



# Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

16 October 2020

## Brand new VICSES vessel to hit the water over weekend



VICSES crews in Victoria's south west are about to get schooled in all things boat rescue, following the region's recent drenching.

Between Oct 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020, volunteers in the south west attended **174 jobs**, with 90 of those being for flooding. With a La Nina confirmed this spring, and further rain expected, training south west VICSES members in water rescue is a priority.

This weekend (October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>) members of the Hamilton, Balmoral, Dartmoor and Warrnambool units will head to Rocklands Reservoir and Lake Hamilton for intensive deckhand courses.

Once completed, it enables VICSES members to operate multiple vessel types and ultimately be deployed as part of a boat crew. It's also an opportunity for current Crewpersons and VICSES Coxswains to maintain their skills and log hours on the water.

Several new boats have been acquired by three units in the region (one pictured above), with Saturday and Sunday to be the inaugural use of the bright yellow vessels. COVID-Safe measures will be in place, so training can be delivered in an optimal way.

Local media are invited to attend the boat ramp at the Hamilton Rowing Club at **Lake Hamilton** for a photo and filming opportunity on Sunday, between 11am and 3:30pm. Map and directions available on request.

### For more information, contact:

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**Quotes attributable to VICSES' Hamilton unit controller John McKenzie:**

*“These VICSES deckhand courses will expand the water-based skills of volunteers from the Hamilton, Balmoral, Dartmoor and Warrnambool units. Given recent floods around the south west, and the possibility of more this spring, this could prove invaluable.”*

*“A significant amount of VICSES units in the region are located near large bodies of water, so having more boat crews available for critical rescues or recovery operations is fantastic.”*

