

# Emergency Services Volunteers and Retained Fire Fighters

PROCEDURE 1.2.1(ak)

POLICY NO AND TITLE	1.2.1	<b>Conditions of Employment</b>
PROCEDURE	1.2.1(ak)	<b>Emergency Services volunteers and Retained Fire Fighters</b>
VERSION AND DATE ADOPTED	1	February 2009
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER		Rob Cattanach

## Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council has a number of staff who are volunteers with the Rural Fire Service (RFS) Brigades, State Emergency Service (SES), and Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) in the Shire. These staff members, along with other community volunteers, provide a valuable safety service to the community of the Bega Valley and NSW.

Over the years large fire events facing various communities have required support from all available volunteers. Often these volunteers have needed to leave their local area and travel to provide support to communities in other parts of the State. This approach ensures that fire crews have adequate support and relief and that large fires can be fought with adequate resources. In the event that such a fire occurred in the Bega Valley RFS and SES crews from across the State would be available to support local volunteer teams. While this procedure refers to bushfire events, the provisions will extend to other major disasters.

## Guidelines/Procedures

Council will provide support for staff members who are volunteers with the RFS, SES or VRA as follows:

1. Eligibility for a total of 5 days paid special leave to attend major bushfire events on presentation of a statement of service from the RFS/SES/VRA and up to 10 days for large scale events in the Bega Valley;
2. RFS/SES/VRA staff members must contact Council prior to departure to attend a bushfire event to ensure that Council staffing levels can be maintained to allow for consideration of OHS issues; and

3. RFS volunteers and other staff members who need leave to protect their own property will have their situation dealt with on a case by case basis by the General Manager.

### **NSW Fire Brigade Retained Firefighters**

Council also has staff members who are NSW Fire Brigade Retained Firefighters. Retained firefighters receive some payment for their attendance at training, for being on-call and for attending fires and emergencies.

Council will support these members of staff and their attendance at large bushfire events by providing special paid leave for those hours not paid by the NSW Fire Brigade subject to a maximum equivalent of 5 days per calendar year.

Any local call outs or attendance at local incidents will need to be covered by an application for annual or accrued leave.