



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



**NSW RFS**  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17**

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# Letter to the Minister

Dear Minister,

I have pleasure in submitting to you for presentation to Parliament the Annual Report of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) for the year ended 30 June 2017.

The season presented some of the most challenging conditions ever experienced in NSW. Following a severe and prolonged heatwave in which many records were broken, the state was faced with Catastrophic fire danger in February 2017.

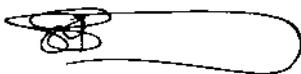
While there was a significant impact on people, properties, farms and infrastructure, the members of the NSW RFS, along with their partner agencies and the community, responded as they so often do - with courage and professionalism.

Apart from fires, NSW RFS members have been engaged in a range of activities including floods, storms and further afield assessing the impact of devastating Cyclone Debbie in Queensland.

The 2016/17 period has again been one of great progress for the Service, demonstrated through the continued investment in building or refurbishing brigade stations and Fire Control Centres, fitting out members with the latest Personal Protective Clothing, and ensuring they have access to state of the art equipment and vehicles.

This Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985*, the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001*, the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*, the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* and the *Public Interests Disclosures Act 1994*.

Yours sincerely,



Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM  
NSW RFS Commissioner



The Minister for Emergency Services and the Minister for Police, the Hon. Troy Grant MP

# NSW RFS Vision and Mission

To provide a world standard of excellence in the provision of a community-based fire and emergency service.

To protect the community and our environment, we will minimise the impact of fire and other emergencies by providing the highest standards of training, community education, prevention and operational capability.

## Values

- mutual respect
- adaptability and resourcefulness
- one team, many players, one purpose
- integrity and trust
- support, friendship, camaraderie
- community and environment
- knowledge and learning

## Customers

- the people of NSW
- our members

## Stakeholders

- Community
- Our members
- Minister for Emergency Services
- Office of Emergency Management
- Department of Justice
- Partner Emergency Services
- Members of Parliament – State and Federal
- Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and local councils
- Other State and Territory governments
- Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA)
- NSW RFS member representative groups
- Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC)
- Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre
- NSW RFS/RFSA Consultative committees (Community Engagement, Infrastructure Services, Membership Services, Operations)
- Emergency and service peak groups
- Media
- Insurance industry
- Peak industry groups
- Tourism industry groups
- Non-government organisations and service providers
- Other government authorities
- Employers of volunteers
- Other associations (Farmers Association, Country Women's Association, etc)

# Commissioner's Report

The season of 2016/17 presented some of the worst fire conditions New South Wales has ever experienced.

A prolonged summer heatwave saw conditions peak in February 2017, when Catastrophic fire danger was experienced across a large part of northern NSW. These fireweather conditions were tougher than any faced before in NSW.

There were a number of fires during this time that impacted on people and property in areas including the Warrumbungles area, around Mudgee, Carwoola, near Queanbeyan, the state's north-west and north coast. In just a few days, more than 50 homes were destroyed and there was extensive loss of valuable farming country, stock, equipment and fencing.

And leading up to this period our people and the community were challenged with serious fires in Pappinbarra, near Wauchope, Kurri Kurri, Boggabri, Camberwell, Sutton and Harden.

Once again, our members demonstrated courage and professionalism, working side-by-side with their crew members, other emergency services and the community to protect so many properties and livelihoods. While there is quite rightly a focus on what was lost during these fires, it's also worth recognising firefighters and landholders saved more than 200 other homes and key assets.

Despite some of the worst of conditions, and very dangerous and difficult fire behaviour, it is testament to their work that no lives were lost.

The season saw a number of other major fires in the Cessnock and Port Stephens area, Kempsey, Shoalhaven, Western Sydney and West Wyalong.

However the operations of the NSW RFS extended much further than fires. Again, our members were called upon to support our partner emergency services including the NSW SES in serious flooding across the state's north in April 2017. This included extensive work in clearing debris from flooded homes and businesses, and conducting helicopter operations which resulted in 28 rescues. Further north, our people provided assistance to the assessment of damage caused by Cyclone Debbie.

Of course, so much of the work of the Service is focused on preparing for when emergencies strike, and increasing our capacity to assist when needed.

Approximately 269,821 properties were protected through hazard reduction activities during the reporting period and 83 percent of planned hazard reduction activities were completed. Again, weather was the most significant disruption to this work, as evidenced by the wet winter in the lead-up to the 2016/17 fire season.

We have continued the focus on educating and engaging with the community through our Prepare. Act. Survive. public awareness campaign. Research confirms this campaign is having an impact on improving community safety during bush fires.

During the reporting period, there was significant work undertaken developing the Service's Community Engagement Strategic Directions, which sets out our plan to keep building on these levels of community preparedness over the next five years.

The number of Neighbourhood Safer Places has increased, with more than 1000 of these places of last resort identified across 129 local government areas. Likewise, an additional 31 Community Protection Plans were completed for local communities at risk of bush fire. This brings to 102 the number of Community Protection Plans completed to date.

The year has also seen the continued investment in building new, or refurbishing brigade stations and fire control centres across the state. Indeed, more than \$25 million has been spent on brigade stations, ensuring our members have access to suitable facilities and amenities. Of particular note is that the overwhelming bulk of this investment – 77 percent – has occurred outside the Sydney area.

To enable the management of fires and other emergencies, work has been completed on new fire control centres at Coonabarabran and Bathurst. These buildings have been welcomed by volunteers and staff, providing improved training facilities and operational capacity.

With a total of 6315 tankers, air and marine craft and other vehicles, we continue to assess and improve the effectiveness of the Service's fleet, making modifications, refurbishments and purchasing new as required.

Approximately 269,821 properties were protected through hazard reduction activities during the reporting period.

Following a review of road crash rescue arrangements and response times across the state, and in response to a request from the State Rescue Board, work has been undertaken to engage with a number of brigades which may be interested in taking on a rescue capacity. This work is continuing, and again it is testament to the professionalism of our brigades and their commitment to helping their community.

The Service has also worked closely with the Volunteer Rescue Association to support the organisation and its members with training accreditation, qualifications and membership management systems.

Following an extensive testing and field trial process, the Service's next generation of Personal Protective Clothing is now being distributed. Meeting the latest standards and providing better comfort for our members, this is a major investment that ensures our people have the appropriate equipment and clothing to do their roles safely. I'm particularly proud of the fact that for the first time ever, female cut PPC will be offered to members.

The investment in our people is ongoing. Our Next Generation Workforce Plan guides the Service in developing the leadership capabilities and training of our members in the years ahead. We continue to explore ways to expand our volunteer base through

policies and standards that encourage diversity and a flexible volunteering model. We need to ensure our members reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.

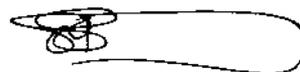
In August 2016, the Service launched "Fuel", a comprehensive learning management system which allows members access to online training resources. The web portal also hosts an online knowledge hub and statewide Learning and Development webinars. It is further demonstration of developing tools and resources which suit our changing membership profile and optimise flexible access options for members living busy lives.

Through the Health and Fitness Initiatives program, there has been an increased focus on the promotion of our members' physical and mental health, and their capabilities. This work will continue in the year ahead.

The year has been a challenging one, but a rewarding one. It has been one of significant achievement. This is due largely to our members.

I want to thank the men and women of the NSW RFS, volunteer and salaried, who have once again given so much. Your continuing commitment ensures our Service goes from strength to strength, while still maintaining its strong connection to volunteering and its birthplace in rural and regional NSW.

I would also like to thank the Minister for Emergency Services and the Minister for Police, the Hon. Troy Grant MP, for his continued support of our people. I would also like to thank our former Minister, David Elliott MP, likewise.

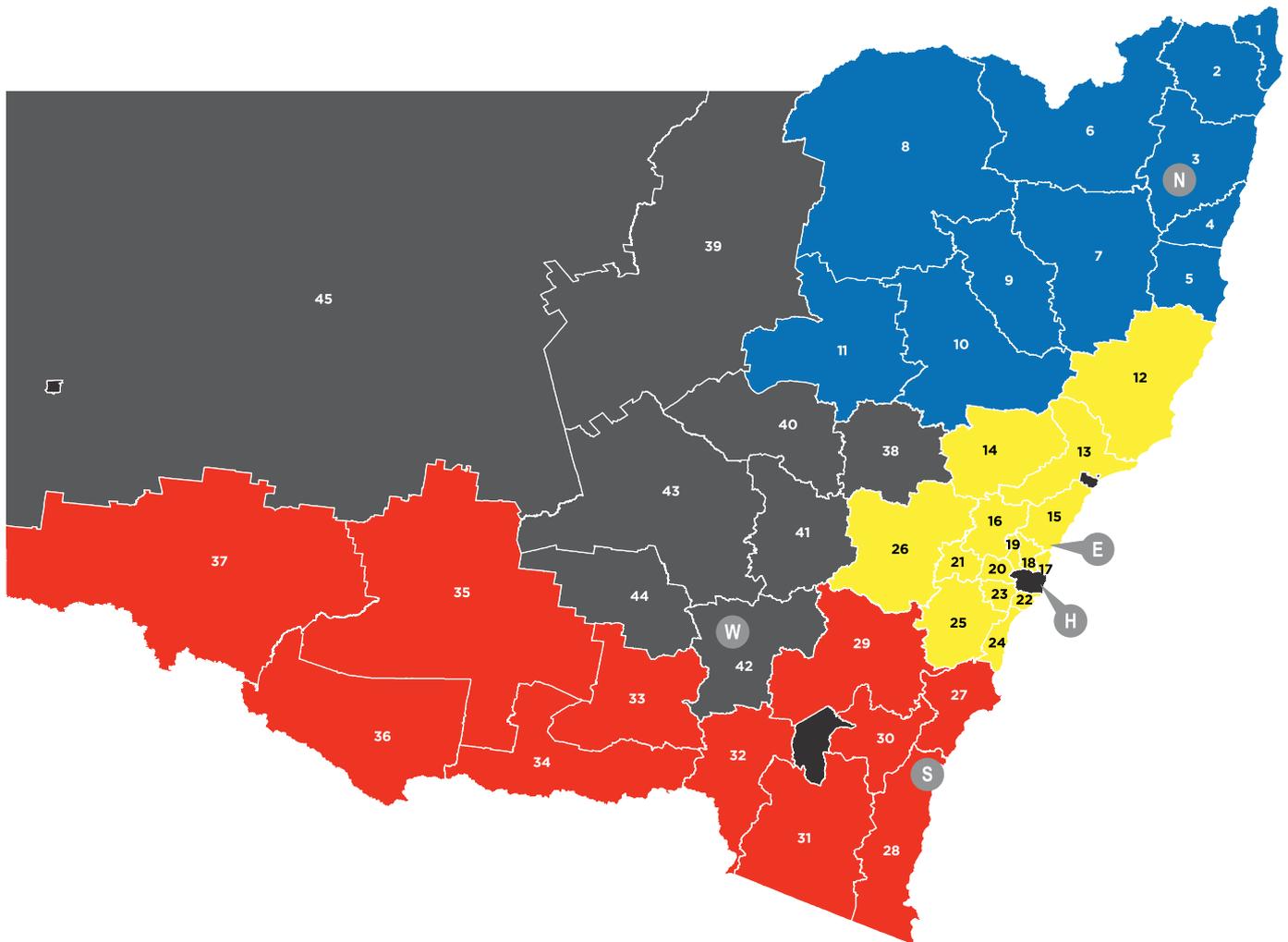


Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM  
NSW RFS Commissioner

# NSW RFS Regions and Districts

as at 30 June 2017

This map shows the NSW RFS Districts, Teams and Zones as at 30 June 2017. Boundaries and districts have been altered to reflect local government amalgamations.



■ REGION NORTH    
 ■ REGION EAST    
 ■ REGION SOUTH    
 ■ REGION WEST    
 ■ NON-RFS JURISDICTION

**H Headquarters**  
 15 Carter Street,  
 Lidcombe,  
 NSW 2141

**N Region North**  
 Level 4,  
 State Office Block,  
 Victoria Street,  
 Grafton,  
 NSW 2460

**E Region East**  
 1049 Pacific Highway,  
 Cowan,  
 NSW 2081

**S Region South**  
 7-9 Kylie Crescent,  
 Batemans Bay,  
 NSW 2536

**W Region West**  
 3/21 Lovell Street,  
 Young,  
 NSW 2594

Office hours at all locations: 0845hrs – 1700hrs, Monday to Friday

REGION NORTH	REGION EAST	REGION SOUTH	REGION WEST
<p><b>1. Far North Coast</b> Ballina Byron Tweed</p> <p><b>2. Northern Rivers</b> Kyogle Lismore Richmond Valley</p> <p><b>3. Clarence Valley</b></p> <p><b>4. Mid North Coast</b> Bellingen Coffs Harbour</p> <p><b>5. Lower North Coast</b> Kempsey Nambucca</p> <p><b>6. Northern Tablelands</b> Glen Innes Severn Inverell Tenterfield</p> <p><b>7. New England</b> Armidale Uralla Walcha</p> <p><b>8. Namoi/Gwydir</b> Gwydir Moree Plains Narrabri</p> <p><b>9. Tamworth</b></p> <p><b>10. Liverpool Range</b> Gunnedah Liverpool Plains Upper Hunter</p> <p><b>11. Castlereagh</b> Gilgandra Warrumbungle</p>	<p><b>12. Mid Coast</b> Lord Howe Island Mid-Coast Port Macquarie-Hastings</p> <p><b>13. Lower Hunter</b> Cessnock Dungog Maitland Port Stephens</p> <p><b>14. Hunter Valley</b> Muswellbrook Singleton</p> <p><b>15. Central Coast</b> Central Coast Lake Macquarie</p> <p><b>16. Hawkesbury</b></p> <p><b>17. Northern Beaches</b></p> <p><b>18. Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai</b> Hornsby Ku-ring-gai</p> <p><b>19. The Hills</b></p> <p><b>20. Cumberland</b> Blacktown Fairfield Penrith</p> <p><b>21. Blue Mountains</b></p> <p><b>22. Sutherland</b></p> <p><b>23. Macarthur</b> Camden Campbelltown Liverpool</p> <p><b>24. Illawarra</b> Kiama Shellharbour Wollongong</p> <p><b>25. Southern Highlands</b> Wingecarribee Wollondilly</p> <p><b>26. Chifley Lithgow</b> Bathurst Lithgow Oberon</p>	<p><b>27. Shoalhaven</b> Far South Coast</p> <p><b>28. Bega Valley</b> Eurobodalla</p> <p><b>29. Southern Tablelands</b> Goulburn Mulwaree Upper Lachlan Yass Valley</p> <p><b>30. Queanbeyan - Palerang</b></p> <p><b>31. Monaro</b> Snowy Monaro</p> <p><b>32. Riverina Highlands</b> Snowy Valleys</p> <p><b>33. Riverina Coolamon</b> Junee Lockhart Wagga Wagga</p> <p><b>34. Southern Border</b> Albury Berrigan Federation Greater Hume</p> <p><b>35. MIA</b> Carrathool Griffith Hay Leeton Murrumbidgee Narrandera</p> <p><b>36. Mid Murray</b> Edward River Murray River</p> <p><b>37. Lower Western</b> Balranald Wentworth</p>	<p><b>38. Cudgegong</b> Mid-Western</p> <p><b>39. North West</b> Bogan Coonamble Walgett Warren</p> <p><b>40. Orana</b> Dubbo Narromine</p> <p><b>41. Canobolas</b> Blayney Cabonne Cowra Orange</p> <p><b>42. South West Slopes</b> Cootamundra - Gundagai Hilltops</p> <p><b>43. Mid Lachlan Valley</b> Forbes Lachlan Parkes Weddin</p> <p><b>44. Bland Temora</b> Bland Temora</p> <p><b>45. Far West</b> Bourke Brewarrina Central Darling Cobar Unincorporated NSW</p>

NOTE: Where a district is a team or zone, local government areas (LGAs) are listed.

# TOTAL VOLUNTEERS 73,223

REGION NORTH

**13,377**  
VOLUNTEERS

REGION SOUTH

**21,673**  
VOLUNTEERS

REGION EAST

**23,097**  
VOLUNTEERS

REGION WEST

**15,504**  
VOLUNTEERS

NOTE: Dual members in different regions are counted in both regions, but counted once for calculating the total volunteer figure.

SOLDIERS POINT



**OVERVIEW OF NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE**

Volunteers and salaried staff	74,101
Brigades	2,021
Local Government Areas	105
NSW RFS Districts	45
Regions	4
Headquarters	1

**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT CENTRES****3**

Batemans Bay  
Coffs Harbour  
Glendenning

**OPERATIONAL AND MITIGATION SERVICES BASES****8**

Batemans Bay  
Bega  
Cooma  
Glendenning  
Mudgee  
Tamworth  
Taree  
Wyong

## NOTES

1: The Planning and Environment Centres (formerly known as Customer Service Centres) and the Operational Mitigation Services bases are considered part of Headquarters

**NUMBER OF NEW AND RENOVATION BUILDS IN 2016/17**

BUILDS	NEW	RENOVATION	TOTAL
Fire Control Centres	2	11	13
Brigade stations	45	24	69

**TOTAL OPERATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND AIRCRAFT**

VEHICLES	NORTH	SOUTH	EAST	WEST	TOTAL
Tankers	734	940	1,207	889	3,770
Pumpers	5	43	15	1	64
Personnel Transport and Command Vehicles	128	430	181	117	856
Bulk Water Carriers	4	28	20	6	58
All general purpose trailers and miscellaneous vehicles	478	320	371	247	1,416
Communications vehicles and dedicated communication trailers	8	17	9	8	42
Catering vehicles and dedicated catering trailers	14	42	17	4	77
Marine craft	0	27	2	0	29
Rotary aircraft	-	-	-	-	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,371</b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>1,822</b>	<b>1,272</b>	<b>6,315</b>

**NUMBER OF NEW, SECONDHAND AND REFURBISHED TANKERS ALLOCATED TO BRIGADES**

VEHICLES - CATEGORY	STYLE	NEW	SECONDHAND/REFURBISHED	TOTAL
Category 1 Tanker	Village	35	23	58
Category 1 Tanker	Multipurpose	11	0	11
Category 1 Tanker	Grasslands	12	0	12
Category 6 Tanker	Grasslands	6	0	6
Category 7 Tanker	Grasslands Dual Cab	15	9	24
Category 7 Tanker	Grasslands Single Cab	15	0	15
Category 9	First Response Unit	22	7	29
Category 10	Urban Pumper	4	0	4
Category 13	Bulk Water Carrier	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>120</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>153</b>



Photo by Peter Lorimer

**INCIDENTS**

	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>	<b>WEST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Bush and grass fires (attended by NSW RFS)	2,227	3,177	1,717	1,167	8,288
Structural fires	235	455	290	179	1,159
Motor vehicle fires	306	1,127	264	171	1,868
Motor vehicle accidents	948	2,324	920	407	4,599
Investigation	638	2,014	864	301	3,817
Refuse fires	76	263	103	77	519
Spillages	161	539	107	36	843
Assist other agencies	176	709	225	140	1,250
Flood	14	51	8	5	78
Other incidents	362	1,198	419	182	2,161
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,143</b>	<b>11,857</b>	<b>4,917</b>	<b>2,665</b>	<b>24,582</b>

**CONTROLLED BURNS/PILE BURNS (Rural Fire Districts)**

2,079

**INCIDENTS: FOUR-YEAR VIEW**

	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Bush and grass fires	8,032	7,837*	7,686*	8,288*
Structural fires	1,090	1,264	1,166	1,159
Motor vehicle fires	1,535	1,633	1,808	1,868
Motor vehicle accidents	3,909	4,236	4,562	4,599
Investigation	2,302	3,512	3,654	3,817
Controlled burns/pile burns (RFDs)	2,664	1,960**	2,502**	2,079**
Refuse fires	634	652	548	519
Spillages	590	776	822	843
Assist other agencies	547	917	1,085	1,250
Flood	115	76	97	78
Other incidents	1,957	2,245	2,092	2,161
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23,375</b>	<b>23,148</b>	<b>23,520</b>	<b>24,582</b>

\*The figure of total bush and grass fires refers to the incidents in which the NSW RFS responded.

\*\*Since the 2014/15 reporting period, controlled burns/pile burns are not included in the total incidents figure.



Photo by Karl Hoffman



2

**MANAGEMENT  
AND GOVERNANCE**

# Management and Governance

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is the lead combat agency for bush fires in NSW. For over 100 years we have been a significant part of the history and landscape of NSW. Working closely with other agencies we also respond to a range of emergencies, including structure fires, motor vehicle accidents, floods and storms that occur within rural fire districts.

The NSW RFS is widely acknowledged as the largest volunteer fire service in the world. Members of the NSW RFS are trained to very high levels of competence to ensure they can respond to any emergency.

The Service aims to reduce the likelihood and consequence of bush fires occurring. This involves comprehensive risk management programs to reduce bush fire hazards and fire ignitions. It also involves the development of regulations for bush fire prone areas.

## Legislation

The management and operational responsibilities of the NSW RFS are set down clearly in the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and can be summarised as follows:

- Protection of life and property for all fire-related incidents within all rural fire districts in the state
- Safety and welfare of all volunteers
- Provision of effective training and resources to rural fire brigades
- Provision of emergency assistance to other emergency service organisations.

In the 2016/17 reporting period, amendments were made to the *Rural Fires Act 1997* to include:

- Establishment of a network of strategic fire trails that improve access for NSW RFS firefighters and facilitate the planning and management of hazard reductions
- Development of Fire Trail Standards that ensure fire trails are constructed and maintained to an appropriate standard
- Establishment of a statewide register for fire trails across NSW
- Establishment of a fire trails complaint process that will allow for reporting of fire trails that are not maintained to the required standard
- Power for the NSW RFS to issue notices requiring rectification works where fire trails have not been constructed or maintained to an appropriate standard.

## NSW Government and Ministry

As a department of the NSW Government, the NSW RFS comes under the Emergency Services portfolio within the Justice Cluster. The Hon. Troy Grant, MP, Member for Dubbo, is the Minister for Police and the Minister for Emergency Services, including responsibility for the NSW RFS.

## NSW RFS Commissioner

The Commissioner is responsible for managing and controlling the activities of the Service and has other functions conferred or imposed on him by or under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. It is the Commissioner who invokes section 44 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* in order to declare a bush fire emergency.

## NSW RFS Executive

The day-to-day management of the Service is carried out under the direction of the NSW RFS Executive.

The Executive consists of the Commissioner and the Service's Executive Directors, Chief Financial Officer and Directors. A profile of each of the Principal Officers can be seen on pages 24-5.

## Corporate Executive Group

The Corporate Executive Group (CEG) comprises the Executive Directors, Chief Financial Officer and Directors of the Service, Regional Managers and representatives of the NSW Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA), which is the representative association of the volunteers and staff of the NSW RFS. Its principal role is to consider and provide advice to the Commissioner on strategic issues affecting the Service. Details of representation and attendance at this Group are set out in Appendix 4.3.

## Governance Committees

Three bodies are empowered by legislation to assist in the operation of the NSW RFS, they are the:

- Rural Fire Service Advisory Council
- Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee
- Fire Services Joint Standing Committee

### Rural Fire Service Advisory Council

The Rural Fire Service Advisory Council (RFSAC) is established under the provisions of Part 6 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. The Council advises and reports to the Minister and the NSW RFS Commissioner on any matters relating to the administration of the Service. It also provides advice to the Commissioner on public education, programs relating to rural fire matters, the training of rural firefighters and Service Standards. Details of representation and attendances at the Council are set out in Appendix 4.3.

### Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee

The Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee (BFCC) is established under the provisions of section 46 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. The Committee is chaired by the NSW RFS Commissioner and supported by the Service.

The BFCC is responsible for planning in relation to fire prevention and coordinated bush firefighting. It also advises the Commissioner on bush fire prevention and mitigation and coordinated bush fire suppression.

The BFCC constitutes Bush Fire Management Committees (BFMCs) for all rural fire districts and areas with significant risk of bush fire. It also approves Operations Coordination and Bush Fire Risk Management Plans that are prepared by the BFMCs. Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix 4.3.

### Fire Services Joint Standing Committee

The *Fire Services Joint Standing Committee Act 1998* provides for the establishment of the Fire Services Joint Standing Committee (FSJSC). The major functions of the Committee are to develop and submit to the Minister strategic plans for the coordinated delivery of urban and rural fire services at the interface; to undertake periodic review of fire district and rural fire district boundaries; the minimisation of duplication and the maximisation of compatibility between the NSW RFS and Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW). The Committee is chaired alternately by the Commissioners of FRNSW and the NSW RFS. Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix 4.3.

## Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee provides assistance to the NSW RFS Commissioner by overseeing and monitoring the governance and accountability requirements of the NSW RFS. The Committee consists of independent members and advises the Commissioner on a range of matters including: the effectiveness of the Service's internal audit function; legislative compliance; the financial statements and financial reporting of the Service; risk and control frameworks; business continuity and corruption prevention activities. Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix 4.3.

## Consultative and Stakeholder Committees

Consultation with our stakeholders and related agencies plays a key role in the governance of the NSW RFS.

### NSW RFS / RFSAC Consultative Committees

The Rural Fire Service Association (RFSAC) is a state-wide non-partisan member association and a valued partner of the NSW RFS. The NSW RFS Commissioner relies on a number of consultative committees, comprising RFSAC representatives and senior staff of the Service for advice on the NSW RFS operations and management.

The Young Members Group is a sub-group of the Membership Services Consultative Committee and provides advice to that Committee on policy and programs, participates in decision-making at a state level and makes suggestions and raises ideas relevant to young members.

The Committees that met during the reporting period were: Community Engagement, Membership Services (including the Young Members Group), Infrastructure Services and Operations.

Details of representation and attendance at these Committees are set out in Appendix 3.11.

### Local Government Liaison Committee

The principal roles of the Local Government Liaison Committee are to discuss and resolve significant issues of a strategic nature that are of mutual interest to local government and the Service.

Details of representation and attendance at this Committee are set out in Appendix 4.3.

## Stakeholder liaison and collaboration

The Service is also represented on a number of external organisations and committees:

- Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and its various groups
- Australia/New Zealand Emergency Management Committee
- Association of Environment Education (NSW) Border Liaison Committees
- Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC)
- District Emergency Management Committees/ District Rescue Committees
- Emergency Services Communications Working Party
- Emergency Services Industry Reference Group
- Emergency Services Personnel Support Advisory Group
- Emergency Service Organisation Work Health and Safety Consultative Committee
- Environmental Education Officer's Group/ Fire Protection Association
- Fuel Loads Management Working Group
- Museum Education Officer's Group
- National Aerial Firefighting Centre
- National Public Information and Warnings Group
- NSW Health Disaster Management Committee
- Standards Australia - various committees
- State Emergency Management Committee/ State Rescue Board
- The National Bush Fire Arson Prevention Working Group
- Aviation Advisory Committee
- Aviation Industry Reference Group

## Governance and Ethical Standards

### Corporate Governance

The NSW RFS Corporate Governance Statement is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with leading practice corporate governance standards and to reflect any statutory and organisational changes.

The 2016 review was undertaken by the Corporate Planning and Governance section with directors and managers that have key governance responsibilities. This was in line with the approach used for both the 2014 and 2015 reviews for consistency. The Corporate Governance Statement was then updated based on the outcomes of this review.

In regard to the 2016 review it is pleasing to note a further overall improvement in the Service's governance arrangements. The Service has progressed from having 15 out of the 17 governance components deemed to be Fully in Place in 2015/16 to having all 17 components deemed to be Fully in Place in 2016/17.

The two components that have improved their overall status are:

- Compliance Framework - moved from Substantially in Place to Fully in Place due to the work undertaken to review and update Policies and Service Standards in a more timely manner. The move was also due to the broadening of the Internal Management Certification Survey to include all managers.
- Stakeholder Communication - has moved from Substantially in Place to Fully in Place due to the Complaints Management Policy P7.1.2 being released.

Other areas of note related to the review are:

- the establishment of an annual declaration process for all staff to acknowledge the Code of Conduct and Ethics
- the Audit and Risk Committee is now fully independent in its membership
- the first Fraud Control Health Check was conducted and the Health Check will now be conducted annually
- in relation to access to government information, Service Standard SS1.4.3 has been released to cover Public Access to Government Information

The updated NSW RFS Corporate Governance Statement is available on the NSW RFS public website and, for staff, on the NSW RFS intranet.

## Ethical Standards

### Code of Conduct and Ethics Training

The Professional Standards Unit delivers Code of Conduct and Ethics workshops to NSW RFS staff and senior volunteer members. The workshops are designed to ensure members are aware of their obligation to uphold the values of the NSW RFS and to reinforce the requirements and best practice conduct expected of members. Participation in a Code of Conduct and Ethics workshop is mandatory for all staff.

During 2016/17, 14 Code of Conduct and Ethics workshops were held across the state, for 128 staff and 105 senior volunteers.

To support the roll out of the Code of Conduct and Ethics to all volunteer members, a “Train the Trainer” program will be developed in the 2017/18 period. Already, more than 50 members have submitted an expression of interest to become trainers. The trainers will complete their training in 2018 and will begin delivering the Code of Conduct and Ethics Workshops in the same year.

In addition to attending a Code of Conduct and Ethics workshop, each year all NSW RFS staff members are required to acknowledge they have read and understand the Code of Conduct and Ethics.

### Fraud and Corruption Prevention Training

Fraud and Corruption prevention training was delivered to 17 salaried members by a representative from the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption in 2016/17.

### Resolve Case Management System

The Resolve Case Management System (RESOLVE) was successfully implemented in December 2016. RESOLVE allows users to record, monitor, report and, when necessary, escalate staff and volunteer conduct matters. Since its inception RESOLVE has seen data accuracy improve and has provided better reporting capability. RESOLVE also provides greater transparency and accountability for managing matters in a systematic and efficient manner.

RESOLVE is managed by the Professional Standards Unit and used by Regional Services.

## Matters affecting the Service

### Audit Matters

The NSW Rural Fire Service is continuing to implement its response to the findings of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Operation Vika investigation.

The Audit Office of NSW has requested clarification around the timing of implementation of the ICAC recommendations in respect of the recording and expensing of inventory for consumables.

As noted in the March 2017 publicly available report to the ICAC on the Service’s progress in the implementation of the ICAC’s recommendations, the NSW RFS proposes to complete the implementation of a valued inventory system for consumables by 1 July 2018.

A project is underway to meet that commitment.

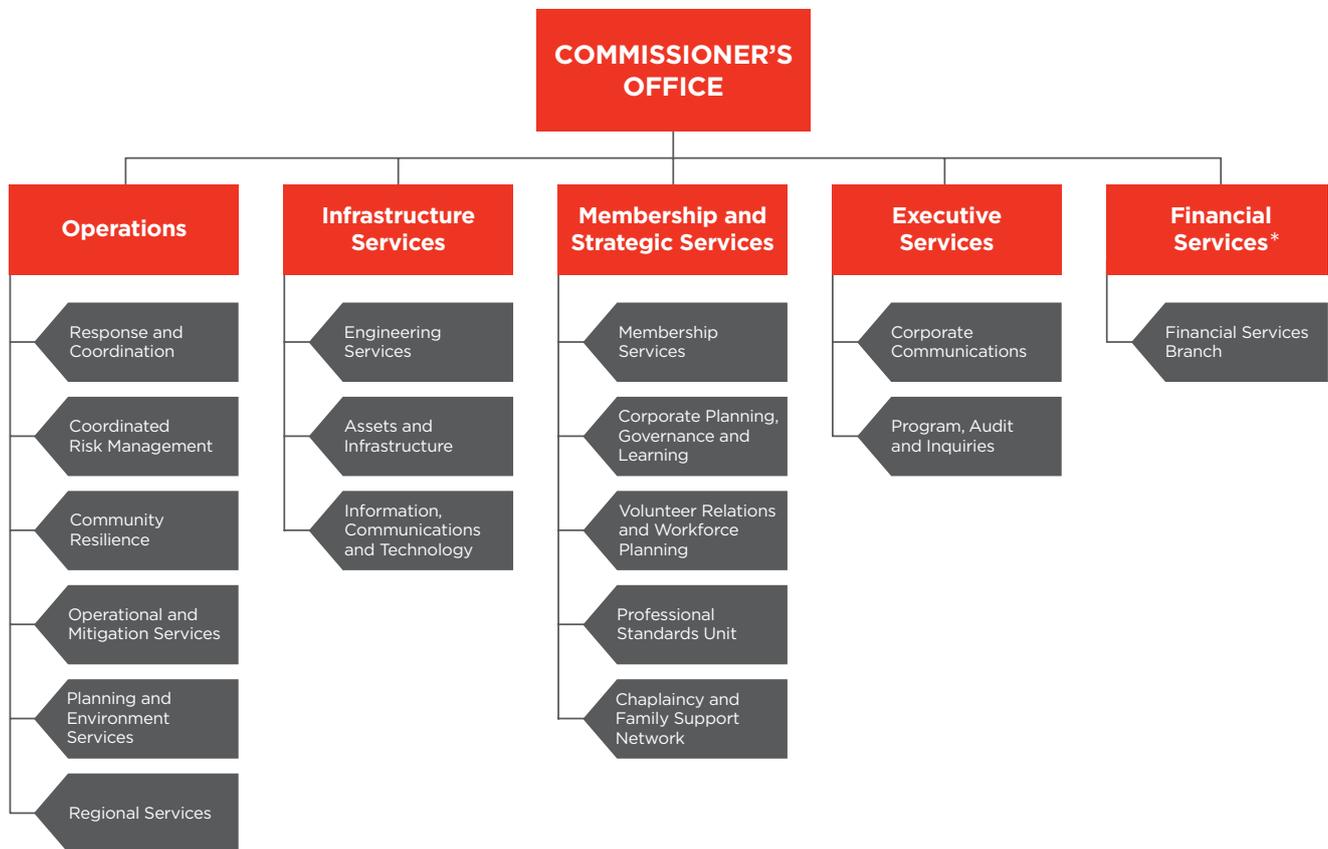
## Complaints Handling

In 2016, the Secretaries Board endorsed the whole-of-government Complaint Handling Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHIP required each agency to develop a Commitments Implementation Plan. The NSW RFS Commitments Implementation Plan was developed in September 2016.

As part of the implementation of the Plan, the current NSW RFS Complaints Management Policy (P7.1.2) was reviewed to ensure alignment with the whole-of-government complaints handling approach. The draft Policy was released for consultation in the second half of 2016/17 and will be published and implemented in 2017/18.

In 2017/18, the NSW RFS will continue to roll out the CHIP initiative.

# NSW RFS Organisational Structure 2016/17



\* As of May 2017 Financial Services reports directly to the Commissioner.

## Principal Officers

NSW RFS Commissioner  
Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, AFSM

Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons has over 30 years experience with the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) serving as both a volunteer and salaried officer.

In 1998 he was appointed an Assistant Commissioner with the NSW RFS and has held portfolio responsibilities for Operations, Strategic Development and Regional Management. In 2004 he was appointed the inaugural Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) Visiting Fellow to the Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM) for a period of 12 months.

In September 2007 he was appointed Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) and is also the Chair of the NSW RFS Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee and the NSW Rural Fire Service Advisory Council.

He was appointed a Director of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) in March 2008 and was the Chair of the NAFC Board from 2009 to 2013.

He is also a member of the NSW State Emergency Management Committee and the NSW State Rescue Board and was Chairman from 2008 to November 2015. He was a Director on the Bushfire Co-operative Research Centre from 2009 to 2014. In July 2012, he was appointed a Board Member of the NSW Government Telecommunications Authority.

The Commissioner has been a member of the AFAC Board since November 2016.

In January 2016 he was appointed as a Councillor of the Royal Humane Society of NSW Inc.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons was awarded the National Medal in 1999 and the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) in 2001.



Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, AFSM

Executive Director, Operations  
Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers, AFSM

Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers joined the NSW RFS in 1979 as a volunteer member of the Belrose Brigade, before being appointed as Deputy Fire Control Officer for the Greater Taree District in 1995.

Deputy Commissioner Rogers has held various executive positions responsible for Regional Management, Community Safety and Operations, and in 2004 was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal.

Deputy Commissioner Rogers represents the NSW RFS on several national and international bodies including the International Association of Fire Chiefs, International Asian Fire Chiefs, the Wildland Fire Policy Committee, National Bush Fire Arson Taskforce, Chair of the State Bush Fire Arson Taskforce, Chair of the National Fire Danger Ratings Board, member of the Customer Service Council, and a number of AFAC Groups.



Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers, AFSM

## Principal Officers – Executive Directors and Chief Financial Officer

### Executive Director, Membership and Strategic Services

Bronwyn Jones, PSM

Ms Bronwyn Jones was appointed to the Service in November 2008.

Prior to joining the Service, Ms Jones had extensive senior level experience in strategic planning and reporting, human resource management and project delivery gained in various public sector agencies, including the Premier's Department, the Department of Community Services, NSW Police Force and IAB Services.

Ms Jones holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Labour Relations and the Law (University of Sydney); a Master of Arts (Interdisciplinary Studies) degree and a Master of Commerce (Human Resources Studies) degree.

Ms Jones was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2016.

### Executive Director, Infrastructure Services Senior Assistant Commissioner

Bruce McDonald, AFSM

Senior Assistant Commissioner Bruce McDonald, AFSM was appointed as the Director Infrastructure Services for the NSW RFS in May 2013 and Executive Director Infrastructure Services in April 2016. Senior Assistant Commissioner McDonald joined the then Bush Fire Brigade in 1980 and progressed through the organisation, holding various brigade positions culminating in Group Captain in the mid-1990s.

He commenced as a salaried officer in 1998 in the role of Deputy Fire Control Officer – Operations, bringing to a close a 25-year management career in the automotive industry. Since 2001, Senior Assistant Commissioner McDonald has held various management positions at NSW RFS Headquarters, including State Operations Officer, Manager, Operational Communications and Group Manager, Assets and Infrastructure.

In 2008 he was seconded to head up the implementation of a SAP Enterprise Resource Planning System replacing the Service's Finance and Procurement systems. Senior Assistant Commissioner McDonald was awarded an Australian Fire Service Medal in 2011.

### Executive Director, Executive Services

Brad Scutella

Mr Brad Scutella has been employed in the NSW and Commonwealth Public Sector since 1980. Over his career he has principally worked in legal related areas in the NSW Police Force, Transport and Australian Securities and Investment Commission. Prior to his appointment to the NSW RFS in April 2015, he held the positions of Special Adviser and Chief of Staff to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

In 2001 Mr Scutella was awarded a scholarship from the Independent Commission Against Corruption. He attended the ICAC scholarship course in Corruption and Anti-Corruption at the Australian National University as both a participant and lecturer.

Mr Scutella is a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of NSW and has responsibility for managing the Executive Services Directorate.

### Chief Financial Officer

Stephen O'Malley

Mr Stephen O'Malley was appointed to the Service in November 2012 as the Chief Financial Officer.

Prior to joining the Service, Mr O'Malley had extensive senior management experience in finance and corporate services in both the NSW and South Australian public sectors, including as the Chief Finance Officer of the Ambulance Service of NSW and Director Corporate Finance of the Legal Aid Commission of NSW. Mr O'Malley's experience includes corporate strategy, financial management, information management, project management, change management and strategic planning and reporting.

Mr O'Malley holds tertiary qualifications in accounting from the University of South Australia, is a Fellow of CPA Australia and Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

## Directors

<b>OPERATIONS</b>	
Director Response and Coordination	Assistant Commissioner Steve Yorke, AFSM (to 2 April 2017) Assistant Commissioner Jason Heffernan (from 3 April 2017)
Director Regional Services	Assistant Commissioner Jason Heffernan (to 2 April 2017) Assistant Commissioner Rebel Talbert (from 3 April 2017)
Director Operational and Mitigation Services	Assistant Commissioner Rebel Talbert (to 2 April 2017) Assistant Commissioner Steve Yorke, AFSM (from 3 April 2017)
Director Coordinated Risk Management	Assistant Commissioner Stuart Midgley, AFSM
Director Community Resilience	Mr Corey Shackleton
Director Planning and Environment Services	Mr Jeff Lucas
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES</b>	
Director Assets and Infrastructure	Chief Superintendent John Parnaby
Director Information and Communications Technology (ICT)	Mr Matthew Smith (to October 2016) Ms Kelly Browne AFSM (from November 2016)
<b>MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGIC SERVICES</b>	
Director Membership Services	Mr Daniel Moroney
Director Corporate Planning, Governance and Learning	Mr Stephen Glassock
Director Professional Standards	Ms Helen Colbey (to September 2016) Ms Narelle Koteff (from December 2016)
<b>EXECUTIVE SERVICES</b>	
Director Corporate Communications	Mr Anthony Clark
Director Program Audit and Inquiries	Ms Natalie Marsic



Photo by Sharon Quandt



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## **SUMMARY REVIEW OF OPERATIONS**

# Summary review of operations

NSW experienced its worst ever bush fire conditions in 2016/17.

## Fire season overview

During February 2017, the state experienced Catastrophic fire danger across northern parts of NSW. A number of large and destructive bush fires impacted on communities including in the state's north, central west and south, destroying more than 60 homes, while also having a significant effect on farms and infrastructure. Despite this, no lives were lost during these worst of conditions.

Across the season, NSW RFS crews responded to more than 8,200 bush and grass fires across the state. These burnt over 268,000 hectares of land, with more than 99 percent of this in Rural Fire Districts. During the season, two lives were lost – a firefighter and a member of the public.

In total across the reporting period, our members attended over 24,500 incidents, including bush and grass fires, motor vehicle accidents, hazard reduction activities and support for other agencies.

## Fire season operations

Early seasonal outlooks predicted the likelihood of above normal bush fire conditions throughout much of the state during the 2016/17 fire season.

Significant rain across winter caused extensive grass growth across many areas, increasing the risk of dangerous grass fires across the warmer months.

This rain also caused a relatively late start to the bush fire season in many areas.

The first significant bush fire events occurred in the north of the state during October, with the most notable being the Fortis Creek fire north of Grafton.

During November, a number of threatening fires developed including fires on the western Sydney urban interface (Londonderry and Llandilo), a fire at Shoalhaven (Beecroft Peninsula and Callala Bay), Cessnock and Port Stephens s44 (Racecourse Road and Lone Pine), Kempsey s44 (Ravenswood) and West Wyalong s44 (Paynes Road).

During December, rainfall kept the overall fire danger down with only one significant fire event at Urana (Clear Hills Road). January saw the commencement of a number of significant fire events in quick succession including the Dubbo s44 (Wuuluman), Palerang s44 (Currendooley), Sutton (Mulligans Flat fire), as well as major fires at Kurri Kurri, Singleton and Tenterfield.

Intense heatwaves early in 2017 saw a number of temperature records broken across NSW. This includes Moree where the town experienced 54 consecutive days of temperatures of 35 degrees or more. The statewide mean temperature across summer was the hottest ever experienced. In Sydney, the mean temperature was nearly three degrees above average.

These conditions culminated in a period of dramatically increased fire danger during February, when widespread areas were subject to fire dangers of Severe and above for prolonged periods.

On the weekend of 11 and 12 February, conditions continued to deteriorate with Catastrophic fire dangers forecast across a large part of northern NSW, stretching from the Hunter to the Queensland border.

### FIRE SEASON OVERVIEW

Total bush and grass fires	8,288
Area burnt (total)	268,367ha
Area burnt (Rural Fire District)	266,922ha
Total Fire Ban declarations	27
Section 44 declarations	25
Personnel deployments	102,099
Aircraft taskings	1,547
Human lives lost	2 (1 firefighter, 1 civilian fatality)
Loss/damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 65 habitable structures destroyed and 38 damaged</li> <li>➤ 243 sheds/outbuildings destroyed and 103 damaged</li> <li>➤ 4 sheds/outbuildings</li> <li>➤ 4,785 stock losses</li> </ul>

Due to the widespread and dangerous conditions, a statewide total fire ban was declared. Seventeen pre-emptive section 44 declarations were made, with Incident Management Teams put in place in the worst affected areas.

On Sunday 12 February, which saw the worst of the conditions, more than 100 new fires started.

During this period, a number of large and destructive bush fires impacted on communities, including the Sir Ivan fire (Warrumbungle LGA), White Cedars Road fire (Mid Western), Pappinbarra (Port Macquarie), Binalong Road (Boggabri), Dondingalong (Kempsey) and a few days later Carwoola (Queanbeyan).

During this time of increased fire danger, a total of 56 homes were destroyed with another 26 damaged. Firefighters and landholders were successful in saving more than 220 others from fire.

These fires also caused significant losses for farming communities, with extensive destruction of stock, crops, fencing and machinery.

### Supporting our emergency service partners

In addition to a busy bush fire season, NSW RFS members provided critical support to a number of other agencies and events across Australia.

This included numerous strike teams being deployed to assist the NSW State Emergency Service with flooding operations in Lismore and surrounding areas caused by the remnants of Tropical Cyclone Debbie in April 2017. These operations included the removal of mud and debris from homes and businesses, provision of incident management personnel and aviation support.

NSW RFS Down the Wire technicians carried out 28 rescues during these floods. This included 26 people who were trapped by floodwaters, with 10 of these being winch rescues from helicopters.

### Base camp capabilities

In March 2017, State Mitigation Crews supported a large Multi-Agency Emergency Services Exercise 200km north of Broken Hill. Amid significant challenges, such as the remote location and lack of water, they provided a base camp to accommodate 100 personnel from various agencies, including NSW RFS volunteers and regional staff.

Successful support for this remote interagency exercise highlighted the capability of the NSW RFS who provided, just one week later, a base camp at Wollongbar TAFE during the floods in northern NSW.

The request for help came on Friday afternoon. By Sunday afternoon, the base camp was fully operational and ready to accommodate and feed over 400 personnel from a range of emergency services.

### Interstate deployment

The Service also participated in one interstate deployment during March and April 2017, with NSW RFS Building Impact Assessment teams deployed to Queensland to assess the damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Debbie under National Resource Sharing Centre arrangements. A liaison officer was also based in Brisbane.

### Volunteer Rescue Association Partnership

To strengthen collaboration arrangements, the NSW RFS embarked on a partnership with the Volunteer Rescue Association during the reporting period. This partnership has identified benefits for both organisations by working closer in relation to:

- Membership records systems
- Training accreditation including a common Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status
- Development of shared communications processes
- Shared training delivery for rescue models
- Exploration of shared procurement strategies

## Investing in rural and regional areas

As a predominately rural-based organisation, the NSW RFS continued its track record of ensuring volunteers and staff have access to an appropriate level of equipment, training and resources to provide effective service delivery.

### Brigade stations and fire control centres

Seventy-seven percent of investment in Fire Control Centres and stations occurred outside the Sydney metropolitan area. New Fire Control Centres were built at Coonabarabran in Region West and Bathurst in Region East, with a combined investment of almost five million dollars.

In 2016/17 new and upgraded rural fire brigade stations were provided across the state including in Namoi Gwydir, Mid North Coast, Orana, Canobolas, Bland Temora, Bathurst, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Northern Rivers, Far South Coast, Lower Western, Mid Lachlan Valley, Sutherland and Shoalhaven Rural Fire Districts.

Work has also progressed on the establishment of four regionally based remote area firefighting training centres. These training facilities are equipped with a tower, mock helicopter airframe and a winch for training and recertification purposes. Two facilities have been completed in Mogo and Glendenning.

During the reporting year, NSW RFS has embarked on the development of a ten-year strategic planning process for the replacement and upgrades to Fire Control Centres and rural fire brigade stations. This process will expand into budgetary and planning processes to ensure a successful program of works is planned and undertaken.

The NSW RFS has developed a solution, has undertaken a procurement process and is working on a program to install pre-manufactured toilets for rural and remote Rural Brigade Stations. The flexibility of this solution is that the toilets can stand alone or be integrated in the existing station, therefore can be added when and where necessary.

NSW RFS commenced a pilot process of centrally coordinated building projects for four rural fire brigade locations within the Hunter Region.

## Regional Highlights

### REGION WEST

The Orana Team has recently completed a major upgrade to the airbase facility at the Dubbo Regional Airport, in conjunction with Dubbo Regional Council. The work includes the installation of two retardant mixing tanks, improved water supply, and electricity connection. The enhanced facility allows for three single-seat waterbombing aircraft to be loaded and refuelled, as well as an area to manage and refuel several waterbombing helicopters.

Bland Temora has established a hot fire cell training facility after receiving an Emergency Services Volunteer Grant. The facility will provide confined space, breathing apparatus and safe-working-on-roof training opportunities.

As an example of the continued upgrading of brigade stations across the state's west, the Gillendoon/Yarrandale brigade in the North West Zone has received its first purpose-built station, consisting of a single bay remote rural station with solar power, toilets and a rainwater tank.

Fifteen new brigade stations were built in Region West, and a further six stations improved with amenities, extensions, new concrete flooring or driveways. Three Fire Control Centres were renovated in the western region with either extensions built or storage facilities improved.

### REGION NORTH

In March 2017, Region North held its 17th annual Region North Exercise at Glen Innes Showgrounds and nearby council reserves. Poor weather affected the event, however organisers and participants showed great adaptability and the exercise was again a success.

A number of brigades received significant upgrades to their facilities across Region North. This includes Maules Creek brigade near Boggabri, which received access to a new two-bay station. Previously, the brigade's equipment and vehicles were stored in members' sheds or on properties in the open. Three new stations were built in the Namoi Gwydir areas.

Seventy-seven percent of investment in Fire Control Centres and stations occurred outside of the Sydney metropolitan area.

The New England airbase at Armidale Airport was also upgraded. Previously, equipment was stored in shipping containers with limited capacity and no volunteer comfort. The enhanced airbase facilities now provide a higher standard of comfort for members.

The Lower North Coast Fire Control Centre was officially opened at Kempsey on Sunday 19 February 2017. The facility has been extensively renovated to meet current operational and administrative requirements including an expanded operations room, new training rooms and new office space.

#### REGION EAST

A number of enhancements were made to local brigade station facilities across the region. This includes the Tilligerry Rural Fire Brigade station in the Lower Hunter District. The facility replaces two ageing stations where the brigades have amalgamated. The new facility serves a community area of around 5,700 people and houses an urban pumper, a Category One bush fire tanker, two Category Seven vehicles and a functional building for more than 60 members.

Nine brigades in total received new stations and 11 stations were upgraded in Region East. Over \$2.5million dollars was invested in a new Fire Control Centre in Bathurst, with further improvements to existing FCCs in Blue Mountains, Cumberland, Sutherland and the Hawkesbury.

Another highlight was an upgrade to the firefighting capacity on Lord Howe Island. Lord Howe is the region's most remote brigade location. The Service upgraded the island's Category 1 tanker, which provides fire services to the area's 400 residents. The Mid Coast District worked closely with the Lord Howe Island Board to identify the needs of the island, source an improved vehicle, and then transport it to the island.

Region East also conducted a number of Incident Management Exercises for the Central Coast District and Hunter Valley District, at the Bulga Fire Control Centre.

#### REGION SOUTH

The region continued its ongoing operational preparedness program this year and completed an Incident Management Exercise at the Shoalhaven Fire Control Centre that included representatives from a number of external agencies such as FRNSW, NSW Police, NSW Ambulance, NSW land management agencies, and the ACT RFS. The exercise provided an opportunity to refresh the skills of the regions' experienced IMT personnel and to test the functionality of the upgrade to the Shoalhaven Fire Control Centre during emergency situations.

The region's fourteenth Group Officer's Forum was held at Wagga Wagga, with 70 Group Officers in attendance. The forum allowed senior volunteers to further engage with the Service's operational processes and management systems. Topics discussed at the forum included Aviation, Centralised Dispatch, Community First Responder, Infrastructure, Work Health and Safety, and Children's Guardian.

Region South conducted a Lessons Learned Interactive Field Trip (LLIFT) during the year for both volunteers and staff. The exercise provided participants with a review of the Carwoola and Currandooley Fires (Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA). Participants were able to view the fire ground and surrounding areas as well as stopping at various vantage points to view the fire ground and to discuss relevant matters in relation to the fire.

There was a significant investment in new brigade stations in Region South where 16 new stations were built and five renovated, with three Fire Control Centres upgraded.

### Regional Events and Activities

In September 2016, Narrabri hosted the annual NSW RFS State Championships. More than 300 members took part in the event at the Narrabri Showgrounds, in a range of realistic scenarios and exercises.

Despite inclement weather, the events were adapted to the conditions and proceeded, with the Orana Composite Team (Dubbo) winning the championships, and St Paul's cadets taking out the junior competition.

The next State Championships will be held in Temora from 14-16 September 2018.

### SUPPORTING LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Across the reporting period, more than \$11.8 million was spent through brigade mitigation support program funding, and bush fire mitigation and resilience funding.

\$9.1 million of this was allocated to projects, fire trails and hazard reduction activities in Region East, \$1.4 million to Region South, \$824,000 to Region North and the remainder to Region West.

The NSW RFS has a longstanding funding arrangement with the Nature Conservation Council (NCC), which supports the NCC's Bush Fire Program. A new four-year funding arrangement commenced in 2016. In 2016/17 this financial support contributed to: the delivery of the 11th Biennial Bushfire Conference (attended by 270 delegates); two community bush fire resilience workshops; a field day for fire managers; and support for the NCC's representation on Bush Fire Management Committees across NSW and NCC's input on fire management policy for the state.

Coordinated by the NSW RFS and the NCC, the Hotspots Fire Project provides landholders with the skills and knowledge to actively participate in fire management for the protection of life and property while also ensuring that biodiversity is protected in healthy productive landscapes.

During the reporting year, 12 workshops were delivered to 131 landholders in areas of high fire risk and biodiversity value. This produced 113 fire management plans covering 9,663 hectares. A notable achievement was the delivery of a workshop with members of the Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) on the far south coast, which provided a number of positive outcomes. These included the completion of property fire management plans for 31 LALC landholdings, the provision of fire fighting training for the LALC Environmental Rangers and the completion of a joint agency burn that achieved cultural, ecological and risk management outcomes.

The NSW RFS has been a proud supporter of the Nature Conservation Council's Firesticks Project working with Aboriginal communities on the NSW north coast and tablelands areas. This project aims to use fire to enhance ecosystem resilience within culturally connected landscapes, integrating contemporary and Aboriginal fire practices to create mosaics across the landscape, reduce bush fire risk and bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities together to achieve better results for land management.

The five-year collaborative project funded by the Australian Government's Clean Energy Future Biodiversity Fund concluded at the end of 2016/17 due to the discontinuation of the Federal funding program. The collaborative program involved personnel from four Indigenous Protected Areas, three Aboriginal Land Councils, the Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, the University of Technology (Sydney), the Office of Environment and Heritage and support from the NSW RFS through firefighter training and mentoring. The Minyurni Indigenous Protected Area hosted the final Firesticks Partners Meeting over 8-10 May, which was attended by NSW RFS representatives and a number of other Indigenous rangers and land management agencies.

## Preparing and protecting the community

In the lead-up to the bush fire season, work continued on preparing communities for the inevitable return of fire conditions.

### Pre-season preparation

In the reporting period, two Local Government Areas brought their official bush fire danger period (BFDP) forward from 1 October to 1 August, and a further five LGAs brought their BFDP forward to 1 September due to local conditions.

In 2016/17 pre-season briefings were delivered through a range of formats, including regional face-to-face briefings and facilitated workshops, seasonal outlooks and online briefings.

Presentation topics included the seasonal outlook, incident alert levels, public information and warnings, aviation, heavy plant, logistics, undertaking evacuations, as well as Remote Area and Specialised Operations capabilities.

In August, the State Operations Exercise was held at the State Operations Centre at NSW RFS Headquarters. The focus of the exercise was around Major Incident Coordination arrangements for the NSW RFS regional areas. Topics included interagency liaison and procedures for escalating incidents to the State Operations Controller.

### Hazard reduction

The NSW Government has committed to targeting the protection of almost 600,000 homes over four years through hazard reduction works, and almost 750,000 hectares of hazard reduction activities across NSW firefighting and land management agencies. These works were supported in the 2015/16 Budget with \$35 million and \$37.9 million each, in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years.

In the reporting period more than 269,820 properties were protected by hazard reduction activities.

Of all these activities NSW RFS members undertook 1,100 activities comprising 7,929 hectares of hazard reduction work. Please see Appendix 1 for more details.

NSW RFS State Mitigation crews also provided assistance to volunteers undertaking strategic bush fire mitigation works in order to accelerate the rate of hazard reduction across the state. Support for more mid-week burning through an increase in SMS crews has been implemented to maximise opportunities to complete planned works.

### Fire Trails

An adequate access network for firefighting vehicles is essential for the protection of the community and its assets. The Strategic Fire Trail Program aims to develop strategies, frameworks and tools that contribute to a strategic approach for an enhanced fire trail network. An enhanced network will facilitate the coordinated management of bush fire mitigation and suppression activities.

During the year, development of the Fire Trail standards and other documentation continued. Consultation continued with the Fire trail Standards Reference Group and the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC). A trial commenced with the Lower Hunter BFCC.

A schedule for the implementation of the Fire Access and Fire trails (FAFT) plans has been developed and will be refined in 2017/18.

### Arson Prevention

As a result of the combined efforts of NSW RFS fire investigators and the NSW Police Force, 2,795 fire investigations were conducted with several persons apprehended for arson-related offences.

Improved information sharing between agencies has been made possible by the Arson Trend Analysis System (ATAS) analysis undertaken by the NSW RFS Fire Investigation and Arson Intelligence section.

As a consequence of greater powers to issue fines for careless ignitions by landholders, a total of 360 warning letters and penalty notices were issued for illegal fires.

Legislation introduced in 2015 which allowed for infringement notices to be issued for those who discard lit cigarettes saw 1,326 warning letters and penalty notices issued during the reporting period.

The Penalty Notice and Legal Process policies continue to be reviewed and updated to ensure arrangements remain appropriate and protect the community.

### Trail Bike Units

The NSW RFS has three Operational Trail Bike units based in the Monaro, Cudgegong and Macarthur Rural Fire Districts. There are 33 riders from a number of Rural Fire Districts including Mid Coast, Central Coast, Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai, Hawkesbury, Blue Mountains, Macarthur, Chifley, Cudgegong, Southern Highlands, Riverina Highlands, Far South Coast, Lake George and Monaro. Sixteen new riders were trained at Mogo during the year and a further unit will be established at the Northern Tablelands in 2017.

There were nine out of area deployments of NSW RFS trail bikes for standby, patrol and high visibility deterrence operations in particular in the Blue Mountains, Orana and Lower Hunter districts on days of increased fire occurrence and activity. A team in Shoalhaven participated in a multi-agency search and rescue for a missing person. Numerous days of standby and patrol operations were also conducted at the base locations of the Trail Bikes.

Another key use for the trail bikes during this period was for fire trail inspections, particularly in the Monaro District. This function proved especially useful following storms as teams could efficiently identify, clear and map trail obstructions such as fallen trees or washaway sections of fire trails.

### Neighbourhood Safer Places

Throughout 2016/17, the NSW RFS increased the number of Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSPs) within NSW to 1,010 sites in 129 Local Government Areas. In addition, the NSW RFS conducted inspections of all of these sites and facilitated works to improve the resilience of a number of NSPs.

### Community Protection Plans

During the 2016/17 reporting year, 31 Community Protection Plans (CPPs) were completed for communities at risk of bush fire across NSW. A further 51 were in progress. One hundred and two CPPs have been completed and approved by Bush Fire Management Committees across NSW since the commencement of this initiative.

### Development controls and assessments

The Planning and Environment Service Centres (PESCs) are located at Batemans Bay, Coffs Harbour and Glendenning. In conjunction with local district staff and brigades, the PESCs are responsible for delivering numerous programs and services, including:

- Development Assessment Applications, referred under S100B of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and S79BA of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Identification, annual inspection and funding for works on Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSPs)
- Implementation of Community Protection Plans (CPPs)
- Completion of environmental assessments
- Delivery of the Hotspots Program, in partnership with the Nature Conservation Council

During 2016/17, the PESCs met targets for development assessment referrals, increased the total number of NSPs to 1,010, completed 31 CPPs, delivered 12 Hotspots workshops and completed all environmental assessments within agreed time frames.

### Building Impact Analysis

Throughout 2016/17, NSW RFS Building Impact Analysis (BIA) teams were deployed to 20 bush fire events to undertake Impact Assessment, identifying the impact of the bush fire on the community immediately after a bush fire emergency. NSW RFS BIA teams also assisted with the Impact Assessment of floods in northern NSW and, in Queensland, were deployed to assist with Impact Assessment in the aftermath of Cyclone Debbie.

Alongside Impact Assessment, BIA has undertaken an in-depth research survey to gain greater insight into the causes of building loss and the effects of bush fire on development. Throughout 2016/17, BIA administered the *Post Fire Analysis of Fire, People and Property* project, which saw researchers critically analyse the research data collected through BIA to provide insights into how people, the bush fire landscape and development interact during a bush fire.

During the reporting period, the Service completed the second of a two-year trial of the Large Air Tanker and Very Large Air Tanker program.

## Developing our capability

The NSW RFS is recognised as a leader in the wildfire and emergency management industry. During the reporting period, the Service worked to maintain and improve its capacity to deal with a range of incidents and activities.

### Aviation

During the reporting period, the Service completed the second year of a two-year trial of the Large Air Tanker and Very Large Air Tanker (LAT and VLAT) program.

The LAT commenced operations in September and remained in action until early March. During the year, the LAT and VLAT undertook a range of missions including attendance at urban interface fires in the Sydney and Hunter areas, grassland fires in the west and south of the state, and a number of forest fires on the south coast, mid-coast and far north coast.

To enable a fast response to fires, the LAT worked from a number of locations across the season including RAAF Base Richmond, and Albury and Dubbo airports. Specialist equipment has been installed at these locations to allow the aircraft to refuel and refill, providing a rapid turnaround.

As the trial came to a close, their use was evaluated by the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC), against both operational and economic criteria. The two-year trial provided ample opportunity to measure the effectiveness of the aircraft in a range of operational situations and environments.

Overall, the evaluation determined that the LAT and VLAT provided a new and increased capacity for fighting fires across NSW, and were effective in achieving incident management objectives in a range of situations. While the cost of the aircraft is a significant investment, the analysis indicated that an appropriate large air tanker capacity is economically justified.

The Service continued to use a range of fixed wing and rotary aircraft to respond to a range of incidents. Across the reporting period, there were 1,547 aircraft taskings, involving both contracted and Call-When-Needed aircraft.

The three NSW RFS helicopters continue to be upgraded with additional capabilities in the areas of incident intelligence gathering, Remote Area Firefighting Teams and Rapid Aerial Response Teams, and night operations.

The Service also worked to improve transparency of aviation contract procurement and dispatch arrangements, following a commissioned Operational Review of the State Air Desk. The Review was undertaken by Bob Conroy (an experienced former Director of NSW National Parks and Wildlife) and involved interviews and consultation with aviation industry personnel.

Twenty recommendations were made around policies and procedures for aviation management, alignment between national and state aviation contract arrangements, communication, and the management of NSW RFS-owned aircraft. The Government response to the review was released in September 2016 with all recommendations supported in full or in part.

### Fire behaviour and analysis

The Fire Behaviour Unit engaged with more operational activity than in past seasons because of the extreme fire activity of 2016/17. There was more than a 33 percent increase in manual fire predictions, for example. The unit continued to support all levels of fire management across the state with fire behaviour predictions and reports.

The NSW RFS introduced four regional Fire Behaviour Analyst positions into Incident Management Teams, increasing our capabilities in fire prediction and behaviour analysis.

The Service has developed and piloted its atmospheric sounding capabilities, a process that arose from the findings and recommendations of the Wambelong Coronial Inquiry.

These capabilities, together with the doubling of the fleet of Portable Automatic Weather Station (PAWS) units, has supported fire incident management as well as assisted the Bureau of Meteorology in severe weather forecasts.

### Rescue capability development

In early 2017, the State Rescue Board completed a review of land rescue arrangements across NSW. This involved the review of motor vehicle accident data and the times taken for existing rescue services to reach these locations.

The review identified a number of locations where it would take more than one hour for existing rescue services to reach these locations. As a result, eleven areas were identified. Some of these are covered by NSW RFS brigades.

A process was undertaken with volunteer brigades in these areas to establish interest in providing a rescue capability, and discuss training and resources. This process is continuing through the second half of 2017.

### Improving skills

While the State Learning and Development Team are responsible for developing training resources and maintaining compliance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations, the actual delivery of NSW RFS courses occurs across the state. In fact, all mainstream courses including Bush Firefighter (BF), Village Firefighter (VF), Advanced Firefighter (AF), Crew Leader (CL) and Group Leader (GL) and most specialist courses are delivered statewide at the local district level.

To ensure our members have the knowledge and skills to enable effective service delivery, the Service has continued to invest in a range of modern training programs including the Operational Officer (OpO), Incident Management Team (IMT) and Incident Controllers' Major Incident (ICMI) training. These courses were delivered over a 30-week timeframe.

The following Operational Officer (OpO) courses were delivered at the following levels and time periods: five OpO courses (Level 1) over 6 weeks, ten OpO (Level 2) over 6 weeks, two OpO (Level 3) over 3 weeks, and 2 new OpO (Level 4) were piloted over 6 days. Eight Incident Management Team courses were conducted over eight weeks and eight Incident Controllers' Major Incident courses were delivered over seven weeks.

In addition, new standards were developed for Incident Management Exercises and Workshops, a statewide training needs analysis was conducted for Incident Management Teams (IMT), and updates were made to a range of training resources for IMT and District roles.

### Effective coordination of incidents

Land use planning changes announced by NSW Planning & Environment known as "The Carter Street Urban Activation Precinct", means that the current NSW RFS Headquarters lease at 15 Carter Street, Lidcombe will not be extended beyond its scheduled expiry in November 2018.

The NSW Government, on behalf of the NSW RFS, has negotiated a long-term lease for a new NSW RFS Headquarters at Sydney Olympic Park. Located just a short distance from the current base at Lidcombe, the new building at 4 Murray Rose Avenue will be fitted with state-of-the-art technology to support modern firefighting operations, such as live fire information and intelligence, digital mapping, public information, warnings and media broadcasting.

It will also house the State Operations Centre for use during major bush fires and is ideally located 30-40 minutes from the Sydney CBD to ensure efficient access for other emergency services such as Fire & Rescue NSW and the NSW Police Force.

Construction of the building has commenced with excavation works well progressed. The planning and designing phases of the technical services have been finalised. The detailed design process for the internal layout accommodating staff and the Operations Centre is well advanced.

Staff have been providing input by participating in workgroups. Baseline data and information about current workstyles and workspaces have been collected over recent months using workplace surveys, observational studies and discovery sessions. A dedicated portal has been developed to allow the project team to share information with staff and will be updated as required with the latest project news, information and frequently asked questions.

## Streamlining Procurement Capabilities

The NSW RFS continues to evolve its procurement function through the implementation of best practice principles identified and recommended during the initial accreditation process in 2014. These recommendations have been instituted as we position ourselves for re-accreditation before the end of 2017.

The procurement team encourages its staff to develop their skills by undertaking further education. This core capability supports ongoing training provided across the state to non-procurement staff. The team is working on a future procurement eLearning program.

Category Management planning processes are being progressively implemented with eleven categories under active management and a further two plans close to finalisation and implementation. All are scheduled to be approved, implemented and operating during the 2017/18 financial year.

In partnership with the Department of Justice, the NSW RFS has developed a detailed requirements specification for an electronic Contract Lifecycle Management System. This has traversed the procurement processes and is expected to be fully implemented during the 2017/18 financial year.

## Keeping the community informed and safe

The NSW RFS recognises the importance of engaging with communities before, during and after emergency events, and the critical role of warnings in emergency management.

### Public Information and Warnings

Throughout the year, there were 20 incidents which reached Emergency Warning, the highest level of bush fire alert. Another 62 reached Watch & Act level.

A total of 87 Emergency Alert telephone warning campaigns were activated, with more than 2.3 million individual messages sent to the community, warning of fires or fire conditions.

The Service published a total of 469 major fire updates on the NSW RFS website, providing detailed information about incidents across the reporting period. The website received more than 6.2 million visits during the reporting period, with 11.9 million page views.

Social media remained an effective way of communicating with the community, with close to 400,000 people following the NSW RFS on Facebook, and 90,000 following on Twitter.

In addition to the use of this technology, face to face communication remained an important aspect of public information during incidents, with local Public Liaison activities including street meetings and community meetings conducted in fire affected areas.

The Bushfire & Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre has commenced research to assess the community's response during the major fires of the season, in particular following the Catastrophic fire danger period of February 2017. Results of this research will help inform future engagement and campaign activities, and are expected in the second half of 2017.

### Public Awareness

The Service's ongoing Prepare Act Survive public awareness campaign continued to demonstrate strong results in changing behaviours in the community. During the second year of the three-year I Am Fire campaign, the campaign achieved all objectives, namely:

- People who correctly assess they live in a bush fire risk area-baseline of 32 percent in August 2016, improved to 35 percent in March 2017
- People who have discussed and made bush fire plans with their household-baseline of 61 percent in August 2016, improved to 69 percent in March 2017
- People who have taken action to prepare their property-baseline of 43 percent in August 2016, improved to 52 percent in March 2017.

The campaign won a silver award in the Government category at the 2016 Australian "Effie Awards" for advertising effectiveness, and was a finalist at the international awards event in Singapore.

### Community engagement

Following extensive consultation with members across NSW, the Service developed its Community Engagement Strategic Directions 2017-2021.

The Strategic Directions set out a five-year plan for improving and coordinating the approach to community engagement across the state.

The initiative was developed through workshops with volunteer members across the state, as well as with the RFS Community Engagement Consultative Committee. The Strategic Directions were completed in the reporting period, and launched at the NSW RFS Leadership Forum in July 2017.

Regional forums were held to further develop the skills and knowledge of volunteer community engagement personnel. These sessions were held at Tamworth, Temora, Batemans Bay and Wyong, and also provided an update on latest research and initiatives aimed at improving community safety.

The Service continued its successful Get Ready Weekend initiative, with more than 400 volunteer brigades taking part in a range of events across the state in September 2016. Aligned to the Prepare Act Survive public awareness campaign, the initiative aims to improve the local perception of risk, and level of planning and preparation in the community.

### Equipping our members

During the year, the final design for female and male Next Generation Bush Fire Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) was approved.

The new PPC has been designed and finalised after extensive consultation with volunteer members, and following in-the-field testing across the bush fire season.

The new PPC will deliver a number of features and benefits:

- Breathable fabric allows metabolic heat to escape to help reduce the occurrences of heat stress or heat exhaustion
- Sizing range for women and men, with tailored options as needed
- The level of protection meets the relevant Australian Standards
- Designed to be more comfortable, better fitting and allow for easier movement
- Fabric is lighter than the existing PPC and stronger, more durable and faster drying
- Ensemble includes a yellow jacket and the option of dark navy over trousers or dark navy cargo pant

Orders for the Next Generation PPC were placed and completed for approximately 4,500 female sets of standard sizes and 13,000 male sets of standard sizes with all products in stock at the end of the reporting year. The total order of 75 percent male and 25 percent female PPC reflects the male to female ratio of firefighters in the Service.

Next Generation PPC has been designed and finalised after extensive consultation with members and in-the-field testing.

### Vehicle development

The Service delivered two new prototype firefighting appliances in the reporting period.

The first was a Category 1 single cab appliance carrying 4,500 litres of water, fitted with a remote controlled front mounted monitor. This prototype also has revisions undertaken in terms of improvement to manual handling, suction hose storage and rake hoe storage.

The second was a Category 10 Urban Firefighting appliance, also built as a prototype. This Cat 10 urban pumper will be made available over the next 12 months to various districts to validate the build concept. Lighting and livery upgrades across all firefighting fleet were tested and will be installed in future. These upgrades will give an improved level of visibility and functionality, which is now becoming the standard for all service tankers.

A review of the in-service fleet was taken in regard to pump operating noise, with noise output assessments undertaken on over 120 in-service tankers, informing improvements in new builds and to develop a program of noise mitigation which will be seen over the next reporting period.

A review of the Service's Marine Operations was collaboratively undertaken with Operations in the reporting period, resulting in the construction of a new NSW RFS standard light utility vessel. This new standard is designed to move people and equipment and is also fitted with a pump, delivering on operational requirements.

Stability and seaworthy tests were undertaken, confirming suitability for both day and night operations before the vessel entered service at the Shoalhaven district.

### Radio communications

The NSW RFS operates one of the biggest radio and paging networks in the country, using over 490 radio towers that support the Private Mobile Radio, Government Radio, and Paging networks.

During 2016/17, a statewide and centrally coordinated maintenance program was introduced for the Service's extensive radio and paging systems.

Centralised dispatch has been introduced to support a further two districts during the reporting period. This brings the total of participating districts to twelve.

NSW RFS is working closely with the NSW Telco Authority on the introduction of their Critical Communication Enhancement Program (CCEP). Over the next four years, the CCEP will deliver the expansion of the Government Radio Network (GRN) aiming to improve coverage across the state of NSW. During the reporting year, the NSW RFS North West District transitioned across to the eGRN as their primary communications platform.

NSW RFS is currently working with Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW), trialling the use of the NSW RFS Paging system in the Illawarra area. If this trial is successful, the aim is to continue to expand the use of the paging system with FRNSW in another five areas in Sydney. This builds upon our state-wide partnership with NSW SES for paging and ensures an effective utilisation of existing technology.

### Improving technology

During the reporting period the NSW RFS migrated its data centre from its Headquarters to two newly established NSW Government data centres. Using the Service's high redundancy processes and high-availability applications, this migration was delivered seamlessly and with minimal disruption.

The year saw the implementation of a number of systems and applications that were spatially enabled using ESRI Arc Collector and/or ESRI Portal for ArcGIS Server. These include:

- the Bush Fire Impact Analysis tool and dashboard
- 3D smoke plume modelling
- Flight Planner
- My Fire Trails
- Fire Trails Viewer
- Fire Trail Data Gatherer
- ICON Field Observations
- Sit Reps (Situation Reporting) and Weather Observations.

Development continued in the aircraft and multispectral line scanning area by delivering automation of scanning and processing on-board the aircraft. Implementation and development of these systems have greatly empowered both NSW RFS members in the field and those in command.

Other projects such as the Office 2016 upgrade, the upgrade to the HPE system (electronic document records management system), and the upgrade of the computer standard operating environment to Windows 10, established a new platform and upgrade path for the NSW RFS. This positions us well to deliver further updates in the next financial year, such as email and cloud integration for Office 365.

### Digital Security

Processes and systems have been implemented to comply with security requirements and guidelines. These include the NSW Digital Information Security Policy and establishing the foundation for further ISO 27001 compliance. An improved antivirus system was implemented, while ICT successfully performed a security "penetration test", further ensuring security of the Service's systems and networks.

The Digital Information Security Annual Attestation Statement can be found in Appendix 2.2.

### NSW RFS Library Services

The NSW RFS Library is a popular resource for members and the wider community. The librarian answered approximately 3,000 queries in the reporting period from NSW RFS volunteers and staff, other emergency services across Australia and globally, university students, schools and the public.

The library also assisted those participating in ICMI, OpO4 and AIPM courses.

As part of our Health and Safety Initiative, the subscription to *Flipster* gives our members access to digital magazines online including *Good Health*, *Men's Fitness* and *Australian Geographic*.

The NSW RFS publication, the *Bush Fire Bulletin*, is among the first journals to be digitised by the National Library of Australia (NLA). This has made past issues of the *Bulletin* available online to readers and researchers around the world through the Library's TROVE database. Last year, the NSW RFS library also made progress in adding our catalogue electronically into the NLA database, which means all libraries across Australia will be able to quickly access records of our collection and request our resources, an important initiative given that, for many items, the NSW RFS holds the only copy in Australia.



NARRABRI HQ



NSW RFS State Championships 2016, Narrabri

## Our Members

### Youth participation in the NSW RFS

#### SECONDARY SCHOOL CADET PROGRAM

In 2016/17 the NSW RFS Secondary School Cadet Program (SSCP) continued to grow, with 63 programs being run in schools across the state - the highest number of programs run since the SSCP began. The program offers school students in Years 9 and 10 the opportunity to develop practical skills and an appreciation of emergency service volunteering.

In 2010 the NSW RFS set a target to train an additional 4,000 students by 2016 through the Secondary School Cadet Program. This target was achieved in 2015 and by June 2017 an additional 5,851 students had completed the program since 2010.

#### NSW YOUNG VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The NSW RFS introduced new awards to promote and recognise young members - the Young Volunteer of the Year Awards comprise two age categories for NSW RFS young members aged between 12-15 years and 16-25 years. The winners of the inaugural Young Volunteer of the Year Awards were Alexander Slade of Williamtown/Salt Ash Rural Fire Brigade in the 12-15 year old category, and Elizabeth Butt of Bendick Murrell Brigade in the 16-25 year old category.

Javen Ricevuto from Balranald Central School in Region South was awarded the NSW RFS Secondary School Cadet of the Year.

Javen, Alexander and Elizabeth were presented with their awards by the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon. Troy Grant MP, at a Young People in Emergency Services Awards Ceremony held at Parliament House during Youth Week 2017.

#### NSW RFS YOUNG LEADER SCHOLARSHIP

The NSW RFS Young Leader Scholarship was established in 2016 to recognise and develop the leadership skills of emerging young leaders in the NSW RFS. As well as acknowledging their contribution to their brigades and communities, the scholarship gives young leaders the opportunity to develop practical leadership and communication skills by participating as a member of a youth crew aboard the tall ship, the *Young Endeavour*. The inaugural Young Leader Scholarship was awarded to Adam Lummis of Dubbo Headquarters Brigade who completed his eleven-day voyage on the *Young Endeavour* in April 2017.

#### CHILD SAFE, CHILD FRIENDLY PLAN 2014-17

In 2016/17 the NSW RFS continued to deliver outcomes from the Child Safe, Child Friendly Plan 2014-17. The Plan includes measures to keep children and young people safe from all forms of harm and to create an environment where children and young people are valued, respected and welcomed. A further seven Youth Participation Workshops were conducted in NSW RFS districts to develop the capabilities of leaders and coordinators of programs involving junior members.

## Secondary School Cadet Program

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Cumulative total number of Secondary School Cadet Program students - commencing 2010/11	814	1,654 (840)	2,484 (827)	3,341 (860)	4,164 (823)	4,975 (811)	5,851 (876)
Cumulative target number of Secondary School Cadet Program students	800	1,600	2,400	3,200	4,000	4,800	5,600

In 2016/17 the NSW RFS was presented with a Resilient Australia Award for the project “Get Ready: A Model for Deaf Community Leadership”.

## Workforce Diversity

The NSW Rural Fire Service has sought to increase the diversity of our large workforce, through inclusive and flexible membership practices.

In 2016/17 the NSW RFS focused on a range of strategies to increase the gender diversity of our members.

- In 2016/17 NSW RFS were gold sponsors of the 2016 Women and Firefighting Australasia (WAFWA) Conference, and also supported a number of members to attend and present at the conference.
- NSW RFS also participated in the development of a paper about gender diversity in the emergency services, which was delivered to the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) in October 2016. Outcomes of the paper included the formation of the AFAC Diversity and Inclusion Group and a commitment to the Male Champions of Change program.
- Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons has joined other leaders in the sector to form the Fire and Emergency Male Champions of Change group with support from AFAC. Together, the group’s objective is to advance gender equity and achieve significant and sustainable improvements in the representation of women in their workplaces. The first meeting of the Male Champions of Change group took place in April 2017.

## MULTICULTURAL POLICIES AND SERVICES PLAN

As a designated agency under the Multicultural Policies and Services Program (MPSP), in 2016/17 NSW RFS provided a detailed progress report to Multicultural NSW on our performance against the NSW RFS Multicultural Plan 2014–2017. Multicultural NSW assessed NSW RFS’ overall performance in implementing and observing multicultural principles as sound with the NSW RFS being on track to achieving 29 of the 35 planned strategies within the Multicultural Plan.

In 2016/17 the Many Cultures One Community (MCOC) Project concluded and was evaluated to assess the overall effectiveness of the project and the extent to which project objectives were achieved. Overall, the Advisory Group, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community members and NSW RFS personnel involved in the project assessed that the project had achieved its intended outcomes of:

- stronger relationships and collaboration between CALD communities and the emergency services
- increased awareness of home fire safety and emergency preparedness in CALD communities
- greater cultural awareness within emergency services and between CALD communities
- increased volunteering opportunities for CALD community members.

This project demonstrated the potential and value of such an approach and the results provide guidance for NSW RFS and community organisations about future engagement strategies with CALD communities.

The NSW RFS is looking at ways to support the employment of humanitarian entrants through our participation in the NSW Government’s Refugee Employment Champions network. A communications plan to educate and encourage hiring managers to consider engaging refugees is under development.

NSW RFS has also participated in partnership projects with community and non-government organisations (NGO) to deliver services to newly arrived migrants and refugees. NSW RFS partnered with Northern Settlement Services and NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) to develop a

Natural Disasters Resilience Strategy (NDRS) for the CALD community in the Hunter and the Central Coast, including a training program and toolkit of resources.

Outcomes achieved in 2016/17 include:

- In 2012 the NSW RFS changed the membership application process to offer all new volunteer members the option to complete a personal diversity profile including ethnic background, languages spoken and disability status. Reporting in June 2017 indicates that the majority of new members take the opportunity to complete the diversity profile, and around 23 percent of our 73,223 volunteer members have now completed a diversity profile in their membership record. The overall figures are monitored and reported annually to the senior executive.
- Throughout 2016/17, promotion of cultural diversity continued through the existing channels of social media, the intranet, the public website and publications, and included the official celebration of Harmony Day, international programs and a range of local brigade-based activities.
- A guide for supporting members with Language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) needs was released on the NSW RFS eLearning platform, FUEL. The LLN guide explains how trainers and assessors can assist and support members with different LLN needs, including specific advice for supporting culturally and linguistically diverse members.

Strategies and activities planned for 2017/18 include:

- With the conclusion of the Multicultural Plan 2014-17, NSW RFS will review and update our multicultural planning in line with changes to the Multicultural Policies and Services Program Framework
- Multicultural communities are a strong focus of the new Community Engagement: Strategic Directions. The Strategic Directions encompasses a tailored and targeted engagement strategy to be delivered over the next five years, commencing in 2017/18
- Work will continue on the new Bush Fire Risk Management Planning Framework, which is proposed to include specific reference to CALD and vulnerable community members.

### DISABILITY PLAN

The NSW RFS Disability Plan 2016-2018 supports the overall vision and objectives of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan to address barriers within government departments and local communities for people with a disability. The actions within the Plan focus on the programs, policies and service standards associated with employment and participation, and service delivery for people with a disability.

In 2016/17 the NSW RFS was presented with a Resilient Australia Award for the project "Get Ready: A Model for Deaf Community Leadership". This project was a partnership with the NSW Deaf Society, NSW SES, Fire & Rescue NSW, Red Cross and the University of Sydney and was funded by the Office of Emergency Management through the Community Resilience Innovation Program (CRIP).

The AIDER (Assist Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents) Program supports some of our most at-risk community members by helping them live more safely and confidently in their home in areas where bush fires might start. Eligible residents can access AIDER services including clearing of gutters, thinning vegetation around the home, removing leaf and tree debris, trimming branches or mowing or slashing long grass.

In 2016/17 the NSW RFS will continue its focus on delivering and building on the initiatives outlined throughout the Disability Plan.

## Aboriginal Services

The NSW RFS Aboriginal Services Plan 2016-2018 provides direction and targets to further develop resilience in Aboriginal communities and cultural diversity within the NSW RFS. During 2016/17, this plan took form in the following activities:

- Indigenous Community Engagement Specialists used art as engagement – Training of 28 Aboriginal Community Safety Assistants (CSA) to deliver Bushfire Safety programs to their communities on the north coast and using Aboriginal art to enhance the program.
- Cultural Burning – The NSW RFS has supported different agencies and groups across NSW by providing resources to implement Cultural Burning activities. This includes providing burn plans, volunteers, tankers and equipment.  
Cultural burns have been conducted in the following areas: Murrin Bridge (Lake Cargelligo), Dubbo (Troy Reserve), The Lakes (Lower Hunter), Morangarell (Bland Shire), Henty, Albury (Wagirra Group), Blue Mountains, Nowra, Taree and Coffs Harbour.
- Bushfire Resilience in Aboriginal Communities (BRAC) – Visits to the 34 communities that were in the initial BRAC project for a review of targets and objectives that were developed in the original Community Protection Plans (CPP). Communities were visited and assessed with local community members, Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) representatives and district staff along with the State Aboriginal Program Coordinator and any shortfalls were communicated to the appropriate agency for action.
- Bush Firefighter Training (BFF) – The NSW RFS Corporate and International Relations section and NSW RFS Districts have conducted BFF training across the state for Aboriginal communities. By providing this service we have given Aboriginal people opportunities for employment through the RFS and other agencies, as well as providing encouragement for them to join the RFS as volunteers.

During 2016/17 approximately 80 indigenous people in the following areas were trained in BFF as external learners or through kindred agencies with the assistance of the NSW RFS: Murrin Bridge (Lake Cargelligo), Wagga Wagga, Albury, Nowra, Taree, Coffs Harbour, Young and Dubbo

- Fire Management Workshop Cape York – Each year the NSW RFS has had representatives, both staff and volunteers, attend this workshop. It is run by experienced Traditional Burning practitioners and ecologists who teach the benefits of cultural burning in a practical workshop. In 2016/17 three NSW RFS members attended.
- Indigenous Engagement events – Districts and brigades attend annual events such as NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day. Active brigades/districts have developed positive relationships with Indigenous communities.

## Volunteer to Career

Volunteer members are encouraged to pursue a career in the Service through the Volunteer to Career (V2C) Program. This year, 35 members attended the program on 1 April 2017. Six hundred and fifteen members have now attended the program since its introduction.

## *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*

The NSW RFS has implemented all reforms associated with the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 (GSE). The last two key reform areas that were completed during the 2016/17 financial year included the Capability Framework and Performance Management.

The implementation of an on-line performance management system “SuccessFactors” for a pilot group was completed at the end of the financial year. The pilot group consisted of representatives from across all four directorates of the NSW RFS, including one region and two districts. Enhancements were made to the system following feedback from the pilot group. In the 2017/18 financial year, approval will be sought to expand the use of “SuccessFactors” to other groups within the NSW RFS.

### Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research

During 2016/17 the NSW RFS strengthened its partnership with the national Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC).

This partnership focused on three research areas:

- Bush fire and natural hazard risks,
- Resilient people, infrastructure and institutions, and
- Economics, policy and decision-making.

Across these areas the NSW RFS has two lead end-user representatives and 12 end users and is involved in 30 projects.

The NSW RFS had key representation at the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Research Forum that was held on the first day of the AFAC/BNHCRC conference on 30 August 2016. This forum was attended by more than 430 emergency managers and researchers, with attendees learning new ways to keep communities safe from natural hazards.

Two Research Advisory Forums were held during 2016/17, which provided the NSW RFS members involved with the opportunity to present and engage with their research project teams.

The first of these was the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Research Advisory Forum (RAF) held at the Australian National University in Canberra from 18-19 October 2016. This Research Advisory Forum focused on the physical science and engineering projects in the CRC research program, such as monitoring and prediction; next generation fire modelling; prescribed burning and catchment management; hardening buildings and infrastructure; and coastal management (Storm Surge project only, not the Extreme Water Levels project).

The second forum was the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Research Advisory Forum (RAF) held in Perth at the Indian Ocean Marine Research Centre, University of Western Australia, from 5-6 April 2017. This forum focused on the resilience and policy themes of the research program. Projects from the following clusters were presented: governance and institutional knowledge; economics, policy and decision-making; scenario and loss analysis; communications and warnings; emergency management capability; understanding and measuring social resilience; and sustainable volunteering.

During 2016/17 the NSW RFS put in place a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC covering arrangements for the commissioning of post-incident research. Accompanying this MOU was a range of supporting documents to be used as the basis for establishing a research agreement, should the NSW RFS seek to commission the BNHCRC to conduct research on its behalf.

In April 2017 the NSW RFS actioned this MOU and commissioned the BNHCRC to conduct research related to the February 2017 fires in NSW. In particular, this research is focusing on the Currandooley fire, Sir Ivan fire and the Carwoola fire. As at the end of June 2017 the fieldwork was well underway and the development of the online survey component was progressing to schedule.

### Industrial Relations Policies and Practices

In the 2015/16 financial year, the NSW RFS commenced a Section 19 Award review of the Crown Employees (Rural Fire Service) Award 2012 and the Crown Employees (Rural Fire Service Major Incident Conditions 2011) Interim Award 2012 in accordance with the *Industrial Relations Act 1996*. The purpose of the review – which occurs at least once every three years – was to modernise, consolidate and to rescind obsolete awards. Both reviewed Awards were filed with the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) on 2 August 2016 and published on 21 October 2016.

Separate to the Section 19 review process, Award negotiations commenced in 2016 between the NSW RFS and the Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) to develop a new Crown Employees (Rural Fire Service) Award. The initial Award discussions were superseded by recommendations from the IRC in December 2016. The IRC recommended that the PSA provide the NSW RFS, for its consideration, proposed Award clauses that are endorsed by their members.

## Statement setting out WHS performance

Further developments to the NSW Rural Fire Service's Health and Safety Management System occurred during the reporting period.

These included:

- Publication of the NSW RFS Health and Fitness Initiatives (HFI) Plan 2016–2021. This plan defines outcomes that support and promote the health and fitness of members to enhance their wellbeing and capacity. In May 2017 the Commissioner endorsed the NSW RFS HFI Framework. The HFI Framework is a five-year planning tool to guide the implementation of health and fitness activities that will be accessible to all members on an ongoing basis. Draft planning documents (Implementation Plan, Communication Plan and Change Management Plan) have also been developed to provide a road map for the detailed rollout of activities under the Framework.
- The ongoing rollout of Part B Health and Safety Site Management Plans (SMP) to all NSW RFS fixed facilities. As of June 2017, 96 percent of all NSW RFS fixed work sites have implemented SMPs.
- Development and implementation of the health and safety management system and projects in response to the internal WHS Audit Program.
- Further design and user acceptance testing of a new online NSW RFS Work Health and Safety (WHS) incident and hazard reporting system for all members. The online system, called SPARK, will improve the quality and timeliness of WHS incident notifications, investigations and follow up actions.
- Draft Service Standard SS7.1.8 WHS Consultation and Issue Resolution was released for a consultation period in Q2-2016/17 and the feedback was reviewed and considered. The Service Standard will be published in 2017/18 to coincide with the development and release of supporting guides and training materials.
- Continuous monitoring and investigation of all reported WHS incidents (including injuries, property damage, near misses and hazard reports). WHS incident statistics were collated and analysed to identify trends which resulted in the development of specific WHS programs and initiatives. Refer to Appendix 3.6 Reported Injuries and Registered Workers Compensation Claims.

## Financial Services

The NSW Budget allocation for the total expenses of the NSW RFS was \$372.4 million; an increase of \$10.8 million or 3.0 percent.



Photo by Sharon Quandt



4

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

# Key Focus Areas

The NSW Rural Fire Service Corporate Plan identifies six key focus areas with specific objectives assigned to each. These are:

## KFA One: People, Property and Environmental Protection

- 1.1 All levels of leadership provide effective emergency management
- 1.2 Effective people and property protection programs
- 1.3 Sustainable environmental protection practices
- 1.4 Timely and relevant information and warnings

## KFA Two: Coordinated Bush Firefighting and Prevention

- 2.1 Policy and planning frameworks to lead coordinated bush firefighting and prevention
- 2.2 Mitigation works, hazard reduction and community engagement are prioritised in line with risk plans
- 2.3 Effective performance and measurement of prevention, mitigation and bush firefighting strategies

## KFA Three: Community Resilience

- 3.1 Communities in bush fire prone areas act on their understanding of the shared responsibilities of resilience
- 3.2 Empowered communities take action based on informed decisions
- 3.3 Risk based land use and planning arrangements, programs and resources

## KFA Four: Our Members

- 4.1 Safe, supportive and inclusive culture and practices
- 4.2 A diverse, flexible, adaptive and sustainable membership that is representative of the community
- 4.3 Informed, engaged, capable and valued members

## KFA Five: Organisational Capability and Sustainability

- 5.1 Resource allocation model based on enhanced risk profiles
- 5.2 Organisational capability anticipates and responds to service delivery requirements
- 5.3 Effective leadership, governance and business systems

## KFA Six: Partnerships and Collaborations

- 6.1 Influence the emergency management direction through partnerships
- 6.2 Partnerships and collaboration are identified and pursued
- 6.3 Business and sponsorship opportunities generated with the commercial sector

These six KFAs are addressed through the following Strategies and Key Actions with the aim of achieving the stated Outcomes.

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## Strategies

- S1 Manage the expectations and capability of the community, volunteers and staff for improved levels of awareness and readiness to act
- S2 Continue to employ technology and systems that meet organisational needs
  - S2.1 Continue to manage and quantify risks to improve community safety
- S3 Continue to develop data collection and management tools, intelligence gathering and forecasting capability for evidence based and opportunistic decision making
- S4 Continue to improve organisational diversity through inclusive and flexible membership ensuring the volunteer culture remains core to our business now and into the future
- S5 Continue to engage in a broad range of member training and development, increasing adaptability to unfolding events
  - S5.1 Continue to develop and implement organisational health and safety programs that improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our members

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

- S5.2 Continue to increase knowledge and awareness of NSW RFS governance arrangements
- S5.3 Use new and existing infrastructure, technology and systems to increase efficiency and effectiveness
- S6 Use compliance controls to ensure good governance, including the management of corporate operational risk
- S6.1 Further increase accessibility, usage and integrity of organisational data through greater coordination and integration of data management systems and processes
- S7 Continue to engage in effective collaborations within the organisation, with other agencies, local communities, local, national and international governments

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### Key Actions 2016/17

- A1 Update NSW RFS Community Engagement Strategy
- A2 Define Bush Fire Risk Plan models and processes
  - A2.1 Meet government hazard reduction and mitigation election commitments
  - A2.2 Commence enhanced strategic Fire Trail Program
  - A2.3 Finalise the review of Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code
  - A2.4 Finalise Planning for Bush Fire Protection
- A3 Connect seven additional districts to the centralised dispatch system
  - A3.1 Enhance public information and warnings display on NSW RFS website
  - A3.2 Establish a mobile surface weather and upper-air observational capability to enhance fire weather intelligence
- A4 Complete 2016–2021 Next Generation Workforce Plan 2016/17 Key Actions
- A5 Expand the Operational Officers' Program to include Level 4
  - A5.1 Complete 2016–2021 Health and Fitness Initiatives Plan 2016/17 Key Actions
  - A5.2 Implement an enhanced complaints management system
  - A5.3 Enhance the Community First Responder Program in consultation with NSW Ambulance

- A5.4 Ensure systems are enhanced to accommodate changes and improvements, including those related to emergency procurement, changes in funding arrangements and local government reforms
- A5.5 Enhance procurement processes through training members in areas including category and contract management
- A6 Complete two Remote Area Fire Fighting Training Centres during 2016/17
  - A6.1 Continue to pilot the use of Large Air Tankers assessing their applicability in NSW
  - A6.2 Develop and plan the implementation of a 2018–2023 Station and Fire Control Centres Strategy
  - A6.3 Commence the rollout of the next generation of Bush Fire Personal Protective Clothing
  - A6.4 Implement the GUARDIAN system to manage information regarding bush fire risk mitigation activities
  - A6.5 Secure lease and draft design for new NSW RFS Headquarters
  - A6.6 Consolidate NSW RFS ICT requirements and plan for integrated systems
- A7 Develop a NSW RFS sponsorship framework and policy
  - A7.1 Review all aspects of current operational Memoranda of Understanding
  - A7.2 Actively engage in the National Fire Danger Ratings Project

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### Outcomes 2016/17

- O1 Communities are enabled to share responsibility for fire preparedness, prevention and actions during fire activity
- O2 Enhanced Bush Fire Risk planning, leading to improved treatment strategies
- O3 Improved intelligence gathering for detection, response and community warnings
- O4 The NSW RFS membership better reflects the local community
- O5 Members are better able to meet the needs of the community
  - O5.1 Members are better able to meet governance and government requirements
- O6 The NSW RFS has fit for purpose systems and infrastructure
- O7 Improved emergency service outcomes through partnerships and collaborations

# KFA One

## PEOPLE, PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The NSW RFS protects lives, property and the environment in a proactive and ecologically sustainable manner.

The community relies on the NSW RFS for timely and relevant information and warnings about incidents to make informed decisions and post incident tools to assist with rebuilding communities devastated by fires.

### ➤ **A3.1 Enhance public information and warnings display on NSW RFS website**

Key Action A3.1 Enhance public information and warnings display on NSW RFS website

To ensure the community continues to have access to timely and relevant warnings and information during emergency events, and that people in fire affected areas can make informed decisions about their safety, the NSW RFS has undertaken preliminary work which will enable improvements to the NSW RFS website in 2017/18.

These improvements include an enhanced display of fire incident information, an incidents tab, filters, a more accessible design and also incorporated warning messages in a spatial display.

Work on this 2016/17 Key Action is complete and a public launch of these changes will coincide with the launch of the new Fires Near Me app, scheduled for late July 2017. This will ensure consistency in the presentation of fire information to the community.

### ➤ **Timely and relevant information and warnings**

Also included in this Key Focus Area is the provision of timely and relevant information and warnings during emergencies. During the 2016/17 fire season, there was extensive fire activity with NSW experiencing its worst ever fire conditions.

Large areas of NSW were affected by Catastrophic Fire Danger and the NSW RFS delivered warnings extensively to communities and individuals in affected areas. These warnings were delivered through the NSW RFS website, social media, traditional media and the Emergency Alert telephone warning system.

On 24 May 2017 the new Public Information and Warnings Protocol (OP 1.1.5) was formally endorsed and promoted.

### ➤ **Rebuilding communities**

A significant rebuilding effort took place following the devastating 2013 bush fires. During this time, it was identified that the community would greatly benefit from improved information and tools relating to rebuilding – or building anew – in bush fire-prone areas.

As part of the recovery efforts following the recent major fires, particularly the Sir Ivan Fire in February 2017, a "toolkit" has been developed to provide information about building after bush fires.

The toolkit provides valuable information to the community in a format that is easily accessible and user friendly. To complement the toolkit, short animated videos were created to detail pre-identified recovery and rebuild strategies.

## KFA Two

### COORDINATED BUSH FIREFIGHTING AND PREVENTION

The NSW RFS is researching and developing a range of new potential bush fire risk management models and processes. This is a long-term initiative that will result in significant improvements in how bush fire risk is identified and managed across NSW.

The NSW RFS drives effective multi-agency risk planning prevention strategies and response arrangements.

One of the many planning strategies for bush fire suppression is an adequate access network of fire trails for firefighting vehicles and appliances to be able to protect the community and its assets.

Effective campaigns designed to reduce hazards are also essential to the prevention and early detection of incidents.

- **A2 Define Bush Fire Risk Plan models and processes**
- **A2.1 Meet government hazard reduction and mitigation election commitments**
- **A2.2 Commence enhanced strategic Fire Trail Program**

Key Action A2 Define Bush Fire Risk Plan models and processes

The Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC) is responsible for the Bush Fire Risk Management Framework, which includes the development of a model Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP). BFRMPs are developed with Bush Fire Management Committees to protect assets including communities, buildings and infrastructure as well as culturally and environmentally sensitive locations.

During 2016/17 two case studies were undertaken to trial the use of fire behaviour models to assist with bush fire risk planning. A workshop including both internal and external stakeholders was held to help determine asset vulnerability. A literature review is also being developed to support this work.

Key Action A2.1 Meet government hazard reduction and mitigation election commitments

Hazard reduction remains a high priority for the NSW Government and the NSW RFS as it contributes to the protection of lives, property and the environment. This NSW RFS hazard reduction program provides the means by which the NSW RFS and other land managers seek to meet the NSW Government 4-year target of 750,000 hectares treated and 600,000 properties protected for the period 01 April 2015 to 31 March 2019.

As at 30 June 2017 the cumulative figures reported are: 464,481 hectares and 303,501 properties protected.

There was significant rainfall during quarter three, with nearly double the average number of wet days in March. Above average wet conditions in Spring 2016 also significantly affected the works program.

During 2016/17 State Mitigation crews completed 780 State Mitigation jobs; 816 AIDER jobs; and 5930kms of vegetation was managed.

## Key Action A2.2 Commence enhanced strategic Fire Trail Program

The focus of this project is to develop strategies, frameworks and tools that contribute to a strategic approach for an enhanced fire trail network. An enhanced network will facilitate the coordinated management of bush fire mitigation and suppression activities.

An adequate access network for firefighting vehicles is essential for the protection of the community and its assets. This project will develop standards, frameworks and tools to contribute to a strategic fire trail network across NSW.

During the year, development of the Fire Trail Standards and other documentation continued. Further consultation also continued with the Fire Trail Standards Reference Group and the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC). A trial of the arrangements commenced with the Lower Hunter Bush Fire Management Committee.

A schedule for the implementation of the Fire Access and Fire Trails (FAFT) plans has been developed and will be refined in 2017/18.

The Rural Fires Amendment (Fire Trails) Act 2016 No 41 commences on 1 July 2017. The Fire Trails Standards are in draft while a trial of the FAFT plan is being undertaken with the Lower Hunter Bush Fire Management Committee.

Following the FAFT Plan trial, the Standards, Construction Manual, BFCC Policy, NSW RFS Service Standard, private land agreements and other supporting documents and tools will be finalised and implemented.

# KFA Three

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The NSW RFS enables people to be resilient and well-equipped to withstand the impact of bush fire and its consequences.

This key focus area includes the update of the Community Engagement Strategy implementation of a revised Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code and the Planning for Bush Fire Protection package. These strategies aim to increase community engagement with bush fire preparedness and planning for bush fire protection.

- **A1 Update NSW RFS Community Engagement Strategy**
- **A2.3 Finalise the review of Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code**
- **A2.4 Finalise Planning for Bush Fire Protection**

Key Action A1 Update NSW RFS Community Engagement Strategy

The NSW RFS Community Engagement Strategy is designed to ensure activities are conducted in a coordinated and strategic way, leading to an increased understanding of the concept of shared responsibility during emergency events.

During 2016/17 consultation with staff and volunteers occurred at workshops and regional forums, to refine the Community Engagement: Strategic Directions paper (Strategic Directions). The final draft of the Strategic Directions was endorsed on 30 June 2017. Consultation on a draft service standard to support the Strategic Directions will commence early in 2017/18.

The Strategic Directions include a list of action items to be carried out over the next five years, starting in 2017/18. All actions will be led by the Community Engagement team supported by other directorates as necessary.

The Community Engagement Strategic Directions 2017-2021 is available on the NSW RFS web page.

Key Action A2.3 Finalise the review of Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code

The Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code provides a streamlined environmental assessment process for bush fire hazard reduction. The Code is being reviewed and amended to improve its operation and incorporate new science. The amended Code will provide NSW with a best practice streamlined environmental approval mechanism for bush fire hazard reduction activities.

During 2016/17 the revised Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code was released for Public Exhibition. Implementation will occur throughout 2017/18 and will require considerable systems changes, training and policy updates.

Key Action A2.4 Finalise Planning for Bush Fire Protection

Planning for Bush Fire Protection (PBP) uses the NSW development assessment system to provide for the protection of human life (including firefighters) and to minimise impacts on property from the threat of bush fire, while having due regard to development potential, onsite amenity and protection of the environment.

During 2016/17 an internal review of PBP was completed and the draft Planning for Bush Fire Protection was released for Public Exhibition. Implementation is expected to occur throughout 2017/18 and requires considerable systems changes, training and policy updates.

# KFA Four

## OUR MEMBERS

The NSW RFS fosters a safe working culture, actively promotes a diverse, flexible and adaptive membership; and values and appropriately recognises the contribution of our members, both volunteer and staff.

Initiatives in this Key Focus Area are aimed at strengthening the NSW RFS workforce, upholding our respectful work ethics and defining a range of health and fitness initiatives for members.

- **A4 Complete 2016–2021 Next Generation Workforce Plan 2016/17 Key Actions**
- **A5.1 Complete 2016–2021 Health and Fitness Initiatives Plan 2016/17 Key Actions**

### Key Action A4 Complete 2016–2021 Next Generation Workforce Plan 2016/17 Key Actions

The NSW RFS Next Generation Workforce Plan (NGWP) identifies the outcomes that are important to the NSW RFS' capability to meet the workforce (staff and volunteer) challenges of coming decades. There is a specific focus on the next five years.

The 2016/17 key actions included:

- A1 Establish a working group to develop a plan for gender diversity
- A2 Develop an agreed District Workforce Planning Framework for volunteers
  - A2.1 Continue to implement the NSW Government Capability Framework
- A3 Continue to improve and promote the flexible membership model and embed its principles into new policy, service standards, programs and initiatives
- A4 Implement online Performance Management System
  - A4.1 Implement SAP Business Intelligence Reporting for more effective analysis of membership data
- A5 Commence implementation of Respectful and Inclusive Workplace training
  - A5.1 Implement phase two conduct training for senior volunteers
- A6 Pilot District Brigade Management training
  - A6.1 Deliver "Leading People" program at district level
  - A6.2 Integrate organisational workforce plans into the business planning framework for more effective monitoring and reporting
- A7 Improved communication and utilisation of membership initiatives and programs

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

During the year, nine of the twelve 2016/17 key actions were completed or were on target for completion. The remaining three actions will be carried over to the 2017/18 planning year.

These are:

- A2 Develop an agreed District Workforce Planning Framework for volunteers
- A4.1 Implement SAP Business Intelligence Reporting for more effective analysis of membership data
- A5 Commence implementation of Respectful and Inclusive Workplace training

There were significant achievements in the Next Generation Workforce Plan during 2016/17. These achievements included:

- commencement of Code of Conduct and Ethics workshops for senior volunteers
- rollout of training in Success Factors online performance management to pilot groups
- Leading People (LDP) course material completed and instructors trained
- delivery of workforce management training for district staff through the Operational Officers' Program (OpO)

### Key Action A5.1 Complete 2016–2021 Health and Fitness Initiatives Plan 2016/17 Key Actions

The Health and Fitness Initiatives (HFI) Plan has a five-year implementation period. The Plan defines outcomes supporting and promoting the health and fitness of members, to enhance both their wellbeing and the capability of the NSW RFS to provide fire and emergency services to the community. To facilitate the roll out of the HFI Plan a framework document and implementation plan was drafted. The HFI Framework was endorsed on 23 May 2017.

The 2016/17 Key Actions under the HFI Plan were:

- A1 Initiate an ongoing Health and Fitness Awareness campaign
- A1.2 Evaluate and review nutritional requirements currently available

To support the ongoing Health and Fitness Awareness campaign two components were rolled out to members: the "Get Healthy at Work" campaign and the Health and Fitness calendar of events.

The Get Healthy at Work Communications Strategy and Plan has been completed. The NSW RFS facilitated an initiative of this program, funded by the Justice Cluster, which offered staff brief face-to-face health checks at Headquarters and Glendenning.

As part of the evaluation and review of nutritional requirements, the Remote Area Firefighting and Specialised Operations unit provided a post-season Evaluation Report of ration pack items and meals provided on the fire ground. This report will be considered as part of the HFI five-year Plan.

# KFA Five

## ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The NSW RFS builds capable and ethical leadership at all levels of the Service. It promotes an organisational culture of reflection, learning and evidence-based decision making; builds and promotes good corporate governance practices and principles and effectively plans and manages assets and facilities to ensure current and future needs are met.

This key focus area covers a wide range of programs, such as developing more sophisticated forms of intelligence and testing new forms of resources to understand fire behaviour and combat fires, while building a highly capable and agile workforce through targeted programs and specialised training for members.

To remain sustainable, the NSW RFS must ensure systems are enhanced and readily able to accommodate changes such as local government reforms, procurement practices and funding arrangements, as well as planning new, improved and state of the art infrastructure and protective clothing for members.

### Key Actions

- A3 Connect seven additional districts to the centralised dispatch system
- A3.2 Establish a mobile surface weather and upper-air observational capability to enhance fire weather intelligence
- A5 Expand the Operational Officers' Program to include Level 4
- A5.2 Implement an enhanced complaints management system
- A5.4 Ensure systems are enhanced to accommodate changes and improvements, including those related to emergency procurement, changes in funding arrangements and local government reforms
- A5.5 Enhance procurement processes through training members in areas including category and contract management
- A6 Complete two Remote Area Fire Fighting Training Centres during 2016/17
- A6.1 Continue to pilot the use of Large Air Tankers, assessing their applicability in NSW
- A6.2 Develop and plan the implementation of a 2018–2023 Station and Fire Control Centres Strategy
- A6.3 Commence the rollout of the next generation of bush fire Personal Protective Clothing (PPC)
- A6.4 Implement the GUARDIAN system to manage information regarding bush fire risk mitigation activities
- A6.5 Secure lease and draft design for new NSW RFS Headquarters
- A6.6 Consolidate NSW RFS ICT requirements and plan for integrated systems

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

### Key Action A3 Connect seven additional districts to the centralised dispatch system

A centralised dispatch system provides a modern, uniform incident response system that is efficient with the allocation of appropriate resources. Expansion of the current system is aimed at improving communication and data capabilities and increasing the capacity and quality of the system.

During 2016/17 the Workplace Advisory Committee and other key stakeholders identified and prioritised districts with the capability for connection.

Two additional districts, the Central Coast and Mid Coast, have been connected with centralised dispatch and South West Slopes has been identified as a possible further connection for 2017/18.

### Key Action A3.2 Establish a mobile surface weather and upper-air observational capability to enhance fire weather intelligence

The use of weather balloons to assess atmospheric instability during periods of Severe to Catastrophic fire danger provides a more sophisticated understanding of fire behaviour. This form of intelligence is used for modelling purposes which enhances situational awareness and informed decision making.

This project was completed in March 2017 with a mobile surface weather and upper-air observational capability established in each region across the state.

The results from this project are informing policies and procedure development. During the reporting year, 35 weather balloon launches took place. The NSW RFS is continuing to work in this area with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

### Key Action A5 Expand the Operational Officers' Program (OpO) to include Level 4

The Operational Officers' Program (OpO) promotes a flexible and decentralised workforce through recruitment, retention and development of candidates. This forms part of the NSW RFS approach to building a highly capable and agile workforce. The OpO4 Program promoted the development of NSW RFS 10/11 District Managers and Senior Officers so they can meet future challenges.

During the reporting period, components of the OpO4 program were developed, fact sheets produced and a pilot program was held toward the end of 2016/17.

### Key Action A5.2 Implement an enhanced complaints management system

A standardised whole-of-government approach to complaint handling is being implemented at cluster level. Reporting at the cluster level provides Government with the opportunity to improve customer experience and build trust, by publicising service improvements driven by customer feedback.

The NSW RFS is developing robust systems to support statistical data, identify trends and better inform decision making. This also enables the organisation to address increasing internal and external reporting requirements.

The NSW RFS has implemented a number of initiatives in support of this key action:

- development of Policy P7.1.2 Complaints Management
- meet the organisational obligations under the Justice Cluster general Complaints Handling Improvement Plan (CHIP) 2016/17 and represent the NSW RFS on working groups as required
- implementation of RESOLVE, an on-line case management system by the Professional Standards Unit
- review of governance structures for complaints management within the NSW RFS Governance Model.

### Key Action A5.4 Ensure systems are enhanced to accommodate changes and improvements, including those related to emergency procurement, changes in funding arrangements and local government reforms

The NSW RFS positively supports the implementation of organisational change and improvements to meet the needs of government and the community. This incorporates actively increasing organisational capability to meet ongoing dynamic needs of internal and external stakeholders.

Under this key action a number of projects are detailed to ensure that systems, processes and strategies which underpin our core business are continuously improved for optimum results.

During 2016/17 the Incident Control Online (ICON) system was enhanced to support incident management requirements and improve the clarity of information delivered to end users. ICON is the system that links incidents to our public website and drives the information delivered to the community.

Work continued with the Local Government Area (LGA) Reforms Communications Working Group. Information was provided to members regarding the reforms and the organisational impacts. Information such as Fire Control Centre details and feeds displayed on the NSW RFS website were updated.

Representation on committees ensures the NSW RFS keeps abreast of trends and changes and identifies opportunities for collaborations. During 2016/17 NSW RFS representatives attended a number of key committees, including:

- Public Service Commission (PSC) Human Resources Director's Forum
- Justice Cluster Human Resource Committee
- Emergency Services SAP Community of Best Practice
- PSC Human Capital Management Working Group.

NSW RFS was also represented on sector Diversity and Inclusion groups including:

- the Refugee Employment Champions
- Positive and Productive Workplaces Reference Group
- Disability Awareness Reference Group
- Aboriginal Workforce Development Community of Practice
- Multicultural Coordinators Forum.

The Emergency Logistics project and other projects affected by local government reform, such as Local Government Area amalgamation, also remained a key focus throughout the year.

Key Action A5.5 Enhance procurement processes through training members in areas including category and contract management

The NSW RFS continues to enhance its robust and transparent procurement practices. These ensure greater accountability and credibility in the expenditure of public monies.

During 2016/17 the NSW RFS progressed its administration of Contract and Category Management. The NSW RFS is currently looking to implement a Contract Lifecycle Management System to support this process.

Planning tools and training relating to Contract and Category Management were implemented, and documents, policies and procedures relating to procurement were reviewed and updated. Work associated with the 2016/17 Procurement Accreditation was completed and the NSW RFS Procurement Management Plan and Procurement Improvement Plan comply with the requirements set by NSW Procurement.

Key Action A6 Complete two Remote Area Firefighting Training Centres during 2016/17

The focus of designing dedicated training centres is to provide the NSW RFS with infrastructure that supports specialised training. Specialist firefighting capability will be enhanced with the provision of role-specific training facilities.

The training centres will host specialised Remote Area Firefighting training and, with the installation of a platform and simulator, there will be a focus on improving winching capability.

Two facilities were constructed at Mogo and Glendenning during 2016/17. The construction of another facility at Lithgow is scheduled for 2017/18.

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

Key Action A6.1 Continue to pilot the use of Large Air Tankers assessing their applicability in NSW

Through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC), the NSW RFS monitors emerging capabilities to assess the technical and economic aspects of large fixed wing air tankers (LAT). A preliminary report into the trial of the LAT and the Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT) during the 2015/16 bush fire season has been provided by NAFC.

The final report of the LAT/VLAT trial incorporated data from the significant fire activity in February 2017. The results of the trial informed the selection of aircraft for the 2017/18 bush fire season and underpinned the submission to Government requesting ongoing support of the LAT/VLAT program.

Key Action A6.2 Develop and plan the implementation of a 2018-2023 Station and Fire Control Centres Strategy

The purpose of the 2018-2023 Station and Fire Control Centres Strategy is to develop a future plan with a medium term focus, to replace or renovate fixed infrastructure, to strengthen local communities and clearly define budget forecast information to partner councils, supported by rigorous and detailed procurement and governance strategies.

During 2016/17 Regional Services worked collaboratively with regions and districts to develop a ten-year Station and Fire Control Centre Strategy. In 2017/18 the implementation strategy will be formalised and aligned with the annual Rural Fire Fighting Fund (RFFF) budget process.

Key Action A6.3 Commence the rollout of the next generation of bush fire Personal Protective Clothing (PPC)

The NSW RFS has undertaken extensive consultation to identify and make improvements to its Personal Protective Clothing (PPC). A design of PPC specifically cut to suit women has been developed. This move reflects the diversity of NSW RFS membership.

Extensive trialling of various fabrics was undertaken during the year to ensure that the garments provided improvements in a range of areas. Members' testing of the garments at brigade activities and in emergency situations provided feedback regarding fabric choices, garment functionality and durability. The NSW RFS worked closely with the contracted supplier to incorporate the feedback to provide a quality garment design.

Trial sets of the PPC ensemble were produced for testing to ensure they aligned with relevant Australian Standards. This testing occurred on a burn mannequin at an independent laboratory at the University of Alberta in Canada. The NSW RFS has utilised this independent facility regularly over the past 20 years to test PPC, a process that has ensured that our members' equipment has met with Australian Standards.

Utilising feedback from an extensive testing phase has ensured that the new range of Next Generation Bushfire PPC garments will provide improvements in design, functionality, fire protection and metabolic heat reduction.

The final design and fabric was approved in March 2017 and construction of 17,500 units of the Next Generation PPC stock is now on hand, ready for distribution during 2017/18.

Key Action A6.4 Implement the GUARDIAN system to manage information regarding bush fire risk mitigation activities

The GUARDIAN system will provide a spatially enabled workflow capability that addresses all risk assessments and treatments carried out by the NSW RFS and other agencies. It will replace BRIMS and better satisfy organisational needs. During 2015/16, extensive consultation was undertaken with key internal and external stakeholders in the development of the business requirements and contracts were awarded for the delivery of the solution. Implementation continued during 2016/17, however there were unforeseen external delays that impeded delivery by the scheduled date of 30 June 2017.

This project will be reviewed and rescheduled for delivery during 2017/18.

Key Action A6.5 Secure lease and draft design for new NSW RFS Headquarters

Land use planning changes announced by NSW Planning and Environment known as The Carter Street Urban Activation Precinct, directly impact on the NSW RFS. The current NSW RFS Headquarters lease at 15 Carter Street Lidcombe will not be extended beyond its scheduled expiry in November 2018. As a result, NSW RFS has established the Headquarters Relocation Program, with the aim to relocate by July 2018.

The project team have finalised high level requirements and are progressing through specialist / technical needs and detailed necessities. The NSW RFS has optimised base building efforts by integrating fit-out works as appropriate. Construction of the building has commenced with excavation works well progressed. The planning and designing phases of the mechanical, air-conditioning and electrical services have been finalised. The detailed design process for the internal layout accommodating staff and the Operations Centre is well advanced.

NSW RFS HQ staff have been consulted throughout the year regarding concepts and proposed layouts and workgroups have also been established to support this process. The NSW RFS HQ relocation program is currently on target for delivery in October 2018.

Key Action A6.6 Consolidate NSW RFS ICT requirements and plan for integrated systems

Integrated ICT systems enable the NSW RFS to readily adapt to changes in strategic direction. The NSW RFS ICT section positions itself to address external and internal change drivers which will have the potential to impact current and future ICT direction and services.

A detailed analysis of NSW RFS systems was undertaken during 2016/17 with the focus on Local Government Area amalgamations and relevant system adjustments. The analysis identified that 27 out of 30 systems require updating. Implementation of these updates is progressing to schedule.

Systems such as Bushfire Risk Information Management System, Incident Control Online, Grants Management System and MyRFS have had significant works undertaken to align them with Local Government boundary adjustments.

A full review of the ICT Strategic Plan will be undertaken in 2017/18 and extensive consultation will be required to forecast the needs and requirements for the NSW RFS. With a clearer picture of forecasted requirements, ICT will ensure that strategies are developed to support fit for purpose systems, adapt to emerging trends and be able to meet the needs of our dynamic organisation.



Photo by Sharon Quandt

# KFA Six

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

The NSW RFS works with its partners to influence the national agenda in relation to emergency services and develop mutually beneficial local, national and international strategic alliances to raise and strengthen the NSW RFS profile.

Programs under this key focus area include working on inter-agency collaborations such as the Community First Responder Program, formalising sponsorship arrangements, reviewing memoranda of understanding arrangements with other agencies and the Fire Danger Rating project.

### Key Actions

- A5.3 Enhance the Community First Responder Program in consultation with NSW Ambulance
- A7 Develop a NSW RFS sponsorship framework and policy
- A7.1 Review all aspects of current operational Memoranda of Understanding
- A7.2 Actively engage in the National Fire Danger Ratings Project

### Key Action A5.3 Enhance the Community First Responder Program in consultation with NSW Ambulance

In conjunction with other emergency service agencies the NSW RFS assists Ambulance NSW to provide first response capability. To provide first responder capability for NSW Ambulance, relevant NSW RFS members undertake extra training and receive enhanced first aid qualifications. This program is driven by NSW Ambulance who engage NSW RFS members.

The memoranda of understanding (MOU) between the NSW RFS and NSW Ambulance for the maintenance of existing Community First Responder units and the identification of additional units, has been reviewed and approved by NSW RFS. Ongoing consultation with NSW Ambulance regarding the establishment of additional Community First Responder units continued during 2016/17 and will continue into 2017/18.

### Key Action A7 Develop a NSW RFS sponsorship framework and policy

The NSW RFS requires a framework and policy to formalise and maximise opportunities for partnerships in the commercial sector which bring value to the Service.

Consideration of existing policies and consultation with key stakeholders, including Fire & Rescue NSW and NSW Police Force regarding their sponsorship framework and policies, was undertaken prior to the development of the NSW RFS Sponsorship Framework. A draft Sponsorship Framework and policy have been submitted for Executive endorsement.

#### Key Action A7.1 Review all aspects of current operational Memoranda of Understanding

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) provide the overall framework for co-operation and joint operations between the NSW RFS and other agencies. Having clearly defined roles during operational activity provides enhanced frontline services and a unified approach to protecting the community.

The MOUs requiring review were identified in 2016 and are currently being reviewed and/or finalised with respective stakeholders. The reviews included MOUs with the Country Fire Authority Victoria, Department of Defence and NSW Ambulance.

#### Key Action A7.2 Actively engage in the National Fire Danger Ratings Project

The National Fire Danger Ratings Project will result in significant improvements to the current national fire danger ratings system. This five-year program is designed to strengthen the ability of fire authorities to accurately communicate bush fire risk to the community, enhance agency readiness and preparedness and contribute to risk management prevention (including input into building standards and planning controls).

During 2016/17, two workshops were held with the science and operations community, each with 20 attendees from around the country. The purpose of the workshops was to help refine ideas and confirm the approach for the implementation of a prototype.

Work completed under this project to date includes:

- The first phase of contracted work for the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), implementing the earlier NSW-based trial system on the BoM ICT infrastructure
- The selection of a set of fire behaviour models to be used
- The development of a "first cut" national fuel map, based on the national fuel classification and national vegetation data.



Photo by Karl Hoffman

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### New South Wales Rural Fire Service

To Members of the New South Wales Parliament

#### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of New South Wales Rural Fire Service (the Service), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Service as at 30 June 2017, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards
- are in accordance with section 45E of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (PF&A Act) and the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

#### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Service in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants' (APES 110).

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of public sector agencies
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

## The Commissioner's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Commissioner is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the PF&A Act, and for such internal control as the Commissioner determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Commissioner must assess the Service's ability to continue as a going concern except where the Service will be dissolved by an Act of Parliament or otherwise cease operations. The assessment must disclose, as applicable, matters related to going concern and the appropriateness of using the going concern basis of accounting.

## Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

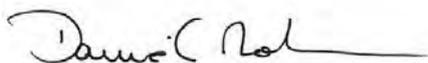
Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf).

The description forms part of my auditor's report.

My opinion does *not* provide assurance:

- that the Service carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the assumptions used in formulating the budget figures disclosed in the financial statements
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.



David Nolan  
Director, Financial Audit Services

18 September 2017  
SYDNEY



**NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED 30 JUNE 2017**

**Statement by the Commissioner**

Pursuant to section 45F of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* I state that:

- (a) The accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the Financial Reporting Code for NSW General Government Sector Entities, the applicable clauses of the *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015* and the Treasurer's Directions;
- (b) The financial statements exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position and financial performance of the Service for the year ended 30 June 2017; and
- (c) At the date of this statement there are no circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM  
Commissioner

15 September 2017

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## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	Actual 2017 \$'000	Budget 2017 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000
<b>Expenses excluding losses</b>				
Operating expenses				
Employee related	2(a)	102,677	110,883	97,175
Other operating expenses	2(b)	48,129	65,595	47,873
Depreciation and amortisation	2(c)	7,778	8,242	7,372
Grants and subsidies	2(d)	160,382	157,219	160,028
Other expenses	2(e)	38,713	30,460	14,142
<b>Total Expenses excluding losses</b>		<b>357,679</b>	<b>372,399</b>	<b>326,590</b>
<b>Revenue</b>				
Sale of goods and services	3(a)	134	655	706
Investment revenue	3(b)	2,126	755	1,992
Grants and contributions	3(c)	363,278	341,325	325,953
Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits	3(d)	666	705	605
Other income	3(e)	15,428	8,097	30,957
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>381,632</b>	<b>351,537</b>	<b>360,213</b>
<b>Operating Result</b>		<b>23,953</b>	<b>(20,862)</b>	<b>33,623</b>
<b>Gain / (loss) on disposal</b>	4	<b>767</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>455</b>
<b>Net Result</b>		<b>24,720</b>	<b>(20,862)</b>	<b>34,078</b>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>		<b>24,720</b>	<b>(20,862)</b>	<b>34,078</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017

	Notes	Actual 2017 \$'000	Budget 2017 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	6(a)	139,532	45,968	104,046
Receivables	7	16,976	26,549	26,594
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>156,508</b>	<b>72,517</b>	<b>130,640</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>				
Property, plant and equipment	8			
- Land and buildings		288	135	429
- Plant and equipment		29,919	22,015	25,458
- Infrastructure systems		2,535	7,310	3,821
Total property, plant and equipment		32,742	29,460	29,708
Intangible assets	9	3,319	6,140	3,427
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>36,061</b>	<b>35,600</b>	<b>33,135</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>192,569</b>	<b>108,117</b>	<b>163,775</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Payables	11	26,425	21,699	23,377
Provisions	12	34,433	31,411	33,050
Other	13	76	86	80
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>60,934</b>	<b>53,196</b>	<b>56,507</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>				
Provisions	12	1,208	1,310	1,485
Other	13	182	187	258
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>1,390</b>	<b>1,497</b>	<b>1,743</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>62,324</b>	<b>54,693</b>	<b>58,250</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>130,245</b>	<b>53,424</b>	<b>105,525</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>				
Accumulated funds		130,245	53,424	105,525
<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>130,245</b>	<b>53,424</b>	<b>105,525</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Accumulated Funds \$'000	Total \$'000
Balance at 1 July 2016	105,525	105,525
Net result for the period	24,720	24,720
Total comprehensive income for the period	<u>24,720</u>	<u>24,720</u>
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance at 30 June 2017	<u>130,245</u>	<u>130,245</u>
Balance at 1 July 2015	71,447	71,447
Net result for the year	34,078	34,078
Total comprehensive income for the year	<u>34,078</u>	<u>34,078</u>
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance at 30 June 2016	<u>105,525</u>	<u>105,525</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Statement of cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	Actual 2017 \$'000	Budget 2017 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Payments</b>				
Employee related		(101,233)	(110,178)	(100,567)
Grants and subsidies		(160,382)	(111,415)	(155,712)
Suppliers for goods and services		(103,421)	(148,409)	(77,909)
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>(365,036)</b>	<b>(370,002)</b>	<b>(334,188)</b>
<b>Receipts</b>				
Sale of goods and services		134	655	706
Interest received		2,126	755	1,992
Grants and contributions		368,186	304,471	334,294
GST receipts		16,647	6,550	15,323
Other		23,367	44,876	26,228
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>410,460</b>	<b>357,307</b>	<b>378,543</b>
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	17	<b>45,424</b>	<b>(12,695)</b>	<b>44,355</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>				
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment		2,497	4,980	2,566
Purchases of plant and equipment		(12,435)	(18,301)	(9,925)
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>(9,938)</b>	<b>(13,321)</b>	<b>(7,359)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>				
Net cash provided / (used) from financing activities		-	-	-
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>NET INCREASE / (DECREASE) IN CASH</b>		<b>35,486</b>	<b>(26,016)</b>	<b>36,996</b>
Opening cash and cash equivalents		104,046	71,984	67,050
<b>CLOSING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	6(a)	<b>139,532</b>	<b>45,968</b>	<b>104,046</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

#### 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (a) Reporting Entity

The NSW Rural Fire Service (the Service) is a NSW government entity and is controlled by the State of New South Wales, which is the ultimate parent. The Service is a not-for-profit entity (as profit is not its principal objective) and it has no cash generating units.

The NSW Rural Fire Service as a reporting entity has no controlled entities.

These financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 have been authorised for issue by the Commissioner on 14 September 2017.

##### (b) Basis of Preparation

The Service's financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared on a going concern basis, an accruals basis and in accordance with:

- applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AAS) (which include Australian Accounting Interpretations);
- the requirements of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015*; and
- Financial Reporting Directions mandated by the Treasurer.

Plant and equipment is measured at fair value. Other financial statement items are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention except where specified otherwise.

Judgements, key assumptions and estimations management has made are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements.

All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency.

##### (c) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements and notes comply with Australian Accounting Standards, which include Australian Accounting Interpretations.

##### (d) Funding – NSW Rural Fire Service

Under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* the Rural Fire Fighting Fund consists of contributions from Local Government (11.7%), the NSW Government (14.6%) and the Insurance Industry (73.7%).

Contributions are recognised in accordance with AASB 1004 *Contributions*.

##### (e) Insurance

With the exception of insurance coverage for volunteers, the Service's insurance activities are conducted through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund Scheme of self-insurance for Government agencies. The expense (premium) is determined by the Fund Manager based on past claims experience. Insurance coverage for volunteers is provided through the Bush Fire Fighters Compensation Fund managed by Insurance and Care NSW (icare), with an annual premium paid. Refer to Note 2(e).

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

(f) Accounting for the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except that:

- the amount of GST incurred by the Service as a purchaser that is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office is recognised as part of an asset's cost of acquisition or as part of an item of expense; and
- receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included.

Cash flows are included in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis. However, the GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the Australian Taxation Office are classified as operating cash flows.

(g) Income Recognition

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration or contribution received or receivable. In addition to the Rural Fire Fighting Fund, other grants and contributions are received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.

Additional comments regarding the accounting policies for the recognition of income are discussed below.

(i) Contributions

Contributions are received from local government councils (11.7%), insurance companies (73.7%), and NSW Treasury (14.6%). All contributions are reported as grants and contributions revenue for the purposes of income recognition.

Contributions from other bodies (including grants and donations) are generally recognised as income when the Service obtains control over the assets comprising the contributions. Contributions are recognised in accordance with AASB 1004 *Contributions*.

In accordance with the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, any unspent grants and contributions made towards estimated rural fire brigades expenditure are to remain within the Rural Fire Fighting Fund.

(ii) Sale of Goods

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised as revenue when the Service transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods, which is usually on delivery of the goods.

(iii) Rendering of Services

Revenue is recognised when the service is provided or by reference to the stage of completion (based on labour hours incurred to date).

(iv) Investment Revenue

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest rate method. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts the estimated future cash receipts over the expected life of the financial instrument or a short period, where appropriate, to the net carrying amount of the financial asset.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

#### (h) Property, Plant and Equipment

##### (i) Acquisitions of Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are initially measured at cost and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Cost is the amount of cash or cash equivalents paid or the fair value of the other consideration given to acquire the asset at the time of its acquisition or construction or, where applicable, the amount attributed to that asset when initially recognised in accordance with the specific requirements of other Australian Accounting Standards.

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at measurement date.

Where payment for an item is deferred beyond normal credit terms, its cost is the cash price equivalent, i.e. the deferred payment amount is effectively discounted over the period of credit.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised at their fair value at the date of acquisition.

##### (ii) Capitalisation Thresholds

Plant and equipment and intangible assets costing \$5,000 and above individually (or forming a part of a network costing more than \$5,000) are capitalised.

##### (iii) Restoration Costs

The present value of the expected cost for the restoration or cost of dismantling of an asset after its use is included in the cost of the respective asset if the recognition criteria for a provision are met.

##### (iv) Maintenance

Day-to-day servicing costs or maintenance are charged as expenses as incurred.

##### (v) Depreciation of Property, Plant and Equipment

Depreciation is provided for on a straight-line basis for all depreciable assets so as to write off the depreciable amount of each asset as it is consumed over its useful life to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

All material identifiable components of assets are depreciated separately over their useful lives.

In accordance with AASB 116, the table below illustrates the useful life of applicable asset categories.

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Useful Life</u>
Infrastructure systems	3 – 10 Years
Land and buildings	Period of the Lease
Plant and equipment	3 – 20 Years

##### (vi) Revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment

Physical non-current assets are valued in accordance with the 'Valuation of Physical Non-Current Assets at Fair Value' Policy and Guidelines Paper (TPP 14-01). This policy adopts fair value in accordance with AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*, AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment* and AASB 140 *Investment Property*.

Property, plant and equipment is measured at the highest and best use by market participants that is physically possible, legally permissible and financially feasible. The highest and best use must be available at

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

a period that is not remote and take into account the characteristics of the asset being measured, including any socio-political restrictions imposed by Government. In most cases, after taking into account these considerations, the highest and best use is the existing use. In limited circumstances, the highest and best use may be a feasible alternative use, where there are no restrictions on use or where there is a feasible higher restricted alternative use.

Fair value of property plant and equipment is based on a market participants' perspective, using valuation techniques (market approach, cost approach, income approach) that maximise relevant observable inputs and minimise unobservable inputs.

The Service does not revalue assets because the carrying value approximates fair value. The plant and equipment of the Service consists primarily of motor vehicles and ICT equipment, and as non-specialised assets with short useful lives they are measured at depreciated historical cost, which for these assets approximates fair value. The Service has assessed that any difference between fair value and depreciated historical cost is unlikely to be material.

The residual values, useful lives and methods of depreciation of property, plant and equipment are reviewed at the end of each financial year.

#### (vii) Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

As a not-for-profit entity with no cash generating units, impairment under AASB 136 *Impairment of Assets* is unlikely to arise. As plant and equipment is carried at fair value or an amount that approximates fair value, impairment can only arise in the rare circumstances where the costs of disposal are material. Specifically, impairment is unlikely for not-for-profit entities given AASB 136 modifies the recoverable amount test for non-cash generating assets of not-for-profit entities to the higher of fair value less costs of disposal and depreciated replacement costs, where depreciated replacement cost is also fair value.

The Service assesses, at each reporting date, whether there is an indication that an asset may be impaired. If any indication exists, or when annual impairment testing for an asset is required, the Service estimates the asset's recoverable amount. When the carrying amount of an asset exceeds its recoverable amount, the asset is considered impaired and is written down to its recoverable amount.

As a not for profit entity, an impairment loss is recognised in the net result to the extent the impairment loss exceeds the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset.

#### (i) Leases

A distinction is made between finance leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to ownership of the leased assets, and operating leases under which the lessor does not transfer substantially all the risks and rewards.

Operating lease payments are recognised as an operating expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

There are no finance lease arrangements.

#### (j) Intangible Assets

The Service recognises intangible assets only if it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the Service and the cost of the asset can be measured reliably. Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Where an asset is acquired at no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value as at the date of acquisition. Following initial recognition, intangible assets are subsequently measured at fair value only if there is an active market. If there is no active market for the Service's intangible assets, the assets are carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation and impairment losses.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

All research costs are expensed. Development costs are only capitalised when certain criteria are met.

The useful lives of intangible assets are assessed as finite.

The Service's intangible assets are amortised using the straight line method over their useful lives. The amortisation period and the amortisation method for an intangible asset with a finite useful life is reviewed at least at the end of each reporting period.

In accordance with AASB 138, the table below illustrates the useful life of applicable asset categories.

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Useful Life</u>
Software	3 – 5 Years

Intangible assets are tested for impairment where an indicator of impairment exists. If the recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount the carrying amount is reduced to recoverable amount and the reduction is recognised as an impairment loss.

#### (k) Rural Fire Fighting Equipment

The ownership of all fire fighting equipment purchased by the Rural Fire Fighting Fund is vested in the relevant local government council. The cost of such equipment is therefore expensed by the Service in the year of purchase.

The exception to this is fire fighting equipment purchased for the State Mitigation Service which is recorded on the Service's asset register.

#### (l) Financial Instruments

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value. Transaction costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition or issue of financial assets and financial liabilities (other than financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss) are added to or deducted from the fair value of the financial assets or financial liabilities, as appropriate, on initial recognition. Transaction costs directly attributable to the acquisition of financial assets or financial liabilities at fair value through profit and loss are recognised immediately in net result.

The Service determines the classification of its financial assets and liabilities after initial recognition and, when allowed and appropriate, re-evaluates this at each financial year end.

#### (i) Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified, at initial recognition, as financial assets at fair value through profit or loss, loans and receivables, held-to-maturity investments, available-for-sale financial assets, or as derivatives designated as hedging instruments in an effective hedge, as appropriate. The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition.

The Service does not hold financial assets classified as financial assets at fair value through profit or loss, held-to-maturity investments, available-for-sale financial assets or derivatives.

#### (a) Loans and Receivables

Trade receivables, loans, and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are classified as loans and receivables. Loans and receivables are measured

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, less any impairment. Changes are recognised in the net result for the year when impaired, derecognised or through the amortisation process.

Short-term receivables with no stated interest rate are measured at the original invoice amount where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

#### (b) Impairment of Financial Assets

All financial assets, except those at fair value through profit and loss, are subject to annual review for impairment. Financial assets are considered to be impaired when there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the financial asset, the estimated future cash flows have been affected.

For certain categories of financial assets, such as trade receivables, the Service first assesses whether impairment exists individually for financial assets that are individually significant, or collectively for financial assets that are not individually significant. Assets are assessed for impairment on a collective basis if they were assessed not to be impaired individually.

Any reversals of impairment losses are reversed through the net result for the year, where there is objective evidence.

#### (ii) Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either 'at fair value through profit or loss' or 'at amortised cost'.

The Service has no financial liabilities classified as 'at fair value through profit or loss'.

##### (a) Financial liabilities at amortised cost (including borrowings and trade payables)

Financial liabilities at amortised cost are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective yield basis.

Payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Service and other amounts. Short-term payables with no stated interest rate are measured at the original invoice amount where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

Borrowings are financial liabilities at amortised cost. Gains or losses are recognised in the net result for the year on derecognition of borrowings.

#### (iii) Derecognition of financial assets and financial liabilities

A financial asset is derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial assets expire; or if the entity transfers the financial asset:

- where substantially all the risks and rewards have been transferred; or
- where the entity has not transferred substantially all the risks and rewards, if the entity has not retained control.

Where the Service has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards or transferred control, the asset continues to be recognised to the extent of the Service's continuing involvement in the asset. In that case, the Service also recognises an associated liability. The transferred asset and the associated liability are measured on a basis that reflects the rights and obligations that the entity has retained.

Continuing involvement that takes the form of a guarantee over the transferred asset is measured at the lower of the original carrying amount of the asset and the maximum amount of consideration that the Service could be required to pay.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged or cancelled or expires. When an existing financial liability is replaced by another from the same lender on substantially different terms, or the terms of an existing liability are substantially modified, such an exchange or modification is treated as the derecognition of the original liability and the recognition of a new liability. The difference in the respective carrying amounts is recognised in the net result.

#### (m) Employee Benefits

##### (i) Salaries and Wages, Annual Leave and Sick Leave

Salaries and wages (including non-monetary benefits) and paid sick leave that are due to be settled wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the service are recognised and measured at the undiscounted amount of the benefits.

Annual leave is not expected to be settled wholly before twelve months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the service. As such, it is required to be measured at present value in accordance with AASB 119 *Employee Benefits* (although short cut methods are permitted).

Actuarial advice obtained by Treasury has confirmed that the use of a nominal approach plus the annual leave on annual leave liability (using 7.9% (2015-16: 7.9%) of the nominal value of annual leave) can be used to approximate the present value of the annual leave liability. The Service has assessed the actuarial advice based on the Service's circumstances and has determined that the effect of discounting is immaterial to annual leave. All annual leave is classified as a current liability even where the Service does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months as the Service does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement.

Unused non-vesting sick leave does not give rise to a liability as it is not considered probable that sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the benefits accrued in the future.

##### (ii) Long Service Leave and Superannuation

The Service recognises liabilities for long service leave for all employees.

Long service leave is measured at present value in accordance with AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*. This is based on an annual actuarial review conducted by Mercer and is considered to approximate present value.

The Service's liability for defined benefit superannuation is assumed by the Crown Entity from 1 July 2014. The Service accounts for the liability as having been extinguished, resulting in the amount assumed being shown as part of the non-monetary revenue item described as 'Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits'.

The superannuation expense for the financial year is determined by using the formulae specified in the Treasurer's Directions. The expense for certain superannuation schemes (ie Basic Benefit and First State Super) is calculated as a percentage of the employee's salary. For other superannuation schemes (ie State Superannuation Scheme and State Authorities Superannuation Scheme), the expense is calculated as a multiple of the employee's superannuation contributions. Further information is provided in Note 19.

##### (iii) Consequential On-Costs

Consequential costs to employment are recognised as liabilities and expenses where the employee benefits to which they relate have been recognised. This includes outstanding amounts of payroll tax, workers' compensation insurance premiums and fringe benefits tax.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

#### (n) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when:

- The Service has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event;
- It is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation; and
- A reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

When the Service expects some or all of a provision to be reimbursed, for example, under an insurance contract, the reimbursement is recognised as a separate asset, but only when the reimbursement is virtually certain. The expense relating to a provision is presented net of any reimbursement in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Any provisions for restructuring are recognised only when an entity has a detailed formal plan and the entity has raised a valid expectation in those affected by the restructuring that it will carry out the restructuring by starting to implement the plan or announcing its main features to those affected.

The effect of the time value of money has been assessed as immaterial.

#### (o) Equity and Reserves

##### (i) Accumulated Funds

The category 'Accumulated Funds' include all current and prior period retained funds.

##### (ii) Reserves

Separate reserve accounts are recognised in the financial statements only if such accounts are required by specific legislation or Australian Accounting Standards.

##### (iii) Equity Transfers

The transfer of net assets between agencies as a result of an administrative restructure, transfers of programs/functions and parts thereof between NSW public sector entities and 'equity appropriations' are designated or required by Accounting Standards to be treated as contributions by owners and recognised as an adjustment to 'Accumulated Funds'. This treatment is consistent with AASB 1004 *Contributions* and Australian Interpretation 1038 *Contributions by Owners Made to Wholly-Owned Public Sector Entities*.

Transfers arising from an administrative restructure involving not-for-profit entities and for-profit government departments are recognised at the amount at which the assets and liabilities were recognised by the transferor immediately prior to the restructure. Subject to below, in most instances this will approximate fair value.

All other equity transfers are recognised at fair value, except for intangibles. Where an intangible has been recognised at (amortised) cost by the transferor because there is no active market, the entity recognises the asset at the transferor's carrying amount. Where the transferor is prohibited from recognising internally generated intangibles, the entity does not recognise that asset.

#### (p) Fair value measurement and hierarchy

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The fair value measurement is based on the presumption that the transaction to sell the asset or transfer the liability takes place either in the principal market for the asset or liability or in the absence of a principal market, in the most advantageous market for the asset or liability.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

A number of the Service's accounting policies and disclosures require the measurement of fair values, for both financial and non-financial assets and liabilities. When measuring fair value, the valuation technique used maximises the use of relevant observable inputs and minimises the use of unobservable inputs. Under AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*, the Service categorises, for disclosure purposes, the valuation techniques based on the inputs used in the valuation techniques as follows:

- Level 1 – quoted prices in active markets for identical assets/liabilities that the entity can access at the measurement date.
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 – inputs that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

The Service recognises transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy at the end of the reporting period during which the change has occurred.

Physical non-current assets measured at depreciated historical cost, which for these assets approximates fair value, do not require fair value hierarchy disclosures under AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*. As the Service's property, plant and equipment are non-specialised short lived assets they are valued at depreciated historical cost and not categorised against the fair value hierarchy.

Refer to Note 18 for further disclosures regarding fair value measurements of financial and non-financial assets.

#### (q) Budgeted Amounts

The budgeted amounts are drawn from the original budgeted financial statements presented to Parliament in respect of the reporting period. Subsequent amendments to the original budget (eg adjustment for transfer of functions between entities as a result of Administrative Arrangements Orders) are not reflected in the budgeted amounts. Major variances between the original budgeted amounts and the actual amounts disclosed in the primary financial statements are explained in Note 16.

#### (r) Centralised Billing and Collecting Services

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) within the NSW Department of Justice is responsible for the centralised billing and collection of legislated contributions for the funding of Emergency Service Agencies from the insurance industry and Local Councils. OEM acts as agent for the Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and the State Emergency Service.

#### (s) Comparative Information

Except when an Australian Accounting Standard permits or requires otherwise, comparative information is disclosed in respect of the previous period for all amounts reported in the financial statements.

#### (t) Changes in Accounting Policy, including New or Revised Australian Accounting Standards

##### (i) Effective for the first time in 2016-17

The accounting policies applied in 2016-17 are consistent with those of the previous financial year except as a result of new or revised Australian Accounting Standards that have been applied for the first time in 2016-17, being:

- AASB 14 and AASB 2014-1 (Part D) regarding Regulatory Deferral Accounts
- AASB 1056 *Superannuation Entities*

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

- AASB 1057 and AASB 2015-9 *Application of Australian Accounting Standards*
- AASB 2014-3 regarding accounting for acquisitions of interests in joint operations
- AASB 2014-4 regarding acceptable methods of depreciation and amortisation
- AASB 2014-6 regarding bearer plants
- AASB 2014-9 regarding the equity method in separate financial statements
- AASB 2015-1 regarding annual improvements to Australian Accounting Standards 2012-2014 cycle
- AASB 2015-2 regarding amendments to AASB 101 (disclosure initiative)
- AASB 2015-5 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Investment Entities: Applying the Consolidation Exception*
- AASB 2015-6 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Extending Related Party Disclosures to Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities*

The impact of these Standards, where applicable to the NSW Rural Fire Service, in the period of initial application is not material.

(ii) Issued but not yet effective

NSW public sector entities are not permitted to early adopt new Australian Accounting Standards, unless Treasury determines otherwise.

The following new Accounting Standards have not been applied and are not yet effective:

- AASB 9 and AASB 2014-7 regarding financial instruments
- AASB 15, AASB 2014-5, AASB 2015-8, AASB 2016-3 and AASB 2016-7 regarding Revenue from Contracts with Customers
- AASB 16 *Leases*
- AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*
- AASB 2014-10 and AASB 2015-10 regarding sale or contribution of assets between an investor and its associate or joint venture
- AASB 2016-1 regarding recognition of deferred tax assets for unrealised losses
- AASB 2016-2 regarding amendments to AASB 107 (disclosure initiative)
- AASB 2016-4 regarding recoverable amount of non-cash-generating specialised assets of not-for-profit entities
- AASB 2016-5 regarding classification and measurement of share-based payment transactions
- AASB 2016-6 regarding applying AASB 9 Financial Instruments with AASB 4 Insurance Contracts
- AASB 2016-8 regarding Australian implementation guidance for not-for-profit entities
- AASB 2017-1 regarding transfers of investment property, annual improvements 2014-2016 cycle and other amendments
- AASB 2017-2 regarding further annual improvements 2014-2016 cycle
- Interpretation 22 *Foreign Currency Transactions and Advance Consideration*

The initial application of these Standards will have no known material impact on the financial statements, with the exception of AASB 16 *Leases*.

Upon initial application of AASB 16 *Leases* the Service anticipates recognising a 'right-of-use' asset and a lease liability in respect of operating leases, particularly the lease of buildings. The quantum of these transactions is unable to be reliably measured at this time, with the Standard first applicable to the 2019-20 reporting period.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>2. Expenses Excluding Losses</b>		
(a) Employee related expenses		
Salaries and wages (including annual leave)	85,349	81,111
Superannuation – defined benefit plans (Refer Note 19)	1,350	1,459
Superannuation – defined contribution plans	6,862	6,509
Long service leave	1,225	1,496
Workers' compensation insurance	2,595	1,474
Payroll tax	5,189	5,040
Fringe benefit tax	107	86
	<u>102,677</u>	<u>97,175</u>
(b) Other operating expenses include the following:		
Advertising	1,646	2,399
Audit Fees – Internal	388	403
Auditor's remuneration		
- audit of financial statements	138	140
Buildings - all outgoings	1,006	1,010
Computer software	631	350
Consultants	162	115
Consumables	386	309
Contractors	3,600	1,498
Electricity	338	309
Equipment – Computer	5,896	5,798
Equipment – General	2,102	5,025
Fees for service	10,341	8,426
Legal Fees	753	712
Maintenance *	1,122	460
Operating lease rental expense		
- minimum lease payments	4,732	4,461
Other Expenses	3,412	4,390
Printing and stationery	841	1,381
Staff training	2,093	1,783
Telephony	1,581	1,909
Travel	3,384	3,717
Vehicle operation	3,577	3,278
	<u>48,129</u>	<u>47,873</u>
<i>*Reconciliation – Total maintenance</i>		
Maintenance expense – contracted labour and other (non-employee related), as above	1,122	460
Employee related maintenance expense included in Note 2(a)	-	-
Total maintenance expenses included in Note 2(a) + 2(b)	<u>1,122</u>	<u>460</u>

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
(c) Depreciation and amortisation expense		
Depreciation		
Infrastructure systems	2,036	1,925
Plant and equipment	4,817	4,559
Land and buildings	141	282
	<u>6,994</u>	<u>6,766</u>
Amortisation		
Intangibles	784	606
	<u>7,778</u>	<u>7,372</u>
(d) Grants and subsidies		
Fire mitigation works	8,432	5,724
Payments for Council costs associated with rural fire fighting activities and equipment	116,690	102,907
Emergency fund – natural disasters <sup>1</sup>	30,558	46,483
Other	4,702	4,914
	<u>160,382</u>	<u>160,028</u>
<sup>1</sup> . In 2016-17 the NSW Government determined it would fully fund standing charges of aircraft contracts, resulting in a reclassification of this expense from Emergency Fund – natural disasters to Aerial support (refer Note 2(e)).		
(e) Other expenses		
Workers' compensation insurance – volunteers	3,000	3,500
Public liability and other insurance	6,358	6,375
Aerial support <sup>1</sup>	29,355	4,267
	<u>38,713</u>	<u>14,142</u>

<sup>1</sup>. In 2016-17 the NSW Government determined it would fully fund standing charges of aircraft contracts, resulting in a reclassification of this expense from Emergency Fund – natural disasters to Aerial support (refer Note 2(d)).

### 3. Revenue

(a) Sale of goods and services		
Rendering of services	-	380
Sale of merchandise	134	326
	<u>134</u>	<u>706</u>

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
(b) Investment revenue		
Interest income	2,126	1,992
	<u>2,126</u>	<u>1,992</u>
(c) Grants and contributions		
Insurance company contributions	231,825	231,867
Local Government contributions	36,803	36,809
Natural disaster relief contributions <sup>1</sup>	23,552	10,413
Other Commonwealth and State Government grants	1,859	931
Department of Attorney General and Justice grants:		
Recurrent grant	67,785	44,278
Capital grant	1,454	1,655
	<u>363,278</u>	<u>325,953</u>
<sup>1</sup> Natural disaster relief contributions included above consist of emergencies declared under section 44 of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> exceeding the claims threshold of \$240,000.		
(d) Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits		
The following liabilities and/or expenses have been assumed by the Crown Entity:		
Superannuation – defined benefit	666	605
	<u>666</u>	<u>605</u>
(e) Other income		
Sale of equipment <sup>1</sup>	1,175	1,251
Comcover – protection of Commonwealth property	1,311	1,956
Aviation – use of contract by other agencies	7,032	8,181
Natural disaster recoups (interstate and overseas deployments) <sup>2</sup>	54	13,312
TMF hindsight premium receipts	73	3,143
Workers' compensation receipts	376	169
Insurance claims proceeds	1,427	936
Development applications	588	600
Other	3,392	1,409
	<u>15,428</u>	<u>30,957</u>

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with section 119(4)(b) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, distribution of proceeds from the sale by Councils of fire fighting equipment is allocated between the Service and the Councils in the same proportion as each entity's contribution to the purchase of the equipment. The Service's share of such proceeds totalled \$1.175m in 2016-17 (\$1.251m in 2015-16).

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

<sup>2</sup>. Natural disaster recoups were higher than usual in 2015-16 due to a large number of deployments including to Canada, Indonesia, USA, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania.

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>4. Gain / (Loss) on Disposal</b>		
Gain / (Loss) on disposal of plant and equipment		
Proceeds from disposal	2,497	2,566
Written down value of assets disposed	(1,721)	(2,111)
	<u>776</u>	<u>455</u>
Gain / (Loss) on disposal of intangible assets		
Proceeds from disposal	-	-
Written down value of assets disposed	(9)	-
	<u>(9)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>767</u>	<u>455</u>

### 5. Service group statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

The service group statements are shown in the tables below.

The purpose of each service group is as follows:

<b>Service Group 1</b>	Community Safety
Purpose:	The protection of the Community through measures that enhance community awareness of and participation in fire risk reduction while reducing environmental impact on the NSW Rural Fire Service's incident management activities.
<b>Service Group 2</b>	Emergency Bush Fire Operations
Purpose:	To cover the rapid and effective emergency response to incidents in bushfire prone areas to minimise injury and loss to the community.
<b>Service Group 3</b>	Operational and Administrative Support
Purpose:	Covers the management and administrative support functions of the Service including financial, human resource and operational support, fire fighting fleet maintenance and the strategy and policy development roles.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

RURAL FIRE SERVICE'S EXPENSES & INCOME	Community Safety*		Emergency Bush Fire Operations*		Operational and Administrative Support*		Not Attributable		Total	
	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Expenses excluding losses</b>										
Operating expenses										
• Employee related	5,607	5,188	74,999	69,937	20,846	22,050	1,225	-	102,677	97,175
• Other operating expenses	5,682	6,155	19,509	16,201	22,938	25,517	-	-	48,129	47,873
Depreciation and amortisation	169	59	4,302	4,157	3,307	3,156	-	-	7,778	7,372
Grants and subsidies	802	10,963	136,832	120,629	22,748	28,436	-	-	160,382	160,028
Other expenses	-	495	32,463	6,789	6,250	6,858	-	-	38,713	14,142
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES EXCLUDING LOSSES</b>	<b>12,260</b>	<b>22,860</b>	<b>268,105</b>	<b>217,713</b>	<b>76,089</b>	<b>86,017</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>357,679</b>	<b>326,590</b>
<b>Revenue</b>										
Sale of goods and services	-	-	22	7	112	699	-	-	134	706
Investment revenue	-	-	-	-	2,126	1,992	-	-	2,126	1,992
Grants and contributions	-	8	149,472	113,509	213,806	212,436	-	-	363,278	325,953
Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits	-	-	-	-	666	605	-	-	666	605
Other revenue	371	212	10,084	11,406	4,973	19,339	-	-	15,428	30,957
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>159,578</b>	<b>124,922</b>	<b>221,683</b>	<b>235,071</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>381,632</b>	<b>360,213</b>
Gain / (loss) on disposal	12	-	670	549	85	(94)	-	-	767	455
<b>Net result</b>	<b>(11,877)</b>	<b>(22,640)</b>	<b>(107,857)</b>	<b>(92,242)</b>	<b>145,679</b>	<b>148,960</b>	<b>(1,225)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24,720</b>	<b>34,078</b>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>	<b>(11,877)</b>	<b>(22,640)</b>	<b>(107,857)</b>	<b>(92,242)</b>	<b>145,679</b>	<b>148,960</b>	<b>(1,225)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24,720</b>	<b>34,078</b>

\* The purpose of each service group is summarised above.

**NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

RURAL FIRE SERVICE'S ASSET & LIABILITIES	Community Safety*		Emergency Bush Fire Operations*		Operational and Administrative Support*		Not Attributable		Total	
	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Current Assets</b>										
Cash and cash equivalents	-	-	-	-	-	-	139,532	104,046	139,532	104,046
Receivables	-	-	4,021	1,457	12,955	25,137	-	-	16,976	26,594
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	-	-	<b>4,021</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>12,955</b>	<b>25,137</b>	<b>139,532</b>	<b>104,046</b>	<b>156,508</b>	<b>130,640</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>										
Property, plant and equipment	146	176	23,360	19,975	9,236	9,557	-	-	32,742	29,708
Intangibles	1,014	1,127	83	182	2,222	2,118	-	-	3,319	3,427
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>1,303</b>	<b>23,443</b>	<b>20,157</b>	<b>11,458</b>	<b>11,675</b>	-	-	<b>36,061</b>	<b>33,135</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>1,303</b>	<b>27,464</b>	<b>21,614</b>	<b>24,413</b>	<b>36,812</b>	<b>139,532</b>	<b>104,046</b>	<b>192,569</b>	<b>163,775</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>										
Payables	-	-	14,705	13,108	11,720	10,269	-	-	26,425	23,377
Provisions	-	-	-	-	-	33,050	34,433	-	34,433	33,050
Other	-	-	-	-	76	80	-	-	76	80
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	-	-	<b>14,705</b>	<b>13,108</b>	<b>11,796</b>	<b>43,399</b>	<b>34,433</b>	-	<b>60,934</b>	<b>56,507</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>										
Provisions	-	-	-	-	475	1,485	733	-	1,208	1,485
Other	-	-	-	-	182	258	-	-	182	258
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>657</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>733</b>	-	<b>1,390</b>	<b>1,743</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	-	-	<b>14,705</b>	<b>13,108</b>	<b>12,453</b>	<b>45,142</b>	<b>35,166</b>	-	<b>62,324</b>	<b>58,250</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>1,303</b>	<b>12,759</b>	<b>8,506</b>	<b>11,960</b>	<b>(8,330)</b>	<b>104,366</b>	<b>104,046</b>	<b>130,245</b>	<b>105,525</b>

\* The purpose of each service group is summarised above.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>6. Current Assets – Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>		
(a) Cash		
Cash at bank and on hand	139,532	104,046
	<u>139,532</u>	<u>104,046</u>

For the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank, cash on hand, short-term deposits and bank overdraft.

Cash and cash equivalent assets recognised in the statement of financial position are reconciled at the end of financial year to the statement of cash flows as follows:

Cash and cash equivalents (per statement of financial position)	139,532	104,046
Closing cash and cash equivalents (per statement of cash flows)	<u>139,532</u>	<u>104,046</u>

Refer to Note 18 for details regarding credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk arising from financial instruments.

Refer to Note 10 regarding restrictions upon cash.

#### (b) Financing facilities available

The Service has a financing facility still required and available through NSW Treasury Corporation to facilitate cash flow until statutory contributions are received. During the year there were no borrowings. The Service has NSW Treasury approval to borrow a maximum of \$30.0m.

A cheque cashing facility of \$0.01m, a credit card facility of \$2.5m and a transaction negotiation authority of \$21.0m are held with the Government's banker, Westpac Banking Corporation, to facilitate routine transactions.

## 7. Current Assets – Receivables

Fees for service	4,891	12,894
Less: Allowance for impairment	(50)	(23)
Other receivables	4,503	9,411
GST receivable	4,021	1,458
Prepayments	3,611	2,854
	<u>16,976</u>	<u>26,594</u>
Movement in allowance for impairment		
Balance at 1 July	23	27
Amounts written off during the year	-	(12)
Amounts recovered during the year	-	-
Increase/(decrease) in allowance recognised in profit or loss	<u>27</u>	<u>8</u>
Balance at 30 June	<u>50</u>	<u>23</u>

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

Details regarding credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk, including financial assets that are either past due or impaired, are disclosed in Note 18.

#### 8. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Land and Buildings \$'000	Plant and Equipment \$'000	Infrastructure Systems \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>At 1 July 2016 – fair value</b>				
Gross carrying amount	5,828	35,894	8,894	50,616
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(5,399)	(10,436)	(5,073)	(20,908)
Net carrying amount	429	25,458	3,821	29,708
<b>At 30 June 2017 – fair value</b>				
Gross carrying amount	5,828	42,083	9,376	57,287
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(5,540)	(12,164)	(6,841)	(24,545)
Net carrying amount	288	29,919	2,535	32,742

#### Reconciliation

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of each class of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of the current reporting period is set out below:

	Land and Buildings \$'000	Plant and Equipment \$'000	Infrastructure Systems \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>Year ended 30 June 2017</b>				
Net carrying amount at start of year	429	25,458	3,821	29,708
Additions	-	10,996	753	11,749
Disposals	-	(1,718)	(3)	(1,721)
Depreciation expense	(141)	(4,817)	(2,036)	(6,994)
Net carrying amount at end of year	288	29,919	2,535	32,742

	Land and Buildings \$'000	Plant and Equipment \$'000	Infrastructure Systems \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>At 1 July 2015 – fair value</b>				
Gross carrying amount	5,646	36,062	6,736	48,444
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(5,118)	(8,941)	(3,428)	(17,487)
Net carrying amount	528	27,121	3,308	30,957
<b>At 30 June 2016 – fair value</b>				
Gross carrying amount	5,828	35,894	8,894	50,616
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(5,399)	(10,436)	(5,073)	(20,908)
Net carrying amount	429	25,458	3,821	29,708

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

#### Reconciliation

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of each class of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of the prior reporting period is set out below:

	Land and Buildings \$'000	Plant and Equipment \$'000	Infrastructure Systems \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>Year ended 30 June 2016</b>				
Net carrying amount at start of year	528	27,121	3,308	30,957
Additions	182	4,963	2,483	7,628
Disposals	-	(2,066)	(45)	(2,111)
Depreciation expense	(281)	(4,560)	(1,925)	(6,766)
Net carrying amount at end of year	429	25,458	3,821	29,708

#### 9. Intangible Assets

	Software \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>At 1 July 2016</b>		
Cost (gross carrying amount)	6,198	6,198
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,771)	(2,771)
Net carrying amount	3,427	3,427
<b>At 30 June 2017</b>		
Cost (gross carrying amount)	6,221	6,221
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,902)	(2,902)
Net carrying amount	3,319	3,319
<b>Year ended 30 June 2017</b>		
Net carrying amount at start of year	3,427	3,427
Additions (acquired separately)	667	667
Additions (internally developed)	662	662
Disposals	(9)	(9)
Amortisation (recognised in 'depreciation and amortisation')	(784)	(784)
Impairment	(644)	(644)
Net carrying amount at end of year	3,319	3,319

Impairment of Software has increased expenses in the Statement of Comprehensive Income as follows:

	\$'000
Other operating expenses	644
	644

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Software \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>At 1 July 2015</b>		
Cost (gross carrying amount)	4,067	4,067
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,333)	(2,333)
Net carrying amount	<u>1,734</u>	<u>1,734</u>
<b>At 30 June 2016</b>		
Cost (gross carrying amount)	6,198	6,198
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,771)	(2,771)
Net carrying amount	<u>3,427</u>	<u>3,427</u>
<b>Year ended 30 June 2016</b>		
Net carrying amount at start of year	1,734	1,734
Additions (acquired separately)	1,886	1,886
Additions (internally developed)	413	413
Disposals	-	-
Amortisation (recognised in 'depreciation and amortisation')	(606)	(606)
Impairment	-	-
Net carrying amount at end of year	<u>3,427</u>	<u>3,427</u>
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>

#### 10. Restricted Assets

Cash held as part of the Rural Fire Fighting Fund	139,532	104,046
	<u>139,532</u>	<u>104,046</u>

The Service holds funds that form the NSW Rural Fire Fighting Fund which is a special deposits account established under section 102 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. Funds in the Rural Fire Fighting Fund can only be expended for the purposes defined in the Act.

#### 11. Current Liabilities – Payables

Accrued salaries, wages and on-costs	886	548
Accrued payables	18,476	14,440
Creditors	7,063	8,389
	<u>26,425</u>	<u>23,377</u>

Details regarding credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk, including a maturity analysis of the above payables, are disclosed in Note 18.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>12. Current / Non-Current Liabilities - Provisions</b>		
<b>Employee benefits and related on-costs</b>		
Annual leave - short term benefit	6,663	6,744
Annual leave - long term benefit	2,993	3,030
Long service leave	25,446	24,221
Provisions for Fringe Benefits Tax	64	65
	<u>35,166</u>	<u>34,060</u>
<b>Other provisions</b>		
Restoration costs	475	475
	<u>35,641</u>	<u>34,535</u>
<b>Aggregate employee benefits and related on-costs</b>		
Provisions - current	34,433	33,050
Provisions - non-current	733	1,010
Accrued salaries, wages and on-costs (Note 11)	886	548
	<u>36,052</u>	<u>34,608</u>

### 13. Current / Non-Current Liabilities – Other

Lease incentive - current	76	80
Lease incentive - non-current	182	258
	<u>258</u>	<u>338</u>

### 14. Commitments for Expenditure

#### (a) Capital Commitments

Aggregate capital expenditure for the acquisition of plant and equipment and infrastructure systems contracted for at balance date and not provided for:

Not later than one year	1,384	493
Later than one year and not later than five years	-	-
Later than five year	-	-
Total (including GST)	<u>1,384</u>	<u>493</u>

Capital commitments include goods and services tax credits of \$0.126m in 2016-17 (\$0.045m in 2015-16) that are expected to be recovered from the Australian Taxation Office.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
(b) Operating Lease Commitments		
Future non-cancellable operating lease rentals not provided for and payable:		
Not later than one year	4,983	4,863
Later than one year and not later than five years	4,857	12,149
Later than five year	-	-
Total (including GST)	<u>9,840</u>	<u>17,012</u>

Operating lease commitments include goods and services tax credits of \$0.895m in 2016-17 (\$1.547m in 2015-16) that are expected to be recovered from the Australian Taxation Office.

Operating lease commitments comprise properties for the NSW Rural Fire Service Headquarters, Regional Offices and a warehouse at Glendenning and motor vehicles.

## 15. Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities

### Contingent liabilities

At balance date the Service was a party to litigation that may result in the payment of minor amounts to settle legal claims. As the Service is insured through the Treasury Managed Fund in respect of the majority of legal claims, any residual amounts are considered to be immaterial. It is not practicable to quantify these amounts due to their nature.

Contingent liabilities associated with the Local Government Superannuation Scheme are disclosed at Note 19(b)(v).

### Contingent assets

The Service has no contingent assets.

## 16. Budget Review

The 2016-17 budget represents the initial budget as allocated by Government at the time of the 2016-17 State Budget.

### Net result

The actual Net Result was \$45.6m more favourable than budget. The major factors are:

	\$'000
Employee related expenses under budget by \$8.2m – primarily attributable to higher vacancy and turnover rates than estimated, and lower than budgeted long service leave and fringe benefits tax. A classification difference between the budget and actual results also contributes \$1.6m to the variance.	8,206
Other operating expenses under budget by \$17.5m – primarily due to classification differences between budget and actual results, which is offset by classification differences in Grants and subsidies (\$14.3m), Other expenses (\$3.4m) and Employee related expenses (-\$1.6m)	17,466
Depreciation and amortisation under budget by \$0.5m – primarily resulting from a timing difference in the completion of capital projects, which will now be completed in the next financial year.	464

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	\$'000
Grants and subsidies over budget by \$3.2m – primarily due to higher than budgeted expenditure on natural disaster combat operations for which a nominal budget allocation is made in each financial year, with the balance of the expense met by the Disaster Relief Account. This has been partially offset by timing differences in expenditure on fire mitigation, and classification differences between budget and actual results (\$11.2m).	(3,163)
Other expenses over budget by \$8.3m – predominantly due to classification differences (\$6.5m) between budget and actual, and higher than anticipated expenditure on aircraft contracts.	(8,253)
Sale of goods and services under budget by \$0.5m - due to higher than budgeted receipts.	(521)
Investment revenue over budget by \$1.4m - resulting from higher than anticipated cash balances.	1,371
Grants and contributions over budget by \$22.0m – predominantly due to the receipt of grants from the Disaster Relief Account to reimburse the net cost of natural disaster combat operations (\$23.6m) and lower than budgeted other State and Commonwealth Government grants (\$1.1m).	21,953
Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits approximated budget.	(39)
Other Revenue over budget by \$7.3m – predominantly due to higher than budgeted revenue for other agency use of aviation resources (\$3.0m), workers compensation receipts and insurance proceeds.	7,331
Gain on disposal favourable to budget by \$0.8m – resulting from sale proceeds above expectation.	767
<b>Variation from budgeted Net Result</b>	<b>45,582</b>

#### Assets and liabilities

The actual Net Assets exceeded budget by \$76.8m. The major factors are:

	\$'000
Cash and cash equivalents higher than budget by \$93.6m – primarily due to lower than budget expenditure and higher than budget revenue as described above, lower receivables reflecting receipt of cash prior to year and carry forward of the combat agency disaster allocation.	93,564
Receivables below budget by \$9.6m – predominantly due to outstanding recoups from the Disaster Relief Account for natural disaster combat operations being received before year end.	(9,573)
Property, plant and equipment above budget by \$3.3m – mainly attributable to higher than budgeted expenditure on plant and equipment, partially offset by below budget expenditure on infrastructure systems.	3,282
Intangible assets under budget by \$2.8m – due to a timing difference for the Guardian Bushfire Risk Information Management System project.	(2,821)
Payables over budget by \$4.8m - due predominantly to increased accrued payables.	(4,790)
Provisions over budget by \$2.9m – predominantly due to higher than budgeted long service leave.	(2,856)
Other liabilities approximated budget.	15
<b>Variation from budgeted Net Assets</b>	<b>76,821</b>

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

#### Cash flows

The actual Closing Cash and Cash Equivalents exceeded budget by \$93.6m. The major factors are:

	<b>\$'000</b>
Net cash flows from operating activities higher than budget by \$58.1m – resulting from lower than budget expenditure and higher than budget revenue, reduced receivables and carry forward of the combat agency disaster allocation as described above.	58,119
Net cash flows from investing activities higher than budget by \$3.4m – resulting from lower than budgeted expenditure on plant and equipment purchases (\$5.9m) partially offset lower than budget proceeds from sale of plant and equipment (\$2.5m).	3,383
Opening cash and cash equivalents above budget by \$32.1m – represented by additional cash than initially budgeted being held at year end in 2015-16.	32,062
<b>Variation from budgeted Closing Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>	<b>93,564</b>

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>17. Reconciliation of Cash Flows from Operating Activities to Net Result</b>		
Net cash from operating activities	45,424	44,355
Depreciation and amortisation	(7,778)	(7,372)
Decrease/(increase) in provisions	(1,106)	(1,750)
Decrease/(increase) in other liabilities	79	86
Increase/(decrease) in prepayments and other assets	(9,618)	46
Decrease/(increase) in creditors	(3,048)	(1,742)
Net gain/(loss) on sale of plant and equipment	767	455
Net result	<u>24,720</u>	<u>34,078</u>

#### 18. Financial Instruments

The Service's principal financial instruments are outlined below. These financial instruments arise directly from the Service's operations or are required to finance the Service's operations. The Service does not enter into or trade financial instruments, including derivative financial instruments, for speculative purposes.

The Service's main risks arising from financial instruments are outlined below, together with the Service's objectives, policies and processes for measuring and managing risk. Further quantitative disclosures are included throughout these financial statements.

The Commissioner has overall responsibility for the establishment and oversight of risk management and reviews and agrees policies for managing each of these risks. Risk management policies are established to identify and analyse the risks faced by the Service, to set risk limits and controls and to monitor risks. Compliance with policies is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

(a) Financial instrument categories

Financial Assets	Note	Category	Carrying Amount 2017 \$'000	Carrying Amount 2016 \$'000
<b>Class:</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	6(a)	N/A	139,532	104,046
Receivables <sup>1</sup>	7	Loans and receivables (at amortised cost)	9,344	22,282
<hr/>				
Financial Liabilities	Note	Category	Carrying Amount 2017 \$'000	Carrying Amount 2016 \$'000
<b>Class:</b>				
Payables <sup>2</sup>	11	Financial liabilities (at amortised cost)	25,539	22,829

*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> Excludes statutory receivables and prepayments (ie not within the scope of AASB 7)

<sup>2</sup> Excludes statutory payables and unearned revenue (ie not within the scope of AASB 7)

(b) Credit risk

Credit risk arises when there is the possibility of the Service's debtors defaulting on their contractual obligations, resulting in a financial loss to the Service. The maximum exposure to credit risk is generally represented by the carrying amount of the financial assets (net of any allowance for impairment).

Credit risk arises from the financial assets of the Service, including cash, receivables, and authority deposits. No collateral is held by the Service. The Service has not granted any financial guarantees.

#### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash comprises cash on hand and bank balances within the NSW Treasury Banking System. Interest is earned on the Service's daily bank balances at the NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) 11am unofficial cash rate, adjusted for a management fee to NSW Treasury.

#### Receivables – trade debtors

All trade debtors are recognised as amounts receivable at balance date. Collectability of trade debtors is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Procedures as established in the Treasurer's Directions are followed to recover outstanding amounts, including letters of demand. Debts which are known to be uncollectible are written off. An allowance for impairment is raised when there is objective evidence that the entity will not be able to collect all amounts due. This evidence includes past experience, and current and expected changes in economic conditions and debtor credit ratings. No interest is earned on trade debtors. Sales are made on 30 day terms.

The Service is not materially exposed to concentrations of credit risk to a single trade debtor or group of debtors. Based on past experience, debtors that are not past due (2016-17: \$0.637m; 2015-16: \$9.032m) and less than 3 months past due (2016-17: \$4.084m; 2015-16: \$3.740m) are not considered impaired. Together, these represent 97% of the total trade debtors.

The only financial assets that are past due or impaired are 'fees for service' in the 'receivables' category of the statement of financial position. As at 30 June 2017, the ageing analysis of 'fees for service' is as follows:

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Total	Past due but not impaired <sup>1,2</sup>	Considered Impaired <sup>1,2</sup>
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>2017</b>			
< 3 months overdue	4,084	4,084	-
3 months – 6 months overdue	28	28	-
>6 months overdue	142	92	50
<b>2016</b>			
< 3 months overdue	3,740	3,740	-
3 months – 6 months overdue	-	-	-
>6 months overdue	122	99	23

#### Notes

1. Each column in the table reports 'gross receivables'
2. The ageing analysis excludes statutory receivables, as these are not within the scope of AASB 7 and excludes receivables that are not past due and not impaired. Therefore the 'total' will not reconcile to the receivables total recognised in the statement of financial position.

#### (c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Service will be unable to meet its payment obligations when they fall due. The Service continuously manages risk through monitoring future cash flows and maturities planning to ensure adequate holding of high quality liquid assets. The objective is to maintain a balance between continuity of funding and flexibility through the use of overdrafts, loans and other advances.

During the current and prior years, there were no defaults on any loans payable. No assets have been pledged as collateral. The Service's exposure to liquidity risk is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

The liabilities are recognised for amounts due to be paid in the future for goods or services received, whether or not invoiced. Amounts owing to suppliers (which are unsecured) are settled in accordance with the policy set out in NSW TC 11/12. For small business suppliers, where terms are not specified, payment is made not later than 30 days from date of receipt of a correctly rendered invoice. For other suppliers, if trade terms are not specified, payment is made no later than the end of the month following the month in which an invoice or a statement is received. For small business suppliers, where payment is not made within the specified time period, simple interest must be paid automatically unless an existing contract specifies otherwise. For payments to other suppliers, the Head of an authority (or a person appointed by the Head of an authority) may automatically pay the supplier simple interest. The rate of interest applied during the year was 9.78% (2015-16: 10.28%).

No interest was paid to suppliers in 2016-17 (\$Nil 2015-16).

The table below summaries the maturity profile of the Service's financial liabilities, together with the interest rate exposure.

**NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE**  
**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017**

**Maturity analysis and interest rate exposure of financial liabilities**

	Weighted Average Effective Int. Rate	Nominal Amount <sup>1</sup> \$'000	Interest Rate Exposure			Maturity Dates		
			Fixed Interest Rate \$'000	Variable Interest Rate \$'000	Non- Interest Bearing \$'000	<1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	> 5 years \$'000
<b>2017</b>								
Payables	Nil	25,539	-	-	25,539	25,539	-	-
		25,539	-	-	25,539	25,539	-	-
<b>2016</b>								
Payables	Nil	22,829	-	-	22,829	22,829	-	-
		22,829	-	-	22,829	22,829	-	-

**Notes:**

1. The amounts disclosed are the contractual undiscounted cash flows of each class of financial liabilities based on the earliest date on which the entity can be required to pay. The tables include both interest and principal cash flows and therefore will not reconcile to statement of financial position.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

#### (d) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Service has no exposure to foreign currency risk and does not enter into commodity contracts.

The effect on profit and equity due to a reasonably possible change in risk variable is outlined in the information below, for interest rate risk and other price risk. A reasonably possible change in risk variable has been determined after taking into account the economic environment in which the Service operates and the time frame for the assessment (i.e. until the end of the next annual reporting period). The sensitivity analysis is based on risk exposures in existence at the statement of financial position date. The analysis is performed on the same basis as for 2015. The analysis assumes that all other variables remain constant.

#### Interest rate risk

Exposure to interest rate risk arises primarily through the entity's interest bearing liabilities. The entity does not account for any fixed rate financial instruments at fair value through profit or loss or as available-for-sale. Therefore for these financial instruments, a change in interest rates would not affect profit or loss or equity. A reasonably possible change of +/- 1% is used, consistent with current trends in interest rates. The basis will be reviewed annually and amended where there is a structural change in the level of interest rate volatility. The entity's exposure to interest rate risk is set out below.

	Carrying Amount \$'000	-1% Profit \$'000	Equity \$'000	1% Profit \$'000	Equity \$'000
<b>2017</b>					
<i>Financial assets</i>					
Cash and cash equivalents	139,532	(1,395)	(1,395)	1,395	1,395
Receivables	9,344	(93)	(93)	93	93
<i>Financial liabilities</i>					
Payables	25,539	255	255	(255)	(255)
<b>2016</b>					
<i>Financial assets</i>					
Cash and cash equivalents	104,046	(1,040)	(1,040)	1,040	1,040
Receivables	22,282	(223)	(223)	223	223
<i>Financial liabilities</i>					
Payables	22,829	228	228	(228)	(228)

#### (e) Fair value compared to carrying amount

Financial instruments are generally recognised at cost. The amortised cost of financial instruments recognised in the statement of financial position approximates the fair value because of the short term nature of many of the financial instruments.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

#### 19. Superannuation – Defined Benefit Plans

##### (a) NSW Government Defined Benefit Superannuation Schemes

The Crown Entity assumed responsibility for the closed NSW public sector superannuation schemes on 1 July 2014. The Service accounts for the liability as having been extinguished, resulting in the amount assumed being shown as part of the non-monetary revenue item described as 'Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits'. Refer to Note 1(m)(ii).

##### (b) The Local Government Superannuation Scheme

###### Fund Information

The Service has a number of employees who are members of the Local Government Superannuation Scheme Pool B (the Scheme) as a result of the transfer of local government employees to the Service.

The Scheme consists of three Divisions. Division B and Division C comprise of both a defined benefit component and a defined contribution component, whilst Division D is a defined benefit scheme. All divisions are closed to new members, except for members of eligible entities who can transfer their entitlements into the Scheme.

The Scheme is deemed to be a "multi-employer defined benefit plan" for the purpose of AASB 119 as:

- Assets are not segregated within the sub-group according to the employees of each sponsoring employer;
- The contribution rates have been the same for all sponsoring employers. That is, contribution rates have not varied for each sponsoring employer according to the experience relating to the employees of that sponsoring employer;
- Benefits for employees of all sponsoring employers are determined according to the same formulae and without regard to the sponsoring employer; and
- The same actuarial assumptions are currently used in respect of the employees of each sponsoring employer.

Given the factors set out above, each sponsoring employer is exposed to the actuarial risk associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers and hence shares in the associated gains and losses (to the extent that they are not borne by members). As such, there is insufficient reliable information to allow each sponsoring employer to account for its proportionate share of the defined benefit obligation, sub-group assets and costs associated with the sub-group in the same way as it would for a single employer sponsored defined benefit plan.

As a result, the Service accounts for the Scheme as a defined contribution plan.

##### (i) Funding arrangements

Pooled employers are required to pay standard employer contributions and additional lump sum contributions to the Scheme.

The standard employer contributions were determined using the new entrant rate method under which a contribution rate sufficient to fund the total benefits over the working life-time of a typical new entrant is calculated. The current standard employer contribution rates, which applied to both 2016-17 and 2015-16, are:

- Division B - 1.9 times employee contributions;
- Division C - 2.5% salaries; and
- Division D - 1.64 times employee contributions.

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

The trustees have determined that each pooled employer will contribute additional contributions to fund. The total additional contributions of \$40.0 million per annum from 1 July 2016 for the 4 years to 30 June 2020, are apportioned according to each employer's share of the accrued liabilities as at 30 June 2016.

The adequacy of contributions is assessed at each triennial actuarial investigation and monitored annually between triennials. The last valuation of the Scheme was performed by Mr Richard Boyfield, FIAA on 2 December 2016, relating to the period ending 30 June 2016.

(ii) Liability for other entities obligations

Each sponsoring employer is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers and hence shares the associated gains and losses.

However, there is no relief under the Scheme's trust deed for employers to walk away from their obligations. Under limited circumstances an employer may withdraw from the plan (ie when there are no active members and on full payment of outstanding additional contributions). There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of the entity.

(iii) Allocation of deficit or surplus

There are no specific provisions under the Scheme's trust deed dealing with a deficit or surplus on wind up of the Scheme.

There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of an employer.

(iv) Expected contributions

The expected standard employer contributions for the next financial year are \$0.754m (2015-16 \$0.763m) and the expected additional contribution is \$0.268m (2015-16 \$0.324m).

(v) Deficit or surplus of the Scheme

The estimated employer reserves financial position for the pooled employers is:

	30 June 2017		30 June 2016	
	\$'000	Asset Coverage	\$'000	Asset Coverage
Assets	1,754,400		1,665,200	
Vested benefits	1,775,900	98.8%	1,796,000	92.7%

*Note:* employer reserves only. Excludes member accounts and reserves in both assets and liabilities.

The key economic long term assumptions used to calculate the present value of accrued benefits are:

	2017	2016
Investment return	6.5% per annum	6.5% per annum
Salary inflation*	3.5% per annum	3.5% per annum
Increase in CPI	2.5% per annum	2.5% per annum

\* Plus promotional increases

## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

The contribution requirements may vary from the current rates if the overall sub-group experience is not in line with the actuarial assumptions in determining the funding program; however any adjustment to the funding program would be the same for all sponsoring employers in the pooled employers.

The Service has a contingent liability with respect to the deficit in the Scheme which it needs to continue to pay in future periods, and it is currently estimated \$1.071m in additional contributions remain.

#### (vi) Participation in the Scheme

The Service is estimated to represent 0.86% (2015-16: 0.81%) of the Scheme at 30 June 2017 based on the Service's additional lump sum contributions per annum as a percentage of the total additional lump sum contributions for all pooled employers.

2017  
\$'000

## 20. Related party disclosures

The Service's key management personnel compensation is as follows:

#### Short-term employee benefits:

Salaries	1,605
Other monetary allowances	-
Non-monetary benefits	79
Other long-term employee benefits	-
Post-employment benefits	118
Termination benefits	-
Total compensation	<u>1,802</u>

During the period, the Service did not enter into transactions with key management personnel, their close family members or controlled or jointly controlled entities of key management personnel.

During the period, the Service entered into transactions with entities that are controlled or jointly controlled by the Service's ultimate parent, being the Government of New South Wales.

Significant income transactions included grants and contributions from the NSW Department of Justice representing the NSW Government statutory contribution to the Rural Fire Fighting Fund required by the *Rural Fires Act 1997*.

Significant expenditure transactions included payments to the Treasury Managed Fund for insurance premiums (\$10.372m), NSW Government Telecommunications Authority for radio network fees (\$9.119m) and Government Property NSW for leasehold rent (\$5.108m).

## 21. Events after the Reporting Period

Government Property NSW has entered into an 'Agreement for Lease', which represents a legal intention to enter into a lease in the future, in respect of the relocation of the NSW Rural Fire Service Headquarters. Signing of the lease by Government Property NSW and relocation of the NSW Rural Fire Service is anticipated in 2018-19.

The contributory funding scheme in the *Rural Fires Act 1997* was amended upon assent of the *Fire and Emergency Services Levy Act 2017* on 4 April 2017. This amendment results in NSW Government being the sole contributor to the Rural Fire Fighting Fund from 1 July 2017. Relevant councils and insurers will continue to contribute towards the costs of the NSW Rural Fire Service through contributions imposed by the amended *Rural Fires Act 1997* (for councils) or the *Emergency Services Levy Act 2017* (for insurers). From 1 July 2017, contributions are based upon a 'rural fire brigade

## **NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE**

### **Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017**

funding target' which largely replicates the previous Rural Fire Fighting Fund calculation, and the contribution percentages are unchanged at 11.7% for Local Government and 73.7% for insurers. These contributions will now be paid to the Office of State Revenue.

There are no events which occurred after the reporting period which affect the financial statements.

**End of audited financial statements**



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee

To Members of the New South Wales Parliament

#### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee (the Committee), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Committee as at 30 June 2017, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards
- are in accordance with section 41B of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (PF&A Act) and the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

#### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Committee in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants' (APES 110).

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of public sector agencies
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

## **The Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Statements**

The members of the Committee are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the PF&A Act, and for such internal control as the Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Committee must assess the Committee's ability to continue as a going concern except where the Committee will be dissolved by an Act of Parliament or otherwise cease operations. The assessment must disclose, as applicable, matters related to going concern and the appropriateness of using the going concern basis of accounting.

## **Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

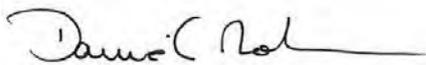
Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf).

The description forms part of my auditor's report.

My opinion does *not* provide assurance:

- that the Committee carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.



David Nolan  
Director, Financial Audit Services

18 September 2017  
SYDNEY



**Please Address Correspondence to:**

The Executive Officer  
Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee  
NSW Rural Fire Service  
Locked Mail Bag 17  
GRANVILLE NSW 2142

**BUSH FIRE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED 30 JUNE 2017**

**Statement by the Chairman**

Pursuant to section 41C of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* I state that:

- (a) The accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the applicable clauses of the *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015* and the Treasurer's Directions;
- (b) The financial statements exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position and financial performance of the Committee for the year ended 30 June 2017; and
- (c) At the date of this statement there are no circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM  
**Chairman**

15 September 2017

## BUSH FIRE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

### Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	Actual 2017 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000
<b>Expenses excluding losses</b>			
Personnel services	2	<u>32</u>	<u>25</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES EXCLUDING LOSSES</b>		<u>32</u>	<u>25</u>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Grants and contributions	2	<u>32</u>	<u>25</u>
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<u>32</u>	<u>25</u>
<b>Net Result</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

### Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017

	Notes	Actual 2017 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000
<b>Total Assets</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated funds		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total Equity</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## BUSH FIRE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

### Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	Actual 2017 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000
Balance at 1 July		-	-
Net result for the year		-	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Balance at 30 June		-	-

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

### Statement of cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	Actual 2017 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Net cash provided / (used) from operating activities		-	-
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		-	-
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Net cash provided / (used) from investing		-	-
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		-	-
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Net cash provided / (used) from financing activities		-	-
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		-	-
<b>NET INCREASE / (DECREASE) IN CASH</b>		-	-
Opening cash and cash equivalents		-	-
<b>CLOSING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		-	-

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## **BUSH FIRE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

### **Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017**

#### **1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

(a) Reporting Entity

The Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee is a corporation constituted under section 46 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. The Committee is the peak planning body for bush fire management in New South Wales.

The Committee is a not-for-profit entity (as profit is not its principal objective) and it has no cash generating activities.

These financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 have been authorised for issue by the Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee on 14 September 2017.

(b) Basis of Preparation

The Committee's financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared on a going concern basis, an accruals basis and in accordance with:

- applicable Australian Accounting Standards (which include Australian Accounting Interpretations); and
- the requirements of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and Regulation.

Financial statement items are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

Judgements, key assumptions and estimations management has made are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements.

All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency.

(c) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements and notes comply with Australian Accounting Standards, which include Australian Accounting Interpretations.

(d) Income Recognition

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration or contribution received or receivable. Revenue (in the form of a grant from the NSW Rural Fire Service) is recognised as income when the Committee gains control over the assets comprising the grant / contribution.

(e) Administrative Support

The NSW Rural Fire Service provides miscellaneous goods and services as administrative support to the Committee at no charge. The value of this minor administrative support is not material.

(f) Personnel Services

Committee members are engaged and remunerated by the NSW Rural Fire Service and their services are provided to the Committee for a fee, which includes a component for relevant on-costs.

(g) Equity and Reserves

The Committee does not hold its own insurance coverage as it does not have any employees, hold any assets or have any potential liability exposure.

## BUSH FIRE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017

(h) Comparative Information

Except when an Australian Accounting Standard permits or requires otherwise, comparative information is disclosed in respect of the previous period for all amounts reported in the financial statements.

(i) New Australian Accounting Standards issued but not effective

NSW public sector entities are not permitted to early adopt new Australian Accounting Standards, unless Treasury determines otherwise. At the reporting date there are a number of new Accounting Standards that have not been applied and are not yet effective. The initial application of these standards will have no known material impact on the financial performance or position.

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>2. Revenue and Expenses</b>		
<b>Revenue</b>		
Grants from the NSW Rural Fire Service	32	25
	<u>32</u>	<u>25</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Personnel services provided by the NSW Rural Fire Service	32	25
	<u>32</u>	<u>25</u>

### 3. Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities

As at 30 June 2017 the Committee had no contingent assets or contingent liabilities (Nil in 2015-16).

### 4. Financial Instruments

The Committee does not hold any financial instruments.

### 5. Events after the Reporting Period

There are no events which occurred after the reporting period which affect the financial statements.

**End of audited financial statements**

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## APPENDIX 1 – HAZARD REDUCTION

### 1.1 Bush Fire Community Protection: Properties Protected Report

Location	Number of works planned	Number of works completed	Proportion of works completed vs planned %	Number of properties covered by completed works	Value of properties covered by completed works \$M
<b>Total bush fire protection works</b>	<b>21,196</b>	<b>17,593</b>	<b>83.0%</b>	<b>269,821</b>	<b>\$131,925</b>
Total programmed hazard reduction works	10,777	8,134	75.5%	158,879	\$69,906.8
Bush fire hazard complaints	1,556	1,404	90.2%	2,990	\$1,315.6
Private land hazard reduction certificates	501	472	94.2%	1,010	\$444.4
Development control assessments	5,851	5,283	90.3%	59,518	\$39,391.4
Community education programs	2,511	2,300	91.6%	47,424	\$20,866.6

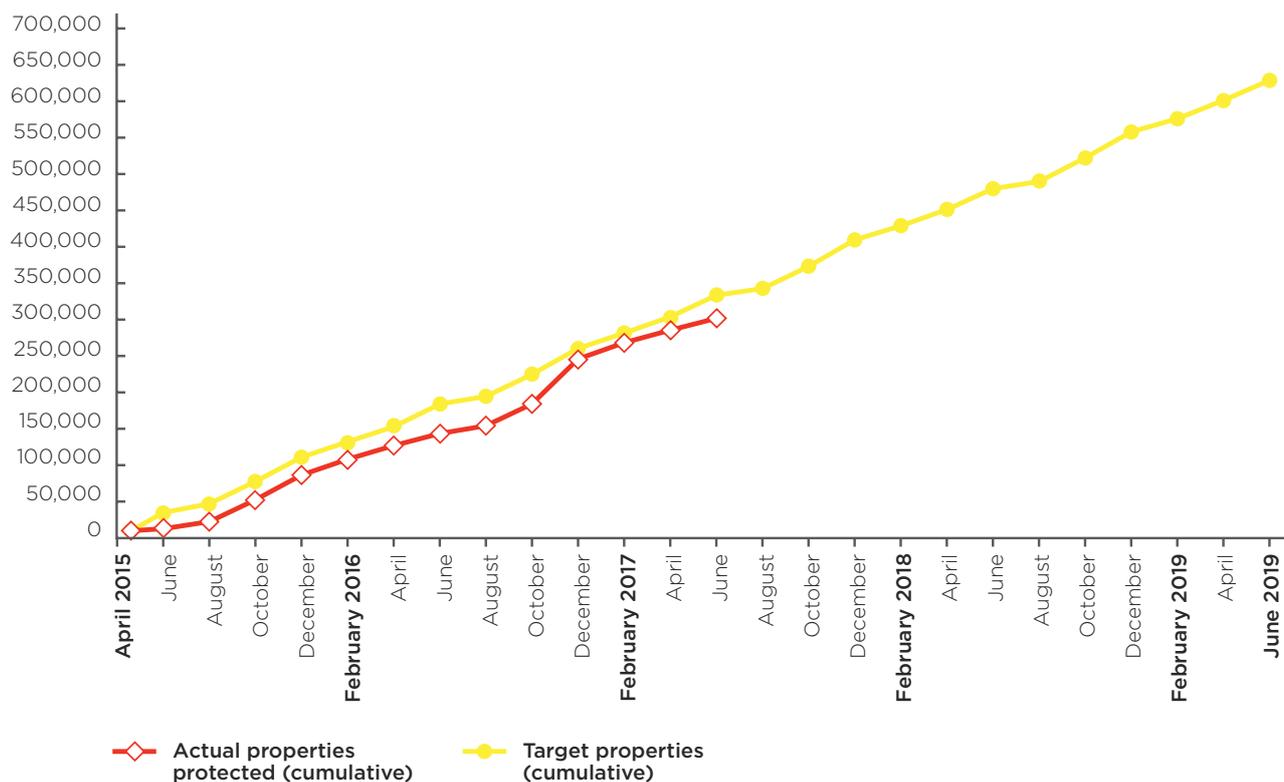
#### NOTES

- 1: The total programmed hazard reduction works' data set is derived from the Bush Fire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS) records as at 1 August 2017.
- 2: The "Number of works planned" data set comprises activities with a scheduled or completed date occurring during 2016/17.
- 3: The "Number of works completed" data set comprises activities with a completion date occurring during 2016/17.
- 4: The "Value of properties covered by completed works" uses a standard property value of \$440,000 per property which was sourced from a published paper (McAneney K.J. 2005).
- 5: The planned works for hazard complaints comprise the complaints received in this reporting period and the carryovers.
- 6: The planned works for DAs comprise the DAs received in this reporting period and the carryovers.

## HAZARD REDUCTION

### 1.2 Number of properties protected by hazard reduction works

In April 2015, the hazard reduction target for properties protected was updated to achieve 600,000 properties protected over 4 years.



### PROPERTIES PROTECTED BY AGENCY

	Target	Number of properties protected	Completed v target (%)
Department of Primary Industries (Crown Lands)	18,854	31,408	166.6%
Local Government Authority	57,737	51,120	88.5%
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service	16,852	21,912	130.0%
Other	1,384	923	66.7%
Forests Corporation of NSW	1,297	1,862	143.6%
Fire & Rescue NSW	4,219	3,584	84.9%
NSW RFS	48,450	48,070	99.2%

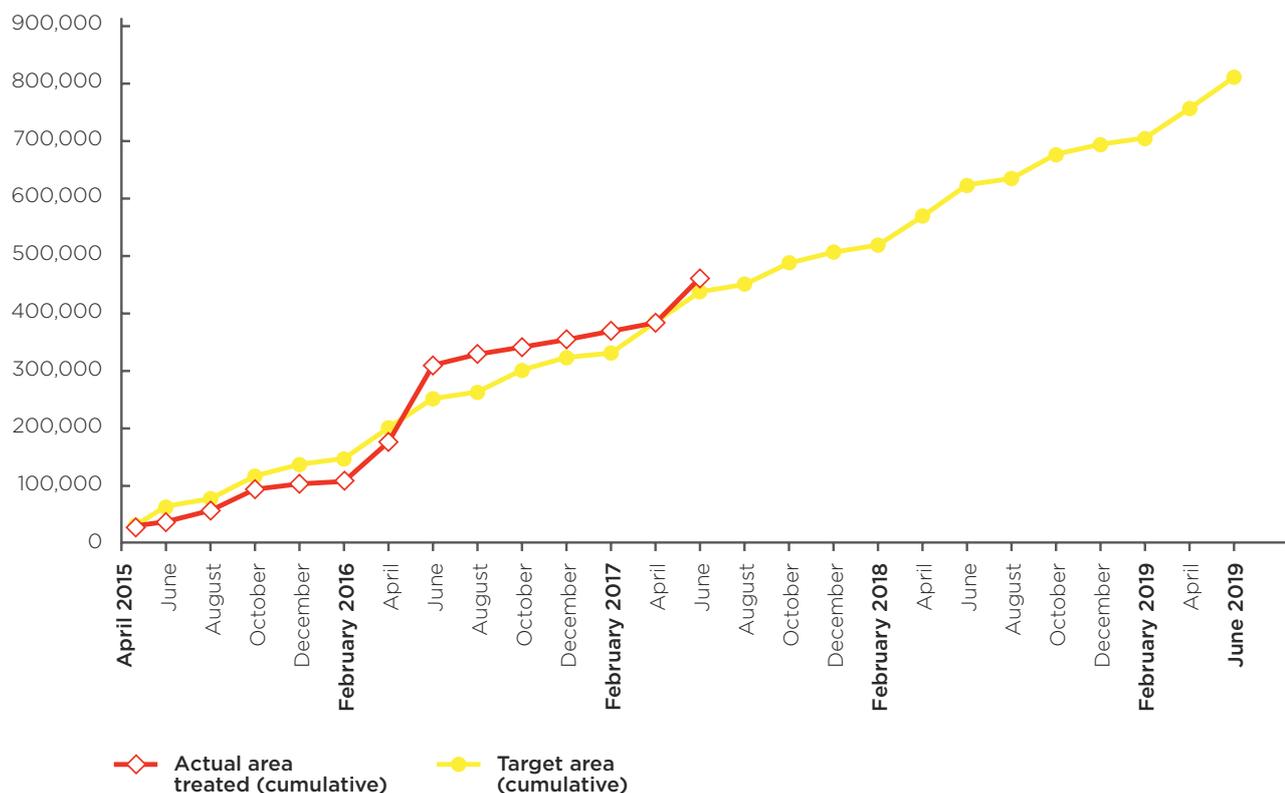
## COMPLETED HAZARD REDUCTION WORKS SUMMARY BY TENURE AND METHOD

	Burning (ha)	Mechanical (ha)	Other (ha)	Total (ha)
Australian Rail Track Corporation	231.76	59.19	0.00	290.95
Catchment Authority	44.33	0.16	0.00	44.49
Commonwealth	2.11	0.00	0.00	2.11
Dept of Primary Industries (Crown Lands)	1,488.64	3,716.39	185.51	5,390.54
Local Government Authority	755.20	14,990.78	3,284.38	19,030.36
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service	85,032.08	1,909.28	0.25	86,941.61
Other	3,115.04	132.50	8.55	3,256.09
Private	7,175.32	729.38	1.48	7,906.18
Railcorp	8.02	1.75	0.00	9.77
Roads and Maritime Services	82.23	332.75	27.00	441.98
Forests Corporation of NSW	17,288.33	39.96	3.87	17,332.16
<b>Total hazard reduction areas</b>	<b>115,223.06</b>	<b>21,912.14</b>	<b>3,511.04</b>	<b>140,646.24</b>

### NOTES

1: The total hazard reduction areas on land tenure exclude 126.6 hectares by grazing means.

## AREA TREATED (HA) BY HAZARD REDUCTION WORKS



## HAZARD REDUCTION

### HAZARD REDUCTION AREAS COMPLETED BY LAND TENURES VERSUS TARGET

Land tenure	Target (ha)	Completed HR Area by method				Completed v target(%)
		Burning	Mechanical	Other	Total	
Australian Rail Track Corporation	292.2	231.76	59.19	0.00	290.95	99.6%
Catchment Authority	434.8	44.33	0.16	0.00	44.49	10.2%
Commonwealth	136.3	2.11	0.00	0.00	2.11	1.5%
Dept of Primary Industries (Crown Lands)	2,783.5	1,488.64	3,716.39	185.51	5,390.54	193.7%
Local Government Authority	12,498.6	755.20	14,990.78	3,284.38	19,030.36	152.3%
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service	135,000.0	85,032.08	1,909.28	0.25	86,941.61	64.4%
Other	2,733.8	3,115.04	132.50	8.55	3,256.09	119.1%
Private	11,145.4	7,175.32	729.38	1.48	7,906.18	70.9%
Railcorp	242.1	8.02	1.75	0.00	9.77	4.0%
Roads and Maritime Services	631.8	82.23	332.75	27.00	441.98	70.0%
Forestry Corporation of NSW	21,142.6	17,288.33	39.96	3.87	17,332.16	82.0%

#### Hazard reduction undertaken by the NSW RFS

While not a land management agency, members of the Service contribute significantly to hazard reduction activities in support of land management agencies and private property owners. During the reporting year, the Rural Fire Service undertook 1,101 hazard reduction works comprising approximately 7,929 hectares of hazard reduction work protecting a total number of 48,070 assets with a value of \$21.2 billion (based on median insurance house and contents value in Sydney 2004: McAnaney K. J. 2005).

## HAZARD REDUCTION CERTIFICATES ISSUED

(Streamlined environmental approval of hazard reduction – pursuant to section 100F and 100G)

Certificate issuing agency	Number issued	% of total
Department of Primary Industries (Crown Lands)	130	10.21%
Local Government Authority	289	22.70%
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service	15	1.18%
NSW RFS	806	63.32%
Other	33	2.59%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,273</b>	<b>100%</b>

## HAZARD COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

Land tenure	Complaints received	% of total
Private land	982	69.55%
Council land	315	22.31%
State Government land	97	6.87%
Commonwealth land	4	0.28%
Australian Rail Track Corporation land	4	0.28%
To be determined	10	0.71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,412</b>	<b>100%</b>

## INSPECTIONS, FORMAL NOTICES AND ENFORCEMENT WORKS

Number of hazard complaints inspections undertaken	Number of formal notices issued under Section 66 of the Act	Enforcement works undertaken under Section 70 of the Act
1,741	117	34

## PERMITS ISSUED UNDER THE *RURAL FIRES ACT 1997*

Permits issued by	Number issued	% of total
Fire & Rescue NSW	472	2.02%
NSW RFS	23,908	97.98%
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,380</b>	<b>100%</b>

## APPENDIX 2 – INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

### 2.1 Waste Handling Report

The NSW RFS continues its commitment to minimising the amount of waste sent to landfill and improving procurement procedures to ensure the Government's targets in this area are achieved. A NSW RFS Waste Management and Resource Efficiency Policy was introduced over this financial year to further support the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-21.

Strategies to reduce paper use continue through the trial of a "paper lite" system and increased use of smart tablets and laptops. Improving online solutions to replace paper-based forms and to manage version control has further reduced paper waste across the NSW RFS.

Data was compiled on the waste recycling efforts. Recycling and resource efficiency results at Headquarters included:

- 9,100 kgs of cardboard recycled
- 5,300 kgs of co-mingled waste (paper, PET, glass bottles and aluminium cans) recycled
- 100 percent of all used toner cartridges recycled
- 100 percent of eWaste recycled
- Continuing the recycling program for fluorescent lights and alkaline batteries
- an increase in the NSW RFS Headquarters site NABERS rating.

## 2.2 Digital Information Security Annual Attestation Statement for the 2016-2017 Financial Year for NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)

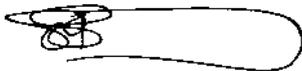
I, Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, am of the opinion that RFS had an Information Security Management System in place during the 2016-2017 financial year that is consistent with the Core Requirements set out in the NSW Government Digital Information Security Policy.

The controls in place to mitigate identified risks to the digital information and digital information systems of RFS are adequate.

- A. There is no agency under the control of RFS which is required to develop an independent ISMS in accordance with the NSW Government Digital Information Security Policy.
- B. The RFS has maintained compliance with ISO 27001 Information technology – Security techniques – Information security management systems – Requirements and independently reviewed by an independent party during the 2016-2017 financial year.

Information security is a key focus area for RFS and, as such a risk based approach has been taken to implement the current security controls. A number of planned, periodic activities to manage and operate our Information Security Management System were carried out over the last period. Independent testing of our security controls was also carried out over this period.

The RFS ISMS has continued to mature over the last 12 months, as such is closer aligned to the ISO 27001:2013 standard. RFS will continue to monitor its compliance, effectiveness, and business benefits, in order to decide if certification to ISO 27001:2013 will be targeted for this financial year.



Shane Fitzsimmons, AFSM  
NSW RFS Commissioner

NB: Risk management and insurance activities appear on page 148.

## APPENDIX 3 – MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGIC SERVICES

### 3.1 Salaried and volunteer members

	2017	2016	2015
Full Time Equivalent Positions (FTE)*	878	855	824
Headcount at Census*	913	884	849
Volunteer members	73,223	73,162	74,516

\* This report is based on the Workforce Profile Report submitted to the Public Service Commission.

### 3.2 Executive remuneration

Senior Executives	2017		2016		2015	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Band 4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Band 3	0	1	0	1	0	1
Band 2	1	4	1	3	1	4
Band 1	4	9	3	11	2	11
<b>Totals</b>	5	14	4	15	3	16
	19		19		19	

Band	2017 Range	Average Remuneration		
		2017	2016	2015
Band 4	(452,251-522,500)	-	-	-
Band 3	(320,901-452,250)	417,876	407,663	397,720
Band 2	(255,051-320,900)	280,666	277,345	265,031
Band 1	(178,850-255,050)	207,552	201,923	190,102

#### NOTES

1: 4.83 % of NSW RFS employee related expenditure in 2017 was related to senior executives, compared with 5.08% in 2016 and 4.87% in 2015.

### 3.3 Membership applications

	2017	2016	2015
New member applications	4,120	4,128	4,558
(includes junior member applications)	(363)	(337)	(425)

### 3.4 Workforce diversity

Trends in the representation of Workforce Diversity Groups				
Workforce Diversity Group	Benchmark/ Target	2017	2016	2015
Women	50%	34.2%	34.4%	34.2%
Aboriginal People and Torres Strait Islanders	3.3%	2.1%	2.0%	1.2%
People whose First Language Spoken as a Child was not English	23.2%	5.5%	5.0%	5.2%
People with a Disability	N/A	4.6%	4.7%	5.1%
People with a Disability Requiring Work-Related Adjustment	N/A	2.5%	2.7%	3.1%

#### NOTES

- 1: The benchmark of 50% for representation of women across the sector is intended to reflect the gender composition of the NSW community.
- 2: The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014 - 17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.
- 3: A benchmark from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing has been included for People whose First Language Spoken as a Child was not English. The ABS Census does not provide information about first language, but does provide information about country of birth. The benchmark of 23.2% is the percentage of the NSW general population born in a country where English is not the predominant language.
- 4: Work is underway to improve the reporting of disability information in the sector to enable comparisons with population data. For this reason, no benchmark has been provided for People with a Disability or for People with a Disability Requiring Work-Related Adjustment.

## 3.4 Workforce diversity (cont.)

Trends in distribution of Workforce Diversity Groups				
Workforce Diversity Group	Benchmark/ Target	2017	2016	2015
Women	100	92	92	90
Aboriginal People and Torres Strait Islanders	100	87	N/A	N/A
People whose First Language Spoken as a Child was not English	100	103	110	107
People with a Disability	100	110	109	109
People with a Disability Requiring Work-Related Adjustment	100	118	116	114

## NOTES

- 1: A Distribution Index of 100 indicates that the centre of the distribution of the Workforce Diversity Group across salary levels is equivalent to that of other staff. Values less than 100 mean that the Workforce Diversity Group tends to be more concentrated at lower salary levels than is the case for other staff. The more pronounced this tendency is, the lower the index will be. In some cases the index may be more than 100, indicating that the Workforce Diversity Group is less concentrated at lower salary levels.
- 2: The Distribution Index is not calculated where Workforce Diversity Group or non-Workforce Diversity Group numbers are less than 20.

### 3.5 Public Interest Disclosures (PID)

The table below provides the information that is mandatory for the NSW RFS to include in the annual report in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 and the Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011.

	Made by public officials performing their day to day functions	Under statutory or other legal obligation	All other PIDs
Number of public officials who made PIDs directly	0	0	2
Number of PIDs received	0	0	2
Of PIDs received, number primarily about:			
Corrupt Conduct	0	0	1
Maladministration	0	0	1
Serious and substantial waste	0	0	0
Government Information Contravention	0	0	0
Local Government pecuniary interest contravention	0	0	0

Number of PIDs finalised (since 1 January 2012)

4

Additional Information	Response
Does NSW RFS have an internal reporting policy?	Yes. NSW RFS Service Standard 1.1.30 Public Interest Disclosures revised and published 2 May 2016
Has head of agency taken actions to meet staff awareness obligations?	Publication of Service Standard 1.1.30 on the public website, intranet and MyRFS. Public Interest Disclosures is a component of the Code of Conduct and Ethics Training provided to staff and senior volunteers.

## 3.6 Reported injuries and registered workers compensation claims

Injury Type	Reported Injuries			Workers Compensation Claims	
	Volunteer member	Salaried Member	Non RFS Personnel	Volunteer Member	Salaried Member
Amputation / de-gloving	1	0	0	1	0
Breathing difficulties	8	1	0	4	0
Burns	29	3	2	9	1
Contusion with skin intact	64	24	3	11	1
Deafness	3	1	0	3	1
Dislocation	6	0	0	4	0
Foreign body in eye, ear, nose, respiratory or digestive systems	17	21	0	8	3
Fracture	18	2	1	13	2
Head injury*	17	2	1	5	2
Heart attack* / chest pains	5	1	0	2	1
Heat stress / heat stroke	57	13	0	24	0
Injuries to nerves and spinal cord	2	0	0	2	2
Internal injury of chest, abdomen and pelvis	20	2	1	1	1
Laceration / abrasion	121	56	2	18	6
Poisoning and toxic effects of substances	52	62	1	10	7
Psychological disorders	3	3	1	1	3
Smoke inhalation	25	0	0	10	0
Sprains and strains of joints and adjacent muscles	121	42	0	59	19
Superficial injury	13	6	1	13	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>834</b>			<b>253</b>	

\* Two injuries resulted in firefighter fatalities.

## NOTES

1: There were no prosecutions under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 in the reporting period.

### 3.7 Learning and Development – NSW RFS training activity by year

Volunteers and their qualifications	2017	2016	2015
Bush Firefighters	2,187	2,674	3,176
Village Firefighters	980	729	860
Advanced Firefighters	715	527	591
Crew Leaders*	354	292	333
Group Leaders	70	24	55
First Aid	1,936	1,826	2,266
Breathing Apparatus	730	559	646
Chain Saw Operators	905	616	789
Rural Fire Drivers	875	650	602
NSW RFS Instructors	234	123	134
NSW RFS Training Coordinators	26	15	58
NSW RFS Assessors	91	76	118
Assessor Advocates	1	6	6

\* Crew Leaders are members attaining CLS.

#### NOTES

1: Figures generated by SAP LSO database only cover qualifications generated by electronic databases within each reporting year. Figures are inclusive of newly certified and recertified members.

### 3.8 Counselling and Support Unit

	Critical Incident Support Services (CISS)			Member Assistance Program (MAP)	Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	
	Number of requests	Number of personnel assisted	Hours	Number of new requests	Internal	External
2017	373	966	17,853	446	91	34
2016	259	808	10,401	363	77	21
2015	273	786	8,522	347	92	26

## 3.9 Chaplaincy and Family Support Network activity

Chaplaincy activity	Totals – Senior Chaplain and Senior Family Support Chaplain			Totals – Volunteer Fire District Chaplains and Family Support volunteers		
	2017	2016	2015	2017	2016	2015
Visits to NSW RFS Headquarters	128	148	155	12	0	0
Visits to Fire Control Centres	28	41	19	408	410	435
Visits with Fire Control Officers	22	35	17	198	204	215
Visits to Rural Fire Brigades	6	32	38	134	152	148
Regional Conferences	1	3	0	0	1	0
State Management Conferences	1	0	0	0	0	0
Brigade Captains Meetings	0	0	0	38	42	36
Seminars and Conferences	4	3	4	27	0	23
Station Openings and Dedications	8	3	4	4	6	8
Fire Fleet Blessings and Services	15	8	11	32	28	48
Personal and Family Counselling	62	87	78	340	352	364
Telephone Support and Counselling	215	242	210	316	290	320
Home Visits – Members and Family	49	73	35	170	168	175
Hospital Visitation – Members	34	51	40	136	125	169
Funeral Services Conducted	10	10	7	8	5	9
Infant Christenings/Dedications	1	1	0	0	0	4
Service Weddings	6	4	5	2	2	6
Rural Fire Service Callouts	3	4	9	68	77	136
FRNSW Callouts	0	1	0	1	0	0
NSW Parks and Wildlife Service Callouts	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respond to Suicides/Postvention	0	0	0	2	12	0
Championship and Field Days	5	3	5	2	2	2
Critical Incident Support	13	18	30	18	15	19
Work Cover and other NSW RFS Meetings	35	115	51	0	0	0
<b>Total kms travelled</b>	<b>53,516</b>	<b>56,412</b>	<b>53,021</b>	<b>9,656</b>	<b>10,936</b>	<b>18,660</b>

### 3.10 Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC)

Year	Cash Contribution	In-kind Contribution*	Additional Bush Fire CRC Research Contribution
2015	\$370,000	\$457,008	N/A
2016	\$380,717	\$306,722	N/A
2017	\$392,101	\$310,856	N/A

\* The in-kind contribution is based on a schedule of predetermined values for various levels of contribution towards BNHCRC outcomes or research utilisation. It also includes a component of actual costs incurred by the NSW RFS towards achieving these outcomes, such as travel expenses to attend conferences.

### 3.11 NSW RFS / RFSA Consultative Committees

The Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA) is a state-wide non-partisan member association and a valued partner of the NSW RFS. The NSW RFS Commissioner relies on a number of consultative committees, comprising RFSA representatives and senior staff of the Service, for advice on the operations and management of the NSW RFS.

The Young Members Group is a sub-group of the Membership Services Consultative Committee and provides advice to that Committee on policy and programs, participates in decision-making at a state level, as well as making suggestions and raising ideas relevant to young members.

The committees that met during the reporting period were: Community Engagement, Infrastructure Services, Membership Services (including the Young Members Group) and Operations. Details of representation and attendance at these committees are set out in the following tables.

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Name	Attendance	Number eligible to attend
Brad Scutella (Chair)	2	3
Marcia LeBusque (Deputy Chair)	3	3
Jamie Bertram	3	3
Raewyn Macky	3	3
David Harris	3	3
Richard Thorek	2	3
Donna Brotherson	3	3
Glenn O'Rourke	3	3
Jayne Leary	2	3
Irene Hancock	3	3

## INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Name	Attendance	Number eligible to attend
Senior Assistant Commissioner Bruce McDonald AFSM (Chair)	3	3
Brian McDonough (Deputy Chair)	3	3
Mark Ross	3	3
Patrick Bradley	2	3
Jason Lewington	2	3
Troy Dowley	3	3
David Wynd	2	3
Steve Jones	3	3
Steve Smith	1	3
Terry Job	3	3

## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Name	Attendance	Number eligible to attend
Bronwyn Jones PSM (Chair)	3	3
Chris Powell AFSM (Deputy Chair)	3	3
Gerard McLellan	3	3
Helen Carlos	3	3
Bill Elder	1	3
David Doblinger	3	3
Greg Fisher	3	3
Peter Burfitt	2	3
Michael Cooksley*	2	2
Phillip Baer AFSM	3	3
Stephanie Huysmans**	1	1

\* Appointment ceased February 2017    \*\* Appointment commenced February 2017

## MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGIC SERVICES

### YOUNG MEMBERS GROUP

Name	Attendance	Number eligible to attend
Stephanie Huysmans* (Chair)	3	3
Nathan Barnden (Deputy Chair)	3	3
David Stimson	3	3
Morgan Fraser	3	3
Brooke Bevan	3	3
Phillip Brunsdon	3	3
Christopher Syme	2	3
Elizabeth Algie	3	3
Nathan Inwood	3	3
Christian Bond	3	3
Jayden Nicholls	2	3
Alexander Milgate**	1	1
Benjamin Albers**	1	1
Angela Burford**	1	1
Tristan Evans**	1	1

\* Appointment ceased March 2017

\*\* Appointment commenced March 2017

### OPERATIONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Name	Attendance	Number eligible to attend
Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers AFSM (Chair)	2	3
Peter Mooney (Deputy Chair)	3	3
Donald Peach	2	3
Elizabeth Ferris AFSM	3	3
Brendon Ede	2	3
Kristaal Hinds	1	3
John Fitzgerald AFSM	3	3
Phil Spicer	3	3
Brenton Walton*	1	1
Geoffrey Ryan	3	3
Lex Sanderson**	2	2

\* Appointment ceased September 2016

\*\* Appointment commenced September 2016

### 3.12 Awards

#### BRAVERY AND SERVICE AWARDS (INTERNAL)

	Volunteer Members	Salaried Members	Total
<b>Commissioner's Award for Valour</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Commissioner's Commendation for Bravery</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Commissioner's Commendation for Service</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>
Firefighter Susanne Barker, Illawarra Community Safety Brigade, Illawarra Zone, Region East			
Captain Peter Brougham, Valla Rural Fire Brigade, Lower North Coast Zone, Region North			
Captain Michael Cantwell, Manna Mount Rural Fire Brigade, Mid Lachlan Valley Team, Region West			
Deputy Group Captain Robert Cox, Corindi/Red Rock Rural Fire Brigade, Mid North Coast Team, Region North			
Inspector Anthony Jarrett (deceased), Lower North Coast Zone, Region North			
Group Captain Andrew Macdonald, Catherine Field Rural Fire Brigade, Macarthur Zone, Region East			
Deputy Captain Sidney (Lionel) Smith AFSM, Kenthurst Rural Fire Brigade, The Hills, Region East			
<b>Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation (Unit)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>
Bedgerebong, Burcher, Jemalong, Lake, Manna Mount, South Gipps, Warroo, Blowclear-Wamboyne, Winnunga and Ungarie Rural Fire Brigades, Helitack 201, Helitack 220 and Down the Wire Technicians			
Coonabarabran Squad Volunteer Rescue Association			
Corporate Communications Group, NSW RFS Headquarters			
Down the Wire Technicians			
Hornsby Support, Cowan, Westleigh, Cherrybrook, Ku-ring-gai and Duffys Forest Rural Fire Brigades, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai and Warringah Pittwater Districts, Region East			
Namoi Gwydir Team State Championships Local Volunteers, Namoi Gwydir Team, Region North			
Namoi Gwydir Team, Region North			
NSW Rural Fire Service State Championships Committee			
Valla and Valla Beach Rural Fire Brigades, Lower North Coast Zone, Region North			

## MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGIC SERVICES

## BRAVERY AND SERVICE AWARDS (INTERNAL) (cont.)

	Volunteer Members	Salaried Members	Total
<b>Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation (Individual)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
Mrs Tracie Bahun, Regional Services, NSW RFS Headquarters			
Superintendent Timothy Carroll, Lake George Zone, Region South			
Deputy Captain Rachel Hessenberger, Sussex Inlet Rural Fire Brigade, Shoalhaven Zone, Region South			
Deputy Group Captain Rick Jones, Duffys Forest Rural Fire Brigade, Warringah Pittwater			
Mrs Roslyn ten Brink, Liverpool Range Zone, Region North			
<b>Commissioner's Unit Citation for Bravery</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Commissioner's Unit Citation for Service</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
Krawarree Rural Fire Brigade, Lake George Zone, Region South			
Mungindi Rural Fire Brigade, Namoi Gwydir Team, Region North			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>

## LONG SERVICE AWARDS (INTERNAL)

Long Service Medal/Clasps	Volunteer members	Salaried members	Totals
10 yr Long Service Medal	567	29	596
20 yr Long Service Clasp	426	12	438
30 yr Long Service Clasp	237	5	242
40 yr Long Service Clasp	195	0	195
50 yr Long Service Clasp	90	1	91
60 yr Long Service Clasp	36	0	36
70 yr Long Service Clasp	2	0	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1553</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1600</b>

## AUSTRALIAN FIRE SERVICE MEDALS (AUSTRALIAN HONOURS SYSTEM)

Australian Fire Service Medal	Volunteer Members	Salaried Members	Totals
<b>AUSTRALIA DAY</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>
Harvey Alan Bailey, Captain, Illawarra, Region East			
Graham Charles Bennett, Deputy Group Captain, Southern Highlands, Region East			
John Cullen, Superintendent, Far South Coast, Region South			
James Robert Fahey, Group Captain, Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai, Region East			
John Kjoller, Group Captain, Canobolas, Region West			
Trevor Penfold, Group Captain, Bland/Temora, Region West			
<b>QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
Peter Michael Brougham, Captain, Lower North Coast, Region North			
Kelly Therese Browne, Group Captain, Sutherland, Region East			
Craig Scott Burley, Group Captain, Hawkesbury, Region East			
Robert John Cox, Deputy Group Captain, Mid North Coast, Region North			
Rex Guskett Fuge, Firefighter, Mid Lachlan Valley, Region West			
David George Loft, Group Captain, Lake George, Region South			
Alan George Tucker, Group Captain (Retired), Clarence Valley, Region North			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>

## NATIONAL MEDALS/CLASPS

National Medals/Clasps	Volunteer Members	Salaried Members	Totals
Medals	121	8	129
Clasps	161	6	167
<b>Totals</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>296</b>

## APPENDIX 4 – EXECUTIVE SERVICES

### 4.1 Internal Audit and Risk Management Statement 2016/17



**NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE**



#### **Internal Audit and Risk Management Statement for the 2016-2017 Financial Year for the NSW Rural Fire Service**

I, Shane Fitzsimmons, am of the opinion that the NSW Rural Fire Service has internal audit and risk management processes in operation that are compliant with the eight (8) core requirements set out in the *Internal Audit and Risk Management Policy for the NSW Public Sector*, specifically:

Core Requirements	Compliance
<b>1. Risk Management Framework</b>	
1.1. The agency head is ultimately responsible and accountable for risk management in the agency	Compliant
1.2. A risk management framework that is appropriate to the agency has been established and maintained and the framework is consistent with AS/NZS IS) 31000:2009	Compliant
<b>2. Internal Audit Function</b>	
2.1. An internal audit function has been established and maintained	Compliant
2.2. The operation of the internal audit function is consistent with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing	Compliant
2.3. The agency has an Internal Audit Charter that is consistent with the content of the 'model charter'	Compliant
<b>3. Audit and Risk Committee</b>	
3.1. An independent Audit and Risk Committee with appropriate expertise has been established	Compliant
3.2. The Audit and Risk Committee is an advisory committee providing assistance to the agency head on the agency's governance processes, risk management and control frameworks, and its external accountability obligations	Compliant
3.3. The Audit and Risk Committee has a Charter that is consistent with the content of the 'model charter'	Compliant

### Membership

The chair and members of the Audit and Risk Committee are:

- Ms Gerardine Brus, Independent Chair, appointed for a 4 year term commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, ending on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018
- Mr Arthur Butler, Independent Member, reappointed for a 3 year term commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, ending 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017
- Mr David Roden, Independent Member, appointed for a 4 year term commencing 25 February 2016, ending 24 February 2020



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Shane Fitzsimmons, AFSM  
Commissioner  
NSW Rural Fire Service  
Date: 1-9-17

## 4.2 Government Information (Public Access) 2016/17 statistics

TABLE A: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS BY TYPE OF APPLICANT AND OUTCOME\*

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Media								
Members of Parliament				1				
Private sector business	1	69	3					2
Not for profit organisations or community groups		1				1		
Members of the public (application by legal representative)	2	21	2	3				1
Members of the public (Other)	1	19	1	1				

\* Two valid access applications received during the 2016/17 financial year have not yet been determined and are not reported for in the table above. Following applicant agreement these applications have an open ended determination date.

TABLE B: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS BY TYPE OF APPLICATION AND OUTCOME

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Personal information applications		4						
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	4	103	6	5				3
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other		2						

\* Two valid access applications received during the 2016/17 financial year have not yet been determined and are not reported for in the table above. Following applicant agreement these applications have an open ended determination date.

TABLE C: INVALID APPLICATIONS

Reason for invalidity	No of applications
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the <i>Act</i> )	13
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the <i>Act</i> )	
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the <i>Act</i> )	
Total number of invalid applications received	13
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	11

TABLE D: CONCLUSIVE PRESUMPTION OF OVERRIDING PUBLIC INTEREST AGAINST DISCLOSURE: MATTERS LISTED IN SCHEDULE 1 TO THE *ACT*

	Number of times consideration used
Overriding secrecy laws	
Cabinet information	
Executive Council information	
Contempt	
Legal professional privilege	
Excluded information	8
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	
Transport safety	
Adoption	
Care and protection of children	
Ministerial code of conduct	
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	

## 4.2 Government Information (Public Access) 2016/17 statistics (cont.)

TABLE E: OTHER PUBLIC INTEREST CONSIDERATIONS AGAINST DISCLOSURE:  
MATTERS LISTED IN TABLE TO SECTION 14 OF THE ACT

	Number of occasions when application not successful
Responsible and effective government	10
Law enforcement and security	8
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	111
Business interests of agencies and other persons	1
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	
Secrecy provisions	
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	

TABLE F: TIMELINES

	Number of applications
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	131
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	15
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>

TABLE G: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS REVIEWED UNDER PART 5 OF THE ACT  
(BY TYPE OF REVIEW AND OUTCOME)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total
Internal review	1	1	2
Review by Information Commissioner			
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of the Act			
Review by ADT			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

TABLE H: APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW UNDER PART 5 OF THE ACT  
(BY TYPE OF APPLICANT)

	Number of applications for review
Applications by access applicants	2
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of the access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	

TABLE I: APPLICATIONS TRANSFERRED TO OTHER AGENCIES UNDER DIVISION 2 OF PART 4 OF THE ACT (BY TYPE OF TRANSFER)

	Number of applications transferred
Agency-initiated transfers	23
Applicant-initiated transfers	

STATISTICS REQUIRED BY CLAUSE 7 OF THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION  
(PUBLIC ACCESS) REGULATION 2009

Total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications)	152
Total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused, either wholly or partly because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act.	8

### 4.3 Committees

#### RURAL FIRE SERVICE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RFSAC)

The RFSAC met on two occasions during the reporting period and attendance was as follows:

Member	Agency	Attended/ Represented
Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM	NSW Rural Fire Service	1/1
Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM	Local Government NSW	0/0
Cr Chris Manchester	Local Government NSW	0/0
Mr John Parker	Rural Fire Service Association	2/0
Mr Warren Cree	Rural Fire Service Association	2/0
Superintendent Michael Brett	Rural Fire Service Association	1/0
Mr Rob Pallin	Nature Conservation Council of NSW	2/0
Mr Graham Brown	NSW Farmers Association	0/1
Mr Karl Sullivan	Insurance Council of Australia	1/0

#### AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (ARC) AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT MEETINGS

The ARC met on seven occasions during the reporting period and attendance was as follows:

Name	Role	Attendance
Gerardine Brus	Independent Chair	7
Arthur Butler	Independent Member	7
David Roden	Independent Member	7

## BUSH FIRE COORDINATING COMMITTEE (BFCC)

The BFCC met on four occasions during the reporting period and attendance was as follows:

Member	Agency	Attended/ Represented
Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM	NSW Rural Fire Service	4/0
Deputy Commissioner James (Jim) Smith AFSM	Fire & Rescue NSW	0/4
Assistant Commissioner Alan Clarke APM	NSW Police Force	0/1
Superintendent David Hoadley AFSM	NSW Rural Fire Service Association	4/0
Dr Allison Rowlands	Office of Emergency Management - (Disaster Welfare Services)	1/1
Dr Ross Dickson	Forestry Corporation	2/1
Ms Naomi Stephens	NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service	2/2
Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM	Local Government NSW	2/1
Cr Chris Manchester	Local Government NSW	1/2
Mr Robert (Bob) Conroy	Representing Minister for the Environment	4/0
Mr Robert Pallin	Nature Conservation Council of NSW	3/0
Mr Graham Brown	NSW Farmers Association	0/3
Mr Timothy Wilkinson	NSW Department of Industry - Lands	0/4
Mr Simon Oliver	NSW Department of Industry - Primary Industries	3/0

## EXECUTIVE SERVICES

### FIRE SERVICES JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE (FSJSC)

The FSJSC met on four occasions during the reporting period and attendance was as follows:

Member	Agency	Attended/ Represented
Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM	NSW Rural Fire Service	1/1
Commissioner Gregory Mullins AFSM <i>(retired 16 January 2017)</i>	Fire & Rescue NSW	1/1
Commissioner Paul Baxter <i>(appointed 24 April 2017)</i>	Fire & Rescue NSW	-
Assistant Commissioner Paul McGuiggan AFSM	Fire & Rescue NSW	2/0
Superintendent Paul Jones	NSW Rural Fire Service	2/0
Superintendent Michael Brett	NSW Rural Fire Service Association	2/0
Mr Leighton Drury	Fire Brigades Employees' Union of NSW	2/0

### NSW RFS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT LIAISON COMMITTEE (LGLC)

The LGLC met on three occasions during the reporting period and attendance was as follows:

Member	Agency	Attended/ Represented
Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM	NSW Rural Fire Service	1/1
Mr Brad Scutella	NSW Rural Fire Service	3/0
Assistant Commissioner Jason Heffernan <i>(resigned from committee 5 April 2017)</i>	NSW Rural Fire Service	2/0
Assistant Commissioner Rebel Talbert <i>(appointed 5 April 2017)</i>	NSW Rural Fire Service	0/0
Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM	Local Government NSW	3/0
Cr Chris Manchester <i>(resigned from committee 5 April 2017)</i>	Local Government NSW	0/0
Cr Denise Osborne <i>(appointed 5 April 2017)</i>	Local Government NSW	1/0
Mr Chris Powell AFSM	NSW Rural Fire Service Association	2/1

## CORPORATE EXECUTIVE GROUP (CEG)

The CEG met on eight occasions during the reporting period and attendance was as follows:

Member and Position	Agency	Attended / Represented
Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM Chair	NSW Rural Fire Service	6/2
Deputy Commissioner Rob Rogers AFSM Executive Director, Operations	NSW Rural Fire Service	6/0
Senior Assistant Commissioner Bruce McDonald AFSM Executive Director, Infrastructure Services	NSW Rural Fire Service	5/2
Ms Bronwyn Jones PSM Executive Director, Membership and Strategic Services	NSW Rural Fire Service	6/2
Mr Brad Scutella Executive Director, Executive Services	NSW Rural Fire Service	7/0
Assistant Commissioner Steve Yorke AFSM Director, Response and Coordination <i>(position rotated, resigned from committee 21 March 2017)</i>	NSW Rural Fire Service	5/1
Assistant Commissioner Jason Heffernan Director, Response and Coordination	NSW Rural Fire Service	7/0
Assistant Commissioner Rebel Talbert Director, Regional Services <i>(position rotated, appointed 21 March 2017)</i>	NSW Rural Fire Service	1/1
Assistant Commissioner Stuart Midgley AFSM Director, Coordinated Risk Management	NSW Rural Fire Service	4/0
Anthony Clark Director, Corporate Communications <i>(from 29 November 2016)</i>	NSW Rural Fire Service	5/0
Matthew Smith Chief Information Officer <i>(until September 2016)</i>	NSW Rural Fire Service	1/0
Kelly Browne AFSM Chief Information Officer <i>(from November 2016)</i>	NSW Rural Fire Service	5/0
Mr Stephen O'Malley Chief Financial Officer	NSW Rural Fire Service	6/2
Chief Superintendent Brett Condie Regional Manager, Region North	NSW Rural Fire Service	7/1
Chief Superintendent Ken Hall Regional Manager, Region South	NSW Rural Fire Service	7/0
Chief Superintendent Benjamin Watson Regional Manager, Region East	NSW Rural Fire Service	5/3
Mr Paul Smith Regional Manager, Region West	NSW Rural Fire Service	8/0
Mr Ken Middleton President	NSW Rural Fire Service Association	7/0
Ms Marcia LeBusque Director	NSW Rural Fire Service Association	6/1

## 4.4 Minister-approved Travel

Overseas visits undertaken by officers and employees from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

Date	Country	Officer/s	Trip details
3 to 10 July 2016	Port Vila, Vanuatu	Superintendent Brian Graham	Scoping mission to validate intent and content of proposed Rotary/Vocational Training Team program
19 to 22 October 2016	Tokyo, Japan	Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons	Represent NSW RFS at the Japan Firefighters Association conference on "Disaster Prevention in Communities and the Volunteer Fire Service"
14 September to 1 October 2016	France and USA	Viki Campbell	Participate in NAFC Working Group market appraisal – large fixed wing air tanker services
1 to 14 October 2016	Edmonton, Canada	Harry Vertsonis	Supervise testing of new generation Personal Protective Clothing at University of Alberta
7 to 9 September 2016	Lord Howe Island	Stuart Robb	Carry out structure fire investigation and after action review and maintain strategic relationships with Lord Howe Island Board
27 September to 3 October 2016	Gaborone, Botswana	Senior Assistant Commissioner Bruce McDonald and Superintendent Brian Graham	Travel to Gaborone, Botswana to attend 50th anniversary of independence as representatives of Minister and Commissioner
19 to 26 March 2017	Reno, USA	Assistant Commissioner Rebel Talbert	Attend 2017 International Association of Fire Chiefs Wildland Urban Interface Conference
28 April to 10 May 2017	Baltimore, USA	Majors Ian Spall and Kerry Spall	Attend International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) 14th World Congress on Stress, Trauma and Coping
29 May to 4 June 2017	Botswana	Superintendent Brian Graham and Warwick Teasdale	Represent the NSW RFS at the Botswana National Fire Management Conference
5 to 10 June 2017	Botswana	Keith Davies	Travel to Botswana to facilitate arrival of fire tankers donated by the Australian Government

## 4.5 Annual Report costs

The Organisational Communications team is responsible for the production of the Annual Report. The total external costs incurred in the production of this report were \$0.

The report is accessible on the NSW RFS website [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au)

Copies may be obtained by emailing: [organisational.communications@rfs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:organisational.communications@rfs.nsw.gov.au)

## 4.6 Risk Management and Insurance

Total deposit premiums (excluding GST) paid	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Workers compensation - salaried staff	1,182,260	843,308	680,117	758,513
Workers compensation - volunteers	3,000,000	3,500,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Motor vehicle	3,016,610	3,374,980	3,361,510	4,981,140
Public liability	2,964,320	2,911,530	3,073,780	3,457,420
Property	98,120	65,630	48,610	36,010
Other	23,970	17,760	13,150	11,370
Totals	10,285,280	10,713,208	9,177,167	11,244,453

### NOTES

- 1: Insurance coverage is provided by the NSW Treasury Managed Fund for all areas except for workers compensation coverage for volunteers. NSW RFS volunteers are covered by the Bush Firefighters Compensation Fund administered by icare.

## 4.7 Review Use of Credit Cards

30 June 2017

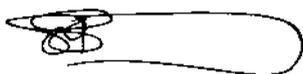
Corporate credit cards are available to approved staff of the NSW RFS upon the approval of the Chief Financial Officer or delegate.

NSW RFS corporate and purchasing credit cards are used for approved business related expenditure.

Credit card transactions by cardholders are reviewed by officers within the NSW RFS and any irregularities are reported to management.

I certify that credit card use in the NSW RFS has been in accordance with the established NSW RFS policy, Premier's Memoranda and Treasurer's Directions.

SIGNED:



Shane Fitzsimmons, AFSM  
NSW RFS Commissioner

## 4.8 Payment Performance

AGED ANALYSIS AT THE END OF EACH QUARTER 2016/17

Quarter	Current (i.e. within due date) \$'000	Less than 30 days overdue \$'000	Between 30 and 60 days overdue \$'000	Between 61 and 90 days overdue \$'000	More than 90 days overdue \$'000
<b>All suppliers</b>					
September	837	41	218	(128)	223
December	4,255	3,006	183	(182)	32
March	1,622	983	449	(207)	96
June	6,081	686	55	123	54
<b>Small business suppliers</b>					
September	0	0	0	0	0
December	0	0	0	0	0
March	0	0	0	0	0
June	0	0	0	0	0

ACCOUNTS DUE OR PAID WITHIN EACH QUARTER 2016/17

Measure	Sept 2016	Dec 2016	March 2017	June 2017
<b>All suppliers</b>				
Number of accounts due for payment	5,849	6,709	6,355	6,997
Number of accounts paid on time	5,525	6,411	5,804	6,576
Actual percentage of accounts paid on time (based on number of accounts)	94%	96%	91%	94%
Dollar amount of accounts due for payment \$'000	48,742	70,172	58,064	42,196
Dollar amount of accounts paid on time \$'000	46,394	63,586	51,105	38,914
Actual percentage of accounts paid on time (based on \$)	95%	91%	88%	92%
Number of payments for interest on overdue accounts	0	0	0	0
Interest paid on overdue accounts	0	0	0	0
<b>Small business suppliers</b>				
Number of accounts due for payment to small business	9	17	7	8
Number of accounts due to small businesses paid on time	9	17	7	8
Actual percentage of small business accounts paid on time (based on number of accounts)	100%	100%	100%	100%
Dollar amount of accounts due for payment to small businesses \$'000	10	28	34	10
Dollar amount of accounts due to small businesses paid on time \$'000	10	28	34	10
Actual percentage of small business accounts paid on time (based on \$)	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of payments to small business for interest on overdue accounts	0	0	0	0
Interest paid on overdue accounts	0	0	0	0

## 4.9 Engagement of consultants

During the reporting period, one consultant was engaged at a total cost of \$162,229.

Consultancies equal to or more than \$50,000	Cost (\$)
<b>Personnel and industrial</b>	
Diplomacy Management Consulting (industrial relations advice and advocacy service)	\$162,229
Consultancies less than \$50,000	Cost (\$)
<b>Accounting general</b>	-
Total consultancies	\$162,229

## 4.10 Funds granted to non-government organisations

	Program area	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Nature and purpose
Nature Conservation Council of NSW	Operations	115,485	118,372	121,331	124,364	134,671	Annual funding to allow the Council to meet its responsibilities under the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> .
Total		115,485	118,372	121,331	124,364	134,671	

## 4.11 Privacy statement

The *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIPA)* establishes certain principles governing the manner and circumstances in which personal information may be collected and used. The *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (HRIPA)* also stipulates the responsibilities of private organisations and public agencies in dealing with health information.

The NSW RFS Service Standard, 1.1.14 Personal Information and Privacy, sets out the manner in which members of the NSW RFS shall collect and use personal information in carrying out the functions of the NSW RFS, so as to comply with the provisions of the PPIPA and HRIPA. The NSW RFS Privacy Management Plan also forms part of this Service Standard and articulates the responsibilities of the NSW RFS under PPIPA and HRIPA.

There were no reviews of the NSW RFS application of the PPIPA Act by or on behalf of the Service during 2016/17.

# Glossary

ACRONYM	MEANING
AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council
AFSM	Australian Fire Service Medal
AIDER	Assist Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents
BFCC	Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee
BFDP	Bush Fire Danger Period
BFEAC	Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code
BFF	Bush Fire Fighter training
BFHC	Bush Fire Hazard Complaint
BFIL	Bush Fire Information Line
BFMC	Bush Fire Management Committee
BFRMP	Bush Fire Risk Management Plan
BNHCRC	Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre
BRAC	Bush Fire Resilience in Aboriginal Communities
BRIMS	Bush Fire Risk Information Management System
CEG	Corporate Executive Group
CFU	Community Fire Unit
CHIP	Complaint Handling Improvement Plan
CISS	Critical Incident Support Services
CPP	Community Protection Plan
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
EAM SAP	Enterprise Asset Management Project
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunities
FBA	Fire Behaviour Analysis
FBA <sub>n</sub>	Fire Behaviour Analyst
FCC	Fire Control Centre
FRNSW	Fire & Rescue NSW
FDR	Fire Danger Rating
FSJSC	Fire Services Joint Standing Committee
GIPA	Government Information (Public Access)
GIS	Geographic Information System
GRN	Government Radio Network
<i>GSE Act</i>	<i>Government Sector Employment Act</i>

ACRONYM	MEANING
HFI	Health and Fitness Initiative
ICMI	Incident Controller Major Incident
ICON	Incident Control On Line
IMT	Incident Management Team
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
MAA	Mutual Aid Agreement
MIC	Major Incident Coordination
MICC	Major Incident Coordination Centre
MLU	Ministerial Liaison Unit
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MyRFS	<a href="http://www.myrfs.nsw.gov.au">www.myrfs.nsw.gov.au</a> (volunteer extranet)
NAFC	National Aerial Firefighting Centre
NGWSP	Next Generation Workforce Strategic Plan
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW)
NSP	Neighbourhood Safer Places
NSW RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
NSW SES	NSW State Emergency Service
PAWS	Portable Automatic Weather Stations
PBP	Planning for Bush Fire Protection
PESC	Planning and Environment Service Centres
PSU	Professional Standards Unit
RAFSO	Remote Area Firefighting and Specialised Operations
RAFT	Remote Area Firefighting Team
RART	Rapid Aerial Response Team
RFSANZ	NSW Rural Fire Service Association
RFSAC	Rural Fire Service Advisory Council
s44	s44 Section 44 of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> (declaration of major fire emergency)
SOC	State Operations Centre
SOE	Standard Operating Environment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SWS	Static Water Supply
V2C	Volunteer to Career program

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# Errata

## 3.3 Membership applications

4 DECEMBER 2017

Table updated following a review of historical data of junior member applications between 2014 and 2016. Previously published figures understated junior membership applications.

# NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## Postal address

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