



Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

14 January 2021

VICSES recognises ten-year anniversary of devastating La Nina floods



A motorist being rescued by VICSES in Shepparton during 2010 floods

Ten years after La Nina generated flooding caused \$1.3 billion damage, the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) reflects on the devastating impacts, and powerful stories from those that responded.

- One third of Victoria experienced flooding or storm damage between Sep 2010 and Feb 2011 (70 local government areas) – see map below. VICSES responded to **34,000** requests for assistance in that time.
- Impacted townships in the **north east** included: Wangaratta, Benalla, Bright, Violet Town, Seymour, Myrtleford, Shepparton and Euroa.
- Rainfall totals included 100-300mm for large areas of the state between 9 and 15 Jan, 2011 as part of the wettest January in Victoria on record.
- Dozens of evacuations took place, towns 'split' in half by flooding, with loss of productive farmland, serious damage to homes, businesses, and infrastructure.
- VICSES was the first agency to implement recommendations from Black Saturday Royal Commission, including multi-agency Regional Controllers and Deputy Incident Controllers.
- Significant improvements have been made to flood mitigation, warnings and response since, with emphasis on including local communities in key decisions and providing timely and clear flood warnings.

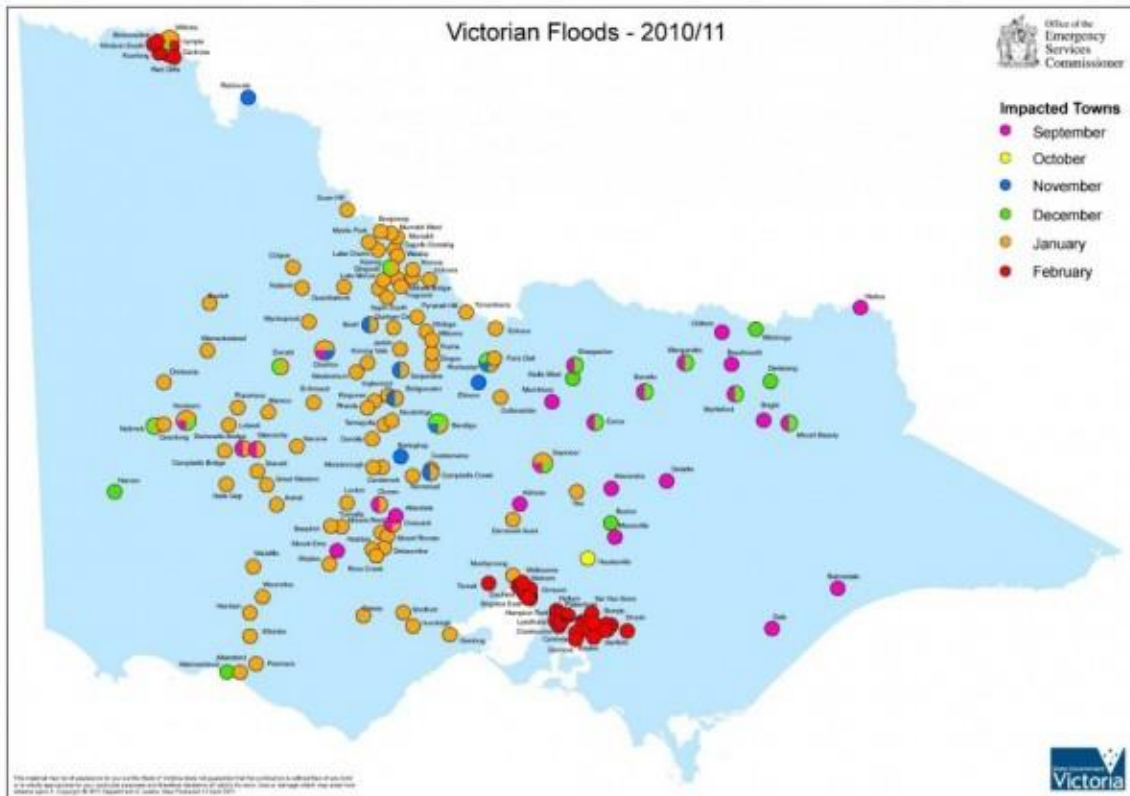
For more information, contact:

VICSES State Media Duty Officer (6am-10pm)
Phone: 1300 783 933
Email: media@ses.vic.gov.au

- Victoria is now experiencing its first La Nina weather system since this event, with heavy falls earlier in January 2021 leading to flash flooding in Warrnambool and the Otway Ranges. VICSES has responded to 4,200+ callouts since the start of December.

- VICSES Local Flood Guides are now available in over **140** at-risk townships

- The web-based intelligence platform FloodZoom is now the key source of data and intelligence for emergency services when responding to and monitoring floods. The platform has greatly improved agencies' capacity to predict potential consequences of serious flood incidents.



Quotes attributable to 2010/11 incident controller Keith O'Brien and current VICSES north east Regional Manager:

I oversaw much of the 2010/11 flooding. It was a significant challenge at VICSES in terms of capacity, however we had fantastic support from other agencies. All volunteers and staff that took part were incredible, and gave greater than 100% effort across areas like Wangaratta, Benalla, and Seymour.

Communities across the state banded together during what was a devastating time for thousands of locals, farmers, and businesses. In addition to emergency services, it was residents who made an enormous difference – whether it be sandbagging their own properties or neighbour's, assisting with clean-ups, and generally supporting each other through those floods.

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Quotes attributable to Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp:

In the decade since the 2011 record floods in central Victoria, we've learnt a lot and made significant improvements to our emergency flood response to ensure the safety of at-risk communities."

The emergency management sector is committed to continuous enhancements in ensuring Victoria has the best emergency preparedness and response to keep the community safe.

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