

Chris Minns
Premier of NSW



Jihad Dib
Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Youth Justice

Media Release

NSW emergency services gear up for bushfire season

Tuesday 8 August 2023

NSW emergency services are getting ready for a potentially dangerous bushfire season with a multi-agency training exercise at the State Emergency Operations Centre at Rural Fire Service (RFS) headquarters at Homebush in western Sydney.

The two-day exercise is designed to help keep communities safe and is part of a range of initiatives underway to ensure emergency services are prepared and working together to ensure all available resources are ready to respond during bushfires.

Exercise Alinta involves more than 120 participants responding to simulated fire activity across NSW, applying procedures and operational systems responsible for deploying firefighters and aircraft, fire warnings and information sharing to help protect communities.

It is part of a broader program the Minns Government is implementing to ready NSW emergency services for the bushfire season, including a \$10 million boost for mobile hazard reduction crews and deployment of a new Chinook water bombing helicopter to assist in aerial firefighting efforts.

Specialist staff from the RFS, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Police, NSW Ambulance, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Forestry, Education and Transport for NSW will participate in the collaborative exercise at Sydney Olympic Park.

Exercise Alinta takes place ahead of an expected return to fire conditions this summer, and a week after the start of the Bush Fire Danger Period in six Local Government Areas in the state's north.

Premier of New South Wales Chris Minns said:

“Our emergency services are planning ahead so they will be ready to respond in what could be a challenging bushfire season, coming hot on the heels of three years of high rainfall and vegetation growth.”

“Days like today are an important opportunity to fine tune the skills and processes necessary to protect the people of NSW, from public warnings and resource deployment to aircraft coordination and logistics.”

“The community should be reassured that our frontline services are preparing to swing into action should it be needed, coordinating a major response effort from our world-class State Emergency Operations Centre.”

Minister for Emergency Services Jihad Dib said:

“Exercise Alinta is based on real-time weather experienced during the 2019-20 bushfire season, putting staff to the test against some of the most difficult conditions ever seen in NSW.”

“Our rural fire and emergency services are among the world’s best at tackling bushfires. Simulations like this help us prepare so that when bushfires occur our crews including volunteers are well supported to protect communities across the State.”

“It’s imperative we prepare ourselves for any emergency as best we can. A re-creation of events and simulated exercise now, will help at the time when the bushfires are here for real.”

Commissioner of the RFS Rob Rogers said:

“This exercise will demonstrate the diverse nature of our work and the many skills required to coordinate major incidents.”

“It’s been three years since the devastating fires which saw many NSW communities impacted by fire, and with a return to hot and dry conditions this summer, we’re getting ready for the increased risk – and it’s important that the community gets ready too.”

For more information on the Bush Fire Danger Period, visit: <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/BFDP>

MEDIA:

Sarah Michael | Premier | 0401 591 286

Mark Scala | Minister Dib | 0427 549 878

RFS | Media Duty Line | (02) 9898 1855