



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

MEDIA RELEASE

Major investment boosts southern NSW community safety

16 December 2021

Regional communities in the state's south will benefit from enhanced emergency response, with the announcement today of a new \$8 million Rural Fire Service Fire Control Centre to be built and a firefighting helicopter based at Tumut.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott joined NSW RFS Commissioner Rob Rogers today to see the new base for the helicopter first hand at Tumut Airport and inspect the site of the new Fire Control Centre.

Mr Elliott said three multi-purposed helicopters have been pre-positioned at Tumut, Dubbo and Coffs Harbour to allow for rapid deployment regionally during the fire season.

"The RFS aviation capability has grown over recent years now comprising of a 737 Large Air Tanker, two Citation fixed wing aircraft and six helicopters, and is now the biggest firefighting aviation fleet in the country," he said.

"The NSW Government is committed to the expansion of the NSW RFS aviation capacity, including its resources and training and we will continue to provide our emergency services with the most appropriate resources on the ground and in the air where they are needed,"

"The new Fire Control Centre will also provide the NSW RFS and its emergency services partners with the modern facilities they need to successfully manage large-scale emergency response operations,"

"It will be developed in partnership with Snowy Valleys Council, which is providing a parcel of land in its airport precinct for the project. There is also the potential for other agencies to be co-located on the site."

The Fire Control Centre will incorporate an operations centre, administration area, training facilities and a hangar.

NSW RFS Commissioner Rob Rogers said that the strategic placement of the aviation fleet in three regional locations is particularly important.

"Our main concern this season is the significant potential for grass and crop fires in regional NSW which can develop rapidly, so to have an asset like this on hand means assistance can be provided to our firefighters on the ground sooner in an emergency," Commissioner Rogers said.

"These aircraft will provide additional reassurance for regional NSW communities. It will not only support firefighting operations, but can also provide real time high definition video streams and assist in response planning as well as search and rescue missions," he said.

"This summer we have already provided aviation assets to assist the State Emergency Service with the response to flooding and these helicopters are ready for deployment as we face the potential for grass fires in regional NSW this summer."



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