

Fire Rescue Victoria Modern Slavery Act 2018 Statement

Introduction

The Modern Slavery Act 2018 came into force on 1 January 2019.

This Act requires entities based or operating in Australia, which have an annual consolidated revenue of more than \$100 million to report annually on the risks of modern slavery in their operations and supply chains, and actions to address those risks. Other entities based or operating in Australia may report voluntarily.

The Commonwealth is required to report on behalf of non-corporate Commonwealth entities, and the reporting requirements also apply to Commonwealth corporate entities and companies with annual consolidated revenue of more than \$100 million.

Entities must report against a number of mandatory criteria and reports are kept by the Minister in a public repository known as the Modern Slavery Statements Register. Statements on the register may be accessed by the public, free of charge, on the internet.

Modern slavery describes situations where offenders use coercion, threats or deception to exploit victims and undermine their freedom.

Practices that constitute modern slavery can include:

- human trafficking
- slavery
- servitude
- forced labour
- debt bondage
- forced marriage, and
- the worst forms of child labour

Modern slavery is a term used to describe serious exploitation. It does not include practices like substandard working conditions or underpayment of workers.

This statement outlines Fire Rescue Victoria's (FRV) approach to minimising the risk of modern slavery both within our operations and our supply chain. FRV is committed to operating responsibly, working with our suppliers to ensure compliance, and mitigating harm. This statement has been prepared for the reporting period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Criterion 1 and 2: Identify the reporting entity and describe its structure, operations and supply chains.

Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) is a modern fire and rescue service that meets the needs of twenty-first century Victoria. FRV does not own or control any other entity.

The new organisation was established on 1 July 2020 as part of Victoria's Fire Service Reforms.

We serve and protect communities across Melbourne and Victoria's major regional centres.

There are 85 FRV fire and rescue stations across the state. Our firefighters operate 47 fire stations in metropolitan Melbourne and 38 regional stations, most of which are co-located with CFA volunteer brigades.

We respond to fires, complex rescues, road crashes, emergency medical calls and hazardous chemical spills.

Our people are highly trained and ready to respond to emergencies across Victoria, Australia and the world.

Our supply chain activities are made up predominantly of local suppliers, but include some national and global suppliers. Activities are spread across a variety of goods and service categories and include

- Apparel
- Property Services
- Corporate categories
- ICS
- Operational equipment and Services

Criterion 3: The risks of modern slavery practices in operations and supply chains.

FRV is currently reviewing supply chains to identify any potential risk of modern slavery. The key areas identified as categories of high priority include

- Textiles and raw materials for clothing production
- Office cleaning
- Electronic manufacturing and assembling
- Vehicle manufacturing and assembling
- Construction materials

FRV will roll out a questionnaire to the suppliers in the identified potential high risk categories and use data obtained to mitigate any identified or potential risk.

FRV recognises that modern slavery risks may be increased during the COVID-19 pandemic due to product and resource shortages, operating restrictions, limitations of freight movement and resource shortages.

FRV will continue to work with suppliers to identify current and potential risks. Once identified, FRV will work to mitigate risks in our supply chains.

Criterion 4: Describe the actions taken by the reporting entity to assess and address these risks, including due diligence and remediation processes

In addition to working with existing suppliers to identify potential areas of risk, FRV is undertaking the following actions

- Development and implementation of a Modern Slavery Policy for FRV
- Inclusion of a modern slavery clause into purchase order terms and conditions, setting out FRVs position and consequences of disclosure or identification of modern slavery practices in the supplier's operations
- Inclusion of a Modern Slavery clause in all contractual arrangements, with such clause to be embedded in all contract templates
- Review the responses of suppliers to the modern slavery questionnaire to identify areas of high priority for review and remedial action if necessary
- Include the modern slavery clause as a compulsory step in the vendor application process
- Utilise the Australian Government's e-learning modules, introduce a modern slavery training module to be undertaken by all FRV staff involved in procurement.

Criterion 5: Describe the effectiveness of actions being taken by the reporting entity to assess and address modern slavery risks

FRV is developing a reporting framework which will provide quantitative and qualitative data to assess the effectiveness of actions being taken to address the modern slavery risk.

Any operations or supply chain risks identified will be recorded and mitigated as appropriate. Such actions will be included in a yearly report to be provided as part of the yearly statement to Australian Border Force.

Criterion 6: Describe the process of consultation with any entities the reporting entity owns or controls.

Not applicable

Criterion 7: Any other relevant information

The Victorian Government maintains a Supplier Code of Conduct which must be reviewed and adhered to by all suppliers that engage with the Victorian Government. The Supplier Code of Conduct outlines the expectations of suppliers in areas including integrity, ethics and conduct, conflict of interest, labour and human rights, health and safety and environmental management. It is complimentary to and supports the objectives of the modern slavery legislation.

Conclusion

Fire Rescue Victoria is committed to the eradication of modern slavery. We will continue to review and refine our approach to identifying, minimising and managing modern slavery risks in both operations and supply chains.

We will work to meet the expectations set out in the Modern Slavery Act 2018.

Fire Rescue Victoria is a 'Commissioner entity' for the purposes of the Public Administration Act 2004 (Vic), being a public entity that consists of a governing body of only one person. Pursuant to section 6 of the Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958 (Vic), Fire Rescue Victoria is constituted by the Fire Rescue Commissioner who is the principal governing body and responsible member for the purposes of section 13(2) of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth).

This statement was approved by the Commissioner of Fire Rescue Victoria, Ken Block, on 29 April 2022.



Ken Block
Fire Rescue Commissioner
29/04/2022