

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Thursday, 14 October 2021

FIRE SEASON INQUIRY PHASE TWO REPORT DELIVERED

The Victorian Government has tabled the second phase report from the Inspector-General for Emergency Management's (IGEM) independent inquiry into the 2019-20 Victorian fire season.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes today welcomed the report and confirmed the Andrews Labor Government's support for all 15 recommendations.

The recommendations aim to ensure the emergency management sector, local governments and communities are better placed to manage relief and recovery from bushfires and other emergencies.

The Phase Two Report examines relief and recovery arrangements during and immediately after the 2019-20 Victorian bushfires. This builds on the Phase One report released in 2020, which focused on emergency preparedness and response.

Community experiences, highlighted throughout IGEM's report, show there is further work all response agencies can do to better support locals during and after emergencies.

The Government will build on work already underway including making relief a greater priority within the emergency management system. Creating a strengthened, dedicated recovery entity to work with government departments, agencies and councils to develop a state-wide, all-emergencies response will ensure the sector is well equipped to drive ongoing improvements and tackle enduring challenges.

The Government will work with the sector over the coming months to finalise the design of the dedicated recovery entity and in the interim, Bushfire Recovery Victoria will continue its vital work and play a similar role to support the recovery of communities, as it has for the 2019-20 Victorian fires and the 2021 flood and storm events over the coming extreme weather season.

A link to the IGEM *Inquiry into the 2019-20 Victorian Fire Season* Phase Two report and the Government's response can be found on the [EMV website](#).

Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"This has been a difficult two years for the communities directly affected by the devastating 2019-20 fires. I thank the Inspector-General for their work in recommending how we can better support these Victorians."

"We'll continue to support communities as they recover and rebuild, and we appreciate the work being done by our incredible emergency services personnel to help those efforts."