

SES Volunteers Drive Across Iconic Melbourne Bridge for Sustainable Funding

Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) volunteers will be conducting a public awareness drive on Monday, May 20th, 2024, at approx. 10:15 am. Taking place across Melbourne's Bolte Bridge, the drive will showcase a convoy of SES vehicles, all of which are maintained and operational thanks to tireless volunteer fundraising efforts. This initiative aims to highlight the critical need for sustainable funding for VICSES.

Volunteers – The Backbone of Emergency Response

VICSES relies heavily on almost 5,000 dedicated volunteers who contribute countless hours to emergency preparedness and response efforts. From floods to storms to road crashes, VICSES volunteers provide essential support during critical times.

Funding Challenges Threaten Operational Readiness

Despite the invaluable contributions of volunteers, VICSES faces significant funding shortfalls. The current reliance on volunteer-led fundraising to maintain equipment, facilities, and replace aging vehicles is unsustainable.

A Call for Sustainable Funding

The VICSES Volunteer Leadership Group is urging the Victorian government to consider:

- **Indexed, sustainable funding:** This will ensure VICSES can continue to deliver critical emergency services across the state.
- **Reduced burden on volunteers:** Sustainable funding would allow volunteers to focus on core operational tasks and training, minimising the pressure to fundraise.

Proposed Solution: Sustained Funding for VICSES

The VICSES Volunteer Leadership Group is urging the Victorian government to establish sustained funding for VICSES. This funding would ensure VICSES has the resources needed to operate effectively, removing the burden on volunteers to fundraise and allowing them to focus on core operational tasks and training.

Quotes attributable to Mike Bagnall, Unit Controller - Wedderburn

"Investing in VICSES is an investment in the safety and resilience of our communities."

"We urge the government to implement a modernised Emergency Services Levy and ensure VICSES can continue to safeguard Victorians during emergencies."

Quotes attributable to Goldie Pergl, Unit Controller - Fawkner

"While we are incredibly grateful for the dedication of our SES volunteers, fundraising for essential equipment and vehicles shouldn't be their primary responsibility"

"Sustainable funding would allow our volunteers to focus on what they do best – saving lives."

For more information, contact:

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Key information:

Estimated schedule for drive:

- 10:15AM – Vehicles driving over Bolte Bridge, southbound
- 10:45AM – Vehicles arriving at Essendon DFO
- 11:00AM – Media conference at Essendon DFO

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