

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Wednesday, 5 April 2023

## **BETTER PROTECTION, LOCALLY MADE FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**

CFA volunteers across Victoria will get new, locally made uniforms that provide better protection from heat thanks to investment from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes visited Stewart & Heaton today to tour the local manufacturer delivering the new wildfire personal protective clothing (PPC) to Victorian firefighters.

The roll out of the wildfire PPC is supported by the Government's \$126 million CFA Capability Funding package, with \$10.85 million going towards the production of up to 29,000 sets of state-of-the-art protective clothing.

The PPC will be manufactured through Stewart & Heaton, which will support local business and create 15 new jobs and support a further 15 existing roles.

Providing an improved level of protection from radiant heat and heat-related illness, the new gear will feature CFA's iconic yellow but will be made of lighter weight materials with better design for function and comfort.

The PPC is specifically tailored for both men and women, ensuring a safe and comfortable fit for all volunteers.

The jackets will feature a new epaulette holder on the chest area, reinforced elbow patches, front-top and lower pockets on both sides and radio pockets along the side seam. The protective trousers incorporate elastic back waistbands with large belt loops, two back pockets and hip pockets.

Manufactured using Hainsworth Eco-Dry Shield woven fabric, the garments have an inherent fire-retardant performance to provide benefits to firefighters including comfort, ease of movement and breathability.

The PPC will be provided to eligible members in addition to existing wildfire PPC, meaning recipients can continue to use their current wildfire PPC in addition to the new garments.

With the staggered rollout expected to begin in the coming months, the design of the PPC was informed by consultation with volunteers providing input on what they wanted to see in their new uniforms.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes**

*"Our CFA volunteers go above and beyond every day to protect Victorians – we're proud to deliver this new uniform that will help to protect them while they perform their important work"*

*"CFA members shaped this new clothing, which means it's custom made to fit their needs and be comfortable in difficult conditions – all while being locally made."*