



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## 2025 CFA ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

**Sunday 4 May 2025**

### **Acknowledgments**

**The Honourable Vicki Ward MP**, Minister for Emergency Services

**Tim Wiebusch**, Acting Commissioner, Emergency Management Victoria

**Jo Plummer**, Chair, **Greg Leach AFSM**, Chief Executive Officer, **Board Members and Staff**,  
Country Fire Authority

**Senior Representatives and Members of Emergency Services Organisations**

**Friends and family of fallen firefighters**

**Distinguished guests**

I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we are gathered – the Wurundjeri people of the Eastern Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

Today is an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifice of firefighters who paid the ultimate price in the line of duty.

For many, their service to the community extended far beyond the day of their tragic passing.

As we pay tribute to them, we not only remember their final act of bravery – but also the risks they took every day in the protection of others.

It is hard to quantify what a difference these individuals have made in the lives of so many across our State.

Countless Victorians have been the beneficiaries of their selflessness in moments of crisis and emergency.

I have no doubt they will continue to be remembered for their incredible legacies of service to their communities.

As I meet with Victorians across our State, I have seen firsthand how the CFA acts as the backbone of our towns and regions – as it had done now for 80 years.

Last year, as I visited the West Wimmera Shire, I had the chance to tour the CFA Shed in the town of Goroke and sit down with local volunteers over a cup of tea.

It was an experience that left a lasting impression, as we discussed the experiences of emergency services workers in regional Victoria.

There's no denying that there are immense challenges – brought on by the barriers of distance and the intense forces of nature.

What struck me was their unwavering commitment to protecting their friends, neighbours and communities in the face of danger.

These were people who worked full-time jobs and cared for families of their own.

Yet they would – without question – drop everything in an instant to come to the aid of their fellow Victorians when called upon in an emergency.

These are the kinds of stories that are repeated to me at the presentation of Bravery Awards and Fire Service Medals during investiture ceremonies at Government House.

Recipients will tell you of how they instinctively ran towards a situation, despite extreme and rapidly changing threats to safety, in order to provide assistance.

They tell you these things not to be thanked, but with humility, in a very matter-of-fact way, as if it had not even crossed their mind to take any other course of action.

Firefighting is a selfless pursuit – one that requires courage and compassion.

We see this in the volunteers in the CFA and also in those whose fulltime work is firefighting providing their all in so many different situations.

Across our State, many Victorians are alive and well because of these efforts.

However, today's service acknowledges that these efforts do not come without cost.

To the friends and families here today of those who have passed away, I understand that occasions like this may bring about a range of emotions.

The recognition of these acts of courage is inextricably linked with the tragic passing of your loved ones.

Although such recognition will not ease the pain of your loss, I hope it serves as a reminder of their legacy and of how much the community values their service.

On behalf of the people of Victoria, I express my heartfelt condolences to you.

In reflecting on the sacrifices of those who gave their lives, we also acknowledge the continuing service of those who put themselves at risk each and every day.

While we always hope to avoid disasters, we are thankful for the preparation and support of our firefighters to minimise their impact.

And we are ever grateful for their dedication to making our State a safer place.

Thank you.