



Service Standard 7.1.3 Health and Injury Management

Version	2.0
SOPs	Nil
Policy Owner	Executive Director People and Strategy
Policy Contact	Director Health and Safety
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1. Purpose

- 1.1. The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) is dedicated to safeguarding the well-being of its members by ensuring a secure and healthy work environment, in accordance with the NSW RFS Work Health and Safety Statement.
- 1.2. This Service Standard establishes a comprehensive framework for health and injury management including workers compensation for RFS members known as the RFS Health and Injury Management Program. This Service Standard should be read in conjunction with the RFS Health and Injury Management Program documentation.
- 1.3. Key features of the RFS Health and Injury Management Program are outlined below, with reference to the relevant section of the Program for further detail.

2. Policy

Health and Injury Management Program overview (Section 1)

- 2.1. The RFS Health and Injury Management Program specifies the procedures, processes and responsibilities governing the handling of workplace injuries and illnesses, including notification, first aid, claim lodgement, return-to-work processes, dispute resolution mechanisms, record-keeping practices and privacy measures ensuring consistent and effective management of RFS member's safety and well-being.
- 2.2. The Health and Injury Management Program applies to members who have sustained both work-related (compensable) injuries or illnesses, and non-work related (non-compensable) health conditions that may impact their ability to work.

Roles and responsibilities (Section 2)

- 2.3. The roles, rights and obligations of members, managers, the RFS Health and Wellbeing team and other stakeholders are detailed in Section 2 of the Health and Injury Management Program.

Workers Compensation Insurers (Section 2.5)

- 2.4. Workers compensation provisions afford RFS members cover via two separate insurance policies:
- a. **iCare** is the workers compensation insurer for volunteers and covers:
 - Loss of earnings and payment of medical and vocational rehabilitation expenses for injuries or illnesses sustained through performing RFS authorised activities, and
 - Expenses associated with the loss or damage of personal property arising out of RFS authorised activities.
 - b. **EML** is the workers compensation insurer for employees and covers:
 - Loss of earnings and payment of medical and vocational rehabilitation expenses for injuries or illnesses sustained through performing RFS authorised activities.

First Aid and Medical Treatment (Section 3.1)

- 2.5. As a priority, first aid should be provided following any workplace injury. If necessary, further treatment should be arranged depending upon the severity of the injury (i.e. treatment by ambulance, taken to hospital via ambulance or consulting a doctor).

Notification of Injury (Section 3.1)

- 2.6. All workplace injuries are to be notified to the member's Supervisor / Manager as soon as reasonably possible, and a Workplace Incident Form completed.
- 2.7. In the event of the death of a person, serious injury or illness, or dangerous incident (as defined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011), the member's Supervisor / Manager immediately notifies the Safety Manager or nominated person. It is the responsibility of the RFS Safety Team (not the individual member, or Supervisor or Manager) to report all notifiable incidents to SafeWork NSW.
- 2.8. RFS have a regulatory obligation to inform the relevant insurer within 48 hours of being notified of an incident that results in an injury or illness.
- 2.9. If the injured member does not wish to lodge a claim for compensation, the injured member may be required to provide a medical certificate confirming their ability to return to pre-injury duties to their Supervisor / Manager, and confirmation that they do not wish to claim for compensation, preferably in writing. All expenses incurred in this circumstance may need to be covered by the injured member.

Claim Lodgement Process (Section 3.3)

- 2.10. The Workplace Incident Form is sufficient to commence the workers compensation claim lodgement process. The Injury Management Coordinator will assist in lodging the claim with the relevant insurer.
- 2.11. A valid State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) Certificate of Capacity must be obtained from the Nominated Treating Doctor (NTD) specifying the injured member's exact injury and diagnosis, further treatment requirements and their fitness for work. The Certificate of Capacity must be provided to the injured member's Supervisor / Manager within 24 hours of receipt from the NTD and/or attending the NTD.

Early Commencement of Injury Management (Section 4)

- 2.12. The Injury Management Coordinator will contact the member within 2 working days of injury notification to commence planning and early intervention to enable recovery and return work or volunteering.
- 2.13. The insurer will contact the injured member within 3 days of receipt of the injury notification to commence the assessment process. The insurer is required to make a determination on the claim within 7 days for staff members and 31 days for volunteer members.

Return to Work Process (Section 5)

2.14. When necessary, the Injury Management Coordinator will liaise with the NTD and any other treatment providers to assist in the rehabilitation and return to work and ascertain the work capacity and prognosis of the injured members.

Approved Workplace Rehabilitation Providers (Section 5)

2.15. Workplace rehabilitation providers are engaged to help injured/ill members to return to work. RFS utilises a panel of insurer's preferred workplace rehabilitation providers, although members have the right to select their own provider.

2.16. Workplace rehabilitation provider services may be requested by the member, treating doctor, Injury Management Coordinator or the insurer.

Dispute Resolution (Section 6)

2.17. If a disagreement arises, the RFS will work together with the injured member to attempt to resolve the dispute. In resolving disputes, the RFS may involve the insurer, an approved workplace rehabilitation provider, the NTD or an Injury Management Consultant.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality (Section 7)

2.18. All RFS member's personal and health information will be managed in accordance with privacy legislation and *Service Standard 1.1.14 Personal Information and Privacy*.

Defining Firefighters for Workers Compensation Purposes

2.19. Volunteers are entitled to make a claim for workers compensation if they sustain an injury or illness while performing firefighting duties or associated operations or work connected with a Rural Fire Brigade (known as authorised activities), as specified under the Workers Compensation (Bush Fire, Emergency and Rescue Services) Act 1987.

2.20. A definition and examples of authorised activities can be found in the fact sheet [Volunteer Workers Compensation for Injury or Illness](#).

2.21. A staff member who sustains an injury or illness arising out of, or in the course of their employment with the RFS is entitled to make a claim in accordance with the Workers Compensation Act 1987 and the Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998. Amendments introduced in 2012 and 2015 do not apply to some categories of workers, including firefighters, who are known as "exempt workers".

2.22. A list of roles and/or positions deemed as firefighters for workers compensation purposes can be found in the fact sheet [Staff Workers Compensation for Injury or Illness](#).

3. Definitions

3.1. For Definitions refer to the Glossary of Terms in the RFS Health and Injury Management Program.

4. Document control

Release history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	9 April 2020	Initial release
1.1	10 February 2023	Administrative update to correct titles, contact details and links only

Version	Date	Summary of changes
2.0	9 April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Repeals and remakes SS 7.1.3 Workers Compensation for NSW RFS Volunteers v1.1 – Repeals Policy P3.4.1 Workers Compensation and Injury Management for NSW RFS Employees v2.1 – Complete revision to align with new Health & Injury Management Program – RFS Template update

Approved by

Name	Position	Date
Rob Rogers AFSM	Commissioner	11 July 2024

Related documents

Document name
NSW RFS Health and Injury Management Program
Volunteer Workers Compensation for Injury or Illness Factsheet
Volunteer Workers Compensation for Personal Property Factsheet
Staff Workers Compensation for Injury or Illness Factsheet
WHS Incident Report Form