Helicopter support for bushfires

WA's aerial firefighting fleet for the 2009-10 bushfire season includes two Type 1 helicopters, four helitacs and an air intelligence helicopter operated by FESA. In addition, there are eight fixed wing aircraft operated by both FESA and the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Emergency Services Minister Rob Johnson said the Government had invested $6.5million this season to ensure that Western Australia had one of the best aerial firefighting fleets at its disposal.

“The Government is committed to supporting fire crews and protecting the community from bushfires,” he said.

“We have joined forces with the Federal Government to boost the state’s aerial firefighting resources with additional funding for a second Type 1 water bombing helicopter.

“The Type 1 is capable of dropping nearly 4000 litres of water and can carry up to 15 firefighters with their equipment.

“This is the first time that we have had two Type 1 water bombers based in WA.

“This type of aircraft has a proven track record in our state, having flown nearly 100 successful missions in the last two seasons.”

While a Type 1 chopper is based in Perth, the second operates out of Busselton to protect lives and property in the highly vulnerable South West region.

Emergency Services Minister Rob Johnson with Chief Operations Officer Craig Hynes and the Type 1 helicopter based in Busselton.