

Australian Capital Territory

Emergencies (Appointment and Probation Arrangements for Volunteers) Commissioner's Guidelines 2006

Notifiable Instrument NI 2006 – 219

made under the

Emergencies Act 2004, s 11 (Commissioner may make guidelines).

1. Name of Instrument

This instrument is the *Emergencies (Appointment and Probation Arrangements for Volunteers) Commissioner's Guidelines 2006*.

2. Commencement

This instrument commences on 1 July 2006.

3. Commissioner's Guidelines

The ACT Emergency Services Commissioner hereby makes the *Commissioner's Guidelines relating to Appointment and Probation Arrangements for Volunteer Members of the ACT Emergency Services Agency* in Schedule 1 to this instrument.

4. Revocation

NI2005-454 is revoked.

David Laurence Prince
Acting ACT Emergency Services Commissioner
26 June 2006

NI 2006 - 219
Schedule 1

EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY

COMMISSIONER'S GUIDELINES

relating to

**APPOINTMENT AND PROBATION
ARRANGEMENTS FOR VOLUNTEER
MEMBERS OF THE ACT EMERGENCY
SERVICES AGENCY**

June 2006

A.C.T. EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY

COMMISSIONER'S GUIDELINES

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT AND PROBATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR VOLUNTEER MEMBERS OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY

1. PURPOSE

To provide Commissioner's guidelines for the appointment and probation of volunteer members of the ESA.

These guidelines are made in accordance with the *Emergencies Act 2004*. They are based broadly on the practices that apply to the appointment of career employees.

2. REFERENCES

- a. *Emergencies Act 2004*
- b. *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, Part 2, Division 2.1, Section 9, "General obligations of public employees"
- c. *Public Sector Management Standards*, Standard 1, "Ethics"
- d. ACT Emergency Services Agency, "Code of Conduct"
- e. Individual Service codes of conduct

3. DEFINITIONS

ACTAS – ACT Ambulance Service

ACTFB – ACT Fire Brigade

ACTRFS – ACT Rural Fire Service

ACTSES – ACT State Emergency Service

CFU – Community Fire Unit

Chief Officer – means the Chief Officer of an Emergency Service, appointed under the *Emergencies Act 2004*.

Commissioner – means the ACT Emergency Services Commissioner, appointed under the *Emergencies Act 2004*.

Emergency Service – means ACTAS, ACTFB, ACTRFS, or ACTSES, and includes a brigade of the ACTRFS, a unit of the ACTSES, or a CFU established under the *Emergencies Act 2004*, or a member of any of those organisations.

ESA – ACT Emergency Services Agency

4. BACKGROUND

- a. The ESA has the object of protecting life property and the environment in the ACT. The ESA achieves this in a number of ways including through the use of appropriately skilled and trained career and volunteer members.
- b. The *Emergencies Act 2004* provides the legal framework (Ss 59B and 59C) for Chief Officers to appoint and end the appointment of volunteer members in accordance with Commissioner’s guidelines. The Commissioner makes Commissioner’s guidelines under which the ESA operates.

5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of these Commissioner’s Guidelines are to:

- a. establish a framework of legislation and procedures which are understood by prospective members, existing members and are able to be managed by the respective Chief Officers of the ACT’s Emergency Services.
- b. articulate the probationary period which applies to volunteers.
- c. highlight references used by the ESA in determining appropriate standards.

6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

6.1 Appointment of Volunteers

- a. Appointments to the ESA are based on merit and the skills requirements of respective services.
- b. Volunteers will be appointed to the ACTRFS, ACTSES, and the ACTFB by the respective Chief Officers of the services.
- c. Volunteers may be appointed to more than one service simultaneously (but for operational reasons this may not be preferred and will be the decision of the respective Chief Officers).

- i. when this does occur the respective Chief Officers should confer and agree on the best course for their respective services and the volunteer member.
- d. In consultation with the head of the respective operational units or brigades the decision on placement of volunteers within the services will be made by the Chief Officer (or authorised person).

6.2 Probation Arrangements

- a. Volunteers appointed within the ESA may be appointed on an initial period of three months. The initial period is provided to allow for initial basic skills training followed by a period of assessed activity in the respective volunteer unit or brigade.
- b. This period may be extended for additional periods of three months, to a maximum period of twelve months, if the Chief Officer forms the view that it is in the best interests of the volunteer or service to extend the period of probation to allow for further periods of assessment of the volunteer's performance in the respective service.
- c. If probation is to be extended for any period, the probationary volunteer must be advised prior to the normal expiry of the period of probation. If a volunteer is not advised prior to expiration of the period of probation then they will be deemed to be confirmed as a volunteer in the respective service.
- d. There may be occasions where a Chief Officer decides that appointment can be made without probation. Examples where this may be the case include where former volunteers reapply to be members, or experienced volunteers transfer between services or from interstate.
- e. Appointment of volunteers will be subject to satisfactory checks on
 - i. Medical fitness
 - ii. Criminal Record
- f. Volunteers are to provide reasonable assistance to the respective services to enable these checks to occur in a timely fashion.
- g. The decision to confirm the appointment of a volunteer will take into account their performance as a volunteer during probation, and the ability of a volunteer to maintain an acceptable standard of conduct, diligence and performance.

6.3 Ceasing of Probation

- a. A Chief Officer may cease the appointment of a volunteer during the period of the volunteer's probation, for any reason. The Chief Officer is required to provide the volunteer with reasons for the decision, but the decision is not subject to review.
- b. A volunteer may choose to cease their appointment to a service at any time by notice to the respective Chief Officer.
- c. When a volunteer ceases to be a volunteer for any reason the volunteer is required to immediately return to the service any equipment, Personal Protective Equipment, Personal Protective Clothing, identification and security pass, and any other property of the ACT Government or unit or brigade to which they were assigned.

7 REVIEW

These guidelines will be reviewed every two years, or more frequently if needed.