



ACT Government

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Taking the Territory forward

MEDIA RELEASE

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MORE REMOTE AREA FIRE FIGHTING TRAINING FOR ACT RFS

The skill level of the ACT's specialist remote area fire fighters will be increased with additional funding for specialised training as part of the ACT Rural Fire Service training allocation in the ACT Government's 2007-08 Budget.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services Simon Corbell today announced the ACT Government had provided an additional \$394,000 over four years to further develop the abilities of the specialist Remote Area Firefighting Teams (RAFTs).

"RAFTs offer the ACT Rural Fire Service (ACT RFS) the option of placing these bushfire specialists in hard to access areas to try to stop bushfires in their path," Mr Corbell said.

"Successful operations by the RAFTs can mean the difference between containing a fire in a small area or having it spread over a much larger space.

"The ACT RFS has developed three of these RAFTs in the last 18 months.

"The teams have been deployed to many incidents within the ACT and have also supported the NSW RFS in its southern and eastern regions in that time.

"The new training will further refine the RAFTs skills to get closer to bushfires in remote areas and to get out again quickly in the case of an injury or an imminent threat due to changing circumstances.

"The ACT Government recognises the key role our volunteer fire fighters play in keeping the ACT community safe.

"Maintaining a highly skilled volunteer fire fighting organisation is a key to this."

Mr Corbell said training of the RAFTs was identified in the McLeod Report and the Coroner's Report into the January 2003 bushfires.

"That's why it's important our volunteers are given every opportunity to develop their skills to ensure the best possible defence from any bushfire threat in the future," he said.

"This funding confirms the ACT Government's continued commitment to providing our frontline emergency services personnel with the training they need."

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Enquiries: Monika Boogs

6205 0497

0419 423 603

monika.boogs@act.gov.au