

**NSW BUDGET DELIVERS \$831 MILLION FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES**

17 June, 2007

**NSW Premier Morris Iemma today announced that this year's NSW Budget would deliver a record \$831.5 million funding for our emergency services - an increase of \$66.3 million or 8.7 per cent over last year.**

Mr Iemma was joined by NSW Minister for Emergency Services, Nathan Rees in congratulating our emergency workers for their unstinting efforts, not just in the past week but all year round.

He said the funding boost met his Government's election commitment to increase investment in our emergency services to ensure NSW families will continue to receive world-class emergency protection.

"The devastating floods and storm damage in the Hunter and Central Coast were a dramatic demonstration of the importance and debt we owe to our emergency services – especially to our volunteers," Mr Iemma said.

"We will continue to back our emergency services by giving them the resources they need to protect our community in times of natural disasters and other major emergencies.

"The increase in this budget recognises the hard work and dedication of members of the NSW Fire Brigades, Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service and the volunteer marine and rescue services.

"It delivers again on the firm commitment we have given our emergency services to provide them with the equipment, training and accommodation they need for their invaluable and challenging work."

Mr Iemma said that over 13 years, the NSW Government has now committed a total of \$6.9 billion to the State's emergency services so that professionals and volunteers can carry out their work safely and effectively.

"A feature of this year's budget will be the investment of almost \$53.8 million for bushfire tankers, fire engines and SES response vehicles and floodboats."

Mr Rees said the **Fire Brigades' record budget of \$544.5 million** included funding for new fire engines and specialised vehicles, upgraded fire stations, counter terrorism equipment and establishing and supporting Community Fire Units.

"The **Rural Fire Fighting Fund is set at an unprecedented \$198.6 million**. Our volunteer firefighters will receive more tankers, upgraded stations and fire control centres and more funding for bushfire prevention works," Mr Rees said.

"The **budget of the SES is \$51.5 million** and includes \$1.7 million for rescue equipment, \$542,000 for 20 new floodboats and \$800,000 to help provide safe, reliable vehicles for volunteers."

Budget highlights for the emergency services include:

### **NSW Fire Brigades:**

The NSW Fire Brigades' 2007/08 budget of \$544.5 million is an increase of \$21.3 million (4.1 per cent) on last year. Spending will include:

- \$18 million for more than 40 fire engines, heavy rescue vehicles, high rise firefighting vehicles and other specialist appliances (including \$7 million brought forward late last year);
- \$5 million to upgrade fire stations around the State, improving firefighters' working conditions;
- \$5.4 million for firefighter safety and counter terrorism equipment, such as thermal imaging cameras, gas detectors monitors and defibrillators; and
- \$2.6 million to establish and support Community Fire Units.

### **Rural Fire Service:**

The 2007/08 Rural Fire Fighting Fund is \$198.6 million - an increase of \$30.5 million (18 per cent) on last year. The Fund includes:

- \$34.5 million for bushfire tankers;
- \$15 million for new and upgraded brigade stations and fire control centres, including installing water tanks to reduce reliance on drinking water supplies;
- \$9.05 million for bushfire protection works.

A further \$4.6 million also will be provided under the joint State-Commonwealth Bushfire Mitigation Program for fire trail construction, maintenance and signage.

### **State Emergency Service:**

The SES 2007/08 budget of \$51.5 million is an increase of \$9.9 million (23.8 per cent). It includes:

- \$2.4 million for upgraded communications and paging systems for SES volunteers;
- \$1.7 million to provide rescue equipment, including new motorised hydraulic cutters for road crash rescue units;
- \$800,000 to assist with the cost of purchasing emergency response vehicles for SES Units around the State; and
- \$542,000 for 20 new floodboats for units around the State.

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