

Northern Territory Fire & Rescue Service

Volunteer Firefighter Information Booklet



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Privacy

Personal information provided to the department is protected by the privacy provisions of the *Information Act*. The department collects your personal information for recruitment and management purposes as required by the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*. The NTFRS will NOT disclose the information without your consent except where authorised by law. Non-identifying information may be used for statistical purposes

If you have any questions about the information contained in this booklet, or require assistance, please contact the NTFRS Recruitment Office.

Telephone: 08 8999 FIRE (8999 3473)

Email: fire.recruitment@nt.gov.au

Website: www.fire.nt.gov.au

Introduction

You are encouraged to read this booklet carefully prior to completing the Application Process and Forms.

Volunteer Firefighter

Being a volunteer firefighter seems an attractive job to many. We receive hundreds of enquiries about it each year. In our selection process, we aim to avoid recruiting people only for them to discover after a short time that it is not what they expected.

What is a Volunteer?

A volunteer is a person who freely donates time and effort to serve in a volunteer brigade.

Most volunteers participate as operational firefighters. This involves responding to emergency incidents such as bush fires, structure fires, motor vehicle incidents, chemical spills, etc. Other volunteers participate as members who support the brigade's operational firefighters in areas like community fire safety, junior development, fundraising, communications, brigade administration and equipment maintenance.

Many people who decide to become volunteers are motivated by a desire to do something for their community and help others in need. However, there are other aspects to volunteering which people also find very appealing, such as:

- Educating people in the community about fire safety
- Continually learning and practicing useful skills
- Doing physical work
- Belonging to a team
- Forming friendships and socialising together



Firefighting – is it really for you?

Certain qualities needed to make an effective firefighter are not always immediately obvious. Please take a minute to consider the following questions. Answer them as honestly as possible to see if you've got what it takes.

- Are you genuinely interested in people and able to get on with people from different backgrounds and cultures?
- Are you reasonably fit and healthy?
- Are you committed to promoting the safety of your community?
- Do you enjoy working as part of a team?
- Could you work under pressure to support your colleagues?
- Would you be able to deal sensitively with members of the public in difficult and emotional situations?
- Would you be able to take the responsibility for representing a professional service?
- Are you committed to always maintaining and developing your skills?
- Are you prepared to follow instructions from others?
- Are you dependable and can you be relied upon?

If you answered yes to all of the above, you may well be able to cope with the challenges of the firefighter role.

Still interested? Please read through the volunteer firefighter information booklet to get a better understanding of the process.

NTFRS is strongly committed to building a diverse workforce that represents the diversity within the Northern Territory and strongly encourages applications from Aboriginal people, females and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The information contained in this booklet is current at the time of publication. Processes and procedures are subject to change without notice. Please ensure that you use the most recent recruitment information pack when making your initial application. To confirm that you have up-to-date information and forms please contact 08 8999 FIRE (8999 3473) or visit our website www.fire.nt.gov.au



What will I be doing?

Time commitments vary between units but a typical commitment range is:

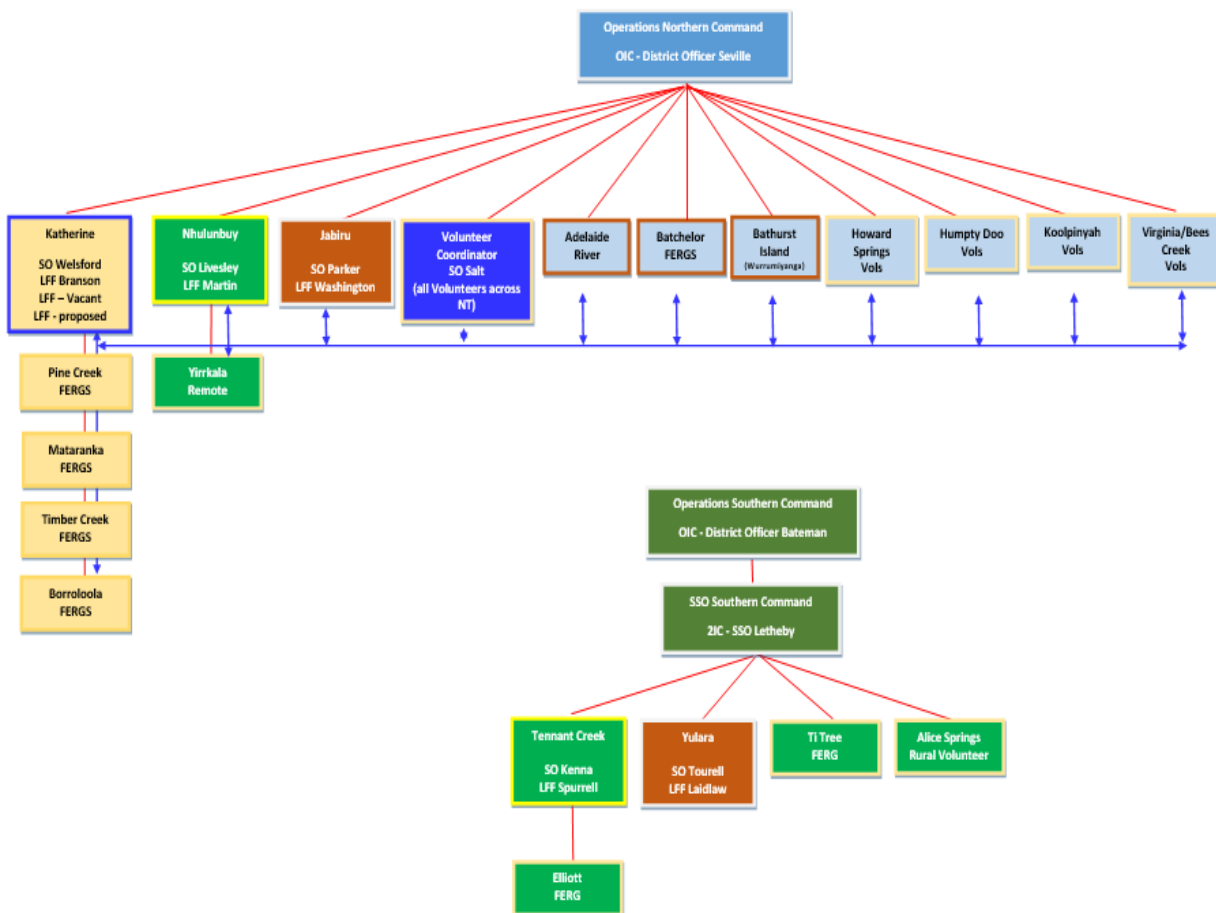
- one training night per month;
- one meeting per month; and
- attending incidents when you are available.

Responsibilities include the below.

- Attend incidents whenever possible or rostered on
- Follow instructions given by officers
- Use service equipment and vehicles in a safe manner
- Attend meetings as required
- Participate in training
- Maintain a reasonable level of fitness, appropriate to allocated tasks
- Maintain vehicles, equipment and personal protective clothing.

Not all firefighters work involves firefighting. The NTFRS actively promotes fire education programs through schools, service groups, seniors' homes and local businesses. Training for this type of work is also provided by the NTFRS. A very rewarding position within a Brigade is the Volunteer Brigade Training Officer (VBTO) whose role is to deliver and assess the training programs provided by our Volunteer Training Unit either to new members or at regular training nights.

Organisation Chart



Types of Brigades

Metro

Sometimes called 'Town Brigades', fire stations in the Darwin and Alice Springs areas have 4 shifts working a four day 10/14 hours roster system.

Rural Volunteer Brigades

There are 5 Volunteer Brigades in the Darwin rural area that support Metro stations when they respond into the rural areas of Humpty Doo, Howard Springs, Koolpinyah, Virginia and Bees Creek. The Alice Springs Rural Volunteer Fire Brigade supports the metro crews when responding into their rural area.

Regional Stations

Also known as 'Track Stations, these are located at Jabiru, Nhulunbuy, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Yulara which have two permanent crew members attached. The permanent crew is supported by Auxiliary and Volunteer Firefighters.

Fire & Emergency Response Groups (FERGS)

FERGS are volunteer stations located mostly along the road corridors that in addition to their town protection, provide road crash rescue capabilities in case of motor vehicle accidents. FERG Brigades are found at Adelaide River, Batchelor, Timber Creek, Borroloola, Elliott and Ti-Tree.

Remote Brigades

Volunteer Brigades at Wurrumiyanga (Bathurst Island) and Yirrkala are classed as remote volunteer brigades as they are our most isolated brigades but still respond to a diverse range of incidents.

The NTFRS is one of the smallest Fire Services in Australia with just over 200 permanent firefighting members and approximately 350 Auxiliary and Volunteer members. It is a modern, professional organisation that forms part of a Tri Service, combining Police, Fire and Emergency Services.







What do Fire and Rescue volunteers get for giving their time?

- Create a feeling of safety to people living within and visiting the community.
- Have a great sense of self-esteem and pride in their community
- Have an active social life and make good friends within the brigade and community
- Learn new skills that can enhance your employment prospects

Who can join?

Any person who is 16 years of age and over and is reasonably fit and healthy is eligible to join a Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Volunteer Fire Brigade or Fire and Emergency Response Group.

What do I need to join?

Contact your local Volunteer Fire Brigade or Fire and Emergency Response Group Captain or you can contact the Fire and Rescue Service Operations Northern Command Volunteers on 08 8946 4165. You will need to complete a registration form as well as undertake a criminal history.

You will then formally be appointed by the Director NTFRS, and then gazetted as a voluntary member of the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service.

Why am I needed?

The Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service and the community hold volunteer firefighters in high esteem and appreciate their dedicated efforts.

With limitations on the number of full-time and part time Fire and Rescue personnel available to deal with emergency incidents our volunteers become an invaluable part of our organisation. In some smaller population centres, NTFRS volunteers provide the only emergency response capability.

I've never done anything like this before – how will I know what to do?

Our volunteers are ordinary people just like you – they're fathers, mothers, wives, nephews – single or married. Volunteering with us can be a family affair or an individual lifestyle change.

Full training and protective clothing is provided to all volunteers. You will never be sent out to conduct a role without extensive FREE training. Many of these skills are nationally accredited and can be utilised in the normal workplace enhancing your career opportunities.



What commitment is required?

Fire and Rescue volunteers must attend regular training to ensure they maintain their skill levels and are able to undertake their roles safely. Training provided to volunteers is based on nationally recognised competencies. Volunteers who attend courses undergo theory and workplace based assessments to gain statements of attainment which may be transferred between organisations, States or Territories.

Training is skills-based, so qualifications may be gained on the job. All training costs are met by the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service.

Members should also have the support of their employers and family to enable them to respond to emergencies with a minimum of disruption and disadvantage.

What recognition do volunteers receive?

As well as training qualifications, Fire and Rescue Volunteers who serve diligently for a period of time can be eligible for:

- 5 Year Certificate
- 10 Year Fire and Rescue Service Medal with subsequent clasps 20, 30, 40 years
- National Medal

Becoming a Volunteer

Criteria for application

To be eligible to apply as a NTFRS Volunteer Firefighter, applicants must:

- minimum age of 18 but we encourage 16 year olds to join as a Cadet Firefighter
- be of good character
- be fit and healthy
- available to attend regular training and meetings
- able to become competent in the roles and tasks required of a volunteer firefighter
- be able to work in and fit in a team

What can I expect when I first visit a brigade?

On your first visit you will go through an Introduction where you meet the members and given a tour of the station. The brigade captain or another officer will then talk to you about the brigade, why you're interested in joining, and what sort of things you could be expected to do and learn over the next few months.

If you decide after the first night to continue, you will be asked to fill in an application form and provide a Criminal History Check. These documents and your discussion with the brigade members will form the basis of your application.



Can I apply if I have a criminal record?

The NTFRS are aware that people make mistakes and all criminal history matters are assessed and are considered on a case-by-case basis. Some serious offences may mean applications will not progressed. We also have a "Sponsorship and Mentor Program" which allows you to become a volunteer under the guidance of a senior member. You will receive all training, protective clothing, can respond to incidents (these are part of the Sponsorship requirements) etc. but will not become a full member until your sponsorship has been finalised.

Do I need MR Licence to apply?

No, the licence is not required at the time of submitting your application. However, some Brigades do have water tankers as part of their vehicle response, so there may be an opportunity for you to gain your MR licence in the future through the NTFRS.

Do I need to have my First Aid Certificate?

No. During the induction and normal training, the Northern Territory Fire & Rescue Service (NTFRS) will provide first aid and sometimes extra emergency care training as part of our training in order that participants become familiar with NTFRS first aid procedures and equipment.

Am I at a disadvantage if I am female or from a culturally diverse background?

No. NTFRS is seeking to employ people who reflect the diverse culture and skills of the Northern Territory.

We are continually encouraging people from diverse backgrounds to apply with an aim to achieving a gender and cultural balance with the NTFRS.

Does training or service as a volunteer help with securing a career position?

Previous experience and qualifications in a Fire Service role may enhance the applicant's performance during the selection stages but does not guarantee they will be more competitive or gain permanent employment.

Can I still join if I live quite a distance from the fire station?

The NTFRS has a program called the 'Secondary Responder' in which people who wish to volunteer but live outside the nearest brigades response area, can join that brigade and be a full member but are allocated as relief crews. This means that when called out, they go to the station and make preparations for the return of the initial crews by making sure there is cold water, air conditioning is on etc. When the first crews return for some rest and relief, the Secondary Responders then take the vehicle and respond to assist at the incident, leaving the first crew to refresh themselves.



Volunteer Fire Stations

Adelaide River Fire and Emergency Response Group

The Adelaide River Fire and Emergency Response Group started on 4 March 1976 as published in Northern Territory Government Gazette No 15 of 9 April 1976.

Location

Lot 113 Stuart Highway, Adelaide River NT 0846

Postal Address

PO Box 18, Adelaide River NT 0846

Telephone

0417 349 315

Alice Springs Rural Fire Brigade

Location

Corner Stegar Road and Ross Highway, Alice Springs NT 0870

Postal Address

PO Box 9111, Alice Springs NT 0871

Telephone

0417 775 523

Bathurst Island (Wurrumiyanga) Remote Volunteer Brigade

1974 saw the authorisation for the formation of the Bathurst Island Volunteer Fire Brigade, the sixth Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Location

Nguiu Police Station, Bathurst Island NT 0822

Postal Address

PO Box 1, Nguiu NT

Telephone

0400 706 513

Borroloola Fire and Emergency Response Group

The Borroloola Volunteer Fire Brigade started on 11 April 1988, under the captaincy of John Sanders. John unfortunately passed away less than six months later, on 28 September 1988. This brigade is number 11.

Location

Borroloola Police Station, Garawa Road, Borroloola NT 0854

Postal Address

C/o Borroloola Police Station, Borroloola NT 0854

Telephone

0417 313 978

Elliott Fire and Emergency Response Group

Authorisation was granted to form the Elliott Volunteer Fire Brigade in May 1978, to operate within a radius of three kilometres of the Police Station. This is the eighth Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Location

Elliott Police Station,

Postal Address

C/o Tennant Ck Fire Station, Tennant Creek, 0860

Telephone

0409 759 842

Howard Springs Volunteer Fire Brigade

The establishment of the brigade was approved by the Chief Minister Mr Stephen Hatton 12/11/86.

Location

325 Whitewood Road, Howard Springs NT 0835

Postal Address

PO Box 719, Howard Springs NT 0835

Telephone

0417 952 132

Humpty Doo Volunteer Fire Brigade

On 5 May 1983 Divisional Officer Colin Dash of the NT Fire Service chaired the first Annual General Meeting of the Humpty Doo Volunteer Fire Brigade. This is the tenth Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Location

3 Vereker Street, Humpty Doo NT 0836

Postal Address

PO Box 820, Humpty Doo NT 0836

Telephone

0417 395 516

Koolpinyah Volunteer Fire Brigade

The Koolpinyah Volunteer Bushfire Brigade was originally established in July 1988 in the Darwin rural area as a volunteer bushfire brigade of the NT Bushfires Council. On 16 March 1994 the establishment of both the Yirrkala and Koolpinyah Volunteer Fire Brigades were authorised by gazette notice.

Location

563 Pioneer Drive, Koolpinyah NT

Postal Address

PO Box 1108, Humpty Doo NT 0836

Telephone

0418 166 503

Mataranka Fire and Emergency Response Group

The Mataranka Fire Brigade was gazetted in 1973 making it the fourth Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Location

Lot 29 and 30 Gunn Street, Mataranka NT 0852

Postal Address

PO Box 4058, Mataranka NT 0852

Telephone

0417 947 168

Pine Creek Fire and Emergency Response Group

The first volunteer fire brigade to be established outside the metropolitan areas was at Pine Creek, being gazetted on 3 June 1970

Location

Lot 52 Main Terrace, Pine Creek NT 0847

Postal Address

Po Box 189, Pine Creek NT 0847

Telephone

0409 579 035

Ti Tree Fire and Emergency Response Group

Location

Lot 3 Stuart Highway, Ti Tree NT 0872

Postal Address

C/- Ti Tree Police Station
Ti Tree NT 0872

Telephone

0409 809 775

Timber Creek Fire and Emergency Response Group

Location

Lot 49 Victoria Highway, Timber Creek NT

Post Address

C/- Timber Creek Police Station, Timber Creek NT

Telephone

0417 142 728

Virginia / Bees Creek Volunteer Fire Brigade

Location

629 Bees Creek Road, Bees Creek NT 0822 and 355 Lowther Road Virginia NT 0822 (2 Sheds)

Postal Address

PO Box 20, Coolalinga NT 0839

Telephone

0417 836 382

Yirrkala Remote Volunteer Brigade

The Yirrkala Volunteer Fire Brigade was established on 16 March 1994.

Location

204 Tuffin Road, Yirrkala NT 0880

Postal Address

CMB 1, Yirrkala NT 0881

0409 682 101

Yulara Volunteer Brigade

Location

213 Yulara Dve, Yulara NT 0872

Postal Address

PO Box 83, Yulara NT 0872

0408 562 061

Further information

If you would like further information on the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service, please contact the following:

Your local Fire Station, or

Volunteer Manager
NT Fire and Rescue Service
PO Box 39764
Winnellie NT 0821
Tel: 08 8946 4165

Email: firevolunteercoordination@nt.gov.au