

# MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## East meets west as firefighters tour regional NSW

14 August 2012

Western NSW will this week host around 20 NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) volunteers from Sydney and surrounding brigades in the lead up to this year's bush fire season.

The volunteers are touring Western NSW to inspect grassland areas and growing fuel loads, conduct one hazard reduction, meet expert local NSW RFS volunteers and learn more about fighting grass fires.

NSW RFS Assistant Commissioner Dominic Lane said this tour will be invaluable to help these volunteers - who typically deal with major bush fires - learn from their colleagues in the west who regularly face major grass fires.

"NSW RFS volunteers are often sent to assist in different parts of the state during major fires. This tour will help educate and inform these volunteers about grassland areas before the fire season, ensuring they are better prepared in case they are needed during major fires.

"These volunteers will visit eleven sites across western NSW to gain an understanding of fire behaviour and containment challenges across grasslands, tour previous major fires and recent hazard reduction work sites and conduct one hazard reduction.

"They will also learn from locals about how to fight grass fires, including the best containment strategies and the challenges of firefighting in remote parts of the state.

"Widespread rainfall over the past two years has led to grass growth not seen more than 30 years. As this vegetation dries out, it will become more susceptible to fire increasing the potential for large and fast moving fires.

"This tour was requested by volunteers during the Broken Hill Regional Forum and will ensure some of our volunteers see the risks in Western NSW first hand," Assistant Commissioner Lane said.

Region West Manager, Paul Smith urged people to visit the NSW RFS website [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) where they could find easy to follow information on prepare their own Bush Fire Survival Plan.

"This tour will help prepare our firefighters for a busy season and we hope it will also highlight the need for the public to prepare for the upcoming bush fire season.

"A Bush Fire Survival Plan can help you protect your family, home and property in the event of a bush or grass fire in your neighbourhood," Mr Smith said.

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**Note: The tour will be stopping in Young, West Wylong, Ivanhoe, Menindee, Broken Hill, Silverton, Wilcannia, Cobar, Nyngan, Dubbo and Orange.**