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MEDIA RELEASE

NSW SES welcomes independent review into Northern Rivers flooding

The NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) has today welcomed the independent review into the response and management of flooding that affected communities in the Northern Rivers in March and April this year.

Former NSW Police Deputy Commissioner, Dave Owens, conducted the review following the devastating floods that saw NSW SES volunteers respond to 3,400 calls for help and almost 500 flood rescues.

NSW SES Commissioner, Mark Smethurst, said the report was an opportunity for the Service to demonstrate its ability to serve its communities across the state.

“The NSW SES has already implemented several of the recommendations in the review such as formalising a new process for the issuing of Evacuation Warnings and Orders, implementing pre-deployable incident management resources, reinforcing fatigue management systems and policy, and closer liaison with the Bureau of Meteorology to have a suitable representative based at the NSW SES State Operations Centre.

“What’s important to note is the incredible contribution made by NSW SES volunteers during these floods. They sacrificed their time from work and family to protect people, when their own properties and loved ones may have been at risk.

“These dedicated men and women of the NSW SES should be commended for this tremendous contribution and it is important the community continues to support them.”

“One of our key priorities is continuing to educate communities in these flood-prone areas to ensure they understand their flood risk, they know how to prepare themselves for a flood, and they know how to act when a Flood Evacuation Warning or Order is issued,” Commissioner Smethurst said.

“The independent review states that preparation and planning for a major flood is everyone’s responsibility and the NSW SES will continue to engage communities, local councils and other groups to ensure people are aware of what they can do to mitigate their flood risk in the future,” he concluded.

The full report and NSW SES response to the report along with other documentation can be found here <https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/about-us/access-to-information/>

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