

Mt Gellibrand Fire Tower gets green light

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From left to right: A/Commander Adam Matthews, A/ACFO Wayne Aylmer, Graeme Harvey, Sue Spencer, DGO Bruce Shaw, Group Officer Mark Brown, Kane McDonald, Don Smith

A brand-new replacement fire tower has been installed at Mount Gellibrand and is now operational in time for the start of the Fire Danger Period in the Colac Otway Shire today.

The final piece of the \$375,000 structure was installed on Tuesday, 30 November, when the fabricators fixed the six-tonne cabin atop the footings.

The Mt Gellibrand fire tower is now available for activation on severe fire danger days.

The fire tower is utilised by CFA for smoke sightings across the landscape and will operate within a network of nearby towers to detect fire in areas across Mt Gellibrand, the Otways and open grassland.

Deputy Chief Officer South West Rohan Luke said the new tower is built to withstand harsh weather and will provide enhanced safety for its CFA operators, as well as far-reaching fire observation across the area.

“We’re excited to provide our fire spotters with a safer and more reliable structure to continue contributing to CFA’s fire preparedness activities,” he said.

“We installed new footings and a base in the past few weeks and completed the structure with the addition of the cabin.”

Funding for the replacement tower was allocated through the CFA Base Capital Works Program for 2021-22.

The new tower has replaced an ageing fire tower which was no longer deemed safe for use.

“The health and safety of our people is our highest priority and this tower has been built with improved structural integrity to deal with rapid wind gusts and other severe weather,” DCO Luke said.

The Mount Gellibrand fire tower can typically be activated above a Fire Danger Index (FDI) of 35 with the previous Mt Gellibrand fire tower activated twice during last summer season.

The tower has been instrumental in detecting fires in the area over many years.

While fire towers are an important part of CFA’s fire spotting strategy, firefighters also utilise advanced technology and vigilant community members for the early detection of fires across the state.



Don Smith on the left and Bruce Shaw on the right.