



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

MEDIA RELEASE

Indigenous student fire fighting cadets celebrate graduation

6 May 2021

Seven students from the Tirkandi Inaburra Cultural and Development Centre in Coleambally will today be congratulated for their successful completion of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Secondary School Cadet Program.

NSW RFS Acting Area Commander, Supt David Jones said the program is the ideal way to introduce young people to the important role volunteer firefighter's play within communities.

"These Indigenous high school students from years 8-10 have completed an intensive three-day course that has given them skills and experience which will last a lifetime," Supt Jones said.

"As well as examining fire behaviour, the students have been taught essential fire safety techniques and gained an appreciation of the work our emergency services do every day in this state.

"The cadet program also offers students the opportunity to experience firsthand the commitment and camaraderie that comes with volunteering and transition to their local rural fire brigade should they wish. We were fortunate to also have involved, Indigenous fire mitigation crews from Bourke and Brewarrina to demonstrate cultural burns and provide positive role models for the boys."

This is the first time the Tirkandi Inaburra Cultural and Development Centre has taken part in the Secondary School Cadet Program, but according to Matt Watts, the Centre's CEO, it won't be the last. "We were thrilled to be involved in the Secondary School Cadet Program which offered the boys so many opportunities to learn new hands-on skills," Mr Watts said.

"These students are here because they have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging with school and we are keen to offer them experiences that help them find purpose in their lives. The boys have got so much out of it and we would be very happy to be involved with the program again."

Supt Jones thanked all staff from the MIA District and Indigenous fire mitigation crews for their hard work in supporting and running the program.

"NSW RFS members thoroughly enjoy working closely with schools and communities to ensure that everyone is as well prepared as possible for the very real threat of fire. Firefighters cannot do it alone," Supt Jones said.

"The Service is proud to pass on the ideals of community service, dedication and teamwork to the next generation."



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