

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



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ONE-OF-A-KIND FIRE INVESTIGATION TRAINING IN VICTORIA

Victorian volunteer firefighters can now use a unique facility designed for specialised training on how to determine the origin and cause of fires.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes today joined CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan and volunteers to officially launch the \$3.4 million purpose-built Fire Investigation Training Facility.

The state-of-the-art facility has four rooms and a carport which have been designed specifically to be burned and restored for volunteer firefighters to better understand fire patterns and behaviours, including where and how a fire has started.

It allows investigators to determine the origin and cause of structural and vehicle fires, which helps improve firefighter safety, and teaches fire prevention and suppression tactics to build safer, educated and more resilient communities.

Fire investigators responded to 500 fire scenes last year where they investigated structure fires in buildings and homes, non-structure fires including burnt vehicles, machinery and boats, as well as bushland fires, highlighting the community's critical demand for these specialised roles.

Designed with safety top of mind, the facility has systems to treat gases from smoke, and to collect and store used water to be treated off-site. This is an Australian-first and means that harmful chemicals are safely disposed of without harm to people or the environment.

The facility will provide high quality, specialist training to volunteers that meets the National Public Safety Training Package for fire investigation and CFA members can use the facility to gain credits towards an Advanced Diploma.

Victorian partner agencies involved in fire investigation can also use the facility, including Victoria Police, Fire Rescue Victoria and other forensic services.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"Our volunteer firefighters go above and beyond to keep Victorians safe. This facility is an incredible testament to that dedication, giving them firsthand experience of anything they may face when fighting fires."

"As the first of its kind, the facility will be an incredible asset to the CFA and its volunteers as they learn how to better investigate fires and protect Victorians."