

## TREASURER TOM KOUTSANTONIS

Thursday, 7 July 2016 (released Friday, 20 May 2016)

### ESL to fund additional fire-fighting training and equipment

The Emergency Services Levy (ESL) will increase by 1.5 per cent in 2016-17 in order to upgrade the safety equipment on fire trucks and provide increased training for our CFS and SES volunteers.

That represents an increase of around \$4 to the ESL for owners of a median valued residential property in metropolitan Adelaide. A total of \$292.4 million will be raised through the ESL this financial year.

Additional funding for services include:

- \$2.6 million to retrofit safety systems to existing CFS, MFS and DEWNR fire trucks and accelerate the replacement of CFS fire trucks to significantly improve the protection of fire crews exposed to burn-overs during bushfires;
- \$1.5 million for increased training and support for CFS and SES volunteers;
- \$1.4 million to ensure SAFECOM can continue to provide key emergency management support functions, including volunteer support, work health and safety, public information and procurement support to emergency services agencies, enabling them to focus on the delivery of front-line services;
- \$1.0 million to enhance SES flood response and incident management capabilities so that it is better prepared to manage and respond to flooding emergencies;
- \$2.8 in cost recovery for the Pinery fires.

### Background

The Emergency Services Levy is a hypothecated fund in which every dollar raised goes towards emergency services, including organisations such as the Country Fire Service (CFS), Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS), State Emergency Service (SES) and Volunteer Marine Rescue SA.

ESL discounts of between 20 per cent and 90 per cent apply in regional areas with the amount of discount depending on where the land or homeowner's property is located in the State.

Eligible pensioner and low-income earners will continue to receive remissions and pensioner concessions on their ESL invoices. There will be no change to ESL rates paid by owners of mobile property.



The ESL collected will be distributed to the following key emergency services:

SA Country Fire Service  
SA Metropolitan Fire Service  
SA State Emergency Service  
Surf Life Saving SA Inc  
Volunteer Marine Rescue SA  
SA Police  
SA Ambulance  
Department of Environment, Water & Natural Resources  
Shark Beach Patrol  
State Rescue Helicopter  
SA Fire & Emergency Services Commission

### **Quotes attributable to Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis**

The State Government has considered the funding requirements of our emergency services organisations and determined that a small increase to the ESL of 1.5 per cent was necessary to properly fund these critical agencies.

This increase is lower than the 1.7 per cent increase in fees and charges this financial year.

\$2.8 million of the increase will also go towards recovering additional costs associated with firefighting and incident response associated with the Pinery fires.

### **Quotes attributable to Emergency Services Minister Peter Malinauskas**

In the past two years we have seen some of the most devastating bushfire seasons on record. The Pinery fire drew on significant resources from our emergency services sector, including the deployment of thousands of volunteers.

Our volunteers take enormous risks defending life and property, and it is critical that we provide them with the resources they needed to protect themselves and the communities they are defending.

With an apparent increase in large-scale bushfires over recent years, firefighters face the real risk of death or serious burns from burn-overs and equipping our firefighters with burn-over technology is a significant priority. I am extremely pleased to announce \$2.6 million will be spent on accelerating the replacement and retrofitting of existing CFS vehicles to provide burn-over technology and improve safety for firefighters.

I am acutely aware of the importance of training to ensuring the safety of volunteers and to encourage the continual recruitment of new volunteers, so I am very happy to announce \$1.5 million to fund training for CFS and SES volunteers.

**Media Contact:** [David Russell](mailto:David.Russell@sa.gov.au) 0434 307 012

