



## MEDIA RELEASE

5 December 2025

### Regional Cities Victoria welcomes freeze on ESVF levy for farmers – a win for regional communities

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) today welcomed the Victorian Government's decision to freeze the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) rate for farmers for two years.

RCV – a powerful assembly representing Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga – has consistently raised concerns over the impact of the new levy on drought-affected farmers, families under increasing cost pressures, and the broader economies of regional Victoria.

The freeze is a welcome recognition of those concerns, and of the very real challenges faced by regional communities.

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

*“Our member councils welcome this decision. Farmers across regional Victoria are the backbone of our state. This freeze offers much-needed relief at a time when many are doing it tough.”*

*“RCV’s advocacy has been integral to achieving this outcome. We have consistently advocated against a significantly higher emergency services levy which is unrealistic and unfair. This announcement shows the Government has heard those calls – it’s a win for farmers, families and regional towns doing it tough.”*

*“RCV will continue its advocacy for the best outcomes for our community.”*

**Contact RCV Media on 0411 035 695**