

# Media Release

**The Hon Vicki Ward MP**

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



Thursday, 18 September 2025

## FIRST LOOK AT NEXT-GEN HEAVY RESCUE TRUCKS FOR VICSES

The Allan Labor Government is backing the lifesaving work of emergency rescue volunteers with the first of 57 world-class NextGen Heavy Rescue Trucks (HRTs) rolling out to VICSES units.

Minister for Emergency Services Vicki Ward this week visited the VICSES State Fleet Centre in Derrimut to inspect the new vehicles rolling off the conveyor belt, meet the staff building them, and remind Victorians to be prepared ahead of the upcoming storm season.

The Minister was joined by the new VICSES Chief Officer Operations, Alistair Drayton AFSM. Alistair is a deeply respected and accomplished leader, bringing over three decades of experience in emergency management both locally and overseas.

The NextGen HRT has a unique rescue body designed by a VICSES volunteer working group – it can transport five volunteers and up to 2000 kilograms of equipment to respond to road crash rescues, floods and storms.

It has enhanced ergonomic design, wind speed detection capability, dedicated storage for food and water on extended operations, a chainsaw workbench and locker storage for easy access to equipment.

The Labor Government has invested \$24.4 million to deliver 57 custom-built HRTs as well as seven medium rescue trucks to be constructed and rolled out across Victoria in coming years, with Frankston the first unit to receive one of the new trucks next month.

This builds on the Labor Government's \$30 million investment in a rolling fleet replacement program for VICSES in this year's Budget to ensure volunteers have the equipment they need well into the future.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Vicki Ward

*"We continue to provide record investment for our emergency services and these NextGen Heavy Rescue Trucks will be a game-changer for VICSES volunteers – keeping them safe during emergencies."*

*"We welcome Alistair Drayton who will lead operations at VICSES and we thank our emergency services volunteers who put themselves in harm's way to keep Victorians safe."*

*"We have already experienced wild weather this spring with VICSES units across the state responding to thousands of requests for assistance – now is the time to prepare your homes for damaging wind and storm conditions."*

### Quotes attributable to VICSES Chief Officer of Operations Alistair Drayton

*"The arrival of the NextGen Heavy Rescue Trucks marks a major step forward in how we support communities during emergencies."*

*"Designed with input from our volunteers, these vehicles are purpose-built for road crash rescue, flood and storm response. They'll be a vital asset, enhancing safety, capability, and comfort for our crews on the ground."*