

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Health Infrastructure

Minister for Ambulance Services



Friday, 1 March 2024

AMBULANCE SERVICE IN TRENTHAM SET FOR AN UPGRADE

The Allan Labor Government is boosting ambulance services in the Hepburn Shire with construction now underway to deliver an ambulance facility in Trentham.

Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas today visited the current Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) on Station Street. Upon completion of works later this year, it will transition into an Ambulance Community Officers (ACOs) facility.

Since 2020, the Trentham community has been served by dedicated local volunteer members of the CERT, but with increased demand across the region, the upgrade to an ACO branch will employ paid 'on call' first responders – making it easier to recruit more local members and expand the current team.

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

These officers are dispatched at the same time as Ambulance Victoria's Advanced Life Support (ALS) or MICA paramedics to a Triple Zero call – due to their location and proximity within the local community, they can generally always provide the fastest response.

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, in turn freeing up ambulance crews in the region.

Importantly, Trentham CERT volunteers will all be offered positions within the new ACO team to continue to play an important role in supporting their community when the new branch becomes operational later this year.

To help with the transition, the refurbishment will deliver a bigger and better facility, including a training room, rest and recline areas for crews to recuperate, space for a new ambulance vehicle, parking and security upgrades.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has invested more than \$2 billion into Victoria's ambulance services, including a doubling of the on-road workforce with an additional 2,200 paramedics, and building or upgrading 51 ambulance stations.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas

"The dedicated volunteer Community Emergency Response Team have been providing locals with fast and immediate care over the past four years – this selfless work makes a real difference in small towns like Trentham."

"The new Ambulance Community Officers will help meet the growing demand for emergency care across the region, reducing pressure on our paramedics who often need to travel longer distances to reach patients in regional areas."