

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Friday, 8 October 2021

## FORMER POLICE CHIEF TO HEAD UP REVIEW OF ESTA CAPABILITIES

The Victorian Government has commissioned a review into how the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) delivers its triple zero services so it can continue to keep the community safe and provide its vital service.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes today announced the independent review of ESTA's capability and services would be led by former Victorian Chief Commissioner of Police Graham Ashton AM.

Mr Ashton will look at ESTA's current functions and provide advice to the Government on how to improve ESTA's capability across several areas.

As part of the review process, Mr Ashton will consult key stakeholders across the emergency services sector and will deliver the review findings and recommendations to government early next year.

ESTA provides the critical link between the Victorian community and the state's emergency services agencies, providing Victoria's 24-hour emergency call-taking and dispatch services for police, fire, ambulance and VICSES.

In 2020-21, ESTA answered more than 2.8 million calls, or one call every 11 seconds. More than 1.9 million of these calls came via the triple zero emergency call service.

With around one in three calls made to triple zero not requiring emergency assistance, ESTA is also continuing to support government initiatives to remind the community of the importance of leaving triple zero for emergencies to relieve pressure on the system.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* is delivering more than \$70 million for Victoria's emergency services, including ESTA, to continue their critical work as part of the state's emergency service response.

As part of this share, ESTA is recruiting 43 new full time-equivalent staff for call-taking, dispatch and mental health support roles.

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

*"Our hardworking emergency call takers have done their absolute best throughout unprecedented demand from the pandemic – but we want to see where things can be improved."*

*"Mr Ashton has expert knowledge of how our emergency services should operate, and I look forward to seeing his recommendations on how we can continue to support our emergency services agencies to keep Victorians safe."*