



SENATOR THE HON LINDA REYNOLDS CSC
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS

THE HON TROY GRANT MP
NEW SOUTH WALES MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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**JOINT GOVERNMENT FUNDING BOOST TO SUPPORT NSW
EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers across New South Wales' first-response agencies will be better supported to continue their dedicated service through joint Commonwealth-State funding.

The \$723,000 in funding for 13 projects across nine agencies is part of the Emergency Volunteer Support Scheme (EVSS), which backs programs that enhance the recruitment, retention and capability of the State's emergency services.

The EVSS is just one of a suite of programs jointly funded through the National Partnership Agreement on National Disaster Resilience.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs Senator the Hon. Linda Reynolds, who has responsibility for Commonwealth disaster assistance, said communities need to become more resilient in the face of natural disasters.

"I am very proud of the work our Governments are doing to strengthen capabilities across different communities, such as keeping small fire brigades operating with more volunteers who are armed with better skills," Assistant Minister Reynolds said.

"More highly-trained volunteers on the frontline means more helping hands in times of trouble, and during the aftermath when communities rebuild."

NSW Minister for Emergency Services the Hon. Troy Grant said volunteers play a crucial role when responding to disasters and emergencies across the State.

"Our men and women on the frontline carry out vital work in fighting fires, performing flood rescues, and a host of other work in both city and country areas," Minister Grant said.

Minister Grant said volunteers also assisted through organising and catering, and it was important to look after their needs so their dedicated service can continue.

“This scheme supports public awareness projects that help recruit local volunteers, and may even target certain groups for future opportunities such as young people, while also strengthening the skills of the existing membership,” Minister Grant said.

The funding can be used towards purchasing training equipment and the management of courses to upskill volunteers, as well as projects aimed at recruitment and retention.

Examples include the SES Namoi North West Region project that is investigating flexible volunteering opportunities for staff and students at the University of New England, and the St John Ambulance’s project which provides conflict management training to volunteers.

A full list of projects supported under the EVSS can be found here:
<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/emergency-management/Funding-Programs/emergency-volunteer/Support-Scheme-2017-2018.aspx>

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