

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Friday, 8 April 2022

VICSES GEARS UP TO KEEP US SAFE THIS EASTER

As the Easter long weekend fast approaches and Victorians are preparing to head away, our emergency service crews are preparing to make sure you get to your destination safely.

The Driver Reviver Program is a 30-year-old program powered by Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) and Lions Club volunteers, which aims to promote road safety and save lives lost on our roads.

This Easter, more than 30 sites will run across the state, where drivers and their families will be greeted by volunteers offering a free cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit, and most importantly, the chance to stop and rest before hitting the road again.

Participating units this Easter include Bacchus Marsh, Cann River, Kerang, Marong, Maryborough, Mildura, Morwell, Orbost, Ouyen, Rochester, St Arnaud, Tambo Valley, Euroa, Chiltern and Benalla.

On average, VICSES volunteers respond to 1300 road crash rescues each year and last financial year, they attended more than 1180 road rescues across the state.

VICSES provides the largest road rescue network in Australia, with 104 accredited Road Crash Rescue provider units across Victoria, and 22 Rescue Support Units.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes joined Member for Ivanhoe Anthony Carbines and Member for Northcote Kat Theophanous today at the VICSES Northcote (Heidelberg) Unit construction site, which will deliver a new fit-for-purpose unit for local volunteers - and thank all volunteers for all they've done for us over a busy few months and all that they'll do to keep us safe over the coming weeks.

VICSES volunteers have played a vital role in protecting Victorian and interstate communities, responding to a record number of requests for help over the past year including flood, storm, earthquake and road-crash rescue incidents. Last year VICSES recorded its busiest year on record with more than 46,300 calls for assistance.

This included more than 10,000 calls following the June storm event that caused heavy destruction in the Dandenong Ranges, Macedon Ranges and other parts of the state, and more than 8,000 calls for assistance in October when Victoria was hit with another severe weather event.

More recently, 121 VICSES members have been deployed to areas of NSW to assist with the state's flood response.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"Our VICSES volunteers dedicate themselves to serving the Victorian community, responding in times of emergency – and they will be giving up their long weekend to serve you a cup of tea to avoid the alternative, which is far more devastating."

"We want everyone to have a safe Easter – which means planning for rest stops when you're planning to hit the road."

"It's important we take a moment to thank our volunteers for a year that has seen them respond to major storm events and put their hands up to be away from family to help those in need interstate."

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