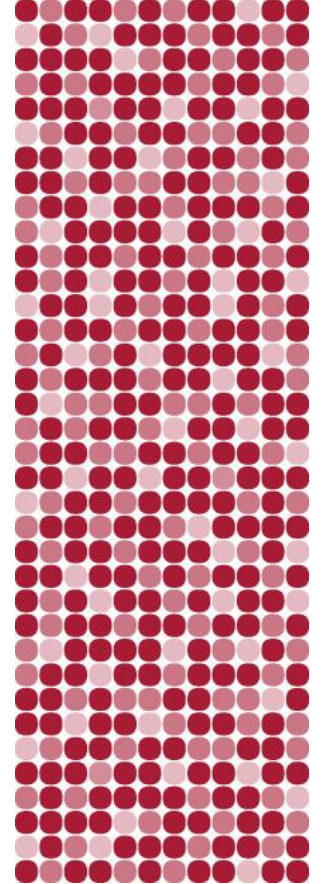


Fire Services Property Levy - Communications

Phil Scott, Acting Assistant Director,
Strategic Communication and Protocol Branch,
Department of Premier and Cabinet



Communication overview

- Communication activities focus on informing Victorians of the change.
- Extensive research undertaken.
- We have also been working with councils to include a flyer with rates notices.
- The State Revenue Office is providing customer service training to councils.



It's not
a new
fire levy,
it's a
fairer
fire levy.



From 1 July 2013, the Fire Services Levy will be removed from insurance premiums and replaced by a property-based levy collected with council rates. This means all property owners will contribute a fair share to our fire services, not just those with adequate insurance.

firelevy.vic.gov.au

**FIRE SERVICES
PROPERTY LEVY**



Important information for Victorian property owners.

How are Victoria's fire services funded?

Prior to 1 July 2013, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and Country Fire Authority were funded by a Fire Services Levy that insurance companies applied to building and contents insurance premiums. The amount that policyholders were charged was at the discretion of the insurance companies.

Why is it being changed?

Under the old system, everyone received assistance from the State's fire services, even though not everyone helped fund them. Also, many people paid more than their fair share. The Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission found that the insurance-based levy was unfair and lacked transparency. It recommended replacing it with a property-based levy to make sure all Victorian property owners contribute a fair share.

How much will I contribute?

There will be a fixed charge of \$100 for residential properties and \$200 for non-residential properties, plus a variable charge based on your property's capital improved value listed on your rates notice.

Will there be any concessions?

Yes, there will be a new \$50 concession for eligible pensioners and veterans. Also, farmers with multiple properties that operate as a single enterprise can lodge an exemption form to pay a single fixed charge.

How else is it fairer?

As part of the reforms, the Victorian Government has removed the unfair 'tax on tax' that saw GST and stamp duty charged on top of the old levy. Together with the new concessions, this will save households and businesses approximately \$100 million each year.

How will I be protected during the transition?

The Fire Services Levy Monitor has been established to oversee the change from an insurance-based levy and to make sure that insurers genuinely pass on savings to consumers. If you have a concern about the removal of the insurance-based levy, contact the Fire Services Levy Monitor (www.firelevymonitor.vic.gov.au or 1300 300 635). Paying the property-based levy does not remove the need to have adequate home and contents insurance.

Where do the funds go?

All funds collected by councils will go to supporting Victoria's fire services.

firelevy.vic.gov.au

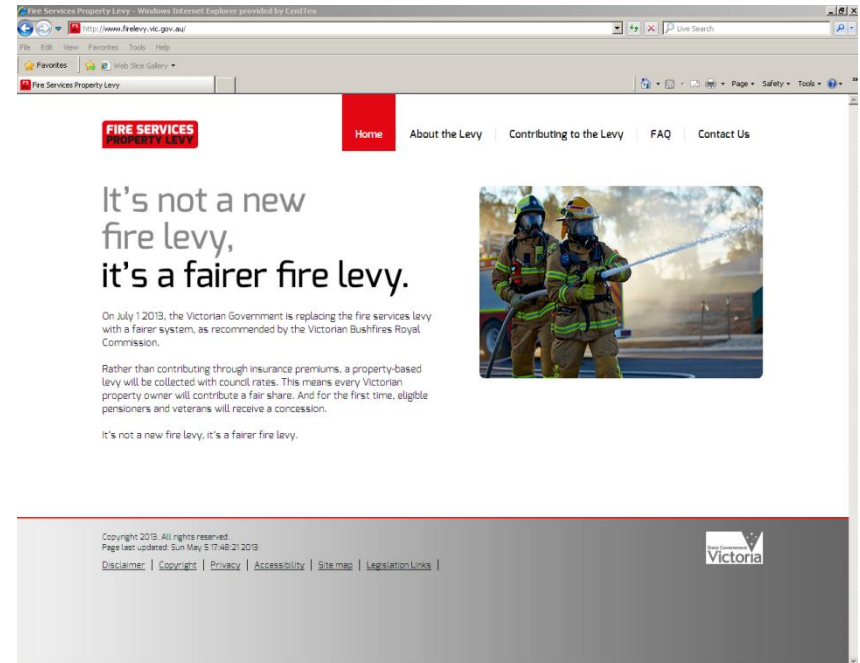
**FIRE SERVICES
PROPERTY LEVY**



What we have done so far



- A website (www.firelevy.vic.gov.au) has been developed; web tiles provided to all councils.
- FAQs and the flyer are being translated into twelve other languages and will be made available on the website.
- Advertising appeared in press and on radio when the variable rate was announced in early May.
- Worked with councils to ensure advertising will appear when rates notices are distributed in local municipalities.
- The Office of the Fire Services Levy Monitor is encouraging Victorians to check insurance renewal notices.



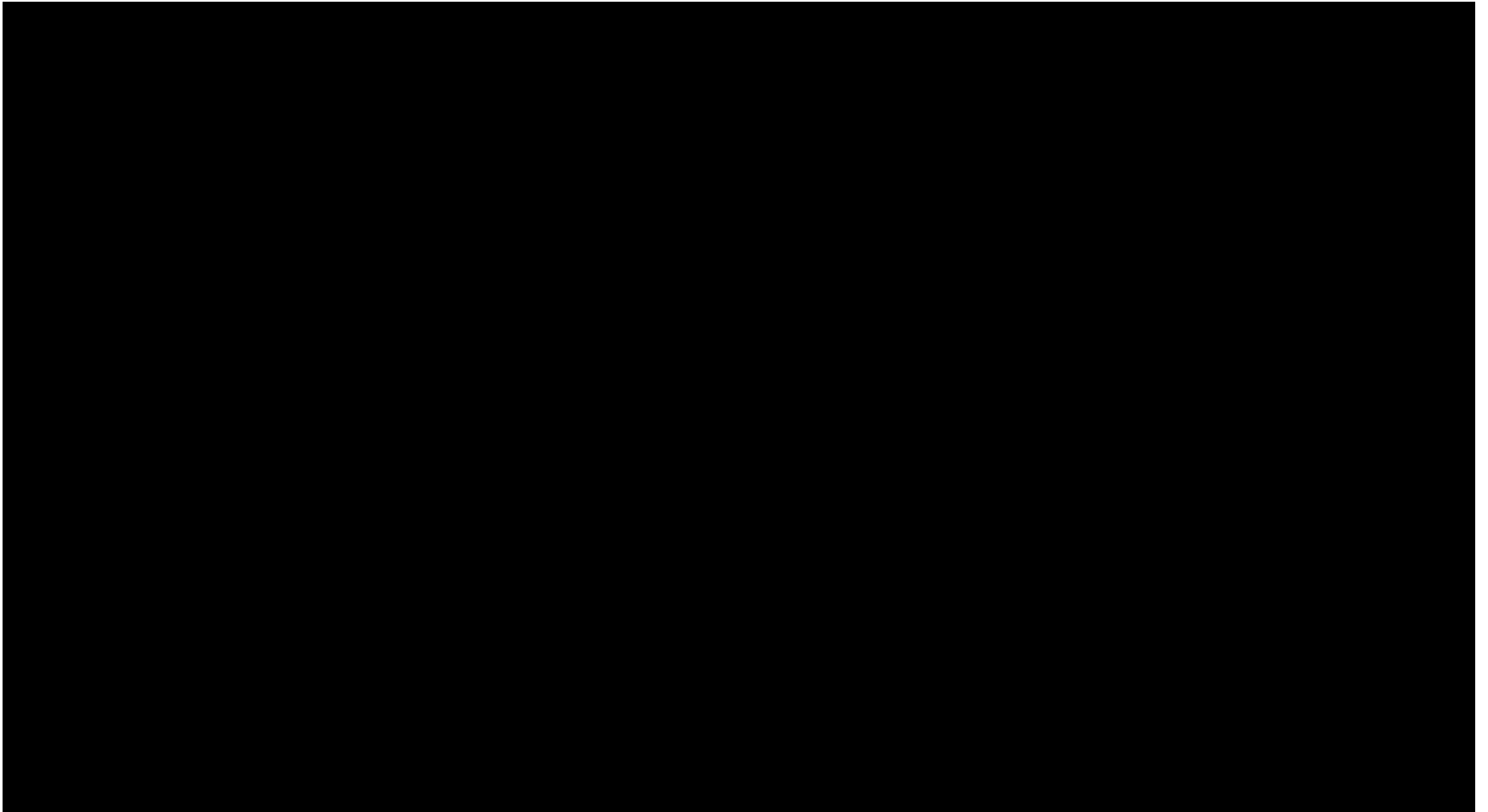
What we are doing now



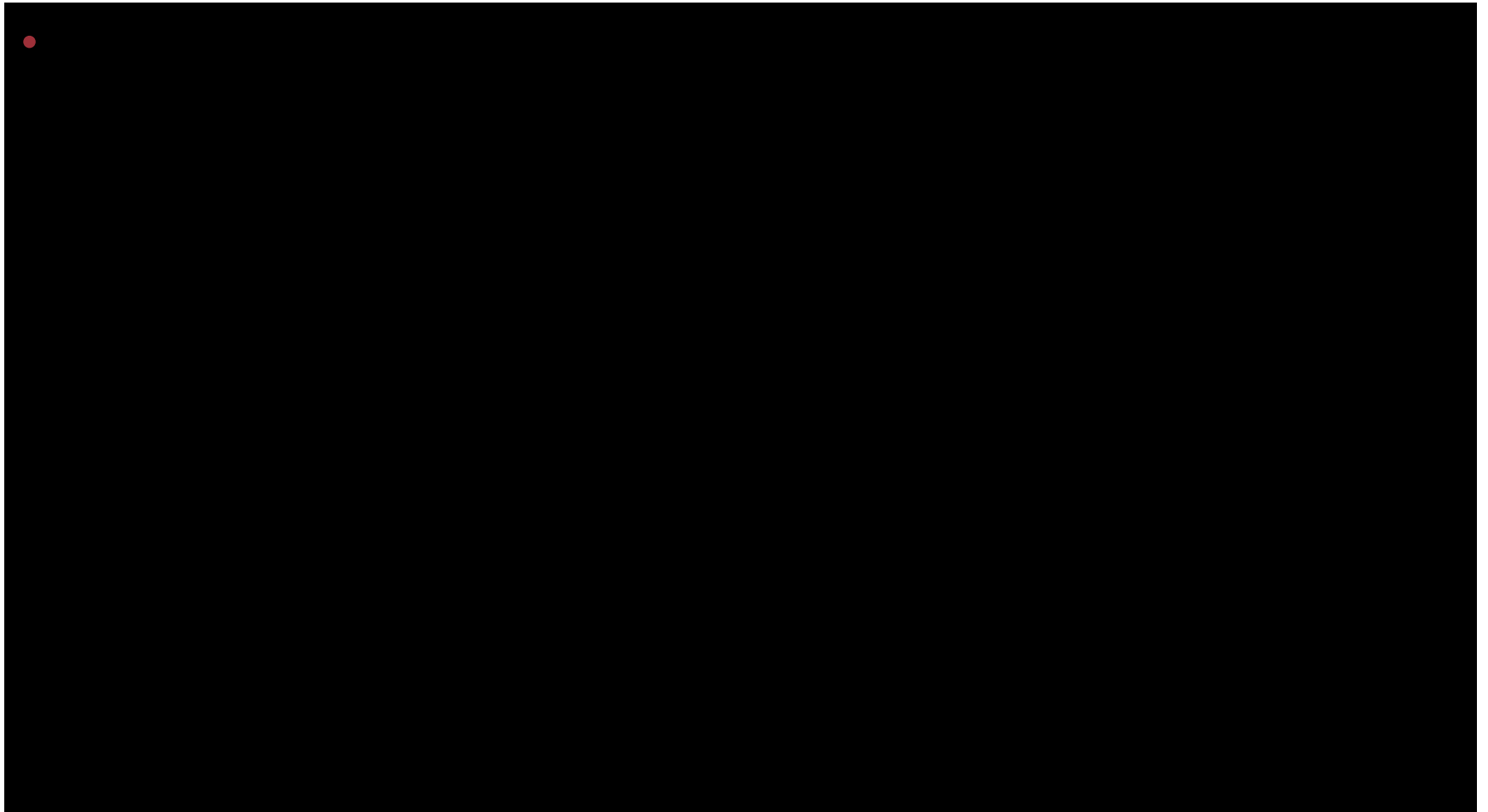
- A state-wide information campaign has commenced, ahead of the levy coming into effect on 1 July.
- This includes:
 - Television;
 - Press;
 - Radio; and
 - Online.



Press advertising



Television commercials



Contacts



- Councils are expected to be the first point of contact for property owners from 1 July 2013.
- For questions about the Fire Services Property Levy, contact the State Revenue Office at www.sro.vic.gov.au or 13 21 61.
- For queries or complaints about insurance, please contact the insurance company concerned or the Fire Services Levy Monitor at www.firelevymonitor.vic.gov.au or 1300 300 635.

QUESTIONS

