

MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Major firefighting training takes to the skies

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Aerial firefighting specialists from throughout Australia are converging on Taree Airport this weekend for a major training exercise to prepare for the upcoming fire season.

NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers said around 80 aerial firefighters will be travelling to Taree to hone their skills in aviation management.

“The unprecedented rain we’ve had in recent years has led to an increase in vegetation growth, particularly grass growth. As soon as we start to get some warmer weather this grass will dry out, providing the ideal fuel for grass fires.

“This training will ensure aerial firefighting specialists from both NSW and throughout Australia are well practised and trained in preparation for the inevitable return of fire conditions,” said Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers

“People in communities throughout Australia will benefit from having freshly trained and prepared aerial firefighters on hand to help fight fires from the sky when required during the summer months.

Trainees will fine tune their skills in navigating to water bombing sites, calling in water bombers, dropping foam and retardant and running an airbase.

They will also be taught how to co-ordinate reconnaissance, aerial ignition techniques as well as transport and airbase management services.

“These roles are vitally important during fires, particularly in the work aerial specialists do to support firefighters on the ground.

“This training will help us to combat fires by sharpening the skills of our aviation specialists, not just from the NSW RFS, but from a range of firefighting and land management agencies from throughout Australia,” said Deputy Commissioner Rogers.

NSW RFS firefighters will join with their counterparts from the ACT Rural Fire Service, South Australia Country Fire Service, Queensland Fire and Rescue and the NSW SES to hone their skills in this four day exercise.

“This large-scale, multi agency training exercise would not be able to take place without the support of the Greater Taree Council and their Airport Management, who are both very supportive of our training,” said Deputy Commissioner Rogers.

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