

MEDIA RELEASE

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BUDGET DELIVERS VITAL RESOURCES FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

The NSW Budget delivers a record \$1.3 billion for emergency services in 2016-17, including funding for new fire stations, bushfire management facilities and major projects to reduce drownings.

Minister for Emergency Services David Elliott said Fire & Rescue NSW would receive \$7.9 million for construction and refurbishment of fire stations across the state and \$14.8 million for the replacement of essential fire-fighting equipment.

The NSW Rural Fire Service will receive \$14.2 million for a new state-of-the-art headquarters, while the NSW State Emergency Service will receive additional capital funding of \$6.4 million for the relocation of its headquarters within the Illawarra. The Budget also provides \$11 million for projects to reduce drownings, with \$6 million to be invested in a new Water Safety Fund over the next three years.

“The fund will support projects that improve water safety in dangerous locations and encourage ‘at risk’ population groups to develop their skills and take precautions when engaging in hazardous activities such as rock fishing,” Mr Elliott said.

The government will introduce laws making life jackets mandatory for rock fishers in high risk locations and has allocated \$760,000 over two years to implement the changes. Surf Life Saving NSW will receive \$4 million over three years to increase water safety on the state’s beaches, with the funds to be used for buying new equipment, developing the skills of existing life savers and training new recruits.

Other Budget highlights include:

- \$120 million for natural disaster response and recovery expenses; and
- \$1 million to develop a business case for a complex to support coordination of the emergency services agencies in emergency and counter-disaster responses.

“Our emergency service workers are the heroes we rely upon during natural disasters and this Budget delivers the resources they need to protect us against fires, floods and other extreme weather events,” Mr Elliott said.

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