

# SERVICE STANDARD 2.1.15

## DISTRICT AND AREA VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

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Contact	Director Area Operations
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### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) values the engagement and contribution of all NSW RFS members and seeks to formalise consultation and engagement frameworks across District and Area Commands.
- 1.2 This Service Standard relates to volunteer engagement such as involvement in Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs).
- 1.3 This Service Standard details the requirements for NSW RFS District Managers and Area Commanders in establishing a Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and the procedures by which a NSW RFS District Manager and Area Commander may remove or suspend a SLT member.

### 2 Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this Policy Document the following definitions apply:
  - a. **Field Officer:** a position elected by members of the brigade in accordance with the brigade's constitution. Field Officers are:
    - i. Captain
    - ii. Senior Deputy Captain, and
    - iii. Deputy Captain.
  - b. **Group Officer:** a position elected by the brigades in the Group. Group officers are:
    - i. Group Captain, and
    - ii. Deputy Group Captain.
  - c. **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** A group of senior local NSW RFS members who assist the District Manager or Area Commander with the strategic and day-to-day leadership of the rural fire district and Area Command. Formerly known as Senior Management Teams (SMTs).

### 3 Policy

- 3.1 A District Manager must cause to create certain committees or teams (such as a Senior Leadership Team) to ensure the District Manager and staff are sufficiently informed of the view of the Brigades within their District.
- 3.2 The SLT assists the District Manager in the strategic and day-to-day management of the Rural Fire District (the district).
- 3.3 An Area Commander must cause to create certain committees or teams (such as a Senior Leadership Team) to ensure the Area Commander is sufficiently informed of the view of the SLTs within their respective Commands.
- 3.4 Any reference to a Senior Management Team (SMT) in any NSW RFS Standard, Policy, SOP or procedure is also held to mean Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

#### Purpose of the District SLT

- 3.5 The SLT represents all NSW RFS volunteers in the district and is a consultative body to the District Manager in relation to the input of volunteers to:
  - a. Corporate and business planning;
  - b. Budget preparation and priorities;
  - c. Local standard operating procedures (SOPs);
  - d. Liaison between the brigades and the District;
  - e. Mitigation activities and needs across a District or Area;
  - f. Operational capability and capacity needs across a District or Area;
  - g. Infrastructure and asset management activities and needs across a District or Area; and
  - h. Any other function as specified in the Service Standards.

#### Meeting Schedule

- 3.6 An established District SLT shall meet as many times as agreed by the SLT but not less than once a quarter.

#### Structure of the District SLT

- 3.7 The SLT is comprised of the District Manager, and senior NSW RFS Volunteer Officers. These will include all Group Captains, and may also include but not be limited to:
  - a. Deputy Group Captains;
  - b. Captains;
  - c. selected senior district staff; or
  - d. any other current member appointed by the District Manager.
- 3.8 The SLT shall have no less than eight volunteer members.
- 3.9 The SLT shall provide proportionate representation of all brigades in the district to ensure all district types of brigades are represented (i.e. Operational and Support brigades etc.).
- 3.10 The District Manager must where ever possible ensure a proportionate representation of the district membership within the SLT, including Aboriginal, Female and Young Person (<25Yrs).
- 3.11 The Area SLT shall have sufficient representation of those District SLTs within the Area at the discretion of the Area Commander. The Area Commander shall where possible adhere to the intent specified in clause 3.10.

#### Establishment of the District and Area SLT

- 3.12 The District Manager or Area Commander shall appoint members to their respective SLT. This may be done through an EoI process or by direct appointment by the District Manager.
- 3.13 Membership of the SLT shall be for three years, or such lesser period as may be consistent with the Group Officer tenure in the district.

## Resignation of SLT members

3.14 Upon resignation of a member of the SLT, the District Manager or Area Commander must cause to appoint a new SLT member in a manner agreed to by the SLT.

## Removal or Suspension of Senior Leadership Team Membership

3.15 A District Manager or Area Commander who decides to revoke or suspend a SLT member's appointment must give that member notice in writing (the Notice) that their appointment is to be revoked or suspended.

3.16 The Notice must:

- a. set out the facts and circumstances that have led to the District Manager or Area Commander making the decision to revoke or suspend the appointment;
- b. invite the member to provide a written response or submission as to why the member's appointment should not be revoked or suspended;
- c. specify the date by which any such response or submission must be provided;
- d. advise the member that if they do not provide a written response to the Notice within the time specified, their appointment will be revoked or suspended without further notice; and
- e. advise the member that they can apply in writing to the Director Area Operations to have this decision reviewed.

3.17 Where possible the decision maker should allow the member at least 14 days from the date on which they received the Notice to provide a response or submission.

3.18 The Notice must be given to the member by one or more of the methods referred to in clause 38 of the *Rural Fires Regulation 2013*. These include but are not limited to:

- a. physically giving it to the member;
- b. posting it to their last known residential or business address; or
- c. sending it by fax or email to a fax number or email address the member has provided to the NSW RFS.

3.19 Within 14 days of receiving any response or submission, the decision maker must advise:

- a. the member; and
- b. the relevant Area Commander

in writing of their decision as to whether the member's appointment has been revoked or suspended.

## 4 Related documents

- > [Rural Fires Act 1997](#)
- > [Rural Fires Regulation 2013](#)
- > [Service Standard 1.1.2 Discipline](#)
- > [Service Standard 2.1.2 Brigade Constitution](#)
- > [NSW RFS Code of Conduct and Ethics](#)

## 5 Amendments

AMENDMENT DATE	VERSION NO	DESCRIPTION
16 March 2022	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Initial release</li><li>&gt; NOTE: this new Service Standard takes and updates content relating to SMTs previously found in Service Standard 2.1.4 Appointment of Field and Group Officers v3.0</li></ul>