



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Orana Team celebrates veteran volunteers and brigade's anniversary

**19 July 2018**

NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) members will gather today to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Benalong Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) and honour Orana Team volunteers for their long-standing dedication and commitment to protecting the community.

Member for Dubbo Dugald Saunders and NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons will congratulate members past and present for building the Benalong RFB into the community institution it is today.

"This Brigade, formed in 1939, has a proud history of community service and spirit," Mr Saunders said.

"Today, the brigade of 70 members continues its level of dedication and responds to a wide range of emergency incidents ranging from bush and grass fires to motor vehicle accidents, as well as lending a helping hand at community events and helping locals prepare for the fire season."

National Medals and NSW RFS Long Service Medals will also be presented to 50 members, across two ceremonies to be held at the Benalong RFB station and the Dubbo Fire Control Centre.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said this would recognise their combined 1,546 years of service.

"Every member is worthy of the highest praise, however I would like to make particular mention of Ross Dunkley, who is receiving the Long Service Medal 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Clasp in recognition of his 67 years of service," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

"Ross, who is still an active member, joined the Benalong Brigade in 1952 and held the position of Captain for 17 years years.

"I'd also like to congratulate Kevin Hyland of the Benalong Brigade for his 61 years of service and Ken Commerford, a founding member of the Mountain Creek Brigade for his 60 years of dedication to protecting the local community.

"The hard work and professionalism of NSW RFS members does not go unnoticed and, while they do not ask for praise, we gladly award these medals as a proud acknowledgement of their contribution and commitment."

Benalong Brigade's 80th anniversary and the medal presentations for the Orana Team today are a great opportunity for the Service and community to say thank you to all volunteer members.

"The Orana Team is afforded a world-class level of fire protection due to the experience and dedication of its 60 Rural Fire Brigades and we cannot thank them enough," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

 For more information contact the State Duty Media Officer on (02) 9898 1855.  
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