



Michael Gallacher MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
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MEDIA RELEASE

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AIR-CRANE ARRIVES TO BOOST RESOURCES THIS FIRE SEASON

Police and Emergency Services Minister Michael Gallacher has welcomed the arrival of the first firefighting Air-Crane 'Malcolm', direct from active service in the USA, boosting the NSW Rural Fire Service's (NSW RFS) resources for the summer.

"These famous helicopters are a well-known sight in the skies as they help our firefighters battle bush fires and save lives and properties every bush fire season," Minister Gallacher said.

"They are brought to Australia each year because their huge water capacity means they can drop a lot of water very accurately in a short time, helping firefighters to control the flames and protect homes and other assets during a fire.

The second Air-Crane 'Camille' is due to arrive in early December. Both Air-Cranes will be based at Bankstown Airport and deployed to wherever they are needed in NSW.

"These Air-Cranes are an investment in protecting lives and property in NSW; an investment this Government has no hesitation in making," Minister Gallacher said.

"The cost of having the Air-Cranes based in NSW is jointly met by the State and Commonwealth Governments.

"The arrangement we have with the Commonwealth Government allows us to share major resources across state borders.

"That means that if NSW experiences a severe fire season and other States can spare their Air-Cranes, we will be able to use them in NSW. Similarly, if NSW was to have a relatively quiet fire season, our Air-Cranes could help fight fires in other States.

NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said in addition to the two Air-Cranes, the RFS has access to more than 100 aircraft to help fight both bush and fast moving grass fires.

"These aircraft, including the massive Air-Cranes, are a big asset in our firefighting arsenal.

“Recent fires right across NSW have clearly demonstrated how firefighters working with aircraft can successfully protect people and homes.

“However, although Malcolm has joined our ranks, people cannot afford to be complacent this coming season.

“Already around 2,700 fires have hit NSW during the past three months and it is getting busier all the time. Just last week we had a day with 64 fires being fought by nearly 500 firefighters and 53 aircraft.

“People should not delay their preparations any longer. I urge everyone to download a Bush Fire Survival Plan and discuss with their family what they need to do now and what they would do if a fire was to threaten their home or family,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

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