



Dominic Perrottet

Treasurer and Minister for Industrial Relations

Troy Grant

Minister for Emergency Services

Minister for Police

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW BUDGET: MASSIVE AIR TANKERS SECURED FOR NSW BUSHFIRES

Massive fixed-wing tankers will continue to be part of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) arsenal for fighting major bushfires, Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Minister for Emergency Services Troy Grant announced today.

With \$38 million allocated over four years as part of Budget 2017-18 the State will continue to engage the Very Large Air Tankers and Large Air Tankers like those nicknamed “Thor” and “Southern Belle”.

“The Liberal & National Government will continue to prioritise the State’s fire-fighting capability at this budget and into the future, ensuring that we minimise the destruction caused by bushfires.” Treasurer Perrottet said.

“During a two-year trial, these air tankers flew over 130 missions on more than 50 firegrounds and dropped 6 million litres of retardant on bush and grass fires. We want to continue to provide this critical support in emergency situations.”

Mr Grant said that after seeing the devastation caused by the Sir Ivan bush fire in February and the impact “Thor” and “Southern Belle” had on the fire ground, there was no hesitation backing in continued aerial support for the RFS.

“Our RFS volunteers and staff work tirelessly on the ground, they put their lives on the line in incredibly dangerous situations. The big plane tankers give teams on the ground a real edge in a bush or grass fire,” Mr Grant said.

“These planes can carry 15,000 to 43,000 litres of firefighting retardant, and they can reach any location in NSW within an hour of takeoff.”

The NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons welcomed the announcement, saying the aerial support added to the tools available to the RFS to do their job.

“Over the past two fire seasons these two large aircraft have proved their worth,” Mr Fitzsimmons said.

“They have had a significant impact on bush and grass fires right across the state. The integration of these aircraft with other aircraft and the hard working firefighters on the ground have in no doubt saved lives and livelihoods.”

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