



PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

**2009-10 AND 2010-11 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE
OUTCOMES QUESTIONNAIRE — PART TWO**

VICTORIA STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

DUE: TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2011

Question 1

The majority of VICSES funding is in the form of one-line grants, and is separate to 'major incident funding'.¹ Can the Service provide details of the major one-line grants, including their purpose, that have been received from Government for 2010-11?

| Grant | Value | Purpose |
|--|--------------|---|
| The "One Line Grant" referred to is the Annual Recurrent Appropriation (excluding capital appropriations) as provided in the Annual State Budget and received by VICSES through the Department of Justice. | \$33,270,000 | VICSES annual budgeted recurrent funding from the State |
| VICSES also receives Annual Capital Appropriations through the same methodology but this Appropriation is recognised as an addition to Equity in the Balance Sheet. | \$3,873,000 | VICSES annual budgeted capital funding from the State |

Question 2

Please provide the reasons for the decrease in the income category 'Volunteer and other grants', which was reduced from \$2.48 million in 2009-10 to \$197,000 in 2010-11.²

"Volunteer and other grants" refer to grants through the Department of Justice for the various programs including the Valuing Volunteer program (VVESW), the Community Support Emergency Services Program (CSESP) and the National Disaster Resilience Grants program. Generally revenue for these programs are recognised on receipt. In 2009-10 VICSES was provided with the CSESP and Valuing Volunteer funding for 2010-11 earlier so as to allow for the earlier commencement of the programs that are primarily for the VICSES Volunteer Units.

¹ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, October 2011, p.64

² Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, October 2011, p.64

Question 3

Can the Service provide information on the Sponsorship Strategy³, including target sponsor numbers and sponsorship totals for the next few years?

The Sponsorship Strategy provides a **framework** for how VICSES should or could use Sponsorship. It details:

- the key benefits VICSES can provide/sell to sponsors/partners/supporters; and
- how sponsors/partners/supporters need to be managed in order for the relationship to work.

No targets were developed as part of the Strategy.

Question 4

It is noted that the Health and Safety Indicators for 2010-11⁴ are significantly higher than the corresponding figures from the 2009-10 Annual Report.⁵

(a) Please provide reasons for the significant deterioration in these OH&S results:

| Indicator | 2009-10 result | 2010-11 result | Explanation for change |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| Number and rate of incidents | 26 | 69 | <p>The change in figures reflects an improvement in the accuracy of reporting rather than a deterioration in performance.</p> <p>In February 2011, VICSES launched an online incident management system to encourage reporting of incidents and hazards. Prior to this, there existed a paper-based system. This initiative has resulted in not only greater accuracy in capturing incident reports but also an improved incident reporting culture (86 incidents and hazards logged in the first 4 months) and reporting accuracy.</p> <p>The increase in incidents is viewed as a positive move towards a stronger reporting culture and greater transparency of risk.</p> |

³ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, October 2011, p.28

⁴ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, October 2011, p.31

⁵ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2009-2010*, October 2010, p.33

| Indicator | 2009-10 result | 2010-11 result | Explanation for change |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| Number and rate of time lost claims | 1 volunteer claim | 2 employee claims; 37 volunteer claims | <p>There appears an error in records for 2010-11. Report from Allianz run 28 November 2011 for period end data (30 June) indicates the following lost time claim performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2009-10 Volunteer 2, employee 0 - 2010-11 Volunteer 6, employee 1 <p>Of the 6 lost time claims received for Volunteers in 2010-11, 2 claims were for injuries prior to 2010-11, 2 related to the January 2011 floods and 2 related to Sept/Aug 2011 flooding events.</p> <p>This increase in lost time injuries for volunteers in 2010-11 is directly related to increase in work events for SES members. 2010-11 was the busiest year on record for SES with 39,115 events attended by SES members. This was a 26% increase on work activity from the previous year (2009-10 totalled 28898 events).</p> <p>There was no change in the numbers of lost time claims for employees over the 2 periods.</p> |
| Number of claims exceeding 13 weeks | 0 | 3 employee claims; 17 volunteer claims | It is difficult to get the history on this report, but these numbers seem unlikely based on the above figures. |
| Average cost per claim | \$572 | \$5,485 employee; \$1,949 volunteer | The data in this field is statistically sensitive due to the small numbers of claims received for VICSES. The average claims cost for the employee policy represents the total cost of the claim as there was only 1 claim. |

(b) Please provide details of the results of any measures taken to address this issue.

Purchased and introduced an automated incident reporting and management system, titled SafeGate.

Continuing to promote incident and hazard reporting across the organisation. Currently, hazard reporting makes up 39% of VICSES's total OH&S reports, indicating a focus on incident prevention.

Appointment of a [Workplace Health and Safety \(WHS\)](#) Manager to the leadership team, supported by 2 FTE WHS Advisors.

Request submitted through insurer for access to the Allianz workbench to enable access to rapid online reporting to deliver timely and accurate data.

Reporting on safety data to be aligned to financial forecasting period for the Annual Report and submitted at the end of the financial year.

Question 5

Please provide figures showing:

- (a) the number of new volunteers recruited during the years 2009-10 and 2010-11;

| |
|-------------------------------|
| 2009-10 – 948 new volunteers |
| 2010-11 – 1030 new volunteers |

- (b) the total number of active volunteers as at 30 June 2009, 20 June 2010 and 30 June 2011;

| 30 June 2009 | 30 June 2010 | 30 June 2011 |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 4,035 | 4,258 | 4,538 |

- (c) expenditure on training provided by external sources for volunteers for 2009-10 and 2010-11; and

| |
|-------------------|
| 09-10 - \$521,000 |
| 10-11 - \$430,000 |

- (d) an estimate of the cost of training provided by internal staff for volunteers for 2009-10 and 2010-11.

| |
|--|
| 09-10 - \$1,175,000 (includes training course development) |
| 10-11 - \$1,259,000 (includes training course development) |

Question 6

Please provide figures showing:

- (a) expenditure on training provided by external sources for professional operational staff for 2009-10 and 2010-11; and

VICSES contributes \$50K annually to a partnership memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Fire Agencies, VICSES and Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), for the BoM to provide briefing services at the State Control Centre and 8 regionally based one day training sessions each year.

- (b) an estimate of the cost of training provided by internal staff for professional operational staff for 2009-10 and 2010-11.

VICSES conducts two, two day operational workshops as focussed professional development for staff that includes emerging doctrine and systems for use during operations and an opportunity to workshop policies and procedures.

2009-2010 – November Workshops - \$25K, April Workshops \$20K.

2010-2011 – The workshops have been expanded to include all staff that perform Information Management Technology roles and Sector/Division Commander training. The two November workshops cost \$30K.

Question 7

It is noted that the VICSES has a range of goals and objectives set out in its three-year Strategic Plan⁶. Please detail the following information about any performance measures that VICSES has developed to measure its progress towards these goals and objectives.

| Goal/objective | Measure | Target | Actual results, 2010-11 |
|--|---|--|---|
| A strategic and proactive approach to service delivery in our community – VICSES provides appropriate community awareness and education programs for floods, storms, tsunami and earthquakes | Community education and public relations activities undertaken, for example displays, community bbqs, doorknocks etc | 450 | 461 |
| A sustainable volunteer workforce and employee workforce –VICSES provides a safe working environment for volunteers and staff | <p>Ensure VICSES has the ability to monitor and improve the safety of members by implementing OHS IT System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaudit units for Safety and Training that were audited in 2009 to benchmark improvements Externally audit a further 10% of Units for Safety and training standards | <p>System implemented and reporting tools used effectively developed and implemented</p> <p>Continued improvement in safety training and operating procedures</p> <p>Continued improvement in safety training and operating procedures</p> | <p>Implemented <i>Safegate</i> and increased reporting of incidents by 30%</p> <p>Audits demonstrated improvement and further improvements identified and actioned</p> <p>Audits completed and outcome of improvements included in report to Governance Committee</p> |
| An appropriately resourced emergency management and response capacity – VICSES has a totally integrated operational incident management system | <p>Accurate data for all incidents is captured into the system</p> <p>Accurate records of Volunteer data</p> <p>Accurate record of deployable equipment</p> | Performance monitoring, analysis and improvement process for the Operational Incident Management System developed and implemented to ensure data available to support improvement in operational performance and reporting | <p>Staff and volunteers trained to use the system</p> <p>System review conducted by Colmar Brunton confirmed high level of volunteer take-up and confidence in data accuracy</p> |
| An appropriately resourced emergency management and response capacity - VICSES has an effective and sustainable asset management system | <p>Implement Asset and Infrastructure capital programs</p> <p>Asset register is accurately maintained</p> | <p>Critical Asset program delivered in a timely manner and within budget</p> <p>Audit of asset register to ensure accuracy</p> | <p>More than 90% of program delivered on time and under budget</p> <p>Audit completed and asset register updated</p> |

⁶ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Strategic Plan 2009 – 2012*, p.3

Question 8

It is noted that 'action reviews' are conducted after emergency events,⁷ including identifying opportunities for development. Please outline any processes that VICSES has to capture issues brought to light during operations that have the potential to improve service provision in future operations. How are standard operating procedures updated and improvements implemented once such issues are raised?

VICSES conducts operational debriefs as a standard practice after operations at all levels to identify things that went well and areas that may need improvement.

After significant events, such as the March Hailstorm, September Floods 2010 and the January/February Floods 2011, an After Action Review program is implemented. For significant reviews, VICSES has engaged an independent reviewer with sector experience, appointed by the Chief Officer Operations to conduct a series of interviews and debriefs with VICSES members and other key stakeholders at Local (Municipal), Regional and State level. This includes the Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance), Local Government and key government agencies such as DHS, DOT, DPI.

The After Action Review programs are coordinated and monitored by VICSES Manager Operational Performance.

The independent reviewer(s) compile a report containing observations, lessons learnt and recommendations. Lessons Learnt / Recommendations are then registered and actions against these items are assigned to the relevant business area within VICSES to progress.

VICSES has a Consultation Framework in place to involve volunteers and staff in workshopping and providing feedback on ways systems and processes can be improved.

~~BERG~~ Budget bids are then developed for those improvement areas that cannot be met without additional funding support.

VICSES has a Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Taskforce, consisting of members from both volunteer and staff ranks under a broader Operations Consultation Framework. This taskforce specifically has the brief to review SOPs and develop SOPs for new subject areas.

Improvements are communicated to VICSES members through Operations Update bulletins, attaching the revised standard operating procedure and any aid memoirs that have been developed or updated.

Key guidance is provided to members through a pocket sized Field Operations Guide which provides memory joggers and key information for each response activity. It is planned to be updated every two years.

Depending on the topic, additional aids are provided at the time of implementing improvements such as interactive CDs or DVD footage of a new work practice.

⁷ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, October 2011, p14

Question 9

It is noted that the number of competencies issued to members during 2010-11⁸ was 10,049, which was down from 11,693 during 2009-10⁹. Can the Service provide reasons for this decrease?

VICSES had 136 days of declared operations during 2010-11 (including floods in September 2010, Nov - December 2010 & Jan to March 2011) whereas this was only 36 days of declared operations in 2009-10 (including hailstorms March 2010). As a result, a number of training events were cancelled to allow for attendance and recovery from the operations.

Question 10

Can the Service identify projects and provide progress reports for work resulting from recommendations of the Bushfires Royal Commission?

Bushfires Royal Commission Recommendation 3

Assist Municipal Councils

- Provision of Introduction to Emergency Management (IEM) courses to [Municipal Association Victoria](#) new staff members
- Review of Emergency Management Plan guidelines Part 6 revised 2010
- Involvement through State Fire Planning Committee
- Meeting with Victoria Police regarding Vulnerable People. VICSES has requested expansion of project beyond fire.

Bushfires Royal Commission Recommendation 8

L3 Incident Controllers

- VICSES involvement in Fire Commissioner exercises and planning the conduct of VICSES Flood exercises
- VICSES is linked into multi-agency incident leadership programs and identifying target VICSES IMT members
- VICSES has established an endorsement process for VICSES Level 3 Incident Controllers. Ongoing development of the process is occurring.

VICSES is included in State multi-agency opportunities for incident leadership development

Bushfires Royal Commission Recommendation 16

Standardise operating systems, information and communications technologies

- VICSES is contributing to Fire Services Commissioner Reform Program reviews, such as the Common Operating Picture Project, and highlighting requirements based on all hazards approach.

⁸ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, October 2011, p34

⁹ Victoria State Emergency Service, *Annual Report 2009-2010*, October 2010, p.35

Bushfires Royal Commission Recommendation 19

Traffic Management Plan ID Card

VICSES is seeking participation in these programs

Bushfires Royal Commission Recommendation 20

Aerial Preparedness

- VICSES has a representative on the AFAC Aviation Technical Committee and has accessed state aircraft during September 2010, Jan-Feb 2011, July-August 2011 floods events.

Discussions have begun with the State Aircraft Unit to formalise arrangements. VICSES is establishing an Aviation Taskforce under its Consultation Framework to support the development of these arrangements.

Question 11

The Interim Report of the Victorian Floods Review comes to an interim conclusion that the VICSES did not have the capacity 'to effectively fulfil its legislated role as control agency for these floods'.¹⁰ Can the Service list the areas that will be the focus for improvements in performance in the future?

The areas that will be the focus for improvements are outlined in the Comrie report:

Comrie, N., Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings & Response: Interim Report, June 2011, P.4

- Flood Planning Framework for Victoria

VICSES is working with DSE and the State Flood Policy Committee to document the flood planning framework for Victoria

- Municipal Emergency Management Plan Audits

VICSES has gained support for auditing of MEMPs to transition to a third party to create further capacity for VICSES to undertake its key control agency responsibilities.

- Evacuation Planning

VICSES has contributed to the revised evacuation arrangements that have been developed for the State Emergency Response Plan.

- Community Education Strategy

VICSES has taken some joint approaches in community education with CFA. VICSES has trained CFA and DSE personnel regarding the use of SES One Source One Message (OSOM), a web-based messaging system used to deliver timely and accurate warnings.

- Level 3 Incident Controllers

VICSES has worked with the Fire Agencies to identify and endorse Level 3 Incident Controllers who can be placed on standby to respond anywhere within the State to where the weather forecast predicts a significant event and VICSES is Control Agency.

¹⁰ Comrie, N., Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings & Response: Interim Report, June 2011, p.4

- Use of Other Agency Personnel Agreements
VICSES State and Regional Emergency Plans are based on arrangements to use other agencies staff and volunteers to respond to incidents and assist during surge activity.
- VICSES Command and Control Manual
An operations manual has been produced and presented to staff at facilitated workshops.
- Fatigue Management Guidelines
Time and Attendance system purchased and currently being implemented. Incident management staff are discussing fatigue management issues at operations forums.

Question 12

Please advise whether or not the performance of VICSES is included in the following performance measures which are set for the Department of Justice in the budget papers as part of its *Emergency Management Capability* output:

| Performance measure | Is the performance of VICSES included? (yes/no) |
|---|---|
| Number of emergency service delivery points | YES |
| Advice meets internal benchmarks | NO |
| Municipal customer satisfaction | YES |
| Emergency response times meeting benchmarks | YES |

Question 13

Please provide the following OH&S data for 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11:

- (a) the number of hazards/incidents reported for the year for the Service;
- (c) the number of 'lost time' standard claims for the year for the Service;
- (d) the average cost per claim for the year (including payments to date plus the estimate as at 30 June of the year of outstanding claims costs advised by WorkSafe); and
- (e) the full-time equivalent workforce included in OH&S statistics as at 30 June for 2009, 2010 and 2011

| Year | Number of hazards/incidents *** | Number of 'lost time' standard claims | | Average cost per claim ** (All claims) | | FTE workforce as at 30 June * | |
|---------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| | | Staff | Volunteer | Staff | Volunteer | Staff | Volunteer |
| 2008-09 | 73 (18) | 0 | 2 | 20 | 8,002 | 149.4 | 5500 |
| 2009-10 | 157 (25) | 0 | 2 | 434 | 1,308 | 170.4 | 5500 |
| 2010-11 | 245 (62) | 1 | 6 | 244,245 | 24,102 | 187.4 | 5500 |

* the FTE applies to Staff only. Volunteer workforce is calculated on headcount only – this includes active and non-active volunteers.

** average cost has been calculated based on claims costs as at 30 June of period end.

*** total figure represents all hazards, incidents and injuries. The figure in brackets represents the proportion of the total figure that were reported as hazards.

CONTACT DETAILS

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The completed questionnaire must be returned by no later than COB, Tuesday, 13 December 2011.

Please return the response (including an electronic version) of the questionnaire to:

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