



**David Elliott**  
Minister for Police and Emergency Services

## MEDIA RELEASE

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**Editors' Note:** Images available [here](#) and pool vision available on request.

### FALLEN EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS HONOURED

NSW has today honoured the brave emergency services personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty, adding eight names to the memorial at a ceremony at Mrs Macquarie's Chair.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott said it is important to remember the 102 volunteers who paid the ultimate sacrifice protecting their community.

"The men and women who volunteer put service above self, often prioritising the safety of their community above their own. Our State owes them all a debt of gratitude," Mr Elliott said.

"NSW tragically lost eight beloved volunteers, Geoffrey Keaton, Andrew O'Dwyer, Samuel McPaul, Colin Burns, Michael Maria, Phillip Bell, Ian Long and Robert Panitz. The whole community mourns with their families.

"It is an especially poignant occasion given the loss of NSW RFS volunteer Jim Shanahan on Friday, whose name will be added to the memorial for next year's event.

"Whilst we do everything we can to ensure the safety of our emergency services members, tragically, sometimes these men and women do not make it home. Their sacrifice will never be forgotten."

There are now 102 names enshrined on the memorial which recognises volunteers from the NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW State Emergency Service, Marine Rescue NSW and the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association.

Of the eight names which were added to the memorial, four lost their lives last summer fighting the 'Black Summer' bushfires. They are NSW RFS firefighters Geoffrey Keaton, Andrew O'Dwyer, Samuel McPaul and Colin Burns.

The names of four volunteers who died as a result of illnesses associated with their work are also being added - Michael Maria, Phillip Bell, Ian Long, Robert Panitz.

There are 90,000 volunteers in NSW who give their time unwaveringly to serve communities right across the State.

More information on the annual Emergency Service Volunteer Memorial is available [here](#).

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