



FIREFIGHTING AND WATER REPLACEMENT

During bush fire emergencies, firefighters may need to draw water from private properties as they work to protect life and property by suppressing the fire.

Under certain circumstances, such as during a prolonged drought, this water may be replaced by the NSW RFS in consultation with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) as the Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area under the NSW Government's Disaster Assistance Scheme.

Water replacement may be provided during or after a bush fire emergency to livestock owners, and agricultural growers who meet the eligibility criteria below:

- water was taken to suppress a fire, or landowner has experienced an infrastructure failure as a result of a bush fire
- the water taken significantly impacts the landowner's ability to ensure sufficient water for livestock and agricultural purposes (e.g. vineyards, horticulture).

Hobby farmers who don't earn a significant portion of their income from agricultural enterprise will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Affected landowners should contact the NSW Department of Primary Industries (www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) or Local Lands Services (www.lls.nsw.gov.au) in their region for further advice.

The assessment will:

- verify that water was taken for firefighting purposes
- verify the amount of water taken
- consider the availability of alternate water sources as well as other factors such as recent or forecast rainfall
- in some instances arrange minor repairs to damaged infrastructure to enable water supply.

Following approval, water may be replaced in stages to assist in maintaining the welfare of livestock/animals and continue production, but will not exceed the total amount of water taken by firefighting authorities.

For further information visit the NSW DPI website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au or the Emergency NSW website at www.emergency.nsw.gov.au.