



RFS

District Information Pack

Hunter Valley

The Hunter Valley District is located in the Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales and has a Population of approximately 35,226 with the three major centres Muswellbrook, Denman and Singleton. These centres are surrounded by rural residential suburbs and small villages.

The District area has medium density urban areas, large mining industry with associated support structure, military facilities, agricultural industries, numerous National Parks and isolated communities.

The Hunter Valley District covers approximately 8301.97 square kilometres and has 32 Rural Fire Brigades with approximately 1200 volunteers.

Hunter Valley has an average of 500 plus calls per year, of which on average one can be considered to be a major fire.

The nominated Incident Management Facility is the Hunter Valley Fire Control Centre located at 2161 Putty Road, Bulga.

1.1. Contact Information

District Office Address:	2161 Putty Road Bulga NSW 2330
District Office Phone:	02 6575 1200
After Hours Contact:	Via State Operations on 02 8741 5400
A PSN Radio Channel:	116 HUNTV A – Primary Dispatch Channel
B PSN Radio Channel:	216 HUNTV B
PMR Channel:	2214 HUNTV P
ESO Conversion Chart:	Please see file in folder for relevant conversion information
Fire Weather Forecast Area:	Greater Hunter
Local Government Area:	Muswellbrook, Singleton

1.2. Topography

The area is a mix of rural grasslands, heavily forested National Parks and a significant area of coal mine and power station land.

The topography of the Hunter Valley includes gently sloping hills with modest gradients through to deep gorge terrain in the remote national park areas. The terrain of the western part of the District is noticeably flatter as the Goulburn River and other tributaries of the Hunter River dominate the area.

Large portions of the District area are remote and access is limited to aerial means or by remote fire trails.

1.3. Vegetation

The Hunter Valley Area encompasses a wide range of vegetation types. The area essentially encompasses a snap shot of all vegetation types found across most of the state – ranging from heath in the south to forested areas, both dry sclerophyll and rainforest predominantly through the ranges as well as grassland expanses.

This wide variety of vegetation results in an associated variety of risk across the area.

Large areas of the Hunter Valley District are captured by the Yengo, Wollemi and other national parks. Extensive areas on the low lands have been cleared for farming and are grazed lands.

Large tracts of land have been cleared for coal mining and remain either vegetation free or have new revegetation growth.

Grassland fuels vary between 2-6t/ha depending on the grazing levels. The forested areas generally have an average of 15-20t/ha with mainly surface and near surface fuels.

1.4. Climate

The Hunter Valley's climate is similar to a Mediterranean climate with lovely balmy days in spring and summer and brisk nights in autumn and winter when wood fires are roaring. In summer the average daily temperature is between 28° - 32°c and in winter 16° - 18°c, dipping to lows of 2° - 4°c overnight. The average rainfall is about 870mm.

1.5. Average Weather Data

Summary of major climate statistics recorded at Cessnock Airport AWS recorded by the BoM (last updated 4 July 2024)

Element (Mean)	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Max Temp (°C)	25.4	27.0	29.1	30.4	29.3	27.4	24.2	20.8	17.9	17.6	19.6	22.7
Min Temp (°C)	9.9	13.0	15.2	17.1	16.9	15.0	10.7	7.5	5.7	4.1	4.5	7.1
Rainfall (mm)	55.5	76.0	80.3	74.5	100.7	86.8	57.9	39.7	54.5	35.9	34.1	43.2
3pm Temp (°C)	23.4	25.0	27.3	28.7	27.3	25.7	23.0	19.6	16.8	16.4	18.6	21.2
3pm wind (km/h)	18.7	18.6	18.3	18.5	17.3	15.7	14.6	14.2	15.1	15.3	17.3	19.1
3pm RH (%)	44	47	46	46	53	53	52	54	55	49	42	42

Summary of major climate statistics recorded at Scone Airport AWS recorded by the BoM (last updated 4 July 2024)

Element (Mean)	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Max Temp (°C)	25.6	28.2	30.5	31.8	30.7	28.1	24.6	20.4	17.1	16.7	18.9	22.3
Min Temp (°C)	9.7	13.0	15.4	17.2	16.7	14.3	10.0	6.5	4.7	3.3	3.7	6.7
Rainfall (mm)	52.0	77.9	74.3	61.2	58.3	63.0	34.8	34.7	45.5	38.8	36.1	35.4
3pm Temp (°C)	23.6	26.0	28.4	29.9	28.9	26.7	23.4	19.4	16.1	15.6	17.7	20.8
3pm wind (km/h)	19.1	20.6	20.0	19.2	18.7	18.6	18.0	16.1	16.0	16.5	18.7	18.9
3pm RH (%)	42	43	42	41	47	47	49	51	58	55	47	44

1.6. Known Radio Comms Blackspots

- Frazer Beach, Munmorah State Conservation Area
- Northern part of Mt Royal National Park area
- Baerami Creek (Baerami valley) south of Bylong Valley Way
- Horseshoe Creek (Horseshoe valley) south of Bylong Valley Way
- Hungerford Creek area (Hungerford valley) south of Bylong Valley Way
- Widden Valley south of Bylong Valley Way
- Martindale valley Martindale Road south of Martindale Public School
- Glen Gallic area west of Martindale Road
- Northern area of Sandy Hollow Giants Creek Road Manobalai

With the exception of Manobalai, and Mount Royal (Barrington Tops) all the areas listed above are small north-south narrow valleys that lead into the Wollemi National Park.

1.7. Hazards

1.7.1. Road Transport

The Hunter Valley District has both the Golden Highway and New England Highway as the main transport thoroughfares passing through it. These transport routes carry heavy vehicles with many of them carrying dangerous goods. Due to the high mining industry in the area there are significant heavy vehicle movements carrying large quantities of fuel.

There are a number of heavy vehicle movements carrying munitions into and out of the Myanbat Military Facility to various military bases.

The Hunter Valley also has Putty Road as a substantial transport route joining Sydney to the Hunter Valley. This route has had a notorious history of bad accidents and is remote from most frontline emergency services other than the RFS.

1.7.2. Mining

There are extensive coal resources in both underground and open cut mines across the Hunter Valley area. Mining is the major industry within the local area. Mining is also a substantial landholder for the area

1.7.3. Agricultural

Whilst traditional agricultural operations are present throughout the area, there is a significant amount of vineyards due to our climate. These installations contribute heavily to the tourism industry for the region.

1.7.4. Energy

The Hunter Valley comprises a significant power energy provider for the region with traditional power generating means and is also in the process of installing a new wind farm in the Muswellbrook Area.

1.7.5. Water

The main catchments in the area Glenbawn Dam which is just outside Hunter Valley District but feeds into the Hunter River that passes through Hunter Valley. The other catchment area is Lake St Clair. Both Glenbawn and Lake St Clair dams spill into the Hunter River and during times of heavy rains have the potential to contribute to flooding in the area. The Goulburn River and the Wollombi Brook also flow into the Hunter River and contribute to the flooding in the area.

1.7.6. Special Fire Protection Facilities

There are three hospitals located in Hunter Valley, being the Singleton, Muswellbrook and Denman hospital. There are also a number of nursing home and school facilities located throughout the District.

1.8. Land Management Authorities

Singleton

Land Manager	% of Area
National Parks & Wildlife Service	37.4
Forestry Corporation NSW	1.3
Department of Lands	4.2
Local Government	0.7
Private	38.7
Commonwealth	2.8
Local Mining (Private Tenure)	14.9

Muswellbrook

Land Manager	% of Area
National Parks & Wildlife Service	43
Department of Lands	6.4
Local Government	0.17
Private	46.9
Commonwealth	0.43
Coal Mining (Private Tenure)	3.1

For more specific data on the Hunter Valley District, please follow the link to the Hunter Valley Bush Fire Risk Management Plan [here](#).

Note: This link will only work with internet coverage.

For further information regarding the Hunter Valley District Information pack, please contact the Operational Improvement team via **email at** operational.improvement@rfs.nsw.gov.au

