



Troy Grant
Minister for Emergency Services

Paul Toole
Minister for Lands and Forestry

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW FIRE SPECIALISTS HELPING TO FIGHT US WILDFIRES

More than 55 specialists from NSW fire agencies will join an Australian and New Zealand deployment to the United States to assist firefighters battling devastating wildfires in Northern California, Oregon and Washington State, which to date have killed six people and destroyed approximately 500 homes.

Minister for Emergency Services Troy Grant said experts from the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS), Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) and Forestry Corporation of NSW (FCNSW) would join their interstate colleagues as part of the 188 strong Australian and New Zealand contingent.

A number of Australian personnel are already in the US preparing for the arrival of the main NSW grouping, which will likely fly out from Sydney Airport on Friday.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of those who have died, the thousands who have been left homeless and the firefighters and emergency service personnel working tirelessly to contain these destructive fires,” Mr Grant said.

“NSW’s specialists are highly trained and have experience dealing with the type of fires that are currently threatening the US west coast, and the request to have them help out is testament to their professionalism, training and expertise.

“Our NSW fire specialists know all too well the devastation bush fires cause, and it’s because of their training and experience that they have again been called upon to help. This specialist assistance follows the support provided to their Canadian counterparts after wildfires devastated British Columbia last year.”

The contingent will include divisional commanders, heavy plant supervisors, air base managers, safety officers and sector leaders who will assist thousands of US firefighters battling around 90 fires that have so far burnt more than 375,000 hectares across 14 states.

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council’s National Resource Sharing Centre is facilitating the deployment of Australian and New Zealand personnel following a formal request for assistance made by US fire authorities.

Minister Lands and Forestry Paul Toole said the contingent would remain in the US for up to six weeks.

“To all of the Australian personnel heading over, I know your contribution will be invaluable to the firefighting effort and hopefully your presence will allow your US colleagues to take a quick breather,” Mr Toole said.

“Please stay safe and know that we are proud of each and every one of you.”

MEDIA: Douglas Martin | Minister Grant | 0438 371 354
Ashley Gardiner | Minister Toole | 0429 063 494