

## Appointment of Field Officers

The ACT Rural Fire Service Chief Officer has issued this service standard under Section 38(1) of the *Emergencies Act 2004* – A Chief Officer may determine standards and protocols.

### Purpose

This service standard describes the process for the appointment of a member of the ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS) to the role of field officer: Group Officer, Brigade Captain, Senior Deputy Captain or Deputy Captain.

### Scope

This service standard applies to all members of the ACTRFS Brigades, as defined in the *Emergencies Act 2004*.

### Background

The positions known as “Field Officers” are appointed by the ACTRFS Chief Officer (ACTRFS CO) as specified in paragraph 55 of the *ACT Emergencies Act 2004*. “The Chief Officer may give members of the rural fire service various ranks in accordance with the standards and protocols for the rural fire service.”

In the ACTRFS, field officer positions are:

- Group Officer
- Brigade Captain
- Senior Deputy Captain
- Deputy Captain.

To hold a field officer position, a member must satisfy the requirements for that role specified in 3.1.2 Rank and Insignia Service Standard and also in the ACTRFS Field Operations Manual.

Field officers hold a management and leadership role in the ACTRFS. They have the responsibility for leading and managing individuals and teams during operations, training and community activities.

Field officers are expected to consistently display professional behaviour during their service with ACTRFS. This includes:

- continued display of respectful attitude when acting on behalf of the service
- giving support to other members
- promoting and upholding all aspects of 3.1.1 Code of Conduct and Ethics of ACTRFS Members Service Standard.

## Responsibilities

Members	Nominates for field officer positions within their Brigade provided they hold necessary qualification and experience specified in 3.1.2 Service Standard.  Votes for field officer positions within their Brigade.
Field Officer Elect	Does not assume rank or responsibilities of role until appointment is approved by the ACTRFS CO.
Field Officer	Fulfils role of their position, once formally appointed.
Brigade President	Sends names of field officers elect and their positions to the ACTRFS Membership Officer.
ACTRFS Membership Officer	Checks that all field officers elect are eligible for the applicable role in compliance with 3.1.2 Rank and Insignia Service Standard.  If not eligible, notifies Brigade President.  If eligible, provides names to ACTRFS CO for approval.  After approval, arranges letters of appointment and Authority Card and sends them to individual field officers and Brigade President.  Issues appropriate rank insignia to field officers.  Includes notice of appointment in ACTRFS updates.  Maintains records of all decisions made in relation to the appointment of field officers.
ACTRFS Chief Officer	Approves appointments of field officers.

## Service standard

### Election of field officers

Field officers are normally elected at the Brigade Annual General Meeting (AGM).

However, if a field officer leaves, a new field officer can be elected between AGMs or appointed by a majority of the Committee to fill new or forthcoming vacancies.

Newly elected field officers are known as “Field Officers Elect” until approval of the appointment by the ACTRFS CO, unless a member has been re-elected to a field officer position they held prior to the election.

The previous office bearer continues to hold the responsibilities of their field officer role until the field officer elect is formally appointed.

Appointment must be completed within 2 weeks of the election.

### Appointment of field officers

1. Following the election, the ACTRFS Membership Officer checks the eligibility of the elected members and takes the following actions:
  - If they meet eligibility requirements, provides their name to the ACTRFS CO for approval.
  - If they do not meet eligibility requirements, formally documents the ineligibility of the Field Officer Elect, forwards the document to the Field Officer Elect and Brigade President.
2. The ACTRFS CO makes the decision to appoint after consultation with relevant stakeholders, if required.
3. After approval by the ACTRFS CO, the ACTRFS Membership Officer prepares a letter of appointment, including the formal start date and provides this to the ACTRFS CO.
4. ACTRFS CO signs the letter of appointment.
5. ACTRFS Membership Officer sends letters of appointment and Authority Cards to the individual field officers, with a copy to their Brigade President and supplies insignia to the appointed field officers.
6. ACTRFS Membership Officer informs RFS members of appointments.
7. If the ACTRFS CO declines to appoint a Field Officer Elect, the ACTRFS CO will document the reasons for that decision and forward it to the Field Officer Elect and Brigade President.

## Responsibilities of Field Officers

ACTRFS Field Officers undertake to fulfil the responsibilities defined in the applicable role descriptions.

## Length of service

RFS Field Officers are elected for a period of twelve months or as specified in a Brigade's constitution. At the end of this period they may nominate for re-election to the position they hold, or another position, if qualified.

## Wearing insignia

After appointment, Field Officers should wear the appropriate insignia on their uniforms and use the appropriate identifying helmet as specified in 1.1.3 Rank and Insignia Service Standard.

## Revoking rank

ACTRFS members who have been appointed to Field Officer positions may have their appointment revoked by the ACTRFS CO if they fail to maintain the skills, knowledge or professionalism required of the role.


The ACTRFS CO must provide the member in writing the details of the decision to revoke rank, including the reasons for the decision. The process described in the Notifiable Instrument, NI 2011-324: Emergencies (Suspension and Disciplinary Arrangements for Volunteers) Commissioner's Guidelines 2011 must be followed if suspension or disciplinary actions are being considered.

## Document information

### Version history

Author	Version	Version Approval Date	Summary of Changes
Rohan Scott	1.0	19/10/2020	First issue
Andrew Gradie	2.0	1/03/2023	Administrative Review

### Approved by

Name	Title/Role	Signature	Date
Rohan Scott	CO ACTRFS		09/02/2024

## Document Owner

Position	Section
Assistant Director	Volunteer Membership and Engagement

Next review due: 01/02/2027

## Related documents

Document name
3.1.1 Code of Conduct and Ethics of RFS Members Service Standard
3.1.2 Rank and Insignia Service Standard
ACTRFS Field Operations Manual & Contact Directory
ACTRFS Training Information Book

Signed documents will be scanned and filed in TRIM.