



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



MEDIA RELEASE

Lower Hunter celebrates long serving volunteers

13 September 2019

Member for the Upper Hunter Michael Johnsen MP and NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers AFSM honored 55 volunteer firefighters at a ceremony held on Friday night.

Mr Johnsen and Deputy Commissioner Rogers presented National Medals and Long Service Medals to volunteers in acknowledgment of their long-standing dedication to the Service and to protecting the local community from fire.

“In total, these 55 recipients have between them devoted an incredible 1,439 years of service to the local community and, of those, 13 recipients are being honoured for more than 40 years of service, which is truly inspiring,” Mr Johnsen said.

“It is an absolute honor to present these awards and to take a moment in which we can reflect upon the outstanding achievements of these members.”

Deputy Commissioner Rogers made particular mention of Long Service Medal 4th Clasp recipient Ronald Kellner, who was recognised for his incredible 67 years of service to the Wallarobba Brigade.

“When Ronald first joined the Brigade in 1951, a 44 gallon drum was used to fight the fires, by dragging the drum around on a slide behind a horse,” Deputy Commissioner Rogers said.

“Ronald also assisted with fund raising for the brigade to purchase the first firefighting appliance, walking all around Wallarobba with a bucket to raise \$10,000.”

Deputy Commissioner Rogers also recognised the service of Warren Marquet, Kevin Bristow AFSM and David Thomas, who have all given more than 50 years of service to the community.

“Warren, Kevin and David combined have given more than 150 years of service to the Service, which is a credit to the Lower Hunter District,” Deputy Commissioner Rogers said.

“We must also thank the family, friends and colleagues of all these and all volunteers. We know it takes their support and patience to help Rural Fire Service members do what they do.

“It is an absolute honor to present these awards and to take a moment in which we can reflect upon the outstanding achievements of these members.”

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