



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

MEDIA RELEASE

Medal honours and \$2.66 million investment for Castlereagh Zone firefighters

3 April 2022

Members of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Castlereagh Zone have been recognised for their dedicated service and had their firefighting capabilities bolstered, including the official opening of the Weetaliba and Gamble Creek Brigades station.

Over three ceremonies yesterday and today in Weetaliba, Gilgandra, and Coonabarabran, Chief Superintendent Heath Stimson presented the National Emergency Medal to 47 NSW RFS members, including one posthumous NSW Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation, for those who provided sustained or significant service during the devastating 2019-20 fire season.

The medal is awarded to those whose service were in the protection of lives and property or in the service of interests that are not their own and who supported the emergency response for a minimum of five days between September 2019 and February 2020.

Members of the Castlereagh Zone team rose to the challenge and continued to assist local brigades battling fires throughout the season through a range of roles, including as firefighters, communications operators, strike team leaders, bulk water tanker drivers, aviation radio operators, and bus drivers.

Also being honoured for a combined 1,987 years of service, 60 NSW RFS firefighters were presented with long service medals and clasps during the ceremonies.

Chief Superintendent Stimson praised the hard work and incredible contribution of brigade members across the region.

"Every single one of these members should be proud of themselves and their dedication to protecting communities across the state," Chief Superintendent Stimson said.

"Whether they were battling blazes during one of the most destructive fire seasons in recent memory to providing more than 60 years of service – it is incredible to have these volunteers on deck to mentor and guide the younger generation joining the Service."

To boost their firefighting capabilities, Chief Superintendent Stimson was also on hand to open the new \$320,000 station to house the Weetaliba and Gamble Creek brigades.

"Brigades in the Castlereagh Zone will also benefit from nine new fire tankers – ranging from a Category 9 fire truck to a Category 13 bulk water carrier," Chief Superintendent Stimson said.

"These firefighting appliances are worth a combined \$2.34 million but to our members, they are a priceless resource so they can continue to protect the community."

For more information contact the State Duty Media Officer on 9898 1855
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