

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



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VICTORIA'S FIREFIGHTING FLEET READY FOR THE FIRE SEASON

Victoria's aerial firefighting fleet is prepared to respond to any fires that may happen over summer, with the 50-strong fleet ready to be deployed across the state.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes unveiled the fleet today at Avalon Airport today alongside Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp.

A new addition to Victoria's base fleet of 50 aircraft is the Black Hawk which can hold up to 4,000 litres of water and can also drop fire retardant and foam.

The CH47 Chinook returns for a second year – capable of holding 11,000 litres of water it is the highest volume helicopter in the fleet and is a vital asset in firefighting operations.

The fleet also includes two Large Air Tankers, other Type 1 helicopters including a Super Puma and an Aircrane and 14 single engine air tankers including one Fireboss.

Victoria also has a surge capacity of up to 100 aircraft that can supplement the core fleet and be called upon when needed. This includes support from thousands of dedicated emergency services workers from across all agencies.

The latest Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for summer indicates Victoria will experience normal fire potential for the north and west and below normal for other areas. The risk of grass fires could increase as the grass dries out.

Aircraft have already played a key role during the recent flood response with more than 1,800 aircraft movements since 1 October transporting emergency services workers and resources and to survey affected areas.

Aircraft have also been deployed for fire response including to seven fires since the start of November.

The aircraft fleet is jointly funded by more than \$30 million from the Andrews Labor Government and the Commonwealth Government.

For more information on how to prepare for fires and other emergencies download the VicEmergency app or visit emergency.vic.gov.au.

Quote attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"While it's been a wet start to summer, the risk of fires is always there – so it's vital we have the resources on standby ready to keep Victorians safe."

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt

"Our uniquely skilled forest firefighters work hard year-round to reduce the risk of bushfires and are integral in the response to fires during the summer."

Quote attributable to Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp

"While many Victorians have been preparing for and responding to floods, it's important to be prepared for fires, have a plan and never rely on one source of information."

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