



Greg Aplin MP
Member for Albury

MEDIA RELEASE

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NANCY BIRD READY TO SUPPORT OUR FIRE FIGHTERS

Member for Albury, Greg Aplin has welcomed the naming of the waterbombing DC-10 Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT) "Nancy Bird" in honour of renowned Australian aviator Nancy Bird Walton AO OBE.

Nancy Bird Walton was the first woman in Australia to obtain a commercial pilot's licence and was the founder of an outback air ambulance service. Like our NSW RFS volunteers, she provided invaluable emergency response across regional NSW.

Mr Aplin said it was fitting that the VLAT Nancy Bird be tasked with protecting lives and property across NSW.

"Our volunteers face unpredictable conditions every time they respond to a fire," Mr Aplin said.

"We are indebted to the 74,000 NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers who protect this state from the devastation of bushfires, and I'm proud to be part of a Government that is committed to supporting them.

Minister for Emergency Services Troy Grant said the start of the bush fire season had been demanding with more than 6,200 NSW RFS volunteers responding to 2,500 fires in September alone.

"We have seen firsthand the benefit of having the Large Air Tanker "Thor" available to help attack and contain those fires," Mr Grant said.

"Our volunteers face walls of fire and step into hellish conditions to keep us safe. They need all the help they can get.

We want them to be reassured knowing Nancy Bird, Thor, and a 100 other aerial appliances are ready to respond in the event of a serious emergency."

The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government allocated \$38 million in the 2017-18 Budget to secure the use of the LAT and VLAT in the summer bushfire period over the next 4 years.

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