

# SERVICE STANDARD 2.1.10

## BRIGADE CLASSIFICATION AND ENDORSEMENTS

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Version Number	1.0
SOPs	➤ SOP 2.1.7-1 - Brigade Classification and Determination Process
Owner	Deputy Commissioner Field Operations
Contact	Director State Operations
Approved Date	25/11/2021
Effective Date	25/11/2021
Next Review	25/11/2026
Document Control	Electronic - Printed copies are uncontrolled

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 Brigade Classification and Endorsements allow the NSW RFS to identify and develop rural fire brigades based on community need and outcomes of an operational capability methodology.
- 1.2 A Rural Fire Brigade’s capability to maintain resourcing is reliant on engaging, training and sustaining a range of firefighting and operational capabilities, to suit varying geographical, economic and environmental risks, aligned with a wide range of community demographics and risk profiles.
- 1.3 Brigade Classifications were previously addressed as part of the NSW RFS Service Delivery Model. This Service Standard provides an interim approach to Brigade Classification and Endorsement whilst a Resource to Risk methodology is developed which will further guide future resourcing and capabilities.

### 2 Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy document, the following definitions apply:
  - a. **Ability:** Possession of the resources and training to carry out an operational activity.
  - b. **Brigade:** a NSW RFS Brigade as defined in the *Rural Fires Act 1997*.
  - c. **Capacity:** the maximum amount of activity a Brigade or its members can sustain.
  - d. **Capability:** the capacity and ability to achieve and sustain an operational activity.
  - e. **Endorsement:** a sub categorisation to indicate capability speciality (e.g. Rescue, CFR, RAFT)
  - f. **Area Of Operations:** an area whose geographical boundaries are normally aligned to a NSW RFS Brigade boundary. This area may vary as a result of responsibilities being assigned to another Brigade.

### 3 Policy

- 3.1 Schedule 1 provides detail on the Brigade Classifications (Types of Brigades).
- 3.2 Schedule 2 provides detail on available Brigade Endorsements. Endorsements further prescribe the operational capability of rural fire brigades in addition to its classification.
- 3.3 The process to be undertaken in determining a brigade classification and endorsement is outlined in the flow chart in SOP 2.1.10-1.
- 3.4 Brigade Classification and Endorsements will provide a basis from which capability planning, resource allocation and operational decision-making can be made.
- 3.5 The Brigade Classifications do not directly link to contingency resourcing requirements, surge requirements, seasonal demands, or resource allocation for support functions. A Brigade Classification is relevant to the Area of Operations applicable for that Brigade.
- 3.6 Review of a Brigade's Classification and Endorsements are to be initiated by District Managers every three years; or:
  - a) upon Brigade request;
  - b) when triggered by a significant change in the risk profile of the community;
  - c) following an approach from an external agency or body to consider additional capabilities e.g. rescue;
  - d) where identified following sustained observations regarding issues or opportunities to improve with the current Brigade Classification; or
  - e) as required by Director Area Operations.
- 3.7 The development or review of any Brigade Classification and Endorsement must be carried out in consultation with the brigade/s affected, the relevant Group Officer and be endorsed by the District Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- 3.8 The relevant Area Commander shall be consulted:
  - a. where a Brigade and the District cannot agree on the appropriate classification or endorsement; and
  - b. to validate the District Manager's acceptance of the Brigade's recommended Classification and Endorsements.
- 3.9 For endorsements relating to rescue or remote area operations the Manager Operational Field Support must be consulted.
- 3.10 Where the agreed Brigade classification and/or endorsements do not adequately address the risk profile in the community, the District Manager in consultation with SLT will:
  - a. develop and implement alternative arrangements to address the risk exposure; and
  - b. consult with the Area Commander for further consideration; or
  - c. develop operational arrangements in consultation with Director, State Operations.
- 3.11 The District Manager will ensure the endorsed Brigade Classification and any Endorsement is recorded in the approved organisational system.
- 3.12 Resources and training will be facilitated in consideration to the Brigade Classification requirements, in line with this Service Standard.

### 4 Related documents

- > [NSW Rural Fires Act 1997](#)
- > [Service Standard 1.3.1 Delegations and Authorisations](#)
- > [Service Standard 1.3.4 Rural Fire District Service Level Agreements](#)

- > [Service Standard 3.1.17 NSW RFS Rescue Operations](#)
- > [Service Standard 5.1.5 Protective Clothing and Accessories](#)
- > [Service Standard 5.1.7 Appliance and Vehicle Category Details](#)
- > [Service Standard 5.1.9 Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus](#)
- > [Service Standard 5.1.10 Accommodation Standards and Building Construction Projects](#)
- > [Service Standard 6.1.2 Qualifications for NSW RFS members](#)

## 5 Amendments

AMENDMENT DATE	VERSION NO	DESCRIPTION
25/11/2021	1.0	Initial release

## Schedule 1 – Brigade Classifications (Type of Brigades)

The following table describes the Brigade Classifications. Whilst they may not capture all unique capabilities attached to an individual Brigade, they are used for determining the core Brigade Classification.

Predominant Risk Type	Brigade Classification	Description of Brigade Area Risk Profile/Brigade Role
<p><b><u>Bush/Grass Fire Risk</u></b></p> <p><i>Predominantly fires in grass, open woodland or forests</i></p>	Rural Remote	<p>Structures are isolated houses, farm buildings, sheds and agricultural assets (fences, grazing etc.).</p> <p>Reticulated water is unlikely to be present.</p> <p>The frequency of events is low.</p> <p>Generally, operate within their own or adjoining Brigade area. Do not operate outside normal risk profiles unless exceptional circumstances, &amp; when supported by adequate planning, and suitably qualified supervision.</p>
<p><b><u>Bush/Grass Fire and Low Structural Risk</u></b></p> <p><i>Predominantly fires in grass, open woodland or forest.</i></p>	Rural	<p>In addition to isolated houses, farm buildings, sheds and agricultural assets (fences, grazing etc.) there may be a small community (&lt;20 houses), with no major facilities such as commercial centres.</p> <p>There may be community buildings and may include some significant agricultural buildings.</p> <p>Reticulated water may not be present.</p> <p>Infrequent transport risk.</p> <p>The frequency of events is low to moderate.</p> <p>Subject to the maintenance of operational coverage in their own Brigade area/or District, some Members and/or equipment are available for use outside the District. Rural Brigades are able to provide full range of bush and/or grass fire fighting services in all areas of NSW, along with support to other emergencies.</p>
<p><b><u>Bush/Grass Fire and Structural Risk</u></b></p> <p><i>The bush/grass fire risks encompass all types of vegetation, with an even spread between bush/grass and structural risks.</i></p>	Village 1	<p>There is a village or minor urban interface, with a range of community and commercial structures as well as some transport risk. Possibly includes a small institutional risk.</p> <p>Reticulated water may be present.</p> <p>Possibility of one or two small hazardous materials risk and the potential requirement to assist Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW).</p> <p>May have additional capabilities other than fire fighting.</p> <p>The frequency of events is moderate.</p> <p>In addition to the above Rural Brigades, Village 1 Brigades also provide <u>defensive structural</u> and transport firefighting along with support to other emergencies.</p>
	CABA (optional)	<p>Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that is a Village 1 Brigade and have suitably qualified members in the use of CABA and relevant equipment. A Village 1 Brigade with CABA would be working towards Village 2 classification.</p>

Predominant Risk Type	Brigade Classification	Description of Brigade Area Risk Profile/Brigade Role
<p><b>Structural and Bush/Grass Fire Risk</b></p> <p><i>There is predominantly an urban and/or interface structural risk and also includes potential bush/grass fire impact.</i></p>	<p><b>Village 2</b> <b>Includes CABA</b></p>	<p>Large village or small townships and larger interface areas, with substantial commercial and institutional risks and likelihood of significant road or rail transport risks.</p> <p>Reticulated water will probably be present.</p> <p>Some hazardous materials risk and an increased likelihood of the need to assist Fire and Rescue (FRNSW).</p> <p>May have additional capabilities other than fire fighting</p> <p>The frequency of events is moderate to high.</p> <p>In addition to Village 1 Brigades, Village 2 Brigades are able to provide <u>offensive structural</u> and transport fire fighting support within their own and neighbouring Brigade areas, along with support to other emergencies.</p> <p>Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus is a requirement for Village 2 Brigades.</p>
<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p><b>OTHER Support</b></p>	<p>Brigades that support NSW RFS activities and other emergencies and may not include any fire fighter role, or a geographic area. May be a District based Brigade that incorporates a single or multiple endorsements as listed in Schedule 2.</p>

## Schedule 2 – Brigade Endorsements

The following table describes Brigade Endorsements. Whilst they may not capture all unique capabilities attached to an activity, they are used for determining the core Brigade Endorsement in addition to the determined Brigade Classification.

Activity Type	Brigade Endorsement	Description
Rescue Operations	RCR	Road Crash Rescue – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that has Road Crash Rescue (RCR) accreditation by the NSW State Rescue Board and, obtained Authorised Rescue Brigade (ARB) status in accordance with Service Standard 3.1.17
	GLR	General Land Rescue – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that has General Land Rescue (GLR) accreditation by the NSW State Rescue Board and, obtained Authorised Rescue Brigade (ARB) status in accordance with Service Standard 3.1.17
Medical Response	CFR	Community First Responder – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that has accreditation as a Community First Responder Unit by NSW Ambulance.
Marine Operations	MAR	Marine – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that has one or more marine vessels attached and suitably trained members to support the vessels. May include trailer boats and vessels at mooring or berth.
Remote Area Operations	RAO(RAFT)	Remote Area - Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that has a Remote Area Unit accreditation in accordance with Service Standard 3.1.4. This may be a Brigade standalone function or coupled with a Brigade with other functions
Communications	COMMS	Communications – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that provides a communications capability to a District, through operating in or assisting in a Fire Control Communications Centre.
Catering/Welfare	CAT	Catering – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that has an ability to provide catering or catering solutions in the field to support operations or training. May not include the preparation food, but may solely include the use contractors with the brigade providing delivery and support.
Aviation	AVI	Aviation – Can be applied to rural fire brigade that has a specific role in delivering aviation support functions and suitably trained members such as ABO, ARO, may include AOB, AAS, ABM, AOM, AOF. This may be a Brigade standalone function or coupled with a Brigade with other functions
Trail Bike Operations	TBO	Trail Bike Operations – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that has approved trail bikes and suitably qualified members in their operation as per Operational Protocol 1.4.7.
Logistics	LOGS	Logistics – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that supports the role of logistics, the transport of equipment and personnel. The brigade may have buses, tilt-tray, flat bed or prime mover, trailer combination vehicles.
Community Safety/Engagement	COMSAF	Community Safety/Engagement – Can be applied to a rural fire brigade that predominantly undertake roles in providing community education and safety information.

Example: Ashburg RFB [RCR,CFR] Village 1

**SOP 2.1.10-1 BRIGADE CLASSIFICATION DETERMINATION PROCESS**

