

Step by step guide to developing a WAFES Award nomination

About the awards

The WAFES Awards acknowledge the achievements of volunteers, career firefighters and DFES staff throughout Western Australia who have gone above and beyond their normal duties over the past 12 months.

There are 15 awards in total covering Marine Rescue, SES, VFES, VFRS, career firefighters and DFES corporate staff and operational personnel across youth, individual and team categories.

We're here to help

We all know outstanding volunteers and DFES staff who deserve to be recognised but putting together a nomination can be tricky. This guide walks you through what you need to do to develop a nomination that showcases the exceptional work of your nominee and gives the judging panel all the information they need.

If you need help developing or submitting your nomination or accessing the awards website your Volunteer Management Support Officer (VMSO), volunteer association and the DFES events and awards team are here to help.

Steps to developing a nomination

Step 1: Decide who to nominate

When thinking about who to nominate ask yourself:

- why are you nominating this person or team?
- have they gone above and beyond their normal duties?
- is there a specific incident/project or event over the past 12 months (31 March 2022 to 1 April 2023) that you can use as an example in your nomination?

Remember you can nominate more than one individual or team!

Step 2: Select the right award

Visit the [WAFES Awards website](#) and review each award including eligibility and criteria. For more information read the terms and conditions in the 'Additional information' section.

Select the award that your nominee meets the requirements for.

If you can't find an award that fits, email rewards@dfes.wa.gov.au to find out more about the DFES Honours and Awards program and other alternatives for recognising your nominee.

Step 3: Plan your nomination

Don't just say your nominee is outstanding, prove it!

The key to a strong nomination is providing specific information that demonstrates how the individual or team has gone above and beyond to keep the community safe.

Start planning out your nomination by considering a few key questions.

What did the nominee do?

- Any incidents/projects or events above the nominee's regular duties, including at least one within the past 12 months.
- Any challenges or issues encountered and overcome.
- Ask their peers, colleagues or supervisors for information that could strengthen the nomination.

How did they do it?

- Behaviours and attitudes
- Initiative and leadership
- Teamwork
- Creativity and innovation

What were the results and impact?

- What did the nominee's efforts accomplish?
- How did their teammates, DFES and/or the community benefit from those efforts?

Once you have this down, look at the criteria for the award and decide which one (or more) your nominee meets.

Step 4: Write your nomination

Now for the main event, writing the nomination.

One way to approach this is starting with a statement explaining why the nominee deserves recognition. Support this statement with examples of incidents/projects or events that occurred within the past 12 months, addressing the award criteria.

For your nomination to stand out against others, you must include evidence of what makes your nominee so exceptional. Judges can only assess the nomination based on the information you provide, so be specific.

Handy tips

- Get started early. Writing a nomination may take longer than expected.
- Nominations must be between 300 to 1000 words.
- You don't have to complete your nomination in one go. It can be saved and submitted at a later time.
- Write short sentences that are concise and give specific detail.
- Use plain English and don't over complicate your nomination.
- Think quality not quantity and consider whether the information you provide is relevant to the award criteria.
- Provide a complete overview of the nominee's accomplishments. It is important to tell the nominee's story as you would to a stranger.
- Describe unique characteristics that are more than just that the nominee is a great or nice person. Explaining detailed behaviours and giving specific examples will increase their chances of progressing to the next stage.
- Make sure all the information you provide is accurate. If you are unsure, ask someone who can verify it.

Things to avoid

The most common mistake people make when writing nominations is describing the nominee's actions or contributions in a way that suggests they were just going about their regular duties. Instead, focus on what makes your nominee stand out from the pack and how they have gone above and beyond to make a difference.

Other things to avoid include:

- an extended CV or resume.
- a role description outlining the nominee's regular duties.
- a list of achievements or awards.

Step 5: Supporting documents

Nominations may also include supporting evidence such as a relevant referee statement from someone who knows the nominee and their work or photos and videos that help address the criteria.

There are lots of options for supporting evidence but remember to make it relevant to the nomination and ensure it provides further context for the judging panel.

Step 6: Select your endorser

All nominations must include the name of a supervisor who can endorse and support the claims in the nomination. More information on eligible endorsers can be found on the [website](#).

Remember as the nominator you cannot endorse the nomination.

If you need help determining who can endorse the nomination contact your VMSO or the DFES events and awards team.

Step 7: Submit your nomination

- Head to the [awards website](#).
- Click on the 'Nominate now' button under your nominee's award.
- Follow the prompts and enter all the required information including your nomination, any supporting documents and endorser details.
- Once your nomination is complete click the 'Submit entry' button.
- You will receive an email when your nomination has been successful submitted.

Remember you can update your nomination at any time before the closing date.

Closing date

Nominations for the 2023 WAFES Awards close Monday 3 April at 9am. Make sure you leave enough time to submit your nomination online before the closing date.

Questions and support

The [awards website](#) has information on the awards, criteria, eligibility, key dates and more.

If you cannot access the website or need help or support with an award nomination please contact your VMSO, volunteer association or the DFES events and awards team.

VMSO contact details

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