

Media Release

Blue Mountains Unit

2100hrs 3 November 2013

SES Assisting Bushfire Victims in Operation Make-Safe

More than 160 volunteers of the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) Sydney Western Region coming from as far as Leichhardt who assisted during the fires two weeks ago returned to the Mountains last weekend to help the community as part of the recovery program.

The SES was bought in as part of the Operation Make-Safe which included members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Public Works. The skills of the SES volunteers were used to inspect almost 200 properties affected by fire and assess the condition of trees that were damaged.

“Then we were able to task to have the trees removed by SES and ADF members” stated John Hughes, Local Controller of the Blue Mountains SES.

“Our volunteers spent most the day on Saturday conducting the risk assessments in the fire damages streets of Winmalee and Yellow Rock, and came back on Sunday to make the trees safe.” Mr Hughes continued.

“In all, we inspected 915 trees and our volunteers removed 228 that were classified as a threat to properties by Sunday evening”

The SES also tasked a further 71 properties with dangerous to be completed by the ADF over the next week.

“Whilst the removal of fire-damaged trees may not be the core responsibility of the SES, our volunteers are more than happy and proud to assist the community during in this harrowing time” stated Mr Hughes

The SES will continue to coordinate with the member organisations of the Recovery Committee such as Public Works to assist any residents who still have concerns over trees that may threaten properties.

Whilst the SES were still completing bushfire tasks on Sunday evening, winds gusting over 60kph brought large tree down onto a house in Yellow Rock causing extensive damage to the roof and internal ceiling. An SES team from Parramatta responded to the two storey house which took 6 hours to make safe

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