6 January 2022

Jacquie Petrusma, Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management

**Aerial firefighting fleet bolstered**

Tasmania’s firefighting capacity has been bolstered with the launch of the summer aviation fleet to help keep Tasmanians safe from the threat of bushfires.

Tasmania now has 12 specialised aircraft on hand to help fight fires from above, including a mix of firebombing, air supervision and aerial intelligence gathering aircraft. Eight are helicopters and four are fixed wing planes. These aircraft are made possible through the collaboration of the Tasmanian and Australian Governments who jointly fund the aircraft through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre.

The fleet are all strategically positioned so that they can be moved quickly around the State to respond to fires.

In addition, 20 local aircraft are available to call on to assist when required, taking the total firefighting aircraft available in Tasmania to 32. This will ensure a rapid response to bushfires when they start, keeping fires small until ground crews arrive.

Tasmania is well prepared for the bushfire season, and we recognise the importance of having access to a sophisticated, flexible, aerial firefighting capability to respond to bushfires, protect our communities and to support firefighters on the ground.

The Tasmania Fire Service, Parks and Wildlife Service and Sustainable Timbers Tasmania have been busy preparing for, and responding to bushfires over the last month.

We know that investing in the aerial firefighting fleet is a critical part of keeping Tasmanians safe during bushfire season.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is committed to keeping Tasmanians safe from the threat of bushfires, which is why we are investing $111.5 million over the forward estimates for bushfire prevention and safety measures.

<https://www.premier.tas.gov.au/site_resources_2015/additional_releases/aerial_firefighting_fleet_bolstered>