



RFS

3.1.6A OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE FRAMEWORK

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Document control

Release History

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes
1.0	20 December 2023	Operational Performance	Initial release

Reviewed by

Name	Title	Date
Josh Atkins	Manager Operational Performance	
Paul Seager	Director Training and Doctrine	

Approved by

Name	Title	Date
Kyle Stewart APM	Deputy Commissioner Preparedness and Capability	
Peter McKechnie AFSM	Deputy Commissioner Field Operations	
	Policy Review Committee	28 November 2023
Rob Rogers AFSM	Commissioner	20 December 2023

Related documents

Document name	Version
Service Standard 3.1.6 Operational Doctrine	4.0

Contents

- 1 Introduction..... 4
- 2 Doctrine Structure 4
- 3 OPG Streams 5
- 4 Doctrine Development and Review..... 7
- 5 Document Control..... 8
- 6 Document Format and Content 8
- 7 Dissemination 9
- 8 Related documents..... 9

1 Introduction

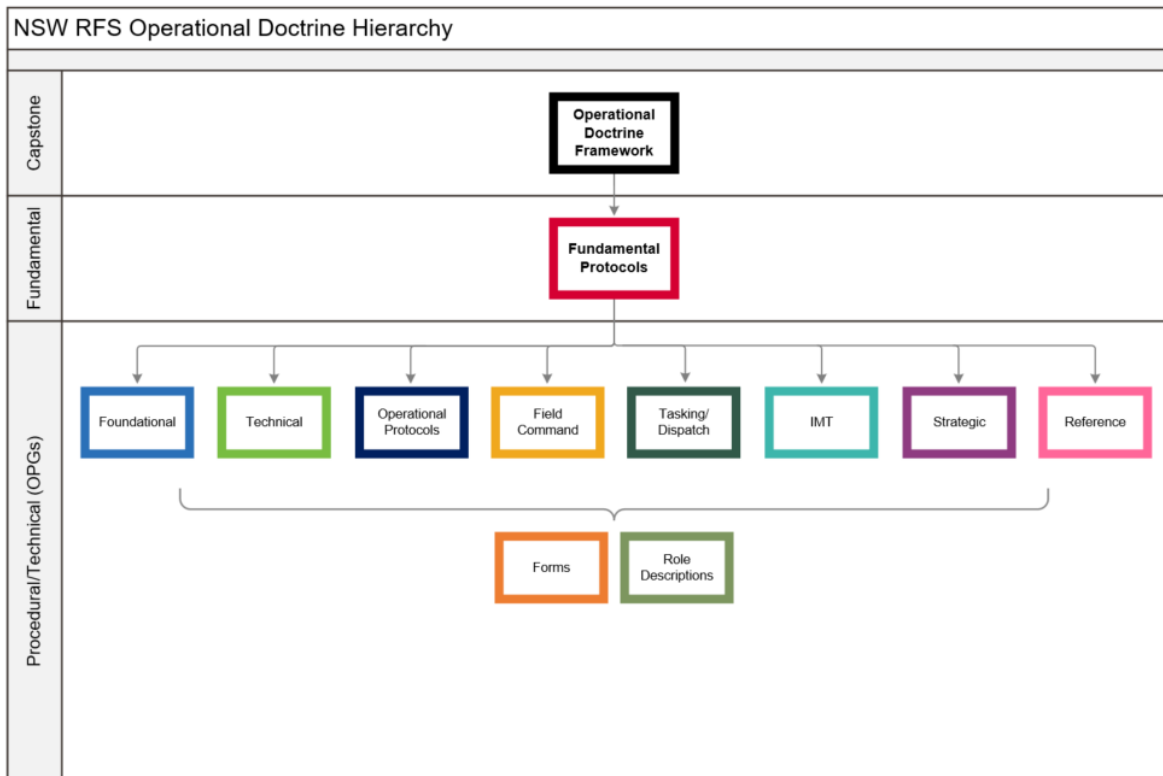
The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) is committed to minimising the impact of fire and other emergencies on the community and the environment, in accordance with the requirements of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*.

Effective delivery of operations to achieve that commitment depends on sound, easily understood, and actionable operational doctrine being available to operational decision makers at the time they require it.

The purpose of this document is to articulate the framework and process that underpins how the RFS will manage operational doctrine and is authorised by Service Standard 3.1.6 Operational Doctrine.

2 Doctrine Structure

- RFS operational doctrine is categorised according to the National Council for Fire and Emergency Services (AFAC) Doctrine hierarchy:
 - **Capstone Doctrine** – reflects the strategic intent of the RFS. It covers the role of operational doctrine in emergency management operations and service delivery, and how operational doctrine is governed. This Framework represents the Capstone level of doctrine.
 - **Fundamental Doctrine** – describes the principles the RFS have adopted to be able to protect life, property, and the environment. Fundamental Protocols outline the expectations, measures, and processes that all members will consider when conducting operations. These fundamental protocols are referenced in each piece of subsequent operational doctrine.
 - **Procedural Doctrine** – contains operational guidance, allowing RFS members to exercise their duties with a set of parameters.
 - **Technical Doctrine** – contains specific, practical, and detailed operational instructions to be followed by RFS members when exercising their duties.



- The Procedural and Technical levels of doctrine are grouped together as Operational Procedures and Guidelines (OPGs). This includes Operational Protocols.
- OPGs are designed for use at a variety of levels including operational, tactical (officers), operational management (Incident Management Teams) or strategic (State Operations). OPGs are short statements of factors to be considered and methods to be used during incidents and related activities. They reflect key points of operational doctrine in an easy-to-use format for reference during actual operations.
- Existing Incident Management Procedures (IMPs) and Operational Management Procedures (OMPs) will be progressively updated and incorporated into OPGs.
- OPGs are made readily accessible to all RFS personnel through a variety of platforms such as One RFS, Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) and the RFS Firefighters Pocketbook, and are available to relevant members of other emergency services and organisations as required.
- Fundamental Protocols and OPGs must be followed. This applies to all members involved in RFS operations.

3 OPG Streams

- OPGs are divided into streams; groups of similar and/or related doctrine to provide ease of navigation and understanding. These streams are colour coded so that like doctrine can be identified simply.

Foundational (Blue)

- Foundational OPGs cover doctrine that applies to general firefighting functions. This doctrine is particularly applicable to newer and general members.

Technical (Green)

- Technical OPGs cover doctrine that applies to specific and discrete functions and tasks that may be encountered during an incident. This doctrine is more prescriptive than other OPGs to adequately address specific risks.

Operational Protocols (Dark Blue)

- Operational Protocols prescribe the methods and procedures to follow during a specific incident and/or hazard type.

Field Command (Yellow)

- Field Command OPGs cover doctrine that applies to the application of Incident Control Systems (ICS) in the field. This doctrine is particularly applicable to Crew Leaders, Group Leaders and members performing the role of Incident Controller on an incident ground.

Tasking/Dispatch (Dark Green)

- Tasking/Dispatch OPGs cover doctrine that applies to specialised functions related to incident dispatch and the Operational Communications Centre (OCC).

Incident Management Team (IMT) (Teal)

- IMT OPGs cover doctrine that applies to the application of ICS where Control is conducted remotely from the incident, multiple ICS functions have been delegated and a formal IMT has been established. Based on AIIMS, this doctrine is applicable to all personnel undertaking a role within an IMT.
- The RFS aligns to the principles of AIIMS. OPGs related to IMT capture the RFS context associated with incident management and do not replicate doctrine that is currently adequately covered by AIIMS.

Strategic (Purple)

- Strategic OPGs cover doctrine that applies to incident coordination beyond the incident. This includes functions required at the Area or State level.

Reference (Pink)

- Reference OPGs are supporting documents to assist members with additional information relevant to incident activities.

Forms (Orange)

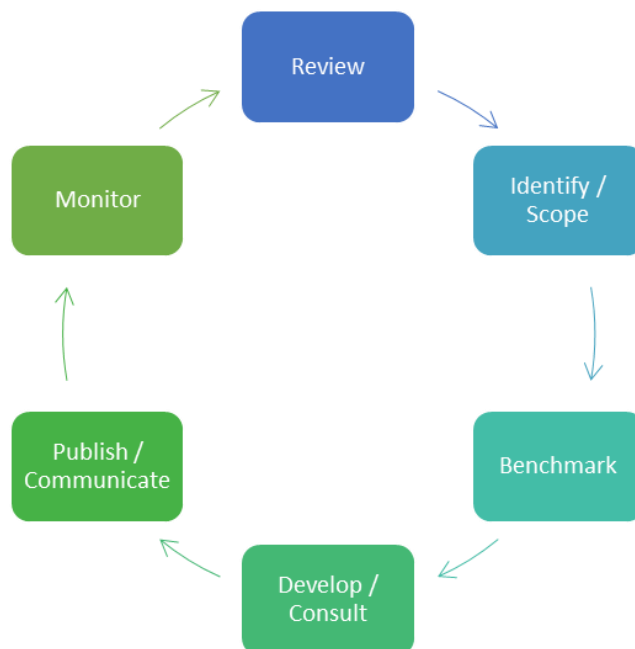
- Forms capture the process of requesting or advising the dispatch of functions or resources associated with processes prescribed by other OPGs.

Role Descriptions (Olive)

- Role Description OPGs prescribe specific roles identified through operational requirements. These include role dimensions, responsibilities and any applicable delegations associated with the role.
- Local Procedures
 - Districts may enhance OPGs by means of local procedures to meet local needs. However, they must not conflict with the original meaning or intent of higher order Doctrine, and must be consistent with Service Standards, policies, operational doctrine and RFS training materials.
 - Local Procedures are approved by the relevant District Manager, following consultation with Brigades and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for the District.
 - At a minimum, Rural Fire Districts must consult with adjoining Rural Fire Districts when developing Local Procedures to safeguard operational compatibility while maximising local expertise.

4 Doctrine Development and Review

- Operational Performance are the custodians of, and coordinate the development and review of, all Operational Doctrine.
- Doctrine development and review will undergo a stringent and consultative process, to ensure doctrine is clear, concise, and contemporary, and reflects industry current practice.
- Doctrine may be developed or reviewed for one or more of the following scenarios:
 - Standard three (3) year review cycle;
 - Updates to legislation;
 - AFAC Doctrine / Guideline updates;
 - Internal or external reviews (e.g. audits and inquiries);
 - Risk assessments;
 - ICAM recommendations;
 - Updates to industry current practice;
 - Lessons identified or learnt, through the Lessons Management process;
 - Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee (BFCC) and Incident Controller (IC) recommendations; and/or
 - Identified doctrine gap.



- Doctrine development and review will involve the following:

Identify and Scope

- Identify the doctrine for development or review and confirm need for change
- Scope any change that is required.

Benchmark

- Benchmarking is a process that involves comparing similar products of other like agencies and organisations against RFS
- Benchmarking also ensures that any existing AFAC, BFCC, and NSW Firefighting Authority doctrine is considered.

Develop and Consult

- Draft initial document with pre-identified changes or updates
- Consultation workshops with content owner, subject matter experts (SMEs), and review groups to refine the draft
 - SMEs are individuals or teams with a high level of knowledge and experience related to the content of the doctrine
- Doctrine will be developed in a collaborative manner with RFS members (both volunteers and staff) to be selected based on the nature of the doctrine being developed.

Publish and Communicate

- Publish approved doctrine piece
- Communicate and disseminate doctrine through established mechanisms
- Communicate changes and rationale for change (e.g., new practices, new equipment, safety requirement, etc.)
- Implement.

Monitor and Review

- Monitor effectiveness of doctrine through any feedback and/or observations/insights
- Monitor industry trends or safety notifications
- Begin review process.

5 Document Control

- Document Control is the process of ensuring that documents are created, reviewed, approved, stored, distributed, and disposed of in a systematic, transparent, and effective manner for the purposes of demonstrating good governance and quality control.
- The current version of an OPG is the latest version published on the NSW RFS internal intranet and/or the NSW RFS public website
- An OPG takes effect on the date of issue (that is, publication) unless another date is specified as the effective date in the document
- It is important to note that the provisions of any OPG remain effective until such time as a revised version is actually issued (published), or the OPG is formally repealed.

6 Document Format and Content

- It is intended that OPGs present critical information to guide action as prominently within the document and as early as possible. Where possible OPGs will use plain language and remain concise. OPGs will utilise the following headings and document flow:
 - **Scope** – a short summary of the doctrine to explain its nature and purpose
 - **Guiding Principles or Protocols** – the specific information that will guide the actions and requirements for the piece of doctrine. The intent should be to provide guidance on

factors that should be taken into account when deciding what actions to take, rather than prescription

- **Special Considerations** – outlines the specific risks or processes that need to be considered
- **Related Information** – additional information related to the intent of the guidance
- **Definitions** – initially these are embedded within the document. It is the future intent that these will be embedded links in the doctrine to an online dictionary
- **Appendices** – additional supporting information providing a more detailed understanding.

7 Dissemination

- Operational Doctrine will be prepared and disseminated in an electronic format. This will allow content to be shared and displayed seamlessly across multiple devices including computers, MDTs and mobile devices such as tablets and phones.
- This electronic format will allow for the printing of operational doctrine; however any printed copies will be uncontrolled and may not reflect current doctrine.

8 Related documents

- [Rural Fires Act 1997](#)
- [Service Standard 1.1.7 Code of Conduct and Ethics](#)
- [Service Standard 1.5.1 Management of NSW RFS Policy Documents](#)
- [Service Standard 1.5.6 Lessons Management Framework](#)
- Fundamental Protocols
- [Operational Procedures and Guidelines](#)