



Department of Primary Industries

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Procedure – Aviation contracting for emergency operations

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REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Amendments	
		Section	Details
1	2 Nov 11		For approval
2	31 Jul 12	All	Integration of NSW RFS in contracting arrangements

1. Application / Scope

- 1.1. Air Operators used in emergency management operations for NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) must be contracted in accordance with this procedure to enable the provision of safe, efficient and effective operations.
- 1.2. Tendering and contract management should comply with the NSW Government and departmental policies, procedures and guidelines.
- 1.3. An aviation Expressions of Interest (EOI) must be developed for the provision of aviation services. Note that these agreements are contracts, but there is no undertaking by NSW DPI to actually utilise or guarantee the Air Operator any pre-determined employment.
- 1.4. Aviation EOIs by nature can be complex and input from end-users, as well as aviation and contracting advisors is essential in ensuring that service to the required standard is acquired. Due to the safety and financial considerations and imperatives in the provision of aviation services, it is essential that the end-user understands what their objectives are for the use of aviation services.
- 1.5. EOI process is managed by NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) Aviation Section.
- 1.6. All EOI responses, assessments and audits for each Air Operator are maintained by the NSW RFS.

2. Abbreviations / Definitions

- **ABN** – Australian Business Number
- **Air Operator** – Organisation that holds an Australian Civil Aviation Safety Authority Air Operator Certificate
- **AOC** - Air Operator Certificate
- **AOL** – Approved Operators List
- **Assessment** – Evaluation of an organisation, system, process, project or product against generally accepted standards and/or practices to determine the effectiveness of the subject and make judgements on its performance then where appropriate propose recommendations to correct perceived deficiencies and/or optimise existing conditions.
- **Audit** – Evaluation of an organisation, system, process, project or product against set criteria in order to check compliance with that criteria and then issue where appropriate, notices of non-compliance where such non-compliance exists.
- **CWN** – Call When Needed (AOL)
- **Department** - NSW DPI
- **EOI** – NSW & ACT State Air Desk Expression of Interest for Call When Needed Helicopters and Fixed Wing Aircraft to Support Emergency and Other Operations
- **Independent Aviation Assessor** – industry expert in aviation approved for use by Emergency Management Unit
- **IAWG** – Interagency Aviation Working Group
- **NSW DPI** – NSW Department of Primary Industries
- **NSW RFS SAD** – NSW Rural Fire Service State Air Desk
- **SMS** – Safety Management System
- **Task Profiles** – Description and analysis of an aviation task to determine limits and requirements

3. Resources / Equipment

- NSW RFS database for the Approved Operators List (AOL)
- Aviation EOI for Air Operators
- Tender documents submitted by Air Operators to RFS
- Independent Aviation Assessor(s)
- Member of Interagency Aviation Working Group (IAWG) to oversee EOI development
- Aviation policies, procedures, task profiles and associated risk assessments

4. Warnings

- 4.1. No information pertaining to Air Operators is permitted to be released to other Air Operators and shall be kept confidential and only accessible by personnel requiring the information to perform their roles.
- 4.2. Any departmental personnel involved in the process must declare any conflict of interest that has the potential to arise in accordance with the department's Code of Conduct.
- 4.3. The purpose of the EOI for aviation services is to identify Air Operators that will provide a safe and efficient service at a reasonable and sustainable cost to the Air Operator and the Agencies. Lowering of costs by Air Operators has the potential to undermine maintenance and safety. An effective assessment process developed in consultation with independent aviation experts is required.

5. Procedure

5.1 EOI

5.1.1 Development

Before an EOI is issued, end users of the service through the IAWG should agree that the format, content and correct service is being sought. NSW RFS is responsible for the IAWG.

NSW DPI element of the EOI is developed in conjunction with task profiles and their associated risk assessments. These documents set the requirements and standards for NSW DPI aerial emergency management operations. The task profiles and risk assessments will form part of the operating procedures for the department and Air Operators.

The EOI should be reviewed and re-issued every year as there are ongoing technology improvements in the aviation industry that may aid in meeting aviation objectives. Other Air Operators may also enter the market or existing operators may leave.

The EOI is open for submission at all times to enable additional Air Operators, aircraft and aircrew to be assessed as required.

5.1.3 EOI availability

The approved EOI and associated documents are to be available from NSW RFS.

5.2 Register

NSW RFS will maintain a register that will contain information relating to the EOI applicants, both successful and non-successful, including approved and non-approved Air Operators, aircrew and aircraft. The register is the Approved Operators List (AOL).

5.3 Air Operator evaluation

NSW RFS Aviation Section evaluates EOI applications.

An agreement with NSW RFS enables the sharing of audit costs and reports between the agencies included in the EOI.

Audits and assessments will be conducted to:

1. Check initial compliance to EOI requirements to enable contracting of Air Operators – by NSW RFS
2. Assess compliance by contracted Air Operators to the EOI including policies, procedures, task profiles, legislation, regulations and industry standards – during operations, when there is a significant change within the contracted company or as required
3. Check progress of system improvement of the contracted Air Operator and the department, particularly the Safety Management System – see point 2
4. RAMP checks performed by NSW RFS
5. Investigate incidents and accidents – as required

The audit and assessment processes will be conducted by qualified persons, usually an Independent Aviation Assessor with input from appropriate department personnel and Air Operators. A report is produced for each assessment/audit and includes any observations and recommendations for rectifications or improvements. This report will be registered.

Recommendations to Air Operators must be addressed or a response given in writing to explain why the recommendation is not being addressed. Some recommendations will be mandatory to meet EOI requirements including legislation. If these recommendations are not completed satisfactorily by an Air Operator, the contracting process will be terminated. The Air Operator should be provided an opportunity to respond to recommendations and observations.

5.5 Acceptance

NSW RFS Aviation Section will manage acceptances and notify Air Operators.

6. References

Policy

- [NSW Government tendering guidelines](#)

Task profiles

- [Aerial Mustering](#)
- [Aerial Shooting](#)
- [Aerial Spotting in support of spraying](#)
- [Aerial Spraying](#)
- [Aerial Surveillance](#)
- [Aerial Transport](#)

Risk assessments

- [Aerial Mustering](#)
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- [Aerial Surveillance](#)
- [Aerial Transport](#)

7. Appendices

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