



SUPPLEMENTARY BUSINESS PAPER

(Item 8)

WORKSHOP MEETING

**Wednesday 23 February 2022
at 6:30PM**



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8 MR SHANE ALAN FITZSIMMONS AO AFSM

Hornsby Shire Council joins with many people in acknowledging the invaluable contributions to the citizens of New South Wales, and indeed the Nation, by the Head of Resilience NSW, Shane Alan Fitzsimmons AO AFSM.

A Berowra local, Mr Fitzsimmons' dedication to the community began as a volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) in Northern Sydney in 1985, and eventually led to his appointment to Commissioner of NSW RFS in 2007.

Mr Fitzsimmons' calm, steadfast, unassuming yet reassuring leadership during the 2019–2020 Australian bushfires crisis attracted the admiration of the people of Australia and drew praise from around the world.

With over six per cent of NSW or some 5.5 million hectares of land burned during the crisis, Mr Fitzsimmons had command of over 2,500 firefighters at the peak of the fire season.

Yet, in the words of former NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian: "[during] times of devastation and great heartache, he remained authentic and excelled in his role both operationally and emotionally".

As the BBC reported at the time: "At press briefings, he [became] renowned for delivering warnings and key developments – often bad news – in a straight-talking, informative way. As Commissioner, he [bore] ultimate responsibility for the fight against the State's blazes – some the size of small countries".

When in April 2020 the NSW Government established Resilience NSW, a new agency focused on disaster preparedness and recovery, it was most appropriate that Mr Fitzsimmons should be asked to lead it. Mr Fitzsimmons was also named the NSW Australian of the Year in 2020.

The citizens of Hornsby Shire are only too familiar with bushfires and other natural disasters.

As we confront the uncertainties of our time, it is fitting that we should express our appreciation of the empathetic, steady, and capable leadership of Shane Alan Fitzsimmons and celebrate his recent appointment as an Officer of the Order of Australia in the 2022 Australia Day Honours for "distinguished service to the community through leadership roles within fire and emergency response organisations".

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council express our appreciation of the empathetic, steady, and capable leadership of Shane Alan Fitzsimmons and celebrate his recent appointment as an Officer of the Order of Australia in the 2022 Australia Day Honours.

The Honourable Cr PHILIP RUDDOCK

Mayor

Attachments:

There are no attachments for this report.

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