

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Inquiry into the 2026-27 Budget Estimates

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Committee member:	Jade BENHAM, Richard RIORDAN
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Part A:

Transcript extract: Page 7

Jade BENHAM: Okay. That is no problem. I want to go to the breakdown of CFA appliances that we were just talking about. Last year I think the minister took it on notice about the breakdown in pumper type et cetera. We need to, if we are able to, get the type of CFA appliances, pumpers and tankers, and the age profile. If we need to be supplied that on notice, that would be great, because it is a lot of information, I appreciate.

Vicki WARD: I think that has already been provided to the leader –

Jade BENHAM: Not the age profile – we are after the age profile. And also whether those appliances are actually owned by the brigades themselves or whether they are CFA owned, owned by the organisation, because there are apparently some differences.

Vicki WARD: Well, yes. So the differences are – you will have appliances that are issued direct from CFA. Then you will also have appliances that will have different funding points. So there will be appliances that will be managed through CFA, if you like, that will be a part of the volunteer emergency services and equipment program. So that means the brigade might contribute some, other orgs might contribute some, but the government has also contributed. They are brigade appliances, but there are multiple points of where they have actually been paid for and supplied.

Jade BENHAM: Yes, and that is fine. We are just after the age profile of –

Vicki WARD: CFA are the ones who order them and –

Jade BENHAM: I am sure the department will have that information. But the age profile –

Vicki WARD: It would be more that CFA would have that information. And CFA has quite –

Jade BENHAM: I would have asked the CFA.

Vicki WARD: an extensive fleet. They have not been here before, Ms Benham.

Jade BENHAM: This information has been provided, but not since 2024, and that data was from July 2023. So we are actually just following up now – we need the information on the age of CFA appliances.

Vicki WARD: I thought that was provided.

Jade BENHAM: You are happy to provide it? Great. Thank you.

Vicki WARD: Well, we have got to check, because we think it has been provided. We need to check the –

Jade BENHAM: Not since 2024. We have checked.

Vicki WARD: No. There was an FOI that was put through to the department and released.

Jade BENHAM: Yes, and the age profile was not provided. That is okay. I will move on.

Vicki WARD: We will see what we can find.

Question: Please provide breakdown of Country Fire Authority (CFA) appliances, pumpers and tankers by age profile and type.

Response:

Country Fire Authority firefighting appliances by age (current as at 30 June 2025)

	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	31-35 years	36-40 years	TOTAL
Pumpers	3	47	23	82	44	17	3	0	219
Pumper tankers	1	0	1	19	9	12	2	0	44
Tankers	245	246	400	391	185	246	270	14	1,997
Specialist appliances*	18	43	32	22	13	6	4	0	138
TOTAL	267	336	456	514	251	281	279	14	2398

* as at 14 January 2026

Part B:

Transcript extract: Page 12

Richard RIORDAN: Right. Highly probable. Okay. Could we have the list that we often ask for – that is, what is the average age spread of the CFA tanker stock that we have got today?

Vicki WARD: Are you talking pumper tankers? Are you talking medium tankers?

Richard RIORDAN: We are just talking the fleet – the CFA fleet, the 3500 or whatever the figure is vehicles.

Vicki WARD: Well, the fleet goes beyond pumpers. It goes beyond tankers.

Richard RIORDAN: I am just saying, the CFA truck fleet that we have got out there that keeps Victoria safe. If it is available on a spreadsheet, could we have it? Can you take that on notice?

Dean TIGHE: Yes.

Question: What is the average age of the CFA fleet?

Response:

The average age of CFA's firefighting appliances is approximately 16.76 years old.



Vicki Ward MP
Minister for Emergency Services

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Committee member:	Aiv PUGLIELLI
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Transcript extract: Page 15-16

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Okay. I might move on to another matter. Looking at the \$10 million for FRV's rolling fleet replacement program, just to understand, is that funding in addition to a pre-existing, ongoing \$10 million per year that has already been secured in last year's budget?

Vicki WARD: That is right.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: That is correct.

Vicki WARD: That is correct.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Can we get a sense of how many appliances we are seeing replaced with that type of amount per year?

Vicki WARD: Yes. So what we have got is – what I will do is just give a little bit of a snapshot of the appliances that are being directed towards FRV. So in October last year we had two heavy pumpers delivered to South Melbourne and Windsor. We had four heavy pumpers in December delivered to Carlton, Northcote, Ascot Vale and Hawthorn. In April we had a heavy rescue vehicle delivered to Dandenong. In May, there was a heavy rescue vehicle delivered to Melton, this month, and we are anticipating two Series 1 heavy pumpers to Highett and to Croydon. So, sorry – I can give it to you, Aiv.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Thank you. That would be appreciated.

Question: How many Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) appliances are being replaced each year because of the additional \$10 million of ongoing funding for FRV?

Response:

The additional \$10 million in asset funding in this year's budget is intended to deliver an additional replacement fireboat, three heavy pumpers and two ultra large pumpers (district pumpers), in accordance with priorities determined by Fire Rescue Victoria. This funding is in addition to the \$40 million Rolling Fleet Replacement Program in the 2025-26 Budget, and the \$15 million for new aerial pumper platforms in the 2024-25 Budget, as well as existing FRV funding for new appliances.



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Committee member:	John PESUTTO
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Transcript extract: Page 2-3

John PESUTTO: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, Minister and officials. I will direct my question to the Secretary, or Fire Rescue Commissioner Gavin Freeman if he is attending, if not the Secretary. I refer to budget paper 3, page 80, and the need for a safe operating environment for firefighters, and also page 98 of the 'Department Performance Statement', referring to parliamentary appropriations for the department. Presumptive firefighter rights for cervical, ovarian and uterine cancers commenced in 2003. Can I ask, Secretary, what has been the additional cost to each year's budget for all claims pertaining to these three cancers, broken down by financial year and delineating between career and volunteer outputs, with an estimate for this year's budget?

Vicki WARD: Sorry, Mr Pesutto, can you tell us which cancers that was again?

John PESUTTO: It was cervical, ovarian and uterine.

Vicki WARD: Is there a reason why you have pulled out women's cancers?

John PESUTTO: I am just asking a question. I am not sure I have to explain why.

Vicki WARD: I just find it unusual that you would single out women's cancers, that is all.

John PESUTTO: I might ask the questions, Minister. If you do not have the info, I appreciate that, but could you commit to providing that to the committee?

Emma CASSAR: Yes, Mr Pesutto. We can take that one on notice and come back to you.

Question: What has been the additional cost to each year's budget for all claims pertaining to cervical, ovarian and uterine cancers, broken down by financial year and delineating between career and volunteer Victorian firefighters, with an estimate for this year's budget?

Response:

As indicated in Budget Paper 5, it is impractical to quantify any possible contingent liabilities for the State arising from the presumptive rights compensation scheme.



Vicki Ward MP
Minister for Emergency Services