



Troy Grant
Minister for Police
Minister for Emergency Services

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 1 September 2017

THOR RETURNS IN TIME FOR EARLY BUSH FIRE SEASON

The NSW Government's investment in aerial firefighting was on display today with the arrival of the Large Air Tanker (LAT) C-130 Hercules 'Thor' in Sydney, as nine local government areas commence their bush fire season a month early.

Minister for Emergency Services Troy Grant was joined by NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers at the RAAF Base in Richmond to view the final testing of the Large Air Tanker.

"Following the NSW Government's two-year trial, Thor has returned to provide invaluable assistance to NSW in fighting fires from the skies," Mr Grant said.

"Thor's arrival comes not a moment too soon, with the RFS declaring an early start to the bush fire danger period for the Warrumbungle, Gilgandra, Mid-Western Regional, Port Macquarie – Hastings, Mid-Coast, Bathurst, Oberon, Lithgow and Blue Mountains local government areas.

"This aircraft can dump 15,000 litres of water or fire retardant at a time and will be used for direct attacks on both bush and grass fires, to create containment lines, and to provide urban interface protection.

"A DC-10 Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT) will also return to NSW in November.

"\$38 million has been allocated over the next four years for the use of these massive aircraft, highlighting this Government's commitment to the protection of lives and property across NSW."

Deputy Commissioner Rogers said Thor returns as one of more than 100 firefighting aircraft available for use during the fire season in NSW.

"With record dry and warm conditions over the past two months and a forecast of similar conditions leading into spring, these aircraft are an important asset in our firefighting toolbox," Deputy Commissioner Rogers said.

"These aircraft complement the broader aerial fleet and the hard working firefighters on the ground. It is this support along with a well prepared community, that is what makes the difference.

“Fire agencies have been busy over recent weeks undertaking hazard reduction burns and it is just as important that residents play their part by preparing their property.

“There are simple things you can do like removing flammable materials from yards, clearing leaves from gutters, and checking hose lengths.

“It is also vital to have a conversation with your family now to decide what you will do if a fire starts by making your bush fire survival plan.”

The nine districts entering the bush fire danger period one month early are in addition to the 19 local government areas that typically commence their danger period on 1 September, due to local climatic conditions.

Please check the RFS website at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au for specific information relating to your local area.

For further information on getting ready for the bush fire season visit www.myfireplan.com.au

MEDIA: Elizabeth Bold | Minister Grant | 0418 453 324
RFS Media | 9898 1855