



Name of Deployment (update 06)

News and information for families

01 March 2016

Welcome

The following update has been provided by Jamie Cowan, New Zealand Liaison for the National Rural Fire Authority during this deployment to Tasmania.

Day 50 of Campaign

We are now at Day 50 of this campaign. Although it's not to be celebrated as such, it certainly is a milestone!

Fire activity is decreasing due to favourable weather conditions, and many crews are working towards demobilising and heading home.

The Hon Wyatt Creech, Chair of the New Zealand Fire Service Commission and Gary Lockyer, Operations Manager for the National Rural Fire Authority, recently visited some of the crews. This provided them with an opportunity to see how New Zealand firefighters have contributed to this campaign.

Wyatt and Gary received glowing reports about New Zealand firefighters during their visit. An example of the outstanding comments included, "Kiwis are hardworking, always smiling and do a great job."

The commitment from our Kiwi crews working seven day shifts with a two day break has been noticed and our teams' are appreciated for their efforts.

Photo (right):
Wyatt Creech, Chair NZ
Fire Service
Commission, Pilot
Roger Corbin, Gavin
Freeman Acting Chief
Officer Tasmania Fire
Service, Jamie Cowan
NZ Liaison, and Gary
Lockyer Operations
Manager National
Rural Fire Authority.



State wide situation

Rain has fallen over much of the state in the past week, which has helped to improve the fire situation, and the number of personnel required from outside of Tasmania is steadily decreasing.

Stats from the fire ground:

- 1000km of fire perimeter
- 123,800Ha burnt
- 49 fires remain active
- 25 fires are listed as 'Going'
- 22 fires are in 'Patrol'
- 1 fire is 'Under Control'
- 1 fire is 'Being Controlled'
- 240 interstate or international personnel are on the ground, as well as 159 local troops, and
- 28 helicopters are currently in use.

Interesting fact! This fire event actually started by 1999 lightning strikes hitting the ground.

Where our crews and what are they up to?

Taskforce Charlie (Wuthering Heights fire):

Taskforce Charlie have been working on the Wuthering Heights fire. Significant progress has been made on blacking out and we expect this fire will not pose any further threat.

- Remote hot spots that have been located by thermal camera flights
- Hazardous tree identification and removal, and
- Fire line construction, cutting hand lines and working with heavy machinery.

The fire ground status has been downgraded to 'contained' as of 25 February, 2016. Furthermore, it is expected that the area will be put into 'patrol' over the next few days. Total area burnt has now reached 22,315Ha.

Taskforce Delta (Strathgordon, Gordon River fire):

Low cloud and drizzle have made life difficult to get out on the fire line over the past few days; however, Taskforce Delta are back on the line today working at a very remote site at the Strathgordon, Gordon River fire and are focusing on:

- Aerial insertion and hot spotting, and
- Suppression using hand tools, with support from helicopters.

There is no substantial change to the situation. Fire behaviour remains very quiet, which is largely due to recent rainfall (over 60 mm recorded in the past week).

Weather permitting, remote area crews will work in conjunction with water bombing helicopters continue to consolidate priority edges on the eastern flank before moving onto other edges in the coming days. Total area 1259Ha.

Important dates

Coming up over the next few days:

- 2/03/16 - Last day on the fire ground for all NZ crews
- 3/03/16 – New Zealand crews leave Tasmania for Melbourne and debrief
- 4/03/16 – New Zealand crews fly home

Photos – Charlie and Delta Taskforce



Photo: Taskforce Charlie's Richard Horn and Lui Brown.



Photo: Taskforce Charlie's morning Safety and Tasking Briefing by Trevor Bullock.



Photo: Going to need a bigger chainsaw Lui! (Richard, Lui, TJ, and Colin).



Photo: Taskforce Charlie hard at work digging up hot spots.



Photo: Another hot spot (TJ, Jonathan, and Lui).



Photo: Good to see Taskforce Delta's sense of humour is still intact!



Photo: This is why we wear goggles.



Photo: Taskforce Delta - Wet day visit to the Gordon River power station, 200m underground.



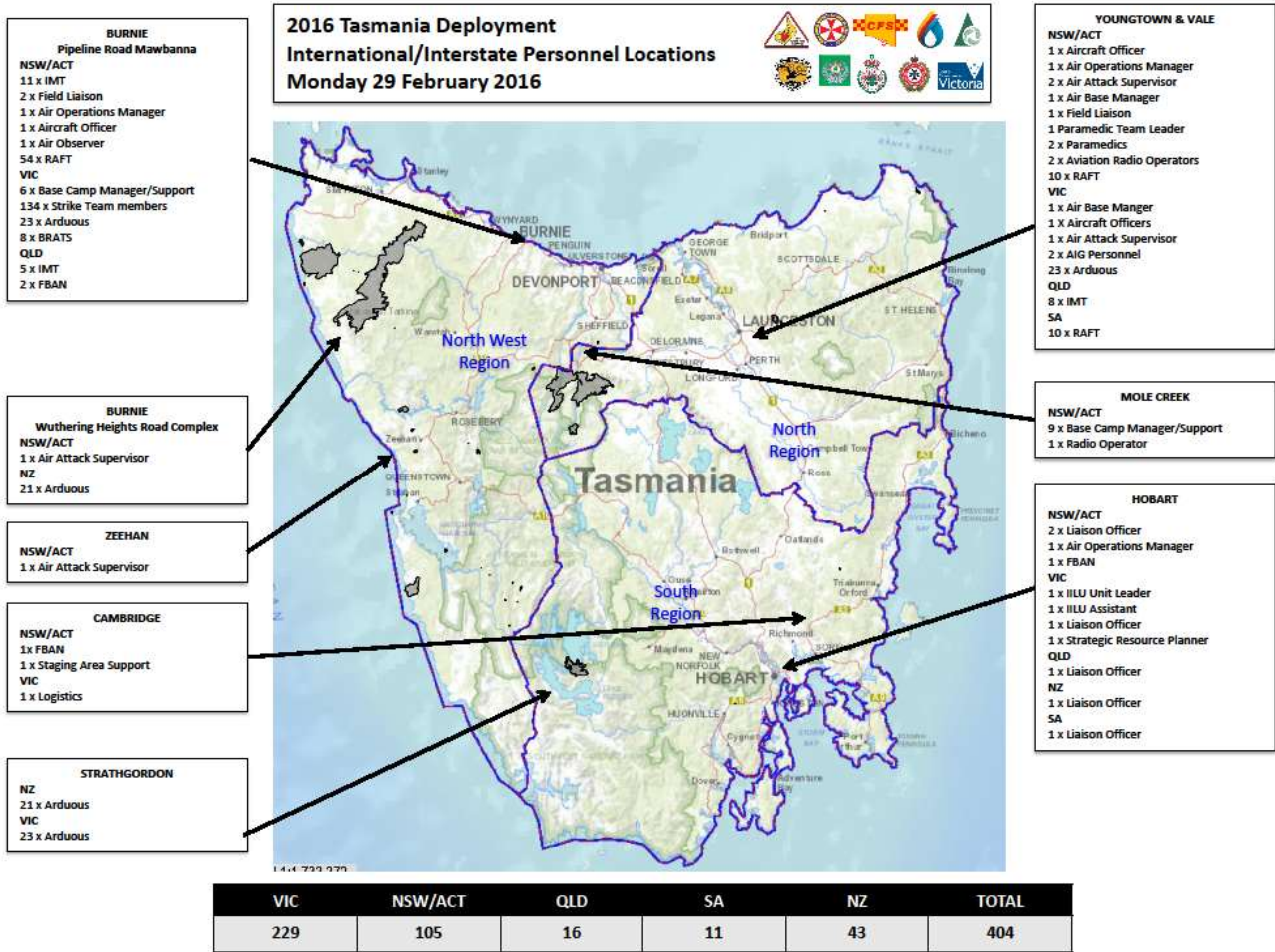
Photo: Defence crew - Rob Allen, Mathew Price, Stuart Bunn, Joshua Bowick and Nathan Thompson



Photo: Perimeter security. Tight scrub, very similar to NZ bush.

Locations

Note: this shows all personnel in country, not necessarily on the fire ground.



NZ Taskforces and Locations

Hobart – State Fire Operations Centre (SFOC)		
Jamie Cowan	NZ Liaison	Otago Rural Fire Authority
Arthur River Complex - Wuthering Heights Fire		
Trevor Bullock	Task Force Leader	Forest Protection Services
Joe Cowan	Crew Leader	Whangarei District Council
Taylor Snelgar	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council
Dylan McGuinty	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council
Kieren Sullivan	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council
Murray Johnstone	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council
Garrett Ugray	Crew Leader	Whangarei District Council
Patrick Roithmayr	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council
Nathan Sullian	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council
Andrew Nepia	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council

Nicky Robinson	Fire Fighter	Whangarei District Council
Graham Staples	Crew Leader	Waimea RFA
Karl Pulowski	Fire Fighter	Waimea RFA
Erik Wardrop	Fire Fighter	Waimea RFA
Matt Pearless	Fire Fighter	Waimea RFA
Rory Cobb	Fire Fighter	Waimea RFA
Jonathon Lane	Crew Leader	Timberlands
Richard Horn	Fire Fighter	Timberlands
Turi McLeod	Fire Fighter	Timberlands
Colin Tanatiu	Fire Fighter	Timberlands
Lui Brown	Fire Fighter	Timberlands
Strathgordon Complex - Gordon River and Maxwell River Fires		
Matt Flynn	Task Force Leader	Department of Conservation
Clinton Lyall	Crew Leader	Northern RFA
Hamish Sheppard	Fire Fighter	Department of Conservation
Shane Woolley	Fire Fighter	Department of Conservation
John Mytton	Fire Fighter	Department of Conservation
John Barrett	Fire Fighter	Otago RFA
Lance Dixon	Crew Leader	Auckland RFA
Wayne Anderson	Fire Fighter	Auckland RFA
Martijn Brunner	Fire Fighter	Auckland RFA
Sid West	Fire Fighter	Auckland RFA
Malcolm Zuppicich	Fire Fighter	Auckland RFA
Jamie Rhodes	Crew Leader	Pumicelands RFA
Andy Uhl	Fire Fighter	Pumicelands RFA
Tony Young	Fire Fighter	Pumicelands RFA
Roy Toia	Fire Fighter	Pumicelands RFA
Tyler Fox	Fire Fighter	Pumicelands RFA
Rob Allen	Crew Leader	NZ Defence Force
Nathan Thompson	Fire Fighter	NZ Defence Force
Mathew Price	Fire Fighter	NZ Defence Force
Stuart Bunn	Fire Fighter	NZ Defence Force
Joshua Bowick	Fire Fighter	NZ Defence Force