



RCV
REGIONAL
CITIES
VICTORIA



10 October 2025

MEDIA STATEMENT

Local Government leaders united in opposition to ESVF

We have formally escalated our concerns to the Victorian Government, writing jointly to Premier Jacinta Allan and Treasurer Jaclyn Symes to set out our strong opposition to the newly introduced Emergency Services Volunteer Fund (ESVF).

Representing all 79 Victorian councils, we remain deeply concerned that the ESVF will unfairly burden ratepayers – particularly in rural and regional communities already grappling with drought, water insecurity and cost-of-living pressures.

We are united in our view that:

- The ESVF is a tax. It funds services that should be supported from consolidated revenue, and its collection belongs with the State Revenue Office, not local councils.
- The levy places an inequitable and disproportionate burden on Victoria's primary producers and rural communities.
- Local government and our communities were not adequately consulted on a reform that directly affects them.
- Transparency and fairness must underpin any funding model for emergency services.

While we strongly support the vital role of emergency services volunteers, we cannot support the ESVF in its current form. The policy is inequitable, poorly implemented, and risks undermining community trust.

On behalf of our ratepayers and communities, we have urged the Premier and Treasurer to reconsider this policy in the interests of equity, sustainability and fairness. We stand ready to work constructively with the Government on a fairer and more transparent approach that delivers sustainable funding for emergency services without placing an unfair burden on Victorian ratepayers.

ENDS

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