

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Tuesday, 23 November 2021

## NEW TRAINING CENTRE FOR STATE'S CFA VOLUNTEERS

Victoria's Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers and other emergency services agencies will benefit from a brand-new training facility in the Central Highlands, preparing them for the summer season.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes today officially opened the \$31 million Central Highlands Volunteer Emergency Management Training Centre (VEMTC), funded by the Andrews Labor Government.

The new VEMTC facility is located on a 40 hectare site on the outskirts of Ballan, and is one of eight training centres operated by the CFA across the state.

The VEMTC facility includes 'live fire' simulations with Practical Area Drills, firefighting props, specialist training and breathing apparatus facilities, and four classrooms.

Another key feature includes an off-road driver training track which replicates various conditions a crew may encounter in real emergencies, such as water crossing, sand crossing, rough and uneven ground, mud, and stopping and starting on steep gradients.

The off-road driver training track holds further sentiment for a number of CFA crews, with 11 CFA members honoured and several streets throughout the facility being named in their honour.

Ensuring training scenarios are as life-like as possible will better equip CFA members with the skills and experience to respond effectively to real emergencies, improving the safety of all Victorians.

The site can host up to eight groups at any one time including three groups training outdoors on the three drill areas, one group training on the off-road driving area, and another four groups learning in the classrooms.

The newest VEMTC opening builds on the Labor Government's continued strong support of the CFA and other emergency service volunteers, with \$126 million in funding over five years provided for the CFA to keep its volunteers safe, prepared and well-equipped.

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

*"Our emergency services put their lives on the line to keep us safe – this facility will make sure they're ready to face any situation."*

*"This new training course is one of the best in the country – attracting more volunteers to our ranks and helping them start a lifelong, rewarding career."*

### Quotes attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

*"CFA volunteers and emergency services keep our communities safe – they deserve the very best in training facilities."*

*"We know how important the role of our CFA volunteers and emergency services is protecting Victorian lives and properties, they need and deserve continued access to world-class training and education."*

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