

## Capital works

Considerable progress continues to be made with our capital works program. During the year investment in land and buildings and firefighting appliances, totalled \$25 million, compared with \$18 million for the previous year.

### Land and buildings

A total of 20 new fire stations were completed and modifications to 13 existing fire stations were completed or commenced. At 30 June 2003 there were eight major new fire stations and 10 smaller stations under construction, with a further seven stations committed.

#### New fire stations completed 2002/03

Baileston	Ferntree Gully	Maiden Gully	Sandy Point
Ballan	Gormandale	Melton South	Sassafras
Balmattum	Harrietville	Nulla Vale	Somerville
Cobden	Katunga	Pastoria	Strathfieldsaye
Doreen	Lardner	Pomborneit	Sunbury Satellite

#### Modifications to fire stations completed or commenced 2002/03

Chelsea	Mildura	Romsey	Warrnambool
Eltham	Morwell	Traralgon	Wodonga
Gisborne	Murchison	Wangaratta	Yea
Heathcote			

#### Projects under construction or committed

Ballarat	Diamond Creek	Greenvale	South Morang
Bendigo	Doveton/Hallam	Hoppers Crossing	Sunbury
Chirnside Park	Drouin	Morwell	Torquay
Cranbourne	Eaglehawk	Nhill	Wangaratta South
Craigieburn	Eltham	Point Cook	
Creswick	Geelong City	Rokewood	

In addition to these works, documentation has commenced for the replacement of cooling towers at Bendigo, Ballarat, Dandenong and Fiskville, and for the refurbishment of the tower at Frankston.

The Rural Fire Station Enhancement Program has also progressed with all projects from the previous year completed and the ten final projects scheduled to be completed shortly.

These are Broadwater, Hazelwood North, Heywood, Maude, Pigeon Ponds, Spring Creek, Tintalra, Vasey, Waubra and Wemen.

### Review of standard fire station design

A review of current fire station planning, design, construction and maintenance methods has commenced to ensure that a combination of both contemporary and potential future innovative design, building materials and technology are used in the most cost and energy effective, practical, and operationally efficient manner. As building and upgrading of fire stations represents a major capital investment, the objective of this project is to ensure fire station design supports our long term service delivery requirements.

### Firefighting appliances program

The firefighting appliances program is on target to achieve completion of all previous years projects as well as most of the 2003/04 program. This will see over 100 appliances delivered during the current year. It is estimated that savings in excess of \$400,000 have been achieved through early placement of cab chassis, pump sets and the extension of contracts for bodies; these savings are equivalent to two 3.4D tankers or one medium tanker.

Production of vehicles approved under the third and final round of the Government's Community Safety Emergency Support Program (CSESP) will commence in September 2003. Four 1500 litre tankers are planned to be completed by end October, by which time eight tanker rebuilds will have commenced.

### Fiskville capital works improvements

Improvements have been made to our major training complex at Fiskville near Ballarat. A new classroom has been installed to facilitate increased training activity.

The new LP Gas House has been completed and is now fully functional. Standard Operating Procedures have been developed and these are undergoing a final risk analysis and safety check prior to operational use of the facility.

Work is also currently underway on realignment and stabilisation of access roads and the upgrading of car park areas.

### **Other capital works**

Other capital works during the year included completion of the SAP finance system and the Aged Protective Equipment Replacement program, along with minor capital projects such as the sale of transport vehicles.

### **Review of capital works program**

During the year a review of the capital works program has resulted in significant improvements in the management of capital works, especially the monitoring and reporting of the capital works program. A key issue identified in the review was the need to develop the capital evaluation model in order to more accurately forecast land and building expenditure associated with increasing demand for our services over multi-year periods. As part of this improvement process, the three-year rolling capital works program is now more closely aligned to planning and budgeting associated with development of our annual and corporate plans. Planning for capital works beyond three years has also become an organisational priority. These improvements support the broader government funding environment in which agencies are required to develop multi-year infrastructure strategies.

Given the forecast growth associated with DSE's Melbourne 2030 planning vision, our capital works program will continue to be a key multi-year strategic initiative to support our service delivery strategy. Accordingly, further improvements will be made to management of capital works programs, including a multi-year approach to vehicles, personal protective equipment and clothing, information, communications and technology, and minor capital works.

### **Personal protective clothing program**

Despite a number of industrial disruptions, the structural firefighter protective clothing project has continued to compile research data, including the completion of Wollongong University research into heat storage in firefighting protective ensembles. CFA and MFESB jointly scoped this research using the facilities of the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences.

The full consultative committee has received the final report and the first draft of the ensemble 'performance' requirements has been prepared with a number of potential variations now under consideration.

Tenders and performance options have been completed, short-listed design options and field consultation has commenced. Field trials and final specifications are expected to be completed by the end of the current financial year.

Field trials for wildfire gloves have also commenced, with samples sent to selected volunteer members. Field trials are expected to be completed by October 2003.

### **Communications**

During the year, the Board approved development of a Call Taking Centre and system to provide call taking services in country Victoria. There are seven phases for the rollout of the country call taking system across the State, with Phase One due for cut over in late October 2003.

CFA and Emergency Communications Victoria (ECV) are now processing a variation to the existing contract for call taking in the BEST CAD area. In accordance with this contract, ECV has issued an impact analysis which will form part of the overall submission to the CAD Contract Management Group (CADCMG). The functional baseline documents for design of the system were approved by CFA in June 2003 and this involved nine system changes to better meet the operational requirements of regional and rural Victorian brigades.

Assignment areas and response data for brigades included in Phase One of the program are now complete. Phase One involves the Buninyong Group only, which will have its emergency calls taken by the centre later this year. Scenario testing of the system is scheduled to commence in October 2003, and will involve members of the User Reference Group which includes representatives of the VRFB, VUFBA, UFU and other stakeholders.