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Tuesday 7 January 2020

NRMA Insurance helicopter helps NSW Rural Fire Service firefighting efforts with deployment of new fire retardant

NRMA Insurance has assisted the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) over the weekend trialling a new biodegradable, non-toxic fire retardant via the NRMA helicopter to help protect homes and properties in the line of fire.

In an Australian first, the NRMA helicopter has sprayed Fire Limit fire retardant around properties and community assets near Batemans Bay and Moruya to help protect these communities in advance of bushfires. Helicopters are more precise than fixed wing aircraft as they can spray directly onto the four walls of a home or building.

The trial is part of ongoing support over the past 18 months where NRMA Insurance has partnered with the RFS to deploy the helicopter to help bushfire fighting efforts.

The NRMA helicopter has flown for more than 40 days and clocked up more than 300 hours since November 2019. The helicopter has dual capability, supporting firefighting efforts on the ground through fire retardant around Moruya and Batemans Bay along with waterbombing on the NSW South Coast, at the Gaspers Mountain fire, Turrumurra and Cessnock.

NRMA Insurance spokesperson Luke Gallagher said the NRMA helicopter has and will continue to help the NSW RFS protect communities for the remainder of the bushfire season.

“We’re experiencing some of the worst bushfires and most challenging conditions we’ve seen. The NRMA Insurance helicopter is providing the RFS with another aerial asset to help protect our vulnerable communities.

“We’re already seeing good outcomes from the helicopter trial, which is looking at how new fire-retardant technology can help protect homes and properties in the path of a bushfire,” Mr Gallagher said.

The NRMA Helicopter is trialling Fire Limit – a biodegradable, non-toxic fire retardant which can be used to attack a fire or protect property for up to two weeks after it’s deployed.

The trial is the first of its kind in Australia and is designed to provide the NSW RFS with a direct and timely way to help protect homes, buildings and community infrastructure.

NSW Rural Fire Service Chief Superintendent, Manager State Operations & Aviation Ben Millington said the NRMA Insurance helicopter and Fire Limit trial gives them another line of defence to protect people and communities from fire.

“We are always looking at new technology and new ways to combat fire. The NRMA helicopter trial has the potential to provide additional benefit to the community.

“The helicopter has the potential to help the RFS provide timely and precise protection of homes, structures and important community infrastructure,” Chief Superintendent Millington said.

Media Release



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The RFS makes all operational decisions about the NRMA helicopter, including when and where it is deployed and how the fire retardant will be used to ensure it helps communities most in need of protection.

NRMA Insurance, with its parent company IAG, has a long history of supporting emergency services and volunteers to help create more resilient communities around Australia.

To support people and communities impacted by the recent bushfires, NRMA has:

- A dedicated major event claims team contacting customers, where possible, located within the impacted communities.
- Assessing and building teams on standby to support customers once it's safe to enter the impacted areas.
- Emergency accommodation and financial assistance available for affected customers.
- Extra people in its call centre to help customers lodge their claims as soon as possible.
- Customers have access to free and confidential counselling by a team of psychologists experienced in providing post-incident support.

NRMA encourages customers be in contact as soon as they can to lodge claims, access emergency accommodation or request other assistance. Customer records are kept electronically, so a customer only needs their name and address to find a policy.

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