



Future outlook

Future directions for Fire & Rescue NSW towards 2033



Fire & Rescue NSW
227 Elizabeth Street
PO Box A249
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232
Telephone: (02) 9265 2971
Facsimile: (02) 9265 2886

© State of NSW through Fire & Rescue NSW, 2013. All rights reserved.
File Reference: NFB/11739

Contents

Vision and strategic directions	4
Fire & Rescue NSW in 2013	6
The challenges ahead	8
Strategic directions	
1. Admired emergency service	13
2. Community based	16
3. Leading practices	19
4. Adaptable people	22
5. Adaptable systems	25
Closing comment	28

Vision and strategic directions

What does the community want from Fire & Rescue NSW? What do we expect from ourselves now and in the future? These questions are addressed at the highest level in the purpose, vision and strategic directions for Fire & Rescue NSW.

Purpose

To save life, property and the environment from fires, emergencies and disasters.

Vision

To be recognised as a leading, best practice fire and rescue service that effectively and efficiently minimises the impact of hazards, emergency incidents and disasters on the people, environment and economy of NSW.

Our Strategic Directions

To meet the various challenges that we are likely to face in the coming 20 years, FRNSW staff – through research and creativity – have established 5 strategic directions that will inform how we act and manage our organisation in the coming years.

The five Strategic Directions are:

1. Admired emergency service
2. Community based
3. Leading practices
4. Adaptable people
5. Adaptable systems

Implementing the strategies in each of our Strategic Directions will ensure that we will adapt as an organisation to successfully meet any external challenge and enhance the service we deliver to the NSW community.

Strategic Directions	Objectives
Admired emergency service	<p>Be recognised by government, the community and other agencies as a world class provider of cost effective, comprehensive, rapid and reliable emergency prevention and response services.</p> <p>Be an essential arm of an integrated and seamless emergency services sector within NSW and nationally</p> <p>Support all arms of Government in NSW through our specialist and expert advice and services</p>
Community based	<p>Work closely with local communities to reduce the prevalence and impact of fires and other emergencies</p> <p>Support and advise industry, Government and local planning authorities to better manage fire and hazardous materials risks in the built environment</p> <p>Help to build community resilience through community based planning and education</p>
Leading practices	<p>Provide firefighters with the most up to date, efficient and effective technologies to help them protect life, property and the environment in NSW</p> <p>Develop and maintain leading edge operational capabilities to deal with a wide range of emergency and disaster hazards, risks and situations</p> <p>Continue to develop leading edge corporate services platforms for the emergency services sector in NSW</p> <p>Operate in a way that ensures the safety of firefighters and the community is always paramount</p>
Adaptable people	<p>Be a leading provider of emergency management training and education</p> <p>Build a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve and protect</p> <p>Establish workplace policies and practices that reflect the needs of a modern workforce</p>
Adaptable systems	<p>Be respected for our high quality leadership, our unquestioned integrity and transparency</p> <p>Continuously improve processes, performance and outcomes delivered by the organisation</p> <p>Effectively engage stakeholders in decisions that affect the development of capabilities and the delivery of our services</p>

Fire & Rescue NSW in 2013

Who we are

FRNSW is one of the largest urban fire and rescue services in the world and the biggest and busiest in Australia.

We have 338 fire stations across NSW and we employ approximately 6,800 permanent and retained fire officers and 400 administrative and trades staff, as well as a further 7,000 volunteer community fire unit members.

Highly trained, committed and professional in our duties, FRNSW staff also appreciate the human dimension of our work. Recognising that we often encounter members of our community in the most stressful and difficult of circumstances, we make every effort to reduce the social, emotional and financial impact of emergency and disaster events on the people of NSW.

FRNSW is a team player, working in unison with other emergency service agencies and the local community to make NSW resilient to fire and other hazards.

In a world of constant change, our workforce strives to remain highly adaptive and resourceful, capable of meeting fiscal and environmental pressures head on to ensure we meet the evolving needs of the NSW community.

What we do

FRNSW effectively manages fire prevention and emergencies in major cities and towns throughout NSW and provides rapid, reliable 24/7 response to a range of emergencies and disasters including fires, rescues, hazardous materials incidents, storms and floods, medical emergencies and dealing with the consequences of possible terrorist attacks across the State.

We seek to save lives and reduce the number of injuries caused by emergencies and disasters, as well as minimising damage to property – including major infrastructure – and protecting the environment.

FRNSW also runs prevention and preparedness programs to avert these emergencies, to build community resilience and thereby minimise the effect on the NSW community.

Fire & Rescue NSW Core Functions

Community safety and prevention

FRNSW's community safety role focuses on prevention and preparedness programs to create a safer environment and build community resilience. When our fire crews are not engaged in emergency incidents, they are engaged in fire and emergency prevention activities such as training Community Fire Units, developing and delivering community education to school children or seniors groups or delivering safety programs such as the Smoke Alarm Battery Replacement for the Elderly (SABRE) program. Our prevention and preparedness programs also reflect the needs of our diverse and more vulnerable community groups.

Fire suppression and management

FRNSW is responsible for responding to fire emergencies in NSW's major cities and towns, providing direct protection to 90% of the State's population. We also support a range of government agencies, including but not limited to, the NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and State Forests.

Rescue

FRNSW provides a high-tech search and rescue service for the entire State which can also be projected nationally and internationally. Our specially trained teams are experienced in responding to storms, floods, landslides, building collapses, transport incidents, motor vehicle accidents, domestic and industrial incidents and animal rescues.

Hazardous materials

FRNSW protects the people and environment of NSW from hazardous materials emergencies. We are equipped to deal with chemical, biological and radiological hazards resulting from industrial accidents or acts of terrorism. We respond to other hazardous conditions such as electrical short circuits, gas leaks and fuel and chemical spills. We also support the work of the Environment Protection Authority.

Terrorism consequence management

FRNSW participates in whole-of-government counter-terrorism planning and training activities to prepare for possible terrorist attacks. In the event of an attack, our role is to respond to fires, chemical, biological or radiological releases, building collapse and other rescue situations.

Supporting other agencies

FRNSW provides expertise and support to other emergency agencies in NSW. We assist the NSW Rural Fire Service during major structure and bushfires in Rural Fire Districts, the State Emergency Service with response and recovery during major storms and floods, the Ambulance Service of NSW in some locations with basic medical response and the NSW Police Force at major events and special operations such as dealing with chemicals at clandestine drug laboratories.

The challenges ahead

At FRNSW we recognise that the changing world we live in presents us with many opportunities and challenges.

It is not possible to know exactly what our society and our operating environment will be like in 2033. Our engagement program was designed to research and identify the key challenges that might face us and to consider their potential impact.

The thoughts of our staff and stakeholders has positioned us to adapt, innovate and evolve to secure our future success – our success translates into a safer, better prepared and more confident community.

We recognise that change will be continuous. As a result our future engagement program across FRNSW and externally must also be continuous. By doing this we can enhance our service delivery to the community and achieve a seamless partnership between all emergency services, other government agencies and the community.

The key skills we need to ensure such a partnership is successful are effective leadership and sound two way communication.

One of the major challenges in public sector management is fostering accountability and leadership in mid-level management. FRNSW will tackle this issue by empowering managers, providing education and training, and by promoting innovation and opportunities to lead teams more effectively.

Operating in a rapidly changing environment will also place enhanced emphasis on sound communication. This applies at all levels, across and from the bottom to the top of FRNSW as well as with our partner agencies and the community.

The major challenges facing FRNSW now and towards 2033 and our proposed responses are summarised in the following pages.

Understanding and meeting the needs of an evolving community

Population growth

Our research has found that the composition of the community we serve is changing at an amazing pace. A direct correlation has been demonstrated between population and the frequency of emergency incidents.

By 2036, NSW's population is expected to grow by 33% to 9.1 million and the number of households is projected to increase by 41% or 1.08 million, due to a fall in household sizes. Population growth will bring about considerable demographic change. Communities in coastal areas will grow substantially, while those in rural areas will experience decline.

Comprehending Australia's current and future demographics, (in particular, the New South Wales community) is essential for FRNSW to understand our community needs. This allows us to develop effective and realistic strategies to meet those needs given the likelihood of increasing numbers of emergencies and increased vulnerability.

Ageing population

By 2036 our ageing population will increase. People over 65 years will increase from 13% to 21.5% and lone person households are projected to increase by 64%, increasing the potential for social dislocation. The majority of the 'Baby Boomers' generation (born from 1946 – 64) are fast approaching retirement. The growing number of older people living in our community means an increasing number of people are vulnerable in emergencies.

FRNSW research has established that people over 65 years of age are more likely to lose their life in a home fire.

Consumer expectations

We will need to keep across the continuing consumer technology and social media revolution that impact the way we interact with each other.

Stakeholder demands and expectations are rising as indicated by reports from the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria, the Queensland floods, Thredbo landslide, Childers fires and international events, such as the Pacific Tsunami impacting Japan and the earthquake impacting Christchurch. FRNSW needs to have the capability to manage these large emergencies in sometimes remote locations. There is increasing demand for development of broader service capabilities.

Cultural diversity

With increasing immigration, communities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, in particular, may not be equipped to prevent fire or emergency incidents and may be unprepared to respond effectively when fire or emergency incidents occur.

We need to ensure our management and education programs take note of this. We also need to think about how we communicate with our community given people have varied backgrounds and experiences.

Socio-economic trends

As the socio-economic divide across society continues, emergency services will feel added call out pressure. Our research shows economically disadvantaged communities are often the most at risk during a disaster.

Managing the impact of climate change

Fire and rescue services around the world are facing a new set of challenges arising from the undeniable scientific evidence of the effects of climate change.

Scientific research and current trends predict a continuing increase in the frequency of extreme weather events such as heat waves, major bushfires, cyclones, storms, floods and high winds.

Climate change, and the roughly five year weather cycle of El Nino delivering drought conditions followed by La Nina delivering persistent flooding, poses significant challenges to all fire, rescue and emergency services.

In the coming years, costs for electricity, gas, fuel and water will significantly increase placing further pressure on limited budgets. As sea levels rise, homes and businesses situated in coastal areas will be more prone to flooding.

In light of these developments, FRNSW will need to review and modify the way we operate, increase prevention education and introduce more efficient and environmentally sustainable fire fighting methods to ensure the continuity, reliability and sustainability of our service.

Keeping up with rapid advances in technology

Across the developed world, new technologies are transforming the way emergency services work. A combination of GPS, robotics, sensors, low level automation, networked computer systems, smart home integration and consumer technology are increasingly being used to enhance emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

While technology represents a vital tool that delivers invaluable benefits to emergency services, it also poses agencies with a number of challenges, including:

- deciding the best technologies to invest in given ever increasing choice, yet finite resources
- relatively new technologies becoming obsolete as new technologies rapidly emerge
- costs associated with up-skilling a workforce to apply and manage new technologies
- compatibility of technologies across agencies
- high community expectations regarding use of consumer technology and social media
- access and equity issues associated with a reliance on consumer technology and social media, and
- privacy concerns associated with accessing personal information from government databases for emergency response.

Providing a flexible and safe workplace

Over the next 20 years, the traditional composition of the emergency service workforce is expected to change dramatically.

By 2033, female employees across the country are predicted to outnumber male employees and more females will occupy management positions. There will be many older employees and workforces will span up to five generations. In addition, there will be considerably more employees from culturally diverse backgrounds, as well as greater participation from people with a disability. The NSW Government also champions improved employment opportunities for Aboriginal people. FRNSW's staff profile mix should better reflect these trends so that we can better understand the communities we protect.

The uptake of technology by emergency services will increase the demand for highly skilled workers and there will be more emphasis on life-long learning and professional development. Training that goes beyond command and control is necessary, as well as improved merit selection and performance feedback structures.

Management of individual performance and accountability will be increasingly important, with performance linked to measurable and achievable targets.

Safety will remain the guiding principle in everything we do and FRNSW will continue to empower workers in relation to their safety and provide the tools to act in response to any issues that may arise.

Maintaining our financial and operational viability

A key challenge ahead for FRNSW is how to remain financially sustainable in the face of forecast population growth and an increase in the number and severity of natural disasters that will significantly increase demand for our services.

Across the NSW public sector, departments and agencies are being asked to exercise financial restraint, operate strictly within finite resources and explore every opportunity to maximise the use of public finance.

The NSW Government actively supports and promotes a whole-of-government approach to improve service delivery and efficiency for the people of NSW. This involves multiple departments and agencies working collectively to address shared priorities.

The community and Government will expect integrated solutions and service delivery across government agencies. Challenges associated with meeting these expectations include managing coordination, accountability and governance of interdepartmental and cross agency initiatives.

In the spirit of this commitment, FRNSW must instil a greater openness to working and communicating with other agencies. Increased cooperation should include sharing our resources and facilities, wherever possible to maximise resources and outcomes for the community.

Conclusion

The external environment we work within continues to change dramatically; “business as usual” in this environment means being adaptive and flexible in approach.

The ways in which we approach our obligation of serving the community will need to change if we are to protect them in the way they and the NSW Government expect.

For us to be a best practice fire and rescue service that protects the people, property, environment and economy of NSW we need to ensure a seamless partnership between FRNSW, other emergency services and government agencies and the community.

Effective leadership at all levels of FRNSW together with dynamic, efficient and contemporary ways of communicating issues and risks, planning projects, coordinating our resources and monitoring how well we are delivering services to the community will be crucial.

Strengthened internal and external communication and transparent, evidence-based decision making will promote an engaged workforce and community.

The following pages describe our strategic direction over the next twenty years.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1:

Admired emergency service

Why this is important

FRNSW takes great pride in serving and protecting the people of NSW and on being considered a leading emergency service agency across Australia and the world.

By focusing on being an 'admired emergency service' we are recognising that we have an inherent responsibility to provide the community with the highest quality emergency service, in the most productive and cost effective way. We are also recognising the need for us to work collaboratively with other government and non-government agencies to deliver a seamless community focused service.

We predict that in 2033 our society will expect a greater and more diverse range of services from FRNSW. In 2033, we expect that our service will be provided in seamless partnership with other emergency service agencies including the State Emergency Service, NSW Rural Fire Service, Ambulance Service of NSW and the NSW Police Force. We expect that from the community's point of view we will all be part of a single all purpose emergency service.

What we are aiming for

In 2033, FRNSW wants to be considered as an essential arm and a leader within the emergency services sector. We want to leverage our people and resources to their full potential and be known for the quality of service we provide across a diverse range of emergency prevention and response capabilities.

We want to realise our full capability, by working collaboratively in partnership with other emergency service agencies and be respected and admired widely for the service and support we provide.

Looking ahead, we will make every effort to fully develop our expertise, improve our service delivery and further enhance our standing in the community.

In close consultation with other emergency service agencies, we will identify every opportunity for our fire, rescue and other broad capabilities to be applied in ongoing support of the State's emergency services sector.

What we will do

Be recognised by Government, the community and other agencies as a world class provider of cost effective, comprehensive, rapid and reliable emergency prevention and response services

- Continue to research and analyse developments in fire safety technologies and general construction technologies to determine how they impact on fire risk and the planning of our service delivery
- Continually review fire, rescue and hazardous material incident response coverage across NSW and adjust our service delivery capabilities as required – according to community risk and needs
- Continue to provide support to interstate and regional neighbours in relation to specialised training, incident management, urban search and rescue and other disaster assistance response services

Be an essential arm of an integrated and seamless emergency service sector within NSW and nationally

- Work with the NSW Rural Fire Service, the NSW State Emergency Service, the Ambulance Service of NSW and the NSW Police Force to plan and deliver seamless, efficient and effective emergency services across NSW
- Continue to support the NSW Police Force with counter terrorism consequence management services

Support all arms of Government in NSW through our specialist and expert advice and services

- Investigate how we can use our state-wide capability and skilled workforce to support the Ambulance Service of NSW to respond to medical emergencies
- Play a leading role across government in planning for major events, emergency incidents, and disasters

What this means

For firefighters

- Opportunity to demonstrate leadership and multiple skills in managing emergency incidents effectively and efficiently to minimise their impact on the community
- Opportunity to work cooperatively and effectively with other emergency services to deliver a seamless community service
- Enhanced job variety and satisfaction through sharing skills with emergency services and other government agencies

For the community

- FRNSW will improve service delivery to the community through regularly reviewing our performance and ensuring that the quality of service continues to evolve and improve
- The community will have confidence that FRNSW will respond professionally, competently and with an appropriate level of resources to minimise the impact of emergency incidents

For other emergency services

- The more we in the emergency services sector share our skills and resources, the greater the opportunity for the whole sector to improve the quality of services as well as financial performance
- Joint planning with other Emergency services in rural and regional NSW will ensure better integrated responses to community needs
- Regular joint exercises with other emergency services will ensure that responses to large incidents will be effectively coordinated and community impacts will be minimised
- Work with other states, territories and countries to build and share urban search and rescue and HazMat/CBR expertise, and provide assistance to other countries as appropriate under international assistance guidelines

For other government agencies

- FRNSW can contribute to a wide range of government services, from community development, to strengthening economic infrastructure and protecting our built and natural environment

For how we manage our resources

- FRNSW will continually review our services and operations to make them increasingly efficient so that FRNSW has a sustainable budget.
- Plan services and facilities over 5-10 year cycles so that resource planning reaches maximum effectiveness.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2:

Community based

Why this is important

At FRNSW, protecting the people of NSW and keeping them safe lies at the heart of what we do. We recognise that in order for us to continue to work effectively within our community, we must listen to and understand their needs, as well as earn and maintain their trust and respect.

The likelihood that climatic events will be more severe and more frequent in the next 20 years means that it is increasingly important for at-risk communities, such as those on the urban/bushland interface and those in flood prone areas, to be well prepared for and readily able to protect themselves when emergencies do occur.

With our permanent capacity, we have a vital role to play in assisting community resilience by helping communities plan for and manage emergency incidents. As the permanent emergency service, we also have a role in helping communities re-establish themselves when emergencies such as bushfire, flooding and storms occur.

Only by forging genuine, authentic and effective partnerships with the people of NSW can we be confident that we will be able to help build a community that is more resilient to emergency and disaster situations, and therefore better able to recover.

What we are aiming for

We will deliver the services the community wants and needs, in ways that they want, and we will work with the community, as well as with government and non-government agencies, to prepare for emergency and disaster situations.

By 2033, FRNSW efforts in the area of prevention and education will have had a major impact on the frequency and severity of accidental fires in residential and commercial premises. Reducing the number of accidental fires will contribute to keeping people safe, will contribute to reducing the economic cost of fire, and will enable FRNSW to assist in other areas of critical community need, e.g. first responder medical services

FRNSW wants to be on the leading edge of community engagement, working with the community and industry as part of a two-way street. We want the community to be active in the planning of fire and rescue services and understand that they actually own our service. Our community based planning and preparedness work will have the effect of building a more resilient and better informed community. We will ask what the community wants from our service and work to make it happen.

What we will do

Work closely with local communities to reduce the prevalence and impact of fires and other emergencies

- Strengthen our effectiveness in delivering community safety campaigns across NSW, in particular with culturally diverse, indigenous and aged communities
- Build our capability to research and evaluate the effectiveness of our community education programs – leveraging partnerships with universities and industry

Support and advise industry, Government and local planning authorities to better manage fire and hazardous materials risks in the built environment

- Provide expert advice to consumer and industry bodies on advances in fire safety
- Continue to work with government planning agencies to ensure major developments across NSW have appropriate fire safety systems. FRNSW would like to see clause 144 of the Environment Planning & Assessment regulation applied to buildings of 1000m² and above widening our planning role
- Provide support to commercial businesses to improve fire safety skills and practices

Help to build community resilience through community based planning and education

- FRNSW will make use of modern communication technologies to keep the community informed of and involved in local emergency management activities
- Forge new partnerships with non-government agencies to access hard to reach at risk groups to promote good prevention and preparedness practices
- Work with human service agencies to utilise consumer networks and leverage government resources in emergency events
- Continue to work with Community Fire Units (CFU) to prepare communities living in the bushland/urban interface to manage and respond to the threat of bushfire
- Build on the experience and success of the CFU Program to further increase community resilience through new Programs such as Community Emergency Response Teams
- Promote residential domestic sprinklers in all homes particularly new subdivisions where fire service response may be delayed due to distance

What this means

For firefighters

- The future role of the firefighter will demonstrate leadership in working with the community to plan and design appropriate safety programs
- Educating and involving the community as a partner is core FRNSW business as it will reduce risk and impact of fire, other emergencies and disasters
- Firefighters will be working with all sections of our community, particularly those that are harder to reach such as older people, Aboriginal people and people from culturally diverse communities

For the community

- FRNSW will become a resource for the community to help learn about risks they are exposed to and the steps to take to reduce those risks
- The community will interact with FRNSW in different ways. Social media in all forms will assist us to promote safety messages and keep the community informed of local emergency and hazardous incidents
- FRNSW is a partner that can help communities prevent and minimise damage from emergencies and disasters through supporting Community Fire Units and through piloting and introducing Community Emergency Response Teams
- FRNSW can be involved in a wide range of activities with community partners such as local government, aged care services and multicultural organisations

For other emergency services

- An informed and involved community will help the NSW emergency services sector achieve better results. Working together on community messages and programs is an opportunity to deepen our engagement and our positive impact

For other government agencies

- Strong resilient communities are important for all government agencies in NSW. As different agencies all working with the same local communities and organisations we have an opportunity to strengthen our messages and programs by increasing our cooperation
- Increasingly we would like to build partnerships with other agencies to assist FRNSW in recognising, engaging and delivering our community safety programs to diverse hard to reach communities in NSW

For how we manage our resources

- Link risk based resource allocation modelling to allocate funding for prevention, preparedness and research activities to reduce emergency incidents
- A suite of community safety packages will be required to be accessed and tailored for each community

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3:

Leading practices

Why this is important

Firefighters are often called upon to work in dangerous environments – this is not expected to change by 2033. With this in mind it is essential that we continue to be vigilant when it comes to firefighter safety. Keeping our firefighters safe whilst working to save life and property will always remain a key priority.

Over the next 20 years, we expect that the rate of technological change experienced in the last two decades will accelerate. We expect that in 2033 we will be using new firefighting, rescue and hazardous material technologies. We will be communicating and accessing information in the fire station and on the incident ground using leading edge mobile communication tools. We also expect that these will be a part of a whole of government approach to information and communication technology.

To stay at the forefront of incident response we need to have an effective approach to research and development and be skilled at assessing and evaluating new technology. We also need to ensure that we use and leverage business management technologies to ensure effective and efficient corporate support services for the front line.

What we are aiming for

FRNSW wants to be known as a service that is at the leading edge of emergency management practice. As one of the largest and busiest fire and rescue services in the world, we should be known as a world leader when it comes to the services we provide and the way we provide them.

By 2033 FRNSW expects that our partnerships with other emergency service agencies will ensure the emergency service sector in NSW has access to the best technologies available. By working with our partner agencies to adopt leading business practices, we will be able to leverage savings across the sector in asset management and procurement and we will be able to build strong business cases for the introduction of leading edge technologies for emergency management.

Over the next 20 years, we will make the best use of modern technologies and adopt safe, effective and efficient work practices in everything we do.

What we will do

Develop and maintain leading edge operational capabilities to deal with a wide range of emergency and disaster hazards, risks and situations

- Ensure our personnel, training, equipment, operational procedures and logistics support are appropriate to task and evolve with the changing role and functions of the organisation

Provide firefighters with the most up to date, efficient and effective technologies to help them protect life, property and the environment in NSW

- Establish a research and development program that identifies and evaluates innovative ways of fighting fires, providing rescue services and managing hazardous material incidents
- Make smart decisions around technology selection so that reliable, cost effective and mature technologies, best suited to our local needs are chosen
- Work with partner agencies and the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council to investigate and implement new technologies to prevent and mitigate the effects of fire and emergency incidents

Continue to develop leading edge corporate services platforms for the emergency services sector in NSW

- Lead the establishment of centres of excellence for corporate services across the emergency services sector – utilising leading business technologies
- Explore ways to share existing infrastructure with other emergency services agencies, for example, streamlining asset management, training services and facilities, back-end administration resources, and even shared stations

Operate in a way that ensures the safety of firefighters and the community is always paramount

- The community will be kept safe at events and incidents that FRNSW are called on to support
- All staff in FRNSW will know and be able to demonstrate an understanding of the safety management system and how it affects their work
- Our staff will be empowered in relation to their safety and provided with the latest tools and personal protective equipment to address any issues that may arise
- Health promotion programs will continue to be developed to proactively address emerging needs of the workforce, and in the case of injury or illness, we will ensure a return to full fitness as effectively and efficiently as possible

What this means

For firefighters

- Better, more modern, leading edge equipment
- Latest communication and information technologies in stations and on appliances
- More time and resources dedicated to learning, trialling and implementing new approaches and technology
- Empowering firefighters to maintain their physical and mental health by providing them with appropriate information, education, skills, tools and support services
- FRNSW will be vigilant in maintaining the quality of occupational health and safety standards for firefighters and other workers
- FRNSW will pursue initiatives to promote workers health and wellbeing and ensure their safety

For the community

- The NSW community expects a world class fire and rescue service both now and in the future. Maintaining and improving current levels of quality and safety will be achieved through staying up to date with technology, pooling capability across the emergency services sector through Centres of Excellence and never compromising on firefighter and community safety

For other emergency services

- Building 'centres of excellence' in corporate support services across the emergency services sector is an opportunity for each service to both build on its own strengths and to draw on the strengths within the sector
- Create a seamless ICT infrastructure that improves operational and administrative efficiency
- Collaborate in developing and delivering cross-sectoral programs aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of emergency service workers

For other government agencies

- A whole of government approach will give every agency unprecedented data, knowledge and information and the platform to keep up with developments in the rapidly changing world of information and communications technology

For how we manage our resources

- Negotiate funding arrangements for ICT that support new models of integrated communications and data management
- Improved management of worker health and safety will see a reduction in overtime costs and a reduction in insurance premiums and insurance hindsight adjustments

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4:

Adaptable people

Why this is important

At FRNSW, we recognise that every member of our team has an important role to play in delivering a best practice fire and rescue service. All of us are committed to finding new and better ways to serve the people of NSW.

For us to achieve an organisation that is admired and adopts leading practices, we need to maintain a workforce that is adaptable, one that is able to identify and respond to opportunities and risks. One that is able to apply a broad set of skills and knowledge to any challenge we might face. We need to work together as a team, encourage leadership at every level of the organisation, and empower our people to act and speak up when they see an opportunity or challenge.

What we are aiming for

Firefighting is one of the most trusted professions in the world. As an organisation we want to continue this, through being highly professional and skilled and being able to be deployed in NSW, nationally and internationally in a range of situations. By doing this, we will continue to be an organisation that is admired and relied on in times of crisis.

Whether it be firefighting, engineering, accounting or management, we want our people to be recognised as the best in their fields. Our training programs, workplace culture - including communication, teamwork and leadership programs - will provide the foundation for our people to be recognised as the best at what they do.

But perhaps most importantly, we want to preserve and build on the organisational culture of care and respect for others – often referred to as the “fire brigade family”. It is something unique to FRNSW and part of the glue to bind us together as a competent, capable team.

What we will do

Be a leading provider of emergency management training and education

- Cultivate positive learning cultures of life-long learning to facilitate continuous transfer of FRNSW workforce knowledge and skills development
- Adopt innovative and modern solutions to training and professional development that enable the right training to be provided to the right people in the right place
- Forge partnerships with commercial and public training providers that ensure staff across the emergency services sector have access to the best training available

Build a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve and protect

- Through affirmative actions strategies, foster a workforce that represents the community it serves
- Employ staff with skills, backgrounds and abilities that allow them to work in partnership with a culturally diverse society

Establish workplace policies and practices that reflect the needs of a modern workforce

- Continually update organisational policies, practices and culture to ensure they reflect the changing world around us
- Establish promotional and recruitment rules based on merit, making recruitment decisions based on the skills and performance of individuals
- Make the workplace and our workplace practices friendly for women, Aboriginal people and people from a culturally diverse background
- Preserve the “fire brigade family” aspects of our culture that strengthen mutual respect, trust and teamwork.

What this means

For firefighters

- Able to access the training they need
- Individual commitment to learning and professional development on an ongoing basis
- Contribute to a welcoming workplace that includes all, accepts difference and diversity and is respectful of all
- Expect to be in a workplace where success will come from great performance, irrespective of gender, race or background
- Provision of working conditions, flexible work arrangements and career paths in the emergency services that assist in attracting and retaining a workforce that better reflects the communities we serve and protect
- Pursue targeted recruitment, training and mentor programs to attract and develop workers from disadvantaged groups

For the community

- All members of the NSW community, men and women and people from all cultural and language groups should consider a future in FRNSW. They should expect a fair go, an opportunity to be promoted on merit and an experience that is welcoming

For other emergency services

- Members of the FRNSW team will seek to work with the emergency services sector and forge open and productive relationships that strengthen the sector as whole
- FRNSW will seek to strengthen relationships within the emergency services sector. We will work with our colleagues in the sector to implement the best arrangements for the people of NSW with an open mind and a willingness to change

For other government agencies

- The FRNSW team will have access to and will be part of the NSW community as a whole because our composition will reflect the composition of the broader NSW community

For how we manage our resources

- FRNSW must invest in the training and development of emergency services workers as a valued resource
- The inability of the State Training College to meet the full training needs of firefighters due to residential encroachment and environmental concerns is of concern to FRNSW. Planning is underway for the acquisition of an alternate site within the Sydney basin that may be suitable as an emergency services facility

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5:

Adaptable systems

Why this is important

As we move forward, our organisation is facing a new and challenging service delivery environment shaped by shifting government imperatives, an evolving society, technological advances and an increasingly unpredictable climate.

The test for FRNSW is how we respond to these challenges. FRNSW recognises that change management entails thoughtful planning and careful implementation.

Implementing approaches to the way we manage our work so that we are able to adapt to and manage change will be vital. We need to understand why things work in the organisation and when things don't go as planned we need to be open to learning from them.

What we are aiming for

We will establish systems, processes and practices that allow our organisation to adapt to changing government and community priorities. We will monitor what we are doing and how well we are performing so that we can learn and change our plans when required.

We are committed to the principles of open government and promoting the involvement of the community in decisions. In line with this, we will be an open, transparent and communicative service – both internally and with our external partners.

We want to modernise the way in which our service operates. We need to investigate and adopt approaches that allow local managers to make local decisions. Through modern and flexible management and governance structures we will be able to continue to be a responsive and capable organisation.

What we will do

Be respected for our high quality leadership, our unquestioned integrity and transparency

- Empower managers and promote innovation to lead teams effectively
- Provide managers with the support they need to make effective disciplinary and management decisions, resolve workplace grievances and create harmonious, enthusiastic, team-based workplaces
- Recognise and treat our workforce as a valuable resource, and ensure all workers are treated fairly and with respect

Continuously improve processes, performance and outcomes delivered by the organisation

- Continue to promote and support our debrief and lessons learned capability at all levels to ensure we understand and learn from incidents that we respond to
- Constantly review our organisational policies, procedures and work practices including Standard Operational Guidelines and find new and better ways to manage and improve our services
- Plan for continual change through monitoring trends and opportunities across local and international networks
- Take accountability for local implementation of whole of government policy
- Manage our performance against measurable, and achievable, targets at all levels of the organisation
- Recognise the role of all managers in managing expenses and budgets and showing leadership in managing costs more diligently, in setting priorities whilst ensuring safety is uncompromised

Effectively engage stakeholders in decisions that affect the development of capabilities and the delivery of our services

- Be open and accountable for the way we plan our services and allocate resources across the emergency services spectrum
- Ensure open and effective lines of communication and engagement with all stakeholders involved with FRNSW
- Use evidence to support decision making and provide up-to-date and accurate information on our services to Government, the public and industry stakeholders.

What this means

For firefighters

- We will all improve how we communicate internally to improve our understanding of each other's perspectives and the FRNSW team as a whole
- At every level of the service, we will regularly review and reflect on our practices and systems and explore ways to change and improve them
- We will be willing to be increasingly accountable for the performance of ourselves and our teams by taking more decisions at local levels and setting targets which we will monitor, achieve and report on

For the community

- As an adaptable organisation FRNSW will seek feedback and input about community experiences, perspectives and needs. This input will inform ongoing change and improvement within FRNSW and the NSW community should expect regular communications and updates

For other emergency services

- FRNSW will seek to work with the emergency services sector as a whole by developing and testing common approaches and strategies, including governance and accountability frameworks that support collaborative ways of working
- FRNSW will develop partnerships with other emergency services to promote a strong corporate governance framework that ensures performance management and accountability, underpinned by strategic planning processes
- Ongoing engagement at state-wide and local levels across the emergency services sector will help all parts of the sector understand each other and should result in increasing collaboration and better systems and practices

For other government agencies

- One way to ensure FRNSW can contribute to NSW social, economic and environmental sustainability is opening channels of engagement and working on joint initiatives with agencies across government
- FRNSW will seek to engage with other NSW government agencies to explore opportunities to implement new initiatives and practices

Possible resource implications

- Promote informed decisions about resourcing the emergency services balancing infrastructure needs, other government priorities and funding sources
- Develop robust and open processes for setting and reviewing spending priorities across the emergency services sector
- FRNSW will drive performance improvement and productivity through a strong performance management culture and process framework

Closing comment

The FRNSW Outlook - Towards 2033 provides FRNSW with a road map for the longer term development of the service. It has been developed based on the input of staff, researching the challenges facing the organisation and through imagining what the organisation should be like in the future.

This document has been created through one of the most comprehensive organisational engagement programs that NSWFB and Fire & Rescue NSW has ever embarked on.

The process commenced in March 2012, with nearly 1,300 staff participating in an online survey about performance and the way we work.

Further consultation was undertaken with seven cross functional focus groups debating and deliberating a range of issues facing FRNSW including government, resources, workforce, technology, community expectations, changing society (demographic change) and the environment.

To balance these internal opinions, eight external agencies, including our emergency service partners, were asked what they think it is like working with FRNSW and what they think are the key issues and opportunities for FRNSW.

The consultation program continued with interactive workshops involving over 220 staff, held in Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Goulburn, Newcastle, Wollongong and Sydney. These discussions provided the content and framework of this document.

The result is that FRNSW has a future outlook and corporate plan which are informed and robust.

The strategies set out within the plan are not meant to be the definitive list of things that FRNSW will do over the next 20 years. It is impossible to predict exactly what we will be faced with but it is possible to plan for and influence how we will act and approach each challenge as we face it. Our future plan sets out a challenge for FRNSW to be a leader and to leverage its standing in the community.

This document has informed the development of the FRNSW Corporate Plan for the period from 2013 to 2017. At the end of this period we will revisit our 20 year outlook to review and reaffirm our directions and the actions we need to take.

Fire & Rescue NSW Values

Every aspect of the work we do at FRNSW, is guided by our values. We are committed to:

Safety as a guiding principle

- preventing workplace injuries, both physical and psychological
- being accountable for safe and healthy work practices and workplaces

Honesty and integrity

- truthfulness, openness and transparency in all that we say and do
- impartiality, fairness, equity, and consistency in all that we say and do
- ethical conduct and the moral courage to speak out against wrongdoing
- accepting personal responsibility for our actions or failures to act

Respect

- treating others as we would like to be treated – community members, all of our colleagues and the other people we deal with in the course of our work, regardless of background or position, with;
 - respect
 - dignity
 - goodwill
 - empathy
 - compassion

Courage and selflessness

- dedicating our skills, resources and actions to help those in need or at risk of harm, with no expectation of acknowledgement or additional reward
- having the courage to work under significant pressure and in adverse situations, to stand up for others, and to challenge wrongdoing
- putting the needs of the community and FRNSW before our own

Professionalism

- sharing common goals and the desire to improve
- striving for consistently high standards of conduct and service
- seeking continuous learning through experience, reflection, education and training
- being responsive and innovative in meeting the evolving needs of the community, other stakeholders and our workforce

Teamwork

- embracing diversity and inclusion, and the empowerment of people
- collaborating and cooperating to support and encourage one another, providing a healthy work-life balance and creating healthy, safe and productive workplaces
- working together with other organisations to deliver best outcomes for the community