



Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM

Commissioner of Resilience NSW, 2021 NSW Australian of the Year

THE PROFESSION

3:30pm-4:00pm

Resilience: In conversation with Shane Fitzsimmons

Join LSJ journalist and presenter Kate Allman as she sits down for an authentic chat with the Commissioner of Resilience NSW, Shane Fitzsimmons. This live interview with the former head of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) will see Shane open up about his personal experiences of resilience and share what it means for the legal profession. The conversation will feature important lessons on mental health and leadership, learned through his current role as Commissioner of Resilience NSW, his leadership through the Black Summer of bushfires, as well as 35 years in the RFS. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing challenges it presents to lawyers, this will be an important and timely session.

About Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM

Shane Fitzsimmons was appointed as the inaugural Commissioner for Resilience NSW and Deputy Secretary, Emergency Management with the Department of Premier and Cabinet from 1 May 2020.

He is currently the chair of the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), the State Recovery Committee (SRC), the Board of Commissioners (BOC) and the National Emergency Medal Committee (NEMC).

This appointment followed a distinguished career with the NSW Rural Fire Service of over 35 years, serving as both a volunteer and salaried member.

In 1998 he was appointed an Assistant Commissioner with the RFS and has held portfolio responsibilities for Operations, Strategic Development and Regional Management. In 2004, he was appointed the inaugural Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) Visiting Fellow to the Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM) for a period of 12-months, developing and delivering programs in management and leadership.

From September 2007 to April 2020, he was the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service. He was also the Chair of the NSW RFS Bushfire Coordinating Committee and the Rural Fire Service Advisory Council. He was also a member of the NSW State Emergency Management Committee and the NSW State Rescue Board (SRB) and was Chair of SRB from 2008 to November 2015. In July 2012, he was appointed a Board Member of the NSW Government Telecommunications Authority.

He was appointed a Director of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) in March 2008 and was the Chair of the NAFC Board from 2009 to 2013. He was a Director of the Bushfire Co-operative Research Centre from 2009 to 2014. He was a member of the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority Council from 2007 and was a member of its Board from November 2016 to November 2019 and held the position of Deputy President upon retirement from the Board.

In January 2016, he was appointed as a Councillor of the Royal Humane Society of NSW Inc.

Additionally, he is a patron of two charities – Kids Xpress and Coffee 4 Kids.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons has been awarded the Rural Fire Service Long-Service Medal for more than 30 years, the National Medal in recognition of more than 35 years, and the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM).

He has also been acknowledged with a Paul Harris Fellow and a Paul Harris Fellow Sapphire through Rotary Clubs of Berowra and Sydney.

He has most recently been announced as the 2021 NSW Australian of the Year, and the Australian Father of the Year 2020 through The Shepherd Centre.