



Gabrielle Upton
Minister for the Environment

MEDIA RELEASE

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PARKS FIREFIGHTING GETS \$11M BOOST

Two state-of-the-art helicopters and 280 firefighting units have been added to the state's national parks firefighting stable.

Environment Minister Gabrielle Upton today took delivery of the first of two \$3.3 million state-of-the-art helicopters and announced a \$5 million contract to deliver 280 new Cat 9 firefighting units to be replaced on NPWS vehicles over the next 4 years.

"The \$11.6 million boost means our highly skilled, world class National Parks and Wildlife Service firefighters will be better equipped to face the conditions ahead," Ms Upton said.

"The helicopters will ensure we can get trained Rapid Aerial Firefighting Teams (RAFT) into rugged and remote areas quickly and safely to extinguish wildfires before they take hold and threaten life and property.

"These helicopters are modified to operate in the most difficult environments, at high altitudes and carrying heavy loads - all essential for NPWS work firefighting.

"The Category 9 fire-fighting units fit onto existing vehicles and transport water, staff and equipment to rough and rugged fire fighting zones.

"The upgrade includes more water in the tanks (from 400 litres to 500), lightweight hoses, LED floodlighting and beacons and faster operating hose reels.

The NPWS has increased its fleet of these specialised vehicles by 14% over the past 3 years, with an additional 280 units to be replaced over the next 4 years.

"I am particularly delighted that ICR Engineering Pty Ltd based in regional NSW has won the 4 year contract to manufacture and supply the new units, bringing significant benefits to the regional economy.

The Minister thanked NPWS staff for their commitment to fire management across the national park estate's 870 parks and reserves, accounting for more than 9% of the State.

"They work as part of an inter-agency effort led by NSW Rural Fire Service and with Fire and Rescue NSW and Forestry Corp and they have a long and successful history of supporting one another to keep our communities safe and having the very best equipment behind them is essential."

Since 2011, the Government has increased funding to enable NPWS to double its hazard reduction effort across the State with its successful Enhanced Bushfire Management Program. The program was renewed in 2017, with a further \$92M of funding being allocated over five years. Under the program, NPWS has achieved 135,000 hectares of hazard reduction activity per year on a five-year rolling average.

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