

# Media Release

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## New Fire Observer Cabin on Mount Macedon

A new fire observer cabin has been installed on top of Mount Macedon.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Project Officer Fire Towers and Airbases, Andrew Johnstone, said the new cabin and access ladders replaced an older model and include improved safety features for the fire lookout observer.

“The new cabin looks similar to the old one but access has been modified so that the operator now enters via a door off the walkway rather than through a hatch in the cabin floor,” Mr Johnstone said.

“The most important change is to the ladders the lookout observer uses to climb the 32 metre tower and access the cabin.

“The previous ladders required a person to have specific training and to use a harness while climbing due to the narrow rungs and long length of the ladder.

“The size, gradient and length of the new ladders means they can be climbed without specialist training or harness.

“The new cabin is also fully insulated and air conditioned, which is important because fire tower observers can spend up to ten hours a day in the cabin during summer.

“In October we used a 60-tonne crane to remove the cabin, platform and access ladders from the tower,” Mr Johnston said.

“We then craned the new cabin into place and installed the new ladders.

“We’ve just completed the final fit-out, including installing communications gear, so the new cabin is now operational for the upcoming fire season.”

A fire lookout tower was first established on top of Mount Macedon by the Forest Commission in 1926.

The Mount Macedon Tower is part of a network of strategically located fire towers that ensure maximum coverage of Victoria’s parks and forests. The tower protects the community by providing the essential early detection of bushfires, communications links and intelligence gathering of fire behaviour.

Replacement of the cabin cost \$250,000 and was funded by the Victorian Government’s Reducing Bushfire Risk (RBR) initiative, which aims to reduce bushfire risk on public land by supporting early detection and rapid suppression of fires through upgrading fire towers, building new bridges and improving roads.