



Steph Cooke

Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience
Minister for Flood Recovery

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 24 March 2022

NIGHT-TIME CAPABILITY FOR RFS TAKES OFF

In a first for NSW, the Rural Fire Service (RFS) has commenced training for night-time firefighting operations using a Coulson Chinook helicopter.

Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience Steph Cooke said the new technology and equipment addresses two recommendations handed down as part of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry, following the 2019-20 Black Summer bush fires.

“This new capability will ensure our firefighters on the ground receive back-up from the air, day or night,” Ms Cooke said.

“I’m so pleased to see training and trials underway ahead of the next bush fire season. It will enhance our ability to respond to bush fire threats any time they emerge.

“The NSW Government will continue to invest in state-of-the-art technologies to better equip our emergency services personnel.”

RFS Assistant Commissioner Ben Millington said the intent of the project is to develop an effective night-time firebombing capability.

“Night-time aerial firefighting is a relatively new but exciting concept in Australia,” Assistant Commissioner Millington said.

“Operating helicopters at night will allow us to directly attack fires at times when weather conditions are typically more favourable, which has already become evident through our trials.

“We will continue to build on this capability to provide our firefighters and emergency service personnel with aviation support at times when traditionally they wouldn’t have any.”

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