



Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

After bushfires, floods and a pandemic – it's time to say “thanks” to VICSES volunteers



- Wear Orange Wednesday (WOW Day) is on Wednesday 20th May, 2020
- It's the national day of recognition to say 'thank you' to SES volunteers. Bravely, members have put on their orange uniforms and helped during major bushfires, numerous storm systems and then a pandemic.
- In the past 12 months, VICSES volunteers have responded to **35,000** requests for assistance (that's an average of 100+ every single day). 2019/20 is likely to be the 2nd busiest year in VICSES history in terms of the number of call outs.
- The busiest units in that time period were **Malvern** (1,712 incidents), **Emerald** (1,336 incidents) and **Frankston** (1,176 incidents).
- VICSES is also the largest provider of road rescue in Victoria.
- Victorians are encouraged to get their workplaces, families, and friends involved in WOW Day celebrations by wearing orange and posting a photo to social media using the hashtags **#WOWDay** and **#ThankYouSES**.



- Landmarks across Victoria will also be **lighting up bright orange**, including the MCG, AAMI Park, Melbourne Town Hall, Bolte Bridge, Soundtube, Arts Centre and Melbourne Eye.
- Workplaces can organise orange themed work meetings, even if working remotely with an SES themed Zoom background available on the VICSES website.
- For more information on WOW Day (which is part of National Volunteer Week) head to the link [here](#).
- Malvern unit volunteer Stuart Cronin epitomises the community-first attitude of our volunteers:
 - He was deployed as part of a taskforce to East Gippsland to support the bushfire effort in January working in Cann River.
 - When he returned, he was part of the response to ‘Skylight Sunday’ when the Malvern Unit received over 1,000 calls for assistance in a single day as a large hail storm lashed Glen Iris, Malvern and Camberwell.

Quotes attributable to SES volunteer Stuart Cronin, Deputy Unit Controller, Malvern SES.

“2020 has been a very challenging year for VICSES members, but it shows we will be there in the event of a major disaster – all year ‘round,”

“It doesn’t matter if you’re white collar, blue collar, a farmer, or anything else – VICSES volunteers all work together for our communities. We give up sleep and our personal lives to make Victoria safer, and we’re proud of that.”

Quotes attributable to East Malvern resident Kate Campbell.

“Our roof tiles were covered in holes and the rain was rushing in to nearly every room. We are living as a family of 6, including my mum and dad in their 70’s, as well as my kids and husband.”

“The VICSES volunteers who arrived at our home were calm, approachable, friendly and knowledgeable - which is exactly what we needed at the time.”

“My family certainly feels blessed to be Victorian. Thankyou from the bottom of my heart for all you did.”