



RFS

Media release

Sutherland firefighters honoured for their service

6 November 2025

The dedication and commitment of more than 39 NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers from across the Sutherland District will be recognised today at a special ceremony in Engadine.

RFS Assistant Commissioner Dr Leigh Pilkington will be joined by Maryanne Stuart MP and special guests for the presentation of 26 Long Service Medals, 12 National Medals and one National Emergency Medal.

Assistant Commissioner Dr Leigh Pilkington said with length of service ranging from 10 to 50 years, many of these volunteers have dedicated a significant portion of their life to protecting others and deserve our gratitude.

“Three members are being present with the 45 years Long Service Medal, including David Brown and Peter Kneale from the Waterfall Brigade, and Thomas McCabe from the Sutherland Communications Brigade,” said Assistant Commissioner Pilkington.

“A well-respected member of his brigade and community, Thomas joined Sutherland Communications Brigade in 1974 and has 50 years of continuous service. Thomas was a founding member of the Brigade and has held many roles including Captain, to which he did two stints; from 1990 to 2002 and then from 2011 till 2018.

“David has held many positions within the Waterfall Brigade after joining in 1975, including Deputy Captain, Senior Deputy Captain and President. An experienced firefighter, he is always willing to pass on his knowledge to new members.”

“Peter started with the RFS, joining the Waterfall Brigade in 1976 and has fulfilled roles including Deputy Captain, Senior Deputy Captain and Captain - as well as Vice President, President and Training Officer. He plays an active role in the brigade and is a great mentor to those alongside him.”

Maryanne Stuart MP said many RFS members go above and beyond for their brigades and local community, and it is fitting to recognise the dedication they all show

“Their professionalism does not go unnoticed and while they don’t do the work for praise, their bravery and commitment should be acknowledged,” she said.

“I also acknowledge those who support volunteers in what they do - the family, friends, employers and colleagues. We know it takes their ongoing support and patience to assist and enable our volunteers to do what they do to save lives and protect property.”