

## Questions taken on notice

Portfolio:	Emergency Services
Witness:	Commissioner Andrew Crisp
Committee member:	Mr James Newbury
Page of transcript:	9

**Relevant text:**

**Mr NEWBURY:** Commissioner, in the ESTA annual reports there was a reduction between financial years 2020 and 2021 of ambulance call takers—that is in the annual report. When that annual report was being prepared, did you provide advice to government on that reduced number—a concern perhaps?

**Comm. CRISP:** Sorry, which period?

**Mr NEWBURY:** 2020 and 2021.

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, Commissioner Crisp, perhaps you would like to take that question on notice. The member's time has expired.

**Mr NEWBURY:** Can you take it on notice? Thank you.

**Answer:**

The Emergency Management Commissioner is not involved in the preparation of ESTA Annual Reports.

Portfolio:	Emergency Services
Witness:	Commissioner Andrew Crisp
Committee member:	Ms Bev McArthur
Page of transcript:	11

**Relevant text:**

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Okay. Thank you, Minister. How much is it costing Victorian taxpayers in overtime because of your failure to harmonise the CFA and MFB into Fire Rescue Victoria under one EBA? It has almost been two years. Perhaps on notice, can you please provide the committee with the overtime employee expenses for 2020–21 and 2021–22?

**Answer:**

Overtime payments are a standard feature of industrial agreements across government to ensure the provision of services to the Victorian community and are not a result of any failures of government.

The 2020-21 financial year overtime costs for Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) were \$71,813,000.

The 2020-21 financial year overtime costs for the Country Fire Authority (CFA) were \$920,000.

Overtime costs are published regularly through the annual reporting process and 2021-22 figures will finalised at the end of the financial year.

Portfolio:	Emergency Services
Witness:	Commissioner Andrew Crisp
Committee member:	Ms Bev McArthur
Page of transcript:	11

**Relevant text:**

**Mrs McARTHUR:** And we are here to make sure taxpayers are getting value for money and scrutinising your expenditure. Commissioner, perhaps, can you inform the committee how many allowances are available to firefighters in Victoria?

**Comm. CRISP:** Mrs McArthur, I would have to take that one on notice. I do not know the specific in number of allowances. But if I can just add to the minister's comments, just in terms of what our firefighters have experienced over the last two years with COVID, at times we have seen significant numbers of those members having to be furloughed, so therefore the need to backfill into certain roles in certain stations. That has certainly also contributed to the strain on the service as a whole.

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Well, Commissioner, community safety outcomes are clearly worse. Vaguely, is it over \$100 million? Yes or no?

**Comm. CRISP:** Sorry, is what over \$100 million?

**Mrs McARTHUR:** The expenditure.

**Comm. CRISP:** As I said, I will take it on notice in relation to the allowances.

**Answer:**

In 2020-21, 33 allowances were paid to Fire Rescue Victoria firefighters.

Portfolio:	Emergency Services
Witness:	Minister Jaclyn Symes
Committee member:	Mr Sam Hibbins
Page of transcript:	12

**Relevant text:**

**Mr HIBBINS:** Thank you, Chair. I want to ask about the Dunkeld unit of the SES. Now, this is a unit that has grown rapidly and has got an increased responsibility for search and rescue operations now that the new Grampians trail is open. I understand that they need some new facilities and that the site has been identified and plans are underway for a new building but that the new building will be more expensive than originally first thought. Is the government going to ensure that there is enough money set aside to fully complete the new local SES headquarters in Dunkeld?

**Ms SYMES:** Thank you for your question, Mr Hibbins. I guess I can answer at a high level in relation to some of the messaging I have been given about the appropriate facilities for as many of our volunteers as possible certainly being the aim. In relation to Dunkeld, I do not have any specific information about that site or that unit on me, and unfortunately our officer who is responsible for infrastructure, who would have been able to provide that information quite easily, has had a family emergency which means that she is not here today. So if you are happy for us to—

**Mr HIBBINS:** Take that on notice?

**Ms SYMES:** take that on notice, I will get you some Dunkeld unit information.

**Answer:**

The VICSES Dunkeld Unit is currently co-located with the CFA at 40 Templeton Street, Dunkeld. Adjacent to this location, land has been acquired from Victoria Police at no cost, to allow the VICSES Dunkeld Unit to relocate to its own purpose-built facility. With this new location in mind, the VICSES Head Office is working with the VICSES Dunkeld Unit to develop a design for the new facility.