



# MEDIA RELEASE

## **Hawkesbury volunteers' commitment praised**

**13 March 2014**

Longstanding volunteers from the Hawkesbury District were today honored by the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) for their ongoing commitment to the local community.

NSW RFS Assistant Commissioner Bruce McDonald presented 59 volunteers with their Long Service Medals and acknowledged their dedication during a ceremony held at Panthers North Richmond.

"In total, these 59 Long Service Medal recipients have accumulated 1084 years of service between them," Assistant Commissioner McDonald said.

"Each and every one of these volunteers are worthy of our most sincere thanks and I would like to personally commend them, not only for their commitment to the Service, but also to their community."

Assistant Commissioner McDonald made particular mention of Gregory Bailey who has been a valued member for 43 years and Dick Petrikas who has been a valued member for 63 years.

"Mr Bailey's extensive knowledge of the Macdonald Valley has been invaluable to the Brigade over the years," Assistant Commissioner McDonald said.

"Mr Petrikas' incredible commitment to the Brigade started in 1951. He served in many roles as a Tennyson firefighter, most notably as captain of the Brigade for 25 years."

Assistant Commissioner McDonald said the 21 brigades in the Hawkesbury area respond to a range of bush, grass and house fires, as well as motor vehicle accidents and other emergencies, each year.

"The NSW RFS is at the cutting edge of bush firefighting due to significant improvements in technology, training, equipment and communications, however the real strength of the Service is its people," Assistant Commissioner said.

"These men and women have been part of the Service during an incredible period of growth and transformation and the experience and knowledge within their ranks illustrates this.

"All of the volunteers here today have demonstrated an exceptional level of commitment to their community over the years and these medals are just a small token of our appreciation."