

# MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## **New fire trucks and accolades for Clarence Valley volunteers**

**29 May 2011**

NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons has presented three brand new fire trucks to RFS brigades across the Clarence Valley, and has praised the commitment of the District's volunteer firefighters.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons presented 38 members with Long Service and National medals at an official ceremony at Clarence Valley Fire Control Centre, where he said that volunteers are the backbone of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

"All of the men and women being recognised here today have served with distinction; together they have accumulated more than 1,300 years of service which is an incredible accomplishment.

"In particular I would like to acknowledge Leslie Skinner, John Harvey, Tom Watkins, Ken Ellem, John Murphy and Jim Fricker. These gentlemen have each dedicated more than 50 years to their brigades.

"Their ongoing selfless commitment to the safety of their communities is an inspiration, and like everyone here today, they are most worthy of our gratitude and thanks," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

Southampton Rural Fire Brigade was also presented with the Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation for its outstanding performance during an incident in 2010.

"The crews responded to a particularly dangerous scenario and went about their work professionally and effectively with little thought about their own well-being. This is demonstrative of the calibre of members that the NSW RFS is fortunate to have."

Commissioner Fitzsimmons also formally handed over three new fire trucks worth more than half a million dollars to the Ashby, Pillar Valley and Woombah Rural Fire Brigades.

"The NSW RFS is committed to ensuring that our volunteers are equipped the necessary equipment needed in order to go about their duties. These new vehicles are replacing older models and will enable crews to continue their outstanding work.

"Whilst our members don't volunteer for awards or accolades, today is the ideal opportunity for the Clarence Valley and wider NSW community to express our sincere thanks for their ongoing contribution," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

**For inquiries or interviews contact the NSW RFS State Duty Media Officer: 9898 1855**