



Document Control

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this LOP is to set Rostering guidelines and processes for the Marine Rescue Sydney (MR-Sydney) communications room to ensure that watches are appropriately staffed with sufficient capacity and capability to service the volume and complexity of work on the watch.
- 1.2 This LOP applies to all Members, irrespective of their rating, who perform radio watch duties.
- 1.3 This LOP sets out guidelines and processes for:
 - 1.3.2 Rostering objectives and accountability for the Roster
 - 1.3.3 The concept of watch teams and the role of the Watch Duty Officer in managing that team.
 - 1.3.4 Covering leave and absences
 - 1.3.5 Procedures for calling out additional watch team member support
 - 1.3.6 The expectation for watch keeping frequency
 - 1.3.7 Rotation of members across the Roster - days of the week and times of the day
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 - 1.3.11.6 Watch team members
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- 1.4 This LOP is to be read in conjunction with LOP OP 2 Duty Officer (DO) Attendance and Watch Protocols and LOP OP 24 Telstra Desktop Messaging System (TDMS) MR Sydney Radio Operator Call Out.

2. Rostering Objectives and Accountability for the Roster

- 2.3 To ensure that we maintain the highest professional volunteer service standards we must ensure that each watch has sufficient capacity, capability, and experience to meet peak operational demand and support the training requirements of trainees rostered on the watch.
- 2.4 The Unit Commander and Executive carry the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that each watch has the right quantity of members and the right mix of capability to support the duties of that watch. Day to day responsibility for management of the Roster rests with the Roster Officer and Operations officer.
- 2.5 Staffing the roster requires a balance of meeting the availability preferences of individual members and the need to ensure that each watch has the required capacity and capability to meet operational demand.
- 2.6 While the Roster Officer and the Executive will endeavour to meet the needs of individual members there will be occasions where we ask watches and individual members to make changes to support operational needs in that or other watches. We ask that members respect and support those requests when they arise.

3. The concept of watch teams and the role of the Watch Duty Officer in managing that team

- 3.3 A Watch Team is defined as **all** the members who are assigned to a specific Watch irrespective of whether the member is on a permanent weekly attendance or has a “rotation” and/or part-time arrangement to be on duty for the specific Watch.
- 3.4 The Roster Officer will consult with the DO to assign a Watch team that meets at least the minimum staffing requirement and has the right mix of capability for the demands of that watch. The objective will be to create a watch team list that exceeds the minimum required to cater for planned and unplanned absences.
- 3.5 If a Watch Duty Officer believes they need more, or a different mix of skills, on that watch they should make that request to the Roster Officer.
- 3.6 The roster schedule published by the RO will show the following for each Watch:
 - a) Duty Officer responsible for each Watch; and
 - b) **All** members who are part of that Watch Team, ie: all names will be published on the Roster.
- 3.7 The DO is responsible for scheduling individual members of the watch team on to each watch to ensure that there are sufficient numbers and skills to meet the need on that day. The DO needs to consider the likely workload on that day given the weather and time of year. In section 9 below we set out the minimum staffing levels for particular times of the year including “declared busy days” which will usually align to holiday or fine boating weather periods.
- 3.8 In assessing whether there are sufficient skills available for the watch the DO should consider trainees to be supernumerary (in addition to the minimum required). In cases where a trainee is nearing the end of their training period and can work without constant supervision, the DO may factor their contribution in to the assessment of resources

required on the watch.

- 3.9** The DO has the flexibility to agree “rotations” or planned absences and delayed or accelerated start and finish times with team members subject to always ensuring that there is sufficient capacity and capability on watch.
- 3.10** The DO must mark the scheduled “on watch” team members with a highlighter pen on the Rosters pinned to the notice board. This allows us to maintain a clear understanding of who will be on watch.
- 3.11** The DO should advise the Roster Officer, by email, of any agreed rotation patterns, planned absences or watch no shows, including trainees.
- 3.12** Permanent changes (additions or deletions) to the assigned watch team can only be made via the Roster Officer. The DO should not view their watch as a private domain that they staff only with the members of their choice. Requests for changes to the watch team must be made to the roster officer before being agreed with other members.

4. Covering leave and absences

- 4.3** It is the responsibility of individual members to advise their DO and the Roster Officer, by email, of leave, planned absences or short notice unplanned absences. As much notice as possible should be given, preferably not less than 7 days for short term absences and 14 days for long term absences. Unplanned absences occurring within 24 hours of a scheduled watch should be advised to the DO and Roster Officer by phone. If the member is a trainee the trainee roster officer must also be notified by email or phone, as required.
- 4.4** For leave or absences of two weeks or less the member and DO should arrange alternative coverage from their own watch team or from other watch teams by agreeing swaps or other arrangements. The Roster Officer should be advised of the outcome.
- 4.5** To identify people from outside your watch team who may be willing to swap or cover a temporary absence check the roster for watches at the same time of day and contact people who are on those watches. Their contact details are in Seaowl.
- 4.6** For leave or absences of three weeks or more the member and/or DO can ask the Roster Officer, to assist in finding a suitable replacement for the absence period. It may be that for longer leave periods a temporary replacement cannot be found and a permanent change may be required. In which the case the member may or may not be able to return to the same watch team
- 4.7** Leave periods of greater than 6 weeks require the approval of the Unit Commander and notifications are to be sent to both the Roster Officer and the Administration Officer.

5. Procedure for calling out additional watch team member support

- 5.3** If for reasons beyond the control of the DO the watch ends up being unable to manage the workload the DO can call out additional support by issuing a TDMS call out message to all members and by also advising the Duty Base Manager. Be aware that it could take more than 30 minutes for additional support to arrive at the base. Refer also LOP OP 24 Telstra Desktop Messaging System (TDMS) MR Sydney Radio Operator Call Out.

- 5.4 MR Sydney has a “DO” call out list and an “all member” call out list set up under the Terrey Hills log on in TDMS. The DO should decide if and when they send out the TDMS call out for the assistance they require.
- 5.5 Members receiving the TDMS message will have the option to respond “Yes” OR ignore.
- 5.6 The DO for the Watch must contact the members who responded “yes” by phone or text to advise them that they are required to come in.
- 5.7 A member who responded “yes” to the text but was not subsequently contacted by the DO can ignore and carry on.

6. The expectation for watch keeping frequency

- 6.3 The watch attendance expectation over a 4 week cycle for a MR Sydney member with a radio operator or watch officer rating is as follows:
 - 6.3.2 Standard frequency 1 watch per week
 - 6.3.3 Preferred maximum 4 per week
 - 6.3.4 Preferred minimum 1 per 2 weeks
- 6.4 Exceptions to those frequencies will be made where:
 - 6.4.2 Operational need dictates that members must exceed the preferred maximum.
 - 6.4.3 The personal circumstances of a member mean there will be a short or medium-term interruption to member availability.
 - 6.4.4 Work or other Marine Rescue duties, including duties at other Marine Rescue bases, limit member availability.
- 6.5 The watch frequency objectives are designed to ensure that we have adequate coverage of the roster requirement but also that radio operators maintain their skills and are aware of current operational processes and requirements.
- 6.6 In assessing whether an exception should be made the unit will have regard to the relative role and experience of the individual member and the composition of their watch team.
- 6.7 Requests for an exception for an on-going watch frequency of less than 1 watch per 2 weeks should be made to the Roster Officer and Operations officer by email and they will review and, where appropriate, approve it. The on-going operational performance and currency of the member will be kept under review to ensure that operational standards are maintained.
- 6.8 It is unlikely that a request for a watch frequency of less than one per month will be approved.

7. Rotation of members across the roster

- 7.3 It is understood and accepted that members seek to have an established routine for their Marine Rescue commitments around which they can plan their lives.

- 7.4** As noted above, it is also the responsibility of the unit executive to ensure that watches are appropriately staffed with sufficient and skilled resources and that we are developing operators with the skills necessary to handle the range of watch types that we have including complex busy watches and single operator overnight watches. Accordingly, there will be occasions where the Roster Officer requests changes to the composition of watch teams to support the operational needs of the watch and/or the skills development of members.
- 7.5** We ask that members respect and support requested changes to watch teams when they are made
- 7.6** Members are encouraged to move across watches on the Roster on their own initiative. This will provide them with a varied experience, contact with new members of the team and an opportunity to gain new experience of different types and volumes of work. A change is as good as a holiday. As noted above, if you wish to make such a change, discuss it with your DO and then make a request by email to the Roster Officer.

8. The role of Trainees on watches

- 8.1** Trainees are rostered on to a rotation of watches as part of their “on-the-job” training program by the Trainee Roster Officer according to the availability of the trainee and the ability of any watch to support the training need for that trainee. The objective is to help the trainee with progressing the completion of their workbook and skills log and provide them with a “hands-on” opportunity to practice those skills and gain operational confidence.
- 8.2** As noted above, unless the trainee is experienced and nearing the completion of their training, their contribution should not be included in the minimum staffing requirement for the watch. They should be “supernumerary”.
- 8.3** The DO needs to ensure that there are sufficient team members scheduled on to the watch to meet operational demand AND provide the required mentoring and coaching for the trainee.

9. Minimum staffing levels for defined watch types

The minimum staffing profile for each watch type (excluding trainees) is set out below.

Type of Watch*	Maximum Team Size	Minimum Team Size	Minimum Members on Watch
All days overnight watches 2100hrs– 0130hrs and 0130hrs – 0600hrs	2	1	1
Winter and Summer Non-peak Weekdays	4	2	2
Winter and Summer non-peak Weekends	6	3	3
Summer peak weekdays (from 2 nd week of December until 26 January)	6	3	3
Summer peak weekends (from 2 nd week of December until 26 January)	8	4	4
Declared busy days or holiday periods daylight hours (DBD's)	8	5	4 or 5 depending on the time of year and weather

- ***“Winter” and “Summer” are defined by the dates applicable to the Winter and Summer Remote Base Handover schedules*

9.1 2100hrs and 0130hrs watches require experienced operators (Watch Officer or experienced Duty Officers that have had incident management experience) or operators who have been specifically trained to be Statewide operators and have completed at least 3 buddy 2 person 2100hrs or 0130hrs Watches.

9.2 Declared Busy Days (DBDs) are defined by the UC, DUC and Operations Officer. Specific Watches during a 24 hour period may have up to 5 qualified members on Watch. As noted above it is the DO's responsibility to ensure that that there are sufficiently skilled people on the watch to meet demand. The DO must check the weather at least 5 days ahead and ensure that they are staffed up for known peak periods.

9.3 DBDs will be advised to members as they approach however DBDs will generally include

- 9.3.2** The period from boxing day through to the first working Monday of the new year
- 9.3.3** 26th January Australia Day (and potentially days surrounding Australia Day e.g. extended long weekends)

- 9.3.4 Easter Weekend
- 9.3.5 Public Holiday long weekends
- 9.3.6 First weekends of a school holiday period

10. Flexibility within and across established watch times

- 10.1 We already flex times on 0600hrs watches to reflect early start times in the Summer. DO's have the flexibility to schedule or amend the start and finish times for their watch team members according to operational need. For example, 1600hrs watches may be able to reduce headcount after handovers and incident peaks after, say, 1830hrs, or 0600hrs weekend watches may be able to reduce headcount after handovers and log-on peaks by 0900hrs.
- 10.2 There is also flexibility for DO's to agree for a watch team member to carry over from one watch to another. For example, a member of an incident team on a weekend 0600 watch may not commence till 1000hrs but then carry through 1500hrs when the next incident team member will arrive and carry through until 1900hrs. This allows us to match incident workload times and provide a seamless handover of incident knowledge between watches.

11. Summary of roster management responsibilities

11.1 Unit Commander and Unit Executive

- 11.1.1 Ensure that the roster provides the capacity and capability necessary to deliver the high-quality professional volunteer communications service that we aspire to.
- 11.1.2 As far as reasonably practicable seek to ensure that the Roster equitably shares the load across all members and meets the availability needs of individual members.

11.2 Operations Officer (or their delegate)

- 11.2.1 Responsible to the UC and DUC for the effective operation of the Roster
- 11.2.2 Periodic review of forward Rosters to ensure that they will meet operational need for the upcoming watch types and time of year
- 11.2.3 Support the Roster Officer in carrying out their duties and assist them to resolve any rostering issues or gaps.
- 11.2.4 Monitor actual watch attendance and workloads to assess whether changes are required to watch minimum staffing levels or individual watch team composition.

11.3 Roster Officer (RO)

- 11.3.1 Responsible to the Operations Officer for the construction and maintenance of the Roster in accordance with these guidelines
- 11.3.2 Consult with DO's and members to construct a roster of watch teams with sufficient capacity and capability to meet the need of the relevant watch type.
- 11.3.3 Publish a 2-week Roster 7 days ahead of the start day with Updates to be issued if required.
- 11.3.4 Seek the assistance of the Operations Officer to resolve any difficult rostering issues or gaps.

11.4 Duty Officer (DO)

- 11.4.1** Consult with the Roster Officer regarding any required changes to watch staffing requirements and work with them to establish a watch team of sufficient capacity and capability for the watch.
- 11.4.2** Consult with watch team members to schedule them on to watches according to the operational demand of the watch and noting the flexibility guidelines set out in this LOP.
- 11.4.3** Monitor weather and time of year (eg Declared Busy Day) conditions and ensure that you have sufficient capacity and capability scheduled to meet peak workload demand for the watch. If conditions change and demand is less than expected scheduled team members can be stood down or go home early.
- 11.4.4** Ensure that the Roster Officer is aware of planned and unplanned team member absences and that team members follow the guidelines set out above for covering leave and absences.
- 11.4.5** Support the on-going professional development of your team members (including trainees) through appropriate coaching and mentoring.

11.5 Watch team members

- 11.5.1** Support and respect requests from the Roster Officer for changes to your watch team to fill gaps and/or support your own professional development
- 11.5.2** Provide timely advice (in accordance with the notice periods defined in the guidelines) of planned leave and absences and follow the guidelines for covering that leave and absences

11.6 Trainee Roster Officer

- 11.6.1** Responsible to the Training Officer for the rostering of trainees to watches to ensure their timely and effective progress to MRRO qualification.
- 11.6.2** Construct a trainee roster rotation that balances the availability of trainees and the experience they need to gain across the range of watch types in the roster.
- 11.6.3** Consult with the Roster Officer to align rostering of trainees with the composition of watch teams
- 11.6.4** Consult with the Roster Officer to ensure that Trainee Rosters, particularly ahead of their next rotation, are published in the main roster on a timely basis and with a minimum of 7 days' notice for the trainees.

11.7 Trainees

- 11.7.1** Trainees are to provide their Watch preferences by the nominated deadline to the Trainee Roster Officer to ensure effective management of their Watch rotations although it is not guaranteed that preferences can always be accommodated.
- 11.7.2** Trainees are to provide email notification of scheduled leave and unscheduled/unexpected absences to the trainee roster officer and roster officer as outlined in this LOP OP for members
- 11.7.3** Trainees do not need to arrange a swap or replacement when on leave unless specifically requested to by their DO.