



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## MEDIA STATEMENT

### Response to independent NSW Bushfire Inquiry report

25 August 2020

NSW Rural Fire Service Commissioner Rob Rogers:

“The 2019-20 bush fire season was an extreme event that challenged everyone – including firefighters, agencies and the community like never before.

“Today the NSW Government has released the report into the fires. The release of the Inquiry report goes a long way in providing answers to what worked well, and what can be improved for future events.

“As the report highlights, we have learnt from previous events but the season of 2019-20 challenged conventional assumptions and tactics – and the way we prepare for and respond to extreme events.

“We are already working on improvements including enhancing the way we detect and monitor fires, and how we can respond quickly to keep fires as small as possible. We are also implementing changes to further improve the way we deliver information to the community, especially in border areas. And we are continuing to focus on important mitigation work that can reduce the bush fire risk to NSW communities.

“The report highlights the incredible work of our volunteers, our partner agencies and the community working together, and it’s important to recognise that being prepared for extreme fire events isn’t just a job for firefighters or Government – but for everyone in the community. Given the losses of the last season for communities and our own people, it’s important that we learn from this event.

“Our thoughts continue to be with those who were affected by the fires, especially those who lost loved ones, including the families of the three volunteers and three American aircrew who made the ultimate sacrifice helping the NSW community.”

#### *Background*

- The NSW bush fire season was unprecedented in terms of conditions experienced, the loss of lives and property, and the threat to communities across large parts of NSW.
- It was a combined inter-agency response from NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Corporation NSW, NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Police, NSW Ambulance and the Australian Defence Force come together with our interstate colleagues.
- A Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster arrangements continues with recommendations and findings expected later this year.



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