

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Tuesday, 21 December 2021

REMOTE WATER TANKS TO PROTECT COMMUNITIES FROM FIRES

Firefighting aircraft will have greater access to secure water supplies in remote forest areas in north east Victoria thanks to a \$1.42 million water tank project funded by the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio today announced water tanks will be strategically placed in four remote areas by Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) giving firebombing helicopters an additional resource to refill their water stores during an emergency.

The increased access to water will reduce helicopter turnaround times improving the effectiveness of fire-bombing operations with helicopters able to get water and foam on a fire more quickly, increasing the chances of first attack success.

The concrete water storage tanks – which will be able to contain 25,000 litres – will be filled from permanent creeks, portable pumps or large tankers during the winter months to be ready for the summer fire season.

The first installation will be at Dunstons Road in the Upper Murray followed by Mt Sarah and Kate's Track Tea Tree Range, Mt Selwyn Creek area and Matlock.

Firefighting aircraft support the work of firefighters on the ground, machine operators and experienced contractors who rapidly respond to fires on public land.

The project will bring jobs and economic stimulus to regional communities through employment of local suppliers and contractors.

Funding for the Remote Water Access Project is part of the Government's \$2.7 billion *Building Works* package which is delivering support for projects in bush fire affected areas to rebuild and update infrastructure and assets.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"Timing is everything when it comes to containing remote fires before they spread and impact communities and the environment – that's why we're investing in projects like this."

"Having access to remote water in remote forest areas will not only help keep our firefighters safe, but will also boost their ability to fight, contain and reduce the impacts of bushfires."

Quote attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"One of the biggest challenges of fighting fires in regional Victoria is quick access to water. These tanks will save valuable time, properties and lives."