



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

MEDIA RELEASE

Aviation firefighting simulator given real life tick of approval

17 July 2021

Nine aviation personnel from across the country have enhanced their capabilities and skills using the new aviation simulator located at the NSW RFS Training Academy in Dubbo.

The new simulator, which was announced in April, helps to expand NSW's specialist aviation personnel capacity and assist with addressing recommendation 10 from the NSW Bushfire Inquiry. The simulator provides the NSW RFS with the ability to safely train and develop skills in the field of aerial firefighting.

The NSW RFS is also building an Aviation Centre of Excellence at the Academy, which will further enhance their aviation training capabilities.

Personnel completed an Air Attack Supervisor (AAS) course at the Academy in June, where participants were required to undergo two sessions using the aviation simulator, with a further 16 trainees completing an Air Base Manager course at the same time.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott said the AAS course allowed participants to undertake basic firefighting air attack missions in a mock aircraft, enabling them to direct aircraft and practice communication skills.

"Highly trained NSW RFS aviation specialist instructors have been gearing up over the last few months to become proficient in the use of this simulator and as we've now seen, ready to train NSW emergency services personnel," Mr Elliott said.

"The devastating 2019/20 season saw aerial firefighting assets play a vital role in supporting our firefighters on the ground, and courses like this make sure NSW is as prepared as possible for this and fire seasons to come."

Further aviation focused programs and forums will be held at the NSW RFS Training Academy this year, with Air Base Operation and Aviation Communication programs to be held in other regions.

"The NSW Government remains committed to ensuring our hard working firefighters and support crew have the resources they need to keep our communities safe and work continues with Dubbo Regional Council to have the Aviation Centre of Excellence built and open in 2022," Mr Elliott said.

NSW RFS Commissioner Rob Rogers said the NSW RFS, a leader in aviation firefighting operations for more than twenty years, will continue to develop and support NSW and other jurisdictions with the technology and training required.

"It's exciting to see the first cohort of trainees using the high-tech simulator and the positive feedback. We're continuing to work to improve the equipment and training for our volunteers and those who will use the Centre in future," Commissioner Rogers said.



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“These programs expand the experience and skills of our highly trained personnel and further increases the protection of residents across the state, especially as we approach the next bush fire season.

“While our firefighters are undertaking important preparation for the upcoming season, I would also encourage all residents to do what they can to prepare themselves and their properties. Have the discussion about what you and your family will do in the event fire threatens you.”



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