



# Protocol Guide

## SOP ADM 19





## Commissioners Foreword

Wearing the Marine Rescue NSW uniform signifies a commitment to service. It reflects your role within the organisation, the responsibility it carries, and the trust placed in us by the communities we serve and the agencies we work alongside.

The manner in which each person wears our uniform, and the conduct they uphold while doing so, reflects a commitment to the values of professionalism, respect and teamwork that define our culture.

The protocols in this document support a consistent standard across Marine Rescue NSW. These practices are not about unnecessary formality. They allow us to honour individual contribution, mark important occasions with the attention they deserve, and carry forward the history that shapes our identity.

Whether you are new to Marine Rescue NSW or have served for many years, I hope this guide gives you the confidence to take part in these responsibilities with the same care you bring to your role.

Thank you for your commitment to Marine Rescue NSW. The strength of the organisation depends on the example you set and the standard you uphold.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "A. Barrell".

Alex Barrell ESM  
Commissioner  
Marine Rescue NSW

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## Scope and Purpose

This document defines the uniform and ceremonial protocols for all Marine Rescue NSW members and staff. It outlines eligibility requirements, standards for uniform presentation, expectations for behaviour while in uniform, and guidance for formal duties including meetings, official functions and ceremonial activities.

The purpose of this document is to ensure consistency, discipline and professionalism in how members and staff represent the organisation. It provides clear, practical instruction to support compliance across all roles and locations.

Protocols outlined in this document include practices adopted from established maritime and uniformed service traditions, adapted to suit the operational and organisational context of Marine Rescue NSW.

## Policy Context

This document is guided by:

- Marine Rescue NSW Constitution and Rules
- Marine Rescue NSW Code of Conduct

This SOP replaces SOP ADM 15 - Honours and awards

## Protocol Officers

Protocol Officers are appointed representatives responsible for upholding the ceremonial and presentation standards of Marine Rescue NSW.

They provide guidance on the correct application of uniform dress codes, ceremonial protocols, medal and insignia placement, flag use, and the formal conduct of events.

Protocol Officers are awarded the rank of 'Inspector' while in this position.

They also wear the Marine Rescue colours 'Lanyard' while on official duties.

This Lanyard signifies that the wearer holds a 'specialist position' in Marine Rescue NSW.

Contact details for each region's Protocol Officer:

**Northern Rivers:** [protocol.nr@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:protocol.nr@marinerescuensw.com.au)

**Mid North Coast:** [protocol.mnc@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:protocol.mnc@marinerescuensw.com.au)

**Hunter Central Coast:** [protocol.hcc@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:protocol.hcc@marinerescuensw.com.au)

**Sydney:** [protocol.syd@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:protocol.syd@marinerescuensw.com.au)

**Illawarra:** [protocol.ill@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:protocol.ill@marinerescuensw.com.au)

**Monaro:** [protocol.mon@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:protocol.mon@marinerescuensw.com.au)



## **PART A - UNIFORM POLICY**

### **Authority to wear uniform**

Marine Rescue NSW is recognised under the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW) as an accredited emergency service. Uniform items are issued solely for use by current authorised members and staff for operational, ceremonial, training and approved public duties.

The uniform must not be worn by any person who is not a current member or staff of Marine Rescue NSW. Uniforms are not to be worn for personal, recreational or non-approved use. Custom garments, modified insignia, or unauthorised apparel are prohibited.

### **Lost or stolen uniform**

It is the responsibility of all members of MRNSW to ensure that all issued uniform items are secured and properly stored at all times.

If any part of a uniform is lost or stolen, members must report the incident to their Unit Commander (or their delegate).

### **Restrictions on Wearing Uniform**

Uniforms may only be worn during authorised MRNSW activities including operational duties, training, official functions or approved public engagements. Uniforms must not be:

- Worn at unauthorised events
- Combined with civilian or other agency clothing unless wearing the Provisional Uniform
- Worn while consuming alcohol in public (unless formally approved by the Commissioner)
- Worn by individuals no longer authorised to represent MRNSW

Members and Staff are expected to consider the setting and whether their presence in uniform reflects the values and responsibilities of MRNSW. The misuse of MRNSW uniform may be considered a breach of the Code of Conduct and could result in disciplinary action.

### **Uniform alterations**

Uniforms must not be altered, modified or personalised. This includes:

- Removal or addition of patches, insignia or embroidery
- Decorative additions or branding
- Reshaping or tailoring that changes issued appearance

Minor alterations for fit (e.g. hemming) are permitted, provided they do not affect functionality or style. Medical or accessibility-related adjustments are permitted where necessary, provided they remain consistent with operational requirements.

### **Uniform disposal**

Uniforms that are no longer fit for wear must be defaced or have branding removed before disposal. Uniforms must not be donated, sold, or used for non-MRNSW purposes.

Upon resignation from Marine Rescue NSW, all uniform items must be returned to the member's Unit. Items are not required to be sent to MRNSW Stores and may be retained for use within the unit where appropriate.

## Part B – Dress Codes and Uniform Standards

### Provisional Uniform

#### Eligibility

Members become eligible for the provisional uniform once they are granted Provisional Membership. Further requirements for Provisional Membership are outlined in the Marine Rescue NSW Constitution.

#### Uniform Components

The standard Provisional Uniform set includes the following items:

- One MRNSW branded polo shirt or t-shirt
- One MRNSW cap
- MRNSW issued name badge(s)
- One MRNSW photo identification card

#### Conditions of Wear

The provisional uniform must be worn for authorised Marine Rescue NSW activities, including meetings, training, and supervised public duties. It must be paired with neat civilian trousers and closed-toe footwear suitable for operational environments. The ID card should be worn when undertaking fundraising duties.

#### Care, replacement and transition

Uniform items must be kept clean, stored securely, and presented in a serviceable condition. Any requests for replacement must be submitted to the Unit Commander or delegate.

Upon transition to Regular Membership or attainment of a recognised rating, the full Working Blues uniform is issued. The cap, name badge and identification card remain valid and continue to be used.



### Corporate Uniform

#### Eligibility

The corporate uniform is issued to all Marine Rescue NSW staff.

#### Uniform Components

The standard corporate uniform includes:

- MRNSW branded short or long sleeve business shirt.
- Dark Navy corporate trousers.
- MRNSW branded polo shirt.
- Chino pants, shorts or skirts.
- Corporate Style MRNSW Duty Jacket (slightly different than the regular Duty jackets).
- MRNSW issued name badge.
- Closed-toe footwear that reflects a professional standard and is in a suitable condition.

#### Conditions of Wear

The corporate uniform is suitable for office-based and administrative roles and may be worn as day-to-day attire. Staff who have also been issued Dress Whites may wear the corporate uniform in situations where the Dress Uniform is not required.

#### Care and Replacement

Uniform items should be kept clean and in good condition. Staff may replace items when no longer suitable due to wear, damage or fit.

## Dress Codes

To ensure members are correctly attired for their duties or an event, a uniform Dress Code has been developed. The Dress Codes are as follows:






Uniform Reference Number	Order of Uniform Wear
Operational Uniform	
1	Working Blues
1A	Formal Working Blues
1B	Ceremonial Working Blues
Dress Uniform	
2	Dress Whites
2A	Presentation Dress Whites
2B	Formal Dress Whites
2C	Ceremonial Dress Whites
2D	Ceremonial Dress Whites with Tunic (Ribbons)
2E	Ceremonial Dress Whites with Tunic (Medals)

## Presentation Requirements

The following presentation standards apply to all Marine Rescue NSW uniform dress codes unless otherwise stated:

- Uniforms should be worn in full and to a consistent standard.
- Shirts are to be tucked in; long sleeves either buttoned at the wrist or neatly rolled above the elbow for general duties (not at formal occasions).
- Footwear should be closed-toe, clean, in good condition, and suitable for duty.
- Uniform items should be clean, well-fitted, and free from excessive wear, fading, or damage, particularly at ceremonial events.
- Ribbons and medals are to be current and worn in line with the placement guidelines in this guide.
- Rating epaulettes should reflect both the duty being performed and the member's highest operational rating.
- High-visibility yellow wet weather PPE is the preferred option for vessel operations; the Duty jacket may be worn in situations where hi-vis gear is not required (see Appendix A).
- Legacy uniform items may continue to be worn for general duties but are not appropriate for formal or ceremonial occasions.
- Trial uniform items should not be worn once the trial has ended.
- The Marine Rescue ID Card is to be worn and visible when fundraising. At other times it is not required, though members may choose to keep it in the pocket of wet weather gear if applicable.
- To help maintain consistency, units are encouraged to let members know the correct dress code and protocol before events, especially where awards are being presented.

## Dress Code: 1A - Working Blues

Wet Weather Gear	Duty Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
 Vessels only	 Undecorated	 Shirt only	 Shirt only	

### Eligibility & Occasion

Worn by Regular Members and staff who have been issued the Working Blues uniform for Standard operational duties, MR base activity, community engagement and/or training.

### Clothing

- Working Blues short or long sleeve shirt
- Working Blues cargo shorts or pants
- Duty jacket (as needed)

### Additional Uniform Items

- Citations, pins and ribbons (optional, if issued)
- Epaulettes
- Web belt
- Name badge
- High-visibility wet weather jacket and trousers (as needed – vessel use)

### Headwear






- Working Blues cap or broad brim hat

### Footwear

- Deck shoes or black boots
- Plain black or white socks



## Dress Code: 1B - Formal Working Blues

Wet Weather Gear	Navy Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
	 Undecorated	 Shirt only	 Shirt only	

### Eligibility & Occasion

Worn by Regular Members and staff who have been issued the Working Blues uniform. For formal and commissioning events.

### Clothing

- Working Blues long sleeve shirt
- Working Blues pants
- Duty jacket (as needed)

### Additional Uniform Items

- Citations, pins and ribbons (if issued)
- Epaulettes
- Web belt
- Name badge
- Working Blues cap

### Headwear






- Working Blues cap or broad brim hat

### Footwear

- Black boots
- Plain black socks



## Dress Code: 1C - Ceremonial Working Blues

Wet Weather Gear	Navy Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
	 As needed	 Jacket or Shirt		 Jacket or Shirt

### Eligibility and Issue

Worn by Regular Members and staff who have been issued the Working Blues uniform during formal commemorative occasions such as funerals, memorials, ANZAC day, or other events as directed.

### Clothing

- Working Blues long sleeve shirt
- Working Blues cargo pants
- Duty jacket (as needed)

### Additional Uniform Items

- Epaulettes
- Web belt
- Name badge
- Full sized medals (if issued)
- Working Blues cap

### Headwear

- Working Blues cap or broad brim hat

### Footwear

- Black boots
- Plain black socks



## Dress Code: 2 - Dress Whites

Navy Tie (male or female)	Duty Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
✗	✓ Undecorated	✓ Shirt only	✓ Shirt only	✗

### Eligibility & Occasion

Worn by unit executive members and operational staff issued Dress Whites as part of their role. This dress code is for day-to-day wear, or meetings & events where a professional appearance is required, but formal dress is not.

### Clothing

- Dress Whites shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Navy trousers or skirt
- Duty jacket (as needed)

### Additional Uniform Items

- Name badge
- Ribbons (optional – shirt only)
- Black belt

### Headwear

- Navy cap (as needed)
- White peak cap (as needed – event dependent)

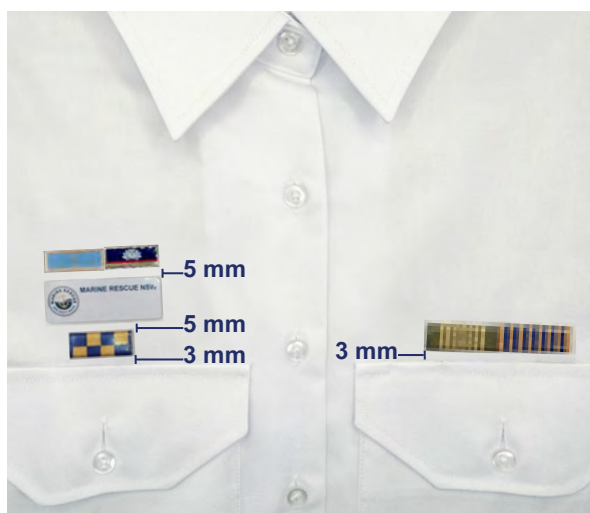
### Footwear

- Black socks
- Black polished shoes (men)
- Black court shoes (women)



### Additional Presentation Requirements

- No medals, pins or decorations may be worn on the Duty jacket under this dress code.
- Only the name badge may be worn on the jacket in the designated pocket.



## Dress Code: 2A - Presentation Dress Whites

Navy Tie (male or female)	Duty Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
✓	✓ Undecorated	✓ Shirt Only	✓ Shirt Only	✗

### Eligibility & Occasion

Worn by unit executive members and operational staff issued Dress Whites as part of their role, or other members attending formal or representative events. This dress code is for events where a professional appearance is required, but formal dress is not.

### Clothing

- Dress Whites shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Navy trousers or skirt
- Duty jacket (as needed)

### Additional Uniform Items

- Navy tie
- Name badge
- Ribbons (optional – shirt only)
- Black belt

### Headwear

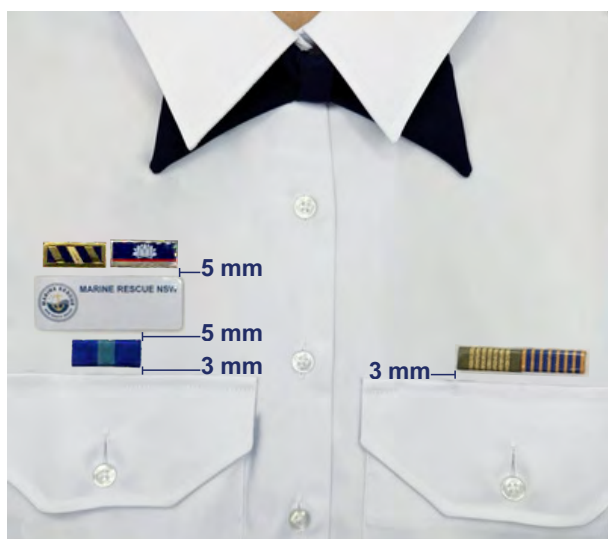
- Navy cap (as needed – event dependent)
- White peak cap (as needed – event dependent)

### Footwear

- Black socks
- Black polished shoes (men)
- Black court shoes (women)

### Additional Presentation Requirements

- No medals, pins or decorations may be worn on the Duty jacket under this dress code.
- Only the name badge may be worn on the jacket in the designated pocket.



## Dress Code: 2B - Formal Dress Whites

Navy Tie (male or female)	Duty Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
✓ Required	✓ Undecorated	✓ Shirt only	✗	✓ Full Size Shirt only

### Eligibility & Occasion

Worn by unit executive members, staff, or, in some cases, other members attending formal or representative events, where permitted. These events may include award ceremonies (RESCA), annual Government House Services Reception etc.

### Clothing

- Dress Whites shirt (long sleeve only)
- Navy trousers or skirt
- Duty jacket\*

### Additional Uniform Items

- Navy tie
- Name badge
- Medals (if issued – full size, shirt only)
- Black belt

### Headwear

- Duty cap (as needed, event dependent)
- White peak cap (as needed, event dependent)

### Footwear

- Black socks
- Black polished shoes (men)
- Black court shoes (women)

### Additional Presentation Requirements

- No medals, pins or decorations may be worn on the Duty jacket under this dress code.
- \*The Duty jacket is required to be worn to and from the venue and removed once inside.



## Dress Code: 2C - Ceremonial Dress Whites

Navy Tie (male or female)	Duty Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
✓	✓ Decorations permitted	✓ Jacket	✗	✓ Full Size Jacket or Shirt

### Eligibility & Occasion

Worn by unit executive members, staff, or, in some cases, other members attending formal or representative events, where permitted. This may include ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, or other events where full-size medals and formal presentation are appropriate.

### Clothing

- Dress Whites shirt (long sleeve only)
- Navy trousers or skirt
- Duty jacket (required, except where advised otherwise)

### Additional Uniform Items

- Navy tie
- Name badge
- Medals (if issued – full size)
- Black belt

### Headwear

- Navy cap (as needed – event dependent)
- White peak cap (as needed – event dependent)

### Footwear

- Black socks
- Black polished shoes (men)
- Black court shoes (women)

### Additional Presentation Requirements

- Medals and citations may be displayed on either the shirt or the jacket.



## Dress Code: 2D - Ceremonial Dress Whites with Tunic – Ribbons

Navy Tie (male or female)	Duty Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
✓ Required	✗	✓ Jacket or Shirt	✓ Jacket or Shirt	✗

### Eligibility

The tunic is not part of the standard uniform issue. It is worn in limited circumstances, typically by senior representatives or members attending formal or commemorative events.

### Occasion for Use

Used for formal duties or ceremonial events where ribbons may be worn in place of medals.

### Clothing

- Dress Whites shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Navy trousers or skirt
- MRNSW tunic

### Additional Uniform Items

- Navy tie (male or female style)
- Name badge
- Ribbons (not worn with medals or miniatures)
- Black belt

### Headwear

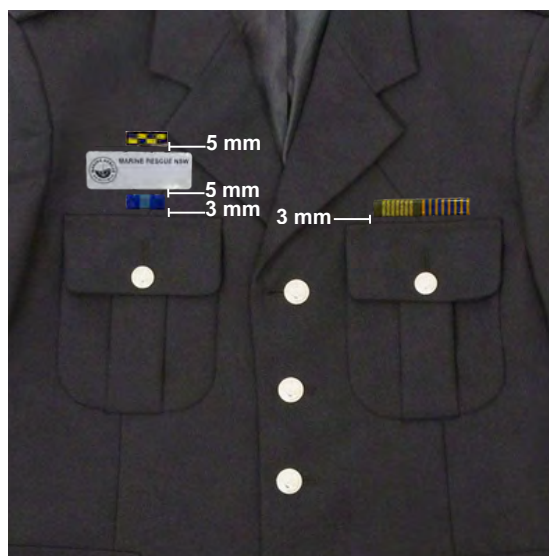
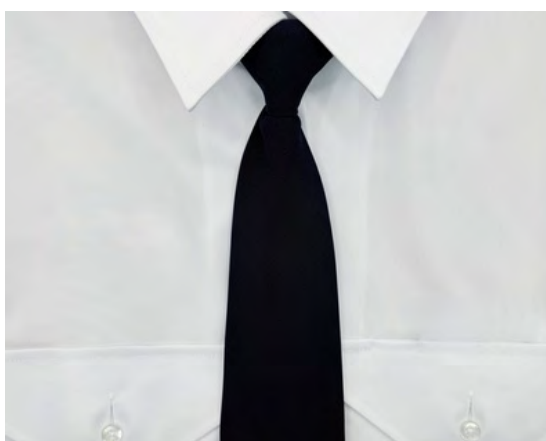
- White peak cap (if purchased)

### Footwear

- Black socks
- Black polished shoes (men)
- Black court shoes (women)

### Additional Presentation Requirements

- The tunic replaces the Duty jacket.
- Ribbons may be worn on the tunic.
- Medals and miniatures must not be worn.
- The Duty jacket is not worn with the tunic.



## Dress Code: 2E - Ceremonial Dress Whites with Tunic – Medals

Navy Tie (male or female)	Duty Jacket	Citations & Pins	Ribbons	Medals
✓ Required	✗	✓ On tunic	✗	✓ On tunic

### Eligibility

The tunic is not part of the standard uniform issue. It is worn in limited circumstances, typically by senior representatives or members attending formal or commemorative events.

### Occasion for Use

Used for high-level ceremonies, official honours presentations, or formal commemorative events where full-size medals are worn.

### Clothing

- Dress Whites shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Navy trousers or skirt
- MRNSW tunic

### Additional Uniform Items

- Navy tie (male or female style)
- Name badge
- Medals (not worn with ribbons or miniatures)
- Black belt

### Headwear

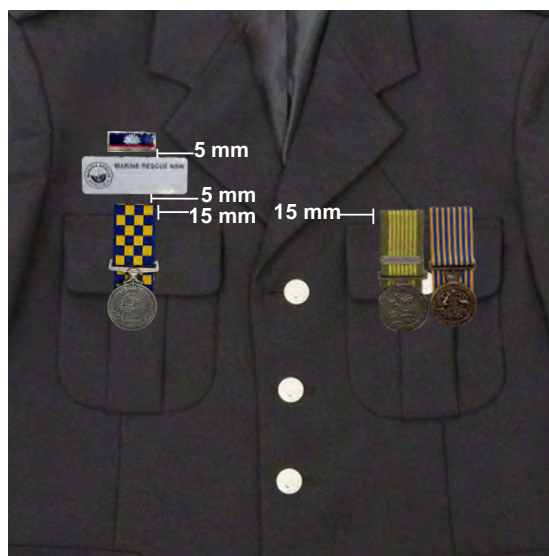
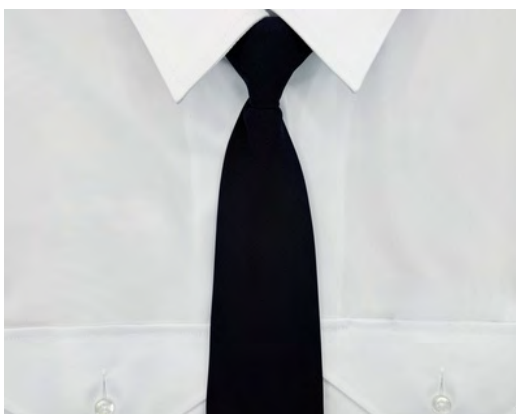
- White peak cap (if purchased)

### Footwear

- Black socks
- Black polished shoes (men)
- Black court shoes (women)

### Additional Presentation Requirements

- The tunic replaces the Duty jacket.
- Full-size medals may be worn on the tunic.
- Ribbons and miniatures must not be worn.
- The Navy cap is not worn with the tunic.



# Specialised Personal Protection Gear (PPE)

## Rescue Water Craft Operator (RWCO) Gear

### Eligibility and Issue

Issued to trained and current Rescue Water Craft Operators (RWCOs). Members must maintain currency through drills and remain active in service to retain access to RWC PPE.

### Occasion for Use

This gear is worn during all RWC operations and training. It must not be worn unless operating or assisting with RWC activity.

### Components

- MRNSW-approved helmet
- MRNSW-issued RWC lifejacket (PFD)
- Neoprene wetsuit (spring suit or full length)
- Neoprene booties

### Additional Presentation Requirements

All items must be clean, properly fitted, and in good condition. No substitutions may be made without ZDOM approval.

Wetsuit thickness may vary depending on local water temperature, as outlined in the RWCO SOP.

For detailed PPE guidance, refer to the RWC SOP available in OTTER.



## State Operations Group PPE

### Eligibility and Issue

Worn during approved SOG deployments or exercises. This uniform is task-specific and must not be worn outside of authorised SOG activity.

### Occasion for Use

This gear is worn during all RWC operations and training. It must not be worn unless operating or assisting with RWC activity.

### Components

Uniform and equipment items may be issued to the member, assigned to a vessel or vehicle, or provided for the duration of a deployment. Members are responsible for ensuring they have access to all required items before deployment.

- Deployment shirt with reflective tape
- Operational trousers with reflective tape
- Spray jacket (optional)
- Black lace-up boots
- Helmet (as required by task or risk assessment)
- Lifejacket (for on-water operations)

### Additional Presentation Requirements

All items must be clean, correctly fitted, and in good condition. Members are expected to bring or collect the PPE required prior to deployment.

For further detail, refer to the SOG SOP, available in OTTER.



## Headwear and Caps

Marine Rescue NSW recognises the following headwear as part of the official uniform. Wear is subject to the guidelines for each uniform type.



### Working Blues Cap

The working blues cap is worn as part of the operational uniform. Members have the option of wearing either the blue baseball cap or blue wide brim hat (see below).



### Wide Brim Hat

The wide brim hat should only be worn when working outdoors or on boats, where it does not create a hazard. Members have the option of wearing either the blue baseball cap or blue wide brim floppy hat.



### Beanie

May be worn during informal duties with the Working Blues uniform. *Available for purchase for Units in cooler climates.*



### Navy Cap

The navy cap is an optional item that may be purchased and worn with the Dress Whites uniform.



### White Peak Cap

The peak cap is worn with the dress whites uniform and tunics, these should not be worn with the operational blues.

The peak cap is normally worn by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners, Senior Staff, Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders.

## Permitted Headwear by Uniform Type: Summary

	Working Blues Cap, Wide Brim Hat & Beanie	Navy Cap	White Peak Cap
Working Blues	✓	✗	✗
Dress Whites	✗	✓	✓
Tunic	✗	✗	✓

## Peak Cap Insignia

Marine Rescue NSW peak caps include visual distinctions that indicate the wearer's appointment level. These distinctions are consistent across both men's and women's headwear, including plain and tricorn styles.



### **Men's Plain Peak Cap**

Worn by Unit Commanders, Deputy Unit Commanders, and selected Unit Executives, as designated by the Unit Commander.

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### **Women's Tricorne Plain**

Worn by Unit Commanders, Deputy Unit Commanders, and selected Unit Executives, as designated by the Unit Commander.

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### **Men's Peak Cap with Silver Bar & Silver Strap**

Worn by Protocol Officers and staff-appointed Superintendents and Inspectors.

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### **Women's Tricorn with Silver Bar**

Worn by Protocol Officers and staff-appointed Superintendents and Inspectors.

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### **Men's Peak Cap with One Row of Silver Oakleaf & Silver Strap**

Worn by the Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioners

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### **Men's Peak Cap with Two Rows of Silver Oakleaf & Silver Strap**

Worn by the Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner

## When caps are worn

The formal white peak cap or working blues cap should be worn in the following circumstances:

- When attending a Marine Rescue NSW function in uniform, or representing Marine Rescue NSW at an outdoor function in uniform
- When the National Anthem is played outdoors
- When taking part in a Marine Rescue NSW funeral parade
- When entering a building while on official Marine Rescue NSW business
- When inside a church (females only)

## When caps are not worn

Peak or working blues caps should not be worn in the following situations:

- When inside a church (males only)
- When a chaplain is conducting a prayer for any Marine Rescue NSW purpose
- When serving as a pallbearer during a funeral parade
- When the National Anthem is played indoors
- When entering a Marine Rescue NSW unit meeting
- When entering a Marine Rescue NSW base
- Inside an RSL Club

## Other Ceremonial Insignia

### Chaplain Stoles

Marine Rescue NSW chaplains may wear a ceremonial stole when officiating at memorials, official ceremonies, and other formal events.

The stole is worn over Dress Whites, Tunic or other formal uniform, draped evenly over both shoulders with insignia clearly visible. It must not interfere with the display of medals, rank insignia, or name badges.

Stoles are reserved for formally recognised chaplains only. The design must align with organisational standards, and any alterations must preserve the official appearance.



## Approved footwear

### Working Blues

Members wearing the Working Blues uniform are to wear either deck shoes or black boots depending on the event.

- **Deck shoes** are the standard footwear issued at no cost as part of the uniform. They are Duty in colour and form part of the full Working Blues uniform kit provided to members.
- **Black boots** may be worn as an alternative to deck shoes. Mongrel brand boots are the style available through Stores, either provided on approval or for purchase. Other plain black lace-up boots of a similar standard are acceptable.

### Dress Whites / Unit Executive Uniform

When wearing the Dress Whites uniform, members are to wear formal black footwear.

- **Men:** black polished lace-up shoes.
- **Women:** plain black court shoes.

Footwear for these uniforms must be well maintained and polished to a high standard. Unit Executives may obtain footwear through the Unit Executive uniform order form at unit cost. Plain black footwear of a comparable style and standard is also acceptable.

### General Requirements

- Footwear must always be serviceable and plain in appearance.
- Socks worn with footwear must be plain, either white or black.
- Footwear should be replaced when worn or damaged to maintain a professional standard.



Deck Shoe



Mongrel Zipsider Boot



Men's Black  
Polished Shoes  
(Executive)



Women's Black  
Court Shoes  
(Executive)

## Legacy and Purchasable Items

Marine Rescue has a number of legacy uniform items, as well as items available for purchase through the Marine Rescue online store.

'Supporter' items purchased from the online store are designed for casual wear and are not considered part of the official Marine Rescue uniform. This includes items such as the supporter cap and slouch hat, which may be worn with civilian attire.

Some legacy items are being phased out. These include the **Marine Rescue NSW Navy knitted jumper/pullover** (with roundels and epaulette holders) and the **Marine Rescue royal blue polar fleece vest**. While these may continue to be worn in general use, they are not to be worn at formal or ceremonial occasions.

The older Marine Rescue working blues shirt with writing above the right pocket is being phased out and should no longer be worn.

## PART C - Honours, Awards and Insignia

### Australian Honours and Awards

Australian Honours and Awards are worn on the left breast, following the official Order of Wearing issued by the Governor-General. The medal of highest precedence is always mounted closest to the heart, with others following outward toward the left shoulder. This ensures consistency and respect for the national system of recognition.

Members of Marine Rescue NSW may be recipients of a variety of awards from the Australian Honours system. These awards recognise service, commitment, and distinguished contributions to the community. The most relevant in this context are the Emergency Services Medal, the National Emergency Medal, and the National Medal:

- **Emergency Services Medal** – For distinguished service in an Australian emergency service. Entitles the wearer to the post-nominal ESM.
- **National Emergency Medal** – For sustained or significant service during nationally significant emergencies. Clasps on the ribbon denote the specific operation.
- **National Medal** – For fifteen years of diligent service in organisations that protect the community, with clasps for each additional ten years.

While these three medals are the most commonly encountered within Marine Rescue NSW, other Australian Honours may also be worn if awarded. These include awards for bravery, campaign and service medals, and long service decorations from other eligible organisations.

#### **Order of Wear (closest to the heart → outward toward the left shoulder):**

Emergency Services Medal → National Emergency Medal → National Medal

*Note: the complete order is available from the Governor-General's website*

### Order of Wear - Medals on the Left Breast



Right  
Closest to the heart

Left  
Towards left shoulder

## NSW State Awards - Medals

NSW agencies issue medals to recognise bravery, distinguished service and long service. These are worn on the right breast, with each service's medals grouped together in a fixed sequence.

### Order of Wear (right shoulder → inward toward the heart):

Marine Rescue NSW → Volunteer Rescue Association → NSW State Emergency Service → NSW Rural Fire Service → NSW Ambulance → Fire and Rescue NSW → NSW Police Force

## Marine Rescue NSW Medals

Marine Rescue NSW awards medals to recognise bravery, distinguished service and long service. These are worn on the right breast, with the highest bravery award placed outermost at the shoulder and the Long Service Medal worn closest to the heart.

- **Marine Rescue NSW Medal for Valour** – The highest MRNSW award, recognising acts of exceptional bravery under great peril. The full-size medal is engraved with the recipient's name and date of action.
- **Commissioner's Commendation for Courage** – Recognises conspicuous courage where members knowingly placed themselves at significant risk to save or protect life. Subsequent awards are denoted by a rosette fixed to the ribbon, miniature and ribbon bar.
- **Commissioner's Commendation for Service** – Recognises meritorious service beyond normal expectations in administration, leadership, operations, training or public education. May be awarded individually or to groups, with further awards marked by a rosette.
- **Marine Rescue NSW Long Service Medal** – Awarded after ten years of continuous or aggregate service.

### Order of Wear (right shoulder → inward toward the heart):

Marine Rescue NSW Medal for Valour → Commissioner's Commendation for Courage → Commissioner's Commendation for Service → Marine Rescue NSW Long Service Medal

### Order of Wear - Medals on the Right Breast *below the name badge*



Right  
Right shoulder

Left  
Closest to the heart

## NSW State Awards - Citations

Citations are worn on the right breast, positioned 5 mm above the name badge. These include citations issued by agencies as well as NSW Premier's Emergency Citations, which are placed after the agency sequence and ordered by date of issue.



When more than one citation is worn, they follow a fixed sequence from the right shoulder inward toward the heart, with Marine Rescue NSW outermost and the NSW Police Force closest to the heart.

### Order of Wear (right shoulder → inward toward the heart):

Marine Rescue NSW → Volunteer Rescue Association → NSW State Emergency Service → NSW Rural Fire Service → NSW Ambulance → Fire and Rescue NSW → NSW Police Force → NSW Premier's Emergency Citations (Flood 2022–23 → Bushfire 2019–20)

## Marine Rescue NSW Citations

Marine Rescue NSW issues its own citations to recognise members for significant contribution, service, or commitment. These are worn on the right breast, above the name badge, with Life Membership placed outermost at the shoulder and Unit Life Membership worn closest to the heart.

- **Marine Rescue NSW Life Membership** – Awarded by the Board for a member's long-term and outstanding contribution.
- **Commissioner's Citation** – Awarded at the Commissioner's discretion for actions or service in a significant incident or rescue. When a member is awarded a second citation, the insignia displays two anchors and the first citation is no longer worn.
- **Marine Rescue NSW Unit Life Membership** – Awarded by an individual unit to recognise significant contributions to that unit over many years.



### Order of Wear (right shoulder → inward toward the heart):

Marine Rescue NSW Life Membership → Commissioner's Citation → Unit Life Membership

*Note: If issued, the 5-Year Insignia Pin is positioned after the Unit Life Membership citation, closest to the heart.*

### Order of Wear - Citations on the Right Side above the name badge



Right  
Right shoulder

Left  
Closest to the heart

## Marine Rescue NSW Long Service Pins and Medals

Long service awards recognise a member's ongoing commitment to Marine Rescue NSW over an extended period. They are worn on the right breast of the uniform and form part of the Marine Rescue NSW internal medal order. When worn with medals from other NSW agencies, they remain grouped within the MRNSW sequence and are positioned according to the NSW-wide medal order.

Service	Recognition	Placement	Notes
5 years	Insignia Pin	Right breast, centred 3 mm above the name badge	Removed once the 10-Year Service Medal or Ribbon Bar is awarded
10 years	Service Medal	Right breast, centred 3 mm above the pocket seam and 5 mm below the name badge	Replaced by the ribbon bar for daily uniform wear
	Ribbon Bar	Right breast, centred 3 mm above the pocket seam	Worn in place of the medal for daily wear. The 5-Year Pin is no longer worn. A single rosette in the centre of the ribbon represents the most recent clasp
20 years	Anchor clasp set	Clasp fixed to the medal ribbon	One clasp added to 10-year medal. Ribbon Bar shows a single rosette
30 years	Anchor clasp set	Clasp fixed to the medal ribbon	Two clasps stacked on 10-year medal. Ribbon Bar shows a single rosette
40 years	Anchor clasp set	Clasp fixed to the medal ribbon	Three clasps stacked on 10-year medal. Ribbon Bar shows a single rosette
50 years	Anchor clasp set	Clasp fixed to the medal ribbon	Four clasps stacked on 10-year medal. Ribbon Bar shows a single rosette

**Transition:** Marine Rescue NSW is in the process of replacing anchor clasps with numbered clasps, and moving to a 5-year milestone system (15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 years).

Under the new system, only the most recent milestone clasp is displayed on the medal ribbon.

Ribbon bars will use a single rosette, marked with the corresponding year number.



5-Year  
Insignia Pin



10-Year  
Service Medal



10-Year  
Service Ribbon Bar



10-Year  
Clasp Set



## Ribbon Bars

Ribbon bars are a smaller version of a medal's ribbon, worn when the full medal is not being worn. They provide a practical way for members to display their awards on a daily basis without the need to wear full-size medals. Ribbon bars are the approved form for routine uniform wear and allow achievements to be recognised while still maintaining a professional and functional appearance.

Ribbon bars are mounted in the same order of wear as the medals they represent, and on the same side of the uniform. On the left breast, they follow the Australian Honours and Awards System, positioned closest to the heart and moving toward the left shoulder. On the right breast, they follow the NSW-wide medal sequence, with Marine Rescue NSW medals grouped in their internal order, positioned closest to the heart and moving toward the right shoulder.

## Placement

Ribbon bars are worn 3 mm above the pocket seam, with the highest award placed in the top row closest to the heart. Where possible, all ribbons should be arranged in a single row. If more than four are worn, a second row is placed directly above with a 5 mm gap. Men may wear up to four ribbons per row, while women may wear three or four depending on fit. Ribbons should always be kept neat, clean and correctly aligned, as they represent the member's personal service and formal recognition.

## When medals are worn

Full-size medals are reserved for formal or ceremonial occasions where the full dignity of the award is to be displayed. These occasions include official award presentations, ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services, memorial services, and other events where the invitation or directive specifies medals are to be worn. Medals are mounted as a single group, with ribbons of equal length so that the medals hang evenly. A medal being awarded is not worn at the presentation ceremony itself; it may only be worn once it has been formally conferred.

When more than one medal is awarded, they are mounted on a single medal bar in the correct order of wear. Medal bars are made in different sizes to suit the number of medals, and all ribbons must be cut to the same length so the medals hang evenly. This ensures the medals are displayed in a professional and consistent manner across all members.

Miniature medals are smaller versions of full-size medals, mounted in the same order of wear. They are intended for wear on civilian evening attire such as a dinner suit, tuxedo or lounge suit, or with evening wear for females. Typical occasions where miniatures may be worn include black tie dinners, official receptions, or other formal evening functions where full-size medals would not be appropriate. Miniatures are not worn on the Marine Rescue NSW Working Blues or Executive Dress White uniforms.

## Lapel Pins

Commemorative lapel pins previously issued by Marine Rescue NSW should be worn on the right collar of the uniform and only one pin is allowed. They can be worn on civilian attire on the collar or on suit or jacket's button lapel.

The MRNSW State Radio Operator endorsement pin is awarded to Radio and Watch Officers endorsed to operate state-wide 24/7. It is worn on the right collar, with either the endorsement pin or a commemorative lapel pin worn at one time, not both.



## Unofficial Medals

Ex-service organisations sometimes commission their own unofficial medals to mark participation in particular military campaigns, periods of service or types of service that have not been recognised through the Australian honours system.

Awards made by foreign governments which have not been approved by the Governor-General for acceptance and wear are also “unofficial”.

There is no impediment to wearing such medals in appropriate private settings, such as a meeting of the relevant ex-service association, or a reception hosted by the relevant foreign government. Ideally, unofficial medals should not be worn at public ceremonial and commemorative events, but if they are worn as the occasion demands, the convention is that they are worn on the right breast.

Wearing of unofficial medals colloquially known as “tinnies” must not be included with approved medals and not worn on the left breast at public, ceremonial or commemorative events while in Marine Rescue NSW Uniform.

## Wearing Decorations with Civilian Dress

Medals, ribbon bars, pins and citations are to be worn on approved Marine Rescue NSW uniforms when specified in the dress code. This includes operational blues, dress whites and tunics.

They may also be worn on appropriate civilian formal attire, such as a suit, when attending events including ANZAC Day commemorations, funerals, official ceremonies, or Government House receptions.

They are not to be worn on corporate attire or casual clothing, including Marine Rescue branded business shirts or polos. Honours and awards are reserved for uniform wear and formal occasions, and must always be displayed in accordance with the order of wear.

## Award and Recognition Presentations

The presentation of awards in Marine Rescue NSW reflects their significance, from Australian Honours conferred at Government House through to long service pins and citations awarded at local unit events. Each award has an intended level of presenter and a standard nomination process. While many can be presented at unit meetings, they may also be conferred at larger award ceremonies or specially arranged events.

## Presentation Protocol

Award presentations should reflect the significance of the recognition. Whether held at Government House or during a unit meeting, each presentation is to be conducted with respect, consistency, and dignity. When planning ceremonies, units should also ensure that all members are aware of the appropriate uniform requirements.

Where a speech is appropriate, remarks should be prepared in advance. They should be concise, respectful, and suited to the award being conferred. For major honours bravery awards, the full citation should be read aloud before the presentation. For service and long service awards, a shorter explanation of the contribution or milestone may be sufficient, but the significance of the award should always be acknowledged.

Recipients are called forward one at a time by name. Where several people are being recognised together, a collective citation may be read, but each recipient should still be called forward individually. Before an award is presented, the presenter should ensure that the member is wearing the correct uniform and that it is neat and presentable.

Awards are given to the recipient in their presentation box. The presenter hands the opened box directly to the recipient, facing the audience, with a handshake to accompany the exchange. Where the occasion calls for medals to be worn, presenters are expected to wear full medals in accordance with the dress code, while recipients wear only previously awarded ribbons until the new award has been formally presented. Where possible, photographs should always be taken to record the presentation, ensuring that uniforms, medals and decorations are in compliance with this SOP.

The tone of the presentation should be appropriate to the level of award. Every presentation should be delivered with care, as each award represents significant commitment to Marine Rescue NSW.

Each award has an intended level of presenter. Where the designated presenter is not available, another senior officer or appropriate representative may take their place. The key consideration is that the presentation is carried out with formality and respect, regardless of the exact title of the presenter.

## Award Descriptions and Procedures

### Emergency Services Medal (ESM)

Recognises distinguished service in an Australian emergency service and entitles the recipient to the post-nominal ESM. Nominations are confidential, endorsed by the Commissioner, and submitted through the national honours system via agencies directly. The medal is formally presented at Government House by the Governor of NSW.

*Form MR460*

### National Emergency Medal (NEM)

Recognises sustained or significant service during nationally significant emergencies, with clasps denoting the specific operation. Public nominations are permitted; nominations for Marine Rescue NSW members are coordinated through Headquarters, endorsed by the Commissioner, and submitted to the Australian Honours system. Where possible, medals should be presented by a Federal Member of Parliament; otherwise by the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, or Zone Commander at a unit meeting or award ceremony.

*Nomination coordinated through Headquarters*

### National Medal (NM)

Recognises fifteen years of diligent service in organisations that protect the community, with clasps for each additional ten years. Nominations are endorsed by the Commissioner before submission. Where possible, medals should be presented by a Federal Member of Parliament; otherwise by the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, or Zone Commander at a unit meeting or award ceremony.

*Form MR450*

### Marine Rescue Medal for Valour

The highest MRNSW bravery award, recognising acts of exceptional courage under great peril. It is usually presented by the Commissioner at a specially organised ceremony, though on occasion it may be presented by the Emergency Services Minister. The medal is engraved with the recipient's name and date of action.

*Form MR300*

### Commissioner's Commendation for Courage

Recognises members who knowingly placed themselves at significant risk to save or protect life. It is presented by the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner at a special event. Subsequent awards are denoted by a rosette on the ribbon and miniature.

*Form MR300*

### Commissioner's Commendation for Service

Recognises meritorious service beyond normal expectations in leadership, operations, administration, training, or public education. It may be awarded to individuals or groups. This commendation is normally presented by the Commissioner, but may also be presented by a Deputy Commissioner or Zone Commander at a unit meeting or award ceremony.

*Form MR290*

### Commissioner's Citation

Recognises exemplary service or a significant rescue or incident. It is conferred by the Commissioner, or a Deputy Commissioner, at a unit meeting or award ceremony.

*Form MR310*

### Marine Rescue NSW Life Membership

Is the highest internal recognition of the organisation, awarded by the Board for long-term and outstanding contribution. It is presented at the Annual General Meeting by the Chair of the Board, accompanied by a framed certificate and citation.

*Form MR305*

### Marine Rescue NSW Unit Life Membership

Recognises sustained contribution to a Unit and is conferred by the Unit Executive. It is presented by the Unit Commander at a unit event, with the recipient receiving a framed certificate and pin.

*Form MR305A*

### Five-Year Insignia Pin

Is awarded for five years of continuous or aggregate service, including service with predecessor organisations. It is presented by the Unit Commander, typically at a unit meeting or award ceremony. The pin is removed once the Ten-Year Medal is awarded.

*Form MR280*

### Long Service Medal

Recognises ten years of service and is presented by a Zone Commander, usually at a unit meeting or award ceremony. The medal is accompanied by a ribbon bar for daily wear.

*Form MR280*

### Long Service Clasps

Mark service at 20, 30, 40 and 50 years, and onwards in ten-year increments. Clasps are fixed to the medal ribbon, while the ribbon bar shows a single rosette for the most recent clasp. They are generally presented by a Zone Commander, though occasionally a State Member of Parliament may be invited. These may be presented at a unit meeting or award ceremony.

*Marine Rescue NSW is in the process of moving to a 5-year milestone system (15, 20, 25, etc)*

*Form MR280*

## PART D - Ceremonial Protocols

### Welcome to Country

A Welcome to Country is a formal ceremony delivered by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Elder or Traditional Custodian who has permission to welcome others to their land. This can only be done by Traditional Owners or Custodians of the land where the event is being held.

To organise a Welcome to Country in your area, contact your Local Aboriginal Land Council. They can help you get in touch with an Elder or Traditional Custodian.

For more information on Indigenous protocol, visit  
[https://www.indigenous.gov.au/contact-us/welcome\\_acknowledgement-country](https://www.indigenous.gov.au/contact-us/welcome_acknowledgement-country).

### Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way for anyone to show respect to the Traditional Custodians of the land they are on. It reflects awareness of and respect for the enduring connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to Country, including land, waters and culture, as the oldest continuous living cultures in the world.

Marine Rescue NSW observes this practice at major events such as Commissionings, state and regional meetings, and other significant gatherings. While not mandatory, Units are encouraged to include an Acknowledgement of Country at Unit meetings, events and activities where appropriate.

As more staff and volunteers work flexibly or attend meetings online from different locations, it remains important to uphold this cultural protocol in all settings.

### Example Acknowledgements

You can use one of the following examples to begin a meeting, speech or formal event, whether in person or online.

**If you know the name of the Traditional Custodians for the area you are meeting on:**

*"I acknowledge the [insert Traditional Custodians name] as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW. I also acknowledge and pay my respects to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today."*

**If you do not know the name of the Traditional Custodians:**

*"I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW. I also acknowledge and pay my respects to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today."*

**If you are hosting or recording an online meeting or webinar and know the Traditional Custodians for your location:**

*"I acknowledge that I am hosting or recording this meeting or webinar from the lands of the [insert Traditional Custodians name]. I also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the many lands across which you all work today and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in this meeting or webinar. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW."*

If you do not know the Traditional Custodians for your location during an online meeting or webinar:

*“I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the many lands on which we are working today and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in this meeting or webinar. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.”*

## **Commissioning of a Marine Rescue NSW Base, Vessel or Facility**

The commissioning of a new Marine Rescue NSW base, facility or vessel is a major milestone for both the organisation and the Unit involved. These occasions mark the formal recognition of the service's growth and development and represent a visible investment by Marine Rescue NSW and the NSW Government in supporting local communities. A commissioning signals that the facility, base or vessel is ready to take its place in service, enhancing the safety of people on the water and strengthening the Unit's connection to the community it serves.

Because of the significance of these ceremonies, they must be carefully planned and managed. Commissionings, building openings and sod-turning ceremonies are coordinated by Marine Rescue NSW Headquarters, in consultation with the Minister's Office and the Commissioner. This ensures that each event is conducted with the appropriate level of formality and consistency across the organisation.

The Minister for Emergency Services is typically invited to officiate, and invitations are also extended to Members of Parliament, senior representatives of partner agencies, local government, donors and community leaders. This high level of representation requires early and detailed coordination. Units must notify Headquarters as soon as planning begins so that invitations, speaking roles, seating, protocol requirements and media arrangements can all be managed in good time. Contact [reception@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:reception@marinerescuensw.com.au) to initiate this process.

The Regional Protocol Officer provides direct guidance to Units on ceremonial procedures, order of events, official acknowledgements, flag protocol and other matters of detail that ensure each ceremony reflects the dignity of the organisation and respects government protocol. Early engagement with the Protocol Officer is essential to avoid any last-minute issues.

Units may arrange their own naming ceremonies when a new vessel enters service. A naming ceremony provides a meaningful opportunity for a Unit to celebrate its connection with the community and recognise those who have shaped its history. Some Units have chosen to honour past members who have made a significant contribution, while others have adopted Indigenous names that reflect the culture, geography or maritime heritage of their local area.

The choice of a name becomes part of the organisation's identity and should therefore be made thoughtfully and with care. All proposed names are subject to approval by the Commissioner well in advance of the ceremony, and Units should contact [reception@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:reception@marinerescuensw.com.au) early in the process to begin this approval and receive guidance on planning the event.

By following these procedures, Marine Rescue NSW ensures that all commissioning events, whether for a base, facility or vessel, are conducted with consistency, dignity and respect. These occasions are not only milestones for the Unit directly involved but also an opportunity to showcase Marine Rescue NSW to government, partner agencies and the wider community. Careful planning and adherence to protocol ensures that the service is represented at the highest standard and that the commitment of our volunteers and supporters is recognised in the most appropriate way.

## Saluting

Marine Rescue NSW is not a commissioned organisation, and there is no formal requirement to initiate salutes to senior officers, or to officers of other organisations, including the Australian Defence Force. However, if a salute is offered, it must be returned as a courtesy.

As a maritime agency, Marine Rescue NSW has adopted the saluting customs of the Royal Australian Navy, in line with broader maritime tradition.

### When to salute

Members of Marine Rescue NSW may be required to salute during official ceremonial occasions, provided they are in full uniform, including either a peak cap or approved baseball cap. In such instances, salutes must be rendered in accordance with the following guidance:

#### Wreath-laying ceremonies

When laying a wreath at a cenotaph or memorial while representing Marine Rescue NSW, the member shall place the wreath, take one step back, and render a salute held for two marching paces (approximately three seconds). The member shall then execute an about-turn and return to their original position.

#### Funerals involving Marine Rescue NSW participation

Where a formal Honour Guard is established, salutes may be rendered as appropriate, and only where the family has requested Marine Rescue NSW participation in the ceremony.

#### Passing of a funeral cortege

Members in uniform shall come to attention and render a salute as the cortege passes.

#### National observances

A salute shall be rendered during the playing of the National Anthem, the sounding of the Last Post, or the raising of the Australian National Flag, where appropriate and when in uniform with headdress.

#### Acknowledgement of dignitaries

A salute may be rendered when in the presence of members of the Royal Family, the Governor-General, or a State Governor, in accordance with established ceremonial customs.

### How to Salute

The salute is performed using the right hand, raised smartly from the position of attention at the side of the body to the peak or brim of the cap or hat.

The hand should be flat, with the palm angled slightly downward and the fingers extended and joined.

The upper arm is raised so that it is parallel to the ground, with the forearm and wrist forming a straight line, keeping the hand approximately horizontal.

The movement should be sharp and controlled, giving an impression of discipline without stiffness.

The salute is to be held until it is returned or for a duration equivalent to two marching paces (approximately three seconds), whichever is appropriate.

Upon completion, the hand is lowered smartly to the side of the body, returning to the position of attention.



## Funerals

### Funeral Services

When attending the funeral of a Marine Rescue NSW member, members should wear Ceremonial Dress Whites (Dress Order 2C). If unavailable, Ceremonial Dress Blues with medals (Dress Order 2C) is appropriate.

At a minimum, members may wear clean, pressed long pants with a long-sleeve shirt and a Marine Rescue baseball-style cap. Neat semi-formal civilian attire is also acceptable. Medals should be worn regardless of dress.

Participation by Marine Rescue NSW in a funeral service must be at the request of the family. If requested, Marine Rescue NSW may provide one or more of the following elements where practical.

Unless you have a specific role in the service, members should sit toward the back of the chapel. All male members must remove caps before entering an indoor venue or chapel.

### Honour Guard

When the hearse arrives at the chapel, members should form two ranks outside the entrance. All members in the honour guard must be wearing caps.

The most senior officer present will call the guard to attention as the casket is removed. As the casket approaches, the order will be given: *"Honour guard salute."* Members will face forward and salute the casket. Once the casket has entered the chapel, the next command will be *"Honour guard attention"* and members will drop the salute. The final command, *"Honour guard fall out,"* signals members to turn toward the chapel and join the mourners inside.

If the casket is already in place before the service begins, there is no requirement for an honour guard at the start.

If the casket is being carried out after the service, members should form a second honour guard along both sides of the driveway or road. As the hearse passes, uniformed members come to attention and salute. Those in civilian clothing should come to attention and bow their heads. Salutes should be dropped once the hearse has passed.

Members are to remain in position until the hearse has departed. On command from the officer in charge, members will turn in the direction of the hearse and fall out.

### Ribbons, Medals and Caps of the Deceased

If requested by the family, the deceased member's medals and cap may be placed on the casket. This is often managed by the funeral director.

If Marine Rescue NSW is asked to assist, the medals should be presented on a cushion and carried by the senior officer. The officer walks to the casket, places the cushion where the member's chest would be, then places the cap at the head of the casket. The officer steps back, salutes, turns about and returns to position. The officer may remain wearing their cap for this process.

### Flags

All Australian citizens may have the Australian National Flag draped over their casket. This can be arranged through the funeral director.

If the family requests a Marine Rescue NSW flag, it must be positioned respectfully, without covering or obstructing the casket. Any flag displayed at a funeral must follow appropriate protocol.

### Memorial Services

For memorials, follow the guidance of the family or event organiser. If appropriate, Uniform Code 1B or 2C should be worn.

## PART E - Flags and Formal Observances

### Flags on vessels

Marine Rescue NSW vessels are to fly the Australian National Flag (Blue Ensign) as the primary ensign. This flag has precedence over all others and is to be flown whenever a vessel is operating. The Marine Rescue NSW Flag is the secondary flag and may also be flown where rigging permits. Only one flag is to be flown from each halyard or portal.

Operational signal flags, such as Delta or Bravo, may be displayed when required for safety or operational purposes. These flags are subordinate to the National Flag and must never displace or outrank it. Signal flags are to be removed promptly once the relevant operation is complete.

While the arrangement of rigging varies between vessel types, flag usage must remain consistent across the fleet. Flags may be flown from the main mast or from dedicated flag portals on the cabin roof. The Australian National Flag should be hoisted on a halyard to the peak of the main mast so that it remains in place during towing operations, a position which also reflects its seniority as the national ensign.

This consistent approach ensures that Marine Rescue NSW vessels are immediately identifiable to other mariners, government agencies and the public. The Blue Ensign represents the organisation's emergency service role, differentiating it from merchant or private craft that may use other ensigns.

*Note: National flag protocol allows vessels under 24 metres in the merchant, fishing, commercial and pleasure classes to use the Australian Red Ensign. Marine Rescue NSW is not part of these categories. As an emergency service fleet, Marine Rescue vessels fly only the Australian National Flag (Blue Ensign) for clear recognition and consistency across the fleet.*

### Naiad

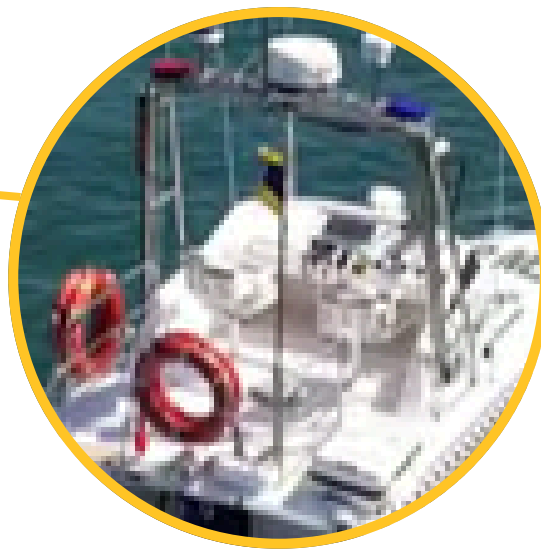
Naiad vessels are increasingly common within the Marine Rescue NSW fleet. They are fitted with three flag portals at the rear of the cabin: the starboard portal is used for the Australian National Flag, the port portal is used for the Marine Rescue NSW Flag, and the centre portal remains free for use with a Delta or Bravo flag during relevant operations.



*Flags correctly positioned on TG30, a 10m Naiad RHIB, with the Australian National Flag on the starboard portal and the Marine Rescue NSW flag on the port.*

## Steber

Steber vessels are fitted with starboard and port halyards, as well as a flag portal located amidships aft on the canopy or cabin roof. The Australian National Flag (Blue Ensign) is flown from the starboard halyard and the Marine Rescue NSW Flag from the port halyard. The centre portal is reserved for operational signal flags such as Delta or Bravo, which may be flown during relevant operations and must be removed once the operation is complete.

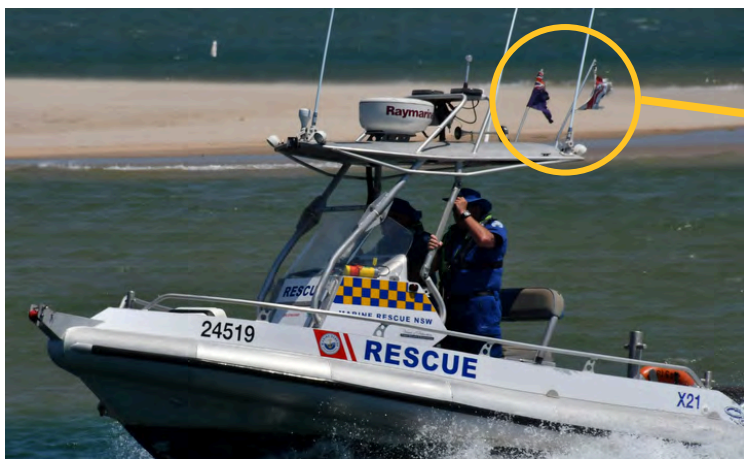


*Delta flag correctly flown during towing on PM30, an 11.5m Steber Cabin Cruiser, replacing the Australian National Flag on the vessel's single flag mount.*

## Ocean Cylinder

Ocean Cylinder vessels vary in configuration, with some fitted with starboard and port halyards, others with starboard and port portals, and some with both. Regardless of the setup, the same principles as Steber vessels apply: the Australian National Flag (Blue Ensign) is flown from the starboard halyard or portal, and the Marine Rescue NSW Flag from the port halyard or portal.

Where both halyards and portals are fitted, the flags are to be flown from the halyards. If Delta or Bravo flags are required, they may be flown from either portal when the halyards are in use. If both portals are already in use, the Delta or Bravo flag is to be flown only from the port portal.



*Flags correctly positioned on X21, a 5.5m Ocean Cylinder Open RHIB.*

## Flags at Bases or Facilities

Where a flagpole is installed at a Marine Rescue NSW base or facility, a combination of flags may be flown. All flags should be of equal size, with none larger than the Australian National Flag (Blue Ensign). The recommended size for base display is 1800 mm x 900 mm, maintaining the standard 2:1 fly-to-hoist proportion. This ensures flags are presented with uniformity and dignity.

### Configurations

Marine Rescue NSW bases generally use either a single pole or a single pole with yardarms. On a single pole, only one flag is displayed. This is normally the Australian National Flag, although a State, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Flag may also be flown when appropriate. On a yardarm configuration, the Australian National Flag is flown at the top of the pole. A recognised national, State, or Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Flag is flown on the left yardarm (as viewed from the front), and an organisational flag such as the Marine Rescue NSW Flag is flown on the right yardarm. This arrangement ensures the National Flag remains in the position of honour, with officially recognised flags placed before organisational flags.



Single Pole  
*Example: half mast*

### Order of Precedence

When more than one flag is flown, they must be displayed in the correct order of precedence. The Australian National Flag always comes first. It is followed by State and Territory flags, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags (equal in precedence), and then organisational flags such as the Marine Rescue NSW Flag.

For Marine Rescue NSW, this means the National Flag is displayed in the senior position, the Aboriginal Flag is typically used as the next most senior flag at bases, and the Marine Rescue NSW Flag is flown after these in the organisational position. This sequence respects the official national protocol while also reflecting the organisation's identity as a not-for-profit emergency service.



Single Pole with Yardarms

### Daily Routine

The Australian National Flag should be raised briskly at first light and lowered ceremoniously at dusk. When flown with other flags, it is raised first and lowered last. Flags may also be displayed at night if they are properly illuminated. This practice maintains the dignity of the flag and ensures it is never left flying in darkness.

### Half-Mast

When flown at half-mast, the Ensign must first be raised to the masthead before being lowered. The position is about one-third down the pole, or halfway on smaller poles, symbolising space for the "flag of death" above. Flags are not flown at half-mast overnight, except on ANZAC Day or during the Sovereign's mourning period, when they may remain in place if properly illuminated.

### Further Information

For more detailed guidance, see the Australian Government Flag Protocol or contact your regional protocol officer, or Member of Parliament's office, where printed copies and Australian flags may be available.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Commissioner is the approver of this SOP. All staff and members are responsible for adhering to this SOP.

### Support and Advice

The Marine Rescue NSW Protocol Officers How to get further information or support in relation to the content of this SOP

### Approval and document Control

Revision	Author	Document Status / Change	Reviewer	Approver	Date
1.0	A. Adam S. Galvin	Content review, rewrite and reformatting	Protocol Committee	Commissioner Barrell	12.9.25



## Appendix A

### Marine Rescue NSW Duty Jacket Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to preserve the professional presentation of the Marine Rescue NSW Duty jacket and reinforce its role in promoting the organisation's identity and values.

#### Permitted uniform combinations

The Marine Rescue NSW Duty jacket can be worn with Operational Blues or Dress Whites uniforms.

#### Preferred use and vessel operations

The high-visibility yellow wet weather jacket and pants (PPE) are the most suitable option for vessel operations, ensuring maximum visibility and safety in maritime environments.

While not preferred, the Marine Rescue NSW Duty jacket may be worn on vessels in situations where high-visibility gear is not required. Examples include calm weather conditions or operations that do not necessitate high visibility, such as moored activities or administrative tasks on board. Regardless of the outerwear worn, always ensure your lifejacket is securely fastened over your outermost layer when on a vessel.

The Marine Rescue NSW Duty jacket is an integral part of the Operational Blues or Dress Whites uniform and is best suited for use at the unit base or in other non-operational settings.

#### Medals and pins

Medals and pins may be worn on the jacket for dress codes 1B and 2C only.

For day-to-day wear, no medals or pins, aside from your name badge in the specially designed pocket on the right side of the jacket, are permitted.

#### Identification and personalisation

Jackets must only display approved name badges, medals, and pins. Modifying the jacket's design, such as removing roundels or reflective writing, or adding unauthorised patches or embroidery, is strictly prohibited to maintain uniformity and professionalism.

#### Ceremonial use

The Marine Rescue NSW Duty jacket is suitable for formal occasions when worn with the Dress Whites uniform. Ensure the jacket is clean and in excellent condition for these events.

## Appendix B - Rank and Insignia

### Executives & Staff

Insignia	Ranks	Position/s
	<b>Commissioner</b>	Chief Executive Officer
	<b>Deputy Commissioner</b>	Chief Operations Officer, Chief Financial Officer
	<b>Superintendent</b>	Zone Commander
	<b>Inspector</b>	Senior Manager Fleet, Zone Duty Operations Manager, Zone Training Manager, Manager Emergency Systems
	<b>State Operations Officer Level 3</b>	As determined by the Commissioner of MRNSW
	<b>State Operations Officer Level 2</b>	Fleet Officer, as determined by the Commissioner of MRNSW
	<b>State Operations Officer Level 1</b>	As determined by the Commissioner of MRNSW
	<b>Specialist Media</b>	As determined by the Commissioner of MRNSW



## Unit Executives

Insignia	Ranks
	Unit Commander
	Deputy Unit Commander
	Unit Executive Position(s): Treasurer, Training Officer, Administration Officer, Membership Officer etc





## Protocol

Insignia	Ranks
	State Protocol Officer
	Regional Protocol Officer

## Radio Operations

Insignia	Ranks
	Watch Officer
	Radio Operator

## Vessel Operations

Insignia	Ranks
	Master
	Coxswain
	Coxswain (Restricted)
	Rescue Water Craft Operator (RWCO)
	Senior Crew
	Crew

## Other

Insignia	Ranks
	Member
	Chaplain

## Appendix C - Legacy Recognition and Non-Approved Awards

### Formation of Marine Rescue NSW

Marine Rescue New South Wales (MRNSW) was established in 2009 through the unification of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol (RVCP), the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA) and the Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA). Each of these organisations brought with them a proud history of service, their own systems of ranks, ratings and awards, and many decades of contribution to community safety on the water.

When MRNSW was formed, members' prior service and certain awards were carried across and recorded in their MRNSW member profiles so that this service and commitment would continue to be recognised.

### Long Service Awards

Members with cumulative service, including time with the RVCP, AVCGA and VRA, became eligible for the MRNSW Long Service Medal, with clasps issued where applicable. This medal brings together service from all three founding organisations and provides an ongoing way of recognising long commitment to marine rescue.

Because the MRNSW Long Service Medal consolidates earlier awards, members no longer need to wear the separate long service medals from the legacy organisations on MRNSW uniform.

### Life Memberships

Members who had been awarded Life Membership in the RVCP, AVCGA or VRA were formally recognised as Life Members of MRNSW. This ensures that those honours continue to be acknowledged. As MRNSW Life Membership takes the place of previous life memberships, the older insignia does not need to be worn with the current uniform.

### AVCGA Distinguished and Meritorious Awards

The AVCGA also conferred two distinct service awards:

- Distinguished Service Award (National Executive)
- Meritorious Service Award (Squadron Executive)

MRNSW continues to recognise both of these awards. As they do not carry a medal, their insignia may be worn in a similar way to citations – on the right side of the chest above the name tag – placed after any citations awarded by MRNSW or other NSW emergency service organisations.

	Administration	Association	Operations	Training
Distinguished Service				
Meritorious Service				

### Badges and Non-Approved Awards

To keep the uniform consistent and easily recognisable, only MRNSW ratings, approved medals, ribbons, citations and the badges listed in Section 2 of this SOP are to be worn.

Badges from other organisations, while important in their own context, aren't part of MRNSW uniform. This includes, for example:

- Australian Defence Force qualification and service badges
- Rank or qualification badges from the RVCP, AVCGA or VRA
- Qualification badges from other emergency service organisations
- Commemorative or membership badges from organisations other than MRNSW

This approach is not intended to diminish the value of those qualifications, but to ensure the MRNSW uniform has a clear, professional and consistent appearance. Members are of course welcome to display or discuss their broader service history in other settings.

## NOTES

[illegible]

## NOTES

[illegible]



## **MARINE RESCUE NSW**

*Volunteers saving lives on the water*

Marine Rescue NSW  
PO Box 579, CRONULLA NSW 2230  
ABN 98 138 078 092

P: 02 8071 4848 F: 02 9969 5214  
E: [contact@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:contact@marinerescuensw.com.au)  
W: [marinerescuensw.com.au](http://marinerescuensw.com.au)