

# Media Release

**The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP**  
Minister for Mental Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services  
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



Wednesday, 5 July 2023

## IMPROVING WORKPLACE SAFETY AND REBUILDING AV'S CULTURE

The 2020 *Independent Review into Workplace Equality* within Ambulance Victoria outlined behaviour and a culture that was unacceptable in any organisation, let alone one that was tasked with caring for Victorians.

With work underway to implement the recommendations made by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC), the Andrews Labor Government is supporting the establishment of an independent restorative engagement scheme.

Ambulance Victoria's dedicated employees and volunteers will be heard, and their experiences in the workplace acknowledged, as options for a scheme start to be explored.

Work will get underway this month to establish the new scheme, which will help rebuild trust, strengthen safety and respect and improve the culture at Ambulance Victoria, as recommended by the VEOHRC.

As part of its review into workplace equality, VEOHRC recommended establishing a scheme for current and former employees and volunteers who had experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and victimisation at Ambulance Victoria.

Work will now commence on developing options that will be explored by the Department of Justice and Community Safety – who will work closely with employees and volunteers as well as their unions, professional associations and the Department of Health.

Once established, the scheme will offer a range of outcomes to current and former employees and volunteers, including individual apologies, statements of regret, and financial compensation, as well as restorative sessions with senior leaders.

All outcomes will be focussed on what matters most to the participant and consideration will be given on how to best support each participant through the process.

The Government will receive advice by the end of the year on options for the scheme, which will launch next year and run for at least 18 months – backed by an investment of \$8 million to support the delivery of VEOHRC's recommendations, which have all been accepted in full.

Ambulance Victoria released an implementation plan – *Safe, fair, inclusive: Your AV Roadmap 2022-2027* – with work well underway to implement all recommendations.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Ambulance Services Gabrielle Williams

*"This restorative process is about listening, acknowledging and responding to the harm caused to anyone that was discriminated against or who experienced sexual harassment, bullying and victimisation."*

*"The kind of behaviours we heard about through VEOHRC's investigation are completely unacceptable and there is no place in Ambulance Victoria for those who engage in or seek to protect, harmful or unlawful conduct."*

*"The scheme will be carefully designed and in place next year – it will help to rebuild trust, strengthen safety and respect and improve the culture at Ambulance Victoria."*

**Media contact:** Harry Adam 0448 505 876 | [harry.adam@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:harry.adam@minstaff.vic.gov.au)