

# WFS Award Scheme Rules



## A1. Terminology

- A1.1. The award shall be named Women in the Fire Service UK Award (hereafter called ‘the Award’).
- A1.2. The terms ‘Women in the Fire Service UK’, ‘WFS’ and ‘the Network’ shall refer to Women in the Fire Service Limited. WFS Ltd is a company registered in England and Wales with company number 6577352. Registered Office: 47 Pashley Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN20 8EA
- A1.3. The terms ‘Memo of Assoc’ and ‘Art of Assoc’ shall refer to the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association respectively of Women in the Fire Service.
- A1.4. The term ‘NEC’ shall refer to the National Executive Committee of WFS and the members thereof, as elected at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting of the Network, or by ad hoc appointment. [*Art of Assoc, Clause 6*]
- A1.5. For the purposes of these rules, the term ‘Chair’ shall mean the Chair of the Network, any Committee or the full National Executive Committee, as applicable to the context.

## A2. Basis of WFS Award Rules

- A2.1. Except where explicitly stated, these rules are prepared in accordance with the requirements and/or agreed interpretation of the WFS Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. [*Memo of Assoc, Clause 4; Art of Assoc, Clause 9*]

## A3. Scope of the Award

- A3.1. The Network shall present the Award as a mark of esteem and to show appreciation or congratulation to any individual or organisation; whether the recipient is a member of the Network, the United Kingdom Fire and Rescue Service or not.
- A3.2. The Award may be given for any significant achievement or activity which, in the view of the NEC:
  - A3.2.1. Supports the aims of the Network;
  - A3.2.2. Makes a positive contribution to an associated aspect of service or work life; and/or
  - A3.2.3. Advances women’s issues generally.

## A4. Levels of Award

- A4.1. There shall be three levels of Award: Bronze, Silver and Gold.
- A4.2. The Bronze Award may be given for:
  - A4.2.1. A significant achievement or contribution, which satisfies the criteria in Rules A2 and A3;
  - A4.2.2. A period of active service as an Honorary Officer, NEC Member, or Representative at any level for a period of not less than five years. [*See Rule A5.10*]
- A4.3. The Silver Award may be given for:
  - A4.3.1. A second or subsequent Bronze Award;

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A4.3.2. Any achievement or contribution which is deemed by the NEC to warrant a higher single Award than Bronze;

A4.3.3. A period of active service as an Honorary Officer, NEC Member, or Representative at any level for a period of not less than ten years. *[See Rule A5.10]*

A4.4. The Gold Award may be given:

A4.4.1. For an outstanding achievement or contribution which satisfies the criteria in Rules A2 and A3;

A4.4.2. As a lifetime Award, for any individual or organisation that has shown outstanding commitment or support to the Network. *[See Rule A5.10]*

### **A5. Nomination for the Award**

A5.1. Any individual or organisation may be nominated for an Award by a Proposer and a Secunder.

A5.2. There is no requirement for the Proposer or Secunder to be a member of WFS.

A5.3. Nomination must be made in writing to the Chair, to be considered by the Committee, for endorsement by the NEC at its next meeting.

A5.4. Nomination may be made using a form supplied by the Network; or in a letter, giving the following information:

A5.4.1. Names and contact details for the Proposer, the Secunder and the Nominee;

A5.4.2. A statement, giving the reason for the nomination;

A5.4.3. Any supporting statement(s) or evidence;

A5.4.4. If applicable, reference to other witnesses or sources of supporting evidence;

A5.4.5. The Proposer's and Secunder's signatures.

A5.5. The level of Award shall be determined by the Committee at its next meeting, whose decision shall be final (subject to endorsement by the NEC).

A5.6. Any nomination must be received by the Chair at least three weeks prior to the date of the next Committee meeting (which shall normally take place on, or immediately before, the occasion of an NEC meeting).

A5.7. The Chair must advise all NEC Members of the nomination at least two weeks prior to that meeting.

A5.8. The initial nomination may be made by email, or fax, but a signed formal nomination must be received by the Chair before the start of the meeting.

A5.9. If the Chair is the Proposer, Secunder, Nominee, or a member of the Nominee's organisation, then any nomination shall be passed to the Vice Chair, Secretary or Treasurer, providing s/he is not so involved. S/he shall perform the role of Chair for any deliberation or voting on this subject.

A5.10. Current members of the NEC, sub committees (or regular contributors thereto) shall not be eligible for nomination during their tenure or involvement.

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### A6. Award Deliberation and Decisions

- A6.1. Deliberation and voting on any nomination shall be held by the National Executive Committee, or a delegated Committee. In the case of a delegated committee, any decision shall require final ratification by the full National Executive Committee.
- A6.2. Any Committee shall be made up from:
- A6.2.1. WFS Representatives or Members, as selected by the National Executive Committee; and
  - A6.2.2. Any other individuals, or representatives of external organisations, as invited by the National Executive Committee on a permanent, fixed term or ad hoc basis. *[Memo of Assoc, Clause 4; Art of Assoc, Clauses 6 & 9]*
- A6.3. Final deliberation and voting on any nomination shall be held as part of a scheduled or extraordinary NEC meeting.
- A6.4. A meeting of the NEC shall deliberate and make the final decisions on:
- A6.4.1. Whether to approve an Award;
  - A6.4.2. The level of Award to be given;
  - A6.4.3. The nature of the Award to be given.
- A6.5. All discussions about nominations and Awards shall be held 'in camera':
- A6.5.1. Any Award Nominee (or their representative) shall not be present during any discussion or voting on their nomination;
  - A6.5.2. If not a member of the NEC or any Committee, the Proposer and/or Secunder may attend to give evidence in support of their nomination, but they must leave before any related deliberation or voting. Their presence for any other business shall be at the discretion of the Chair;
- A6.6. The quorum for deliberation and voting on Award nominations shall be in accordance with normal rules for NEC meetings. *[Art of Assoc, Clause 9]*
- A6.7. In order to ensure consistency and fairness, all deliberation and voting shall be with consideration to:
- A6.7.1. Rules A2 to A4 above;
  - A6.7.2. Previous nominations and decisions;
  - A6.7.3. The best interests of the Network and the Nominee.
- A6.8. The Committee or NEC may agree, without a vote, that further information is required. In this case, deliberation may be deferred to a later meeting, while it is gathered.
- A6.9. Decisions to approve Awards shall be recorded in the NEC meeting minutes, along with a citation statement for each.
- A6.10. A decision to refuse an Award shall be recorded on or with the nomination letter, along with any evidence or notes deemed necessary by the Chair of that discussion. To avoid embarrassment, the failed nomination shall not be recorded in the minutes.
- A6.10.1. Any refusal will be communicated to the Proposer and Secunder by the Chair of that discussion.
  - A6.10.2. There shall be no appeal against a refusal.

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- A6.10.3. Any subsequent nomination for the same Nominee shall not be precluded or prejudiced by an earlier refusal.
- A6.11. Except for the nomination document(s), decision, written evidence and notes authorised by the Chair of that discussion, no other records shall be kept, except by any person who is tasked with gathering further evidence. As soon as is practicable, s/he shall ensure that such records are surrendered to the person designated under Rule A6.12, or securely destroyed on their direction.
- A6.12. All items listed in Rule A6.11 shall be stored together by the Secretary, or a person nominated by them, in accordance with requirements set out in Law and in the Constitution of the Network.

### **A7. Award Notification and Presentation**

- A7.1. Once an Award has been approved, the Chair of the discussion shall, as soon as is practicable:
  - A7.1.1. Ensure that a suitable citation is recorded in the NEC meeting minutes;
  - A7.1.2. Inform the Proposer and Secunder;
  - A7.1.3. Inform the Nominee in writing of the citation and level of Award;
  - A7.1.4. Agree arrangements with the Nominee for the Award to be presented;
  - A7.1.5. Ensure that a suitable Award is purchased and prepared for presentation;
- A7.2. The Award shall be presented by the Chair of the Network, wherever possible.
- A7.3. Where the Chair is unable to present the Award, s/he shall nominate or request another person to deputise (in order of preference):
  - A7.3.1. The Vice Chair, or another Honorary Member;
  - A7.3.2. An NEC Member or Representative; or
  - A7.3.3. A senior person in another organisation.
- A7.4. The Award must be formally presented in a situation and manner that reflects high esteem, such as (in order of preference):
  - A7.4.1. An WFS Conference, AGM or other national event;
  - A7.4.2. An WFS regional event or NEC meeting;
  - A7.4.3. A significant event in the calendar of the Nominee's organisation; or
  - A7.4.4. Another event deemed suitable by the Chair.
- A7.5. In the case of an individual, the Chair of the discussion shall write to the Chief Fire officer/Firemaster or Chief Executive of the Nominee's organisation, with a copy to the Nominee:
  - A7.5.1. Stating that the Nominee has been cited for Award;
  - A7.5.2. Detailing the citation and level of Award;
  - A7.5.3. Outlining or requesting arrangements for presentation of the Award;
  - A7.5.4. Requesting that the Award badge/brooch may be worn on uniform or workwear;
  - A7.5.5. Requesting that this letter be filed in the individual's Personal Records.

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### **A8. Standards and Conventions for Presentation Items**

- A8.1. Any item presented as part of this Award scheme shall adhere to the following general standards:
  - A8.1.1. It must be recognisable as an Award;
  - A8.1.2. It must be recognisable as being awarded by WFS;
  - A8.1.3. It must communicate the level of the Award;
  - A8.1.4. It must be of sufficient quality to demonstrate the gravitas of the Award;
  - A8.1.5. May take the form of a badge or brooch and/or an inscribed plaque or trophy.
- A8.2. Badges or Brooches shall adhere to the standards in Rule A8.1, and:
  - A8.2.1. Should be of a simple, dignified design;
  - A8.2.2. Should have the approximate dimensions of a standard two pence coin (26mm);
  - A8.2.3. Should be Bronze, Silver, or Gold (either solid or plate), to communicate the Award level;
  - A8.2.4. Should be appropriate for wear in formal, working and informal situations;
  - A8.2.5. Should be sufficiently robust and retain its quality with frequent wear;
  - A8.2.6. Should be worn or displayed in accordance with relevant dress regulations and health and safety requirements, or otherwise with due regard to dignity and decorum;
- A8.3. Plaques or trophies shall adhere to the standards in Rule A8.1, and:
  - A8.3.1. Should be of a simple, dignified design;
  - A8.3.2. Should incorporate a plate, or inscription, which communicates:
    - A8.3.2.1. “WFS [level] Award”
    - A8.3.2.2. “Presented to [Nominee]”
    - A8.3.2.3. “For [brief citation]”
  - A8.3.3. Should be displayed in accordance with due regard to dignity and decorum;
- A8.4. For Awards to individuals:
  - A8.4.1. Bronze and Silver Awards shall take the form of a badge or brooch.
  - A8.4.2. The Gold Award shall be a badge or brooch, accompanied by a plaque or trophy.
- A8.5. For Awards to groups or organisations:
  - A8.5.1. All Awards shall take the form of a plaque or trophy.
  - A8.5.2. At the discretion of the NEC, a badge or brooch may also be presented to a named representative of that group/organisation.
- A8.6. All Awards shall be accompanied by an appropriate certificate, signed by the Chair of the Network, Chair of the discussion, or their nominee, as appropriate.
- A8.7. The precise design of presentation items shall be decided by the NEC, in consultation with a delegated sub committee and/or the membership.

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### A9. Changes to the WFS Award Scheme

- A9.1. All operational changes to this scheme (or its rules) shall be made by consensus of the NEC:
- A9.1.1. Subject to discussion and vote as an agenda item at a scheduled or extraordinary meeting; or
  - A9.1.2. By universal or inferred agreement, using approved methods of communication; providing all NEC members have been given a reasonable time to consider, research and consult with their constituents.
  - A9.1.3. Examples of operational changes include (but are not restricted to): practical adjustments to the Award Rules (e.g. to bring them in line with changes to the WFS Constitution); (dis)establishment of any delegated sub committee; and other changes that require dynamic decisions. The primary criterion shall be that any decision or change is in the best interests of the Award Scheme or the Network in general. [*Memo of Assoc, Clauses 3 & 4; Art of Assoc, Clauses 6 & 9*]
- A9.2. All strategic changes to this scheme shall be made by a vote at a General Meeting in accordance with the WFS Constitution.
- A9.2.1. Examples of strategic changes include (but are not restricted to): (dis)establishment of the Award Scheme; fundamental changes to the Award Scheme; or any other decision that is deemed by the NEC to require discussion and voting at a General Meeting. [*Memo of Assoc, Clauses 3& 4; Art of Assoc, Clauses 3 & 4*]