

# FIRE & RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

Fire and Rescue NSW protects over 7 million people, in an area of Australia that's over three times the size of the whole U.K. The service responds to more than 129,000 emergencies a year. To do so, it fields around 7,000 firefighters, working across 335 stations with a fleet of over 700 vehicles.

### CHALLENGE

Fire and Rescue NSW has responded to a wide range of serious events in recent years including the catastrophic 2019/2020 Australian Black Summer bushfires which burned an estimated 18.6 million hectares (46 million acres) and killed at least 33 people.

To maintain and improve its high standard of operational efficiency, the service needs technologies that are rugged and robust enough to withstand harsh Australian conditions. It also requires solutions to drive improvement in its response to major incidents and enable frontline and command center staff to work more efficiently in times of extreme pressure.

## **SOLUTION**

Fire and Rescue NSW's Communication Centre handles emergency calls with a computer aided dispatch system that helps to identify the location of callers and the nearest and best resources to attend to an incident. It has also introduced GIS technology into its fire trucks with mobile data terminals to provide the caller's details, status messaging and turn-by-turn instructions to an incident.

Fire and Rescue NSW also depends on voice communications during major emergencies. It is currently exploring ways to extend the reach of its mission-critical voice communications via carrier and satellite links to support, firefighters working in extremely remote environments.

#### **BENEFITS**

Through a combination of advanced technologies, Fire and Rescue NSW can respond with great speed while maintaining high levels of safety for firefighters and the community.

The agency is also planning for the greater use of cloud technology and other solutions including biometric sensors to obtain vital information and live video streams from firefighters in the field.



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"Firefighters already have so much to think about when they arrive on a scene – what's happened, who's injured, toxic gases, electricity lines and other hazards. They're thinking about all these things. If you introduce new technology, it's got to be seamless. The technology needs to keep them safe without them needing to actively think about it."

#### **Paul Barnes**

Director IT Operations & Communications Fire and Rescue NSW