



# Robyn Preston MP

Member for Hawkesbury

---

## MEDIA RELEASE

---

Tuesday, 13 August 2019

### **'MARIE BASHIR' LARGE AIR TANKER TOUCHES DOWN**

For the very first time, NSW will have a permanent 737 Large Air Tanker (LAT) all year round to respond to bushfires across the State.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott welcomed the \$26.3 million permanent addition to the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) with Acting Commissioner Rob Rogers, Professor The Hon. Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO and Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston MP.

“The LAT will remain in NSW throughout the year. It has a cruising speed of 850km an hour, drops 15,000 litres of fire suppressant, can transport firefighters and is operational from today,” Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston MP said.

“While in previous years we have had contracted Large Air Tankers from the United States over the warmer months, this LAT is now here to stay,” Mr Elliott remarked.

“Our most important bush firefighting asset is our firefighters, and having this aircraft permanently available year round shows the NSW Government’s commitment to having the best available equipment to help protect lives and property.”

Dame Marie said she was humbled to receive this honour from the NSW RFS.

“Our emergency service members are world class and I thank them for all they have done and continue to do, protecting the communities of NSW,” Dame Marie said.

Ms Preston was delighted at the decision to name the new aircraft in honour of Dame Marie.

“The LAT is the first of its kind in Australia and it is great to have it permanently located at Hawkesbury,” Ms Preston said.

“The First Lady of dedication to service and former Governor of NSW, The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO, graced us with her presence today as she unveiled Australia’s very first permanent 737 Large Air Tanker which is named in her honour.”

“Minister Elliot, Dame Marie and I are very impressed with this tanker and its capabilities. This means more protection for the people, property and the bush, all delivered courtesy of the Berejiklian Government.”



# Robyn Preston MP

Member for Hawkesbury

NSW RFS Acting Commissioner Rob Rogers said the 737 and its two lead planes will provide fast, flexible and effective firefighting options, supporting crews on the ground.

“We saw an increase in fires last July and August, so it is comforting to know this aircraft is ready to be deployed at any time when needed,” Acting Commissioner Rogers said.

Coulson Aviation PTY will operate the LAT and its two lead planes.

**Media: Adam Foda | Office of Robyn Preston MP | (02) 4578 0300**