

Emergency Services Volunteer

Fuel Card Scheme Frequently Asked Questions



The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is administering the Scheme on behalf of the Royalties for Regions program and the State Government of WA.

What is the Emergency Services Volunteer Fuel Card Scheme?

The Emergency Services Volunteer Fuel Card Scheme (the Scheme) provides the following emergency service brigades, groups and units (BGUs) with a \$2,000 fuel card annually for the next four financial years, commencing in 2015/16:

- Bush Fire Service
- Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
- Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services
- State Emergency Service
- Volunteer Marine Rescue Services
- St John Ambulance

The fuel card is a gift, made possible by the State Government of Western Australia (WA), to support the important work of metropolitan and regional volunteers and acknowledge their contribution to the WA community.

Funding for the fuel cards in regional WA is supported by the Royalties for Regions program.

Who can apply for the fuel card?

To apply for the fuel card, you must be the volunteer officer-in-charge of a BGU. The volunteer officer-in-charge is considered to be the elected or appointed Commander/Captain/Unit Leader/Local Manager of a BGU or recognised volunteer leader in a St John Ambulance Sub-Centre/Division.

What is the application process for the fuel card?

To receive the 2015/16 fuel card, the volunteer officer-in-charge must apply online via DFES' website – dfes.wa.gov.au/fuelcards.

Applications for the 2015/16 fuel card opens on **Monday 23 November 2015** and closes on **Sunday 10 January 2016**.

LATE APPLICATIONS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED

* Applications cannot be accepted after the closing date as all applications must be validated by DFES' Fuel Card Administrator at one point in time

As the volunteer officer-in-charge of the BGU, you will need your volunteer identification number to complete the application.

The volunteer officer-in-charge is only required to apply for the fuel card in the 2015/16, 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years. An application for existing 2015/16 fuel card holders is not required for the 2016/17 fuel card as the \$2,000 allocation will automatically be provided, subject to BGU data verification. Only new applicants for the 2016/17 financial year will be required to apply for the fuel card for that financial year.



If you have any questions or issues regarding the online application, you can:

- email DFES' Fuel Card Administrator on vfc@dfes.wa.gov.au or call 9395 9550; or
- contact your representative volunteer association or organisation.

My BGU is not listed on the online application form, can I apply?

Only BGUs in the following services are eligible to apply:

- Bush Fire Service
- Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
- Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services
- State Emergency Service
- Volunteer Marine Rescue Services
- St John Ambulance

However, if your BGU is not listed and you believe your BGU is eligible to apply, please email DFES' Fuel Card Administrator on vfc@dfes.wa.gov.au or call 9395 9550.

Who can apply for the fuel card if the volunteer officer-in-charge chooses not to apply?

Please contact DFES' Fuel Card Administrator on 9395 9550 prior to the closing date for applications.

When will the fuel card be issued?

It is anticipated fuel cards will be issued by the end of February 2016.

How can the fuel card be used?

The fuel card can **only** be used to purchase fuel.

The volunteer officer-in-charge is responsible for the fair distribution of the fuel card amongst registered BGU volunteers who actively contribute to either operational or support activities.

The volunteer officer-in-charge can offer a BGU volunteer the fuel card and specify the maximum value to be used. The volunteer officer-in-charge may also consider a direct approach from a BGU volunteer that actively contributes to the BGU and wishes to use the fuel card.

The volunteer using the fuel card may only purchase fuel for a private vehicle or vessel for the purpose of private and/or recreational use.

The fuel card **MUST NOT** be used to purchase fuel for operational vehicles and vessels such as fire appliances, ambulances, marine rescue boats or other emergency response/support vehicles.



As the volunteer officer-in-charge, how do I distribute the fuel card amongst actively contributing members?

As the fuel card custodian you are ultimately responsible for determining how the fuel card will be shared within your BGU, however, a consultative approach amongst your BGU volunteers is strongly encouraged. The following general principles are to be followed:

- the volunteer officer-in-charge will be the custodian of the fuel card;
- the fuel card must be fairly distributed amongst registered volunteers who actively contribute in either an operational or support role within the BGU;
- decisions to offer the fuel card to volunteers within BGUs must be fair;
- use of the fuel card must be recorded and tabled at least annually at a BGU meeting;
- the fuel card can be used to purchase fuel for a private vehicle or vessel for private and/or recreational use; and
- the fuel card **must not** be used to purchase fuel for operational vehicles or vessels.

Where can the fuel card be used?

The fuel card is accepted at major participating fuel outlets in WA only. A full list of participating service stations will be provided with the Emergency Services Volunteer Fuel Card Information Pack which will be distributed with the fuel card.

If the total value of the fuel card has not been used by the end of the financial year, can the remaining value be rolled over to the next financial year?

Due to the limited time BGUs have to use the fuel card this financial year, any value remaining on the fuel card at the end of 2015/16 will be automatically rolled over to 2016/17, in addition to the \$2,000 allocation for that year. However, any value remaining on the fuel card at the end of the 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years will be forfeited.

Can the fuel card be converted to cash?

No, the value of the fuel card cannot be redeemed for cash.

How can I replace/report a lost, stolen or damaged fuel card?

Any fuel card that is lost, stolen or damaged should be immediately reported so that the card can be cancelled, if necessary, and a replacement provided. Contact details on reporting a lost, stolen or damaged fuel card will be provided with the Emergency Services Volunteer Fuel Card Information Pack.

As the volunteer officer-in-charge, am I required to report on who uses the fuel card?

Yes, as the fuel card custodian you will be provided with a tally sheet (sent out with the fuel card) to assist you to keep a record of:

- the name of the BGU volunteer who has been provided with the fuel card; and
- the agreed value to be used from the fuel card.

It is recommended that a copy of the fuel purchase receipt be submitted as part of the record.

The tally sheet must be tabled at least annually at a BGU meeting to ensure the principles of transparency and accountability are met. Transactions made against the fuel card will also be automatically recorded online and can be made available to the volunteer officer-in-charge upon request.

How can the fuel card be transferred between different volunteer officer-in-charge/fuel card custodians?

In the event a volunteer officer-in-charge/fuel card custodian leaves a BGU and needs to transfer the fuel card to the new officer-in-charge/fuel card custodian, DFES' Fuel Card Administrator must be advised via vfc@dfes.wa.gov.au or 9395 9550, in the first instance. Once this change is made to DFES' records, the fuel card can be passed from one volunteer officer-in-charge/fuel card custodian to the next, along with the tally sheet and Emergency Services Volunteer Information Pack.

Do I need to declare the fuel card as a gift?

No. The Scheme is a State Government initiative. Volunteers who are also employed by the State Government of WA do not need to declare or register this gift. Local and/or Federal Government employees should check with their respective employers in relation to their gift declaration requirements.

Why is the fuel card only available for four years?

Funding for the Scheme is limited to four years commencing in the 2015/16 financial year.

As the volunteer officer-in-charge/fuel card custodian, how can I find out how much remaining value is on the fuel card?

You will be able to find out the balance of your BGUs fuel card by contacting the fuel card supplier. Their contact details will be provided in the Emergency Services Volunteer Fuel Card Information Pack which will be distributed with the fuel card.

My BGU missed the closing date for 2015/16 fuel card applications. Can my BGU still apply?

No, applications for the 2015/16 fuel card close on Sunday 10 January 2016. The BGU may apply for the 2016/17 fuel card when applications are opened for that financial year. Details of future application periods will be published on DFES' website – dfes.wa.gov.au/fuelcards

Does this Scheme use Emergency Services Levy funds?

No.

What can I do if I have concerns about the manner in which the fuel card is being administered locally?

Your concerns can be raised through your representative volunteer association or organisation, or DFES' Fuel Card Administrator.

Where can I find out more information?

You can:

- visit dfes.wa.gov.au/fuelcards;
- email DFES' Fuel Card Administrator on vfc@dfes.wa.gov.au or call 9395 9550; or
- contact your representative volunteer association or organisation.