

# MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## Bush fire season turns up the heat

23 October 2012

This weekend gave a taste of what is likely to come this bush fire season with around one thousand volunteer firefighters battling more than one hundred blazes across the state.

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said that fires had already killed stock and destroyed property such as fences, sheds, tractors and electricity poles and wires.

“We estimate that this weekend more than \$1 million of damage was sustained across NSW,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

“In one single fire in Northern NSW around 22,000 hectares of valuable pasture land was burnt and more than 200 head of stock were killed.

“This is a stark reminder of the reality of bush fire season and the damage fires can cause.

“Less than three weeks into this year’s season NSW RFS volunteers have already attended 373 fires, compared to 180 in the same period last year.

“It is clear that this fire season arrived early, and with hotter, drier weather predicted, people need to get ready now, not later.

“Our firefighters can’t do it alone; they need people to be prepared.

“I urge everyone to download a Bush Fire Survival Plan and talk to their family about how they will handle a bush fire this season. That discussion could save their lives, home or livelihoods.”

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said the efforts of the RFS volunteer firefighters, along with FRNSW, NSW Parks and Wildlife and Forests NSW firefighters, have already helped save properties.

“In some areas like the state’s north, volunteers have been dealing with significant fire activity since August.

Many of our volunteer firefighters give up their time to fight these fires with the generous support and understanding of their employers.

“The contribution of employers is especially appreciated, as it helps our volunteers to protect communities throughout NSW,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

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