



Hon Michael Gallacher MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
Minister for the Hunter

MEDIA RELEASE

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EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE \$873,000 BOOST

Volunteers from emergency services and related support organisations around NSW will receive grants worth a total of \$873,000 under a funding scheme to support the hardworking members of Australia's emergency services.

NSW Minister for Police and Emergency Services Michael Gallacher today announced 35 grants had been approved in this year's round of the joint State-Commonwealth 2011-12 Emergency Volunteer Support Scheme, a component of the National Natural Disaster Resilience Program.

"Thousands of emergency volunteers selflessly dedicate their time and efforts to protecting New South Wales communities in times of need," Minister Gallacher said.

"This scheme supports these committed volunteers by funding projects that assist with volunteer recruitment, retention and the upgrade or provision of training related equipment and facilities.

In 2011, the scheme will provide grants to emergency services volunteers in the NSW Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service, Marine Rescue NSW, Volunteer Rescue Association and those taking part in the Ambulance Service NSW Community First Responders Scheme.

A number of agencies that work with the emergency services and provide critical services – including Surf Life Saving NSW, St John Ambulance, the Australian Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Anglicare and ADRA Australia – will also receive funding in recognition of the valuable contribution their volunteers make to the community.

"Thirteen of the grants, valued at a total of nearly \$165,000, will be provided for NSW Rural Fire Service projects including a mobile structural fire training trailer for Western NSW; upgraded training facilities for the Blaxland, Bungwahl, Kurrajong, Jeir-Marchmont, Mount Hunter and Wollombi Brigades and first aid training support for volunteers in the Hawkesbury," Minister Gallacher said.

“An additional six projects worth \$67,000 have been funded to support our SES volunteers, including a recruitment campaign at Muswellbrook and facility upgrades for the Wollongong City and Cessnock SES units, flood rescue training equipment for the Hay SES unit and the establishment of a training support team for the Murray region.

“Approximately \$60,000 will be granted to units of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, including the extra training courses for the Corowa and Albury & Border Rescue Squads and new technology for the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad.

“Marine Rescue NSW will receive a grant of \$100,000 to implement a state-wide ‘Local Computer Learning Station’ program with the vision of delivering a terminal to each unit to assist administration and training at the local level,” Minister Gallacher said.

First Responder volunteers with the Ambulance Service NSW Community First Response Program who provide initial medical assistance in an emergency in Canyonleigh, Scotland Island (in Pittwater) and remote areas of Western NSW will be supported by grants worth \$35,000 to improve their levels of training.

ADRA Australia who assists in the delivery of emergency welfare services will receive a grant of \$52,000 to develop an Online Volunteer Training Project which will supplement volunteer face to face training and free-up more group training time for simulation and exercise based learning.

The Australian Red Cross will receive over \$50,000 to funding training for emergency welfare volunteers in activation and inbound welfare call management.

St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) will receive grants worth a total of \$140,000 for a range of volunteer training, recruitment and retention projects, including a technological fit out of the State Training facility in Blaxland, a flexible volunteering learning project and the further development of existing trainers.

Two grants worth a total of \$130,000 will be given to Surf Life Saving NSW to re-design the way the organisation communicates with their volunteers using the latest technologies and to deliver a conference for Club Captains to exchange ideas relating to volunteer management, recruitment and retention.

The Salvation Army which provides emergency welfare support services has also been granted \$65,000 to deliver five training seminars for Corps Coordinators.

“Each of these organisations plays a vital role in our community and this funding will ensure the continued support to the volunteers, staff and community members alike.” Minister Gallacher concluded.

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MEDIA: Tess Salmon 0467 740 017