



**NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE**



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Rural Fire Service leads the way to Wollongong**

**27 July 2017**

Wollongong will host more than 250 NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) volunteers and staff from across the state over the next few days.

The 2017 NSW RFS Leadership Forum provides an opportunity for NSW RFS members to discuss and exchange ideas about leadership, with the theme Leadership: Skills, Strategy and Sustainability.

NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said the event is one of the key activities on the Service's calendar, and helps build future leaders.

"From the young member who has just joined, to the firefighter in a brigade, through to senior Group Officer roles and staff positions, everyone has an important leadership role, guiding and helping to keep fellow members and their community safe," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

"The Leadership Forum brings together members from all over the state, from brigade level through to senior management, to share and benefit from the experience and knowledge of their peers.

"It also provides an opportunity to spark new ideas and fresh perspectives about how we put leadership into practice across the Service.

"The NSW RFS is no different to many businesses or organisations, facing challenges like changing community and membership profiles, external drivers such as weather and climate, technology, and community expectations – and the true test is how we respond to these challenges".

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said the leadership and young members forums have been combined for the first time, providing delegates of all age groups with a unique opportunity to share their personal perspectives about leadership across generations.

Keynote speakers and presenters include Republic of Botswana High Commissioner Lapologang C. Lekoa, Minister for Police and Emergency Services Troy Grant MP, Commissioner Fitzsimmons and NSW State Emergency Service Commissioner Mark Smethurst.

Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council CEO Stuart Ellis, Rural Fire Service Association President Ken Middleton and diversity advocate Alexandra Shehadie will also address delegates.

The 2017 NSW RFS Leadership Forum is being held at the Novotel Wollongong at Northbeach from 27 July to 29 July. The main presentations and sessions will be held on Friday and Saturday.

**To request an interview with NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons please call the NSW RFS State Duty Media Officer on 02 9898 1855.**

**For more information contact the State Duty Media Officer on 02 9898 1855  
For current incidents or major fire updates visit [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au)**