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## COMMUNITY USE OF RURAL FIRE SERVICE STATIONS

**Policy Number:** POL16/158 • **Adopted:** 26/04/2005 • **Amended:** 21/09/2009, 23/11/2012, 21/02/2017 • **Minute Number:** MIN05.420, MIN09.1283, MIN12.1266, MIN17.104 • **File:** 21692E • **Produced By:** Assets and Works Group • **Review Date:** 1/12/2020

### 1. PURPOSE

To ensure that the community use of Rural Fire Service (RFS) stations does not impact on RFS routine operations, emergency response or RFS member or public safety.

### 2. STATEMENT

For many years, RFS stations have been made available for community use in a number of village locations where no public hall or venues suitable for local meetings and other community activities exist. An increasing focus on risk management and occupational health and safety issues has highlighted areas of potential conflict between community and RFS use of these stations. This policy is aimed at avoiding such conflict.

### 3. PROVISIONS

- 3.1.1. The community use of RFS stations will not generally be permitted in localities where public halls or other suitable venues are available.
- 3.1.2. Negotiations and agreements need to be reached between the community group(s), the District Manager and local Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) members on a brigade-by-brigade basis where community use is proposed.
- 3.1.3. Where permission for community use is allowed, a nominated community member must be placed in charge of the activity and the community group must accept responsibility for adherence to any protocols that have been established by the RFS for co-use of the station.
- 3.1.4. Where any dispute over community use arises, Council will make the final decision on whether or not uses are agreed to after considering each case on its merits. The determining factor is whether the use can be managed in such a way that routine RFS operations, emergency response and member/public safety will not be compromised.
- 3.1.5. Use of RFS stations by community groups will be subject to the same “casual hirers” insurance policy requirements applicable to other public halls and buildings owned by Council.
- 3.1.6. The local brigade may charge a reasonable hire fee for the use of the RFS station.

**4. IMPLEMENTATION**

Council's Assets and Works Group administers this policy. Local RFS District Manager in conjunction with affected RFB Captain(s) are responsible for implementing the policy in the local context.

**5. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed within one year of the election of every new Council, or earlier if circumstances warrant.

**6. APPLICATION OF ESD PRINCIPLES**

None applicable