

Thursday, 30 April 2009

PRAISE FOR STATE'S FIREFIGHTERS AS SEASON ENDS

Emergency Services Minister, Michael Wright, today thanked all Country and Metropolitan Fire Service members who've helped keep our State and community safe during this fire danger season.

Today officially marks the end of the Fire Danger Season across all fifteen-fire bans districts.

Since 1 July 2008, the Country Fire Service has responded to 6,393 incidents with another 4,439 support responses. Of these incidents 1,900 were rural fires.

"The State Government extends its sincerest gratitude to all the men and women who responded to over 10,000 emergency call outs, a job well done. The contribution made by Country and Metropolitan Fire Service members to the State and to our community is greatly appreciated," Minister Wright said.

"South Australian Police have also played an important role this fire danger season through Operation Nomad. During the 2008/09 fire danger season, 166 people have been arrested or reported by police for offences relating to bushfires, including deliberately lighting a fire and light or maintain a fire during the Fire Danger Season.

"87 others have also been issued with fines for breaches of the Fire and Emergency Services Act. All those involved in protecting our state during the fire danger season should be commended for their stellar efforts," Minister Wright said.

Throughout the fire danger season, Country Fire Service utilised aircraft in support of fire management. In total, aircraft were tasked approximately 130 times and proved an effective tool in supporting fire fighters on the ground. Aircrafts used included:

- 7 fixed wing fire bombers;
- 2 medium rotary wing Helitak bombers;
- 1 heavy rotary wing Helitak bomber (Air crane);
- 3 fixed wing surveillance aircraft;
- 1 rotary wing surveillance helicopter;

CFS also accessed the rescue helicopter service for surveillance activities.

"Even though the weather has started to cool down, there's still the potential for fires to cause serious damage to life, property and the environment. Even beyond the fire danger season, there may be days when the weather could become conducive to increasing the fire hazard, so South Australians should remember to remain vigilant," Minister Wright said.