



Minister Steve Whan

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Rural Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

Emergency Services to be Independent

April 7, 2010

Following extensive consultation with stakeholders, the NSW Government today announced it has abolished the overarching department of Police and Emergency Services NSW.

Emergency Services Minister, Steve Whan, said Police and Emergency Services agencies would continue to report directly to their respective Ministers. The recently established “super department” would be dissolved.

Staff transferred to the super department will be re-deployed back into their respective agencies, and the independence of police and emergency services agencies would again be reinforced.

“The Government has listened to the community and in particular our hard working emergency services frontline volunteers and staff,” Mr Whan said.

This decision recognises the variety of reforms and differences in service delivery requirements between those needed in the NSW Police Force and those in the emergency services.

The agencies will continue to work closely and co-operatively together as a cluster to achieve back office reforms allowing the savings to be invested and benefit our frontline services.

There will be no impact on the front-line services of the NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service or the NSW Police Force agencies delivered to the Public of NSW.

Each agency will continue to report through their respective Commissioner/Chief Executive Officer to their Minister.

The Commissioners and Emergency Services CEOs will be responsible for implementing reforms in areas such as payroll, HR functions, finance and other corporate areas.

The Rural Fire Service Association (RFSA), the organisation representing the State’s 70,000+ volunteer firefighters and staff, welcomed the decision.

“We are extremely pleased that Minister Whan listened to the Association’s concerns to protect our volunteers and ensure the integrity and autonomy of the Rural Fire Service is maintained,” RFSA President, Brian McKinlay said.

“The support of Minister Whan has been important at each stage in watering down the worst impacts of the proposal, which was opposed from the outset by our members, he has our thanks and congratulations for this excellent result,” Mr McKinlay said.