

MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

NSW Rural Fire Service awarded for building resilient communities

14 October 2011

Two NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) programs have received awards as part of the Australian Safer Communities Awards.

The awards recognise innovative practices and achievements that help build safer, stronger and more disaster resilient communities that are better prepared to manage an emergency situation.

NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said that the Service's Hotspots Fire Project and Canyonleigh Women's Fire Awareness Program are a demonstration of the innovation and dedication of RFS members.

"The Hotspots project has been in operation for six years and is designed to equip landholders and managers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage fire.

"The NSW RFS works closely with agencies like the NSW Farmers Association and Nature Conservation Council to ensure that the Hotspots project is helping to protect communities whilst maintaining the unique biodiversity of the Australian landscape.

"The team's ongoing commitment to the scheme has assisted communities across NSW protect lives, properties and the environment from the devastation of bush fire," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

"Similarly, the Canyonleigh Rural Fire Brigade has done exceptional work helping prepare women who may be home alone in rural areas for the potential threat of bush fires".

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said that by engaging with the community through these practical programs, the Service is helping develop resilience and improve fire awareness.

"As history has shown, the force of Mother Nature can often hit Australia hard with little notice.

"The Rural Fire Service is committed to ensuring communities are well educated and prepared for emergency situations".

The NSW RFS Hotspots Fire Project was awarded the Australian Safer Communities Award in Education, training and Research for NSW and the Canyonleigh Rural Fire Brigade's Women's Fire Awareness Program received a Highly Commended award for NSW.

For inquiries contact the NSW RFS State Duty Media Officer: 9898 1855