



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



MEDIA RELEASE

Lower Hunter celebrates veteran volunteers and new training facility

29 September 2017

Member for the Upper Hunter Michael Johnsen MP and NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) NSW RFS Acting Regional Manager Chief Superintendent Jayson McKellar AFSM honoured 99 volunteer firefighters at a ceremony held at the new Lower Hunter District training ground.

Mr Johnsen and Chief Superintendent McKellar this week 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 99 recipients have between them devoted an incredible 2,236 years of service to the local community and, of those, 53 recipients are being honoured for more than 20 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.”

Chief Superintendent McKellar made particular mention of National Medal 3rd Clasp recipients Robert Shorten and Garry See, who were recognised for their 46 and 48 years of service respectively to the Bolwarra-Largs Brigade.

“Robert has filled the roles of brigade equipment officer, training officer, vice president, permit officer, deputy captain, senior deputy captain and captain while Garry has held the positions of deputy captain and vice president throughout the years,” Chief Superintendent McKellar said.

“Each and every one of the volunteers recognised is worthy of our sincerest thanks and I would like to personally commend them, not only for their commitment to the Service, but also to their community.”

Mr Johnsen said local volunteers will be able to develop their skills even further following the opening of the new Lower Hunter District training ground.

“The new training ground, centrally located at the Lower Hunter District Fire Control Centre, includes a structural firefighting training complex, a car prop for village firefighting training as well as space for a range of practical assessments and classrooms for theory based learning,” Mr Johnsen said.

“The NSW RFS is at the cutting edge of bush firefighting due to significant improvements in technology, training, equipment and communications and I am confident this new facility will truly benefit our firefighters and the community.”

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