



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



OPERATIONAL OFFICER (OpO)

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

It is essential that all candidates applying for the Operational Officer (OpO) role understand the concept of mobility and the aim of maximising opportunities to develop a broad range of skills across a range of areas. Candidates should read Policy P3.2.9 NSW RFS OpO Program and the related NSW RFS Operational Officer Handbook. All candidates should consider their personal and family circumstances prior to applying.

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Introduction – Working for the NSW RFS

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is the world's largest volunteer fire service. Our 74,000 members provide fire and emergency services to approximately 95 percent of NSW.

NSW RFS members attend a range of incidents and activities including:

- Bush and grass fires
- House and structure fires
- Storm damage
- Search and rescue
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Community education
- Bush fire mitigation
- Remote area operations
- Aviation and marine operations
- Communications and catering

The responsibilities of the NSW RFS are set out under the Rural Fires Act 1997.

Our vision and mission is to provide a world standard of excellence in the provision of a community-based fire and emergency service. To protect the community and our environment we will minimise the impact of fire and other emergencies by providing the highest standards of training, community education, prevention and operational capability.

As a volunteer based emergency service, we value:

- Mutual respect
- Adaptability and resourcefulness
- One team, many players, one purpose
- Integrity and trust
- Support, friendship, camaraderie
- Community and environment
- Knowledge and learning.

Our volunteers are supported by around 800 salaried staff that manage the day to day operations and administration of the Service, develop and implement programs, strategies and initiatives to improve community safety and assist our volunteers in the valuable work they undertake.

1 Using this Information Pack

This Information Pack explains the application and selection processes for seeking employment in the NSW RFS as an OpO.

While the process can vary depending on the OpO Level (i.e. Level 1, 2 and 3) it typically goes as follows:

1. Find an OpO role on iworkfor.nsw.gov.au
2. Create or update your profile and include your personal details on iworkfor.nsw.gov.au
3. Respond to any pre-screening questions, which includes responding to each of the essential requirements and NSW RFS capability set as identified in the role description (no more than 250 words per requirement) and create your cover letter
4. Respond to the targeted questions (no more than 500 words each) and update your resume / curriculum vitae (CV) (maximum 5 pages)
5. Submit your application
6. Successful candidates will undertake the selection and assessment process
7. Successful candidates will undertake a two-week live-in induction program
8. Talent Pool created
9. Offers are made to successful candidate(s)
10. Feedback provided to unsuccessful candidate(s)

2 The NSW RFS Operational Officer Program

The NSW RFS OpO program is an initiative that the Service is undertaking to create and encourage a mobile and agile workforce across the state. It can give people in OpO roles experience in a number of areas and provide opportunity to develop lifelong skills.

The OpO program is a unique opportunity for NSW RFS employees to gain experience in a wide range of activities in district and regional roles, as well as other specialised sections across the organisation. OpO employees will train to become Certificate Issuing Officers (CIO), Prescribed Burning Supervisors (PBS) and Media Liaison Officers (MLO), as well as many other roles including undertaking Intelligence, Planning and Logistics roles during major incidents.

Throughout their career, OpO employees will have the opportunity to work with experienced volunteers from a variety of geographical areas and become familiar with other emergency service agencies.

To give people greater opportunities, OpO employees are appointed to a classification of work, rather than a specific location. This means OpO employees may be assigned any role within that classification at any location within NSW.

Throughout their career and as an OpO employee moves up to a district or operational management level, they need to have experienced a wide range of activities undertaken in different places. Without this variety of experience, they are unlikely to develop the full range of skills needed to protect the community and support our volunteers.

To progress to their full potential, OpO employees will have the opportunity to rotate through different locations for no less than two years in each location, and through a wide range of activities within their assigned roles. This will give OpO employees experience in areas such as coastal, mountainous and western areas. Operational roles in a Regional or Head Office may also be part of the program.

2.1 How does the Operational Officer program work?

Candidates will be ranked based on their performance throughout the recruitment and induction process and allocated to their initial assignment.

Throughout their initial assignment, OpO employees will undertake a structured training program outlined in the *District and Operational Officer (D/OpO) Training Information Booklet*. When the training program has been completed and no less than two years after the start of the initial assignment, OpO employees will be provided with the opportunity to be rotated to a new location for their subsequent assignment.

Experience across different locations such as that provided through mobility will naturally allow candidates a stronger application for further career prospects.

The rotation provides opportunity to OpO employees to develop the skills and experience needed to operate effectively at their level.

3 Operational Officer Roles

The essential criteria for each OpO role is different. While the Role descriptions will give you the RFS qualification that is required, it is important to note that there are National Units of Competency that also align to these qualifications (Note: If units listed below do not include an 'A' or 'B' at the end, then either version is OK).

3.1 OpO1

Essential criteria for the OpO 1 role is;

- NSW RFS Crew Leader Wildfire (CLW) certificate or equivalent
 - National unit of competency for CLW is PUAFIR303
- NSW RFS Community Safety Assistant (CSA) certificate or equivalent
 - National unit of competency for CSA is PUAFIR208
- NSW RFS Crew Leader Supervision (CLS) certificate or equivalent
 - National units of competency for CLS are either PUAOPE001 or PUAOPE012 – Fire Specific
- NSW RFS Introduction to Incident Control Systems (ICS) for IMTs or equivalent
 - Equivalent qualifications for the ICS for IMTs is 22202VIC
- NSW RFS Instructor (RFI) and RFS Assessor (ASR) or equivalent
 - Equivalent qualifications for RFI and ASR are TAEDEL301A and TAEASR301A
- Current First Aid Certificate or willingness to obtain

Other general essential criteria, that OpO 1 candidates need to be prepared to answer are;

- Do you have a current drivers licence?
- Do you have good general health and fitness confirmed by a medical examination?
- During periods of heightened operational activity, if required, are you prepared to support operational activities consistent with your background and skills?
- Are you prepared to participate in the after-hours or on call roster if required?

To ensure you prepare a successful OpO 1 application, you need to be able to meet these essential criteria.

3.2 OpO2

Essential criteria for the OpO2 role is;

- Cert IV in a relevant discipline (E.g. Public Safety, Business or Government)
- Cert IV in Training and Assessment
- NSW RFS Prescribed Burn Supervisor (PBS) certificate or equivalent
 - National unit of competency for PBS is PUAFIR407
- NSW RFS Community Safety Facilitator (CSF) certificate or equivalent
 - National units of competency are PUAFIR301 and PUACOM005
- NSW RFS Crew Leader Supervision (CLS) certificate or equivalent
 - National units of competency for CLS are either PUAOPE001 or PUAOPE012 – Fire Specific
- NSW RFS Introduction to Incident Control Systems (ICS) for IMTs or equivalent, and certification in either IMT Operations (IMO or OPS), Intelligence (INT – national equivalent pending), Planning (IMP or PLN), Logistics (IML or LOG) or Public Liaison (PLO). National equivalents are given below:
 - ICS for IMTs is equivalent is 22202VIC.
 - OPS equivalent is: PUAOPE023A Manage Operations for a Level Two Incident

- IMO equivalent is: PUAOPE005A Manage a Multi-Team Response (within an IMT as the Ops Officer)
- PLN equivalent is: PUAOPE025A Manage Planning at a Level Two Incident
- IMP equivalent is: PUAFIR502A Develop Incident Control Strategies,
- LOG equivalent is: PUAOPE022A Manage Logistics at a Level Two Incident
- IML equivalent is: PUAMAN002A Administer Workgroup Resources,
- PLO equivalent is: PUAOPA021A Manage Information Function at an Incident.
- Current First Aid Certificate or willingness to obtain

Other general essential criteria, that OpO 2 candidates need to be prepared to answer are;

- Do you have a current drivers licence?
- Do you have good general health and fitness confirmed by a medical examination?
- During periods of heightened operational activity, if required, are you prepared to support operational activities consistent with your background and skills?
- Are you prepared to participate in the after-hours or on call roster if required?

To ensure you prepare a successful OpO 2 application, you need to be able to meet these essential criteria.

3.3 OpO3

Essential criteria for the OpO 3 role is;

- Diploma in a relevant discipline (E.g. Public Safety, Business or Government)
- Cert IV in Training and Assessment
- NSW RFS Plan Prescribed Burn Programs (PBP) certificate or equivalent
 - National unit of competency for PBP is PUAFIR406
- NSW RFS Community Liaison Officer (CLO) or Media Liaison Officer (MLO) or equivalent
 - National unit of competence for MLO is PUACOM012A Liaise with the Media at a Local Level
 - CLO is a RFS specific course, there is no national unit of competency aligned.
- Certification in Incident Management Control (IMC or CTR) and at least one other Incident Management Team (IMT) function in a bush fire context, selected from IMO, IMP, IML, PLO, OPS, INT, PLN or LOG.
 - National equivalent for CTR is PUAOPE018A Control a Level Two Incident.
 - National equivalent for IMC is PUAOPE007A Command Agency Personnel within a Multi-Agency Emergency Response.
 - National equivalents for the other IMT qualifications are given in the OpO2 section above.
- Current First Aid Certificate or willingness to obtain

Other general essential criteria, that OpO 3 candidates need to be prepared to answer are;

- Do you have a current drivers licence?
- Do you have good general health and fitness confirmed by a medical examination?
- During periods of heightened operational activity, if required, are you prepared to support operational activities consistent with your background and skills?
- Are you prepared to participate in the after-hours or on call roster if required?

To ensure you prepare a successful OpO 3 application, you need to be able to meet these essential criteria.

4 Initial Assignment

The initial assignment to an OpO role shall be offered to a candidate based on their overall performance during the selection, recruitment and induction program process. The NSW RFS reserves the right to place OpO candidates to best suit the operational needs of the NSW RFS.

Candidates should remember that they can be placed anywhere in NSW and should not apply with the sole view to obtaining a location of their choice. (eg home location).

4.1 Assignment Tenure

OpO roles have been designed so that the OpO employee can perform the assigned duties anywhere in NSW, at the discretion of the NSW RFS. It is expected that an OpO employee will commit to an assignment tenure of no less than two years before electing to undertake different classifications of work or move locations.

4.2 Assistance to relocate following rotation (subsequent assignment)

While mobility provides you with the opportunity to gain a broad range of skills and experiences, the NSW RFS recognises it can also be demanding.

Rotations to a new location will be covered by workplace Policy P3.2.9.

The NSW RFS seeks to provide assistance to OpO employees who are rotated in the following capacity:

- Upon application in accordance with NSW RFS Policy P3.2.9 reimburse the OpO employee costs up to \$5000 per assignment
- Where it can be demonstrated that the financial assistance required is for any other amount in excess of \$5000 an exceptional circumstance application may be submitted for consideration
- Exceptional circumstance assistance packages will be determined on a case by case basis

5 Operational Officer Training and Development

The District and Operational Officer OpO Training Information Booklet produced by the Operational Doctrine and Standards section, outlines the training requirements and content of all operations courses. This Booklet gives you information about training for District / Operational Officers and those in similar roles in the NSW RFS provided by the Operational Doctrine and Standards section.

It applies to officers working in Districts, Regions and Head Office who have an operational or similar function. It does not apply to staff with a purely technical or administrative function, or who work in other areas.

Participation in relevant OpO training courses is mandatory and an expectation of employment with the NSW RFS.

5.1 What this training aims to do

The system aims to provide district / operational staff with the knowledge and skills they need to do their job well, so they can deliver what our community and our volunteers need. It is the means by which the Service ensures it has staff skilled to provide the functions specified in Section 9 of the Rural Fires Act.

5.2 Broad types of training

District / Operational staff training can be divided into three main categories:

- **Induction Courses** – Aimed at inducting OpO employees into the NSW RFS or up into the next level. Most Induction Courses are run at an appropriate facility located in the Western part of Sydney.
- **Initial Training Courses** – Aimed at training both OpO employees coming into the NSW RFS or moving up to a higher level and District (and other similar officers) already at those levels who have not completed the relevant courses in the past. Most initial training courses are run at an appropriate facility located in the Western part of Sydney.
- **Incident Management Training / Exercising** – Aimed at training and exercising people (including volunteers, staff and other agency personnel) in Incident Management Team (IMT) functions and associated subjects.

5.3 Related activities

In addition to all of the above, the Operational Doctrine and Standards section will also provide:

- **Development Activities** – These include activities to be undertaken when a person is assigned to a new location so they become familiar with its characteristics as soon as possible. It also includes information about what external qualifications (certificates, diplomas, etc.) are appropriate to pursue through professional development

- **Information for District Managers** – In particular what operational training they should plan their people undertake and what they should expect of their people once they have completed various stages of training
- **Professional Development Advice** – This includes information about what external qualifications (certificates diplomas, etc.) are appropriate to pursue through professional development at various levels

For further information on the OpO training program including course content please contact the Operational Doctrine and Standards section on (02) 8867 7900.

6 Merit – The basis of recruitment

NSW RFS staff are part of the NSW Public Service. As a Public Service employer, the NSW RFS recruits employees based on merit.

This means that when you apply for a position with the Service, you'll be assessed against the requirements of the role, such as skills, behaviours and any technical abilities required for you to do the role. The assessment panel will also compare you against the skills, experience and abilities of other people applying for the role.

To make this assessment, the panel will use a variety of methods to select the best person for the role. This includes asking you to write an application, do a capability based assessment, sit for an interview, and undertake a referee check.

The NSW Public Service capability framework provides a common foundation for creating and recruiting to roles in the Public Service. You can find out more about the capability framework at www.psc.nsw.gov.au/Sector-Support/Capability-Framework. The capabilities for the Operational Officer (OpO) role will be included in the role description which you can access through the advertisement on the iworkfor.nsw.gov.au website.

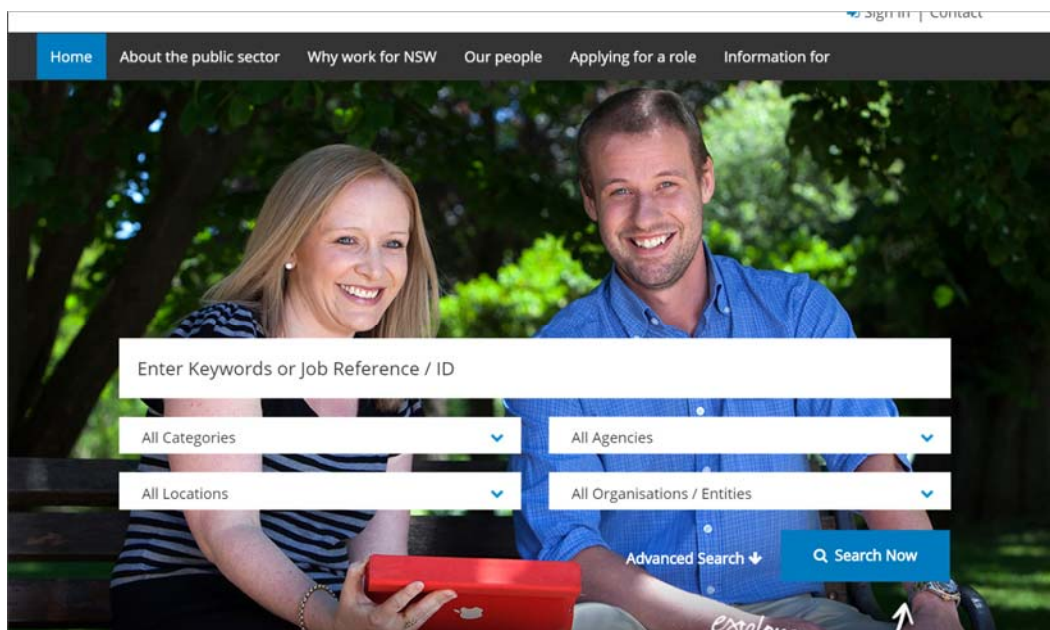
7 Applying for a NSW RFS Operational Officer Role

7.1 Finding NSW RFS Operational Officer Roles

iworkfor.nsw.gov.au is the primary career board for the NSW Rural Fire Service. It lists current vacancies and is the portal for online application and tracking. While some jobs may be listed on other job search websites and / or in newspapers you need to apply for all roles on iworkfor.nsw.gov.au.

7.1.1 Searching for roles

Candidates can search for suitable vacancies by keywords, Government Agency, Job Category, Job Location and Organisation/Entity job title (figure 1). The advanced search option allows you to search using additional criteria such as salary and work type.



The screenshot shows the search interface on the iworkfor.nsw.gov.au website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, About the public sector, Why work for NSW, Our people, Applying for a role, and Information for. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of a smiling man and woman sitting outdoors. Overlaid on the banner is a search form. The form includes a text input field labeled 'Enter Keywords or Job Reference / ID'. Below this are four dropdown menus: 'All Categories', 'All Agencies', 'All Locations', and 'All Organisations / Entities'. At the bottom of the form are two buttons: 'Advanced Search' with a downward arrow and 'Search Now' with a magnifying glass icon. The 'Search Now' button is highlighted in blue.

Once you have signed into your iworkfor.nsw.gov.au account, you can earmark advertisements to your “job cart”, this will group roles you are interested in and separate them from the full list. It is an easy way of identifying advertised roles that interest you so you can quickly navigate to them on your return to the site.

You can also activate the “new job alert” function on your profile. This function triggers an email to your registered email address when a newly advertised role that matches your recorded preferences appears.


7.2 Understanding NSW RFS Operational Officer Roles

Depending on the nature of the work to be done and whether it is ongoing or for a defined term or project, employment as a Public Service employee may be:

- Ongoing;
- Temporary; or
- Casual

OpO roles within the NSW RFS are on an *Ongoing* basis.

Successful candidates are assigned to an OpO role within the NSW RFS at a District, Region, or Head Office location and will have an opportunity to be reassigned to other OpO roles in the NSW RFS over time for organisational and development purposes. This approach promotes mobility across the NSW RFS, broadens employees’ capabilities and provides new development opportunities. It also allows the NSW RFS to respond quickly to changing government priorities or community need, as well as provide valuable exposure to volunteer culture across the broader NSW RFS.



It is essential that all candidates applying for the Operational Officer (OpO) role understand the concept of mobility and the aim of maximising opportunities to develop a broad range of skills across a range of areas. Candidates should read Policy P3.2.9 NSW RFS OpO Program and the related NSW RFS Operational Officer Handbook. All candidates should consider their personal and family circumstances prior to applying.

8 The application process

8.1 Application

To apply, candidates must submit via the I work for NSW web portal:

1. A one page covering letter telling the panel about yourself, what you have done, your skills and why you want to apply for this position.
2. A short statement in response to two targeted questions (to provide evidence of experience against required role capabilities). You must be concise and clear and limit your response to one page per question. (500 words)
3. A series of short responses addressing the Essential Requirements of the position (Including RFS Capabilities set for Occupational /RFS or National Qualifications) for the OpO role. No more than 250 words per requirement.
4. A resume / curriculum vitae (CV).

Understanding the role, what is required and whether you have the right skills and experience are important in deciding whether to apply.

Your application will have a greater chance of success if you follow these principles:

- **Read the advertisement carefully** - All OpO advertisements include a brief description of the role, information on how to apply and a closing date for applications. Keep a copy of the reference number for future enquiries.

- **Read the information package** - The advertisement gives you basic information, but it is important to read the information package from the links provided in the advertisement. Documents in the package may include a role description, organisational chart or other material to help you understand the role and the organisation.
- **Review the Role Description** – This will provide further information on the role and the capabilities required.
- **Speak to the contact person** - After you read the information package, you will know more about the role and may have some questions. You can phone or email the contact person named in the advertisement to help find the answers. Talking to the contact person may also give you a better understanding of the role, whether it is right for you and what to emphasise in your application.
- **Other information** - Get as much extra information as you can to help you present a covering letter and resume with relevant information. You could look at the NSW RFS website, annual report or other publications.
- **Online application process** – The online application process is presented as a series of 'pages' that require information to be completed prior to submitting your application. Each page has a number of fields. All compulsory fields are identified with a red asterisk (*) and must be completed prior to the page being saved.
- **Submit your application prior to the closing date** – Applications that are rushed may contain mistakes and may affect the outcome of your application. Give yourself enough time to complete and review your application in advance of the closing date. If possible have someone else read your application, this will help ensure that you haven't missed anything.
- **Privacy Statement** - The privacy statement in [iworkfor.nsw.gov.au](http://workfor.nsw.gov.au) describes how privacy principles are applied, how and why data is collected and how it is stored. It also outlines circumstances when your information can be disclosed.



TIP: Remember to check spelling, punctuation and grammar, and be succinct. The application itself indicates how well you can communicate and, if written well, can make a positive impression. Your application starts the OpO assessment process.

8.2 Profile (Personal details)

You can create your general profile on [iworkfor.nsw.gov.au](http://workfor.nsw.gov.au) at any time. This includes personal and contact information, creating a username and recording a password. Your email address is your unique identifier in [iworkfor.nsw.gov.au](http://workfor.nsw.gov.au), so you can only create one account per email address.

This general profile can also be created as part of your first NSW Public Service job application. Once this basic information is captured it will populate any future applications automatically, removing the need to retype the same information.

If your contact details change or you would like to include some additional information, you can amend your profile at any time and submit different information for each application if required.

Data is also gathered on subjects such as diversity to assist with workforce planning. Other information, including how you learned of the job vacancy, is also gathered to provide insight into the most effective ways of advertising. Some of this information is provided on a voluntary basis and some is mandatory.

8.3 Cover Letter

Your cover letter should be short and specific; highlighting the main points of your claim for the OpO role.

Your cover letter should be no more than one page in length and include:

- Details of the role you are applying for.
- A brief introduction about yourself.
- A summary of your relevant skills, qualifications and experience.

8.4 Targeted Questions & Essential Requirements

The Targeted Questions seek short statements, based on your actual experience.

These questions will usually start with phrases such as:

- “Give an example of a situation where....”
- “Describe a scenario....”

Your responses should follow the STAR format (by detailing the Situation, Task, Action and Result).

* Targeted Questions

The advertisement will ask you to include a short statement in response to two targeted questions. These are capability-based questions directly relevant to the role's duties and are designed to provide evidence of experience in a similar area. This is done by asking you to describe specific situations and to give actual examples of when you have used these specific skills.

You will be required to answer the targeted questions as part of the online application process. You must limit your response to no more than 500 words (approx 1 page) per question.

When applying for the role through iworkfor.nsw.gov.au you will be asked a series of questions which relate to the essential requirements of the role. These have been designed to provide information about your eligibility to apply, for example having a driver's licence. It is important that you demonstrate in your response that you meet the essential requirements.

Where a text response is required Candidates are to prepare a series of short responses (no more than 250 words each) addressing the essential requirements.

8.5 Resume/ Curriculum vitae (CV)

Your resume (also known as curriculum vitae or CV) is a snapshot summarising your qualifications, experience, skills and qualities. A resume needs to be clear, concise and neatly organised with content relevant to the role you are applying for.

Your resume should include:

- Education, qualifications and details of any courses or areas of focus that might be relevant to the OpO role (ie NSW RFS courses and qualifications)
- Experience, paid and volunteer in reverse chronological order. For each job, include the role title, name and location of employer, and dates of employment. Briefly describe your role responsibilities for each job
- Special skills, computer skills, achievements, and membership in organisations
- References

In iworkfor.nsw.gov.au, the “work experience” and “education” fields capture traditional resume information electronically.

You may choose to fill this data in the I work for NSW application fields or attach a separate CV as a document attachment.

8.6 Referees

Capabilities for an OpO role are assessed at different stages of the assessment process and panels will treat referee information as an equally important aspect of fact finding about your application.

When the assessment panel is making its final decision, information obtained from your referees will be considered together with your application, resume, capability assessment results, interview and other selection tools used.

The assessment panel may conduct a 360-degree check, which means talking to people you have supervised, you have worked with and who you reported to.

The panel may also ask you for additional referees if they need more information than is available from those you have nominated.

Like the “work experience” and “education” fields in iworkfor.nsw.gov.au, referee information can be captured online. Names, contact details and information about your working relationship(s) can all be entered. You can add and remove referee contacts for each application and rearrange the referee order at any time.

8.7 Attachments

You may be asked to attach some form of documentation with your application, for example, a consent form to undertake background checks, and this can be added in the “attachment field”.

Please do not use this function to attach lengthier versions of your application letter. The one-page cover letter is all that is needed.

If you delete a document, you will be removing the ability for the assessment panel to view that document and therefore it will not be considered as part of your assessment.

Do not delete any document until you have information on the outcome of the recruitment action. If you have any concerns, please contact support@jobs.nsw.gov.au for advice before you delete any documents.



NOTE: It is important to note that your attachment library in iworkfor.nsw.gov.au contains the attachments for all your applications; however, only those marked as ‘relevant’ will be submitted for viewing with your application.

8.8 Submitting your application

Once all information has been entered into the system, you will be given an opportunity to review your application prior to submitting it. Take this opportunity to ensure all details are correct.

When you have successfully submitted your application, you will receive an email from iworkfor.nsw.gov.au acknowledging your submission.

9 The NSW RFS Operational Officer selection process

Once the closing date has passed, the assessment panel sets to work to determine the most suitable candidate(s) for the role(s).

The assessment process will be conducted in two ways:

- As a standard panel assessment process, and
- an assessment centre process for capability testing

The assessment process selected by the panel is essential to ensure that the best person is suited for the OpO role.

9.1 Standard panel assessment process

This process includes:

- Review of your application, i.e. your cover letter (including responses to targeted questions) and your resume /CV)
- Capability-based assessments*, one of which is an interview
- Rigorous ‘fit-for-purpose’ reference and background checking (which may include 360-degree reference checks to verify your employment and performance claims)

This approach allows the full spectrum of capabilities for the OpO role to be assessed using different tools or methods, and at different stages of the OpO assessment process.

It is vital that you ensure the email address listed within the I work for NSW portal is the best email contact for you. You will be notified by email if you are successful in progression through to capability assessments.



*** Targeted Questions**

The advertisement will ask you to include a short statement in response to two targeted questions. These are capability-based questions directly relevant to the role's duties and are designed to provide evidence of experience in a similar area. This is done by asking you to describe specific situations and to give actual examples of when you have used these specific skills.

9.1.1 Operational Officer Assessments

The following are a brief example of the number of assessments that are used by the NSW RFS when undertaking OpO capability assessments. Not all assessments are used as this varies dependant on the level of OpO applied for.

Cognitive ability assessments

Consisting of 20 multiple choice questions completed within 20-minute timeframe. The questions cover areas of technical knowledge candidates would be expected to have on day one of the role, in consideration to the technical capabilities contained within the role description. These may include knowledge about fire behaviour, incident management, hazard management, community engagement etc. The Questions are not specific to the NSW RFS systems or procedures, as to ensure any candidate from a related field will be competitive.

Literacy and Numeracy assessment

Consisting of organising data, and composing a short hand written report, these assessments are designed to assess if candidates have sufficient basic numeracy and literacy skills to perform the role, with ability to participate in induction and initial training regimes.

Computer Skills assessment

Consisting of using a NSW RFS computer and suite of standard Microsoft Office suite of programs, candidates will be asked to construct a letter, develop an excel spreadsheet or simular activity. Detailed instructions are provided to assist the candidate with the use of any template or layout however knowledge of the use of the computer program is essential.

Work samples

Work sample assessments comprise of the candidate being requested to bring a portfolio of documents that are evidence of the candidate's activity within the NSW RFS or similar agency. Each candidate will have up to 20 minutes to explain or discuss the work samples with an assessor. Candidates will be required to sign a declaration of originality, certifying works as their own as well as briefly explaining what the documents are and how they relate to the candidates application.

The samples may consist of any combination of records, reports, plans, notifications, handouts or similar.

Samples of documents typically relate to:

- General brigade, unit or simular level activities
- Hazard management activities
- Community engagement activities
- Pre-incident planning and incident management
- Training, assessment and/or excising activities



NOTE: Work sample assessments may be conducted just prior to the interview or undertaken as part of an assessment centre.

Behavioural interviews

The interview is one of the most common forms of assessment. A structured interview allows interviewers to rate OpO candidates in a consistent, standardised manner.

Behavioural questions invite OpO candidates to give examples of like roles or similar situations from their own experience and how they approached them, what they did and what were the results; as well as any lessons learned. The following are examples of behavioural questions:

- **Question:** Tell me about a time when you had to analyse information and make a recommendation? What kind of thought process did you go through? Was the recommendation accepted? If not, why?
- **Question:** Describe a project or idea (not necessarily your own) that was implemented primarily because of your efforts. What was your role? What was the outcome?

Multi-mini interviews

Another interview format is the multi-mini interview (MMI). The MMI uses many short independent assessments (behavioural questions), typically in a timed circuit, to assess candidates' skills, experience and abilities against the capabilities, knowledge and experience standards for the role.

The MMI usually consists of approximately six interview stations, each being a timed (six-minute) interview scenario. Candidates rotate through the stations, each with its own interviewer and scenario. The reviewers then meet as a panel to agree on an overall assessment.

9.2 Assessment centre process (Capability Assessment)

How they work

NSW RFS Assessment centres usually follow after the initial short-listing stages of the assessment process, i.e. cover letter, resume review and targeted questions. Each assessment centre is specifically designed for a particular OpO role (ie Level 1,2,3) with generic transferable capabilities in order to assess candidates' skills, experience and abilities against the capabilities, knowledge and experience standards for the role.

A typical assessment centre incorporates a range of assessments in which your performance is observed and rated by a team of NSW RFS assessors.

This approach also allows the full spectrum of capabilities for the role to be assessed using different tools or methods, but typically conducted in one session.

What to expect

At the beginning of the assessment centre, candidates will receive an initial briefing about the organisation and the structure of the day. Please allow a full day for the completion of the assessment centre.

The notification sent advising candidates of progression through to assessment centre will outline what capability assessment methods will be undertaken on the day.

9.3 The Operational Officer Induction Course

The OpO Induction Course forms part of the Merit Based selection process and is the final step in your journey to becoming an OpO employee.

The induction course runs for two weeks. The first half introduces all aspects of the OpO role. In the second half the participants research key aspects of the OpO role and present their findings to the remainder of the group.

Theory papers conducted during the course and these presentations will all be assessed. The results of these assessment papers form part of the overall merit based assessment for role recruitment.

The NSW RFS for external candidates will place candidates on temporary employment arrangement allowing the NSW RFS to remunerate candidates during the two-week period. Candidates who are already NSW Government employees shall be seconded to the NSW RFS for the two-week period.

Some candidates seek to take leave from their normal employer and not take up the offer of the NSW RFS to temporarily remunerate candidates for the two-week induction program, this is a personal choice of the candidate.

9.4 Initial Assignment

The initial assignment to an OpO role shall be offered to a candidate in consideration of their overall performance during the selection, recruitment and induction program process. The NSW RFS shall, as vacancies arise, make offers of employment to successful OpO candidates who have been placed within respective OpO level talent pools.

Operational Officer roles have been designed so that the OpO employee can perform their duties anywhere in the state of NSW. It is anticipated that placement in any location will normally be for an assigned tenure of no less than two years.

9.5 Offer – Successful candidates(s)

Once the assessment panel has received approval to employ the successful candidate(s), an initial verbal discussion will take place with the candidate as to the likelihood of an offer being made and to what location the candidate will be considered. Offers of employment to an OpO role will be in writing.

9.6 Medical Assessment

External OpO candidates will be required to undertake a pre-employment medical to confirm good general health and wellbeing, this will be communicated to successful candidates at the appropriate time. As work plans for OpO employees may include training, assessment or undertaking of specialist operational roles, good health is essential.

9.7 Feedback – Unsuccessful candidates(s)

Unsuccessful candidates will be advised in writing and offered an opportunity to receive feedback. This feedback is a useful way to understand the areas that could be strengthened in future applications. Feedback cannot be given until the conclusion of the entire recruitment action and as such there may be a delay in the ability for the NSW RFS to provide feedback.

10 Contact Information

If you have any questions about the above information you can contact the OpO Program Coordinator either by

Email: opo.recruitment@rfs.nsw.gov.au or visit [our webpage](#) and register to receive communications about upcoming recruitments.