MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW MACHINES HELP RFS CARVE THROUGH FLOOD CLEAN-UP

Seven tracked loaders have been deployed by the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) to clear flood debris in a boost for the clean-up effort across the disaster-impacted Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley, Central Coast and Hunter.

Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience and Minister for Flood Recovery Steph Cooke said the Bobcat-like equipment, which were originally purchased for bush fire mitigation works, are helping RFS crews make short work of flood debris.

"I'm so proud of our RFS members who have been providing critical support since day one of this flood event, including assisting with rescues, evacuations, sandbagging, pumping floodwater from inundated properties, and clearing out mud and debris where the multi-purpose tracked loaders have proven to be invaluable," Ms Cooke said.

"Each tracked loaders is fitted with a bucket, slasher and mulcher which means they can be deployed in a variety of ways and enables our crews to clear debris and mud quicker than ever before.

"More than 600 RFS members, 70 trucks and six aircraft have assisted the NSW SES in the flood response and I can't thank them enough for their ongoing efforts."

The RFS has seven tracked loaders in action across the State, with seven more on the way.

RFS Acting Commissioner Kyle Stewart said the efforts of volunteers and staff over the past two weeks has shown the versatility of the RFS.

"Our members attend bush and grass fires, structure fires, motor vehicle accidents and as we see now, flood and storm damage, flood rescues and clean-up," Acting Commissioner Stewart said.

"We are proud to be working alongside other agencies including the NSW SES, Fire and Rescue NSW and NSW Police Force to protect our communities. No matter the emergency, the simple fact is that when the community needs help, the RFS will be there."

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