

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



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LARGE AIR TANKER FOR BUSHFIRES TO BE SHARED WITH QLD

The Victorian and Queensland Governments have secured a deal to share a Large Air Tanker to support aerial firefighting capacity in both states during their respective bushfire seasons.

The Bombardier Dash-8 Q400AT aircraft will operate in Queensland from September to December to cover their bushfire season and will operate in Victoria for the height of summer from December to February.

Sharing aerial firefighting resources provides both states with better value for money while ensuring the aircraft is available to support firefighting efforts on the ground when and where it is needed most.

The agreement covers the 2021 to 2024 bushfire seasons and the Large Air Tanker will remain in Victoria between bushfire seasons.

The Q400AT has a 10,000 litre tank for water or fire retardant and replaces the larger C130 previously used by Victoria.

The Q400AT has some significant advantages for use in aerial firefighting including that it is 50 knots faster, uses half the amount of fuel, improved low speed handling for dropping retardant and faster turnaround time from engine start to take-off.

This particular Large Air Tanker also requires less room for take-off and landing, potentially opening several regional airports for operations that have not been able to be used previously.

The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements in 2020 recommended cost sharing for aviation resources.

The *2021/22 Victorian Budget* included record funding to expand Victoria's firefighting capacity, strengthen communication systems during emergencies and deliver reforms recommended by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management.

Quote attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"This aircraft represents a significant advantage for firefighting in Victoria, as it can be operated at smaller regional airports as it requires less room for take-off and landing."

Quote attributable to Acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services Danny Pearson

"By sharing this Large Air Tanker with Queensland, we're ensuring this important aircraft gets maximum use during our bushfire seasons, to keep communities safe."

Quote attributable to Queensland Minister for Fire and Emergency Services Mark Ryan

"Queensland asks a lot of our firefighters when bushfires strike, so it is only right they have the resources to respond effectively."