

Statement

The Hon Martin Foley MP

Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Tuesday, 30 November 2020

STATEMENT ON REPORT INTO AMBULANCE VICTORIA

Every Victorian deserves an inclusive, respectful and safe workplace.

The behaviour and culture outlined in the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) report is simply unacceptable and in no way meets the standards this Government, and the broader community, expect of a workplace.

We thank every member of Ambulance Victoria community who bravely spoke up and shared their experience with the Commission and encourage you to keep doing so.

To anyone in Ambulance Victoria who has experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and victimisation of any kind – please know we hear you, we believe you and there will be immediate action taken.

Ambulance Victoria has accepted all 24 recommendations and we will work with the agency to implement them as soon as possible, with work already underway on priority initiatives.

This includes establishing a new and dedicated division to drive workplace equality and organisational reform, and a complete redesign the reporting and complaints system.

The new system will have a strong focus on supporting people through the complaints process and a new interim director will be appointed to oversee this critical work. This role will report directly to the Chief Operations Officer.

Ambulance Victoria will immediately begin establishing a model for an independent restorative engagement scheme, which enables people who have suffered from past incidents to share their stories, be recognised and heal. This process will also allow leadership to hear and learn from those experiences.

A governance committee chaired by the CEO with members of the workforce, unions, external partners and experts will also be established to help guide, oversee and deliver on the Commission's recommendations.

The report acknowledges that Ambulance Victoria have already implemented significant changes to workplace culture over the years and that the executive leadership is dedicated to building long lasting, significant reforms that will see a more inclusive, respectful and safe workplace.

This is the first volume of the report and its recommendations are focused on more immediate actions that can be taken to improve culture in the workforce. A second volume will be released early in 2022 and is focused on the more long-term systemic change actions – all of which Ambulance Victoria will implement.

The last 21 months have been incredibly hard on the entire Ambulance Victoria workforce and we cannot express enough our gratitude for the care they have provided to every Victorian throughout this pandemic.

We encourage anyone with a complaint to come forward, or participate in the new reforms, knowing that anything you have to say will be handled safely and respectfully, and that you will be supported throughout the process.

The Victorian Government thanks VEOHRC for their work in helping to bring these issues to light and providing a pathway for change.

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