

Guide to Preparing Nominations for the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM)

The Award

The Australian Fire Service Medal recognises distinguished service by members of Australian fire services. It is awarded to paid and volunteer members. The AFSM is awarded by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the responsible minister. For CFA and the other Victorian fire services, the responsible minister is the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

The quota each year for the combined fire services of Victoria is:

- one award for each 1000 (or part of 1000) full-time permanent staff;
- one award for each 5000 volunteer or auxiliary members; and
- one additional award at the discretion of the Minister.

The awards are announced on Australia Day (26 January) and the Queen's Birthday (June) of each year.

Recipients of the Australian Fire Service Medal are entitled to use the letters "AFSM" after their names to show that their outstanding service has been formally recognised.

Who is Eligible?

All volunteers, auxiliary members and full-time staff of CFA are eligible for the medal. The Australian Fire Service Medal is not reserved for senior officers – it is open to all levels of CFA. Nominees must be current serving members of CFA when nominated.

The AFSM may be awarded only once to each recipient. A person who has received an AFSM and gives further distinguished service may be nominated subsequently for an award in the Order of Australia. Similarly, a person who has received an award in the Order of Australia is not excluded from receiving an Australian Fire Service Medal although, in accordance with established honours convention, at least five years should elapse between the announcements of awards.

Posthumous Awards

The Australian Fire Service Medal is not awarded posthumously.

Are Nominations Confidential?

All nominations are strictly confidential and the information provided will be used only to assist in considering the merits of the nomination.

The person being nominated should not be approached for information or advised of his or her nomination at any stage.

What is the Medal Awarded for?

The sole criterion for the award of the Australian Fire Service Medal is **distinguished service**. "Distinguished service" includes service that is above and beyond the normal zealous and faithful discharge of normal or ordinary service, whether short term or prolonged. It could be a special achievement or success in the performance of duty in difficult or unusual circumstances, or sustained high-level performance with outcomes and recognisable benefits to CFA, the fire service in general or the community.

The service must be exceptional. Long service should not be used as a basis for making nominations.



Criterion – “Distinguished Service”

To be considered for this award it would be expected that the nominee has given service beyond the norm exemplified by:

1. **Prolonged service distinguished by exceptional performance in a particular area that has proved of significant benefit to the fire service; *and one or more of the following.***
2. Responsibility for and management of an outstanding/exceptional event that has proven to be of significant benefit to the fire service, a community or community safety generally.
3. Development of a new system, or procedure, or technique that is unique and has made a significant contribution to the fire service, a community or community safety generally.
4. Outstanding leadership in the encouragement and development of others, particularly youth, within the fire service and the fostering and furthering of the aims of the fire service to the long-term benefit of the fire service and the community.
5. Demonstrated creativity in the development and implementation of innovative changes that have made a significant contribution to the fire service, fire/emergency operations, or the interests of community safety.

How Should the Nomination be Prepared?

When completing the nomination form, it is important to:

- provide specific examples of how the nominee’s contribution(s) has been outstanding;
- clearly explain the significance of the nominee’s achievements;
- include examples that best show how the nominee has gone above and beyond what could be reasonably expected of someone in a similar position; and
- focus on why the nominee’s service and achievements are outstanding and worthy of recognition through the Australian Fire Service Medal.

Details of positions held over a number of years are not sufficient on their own.

The Nomination Form

The nomination form is a pro forma comprising the following parts:

- details of person submitting nomination;
- details of person being nominated for the AFSM;
- referees;
- nomination statement; and
- suggested citation.

Details of Person Submitting Nomination

The nomination form must include details of the person making the nomination and be signed and dated. All details required of the nominator are listed on the form and will be treated as confidential.

Details of Person Being Nominated

As the Australian Fire Service Medal is part of the official national honours system, it is important to provide full personal details of the nominee. All details required of the nominee are listed on the form and will be treated as confidential.

Category should be volunteer, full-time firefighter or non-operational member.

For *Previous Awards Received, Qualifications and Service History*, a date order list for each will suffice.



Referees

The names and contact details of at least two individuals who are in a position to comment on the nominee's service and eligibility must be provided.

Referees must provide a written statement of why they are supporting the nomination.

Nomination Statement

Approximately one to two pages detailing achievements to demonstrate distinguished service will suffice.

The statement should be structured around fulfilment of criterion 1 plus one or more of the subsequent criteria for distinguished service.

The nomination will be considered by CFA and the Department of Justice (DOJ) selection panels alongside other nominations from within CFA and from other Victorian fire services in what is essentially a competitive process. It is therefore important to give a clear picture of what the nominee has done to fulfil the criteria of distinguished service. It should not be assumed that the CFA or DOJ selection panels have a detailed knowledge of the area in which the nominee has worked, or a full understanding of the significance of certain achievements.

Specific examples of how the nominee's contribution has been outstanding should be included in this part.

Focus on why the nominee's service and achievements are outstanding and worthy of recognition through the AFSM. This is important as it enables the selection panel to assess the nomination relative to the duties that would normally be expected of a person at a particular level.

As a guide, you might consider some of the following questions.

- In what role(s) has the nominee excelled?
- How has the nominee demonstrated service worthy of recognition?
- How has the nominee's contribution affected a particular field, locality, brigade, group or community at large?
- Over what period has the nominee made a major commitment?
- Has the nominee's contribution been recognised elsewhere, e.g. in the media, by other awards, professional interest groups, volunteer associations or through local government?
- What makes this person stand out from others?

Suggested Citation for Nominee

Include here a brief summary of 100–200 words of the key reasons the award has been made. Three short paragraphs capturing the following information are recommended:

- an acknowledgement of the years of service and role or roles with CFA;
- details of significant achievements that are above and beyond his or her roles, giving one or two examples; and
- a general statement to capture other contributions.

This citation will be used by the Governor-General as background information and cited in the booklet used at the investiture ceremony.

It is important that the citation reflects the substantial achievements of the nominee as this information will be made available to the public.

