

Media Release

The Hon Vicki Ward MP

Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Natural Disaster Recovery
Minister for Equality



Monday, 14 July 2025

NEW EQUIPMENT TO KEEP SWIMMERS SAFE ON THE BELLARINE

Beachgoers, boaters and swimmers around the Bellarine will be safer thanks to new vehicles and equipment for volunteer emergency services down the coast.

Minister for Emergency Services Vicki Ward today visited the Queenscliff Coast Guard and Ocean Grove Surf Lifesaving Club to inspect the new gear and meet some of the volunteer lifesavers who will make use of it.

In Queenscliff, the Marine Search and Rescue (MSAR) have received a new vessel backed with \$2.2 million from the Allan Labor Government.

The vessel is built to support search and rescue responses, tow boats, help with shore-based recovery operations and transport sick and injured people.

Capable of operating night and day, the boat will also help the Country Fire Authority in marine firefighting, as well as supporting police operations.

The Ocean Grove SLC has received a new Isuzu D-Max patrol vehicle and trailer, which will help volunteers respond to incidents quickly and move equipment around the beach as necessary.

It has also received two new inflatable rescue boats that will help with water rescues and operations, as will the 6 new rescue boards and 16 rescue tubes.

The new vehicles and equipment have been purchased thanks to more than \$70,000 from the Allan Labor Government's Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP), with the Ocean Grove Surf Life Saving Club contributing more than \$35,000.

Over the next four years, an additional \$62 million is being provided from the Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund to double VESEP – it's just one of the ways money raised through the fund is being used to support volunteers.

The 2025-26 VESEP applications are open until 28 July with \$30 million available for this year's grants, which is double last year's amount and the most ever available in one round. Groups this year can apply for a grant of up to \$250,000 – a \$100,000 increase on the previous maximum.

Further information about VESEP details on how to apply for a grant are available at emv.vic.gov.au/vesep.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Vicki Ward

"With so many Victorians holding boating licenses and enjoying the water, it's essential that we do all we can to keep them safe."

"We've provided more funding for the Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program to ensure organisations across Victoria can have what they need to keep people safe."

Quotes attributable to Member for Bellarine Alison Marchant

"Enjoying the beach is a proud Victorian tradition and this new equipment will help keep swimmers at Ocean Grove safe."

"We're giving the hardworking volunteers of the Queenscliff Coast Guard a fit-for-purpose vessel so they can continue to be there for those in need."

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