

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



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NEW FIRE AVIATION SIMULATOR A FIRST OF ITS KIND

The Allan Labor Government is making sure our firefighters are prepared for summer – with Victoria now home to a world-class fire aviation simulator that uses advanced technology to simulate real life fire.

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes today joined Country Fire Authority (CFA) staff and volunteers to launch the aviation simulator and remind Victorians that now is the time to prepare for the upcoming bushfire season.

The aviation simulator provides real-world training and skill testing – allowing tens of thousands of dedicated emergency service workers to practice fire mapping, air missions and radio communication in a safe and controlled environment.

Victoria is one of the most bushfire-prone areas in the world and the simulator will provide dynamic training opportunities all year long.

The simulator replicates the inside of an aircraft using state-of-the-art mixed reality goggles, genuine aircraft controls and communication technology to recreate real-life scenarios.

The mixed reality technology allows map reading and crew resource management and can imitate any type of aircraft used for aerial firefighting in Australia, making it the first simulator of its kind.

The original simulator was designed by CFA's Commander of Aviation John Katakouzinis, who began the project in 2020. The prototype was finessed using existing CFA virtual reality technology, a prop trailer, and audio-visual equipment.

Bangholme VEMTC is operated by CFA and provides specialised training to volunteers and staff across emergency organisations in fields including aviation simulation, handling flammable liquids, breathing apparatus use and search and rescue.

While the state prepares for the potential of an early fire season, Victorians are urged to have their fire plan ready, and prepare for the risk of grass and bushfires.

Having a bushfire survival plan with your family, reducing the vegetation around your home by mowing lawns and clearing gutters are some of the most important things you can do to prepare for the high-risk period for fires.

For more information on how to prepare for fires and other emergencies download the VicEmergency app or visit emergency.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"The simulator will help us deliver the best training to our aerial firefighters– allowing them to hone their skills in a safe environment, so they can protect lives and livelihoods right across Victoria."

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos

"Bushfires are occurring more often and are more intense – that's why we are investing in new technology and training for our forest firefighters who are protecting our communities and environment."

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