

Policy Title: Rural Fire Brigade Units Utilisation

Policy No: 215

Policy Subject: Fire Mitigation

Directorate: Works & Services

Department: Fleet Management

Responsible Officer: Directors of Works & Services

Authorised by: North Burnett Regional Council

Adopted Date: Policy & Strategy Meeting – 02/06/2009

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Authorities:

INTRODUCTION:

North Burnett Regional Council has under its control several items of plant and equipment that have been purchased and subsidised through the Queensland Fire & Rescue Service. This plant and equipment is housed at various locations throughout the region and is available to all Rural Fire Brigade Board members within the North Burnett Region for the purpose of fire mitigation.

OBJECTIVES:

To provide procedures for the utilisation of Rural Fire Brigade Units and equipment under direct control of the North Burnett Regional Council.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Equipment available for utilisation as Rural Fire Brigade Units

This Policy will apply to the utilisation of the following plant and equipment held under the control of the North Burnett Regional Council:

Biggenden

NBRC No.	QFRS Asset No.	Plant Description	Location
P2615	RF1027	Mitsubishi Canter Rural Fire Truck	Rural Fire Shed, George St
		Isuzu NPS300 4x4 Single Cab (2000)	Dallarnil, Isis Highway

PRINCIPLES (continued):

Eidsvold

NBRC No.	QFRS No.	Plant Description	Location
P2605	RF2272	Mitsubishi Canter Rural Fire Truck	Rural Fire Shed, Mt Rose St
P2610	RF4061	Isuzu Rural Fire Truck	Rural Fire Shed, Mt Rose St

Gayndah

NBRC No.	QFRS No.	Plant Description	Location
P2617	RF2648	Mitsubishi Canter Rural Fire Truck	Works Depot, Anzac Pd

Monto

NBRC No.	QFRS No.	Plant Description	Location
P2606	RF2578	Mitsubishi Canter Rural Fire Truck	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St
P2608	RF3355	Nissan Patrol 4x4 1-tonne utility	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St
P2628		Rural Fire slip-on mop-up unit	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St
P2629		Rural Fire slip-on mop-up unit	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St
P2630		Rural Fire slip-on mop-up unit	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St
P2631	RF2138	Rural Fire slip-on mop-up unit	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St
P2632	RF2139	Rural Fire slip-on mop-up unit	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St
P2633	RF2275	Rural Fire slip-on mop-up unit	Rural Fire Shed, Edison St

Mt Perry

NBRC No.	QFRS No.	Plant Description	Location
P2609	RF3358	Nissan Patrol Fire Unit 4x4	Rural Fire Shed, Elliott St
P2619	RF2276	Mitsubishi Canter Rural Fire Truck	Rural Fire Shed, Elliott St
P2620	RF5302	Isuzu Fire Truck	Rural Fire Shed, Elliott St
P2623		Rural Fire Tanker Trailer	Rural Fire Shed, Elliott St

Mundubbera

NBRC No.	QFRS No.	Plant Description	Location
P2607	RF2644	Mitsubishi Canter Rural Fire Truck	Rural Fire Shed, Durong Rd

2. Utilisation & Access to Rural Fire Brigade Plant & Equipment

The abovementioned plant and equipment is available free of charge to all rural fire brigades or to individual Rural Fire Brigade members within the North Burnett Region.

Approval for the routine utilisation of plant and equipment (eg. to burn in a fire break) shall be obtained from the Rural Fire Brigade First Officer or Senior Officer of the appropriate Rural Fire Brigade.

Individuals who intend to burn in a fire break or to carry out a controlled burn should first obtain a permit from their respective Fire Warden prior to lighting a fire.

2. Utilisation & Access to Rural Fire Brigade Plant & Equipment (continued)

In an emergency situation, this plant and equipment shall be made available to any Queensland Fire & Rescue Service registered Rural Fire Brigade or any registered Rural Fire Brigade member.

All Rural Fire Sheds containing rural fire brigade plant and equipment only, are fitted with a key pad and a key to individual sheds.

The process to access the key is as follows:

- a. Telephone 5413 5555 which is Fire Com at Kawana (manned 24/7);
- b. Identify yourself as a Rural Fire Brigade Member;
- c. You will then be given the code to enter into the key pad, which will in turn unlock the key pad;
- d. The key inside the key pad will unlock the Rural Fire Shed door; and
- e. Remove the plant or equipment from the Rural Fire Shed, relock the shed and replace the key in the key pad and deactivate the key pad.

3. Conditions of Use

Plant and equipment as listed in item 1 above shall be utilised only under the following conditions:

- a. Units should always remain under the control of a Rural Fire Brigade officer or member and be operated by an appropriately licensed driver/operator;
- b. Units must be collected from and returned to Council's Workshop/Depot or other designated storage site as determined by Council (and agreed to by Queensland Fire & Rescue Rural Operations Area Director) from time to time;
- c. All units are to be refuelled (at the expense of the user) prior to return to the appropriate storage site;
- d. Water tanks on must be refilled by the user. Water available at Council's Depot may be utilised, free of charge, for such refilling;
- e. Water tanks on Slip On Units are to be emptied prior to return for storage;
- f. Log Books, which will be kept in or with the units must be completed by the user;
- g. The whiteboard installed within the Rural Fire Shed is to be completed prior to the removal of any plant and equipment and should show the date equipment is removed, location where equipment will be utilised, the name of the person utilising the equipment and a contact number;
- h. All users are to notify Fire Com, by either radio or phone when the appliance is away from its depot;

3. Conditions of Use (continued)

- i. Any problems, incidents ie damage and/or defects to the plant and equipment are to be reported to the Director of Works & Services (or delegate) or Council's Workshop Foreman; and
- j. All Rural Fire plant and equipment should be returned as soon as possible in a clean and tidy condition following the use of such equipment and the use recorded on the whiteboard as being returned;
- k. If the appliance requires major repair or is involved in an accident, the driver is to notify the Area Director Rural Operations immediately. Please refer to D7.19 Brigade Appliance Insurance, which can be found in the Rural Fire Brigade manual (D7.19 attached). **Refer to Attachment One;**
- l. Further information on rural fire brigade appliance read Business Rule D8.7 which can be found in the Rural Fire Brigade Manual (D8.7 attached). **Refer to Attachment Two.**

4. Maintenance of Rural Fire Brigade Plant & Equipment

The North Burnett Regional Council undertakes to provide regular maintenance of all Rural Fire Brigade plant and equipment within the North Burnett Region, provided that:

- a. All log books are completed to indicate users of plant and equipment;
- b. Plant and equipment is returned in a clean and tidy manner;
- c. Any incidents / damage / faults to plant and equipment is recorded and reported to the Director of Works & Services (or delegate) or Council's Workshop Forman on return of the plant or equipment.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. D7.19 – Brigade Appliance Insurance (Brigade Manual 2007)
2. D8.7 – Appliances (Brigade Manual 2007)

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. D7.19 – Brigade Appliance Insurance**

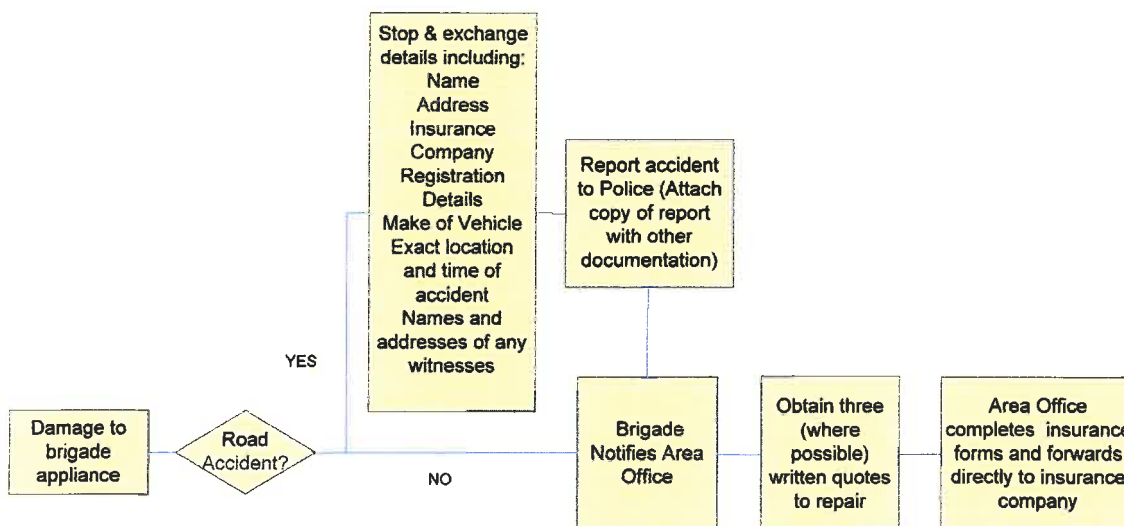
ATTACHMENT 1

What I Need to Know

- The QFRS holds a comprehensive motor vehicle accident insurance policy that covers brigade appliances. The extent of coverage is:
 - All motor vehicles owned or hired by QFRS, or for which they are responsible, including accessories, tools etc. to the limit of liability:
 - Firefighting appliances (not produced by QFRS) up to 20 years of age = replacement value.
 - Firefighting appliances (produced by QFRS) up to 20 years of age = agreed value.
 - Firefighting appliances over 20 years of age = market value.
- Legal liability to third parties, including property damage and hazardous goods is limited to:
 - Property damage = \$20,000,000
 - Hazardous goods = \$1,000,000.
- The insurance company has authorised Area Directors to approve repairs at any time up to the value of \$1,000. Also, in the event of a genuine emergency where repairs must be made to enable an appliance to return to an ongoing firefighting operation, the QFRS authorises a First Officer to approve repairs up to \$1,000.
- For fire appliance damage over \$1,000 only the insurance company can authorise repairs or payments.
- Section 138 of the Fire and Rescue Service Act allows unregistered vehicles to travel on public roads for certain purposes, provided that the vehicle is bearing brigade identification and is being used for an authorised brigade activity. Third party and property damage insurance policies apply.

How I do it

Flowchart



- In the event of a motor vehicle accident:
 - Stop and exchange names and addresses with the other party involved
 - Exchange names of insurance companies and policy numbers (the QFRS insurer is Lumley General Insurance Limited, policy number 6FR1324950)
 - Record the registration number and make of the other vehicle

- Ensure that the exact location of the accident is noted, together with times and conditions of the road (eg. slippery following heavy rain, etc.)
- Record names and addresses of as many witnesses as possible at the scene of the accident
 - Report the accident to the Police if required to do so by State laws
 - Do not enter into discussions concerning who was to blame for the accident.
- If an appliance is involved in an incident in which it is totally destroyed:
 - Identify brigade owned equipment carried on the appliance and process this in accordance with the instructions for equipment insurance.
 - If the appliance is QFRS supplied there is a standard set of equipment issued with the appliance and this should be regarded as part of the appliance.

Reference Materials

Area Reference Manual – Business Rule: D3.7 Manage Brigade Appliances Equipment and Private Property

ATTACHMENTS

2. D8.7 – Appliances

ATTACHMENT 2

What I Need to Know

- QFRS Rural Operations manages the design and construction of a range of fire-fighting appliances. Appliances are generally classified as Light, Medium or Heavy/Tanker*. Specifications of each classification change over time for a number of reasons. (*Heavy/Tankers are a special circumstance acquisition)
- Appliances are supplied to brigades at approximately 20% of the construction cost. QFRS Rural Operations requires that all appliances must be paid for before delivery occurs.
- Due to the specialised nature of the appliance construction process, it can be difficult to accurately predict the future price of an appliance for a brigade with the final price being agreed upon with the brigade prior to the commencement of construction of the appliance. However, subsequent changes to the appliance during construction may affect this price.
- Section 85 of the Fire and Rescue Authority Act provides that the efficiency of rural fire brigades is the responsibility of QFRS. In fulfilling this responsibility, QFRS considers that a rural fire-fighting appliance more than 20 years old has generally reached the end of its useful life in terms of operational efficiency and mechanical reliability. Accordingly, QFRS Rural Operations has a goal of ensuring that no rural brigade appliance is more than 20 years old and has developed acquisition and disposal policies to achieve and maintain this goal.

Appliance Allocation Programs and Policy

- The size of the brigade fleet is determined by risk. The recommended level of equipment and appliances are determined by the Area Director, Rural Operations subject to budget, availability, and future development.
- QFRS Rural Operations will continue to provide the Rural Appliance Modernisation Program (RAMP) which aims to produce sufficient appliances to ensure that the fleet will not have any vehicle older than 20 years.
- The number of appliances produced each year depends primarily on the mix of appliances (medium/light) ordered by brigades for that year. Allocation is determined by the competing operational needs of each brigade, brigade classification, the ability of a brigade to finance the acquisition and any other relevant factor.

Individual Acquisition of Appliances by Brigades

- A rural fire brigade may decide to acquire an appliance from other than the QFRS Rural Operations construction program. No financial assistance is likely to be provided from QFRS Rural Operations to the brigade and the brigade must obtain prior written approval from the Director Rural Operations through the Area Director Rural Operations.
- Approval will not be given to acquire an appliance more than 7 years old.
- The Director, Rural Operations needs to be satisfied:
 - that the appliance is capable of fulfilling an operational need;
 - that the appliance will be able to serve the brigade for a reasonable period of time; and
 - that the appliance is in a mechanically sound condition.
- The brigade may have to furnish documentation verifying the appliance's condition.
- QFRS Rural Operations generally has a fleet of light and medium appliances. Applications to purchase heavy tanker appliances or personnel carriers will require a special justification.

- An appliance that is individually acquired without written approval will not be considered the responsibility of the QFRS. The appliance will not be covered by the QFRS contract of insurance and therefore cannot be identified as a RFS appliance. The appliance will therefore not satisfy the requirements of s138 of the *Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990*.

Modification of Appliances

- Brigades receiving a fully completed appliance from QFRS Rural Operations are strictly prohibited from performing any modification to their vehicle without the approval of the Manager, Operational Support. *Vehicles are built to a standard and any modification can void the compliance and raise liability issues in the event of an incident.*
- Modifications that increase the gross vehicle mass (GVM) or alter the design of the vehicle will not usually be approved.
- Where a modification is approved, the replacement item must be of at least the same standard as the item being replaced.

Slip-ons and trailers

- The QFRS provides fire fighting slip –on units and trailers for use predominantly by Class 1 brigades. These units are usually situated strategically around a large rural brigade area and used where the brigade(s) have no dedicated rural appliances.

How I do it

Requesting an additional appliance or replacing an existing appliance.

- Contact your local Area Director, Rural Operations preferably with a written request for replacing or requesting an additional appliance, due to certain circumstances. Replacements will be forthcoming only due to age or if the vehicle has become unserviceable due to cab chassis or body manufacturing faults, not due to misuse by the brigade.

Decommissioning/disposal of appliances

- Only the Area Director, Rural Operations can authorise the de-commissioning or disposal of an appliance.
- Brigades can dispose of appliances in two ways:
 - planned disposal at the end of the appliance's useful life, usually in conjunction with an appliance allocation program; and
 - ad hoc disposal as circumstances dictate. Loss of appliance during operations or by theft is an insurance matter – refer to the **D7.19 – Brigade Appliance Insurance** for guidance.
- Prior to receipt of a new appliance, the Brigade will receive advice that their old appliance is to be immediately decommissioned and removed from operational service.
- Upon receipt of written instruction to remove an appliance from operational service, a brigade will be allowed a maximum period of twenty eight days to complete the decommissioning process.
- The process for decommissioning/disposing of an appliance is:
 - All RFS decals and sign writing identifying the appliance as belonging to the Rural Fire Service shall be removed.
 - Any serviceable equipment attached to the appliance should, as far as is practical, be removed from the appliance.
 - The appliance is to be advertised for sale as being unregistered and in "as is where is" condition.
 - No liability for the appliance will be attached to QFRS after disposal, and:
 - The QFRS may place other conditions on any disposal.

NOTE:

- Immediately after a rural fire appliance is decommissioned, the QFRS Rural Operations will cancel the comprehensive insurance coverage provided by QFRS.

- The First Officer shall be responsible for ensuring decommissioned appliances are not deployed as brigade assets on fire prevention, suppression operations, training or any form of official brigade activity.
- Rural fire brigades are prohibited from applying public funds, including subsidised equipment, to the restoration and maintenance of decommissioned appliances.
- The funds realised from the sale of a decommissioned appliance will remain the property of the brigade. Proceeds from the sale or disposal of decommissioned appliances are public monies. When disposing of a decommissioned appliance the brigade shall ensure that their conduct in relation to the disposal is transparent and open to public scrutiny.

Safety Inspections and Servicing of Appliances

- Brigades are required to service and maintain the appliances allocated to them. The nature of brigade operations usually sees appliances travelling less than 3,000 kms per year. Infrequent use and harsh operating conditions (rough roads, extremely hot, cold and/or dusty conditions) are regarded as extreme usage and maintenance must be carried out at shorter intervals.
- Brigades should refer to the manufacturer's handbook provided with each new appliance or contact the service department of the nearest dealer for advice.
- Appliances and other brigade vehicles must be inspected annually and be issued with either a Safety Certificate (SC) or a Certificate of Inspection (COI) from a qualified mechanic. Exemptions may apply in some remote locations – eg. parts of the Cloncurry and Cairns districts – and in these circumstances the Area Director, Rural Operations should be consulted.

Reference Materials

- Area Reference Manual – Business Rule: A5.3.3 – Manage Brigade Appliances