page 622.
- the NSW Government's [Personnel Handbook](#)
- the *Retained Firefighters' Recruitment and Personnel Handbook*,
- the [Corporate Records Management Procedures Manual](#), and
- the *Personnel and Information Management* chapters of *Standing Orders*.

If you are unsure whether you should release personnel information consult:

- your supervisor
- your Human Resources Manager
- the Senior Legal Officer on (02) 9265 2950, or
- the Privacy Contact Officer on (02) 9265 2867

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Management and Privacy Contact Officer, (02) 9265 2867*

*File Reference: CHO/00568 In Orders 2006/18, with amendments*

## Disclosure of information to banks or other financial institutions

### 1 Introduction

It is common practice for banks and other financial institutions to ring Fire and Rescue NSW to confirm employment and salary details when a person claiming to be a Fire and Rescue NSW employee applies for a loan.

Financial institutions ask loan applicants to provide them with details of their employment and salary and usually require them to sign a form giving consent to the financial institution to confirm this information with their employer.

In compliance with the [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#), Fire and Rescue NSW will only disclose personal information about employees to banks or other financial institutions when the employee has consented to the disclosure.

### 2 Who can make the disclosure?

All requests from financial institutions for information on pay and salaries must be referred to the Payroll Section at Head Office. Payroll Officers are to inform them that this information is available on the employee's pay slip, which contains details of annual salary, standard fortnightly salary, year-to-date payments and superannuation contributions. Under no circumstances are salary details to be provided or confirmed by telephone.



Requests from financial institutions for other details of employment must be referred to:

- the Payroll Section or the Personnel Section at Head Office, or
- the Administrative Services Coordinator for your Area.

These officers can provide the following information, as it is on public record:

- confirmation of the employee's employment; and
- confirmation of their employment status (eg permanent, temporary, casual).

If the caller requests more information than this, refer the matter to your supervisor.

### **3 Request from employee for a Statement of Earnings**

Where an employee seeks a Statement of Earnings, which confirms employment details, salary details and superannuation contributions, the Statement is to be sent only to the employee's home address as shown on the Human Resources System or to their base station.

### **4 Record keeping**

All correspondence with financial institutions about an employee, including emails, must be filed on the employee's personal file.

*Contact Officer: Manager Payroll, (02) 9265 2836*

*File Reference: CHO/00003 and CHO/00568*

*In Orders 2001/6, with amendments*

## **Employee numbers**

A unique numbering system for employee numbers was established on 1 January 2003. This system gives every employee in Fire and Rescue NSW a unique number and is critical for reliable, timely and accurate storage, retrieval and use of employee information.

### **1 Permanent firefighters**

There was no change to the numbering system for permanent firefighters. Existing permanent firefighters kept their current four-digit number. New permanent firefighters will be given the next number in sequence when they are appointed as recruit firefighters.

### **2 Retained firefighters**

Existing retained firefighters had their current employee number permanently assigned to them. This number will not change even if the retained firefighter is transferred to another station.

New retained firefighters will receive a new six digit number starting from 520000 and will keep this number throughout their employment (ie they will not be given a new number if they transfer to another station).

### **3 Administrative and technical staff**

There was no change to the numbering system for administrative and technical staff.

Existing administrative and technical staff retained their current five digit numbers. New administrative and technical staff will be given the next number in sequence when they are appointed.

#### **4 Staff changing employment status in Fire and Rescue NSW**

When staff change their employment status in Fire and Rescue NSW, for example when:

- a retained firefighter or an administrative or technical employee becomes a permanent firefighter, or
- a firefighter becomes either a technical or administrative staff member, or
- a permanent firefighter, technical or administrative staff member becomes a retained firefighter, or
- a person is employed in two capacities with Fire and Rescue NSW, eg as a retained firefighter and as an administrative staff member,

a new employee number will be assigned to that person as is the current practice.

#### **5 Further information**

Enquiries about the introduction of the unique numbering system should be directed to your Station Commander or Zone Office.

*Contact Officer: Assistant Director IT Systems, (02) 9265 2635*

*File Reference: CHO/04512*

*In Orders 2002/26, with amendments*

#### **Service record cards**

Station Commanders are responsible for the maintenance and security of the Service Record Cards for all personnel under their supervision.

Only the information specifically nominated on the card should be recorded.

Members not wishing to disclose private and personal information on the Service Record Cards, such as unlisted phone numbers or addresses, may decline to list such information. Under no circumstances should tax file numbers or other confidential information be listed. A card must be maintained for each member.

All members are individually responsible for ensuring the information listed is accurate.

*In Orders 1996/19*

#### **Service reports**

When an officer submits a service report, or any other report which is derogatory to a firefighter, the report must state fully the circumstances (including time and date) in which the firefighter has been neglectful in his or her duty, etc.

The firefighter concerned must note such reports before they are forwarded.

*Consolidated In Orders, page 181, with amendments*

## Residential address of Fire and Rescue NSW employees

### 1 Policy

All employees are required to advise Fire and Rescue NSW of their residential address and contact telephone number/s. Employees must advise Fire and Rescue NSW immediately of any changes to those details.

The official record of your residential address and contact telephone number/s is held in the Human Resources Management System.

Fire and Rescue NSW uses this information for managing your employment relationship with Fire and Rescue NSW, and for contacting you in emergencies. The information must be managed in accordance with the [Privacy policy](#) on page 616, and the instructions on [Privacy and confidentiality of personnel information](#) on page 620.

### 2 Keeping your details up to date

To update your details, use [Electronic Self Service](#) which enters your contact details directly into the Human Resources Management System.

If you use Electronic Self Service to update your details, you must also ensure that:

- your Personal Record Card is updated, and
- your Duty Commander's Staff Contact Register is updated.

Alternatively, you can use the [change of address form](#) available on the Intranet. This form has to be submitted through your chain of command to the Zone Office (Retained Firefighters) or to Personnel in Head Office (Permanent Firefighters, administrative and technical staff).

### 3 Address details

Residential address means the place where you live, reside or dwell. It does not mean an address which is used by you for brief stays and does not mean a postal address.

Post Office boxes or a postal address are acceptable for mailing purposes. However, all employees are also required to lodge their residential address and contact details.

When you enter your address in [Electronic Self Service](#), Address 1 is used as your postal address.

- If your residential address differs from your postal address, put your residential address information as Address 2.
- If your postal address and residential address are the same, you only need to update Address 1.

A change log is kept every time you update your address details. This log is used as a reference for country and regional transfer registers.

### 4 Contact telephone number/s

Your contact telephone number/s means the telephone number/s for contacting you in an emergency.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director Operational Personnel, (02) 9265 2869

*File Reference:* CHO/07127

*In Orders 2007/25, with amendments*

## Procedure for telling Fire and Rescue NSW who your emergency contacts are

All staff are encouraged to give Fire and Rescue NSW contact details for one or two people who you would like notified if something happens to you, eg if you have a serious accident or are taken ill at work, or if you are involved in a protracted incident.

In accordance with the [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#), this information is kept confidential and only used in these situations.

Supervisors and officers can access this information when the need arises by contacting Human Resources in Head Office or the Response Coordinator outside business hours.

The contact person may be your next of kin or it may be someone else who you would want notified or who has agreed to assist you in such a situation.

We advise you to tell the person you have nominated as an emergency contact that you have given us this information.

You do not have to provide this information, but if you do not, we may have difficulty contacting the people who need to know what has happened to you, or we may have to do so through the Police.

You can tell us who your emergency contacts are either by using the Electronic Self Service application on the Intranet or by sending a form to Operational Personnel at Head Office.

### 1 Using Electronic Self Service

You can use [Electronic Self Service](#) (ESS) to:

- see who is currently has listed as your emergency contact, and
- add or change emergency contact details.

You can access [ESS](#) from the Home Page under Frequently Requested or from Station Portal. Then click on Emergency Contact in the list under Personnel on the ESS Home Page to view and edit your details.

Any details you enter into ESS will be recorded directly into the Human Resources Information System.

### 2 Using a form

Fill in the form on the Intranet under [Human Resources > Forms > Notification in Case of Emergency](#) and send it to:

Manager Operational Personnel  
Fire and Rescue NSW  
PO Box A249  
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232

Operational Personnel staff will enter the information into the Human Resources Information System.

*Contact Officer:* Manager Operational Personnel, (02) 9265 2830

*File Reference:* CHO/02455

*In Orders 2005/10, with amendments*

## VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

### Overt video surveillance policy

#### 1 Scope and application

This policy applies to the use of overt video surveillance by Fire and Rescue NSW in Fire and Rescue NSW workplaces.

Overt video surveillance is the use of video surveillance in the workplace where:

- employees have been notified in writing at a reasonable period of time before the cameras are used
- the cameras, or camera casings or other equipment that would generally indicate the presence of a camera, are clearly visible to a person in the area which is under surveillance, and
- there are signs which are visible to both employees and visitors which notify them that they may be under surveillance in an area.

**Note:** Covert video surveillance is not covered by this policy. Covert video surveillance is surveillance that does not meet the above conditions. Under the [Workplace Surveillance Act 2005](#), Fire and Rescue NSW can only use covert video surveillance if:

- it is only for the purpose of establishing whether or not the employee is involved in any unlawful activity while at work, and
- it is authorised by a covert video surveillance authority issued by a magistrate.

#### 2 Consultation

Fire and Rescue NSW will consult with employees and/or their representatives before installing overt video surveillance equipment.

This consultative process will give individual employees the opportunity to comment on:

- the purposes for the installation of video surveillance equipment
- the nature and capacities of the equipment being installed
- the location of cameras
- the hours in which cameras will be operated
- the circumstances in which video recordings will be used
- the mechanisms for ongoing consultation on the use of video surveillance equipment, and
- how any disputes arising from the use of video surveillance will be settled.

### 3 Notification

At least 14 days before the use of overt video surveillance, Fire and Rescue NSW will:

- display written notices and a copy of this policy on noticeboards in the affected workplaces, and
- publish notification in Commissioner's Orders.

The notification will include:

- the area/s in which the surveillance will be conducted
- the specific purpose of the surveillance, and
- the position responsible for the conduct of the surveillance.

### 4 Signs

On Fire and Rescue NSW premises where overt video surveillance equipment is installed, Fire and Rescue NSW will display signs informing employees and members of the public that the area is under video surveillance.

### 5 Ethical use of overt video surveillance

- 5.1 Fire and Rescue NSW will not install overt video surveillance cameras in toilets, showers, change rooms or locker rooms in Fire and Rescue NSW workplaces.
- 5.2 Cameras will not be used to zoom in on individuals or pry on a person's activities without cause.
- 5.3 Overt video surveillance will not be used to monitor work performance.
- 5.4 Fire and Rescue NSW will not use overt video surveillance to monitor employees for evidence of minor misdemeanours.
- 5.5 However, overt video surveillance recordings may be used as evidence in disciplinary or legal proceedings if:
  - the employee who is subject to the complaint has reviewed and given consent to the use of the recordings, or
  - an officer conducting a preliminary or formal inquiry under the *Fire Brigades Regulation 2008* or an inquiry under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002* requires a copy of the recording for the purposes of the inquiry, or
  - recordings are subpoenaed,on the condition that a copy of the recording of the incident will be made available to the employee or their authorised representative within fourteen days of the warning, commencement of disciplinary proceedings or legal action.
- 5.6 In accordance with section 3 above, notifications of overt video surveillance will include the specific purpose of the surveillance. Use for purposes other than the notified purpose or section 5.5 above is unauthorised use.

- 5.7 Action will be taken against anyone involved in unauthorised use of video surveillance equipment or recordings. Complaints of unauthorised use of video surveillance equipment or recordings should be sent to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct.

## 6 Access to video recordings

Employees are entitled to access videos recordings of their actions in the workplace. With the consent of the individual concerned and the approval of the Commissioner, recordings may also be provided to the individual's representative or agent.

The following positions are authorised to access recordings:

- the Commissioner
- the Deputy Commissioner
- the Deputy Chief Executive
- the Director responsible for the area under surveillance, and
- the Senior Legal Officer.

Other staff or external parties who need to access recordings may do so on request to one of these authorised positions, subject to the requirements of [section 18](#) of the *Workplace Surveillance Act 2005*, which states that the recordings are not to be used or disclosed unless the use or disclosure is:

- a. *use or disclosure for a legitimate purpose related to the employment of employees of the employer or the legitimate business activities of functions of the employer, or*
- b. *disclosure to a member or officer of a law enforcement agency for use in connection with the detection, investigation or prosecution of an offence, or*
- c. *use or disclosure for a purpose that is directly or indirectly related to the taking of civil or criminal proceedings, or*
- d. *use or disclosure that is reasonably believed to be necessary to avert an imminent threat of serious violence to persons or of substantial damage to property.*

Internal requests for access to recordings should be submitted to the position responsible for the video surveillance concerned. External requests for access to recordings should be made in writing to the Senior Legal Officer.

## 7 Security of recordings

Recordings are classified at a minimum as FRNSW-In-Confidence and may have a higher classification. Recordings must be kept secure in accordance with the [Information security policy](#) on page 554.

Before a recording is disclosed to a party external to Fire and Rescue NSW, that party must give a written undertaking to maintain the security of the information.

Records must be kept of who has accessed recordings and the purpose of the access.

## 8 Retention of recordings

Recordings will be kept for a period of time specified in the notification in Commissioner's Orders on that type of surveillance.

After the specified period of time has expired, the recordings will be erased or securely destroyed, unless they have been identified as evidence relating to a disciplinary proceeding or legal action.

## 9 Issues

Whenever possible, issues relating to overt video surveillance should be resolved directly with the position responsible for the video surveillance concerned or the chain of command above that position.

Staff who are concerned about privacy issues may contact the Privacy Contact Officer, on (02) 9265 2867 for advice. Privacy complaints should be sent to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct.

*Contact Officer: Manager Information Management, (02) 9265 2867*

*File Reference: CHO/05572 In Orders 2006/13, with amendments*

## Security cameras

### 1 Introduction

In accordance with the [Overt video surveillance policy](#) on page 627, employees are notified that security cameras have been installed in Communication Centres (ComCens) and associated facilities, the City of Sydney Fire Station, Head Office, the Alexandria and Greenacre complexes, the Hazmat Service Centre at 26 Anzac Street, Greenacre, the Rescue Section at Ingleburn, 468 Tweed Heads Fire Station and 452 Tamworth Fire Station.

### 2 Purpose

The above facilities require higher levels of security than most Fire and Rescue NSW sites to ensure business continuity and operational readiness.

Security cameras have been installed at these sites:

- to enhance the physical security of employees and visitors at the sites
- to protect the buildings, vehicles and equipment
- to allow review of incidents where the security of the site has been compromised, and
- to allow the investigation of incidents that may have breached laws, regulations or policies.



### 3 Location and operation

The following table shows the locations of security cameras, who monitors the cameras, and the manager responsible for the operation of overt video surveillance at each site.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Monitored by</b>	<b>Manager responsible</b>
Sydney ComCen	Sydney ComCen Operators Security personnel at Greenacre	Assistant Director Preparedness and Response
Operational Capabability	Sydney ComCen Operators Security personnel at Greenacre	
Newcastle ComCen	Newcastle ComCen Operators Security personnel at Greenacre	
Wollongong ComCen	Wollongong ComCen Operators Security personnel at Greenacre	
Katoomba ComCen	Katoomba ComCen Operators Security personnel at Greenacre	
Alexandria complex	Security personnel at Greenacre	Assistant Director Learning and Development
City of Sydney Fire Station ground floor and footpath	Firefighters in the Relay Room Security personnel at Greenacre	Zone Commander Metropolitan East 1
Greenacre complex	Security personnel at Greenacre	Assistant Director Property Services
Head Office lift lobbies and corridors on Levels 8, 9, 10 and 11 and the computer room on Level 9	Security personnel at Greenacre	Assistant Director Operational Personnel
Hazmat Service Centre	Security personnel at Greenacre	Assistant Director Property Services
Ingleburn Rescue Section	Security personnel at Greenacre	Manager Rescue/USAR
468 Tweed Heads Fire Station main engine bay entrance, front entrance door, rear engine bay roller door and rear entrance	Station Commanders Duty firefighter	Zone Commander Regional North 2
452 Tamworth Fire Station main engine bay entrance front of station, front entrance door, rear entrance door	Station Commanders Duty firefighter	Zone Commander Regional North 3

Monitoring is continuous at all sites. At times of high security alert, cameras may be monitored by contracted security staff.

Recordings are made when the cameras detect activity. The length of time that records are kept depends on the level of activity in the area. The records are overwritten when the hard drive storage is full.

#### **4 Access to recordings**

Requests for access to recordings should be made in accordance with section 6 of the [Overt video surveillance policy](#) on page 627.

*Contact Officer: Assistant Director Property Services, (02) 9742 7374*

*File Reference: CHO/05572 and NFB/04114 In Orders 2006/1, In Orders 2006/13, In Orders 2009/8, In Orders 2010/5 and In Orders 2010/11, with amendments*

### **Overt video surveillance at the New South Wales Police Aviation Support Branch**

All personnel are advised that the New South Wales Police Force (NSWPF) has installed overt video surveillance cameras at the Police Aviation Support Branch at Bankstown airport.

The NSWPF has installed the surveillance cameras for the purpose of added security for Police, personal property and aircraft.

Fire and Rescue NSW does not have access to the surveillance data and is not using the NSWPF cameras to conduct surveillance of Fire and Rescue NSW employees. However, all Fire and Rescue NSW personnel should be aware that if the NSWPF makes a complaint of misconduct against a Fire and Rescue NSW employee or charges a Fire and Rescue NSW employee with an offence, the surveillance data may be used by the NSWPF as evidence.

Fire and Rescue NSW personnel who are concerned about privacy issues at the Police Aviation Support Branch may contact the Fire and Rescue NSW Manager Counter Terrorism/Aviation for advice on (02) 9265 2766.

Privacy complaints should be sent to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct.

*Contact Officer: Manager Counter Terrorism/Aviation, (02) 9265 2766*

*File Reference: CHO/05572 and CHO/07130 In Orders 2007/14, with amendments*

### **Policy and procedure for the use of video recordings collected at incidents**

#### **1 Scope and application**

In accordance with the [Overt video surveillance policy](#) on page 627, this instruction notifies employees of the operational use of Fire and Rescue NSW video technology at incidents.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

- the [Overt video surveillance policy](#) on page 627
- the [Information security policy](#) on page 554
- the policy on [Photographs and videos of dead or injured people](#) on page 613, and
- the policy on [Operational debriefs](#) on page 133.

## 2 Purpose

Fire and Rescue NSW can only use video surveillance and recordings made at incidents for the purposes of:

- incident management;
- risk management;
- live monitoring of safety;
- protecting buildings, vehicles and equipment;
- supporting tactical operations, eg using thermal imaging or USAR search cameras;
- gathering information for use in:
  - operational debriefs;
  - training; and
  - post incident analysis by the Fire Investigation and Research Unit; and
- discipline in accordance with the [Overt video surveillance policy](#) on page 627.

## 3 Deployment

Fire and Rescue NSW has the capability to deploy:

- masthead cameras mounted on Incident Control Vehicles (ICVs)
- portable cameras, and
- specialised cameras, eg thermal imaging cameras and USAR search cameras.

Video images may be streamed to the ICV, the Major Incident Coordination Centre or other locations for the purpose of incident management.

Signs must be placed on the ICVs warning that video cameras may be in use.

## 4 Responsibilities

The Incident Controller is responsible for initiating and directing the use of video/camera technology at an incident.

The Incident Controller is to notify all Sector Commanders that video recording is going to take place prior to video recording commencing. Sector Commanders are to ensure that firefighters are notified of the same as soon as possible.

The ICV crew is responsible for adding the tag 'VCAM' to the FireCAD Incident Log to facilitate the retrieval of information related to the incident at which recording has occurred.

At the conclusion of the incident, the ICV Officer is responsible for:

- securing a DVD copy of any recorded vision taken at an incident

- labelling the DVD copy with the name, number and date of the incident
- delivering the DVD under security to the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response, and
- after confirming the quality of the copied DVD, deleting all recorded vision from surveillance equipment.

## **5 Security of recordings**

- 5.1 When a recording is forwarded to the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response for storage, the recording will be kept secure unless accessed in accordance with this policy.
- 5.2 All recordings are classified at a minimum of FRNSW-in-Confidence and must be kept secure in accordance with the [Information security policy](#) on page 554.
- 5.3 Recordings that include images of dead or injured people must be managed in accordance with the policy on [Photographs and videos of dead or injured people](#) on page 613.
- 5.4 The Assistant Director Preparedness and Response is required to make the following entries on a central file that is kept with the DVD recordings:
- date recording was taken
  - address of incident
  - FireCAD incident number
  - date access was authorised
  - date recording was returned
  - date recording was disposed of
  - Disposal Authority and Disposal Class authorising the destruction.
- 5.5 All operational video recordings will be securely stored with the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response for 28 days. Recordings may be retained longer if they are accessed in accordance with this policy.
- 5.6 Following that 28 day period, all recordings will be transferred to secure off-site storage and retained and disposed of in accordance with Fire and Rescue NSW's Functional Retention and Disposal Authority (FRDA).
- 5.7 During the period of retention specified by the FRDA, the recordings may only be accessed where they are subject to legal proceedings.
- 5.8 In all cases, the FBEU will be notified when an application has been made to access the operational video recordings.
- ## **6 Access to recordings**
- 6.1 All requests for access to recorded vision must be in writing to the Director Operational Capability.

- 6.2 The Incident Controller may make application to access and review the footage collected at a particular incident and must do so by completing the form [Application for access to operational video recordings](#) which is available on Station Portal.
- 6.3 The application must be authorised by the Incident Controller's Director before being submitted to the Director Operational Capability for approval.
- 6.4 The application must state the intended use of the footage before the Director Operational Capability can approve it.
- 6.5 The applicant must agree not to copy or distribute the provided material.
- 6.6 Whenever a recording is released by the Director Operational Capability, a copy of this policy will also be provided to the recipient of the recording.
- 6.7 The Incident Controller may, in accordance with this policy, recommend that footage be kept for use at an operational debrief or for use in training material or post incident analysis.
- 6.8 Parties external to Fire and Rescue NSW will not have access to video recordings unless it is required for the purpose of legal proceedings.

## **7 Use of recordings in training material**

Where the Incident Controller identifies that some of the footage contained on the recording would be useful for future training it may be retained by the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response subject to the following:

- 7.1 Only the portion that the Incident Controller deems useful will be retained and/or released for the purpose of future training.
- 7.2 The Director Operational Capability must give approval before the original copy is released to the relevant training section.
- 7.3 Use of a training material which contains video footage must be approved by the Training Review Committee prior to its use.
- 7.4 Where individual firefighters can be identified from the footage intended for use in training material, the agreement of those individuals is required prior to its use.

## **8 Use of recordings for post incident analysis**

Where the Incident Controller identifies that some of the footage contained on the recording would be useful for post incident analysis by the Fire Investigation and Research Unit it may be retained by the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response subject to the following:

- 8.1 Application must be made to the Director Operational Capability via the [Application form for access to operational video recordings](#) available on Station Portal.
- 8.2 On approval, the Director Operational Capability will specify a return date by which the recording will be returned to the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response for relocation to off site storage.
- 8.3 Where recordings are approved footage will only be viewed by the investigating officer/officers in the Fire Investigation and Research Unit.

## 9 Use of recordings during operational debriefs

Where an Incident Controller has been given access to recordings the use of the recorded vision during an operational debrief it will be conditional on the following:

- 9.1 The Incident Controller must review all footage and must select those aspects of the footage that are intended for use at the Operational Debrief before showing it to anyone else. Footage selected should be in relation to the following:
  - Fire and Rescue NSW operations
  - equipment
  - operational safety
  - building construction and performance, and
  - incident management.
- 9.2 Subject to 9.3, where individual firefighters can be identified from the footage, the Incident Controller will not use that footage at the operational debrief.
- 9.3 Where the Incident Controller wishes to use a piece of footage where a firefighter can be identified during an operational debrief, the identified firefighter will be asked if they consent to the footage being released. If they do not consent then the use of that portion of the footage will not be permitted.
- 9.4 Recordings that contain footage of a sensitive nature will not be permitted for use at any operational debriefs, however may, where required, be used for post incident analysis in accordance with Clause 8 of this policy.
- 9.5 Recordings will not be used at Type 3 debriefs where other agencies are present.
- 9.6 Access to recordings will be authorised once only for use at an operational debrief and must be returned to the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response within 28 days of the date of recording.
- 9.7 Where an operational debrief has been conducted and the recording is no longer required it must be returned to the Assistant Director Preparedness and Response as soon as practicable.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director Preparedness and Response, (02) 9318 4353

*File Reference:* CHO/05572

*In Orders 2006/13, with amendments*

## **ELECTRONIC INFORMATION**

### **Password security**

#### **1 Introduction**

Only authorised users are allowed to use Fire and Rescue NSW's computers and information systems. Passwords are used to protect systems from unauthorised access. Depending on which systems you are allowed to use, you will use passwords to access the computer network, your email account, and applications such as AIRS, SAP, ESCAT, Employee Self Service, and FireCAD.

#### **2 You are responsible for your passwords**

You are responsible for keeping your passwords secure and for following the instructions given in this policy.

You are responsible for any work done on Fire and Rescue NSW's systems using your password. Whenever you use a password to access Fire and Rescue NSW's computer systems, the systems keep a record of when you logged in and out, what you accessed and what you changed. By entering your user name and password, you accept all responsibility for what you do.

If you give your passwords to others or you know other people use your passwords, you will be responsible and liable for anything they do using your login.

#### **3 Keep your passwords secure**

To keep your passwords secure:

- choose a different password for each application
- do not share your passwords with anyone
- do not write your passwords down
- do not give your passwords to your supervisor, your colleagues or your subordinates
- do not talk about your passwords
- do not drop hints about the format of your passwords
- do not store your passwords on any computer system, including laptops and handheld computers, without tested encryption
- report any lost or stolen equipment with passwords on it immediately to the Help Desk
- do not reveal passwords in email messages
- not reveal passwords on questionnaires or security forms
- do not use the 'remember password' feature on internet applications
- if computer help desk staff ask you for a password, enter it yourself, and
- if someone demands your password, refer them to this policy.

Always logoff from an application or computer when you have finished using it or protect your workstation with a passworded screensaver. This stops other people from using your login if you leave the computer unattended.

#### **4 Choosing a good password**

Many people use passwords that are easy for anyone to guess and hackers have developed programs specifically to guess passwords. Some passwords are easier to guess than others. Easy to guess passwords include:

- words in English or foreign language dictionaries
- the days of the week or names of a month
- names of your family, pets, friends, colleagues, company or the places you live and work
- swear words
- computer terms
- dates such as birthdays
- your employee number, telephone number, car registration or street address, and
- words using patterns derived from the keyboard or a simple formula such as aaabbb, qwerty, 12321.

Your password will be more secure if it:

- is more than eight alphanumeric characters long
- includes numbers and punctuation characters as well as letters, and
- uses both upper and lower case characters.

For example, you could create a strong password by breaking a word up with numbers and changing some letters to upper case: 'routine' could become 'rouUt1Ne35'. Such a password would take a long time to crack.

Fire and Rescue NSW makes you change your password at 90 or 30 day intervals on most systems. You should change your password regularly on any system that does not enforce password changes.

#### **5 If someone else knows your password**

If you know or suspect that someone else knows any of your passwords, contact the Help Desk immediately on (02) 9265 2833 and get your passwords changed.

#### **6 When someone else needs to have access to your systems**

Sometimes you want other people to have access to your systems or your email account. Examples are a personal assistant managing an executive's calendar, or someone is acting in your job while you are on leave.

In these cases the other users should be given proper authorisation to use these systems. Do not give them your passwords.

Contact the Help Desk on (02) 9265 2833 to set up temporary or permanent authorisation for the other person. The Help Desk can also show you how to give someone proxy access to your email account, calendar or other GroupWise features.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director IT Infrastructure, (02) 9265 2856

*File Reference:* CHO/06120

*In Orders 2003/10, with amendments*



## The Internet

Fire and Rescue NSW aims to make good use of the Internet to improve the service we provide the community. The Internet is used in Fire and Rescue NSW to enable education and research to build our expertise. It will also be used to communicate and share information more effectively throughout the organisation, and with other emergency services, our stakeholders and the community.

**Like all resources, the Internet has a cost and a value.** All Internet use generates a bill for Fire and Rescue NSW. By using the Internet responsibly, for work related activities only, Fire and Rescue NSW will have more resources available for other priorities like equipment and training.

Fire and Rescue NSW has had the ability to monitor use of the Internet broadly across the organisation and will increasingly keep track of the expenditure associated with Internet use and the types of sites visited. This monitoring has identified that employees have accessed a number of sites that are deemed inappropriate (eg pornographic sites) and contravene Fire and Rescue NSW policies on the use of the Internet. Visiting pornographic sites or using pornographic screen savers may also leave employees open to claims of sexual harassment, resulting in harsh penalties - either Departmental or in the courts (see also [Preventing and managing workplace bullying](#) on page 387).

To assist in the management on the use of the Internet, the Information Management Steering Committee has approved the installation of software that blocks access to inappropriate Internet sites.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director IT Infrastructure, (02) 9265 2856

*File Reference:* FSD/POL/127801

*In Orders 1999/7, with amendments*

### General access to and use of the Internet by Fire and Rescue NSW staff

1. Staff are encouraged to make productive use of the Internet as a tool for professional and organisational development.
2. Access to the Internet is provided through the Intranet.
3. Internet access provides staff the opportunity to:
  - exchange electronic mail with other organisations such as fire and emergency services, government departments, professional associations, education providers, business and community groups;
  - get useful information from Internet Web sites hosted and supported by fire and emergency services, relevant community, business, education and government organisations; and
  - search for information that can be used to meet Fire and Rescue NSW objectives and fulfil its mission.
4. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to ensure that their use of the Internet is for work-related purposes. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that access to the Internet is not misused by their staff.
5. Staff are reminded of the provisions of the *Code of Conduct* (see [page 361](#)) and the *NSW Fire Brigades Regulation 2008*, [Clause 19 \(2\)](#) relating to the misuse of Departmental property.
6. When sending electronic mail from a Fire and Rescue NSW location or using a Fire and Rescue NSW account name, staff are reminded that they are representing the organisation. Instructions

in the *Code of Conduct* and the *Fire Brigades Regulation 2008* on public comment, confidential information, intellectual property rights and personal and professional behaviour apply. See also the [Electronic mail and messaging policy](#) on page 604.

*Contact Officer:* Assistant Director IT Infrastructure, (02) 9265 2856

*File Reference:* CHO/03303 and FSD/POL/127801

*In Orders 1997/15 and 1999/7, with amendments*

## **Intranet policy**

### **1 Purpose**

The Intranet is a major organisational tool which delivers a number of benefits to Fire and Rescue NSW, including:

- a channel for internal communications
- delivery of training and training resources
- access to information systems and services
- a repository for information resources, and
- increased communication and networking among staff.

### **2 Access**

The Intranet is available on computers connected to the Fire and Rescue NSW network and also to authorised users over the Internet.

All staff with a current network user ID and password are authorised to use the Intranet. Access may also be provided where necessary to authorised contractors, consultants, temporary staff and external users.

Sections of the Intranet that contain sensitive information, or information systems available over the Intranet, may require additional authorisation for access. These may also be unavailable when accessing the Intranet over the Internet.

Applications for access must be made on the [Information Systems Access Form](#) and approved by an authorised delegate under delegation 16.2 of the [Delegations manual](#).

### **3 Content**

Information on the Intranet, including text, photographs, graphics, discussion forums and databases, is designed for internal use and should not be provided to people outside Fire and Rescue NSW without authorisation. Information cleared for public release is posted on Fire and Rescue NSW's Internet site [www.fire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au).

Content authors and owners are responsible for ensuring that information on the Intranet is accurate, up-to-date and authorised for release. Information that is offensive, threatening, abusive, obscene, pornographic, defamatory, misrepresentative, or discriminatory or which breaches laws or Fire and Rescue NSW policies will be removed from the Intranet and the author and/or owner may be subject to discipline or legal action.

## 4 Security

Information classified as In Confidence, Protected or Highly Protected should not be made available on the Intranet without appropriate additional security. Staff who publish information on the Intranet or make an information system available over the Intranet must ensure that the requirements of the [Information security policy](#) on page 554 are met.

Information on the Intranet may only be used for authorised purposes. It is your responsibility to be aware of any Fire and Rescue NSW policies that apply to information on the Intranet before using or disclosing the information.

In accordance with the policy on [Password security](#) on page 637, you are responsible for keeping your password secure. You should log off the Intranet as soon as you have finished using it.

In the workplace, visitors must be supervised to ensure that they do not get unauthorised access to the Intranet. If you log in over the Internet from outside Fire and Rescue NSW premises, you must ensure that no unauthorised person gets access to the Intranet. Do not leave the computer unattended while logged in to the Intranet.

## 5 Privacy

Use of the Intranet is monitored. Information such as server address, domain name, the pages you accessed and documents downloaded, the previous site you have visited and the type of browser you are using is collected. We use de-identified data (data with personal identifiers removed) to analyse usage patterns. We may use or disclose identified data if there are unauthorised attempts to access the site, compromise its security or make inappropriate communications.

## 6 Further information

If you have technical problems with using the Intranet on your computer, contact the ISG Help Desk on (02) 9265 2833 during business hours.

For information on publishing content on the Intranet and web design, contact the Web Publishing Coordinator on (02) 9265 2906 during business hours.

*Contact Officer: Manager Corporate Communications Capability, (02) 9265 2667*

*File Reference: CHO/06912 In Orders 2006/8, with amendments*

