

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

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



Friday, 22 October 2021

## TECH TRIAL SUPPORTS PLANNED BURNING IN THE WIMMERA

A drone has successfully established an ecological planned burn in the Grampians National Park, saving time and reducing the risk to firefighters, as part of a trial carried out by Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) crews in the Wimmera.

The trial – which involved FFMVic crews working with a licensed operator to fly the drone and drop aerial incendiaries to establish the burn – was found to increase accuracy and save crews time from navigating the difficult terrain on foot.

The 3000-hectare ecological burn, near Halls Gap, was identified as ideal for the drone trial due to its thick vegetation, intersecting drainage lines and creek system – which make it difficult for crews to access.

Every year since 2017, FFMVic crews carry out the burn, which aims to create a patchy mosaic of burnt and unburnt land to break up the vegetation, encourage regeneration and provide habitat for threatened species, such as the Heath Mouse and Southern Brown Bandicoot.

It also promotes the growth of threatened native grasses and orchids and helps to control weeds in the area.

This trial is part of the Victorian Government's record investment of \$517 million in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* to fund FFMVic workers and ensure access to modern technology, fire towers and equipment.

FFMVic works closely with the Bureau of Meteorology to assess weather conditions, such as humidity, temperature, and wind speed – and will only carry out burns when conditions are suitable.

For the latest information about when planned burns are happening near you go to [ffm.vic.gov.au/plannedburn](https://ffm.vic.gov.au/plannedburn), download the VicEmergency app or call the VicEmergency hotline on 1800 226 226.

For drone footage visit: <https://publish.viostream.com/player/download/ny1ykcsdkoo9t4>

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

*"By continuing to improve our practices and trial new technology, we are able to deliver a more effective planned burning program to protect communities and the environment from bushfires."*

*"Climate change and more extreme weather events are changing the nature of bushfires, so it's important we take action now to minimise risk to human life and our native wildlife."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jaala Pulford

*"It's great to see our local Forest Fire Management Victoria crews exploring innovative ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of planned burning. This work will help to protect our treasured natural environment and improve bushfire safety."*