

Media Release

The Hon Vicki Ward MP

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



Monday, 8 December 2025

MORE VITAL FUNDING FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS

The Allan Labor Government is helping emergency services brigades and groups across Victoria to boost volunteer numbers and provide them the tools and skills they need to keep Victorians safe.

Minister for Emergency Services Vicki Ward today announced the recipients of this year's Valuing Volunteers Program grants, with almost \$1.4 million to support programs that recognise the vital role volunteers play.

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) will receive close to \$540,000 – with more than half allocated to support the CFA Firefighter Championships, a long-standing tradition that brings volunteers together to compete against each other and strengthen camaraderie across regional communities.

Funding will also support CFA programs that grow its volunteer base, promote diversity and increase rural participation.

In recognition of the trauma and hazards volunteers face in the role, the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) will receive \$280,000 for health and wellbeing programs that support the physical and psychological resilience of volunteers.

Life Saving Victoria will receive \$275,000 for its Volunteer Capability and Support program, which builds skills through training and development – from basic first aid to advanced resuscitation.

The Victoria State Council for Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA) and independent volunteer marine search and rescue units will share \$200,000 for recruitment and recognition projects, new uniforms and campaigns to attract more volunteers.

The Emergency Services Foundation will receive \$90,000 to expand its Mental Health Matters project, delivering 12 workshops to regional and rural volunteers and their families to help them better respond to mental health challenges.

Since 2014, the Valuing Volunteers Program has provided more than \$15 million for initiatives that recognise and support the critical role emergency services volunteers play in protecting Victorian communities.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Vicki Ward

"Our emergency services volunteers go above and beyond to protect communities – we're investing in them so they can keep doing this vital work for years to come."

"The Valuing Volunteers Program funds projects that focus on training, wellbeing and recruitment to encourage more people to volunteer and support those already serving."