

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Thursday, 23 November 2023

## SUPPORTING OUR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICES

Victoria's hardworking emergency services volunteer agencies will receive almost \$15 million in funding for modern equipment and resources to help them protect local communities thanks to support from the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes today visited the Harcourt CFA brigade to announce the 2023-24 Victorian Emergency Service Equipment Program (VESEP) grants, which will help volunteer emergency services agencies across the state to purchase equipment and improve their emergency response capability.

The Harcourt brigade received a new medium tanker that was purchased with a \$320,000 VESEP grant, just in time for the summer season.

VESEP grants help fund modern operational equipment, vehicles and appliances and minor facility improvements for emergency service volunteer groups. As part of this year's program, CFA will receive more than \$10.8 million to fund 143 initiatives, helping to ensure Victoria's volunteer fire service is well-equipped to carry out its critical work.

Chiltern, Darlington and Maude brigades will all receive \$394,000 to purchase new medium tankers, significantly boosting their firefighting capabilities, while Camperdown, Sarsfield and Mallacoota brigades will each receive \$100,000 towards the upgrade of their volunteer headquarters.

The Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) will receive more than \$2.4 million, with Corio, Kaniva and Phillip Island units among others to receive grants of more than \$80,000 to replace utility vehicles. The Falls Creek Unit will use its grant of more than \$34,000 to purchase a replacement snowmobile and stretcher sled.

Life Saving Victoria clubs will be supported with more than \$858,000 in grants including Torquay Surf Life Saving Club, which will put its grant of \$65,000 towards lifesaving equipment including a defibrillator, new rescue boards and a utility vehicle. Brighton Life Saving Club will fit out its first aid room and purchase additional lifesaving gear with more than \$20,000 in funding.

Victoria's Marine Search and Rescue will also receive a funding boost of more than \$359,000, with Port Welshpool Coast Guard allocated more than \$50,000 for a new utility vehicle, and Paynesville Coast Guard to receive more than \$20,000 to purchase new camera equipment and accessories.

Since 2015, the Labor Government has provided more than \$123 million in VESEP grants to volunteers around the state. Groups can apply for a grant up to \$150,000 excluding GST, with the Government providing \$2 for every \$1 of funding contributed by the local volunteer group.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

*"Volunteers look forward to the VESEP grants every year – we're proud to support the vital fundraising work they do with this program."*

*"Our selfless emergency services volunteers are there when we need them most and these grants are all about helping ensure they have the latest equipment to do what they do best – protect communities and save lives."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

*"Congratulations to the Harcourt brigade and all the volunteer groups receiving grants, it's a pleasure to see first-hand the benefits programs like this provide for our dedicated volunteers."*

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