



Strategy and Outcomes Framework

2020 – 2030
OUR COMMUNITY. OUR CFA.



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Cover photo: Mandy Wallace



Welcome

Chair Foreword



CFA is embarking on a transformative journey; a journey inspired by our evolving Victorian community.

The reform of Victoria's fire services positions us to meet the changing needs and expectations of a growing state.

It also provides us with a unique opportunity to shape the future of CFA and build on our foundations as a volunteer and community focused emergency services organisation. Respect for our history and our valued reputation as a trusted authority in fire safety, community connection and volunteering, underpin our future direction.

Our changing climate presents new challenges, as fire seasons become longer and more intense. We need to focus on partnering with communities and empowering them to plan and prepare for fire as part of the emergency services sector vision for safer and more resilient communities.

This Strategy: **"Our Community, Our CFA 2020-2030"** outlines how we will embrace change and support our people through transition while continuing to stand side-by-side with our communities to protect lives and property.

It provides a blueprint for how we will approach our service delivery over the next ten years, building on our strengths and capabilities in the areas where communities will need us most, and recognising the breadth of our work which goes far beyond fire response.

I commend this Strategy, endorsed by our Board, to all our people..

Greg Wilson
Chair



Introduction

On 1 July 2020, the Government's Fire Services Reform agenda restored CFA to a volunteer firefighting organisation. This Strategy sets out a strong pathway for our organisation, one which implements the Fire Services Reform and makes clear our ongoing commitment to build and maintain a sustainable and effective volunteer-based, community-centred emergency service.

CFA has always been committed to delivering high quality services to protect life and property. This Strategy makes clear our renewed focus on volunteerism, which will allow us to pursue new opportunities to innovate and improve.

This Strategy outlines our commitment to the community, to put them at the centre of all our decisions, and to deliver high quality services that make a positive difference.

Just as importantly, this Strategy also reinforces our commitment to our people, to provide a safe and healthy working environment and to be a progressive and innovative emergency services organisation.

What we do

Main Functions:



Promoting fire safety through community education, engagement and support.



Vegetation management and reducing fuel loads, including planned burning and roadside management.



Response to forest fires, grassfires, structural fires and vehicle fires.



Local, regional and state incident management support.



Expert advice to local and state authorities to inform land use planning, emergency management planning and fire prevention strategies.

Additional Functions:



Response to road and transport accidents.



Assist with search and rescue.



Initial cordon and control of incidents involving hazardous materials (HAZMAT), ahead of specialist response.



Emergency Medical Response in support of Ambulance Victoria.

Adapting to Change

Our community is expanding and becoming more diverse

Victoria's population has grown steadily over the past four census periods and is predicted to increase from 5.9 million in 2016 to 11.2 million by 2056. As the population of Victorian grows, so too does the number of Victorians who rely on CFA for emergency services.

The increase in population has created new challenges for CFA service delivery. Victoria currently has a large population aged between 45 and 65. Over the next four years, the number of people aged 65 years and older is expected to triple as our population ages. This will not just have a significant impact on the availability and capacity of volunteers, but also require CFA to provide services to an increasing number of vulnerable people.

As our population expands, it is also becoming more diverse. Overseas migration is a major component of Victoria's population growth, with more than 25% of our population born overseas. Over 180 languages and dialects are spoken in Victoria. Programs and services that cater solely to English speakers are not going to reach large parts of the Victorian community.

As our community expands and becomes more diverse, CFA will be required to keep up with the growth and diversity of the Victorian community.



Where and how we live is evolving

Victoria is Australia's smallest mainland state in geographic size, but the most densely populated and urbanised state. The modern homes that we live in, the higher density of our neighbourhoods and where people are choosing to live means that the fire risk facing our communities is changing.

While the population of Victoria grows, the populations of many rural and regional areas are declining. The increase in large-scale farming operations, rationalisation of services into fewer and larger cities, increased personal mobility, and increasing economic and social attractiveness of urban lifestyles means more people are leaving smaller rural communities for larger urban areas. As the population declines in rural towns, the pool of available volunteers also decreases.

The settlement of Victoria has created a large area of potential peri-urban development surrounding Melbourne and the regional centres of Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Wodonga and the Latrobe Valley. More and more people are living on the urban fringe, where the risk of grassfire and forest fire can be very high.

Modern homes also present unique challenges for fire suppression. While we now have more options available for early detection systems and residential fire suppression systems, such as smoke alarms and residential sprinklers, many modern homes can provide less fire protection than historic homes. Larger homes, open plan layouts, increased fuel loads including more synthetic home furnishings and new construction materials means house fires will spread quicker, providing less time for residents to self-evacuate and decreasing the time from fire ignition to total structure collapse.

As our communities changes where and how they live, we must adapt our service delivery offering to target the changing risk environment.





Our climate is changing

Climate change has increased the frequency, severity and timing of dangerous bushfire weather conditions in Australia, especially in southern and eastern Australia. Future fire weather will increase in severity for south and east Australia, driven by hotter, drier conditions. In addition to the projected trends towards more dangerous near-surface fire weather conditions, there are also projected trends for an increase in pyroconvection risk factors for some regions of southern Australia, which results in dangerous fire behaviour. Bushfires create their own weather systems, making fire behaviour unpredictable and erratic.

The Australian Climate Council Report released in February 2016 found that global fire seasons had increased by approx. 20% between 1978 and 2013 and that Australia will need to double its firefighting capabilities as climate change causes bushfire seasons to overlap and place existing resources under enormous strain.

The increased risk of devastating bushfires driven by climate factors is testing CFA's response capability. We need to be smarter about how we manage the risk of bushfires in our environment.

Natural disasters are becoming more expensive

Bushfires, like many natural disasters, can be very costly for communities, causing losses of property, stock and agricultural infrastructure, community infrastructure and, in some cases, significant injury and death. Without action, the Australian Business Roundtable forecasts that the annual cost of natural disasters in Australia will reach \$23 billion by 2050. The Insurance Council of Australia has also demonstrated the escalating costs of extreme natural disasters in Australia, which have risen from \$3.533 billion in 1989 to \$4.560 billion in 1999 and \$5.231 billion in 2011.

In 2018-19, cash payments to states and territories under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements totalled \$390.1 million. This is in addition to individual payments made to impacted individuals affected by disasters, which totalled \$121.7 million for the same year. For 2019-20, these payments were even larger.

The Roundtable estimates that if funding prioritisation was given to preparedness and creating community resilience, there could be a 50% reduction in the estimated 2050 natural disaster expenditure. Without this shift, the cost of natural disasters could overwhelm Australia in the near future and compromise our ability to maintain the required capability to respond to and recover from these events.



Expectations are shifting

CFA operates as part of the Government's 'all communities, all emergencies' policy. We are the specialist in the prevention and suppression of fires, but we are also called on to support the community through a wide range of emergency events. In addition to responding to structure, grass and bushfires, we also respond to road accidents, medical emergencies and HAZMAT incidents, support VicSES in preparing and responding to flood and severe weather events, and provide incident management support to all major incidents throughout the year.

Like all Government agencies, CFA needs to ensure it can perform its role efficiently and effectively with our available resources.

Smart devices, mobile communication and social media are all changing the way communities receive information, and how and when they expect to be engaged. We need to look at how we can use innovation to reach our community in ways that work for them.

Shifting expectations are not limited to Government and the community – the expectations of our volunteers are also shifting. More than 6 million Australian adults volunteered in 2010, which equated to roughly 36% of the population over 18. This is up from 24% in 1995. While the number of Australians who volunteer is increasing, the median number of hours spent volunteering has decreased, from 74 hours per year in 1995 to 56 hours per year in 2006.

Australian's lead busy lives and are working harder to manage the various personal and professional priorities competing for their time. Volunteers expect flexibility and agility from their organisation, and CFA has to rise to this challenge.

We are your Country Fire Authority



Vision

Victorian communities are prepared for and safe from fire



Mission

To protect lives and property



Goals and Outcomes

- 1.1 The community has confidence in our advice and services
- 1.2 The community is educated, engaged and empowered to manage its fire risk
- 1.3 The community changes its behaviour to manage their fire risk

- 3.1 Our workplace is safe
- 3.2 We have a volunteer and paid workforce that reflects the community it serves
- 3.3 We uphold the CFA values and are held accountable for our behaviour
- 3.4 Our volunteer and paid workforce is appropriately skilled, resourced and empowered and is continually learning

GOAL 1:
We put the community at the centre of everything we do

GOAL 3:
We provide a great place to volunteer and work

GOAL 2:
We provide programs and services that make a positive difference

GOAL 4:
We are a progressive emergency service

- 2.1 Fires are prevented
- 2.2 Fires are suppressed quickly and effectively
- 2.3 Fires are less harmful to the community
- 2.4 There are zero fire related fatalities or injuries in the community

- 4.1 Our investment decisions are transparent and achieve the greatest possible impact
- 4.2 Our corporate governance arrangements are based on evidence and evaluation to maximise the benefits for our people and our community
- 4.3 We collaborate with Fire Rescue Victoria and other service delivery partners to promote interoperability and build stronger relationships that lead to better community outcomes
- 4.4 We work with Emergency Management Victoria and other government departments and agencies to support government objectives and emergency management reform
- 4.5 Our service delivery and corporate performance is continuously improving

Our Values

We put **SAFETY** first

We excel through **TEAMWORK**

We are dynamic and **ADAPTABLE**

We act with **INTEGRITY**

We **RESPECT** each other

We put the community at the centre of everything we do

Why is this a focus area?

CFA is not just the Country Fire Authority; we are the community's fire authority. We are made up of over 54,000 Victorians dedicated to protecting the life and property of over 4 million people. To properly serve the community, the community must be at the centre of our planning, of our decision-making and of our service delivery.

For many rural and regional areas around Victoria, CFA is synonymous with the community. For larger regional cities and those in the outer Melbourne suburbs, CFA is a part of the community. Making sure the community is prepared for and safe from fire requires community-centred decision-making.

What do we need to do?

We need to understand the community we serve so we can connect with them and tailor our services and advice to meet their unique needs. By building trust and respect, we will ensure that the community listens to CFA advice and accesses our services.

We will build on our reputation as a trusted and respected organisation so that the community trusts our advice and knows how we can support them.

We will respect our communities and acknowledge their individual needs.

We will engage with communities in diverse ways that work for them, and provide a range of diverse opportunities for engagement, based on their unique needs and preferences.

We will work to expand our reach in the community and improve the quality of our engagement so that we are both accessible to, and understood by, the community.

We will partner with the community to understand and identify fire risks and how they can be managed.

We will empower the community to own their fire risk and work with them to manage their risk collaboratively and effectively.

What will success look like?

We will be successful if **the community partners with CFA to actively manage their fire risk.**

This means that:

- The community has confidence in our advice and services
- The community is educated, engaged and empowered to manage its fire risk
- The community changes their behaviour to manage fire risks

What shifts will you see?

The community will experience:

- Enhanced trust in CFA advice and service delivery
- More opportunities to engage meaningfully with CFA on local risk
- Better access to local advice on risk management
- Increased knowledge about what they need to do to manage their fire risk

We deliver programs and services that make a positive difference

Why is this a focus area?

CFA volunteers and staff deliver prevention, preparedness, response and recovery programs and services to over 4 million Victorians. Whether delivering community education programs to prevent fires or responding effectively to fires that have occurred, the services we deliver seek to achieve a common vision – Victorian communities that are prepared for and safe from fire.

We need to make sure that the programs and services we deliver make a positive difference towards achieving our vision. We have an obligation to the community, and to our people, to invest in meaningful service delivery that maximises benefits and minimises risks.

What do we need to do?

For our service delivery to make a positive difference for each unique community, we need to tailor our programs and services to the local fire risk environment of each community, and measure our performance based on the outcomes we achieve.

We will design and deliver our programs and services to address the specific fire risks facing a community, so that we can:

- stop fires from occurring; and
- stop fires that do occur from threatening life and damaging property

We will tailor our service delivery to the community, recognising that a one size fits all approach will not work to support the diverse and varied needs of the Victorian communities we serve.

We will constantly monitor, evaluate and improve the programs and services we deliver so that we know we are doing the best we can to support our community.

We will operate as part of Victoria's 'all communities, all emergencies' approach to emergency management, and utilise strategic partnerships to deliver sustainable and effective emergency services.

We will continue to strengthen our relationships with our partner agencies, so that we can work together and play our part to achieve the sector-wide vision of safer and more resilient communities.

What will success look like?

We will be successful if **the community is not negatively impacted by fires.**

This means that:

- Fires are prevented
- Fires are suppressed quickly and effectively.
- Fires are less harmful to the community of Victoria
- There are zero fire related fatalities or injuries in the community

What shifts will you see?

The community will experience:

- Fewer structure fires
- Fewer bush and grassfires threatening their life and property
- Fewer fatalities and injuries from fires
- Lower financial costs when residential fires do occur
- Lower financial costs when bushfires do occur, including less loss of stock
- Lower environmental costs when bushfires do occur



We provide a great place to volunteer and work

Why is this a focus area?

CFA relies on over 54,000 volunteers to deliver its programs and services to over 4 million Victorians and thousands of visitors to our state each year. These dedicated volunteers are supported by hundreds of staff who work at the local and state level to build capability and support service delivery. Our people, whether volunteer or staff, are committed to CFA and its vision.

To have a sustainable workforce into the future, we need to be an organisation of choice, making CFA a great place to volunteer and work. We need to provide each and every one of our volunteers and staff with a safe and supportive environment to ensure they continue to be part of CFA into the future.

What do we need to do?

Providing a great place to volunteer and work means focusing on providing a physically, mentally and emotionally safe environment for our people where they feel welcome, included and supported to undertake their duties. This goes beyond our statutory obligation to provide a healthy and safe workplace and goes to the heart of the culture we are building for CFA.

We will be the organisation of choice for people looking to volunteer or work with an emergency service.

We will protect the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of our people by strengthening our processes, systems and tools to identify and manage workplace hazards.

We will focus on inclusion and fairness, and creating a workplace culture which values gender, cultural and generational diversity at all levels of the organisation.

We will invest in our leaders, recognising that leadership skills require training and support to develop and grow.

We will clearly define the roles and responsibilities of our leaders, ensuring that decision-makers know what decisions they need to make and how they can be supported to make them.

We will remove barriers to leadership for minority groups so our volunteers and staff who come from diverse backgrounds are supported to expand their skills and take on the challenges that leadership brings..

We will build a supportive and fair workplace culture, where our people live by the CFA values of safety, teamwork, adaptability, integrity and respect, and are held accountable for their behaviour.

We will listen to our people, provide ways for them to share their experiences and issues, and respond to all complaints in a timely, transparent and confidential way.

We will train our people effectively, so that our operational and support personnel have the competencies they need to fulfill their role.

We will equip our people with the tools and equipment they need to successfully complete their tasks.

We will support our people by defining the processes and doctrine they need to make the best decisions in both operational and corporate environments, and ensure they understand how to operate effectively.

We will operate with agility and flexibility, recognising that a one-size-fits-all approach to volunteering and working does not work for the diverse needs of our people and the community.



What will success look like?

We will be successful if **our volunteer and paid workforce is sustainable and effective.**

This means that:

- Our workplace is safe.
- We have a volunteer and paid workforce that reflects the community it serves
- We uphold the CFA values and are held accountable for our behaviour
- Our volunteer and paid workforce is appropriately skilled, resourced, empowered and is continually learning

What shifts will you see?

Our volunteers and staff will experience:

- Fewer workplace injuries, especially those which result in physical or mental harm
- Fewer unplanned absences from the workforce
- More gender, cultural and generational diversity in their brigades and workplaces
- More gender, cultural and generational diversity amongst their leadership
- Better support for leaders to make effective decisions
- More transparent, reliable and effective complaints management processes, which decreases the time taken to address issues or concerns
- Only behaviour that is in line with our values
- Better handling of complaints and workplace issues
- Better access to the training and equipment they need to successfully fulfil their volunteer or paid role
- More transparency in how training, equipment and infrastructure is allocated
- More workplace flexibility and agility for volunteers and staff
- More workplace satisfaction among volunteer and staff cohorts

We are a progressive emergency service

Why is this a focus area?

CFA has been supporting the Victorian community for over 70 years, respecting our past as one of the first volunteer firefighting services in Australia is important to preserving the ethos of our organisation. Much has changed since our establishment, including the community we serve, their expectations, the environment and the Government's regulation of our activity. Our operating environment has changed and we must change with it.

Being a progressive emergency service means we embrace change and innovation to continuously improve our service delivery and corporate performance. It means being agile and adapting to our changing environment.

Being progressive means making the best decisions we can to maximise the benefit of our service delivery offering for the community. Every day, our people make decisions which affect the lives of Victorians, and which have the potential to save lives and property. We need the right data and evidence to guide these decisions, and we need the right governance arrangements to make sure our decisions are appropriate and transparent.

While we innovate and change, we must also maintain our consistent focus on being a socially responsible publicly funded organisation. This means we must meet the expectations of Government and operate within the policy environment that it sets.

What do we need to do?

We will use evidence to inform our decisions and maximise the public value of our investments.

We will invest in research and development to ensure we have the best evidence and knowledge to support decision-making.

We will implement effective and efficient governance arrangements across all levels of our organisation.

We will continuously review and improve our performance, embracing innovation and transformational change.

We will prioritise investment in innovations which will help us to respond effectively to a changing environment.

We will report on our performance through regular and transparent methods, and communicate how we will improve our performance.

We will share our knowledge and expertise with the sector and our delivery partners.

We will form strategic partnerships to help us to meet our strategic goals and provide broader benefit for the Victorian communities.

We will meet 100% of our legislative and regulatory obligations.

What will success look like?

We will be successful if **CFA is recognised as a leading volunteer-based emergency service.**

This means that:

- Our investment decisions are transparent, and achieve the greatest possible impact
- Our corporate governance arrangements are based on evidence and evaluation to maximise the benefits for our people and the community
- Our service delivery and corporate performance is continuously improving
- We collaborate with Fire Rescue Victoria and other service delivery partners to promote interoperability and build stronger relationships that lead to better community outcomes
- We work with Emergency Management Victoria and other government departments and agencies to support government objectives and emergency management reform

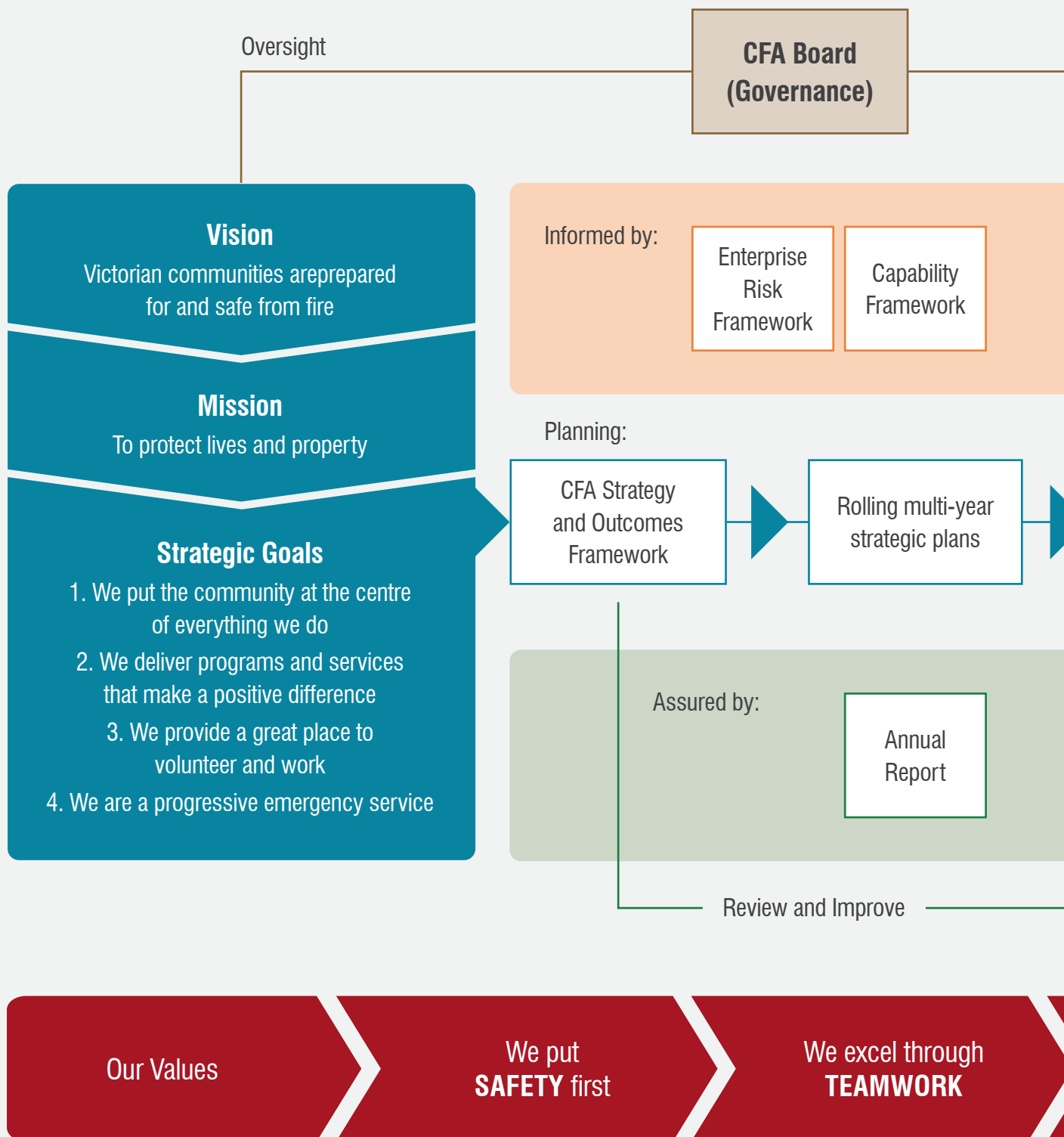
What shifts will you see?

There will be:

- more investment in innovation and technology.
- more investment in research
- less budget variance
- better management of strategic risks
- more projects delivered on time and within budget
- more recognition of CFA's expertise in firefighting, volunteering and community connection among our sector partners
- strong compliance with legislative and regulatory obligations
- a lower carbon footprint across our offices and stations



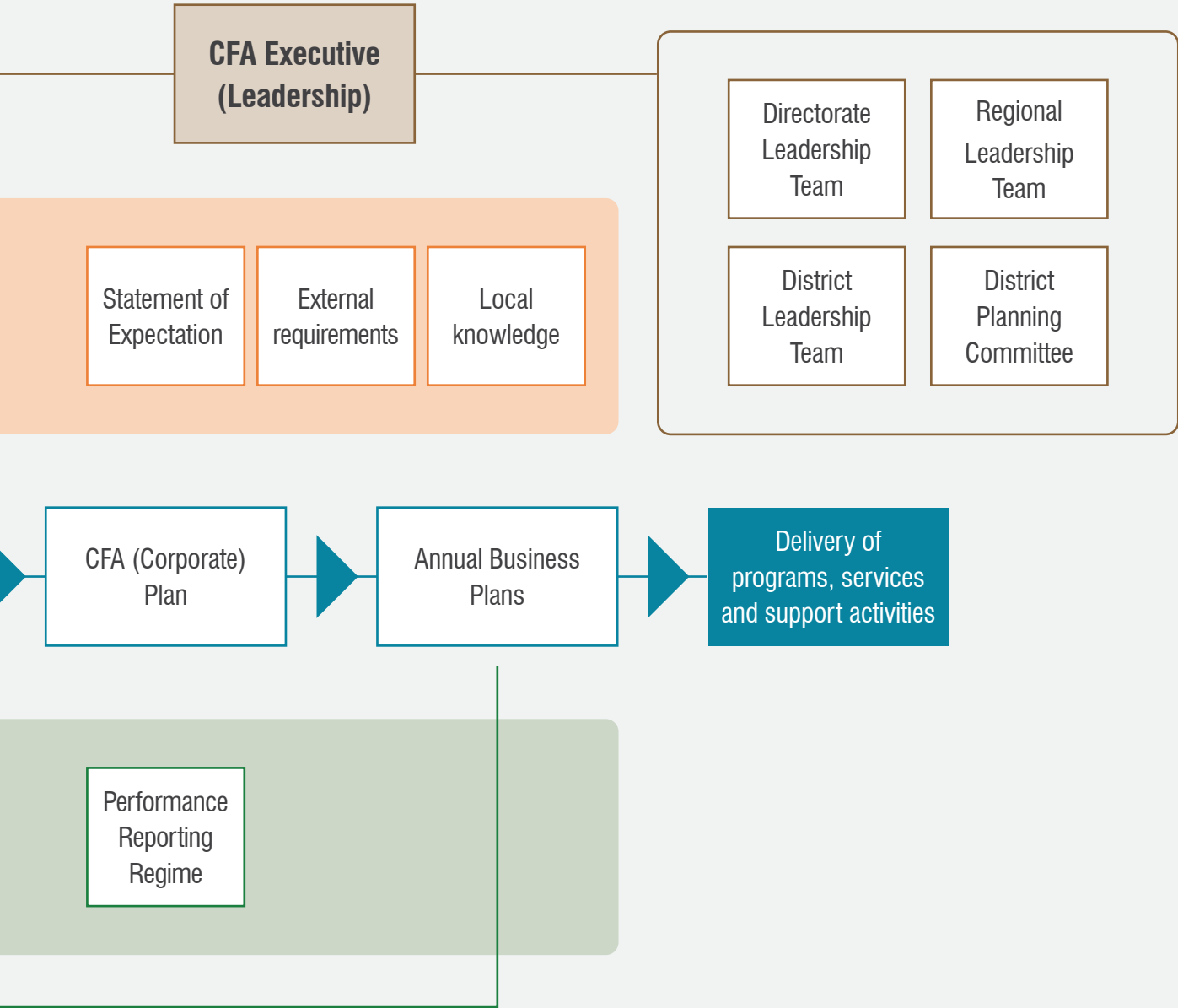
Implementing the Strategy



This strategy sets out a pathway for CFA to achieve its outcomes and create a Victorian community that is prepared for and safe from fire. This strategy will form the basis of a set of strategic plans which will be developed to implement the commitments in this document.

From here, we will rely on our leaders, our members and our communities to realise our vision. Together, we will work to prepare Victorians and keep them safe from fire. We will also work with our emergency management sector partners to pursue the best possible outcomes for the Victorian community.

We have developed a strategic landscape, to show you how this Strategy will be implemented and monitored over the next decade.



We are dynamic and **ADAPTABLE**

We act with **INTEGRITY**

We **RESPECT** each other

Appendix 1:

Outcomes Framework

GOAL/FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS
DOMAIN 1: STRONG RELATIONSHIPS KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE		
1. We put the community at the centre of everything we do so that the community partners with CFA to actively manage their fire risk	1.1 The community has confidence in our advice and services	• Increase in the community's trust of the CFA brand • Increase in the community's trust in CFA advice and service delivery
	1.2 The community is educated, engaged and empowered to manage its fire risk	• Increase in the engagement opportunities available to the community • Increase in the quality of engagement undertaken by CFA • Increase in the number and diversity of the community engaging with CFA
	1.3 The community changes its behaviour to manage fire risks	• Increase in community members taking appropriate action to manage fire risk
DOMAIN 2: A RESPONSIVE AND INNOVATIVE VOLUNTEER SERVICE		
2. We provide programs and services that make a positive difference so that the lives and property of the community are protected from fires	2.1 Fires are prevented	• Decrease in rate of house fires • Decrease in bushfire ignitions
	2.2 Fires are suppressed quickly and effectively	• Increase in containment to room of origin for structure fires • Increase in containment to 5 hectares for forest fires • Decrease average time spent suppressing structure fires (time spent on scene of incident) • Decrease in average time to contain and to control bushfires
	2.3 Fires are less harmful to the community	• Decrease in financial cost of fires • Decrease in time of displacement from family home • Decrease in stock loss • Decrease in structures lost
	2.4 There are zero fire related fatalities or injuries in the community	• Decrease in fire fatalities • Decrease in fire injuries

GOAL/FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS
DOMAIN 3: HIGH PERFORMING VOLUNTEER AND PAID WORKFORCE		
3. We provide a great place to volunteer and work so that our volunteer and paid workforce is sustainable and effective	3.1 Our workplace is safe	• Decrease in workplace hazards • Decrease in workplace injuries • Decrease in volunteer compensation claims • Decrease in work cover claims • Decrease in unplanned leave
	3.2 We have a volunteer and paid workforce that reflects the community it serves	• Increase in the gender, cultural and generational diversity of our volunteer and paid workforce • Increase in the gender, cultural and generational diversity of our volunteer and paid leadership cohorts
	3.3 We uphold the CFA values and are held accountable for our behaviour	• Increase in volunteer and staff awareness of the CFA values and appropriate behaviour • Increase in volunteer and staff reporting value-aligned behaviour • Increase in leaders displaying the CFA values • Increase in volunteer and staff satisfaction with the handling of and outcome from complaints • Decrease in time taken to address complaints
	3.4 Our volunteers and staff are empowered and supported to successfully fulfil their role	• Increase in the effectiveness of training programs • Increase in the transparency of training decisions • Increase in staff satisfaction • Increase in volunteer satisfaction

GOAL/FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS
DOMAIN 4: A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CULTURE		
4. We are a progressive emergency service so that we are recognised as a leading volunteer-based emergency service	4.1 Our investment decisions are transparent, and achieve the greatest possible impacts	• Return on Investment measurement
	4.2 Our corporate governance arrangements are based on evidence and evaluation to maximise the benefits for our people and the community	• Decrease in annual OPEX and CAPEX budget variance • Increase in compliance rates with legislative and regulatory obligations • Decrease in risk rating of strategic risks • Increase in on time and within budget delivery of projects • Decrease in the time taken to implement recommendations from independent inquiries and internal audits
	4.3 We collaborate with Fire Rescue Victoria and other service delivery partners to promote interoperability and build stronger relationships that lead to better community outcomes	• Increase in CFA reputation amongst sector partners • Increase in CFA presentations at Australia-wide and international conferences • Increase in collaboration with service delivery partners
	4.4 We work with Emergency Management Victoria and other government departments and agencies to support government objectives and emergency management reform	• Increase in consultation with government departments and agencies
	4.5 Our service delivery and corporate performance is continuously improving	• Increase in number of service improvement projects initiated and delivered





**PROTECTING LIVES
AND PROPERTY**

Acknowledgement of traditional custodians

CFA would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land throughout Victoria and acknowledge their ancestors and elders, both past and present.