

Media Release

Blue Mountains Unit

1700hrs 3 May 2015

Blue Mountains SES Teams Across the State

The 3rd May 2015 is the 60th Birthday of the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) which was formed after deadly floods affected the Hunter Valley in 1955. This year seems no different with a large number of Blue Mountains SES resources deployed to the same region as the NSW North Coast experienced the wettest April recorded in history.

For an operational period of 14 days straight, more than ½ of the Blue Mountains SES fleet was deployed to Gosford, Wyong, Taree, Grafton and Port Stephens after the SES had received more than 21000 calls for assistance.

Whilst the weather had settled by Sunday, Blue Mountains Flood Rescue Technician Andrew Bennet remained on standby in Grafton this week as flood waters are still a concern in the Clarence Valley this week.

“We were woken at 2am on Sunday morning to rescue a family stranded 45 minutes drive away from Grafton” Mr Bennett stated.

“Whilst enroute we were advised that the family were now safe and I was redirected to a report of a large dog trapped in South Grafton”, Mr Bennett continued.

“When I arrived, I found the dog caught on a washing basket under the house which is in a flooded area and I had to use my Rescue Trauma shears to release him”.

The Blue Mountains Unit had also deployed a number of storm damage teams over the 14 day period in the Gosford and Wyong areas.

“Most of our teams attended large trees that had fallen on houses” John Hughes, Local Controller for the Blue Mountains SES stated.

“Some of these trees had been on the houses for over a week but there was so much damage along the coast SESresources were stretched to their limit” Mr Hughes continued.

“After two weeks, Blue Mountains teams attended to almost 100 jobs on the Central Coast and just had record almost 1000 volunteer hours of time just to this operation.”

During the same period, the heavy rains in the Blue Mountains had caused local damage requiring the SES to attend to 135 calls for assistance from Mt Victoria down to Lapstone.

If any members of the public require assistance during storms, the SES can be contacted on 132500 at any time.

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Released by John Hughes – Local Controller 2100hrs April 26, 2015