

Tuesday, 17 November 2020

RECORD EMERGENCY SERVICES BUDGET DELIVERS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

The State's courageous first responders who have battled bushfires, floods, storms and a pandemic will be supported by a record emergency services budget to help them keep the community safe in a resilient post-pandemic NSW.

The 2020-21 NSW Budget will deliver a total of \$1.8 billion for the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS), Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW), the NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) and Marine Rescue NSW (MRNSW), including an additional \$237 million to boost the State's preparedness and response to bushfires.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott said a record investment of \$700 million for the NSW RFS and \$900 million for FRNSW would help protect lives, property and support our emergency management personnel.

"We are funding a range of initiatives to support frontline firefighters, extend hazard reduction works, accelerate fire trail work, as well as deliver better equipment, and support for the natural environment," Mr Elliott said.

"These funds will also include a suite of mental health programs across all frontline agencies as part of our commitment to support our first responders."

"We are committed to continuing to protect the people of NSW from bushfires, floods, storms and structural fires. We will do whatever it takes to safeguard communities from disaster."

The Budget will allocate \$192 million over five years to address the urgent recommendations from the independent NSW Bushfire Inquiry, including:

- **\$36 million** for a new first responder mental health strategy for emergency services;
- **\$23 million** in additional personal protective clothing for frontline firefighters;
- \$17 million to retrofit NSW RFS and NPWS vehicles and replace FRNSW tankers;
- **More than \$9 million** to fund initial priority works for the fire trail network;
- **More than \$8 million** to extend an integrated dispatch system for the NSW RFS;
- **More than \$5 million** for enhancements to the RFS aerial fleet and training facilities;
- **Almost \$3 million** for improvements to NSW RFS's Fires Near Me app; and
- **Almost \$3 million** to deliver critical equipment for 31 multi-agency Emergency Operations Centres

This builds on more than \$45 million in funding, announced in May, to fast-track hazard reduction and enhance our firefighting capability.

The NSW Government is also committed to supporting NSW SES volunteers with a record \$200 million budget for 2020-21 to ensure they have the resources they need to manage flood and storm emergencies, road accident rescues, bush search and rescue, and other disasters.

This Budget includes more than \$187 million over five years to support Resilience NSW, which was created in 2020 to lead whole-of-Government disaster and emergency efforts from prevention to recovery

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