# UFBA Volunteer Member Field Expert Group:
# BRIGADE GRANTS

## Terms of Reference

## Background

The UFBA's professional working relationship with FENZ means that we are often included in initial discussions with relevant FENZ managers to assist them with gaining an early understanding of where the gaps are for our members, how this might affect volunteers, and areas for improvement before going out for full consultation.

Additionally, the UFBA's proactive approach to identifying local and national trends, concerns, or issues from our membership means that we are often required to find evidence-based proposals before going to FENZ with the problem.

In both cases, we need to advocate for the needs of our membership and to do this effectively, we know the immense and diverse skills of our members need to be utilised.

## Purpose

This Volunteer Field Expert Group (the Group) aims to provide a forum that values and acknowledges the expertise within UFBA membership and better enables the UFBA to draw on this expertise, with a focus on **Brigade Grants.**

To strengthen the voice of our membership and demonstrate our member's expertise to influence sector-wide FENZ policy and changes over time, especially where changes could impact the delivery of fire and emergency services in local communities.

The UFBA wants to ensure brigades are well-supported by FENZ to serve and protect their communities, and that any changes or implementation is made with the advice of volunteers.

## Objectives:

1. Raise with the UFBA areas of concern or interest regarding **Brigade Grants**.
2. Review, discuss and provide feedback or advice on FENZ policies and procedures that affect **Brigade Grants**.
3. Provide verbal and written feedback when required to inform the UFBA and/or FENZ project.

## Roles and Responsibilities:

**Members of the Group will:**

- Be a point of contact for expert advice on the subject.
- Raise matters relevant to the group for the UFBA Management Team to consider.
- Treat any information disclosed by the UFBA as confidential, unless otherwise specified.
- Use their expertise from within the sector and outside the sector to provide feedback or advice on the subject being requested, using an unbiased approach.
- Collaborate and constructively participate in group discussions and submit written feedback when required.

- Ensure that the focus remains on the matter raised.
- Adhere to the UFBA's Professional Standards - Professional Standards | UFBA.

**The UFBA will:**

- Provide opportunities for Group members to discuss matters with each other.
- Provide a dedicated staff member to effectively administer the group and ensure all information/feedback/advice is collated and/or distributed accordingly.
- Utilise this group as a key information source for developing feedback on the project.
- Make the UFBA Management Team available to the group for any issues that need to be escalated.

## Initial Subjects for the Group

This group will focus on **providing advice to the UFBA and FENZ regarding the FENZ Brigade Grant project**.

The key stages in the FENZ project that this group will provide advice on are:

- Review of existing brigade grant policies
- Assessment of grant costs and equitable allocation
- Engagement and consultation with all volunteers
- Development and assessment of policy and funding options
- Grant administration and governance
- Grant entitlements and transitional arrangements
- Implementation planning
- Rural funding for honours and medals

Please note, out of scope for the FENZ project is:

- Individual volunteer payments and reimbursements
- Independent fundraising and sponsorship arrangements
- Wider volunteer recognition arrangements
- Operational resourcing and brigade structures
- Implementation of changes to other policies

## Operating Process

This group is always on standby to engage as required. The group may be called to meet online to discuss a matter requiring discussion, or the group may be asked to provide written feedback only.

The commitment expectation is approximately one evening meeting per month, plus time for pre-reading proposals and drafts.

## Disclaimer

1. To support free and frank discussion, all members and UFBA staff agree to treat any information, content, or material disclosed as confidential, unless otherwise advised by the owner.
2. Personal information collected by the UFBA will be securely and digitally stored and will not be disclosed to any third party without the individual's permission.