

## Media Release

Blue Mountains Unit

2300hrs 31 January 2016

### Summer Storms Impact Blue Mountains

In the last week of January, the NSW SES has responded to 99 requests for assistance as severe storms affected the Blue Mountains. On Friday 29<sup>th</sup>, the Bureau of Meteorology issued a Severe Weather Warning just after midday and within the hour more than 40mm of rain had fallen in the lower Blue Mountains causing local flooding.

Winds estimated over 100kph swept through Blaxland, mainly around Ross Crescent, bringing down a large number of trees which caused extensive power outages and damage to over 20 homes within a square kilometre.

“It was more like a mini cyclone out of no where” stated John Hughes, Local Controller for the NSW SES.

“The force of the winds in Ross Crescent that we witnessed 25 metre trees ripped out of the ground yet less than 500 metres away it looked almost untouched”

More than 35 volunteers of the NSW SES were responded across the lower Blue Mountains for the following 48 hours making properties safe. The NSW SES was assisted by RFS volunteers as well as crews from Fire & Rescue NSW to help clear the extensive damage. Endeavour Energy crews worked into the weekend restoring services to the affected areas.

Then on Saturday afternoon a number of intense storm cells swept across the Mountains, with more than 40mm of rain falling from each cell. The rain was so intense that emergency crews were called to a house in Tallwood Road at Warimoo where part of the roof had collapsed. The Great Western Highway came to a standstill as flash flooding closed all eastbound lanes at Valley Heights.

The storm continued its destructive path into Penrith where extensive damage was caused across the western suburbs. Blue Mountains SES volunteers were then redeployed to Penrith on Sunday to assist with the clean up in neighbour suburbs.

“We expect more storms to come in February” Mr Hughes continued, “This is the month were in the last 10 years we have experienced the most intense summer storms and our teams of volunteers across the State are prepared for these conditions to continue”

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 2300hrs 31 January 2016**