



**Troy Grant**  
Minister for Emergency Services

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 4 May 2017

### **NSW FIREFIGHTERS HONOURED ON ST FLORIAN'S DAY**

Hundreds of NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) staff and volunteers have been recognised today for their outstanding commitment and bravery including an 88-year-old gentleman who has served as a member of the NSW RFS Hills District for over 70 years.

Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant joined NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons to pay tribute to all RFS volunteers and staff at the annual award ceremony at NSW RFS Headquarters in honour of the Patron Saint of Firefighters, St Florian.

“Today we stop to thank everyone involved in fighting fires across our communities especially the many men and women who are on call day after day and selflessly respond to all manner of emergencies,” Mr Grant said.

“The Sir Ivan bush fire is fresh in our memories, as are the emergency services personnel and volunteers who worked around the clock to protect lives and property on the more than 12,000 fires that burned across NSW over the past fire season.

“I’m very proud of the exceptional talent we have in our State working on the frontline and behind the scenes to respond to fire emergencies and I thank each and every fire fighter for their bravery and service.”

Commissioner Fitzsimmons paid special tribute to Sussex Inlet Rural Fire Brigade’s Rachel Hessenberger who was awarded a Commissioner’s Certificate of Commendation.

“Rachel avoided a potentially tragic situation while deployed to Tasmania in 2016. She helped free four members of an overturned vehicle and then gave first aid to those with serious injuries,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons also recognized the action and performance of RFS groups.

“This year, our highly skilled *Down the Wire Technicians* were recognised. These specialists provided helicopter search and rescue capability for 45 continuous days during floods in west and south western NSW,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

For full citations, please visit the NSW RFS website [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au).

**Douglas Martin | Minister Grant | 0438 371 354**

## **NSW RFS Internal Bravery and Service Awards:**

### **Commissioner's Commendation for Service (Individual)**

- Firefighter Susan Barker – Illawarra Community Safety Brigade, Illawarra Zone.
- Captain Peter Brougham – Valla Rural Fire Brigade, Lower North Coast Zone.
- Captain Michael Cantwell – Manna Mount Rural Fire brigade, Mid Lachlan Valley Team.
- Deputy Group Captain Robert Cox – Corini/RedRock Rural Fire Brigade, Mid North Coast Team.
- Inspector Anthony Jarrett (*deceased*) – Lower North Coast Zone
- Group Captain Andrew Macdonald – Catherine Field Rural Fire Brigade, Macarthur Zone.
- Deputy Captain Sidney (Lionel) Smith AFSM – Kenthurst Rural Fire Brigade, The Hills District.

### **Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation (Individual)**

- Mrs Tracie Bahun – Regional Services, NSW RFS Headquarters.
- Superintendent Timothy Carroll – Lake George Zone.
- Deputy Captain Rachel Hessenberger – Sussex Inlet Rural Fire Brigade, Shoalhaven Zone.
- Deputy Group Captain Rick Jones – Duffys Forest Rural Fire Brigade, Warringah Pittwater District.
- Mrs Roslyn ten Brink – Liverpool Range Zone

### **Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation (Unit)**

- Bedgerebong, Burcher, Jemalong, Lake, Manna Mount, South Gipps, Warroo, Blowclear-Wamboyne, Winnunga and Ungarie Rural Fire Brigades, Helitack 201, Helitack 220 And Down the Wire Technicians.
- Coonabararan Squad Volunteer Rescue Association
- Corporate Communications Group – NSW RFS Headquarters
- Down the Wire Technicians
- Hornsby Support, Cowan, Westleigh, Cherrybrook, Ku-ring-gai and Duffys Forest Rural Fire Brigades – Hornsby Ku-ring-gai and Warringah Pittwater Districts
- Namoi Gwydir Team State Championships Local Volunteers – Namoi Gwydir Team, Region North
- Namoi Gwydir Team – Region North
- NSW RFS State Championships Committee
- Valla and Valla Beach Rural Fire Brigades – Lower North Coast Zone, Region North.

### **Commissioner's Unit Citation for Service**

- Krawarree Rural Fire Brigade – Lake George Zone.
- Mungindi Rural Fire Brigade – Namoi Gwydir Team