



# RFS

## Media release

### Celebrations for RFS Shoalhaven members

**27 July 2025**

More than a millennium of service will be celebrated today as Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers are recognised at a ceremony in the Shoalhaven District.

RFS Deputy Commissioner Ben Millington will be joined by The Hon Dr Sarah Kaine MLC and special guests at HMAS Albatross Fleet Air Arm Museum for the presentation of 36 Long Service Medals and 13 National Medals.

“With years of service ranging from 10 to 60 years, many of these volunteers have dedicated a significant portion of their life to protecting others, including Graham Williams who has been a volunteer since 1964,” Deputy Commissioner Millington said.

“Graham tirelessly worked his way up through the ranks within Sussex Inlet Rural Fire Brigade holding the positions of Deputy Captain and Captain and then in 1989 became a Group Captain for the Group 4 area.

“Graham, like the other 55 members today being recognised exemplifies the values of the RFS and are exceptional people not only in the Service, but also in their communities,” he said.

Deputy Commissioner Millington also acknowledged Tomerong Brigade Captain Doug Schutz, for his near 60-year service to the community of Tomerong and surrounds.

“Doug not only is the Captain of Tomerong Brigade but has spent decades as one of Shoalhaven’s top chainsaw specialist problem tree fellers and instructors,” he said.

“The professionalism and knowledge of Doug and his colleagues across the Shoalhaven has not gone unnoticed and while they don’t do the work for praise, today’s event provides us with an opportunity to acknowledge their commitment.”

The Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine MLC said that we are indebted to these local heroes for the countless hours and dedication they give to our communities.

“Today we honour their dedication to the local community, which often goes without recognition,” Dr Kaine said.

“I also acknowledge those who support volunteers in what they do - the family, friends, employers and colleagues. We know it takes their ongoing support and patience to assist and enable our volunteers to do what they do to help save lives and protect property.”

“These incredible community stalwarts dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to protecting their local communities, driven not by the desire for recognition but by a genuine commitment to serve,” said Dr Kaine.