

# Role Description

## Commissioner

Cluster	Stronger Communities
Classification/Grade/Band	Band 3
Senior Executive Work Level Standards:	Work Contribution Stream: Agency Head <a href="http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/wls">www.psc.nsw.gov.au/wls</a>
Kind of Employment	Ongoing
ANZSCO Code	111111
Role Number	52008438
PCAT Code	3119192
Date of Approval	4 May 2020
Agency Website	<a href="http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au">www.rfs.nsw.gov.au</a>

### Agency overview

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is established under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* as the lead combat agency for bush fires in NSW. The agency also operates under the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989*. For over 100 years the NSW RFS has been a significant part of the history and landscape of NSW and is widely acknowledged as the largest volunteer fire service in the world. The agency strives to provide a world standard of excellence in the provision of a community based fire and emergency service through training, community education, prevention and operational capability.

Fighting fires and protecting the community from emergencies is the most visible aspect of the NSW RFS. The Service also has many responsibilities as the lead agency for bush fire management and mitigation in NSW. Working closely with other agencies, the NSW RFS responds to a range of emergencies including structure fires, motor vehicle accidents and storms that occur within rural fire districts.

### Primary purpose of the role

Lead and direct the strategic direction and public administration of the NSW RFS to ensure achievement of organisational objectives and fulfilment of legislative requirements in alignment with policy obligations of the Government

Provide advice to the Minister, government and other key stakeholders on matters relating to whole-of-government emergency services strategies affecting bush fire management to ensure informed decision-making and to facilitate the most effective and cooperative use of resources in meeting community needs

Fulfil Chief Executive Officer and Chief Coordinator of bush fire fighting responsibilities conferred by the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and *Rural Fires Regulation 2013*, leading responses to emergency incidents and disasters and taking strategic command of emergency, disaster management and response activities of the NSW RFS and other combat agencies to meet legislative requirements and community expectations.

The Commissioner of the NSW RFS has ultimate responsibility for bush fire suppression across the State.

### Key accountabilities

1. Set the direction for the organisation, developing the NSW RFS as a high performing organisation; managing resources, programs, processes, staff and volunteers to ensure a culture of continuous improvement and optimising existing infrastructure and deployment of resources

2. Advise the Minister and act as key advisor to Government on matters relating to the NSW RFS to support communities in preventing, responding and recovering from bushfires
3. Lead the strategic planning, management and performance of the NSW RFS as a government agency, ensuring sound governance and management of budgets, staff and resources and the achievement of government policy and direction in the management and operation of the organisation
4. Provide emergency management leadership including the creation of people and property protection plans to protect lives, property and the environment in a proactive and ecologically sustainable manner
5. Lead the coordination of NSW firefighting operations, driving multi-agency risk planning and prevention strategies and response arrangements to ensure resource levels and operations meet the current and future needs of the community
6. Lead, support and advocate for members across both the volunteer/paid workforce to engage and motivate them in the achievement of both individual and organisational objectives
7. Lead NSW RFS input within the network of Emergency Services Agencies to support policy development, interagency and cross-sector coordination to achieve a consensus on cooperative working and resource sharing arrangements and protocols aimed at improving outcomes in the event of natural or man-made disasters
8. Provide leadership to the Executive group, providing counsel, direction and development opportunities to ensure organisation, personal and professional development objectives are achieved with a strong focus on the development of future organisational leaders
9. Lead the administration of the total organisational budget including the NSW Rural Fire Fighting Fund (RFFF) to ensure transparency and accountability of expenditure of public monies
10. Foster a safe working culture and actively promote a diverse, flexible and adaptive membership to encourage membership diversity and develop NSW RFS members

## Key challenges

- Supporting and advising the Minister and managing public information responsibilities during emergency bushfire operations given the high levels of public and media scrutiny
- Leading, supporting and advocating for both paid and volunteer workforce members given the diverse geographical spread of staff and a decentralised model of management
- Leading the organisation, balancing both administration and operational objectives given the rapid changes in priorities during bushfire emergencies and strong community, media and political concerns that may be contentious and/or sensitive
- Leading a reform program to promote cultural change across practices, behaviours and attitudes given the differences in motivation and priorities that can exist across a diverse member (staff and volunteer) organisation
- Operating in an organisation with a unique funding methodology given the need to ensure sound governance and financial management and consistency with government standards, procedures and processes whilst also manage and respond to stakeholder concerns and expectations

## Key relationships

Who	Why
<b>Internal</b>	
Executive Directors	Collaborate on the direction and operations of the organisation; to provide guidance and coaching; seek input on functional accountabilities (HR, Operations)
Members (staff and volunteers)	Provide leadership support and direction, inform on initiatives and projects,

Who	Why
	seek input and feedback
Internal Committees	Chair or participate as member on a number of internal committees including Rural Fire Service Advisory Council, Corporate Executive Group, Bush Fire Coordinator Committee; participates with and reports to Audit and Risk Committee
<b>External</b>	
Minister and Premier's Office	Act as the link and interface during operational incidents; act as key strategic advisor on bushfire management issues and matters
Resilience NSW	Partner on policy development for NSW RFS and bushfire management issues more broadly and on finance and governance matters; provide support to the Minister
Secretary, Stronger Communities	As an executive agency within the Stronger Communities cluster, the NSW RFS works with the cluster to achieve agreed projects/initiatives
Partner emergency agencies	Collaborate and cooperate on prevention, planning, response and recovery operations; foster a seamless service amongst agencies
Community and Emergency Management agencies in other states	Communication on cross border issues and interstate assistance strategies
Commonwealth, State and Local government	Build and maintain relationships; to negotiate on funding and service provision issues
Non-government and private sector organisations at State, Federal and local levels	Enhance service delivery and to ensure services provided by other sectors complement services provided by NSW RFS
Media	Provide updates and information during times of response and recovery; promoting NSW RFS preventative operations to the community during non-emergency times
Community representatives	Ensure needs of the community taken into account in planning, prevention, response and recovery
External Committees and working groups	Chair or participate as a member of a number of external committees including Fire Services Joint Standing Committee, State Rescue Board, State Emergency Management Committee and a range of other state or national level committees

## Role dimensions

### Decision making

The Commissioner is responsible for managing and controlling the activities of the NSW RFS, assuming all assigned responsibilities under *Rural Fires Act 1997* and *Rural Fires Regulation 2013* and performing the legislated role of Chief Coordinator during bushfire operational incidents.

The Commissioner has extensive powers and responsibilities conferred by the *Rural Fires Act 1997* in relation to managing responses to emergency incidents and disasters, taking strategic command of emergency and disaster management and response activities of the Service and other combat agencies

The Commissioner has the accountability obligations and decision-making capacity of a Chief Executive and as such is responsible for the commercial, legislative, political and business direction and outcomes for the organisation.

The Commissioner is active in the field and operates within a complex and sensitive portfolio, advising the Minister on strategic direction, planning, policy development and implementation in relation to Rural Fire Service issues.

The Commissioner is fully accountable for the agency, making key decisions relating to the physical, financial and human resources within the limits of the annual budget.

The Commissioner assumes assigned responsibilities under the PFA Act and the GSE Act.

The position is highly influential in the advice put forward to government for systematic improvements on the most effective and efficient service delivery provided to communities and regions affected by bushfires.

## **Reporting line**

The Commissioner NSW RFS reports to the Minister for Policy and Emergency Services

## **Direct reports**

Positions reporting to the Commissioner include:

- Executive Director Finance and Executive Services
- Executive Director Membership and Strategic Services
- Executive Director Infrastructure Services
- Executive Director Operations
- Executive Assistant

## **Budget/Expenditure**

Operating & Capital Expenditure 2019/20 - \$540.7m

## **Essential requirements**






- Graduate Certificate or degree in a relevant discipline.
- Firefighting and emergency management qualifications to enable fulfilment of legislative requirements of role
- Command and control experience at major bushfires, emergencies and other disasters
- Knowledge of legislation, statutory requirements, policies and procedures in relation to fire and emergency management and public administration
- Knowledge of contemporary and emerging cross-jurisdictional, state, national and international trends, issues, challenges and approaches to emergency services management and emergency incident planning, prevention and suppression
- Leadership, experience and demonstrated skills at a senior executive level within Government, industry or a large scale field operations organisation
- Executive management skills and experience including commercial, business and political acumen combined with knowledge and experience of governance, financial and human resource frameworks to support organisational success
- Skills and experience in the management of media including the ability to conduct and hold press briefings and media interviews
- Experience in the provision of quality strategic and issues based advice at Ministerial level
- An understanding of leadership requirements and expertise in motivating and directing a substantial volunteer workforce |

## **Capabilities for the role**

The NSW Public Sector Capability Framework applies to all NSW public sector employees. The Capability Framework is available at [www.psc.nsw.gov.au/capabilityframework](http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/capabilityframework)

## Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Highly Advanced
	<b>Act with Integrity</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	Manage Self	Highly Advanced
	<b>Value Diversity</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
 Relationships	<b>Communicate Effectively</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	Commit to Customer Service	Highly Advanced
	<b>Work Collaboratively</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	<b>Influence and Negotiate</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
 Results	Deliver Results	Highly Advanced
	Plan and Prioritise	Highly Advanced
	Think and Solve Problems	Highly Advanced
	<b>Demonstrate Accountability</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
 Business Enablers	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
	Technology	Advanced
	Procurement and Contract Management	Advanced
	Project Management	Advanced
 People Management	<b>Manage and Develop People</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	<b>Inspire Direction and Purpose</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Highly Advanced
	Manage Reform and Change	Advanced

## Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
<b>Personal Attributes</b> Act with Integrity	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Champion and act as an advocate for the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour</li> <li>Drive a culture of integrity and professionalism across the organisation, and in dealings cross-government, cross-jurisdiction and outside of government</li> <li>Define, communicate and evaluate ethical practices, standards and</li> </ul>

## NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<p>systems and reinforce their use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and promote a climate in which staff feel able to report apparent breaches of rules, policies and guidelines and act promptly and visibly in response to such reports</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> Communicate Effectively	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate complex concepts and put forward compelling arguments and rationales to all levels and types of audiences</li> <li>• Speak in a highly articulate and influential manner</li> <li>• State the facts and explain their implications for the organisation and key stakeholders</li> <li>• Promote the organisation's position with authority and credibility cross-government, cross jurisdictionally and outside of government</li> <li>• Actively listen, and identify ways to ensure all have an opportunity to contribute</li> <li>• Anticipate and address key areas of interest for the audience and adapt style under pressure</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> Work Collaboratively	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a culture and supporting systems that facilitate information sharing, communication and learning across the sector</li> <li>• Publicly celebrate the successful outcomes of collaboration</li> <li>• Seek out and facilitate opportunities to engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop organisational, whole-of-government and cross jurisdictional solutions</li> <li>• Identify and overcome barriers to collaboration with internal and external stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> Influence and Negotiate	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in a range of approaches to generate solutions, seeking expert inputs and advice to inform negotiating strategy</li> <li>• Use sound arguments, strong evidence, and expert opinion to influence outcomes</li> <li>• Determine and communicate the organisation's position and bargaining strategy</li> <li>• Represent the organisation in critical negotiations, including those that are cross-jurisdictional, achieving effective solutions in challenging relationships, ambiguous and conflicting positions</li> <li>• Pre-empt and avoid conflict across organisations and with senior internal and external stakeholders</li> <li>• Identify contentious issues, direct discussion and debate, and steer parties towards an effective resolution</li> </ul>
<b>Results</b> Demonstrate Accountability	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct the development of effective systems for the establishment and measurement of accountabilities, and evaluate ongoing effectiveness</li> <li>• Promote a culture of accountability with clear line of sight to government goals</li> <li>• Set standards and exercise due diligence to ensure work health and safety risks are addressed</li> <li>• Inspire a culture which respects the obligation to manage public monies and other resources responsibly and with probity</li> </ul>



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Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that legislative and regulatory frameworks are applied consistently and effectively across the organisation</li> <li>Direct the development of short and long term risk management frameworks to ensure the achievement of government aims and objectives</li> </ul>
<b>Business Enablers</b> Finance	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply a thorough understanding of recurrent and capital financial terminology, policies and processes to planning, forecasting and budget preparation and management</li> <li>Identify and analyse trends, review data and evaluate business options to ensure business cases are financially sound</li> <li>Assess relative cost benefits of direct provision or purchase of services</li> <li>Understand and promote the role of sound financial management and its impact on organisational effectiveness</li> <li>Involve specialist financial advice in review and evaluation of systems and processes used to identify opportunities for improvement</li> <li>Respond to financial and risk management audit outcomes, addressing areas of non-compliance</li> </ul>
<b>People Management</b> Manage and Develop People	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure performance development frameworks are in place to manage staff performance, drive development of organisational capability and undertake succession planning</li> <li>Drive executive capability development and ensure effective succession management practices</li> <li>Implement effective approaches to identify and develop talent across the organisation</li> <li>Model and encourage a culture of continuous learning and leadership, which values high levels of constructive feedback, and exposure to new experiences</li> <li>Instil a sense of urgency around addressing and resolving team and individual performance issues and ensure that this is cascaded throughout the organisation</li> </ul>
<b>People Management</b> Inspire Direction and Purpose	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Champion the organisational vision and strategy, and communicate the way forward</li> <li>Create a culture of confidence and trust in future direction</li> <li>Generate enthusiasm and commitment to goals and cascade understanding throughout the organisation</li> <li>Communicate the parameters and expectations surrounding organisational strategies</li> <li>Celebrate organisational success and high performance and engage in activities to maintain morale</li> </ul>
<b>People Management</b> Manage Reform and Change	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drive a continuous improvement agenda, define high level objectives and translate these into practical implementation strategies</li> <li>Build staff support and commitment to announced change, and</li> </ul>

## NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<p>plan and prepare for long-term organisational change, with a focus on the wider political, social and environmental context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create an organisational culture that actively seeks opportunities to improve</li><li>• Anticipate, plan for and address cultural barriers to change at the organisational level</li></ul>