



**David Elliott**  
Minister for Police and Emergency Services

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NSW URGED TO ‘GET READY’ FOR SUMMER**

Prepare your bushfire survival plan, don't drive through floodwater, swim between the flags, and make sure your home is fire safe this summer – these are some of the safety tips NSW emergency service agencies have shared ahead of the 2020 summer season.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott today joined emergency services leaders on Sydney Harbour to issue the timely reminder, as people begin decorating their homes for Christmas, planning holidays in regional NSW and enjoying warm days by the water.

“Aussie summers are iconic, but they can also be tragic. Last year, we had a horror bushfire season. This year, we’re expecting a wet and wild summer. But bushfires and storms are not the only threats we face,” Mr Elliott said.

“I urge you to use the start of summer as a start of a conversation with your friends and families about being prepared for seasonal hazards. Especially this year, as experts warn of a La Niña summer.”

NSW Police Force Deputy Commissioner Gary Worboys said summer is a particularly busy time of year for all emergency services and urged the community to put safety first.

“Police will be out and about - on the streets, on our roads, in, on and around the water, and even in the air. If we all put safety first, our holidays will be remembered for all the right reasons,” Deputy Commissioner Worboys said.

NSW SES Commissioner Carlene York said there have been more than 500 rescue requests this year from people who have risked their lives by driving through floodwaters.

“You wouldn't run into a bushfire, so never drive, walk or ride through flood water – it's incredibly dangerous for both you and the volunteers rescuing you. It's vital to know your flood risk and have an emergency plan in place,” Commissioner York said.

NSW RFS Commissioner Rob Rogers said last summer's bushfire season was a stark reminder of the dangers of fire and the importance of early planning and preparation.

“Last summer’s bushfires destroyed 2,476 homes and claimed 26 lives in NSW. Every family should have a five-minute conversation about important decisions like when to leave and what to take if a fire threatens your home,” Commissioner Rogers said.

Fire and Rescue NSW Assistant Commissioner Paul McGuiggan said decorative lights and summer barbecues also pose a fire risk around the home.

“Make sure you have a sufficient number of working smoke alarms throughout your home that are tested regularly and are supported by a written home escape plan,” Assistant Commissioner McGuiggan said.

NSW Surf Life Saving CEO Steve Pearce reiterated the importance of water safety.

“Only swim at patrolled beaches, stay between the red and yellow flags, always check conditions before heading out, wear a life jacket when boating or rock fishing, and be sure to keep an eye on your mates,” Mr Pearce said.

Marine Rescue Commissioner Stacey Tannos said they’re ready for a record summer on the water as more people stay home instead of heading overseas on holidays.

“Boaters should always Log On with Marine Rescue when heading out and Log Off when they return on VHF Channel 16 or the free Marine Rescue App. It’s quick and simple and gives you the reassurance that our volunteers are watching out for your safe return,” Commissioner Tannos said.

Find out more about the steps you can take to Get Ready for summer at <https://resilience.nsw.gov.au/prepare.html>

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