

# Media Release

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services



Friday, 16 September 2022

## UPGRADED AMBULANCE SERVICES IN TRENTHAM

The Andrews Labor Government is investing in ambulance services in Trentham to deliver more specialised care and faster responses, with the local service to be upgraded to an Ambulance Community Officer branch.

Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas today visited the site of Ambulance Victoria's future Trentham Ambulance Community Officers' (ACO) branch, which is expected to be operational by early 2023.

ACOs are locally based first responders trained to provide advanced first aid in small rural and remote communities where ambulance caseloads are low.

These officers are dispatched at the same time as Ambulance Victoria paramedics to a Triple Zero call. Due to their location and proximity to the local community they serve, they help provide the fastest response possible.

Since 2020, the Trentham community has been served by dedicated volunteer members of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The upgrade to an ACO branch with paid first responders will make it easier to recruit more local members and expand the team to meet increasing demand.

Unlike CERT volunteers who use a four-wheel drive vehicle, the ACO branch will also be home to a new ambulance vehicle that can transport patients, which in turn frees up other ambulance crews in the region.

An agreement has also been reached to secure a new facility in Station Street Trentham to house the new ambulance, supplies and equipment used by the ACOs, with renovation works to get underway soon.

Both ACOs and CERT members have a genuine community spirit and work alongside our dedicated paramedics to deliver exceptional patient care.

This announcement is part of ongoing upgrades to ambulance services in the Hepburn local government area, which have included renovations to the Daylesford site and its expansion to a 24-hour branch.

Ambulance Victoria recruited 700 paramedics in 2021 – its single largest annual recruitment ever – to help respond to increasing demand, with the last quarter being its busiest ever.

The Labor Government has expanded the paramedic workforce by more than 56 per cent since 2014 – an increase of more than 2,200 paramedics.

There are also more Triple Zero call takers being hired and together with the Labor Government's \$12 billion Pandemic Repair Plan announced earlier this year, there will be extra 24,000 healthcare workers trained and recruited into the workforce.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas

*"It's the community's advocacy that has made this upgrade possible and now they will now be able to see its benefits."*

*"This upgrade will ensure Trentham's dedicated first responders can continue to provide our growing community with the high-quality care they deserve."*

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