



MEDIA RELEASE

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ESVF will take \$60m from regional cities next year

The Victorian Government’s plan to legislate the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund (ESVF) will take another \$60m out of Victoria’s 10 largest regional cities next year alone.

	Current FSL (2024/25)	Proposed ESVF (2025-26)	\$ Increase	% Increase
Ballarat	\$14,894,229.00	\$21,126,567.00	\$6,232,338.00	41.84
Bendigo	\$15,805,791.00	\$23,224,657.20	\$7,418,866.20	46.94
Horsham	\$3,871,382.01	\$7,128,133.87	\$3,256,751.86	84.12
Geelong	\$36,830,189.05	\$55,864,820.12	\$19,034,631.07	51.68
Latrobe	\$12,356,398.37	\$18,395,505.43	\$6,039,107.06	48.87
Mildura	\$8,382,185.00	\$12,939,415.00	\$4,557,230.00	54.37
Shepparton	\$9,160,233.20	\$14,218,481.55	\$5,058,248.35	55.22
Wangaratta	\$4,922,445.45	\$8,209,963.30	\$3,287,517.85	66.79
Warrnambool	\$4,728,236.88	\$6,836,557.02	\$2,108,320.14	44.59
Wodonga	\$5,616,025.45	\$8,054,850.35	\$2,438,824.90	43.43
TOTAL	\$116,567,115.41	\$175,998,950.84	\$59,431,835.43	50.99

Debate is scheduled to continue Tuesday in Victorian Parliament’s Upper House on legislation to introduce the new levy.

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) – a powerful assembly representing Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga – wants the levy dumped, expressing significant concern for residents already struggling with cost-of-living pressures.

RCV has strongly objected to the legislation to the Government, Opposition and the cross bench, warning the ESVF also represented an ongoing and increased cost to local government, both as landowners and in the administering of a significantly more complex program.

Councils will incur costs to alter rates notices and to implement the system changes needed to administer the changed land classifications and proposed exemptions.

It has not gone unnoticed that the first year of the new levy will collect approximately \$600m – basically covering what it cost to cancel the Commonwealth Games on regional Victorians.



COMMENTS FROM RCV CHAIR CR SHANE SALI, MAYOR OF GREATER SHEPPARTON:

“Our member councils hold significant concern about the financial impact on residents already struggling with cost-of-living pressures.

“The ESVF is another ongoing cost to local government too, when the revenue base of local government is already unsustainable.

“Councils are already picking up an increasing tab for the state for libraries, school crossings, maternal child health services, kindergarten infrastructure, waste services and environmental protection.

“Meanwhile, regional Victorians look at the tens of billions being poured into metro projects and wonder about the potential of some of that investment in our regions.

“This consistent cost shifting from the state is ultimately borne by our ratepayers, and it has to stop.”