



**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

**March 27, 2008**

Blackmount residents will soon have a new rural fire truck.

Southern Rural Fire Authority Principal Rural Fire Officer Mike Grant said the 4WD truck will be delivered on Monday, March 31, to the Blackmount volunteers.

“It’s a brand new vehicle and will give the 18 firefighting and medical response volunteers much more scope for fighting rural fires,” Mr Grant said.

Currently the area has a former Fire Service appliance which is set up for urban fires. The new truck will be much more appropriate and should last 20 plus years, he said.

“We were successful in getting a subsidy from the National Rural Fire Authority and so we pay one third and the national authority pays the rest.”

The truck was built in Australia and outfitted in Auckland before being brought down. It is one of five being delivered down the country.

The truck is the second for the southern authority after the Waikawa area received one last year.

Mr Grant hopes there will be one more new vehicle next year. Meanwhile, 14 tankers are being rebuilt over the next twelve years on newer second hand truck cabs and chassis to make them more suitable for the work they are doing. The first tanker should roll out by the end of June and the second before the end of this year.

The southern authority undertook a review two years ago to look at what was needed in different locations and what it had.

The new trucks went to areas that needed them the most, Mr Grant said.

The authority has 28 localities in the district, which runs from Beaumont across to Naseby and south, where it has firefighting equipment and/or tankers and trucks.

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