

Published by the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA), October 2021

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Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne

Designed by Griffin Graphics.  
Print managed by Finsbury Green.

Preferred way to cite this publication:  
Victorian Fisheries Authority Annual Report 2020-21

ISSN 2209-7570 Print  
ISSN 2209-7589 Online (pdf/word)

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# Aboriginal acknowledgement

The Victorian Fisheries Authority proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal community and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past, present and future.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples, and as the custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We recognise the strength of Aboriginal people, Traditional Owners and their communities, and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people to Victorian life, through their daily work, their application of Aboriginal knowledge and practice, and at key events; we recognise how this enriches us all.

We recognise that Aboriginal cultures and communities are diverse, and should be celebrated.

We acknowledge that the land and water is of spiritual, cultural and economic importance to Aboriginal people. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, guaranteeing equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

As part of the Victorian Government, we have distinct legislative obligations to Victorian Traditional Owner groups related to cultural and natural heritage, that are paramount in our responsibilities in managing Victoria's resources in partnership with Traditional Owners.



# Message from the VFA's Board Chair and CEO

Through the efforts of our staff and executive, 2020-21 was a year of progress for the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) in all areas of the work we do across the commercial and recreational fishing and aquaculture sectors, in educating the community, and enforcing our fishing regulations. The VFA has maintained its position in the community as an organisation that is engaging, friendly and helpful and we regularly receive feedback from the public describing their positive and rewarding interactions with our staff. For that, we extend our thanks and appreciation to every member of the VFA.

In recognition of the strong linkages between fishing and boating, a key highlight for us was the transition of Better Boating Victoria (BBV) into the VFA on 1 February 2021. The list of boating facility upgrades undertaken by BBV since its inception in 2019 is an impressive one and this exciting transition has already begun to deliver benefits for the Victorian fishing and boating community in making it safer, cheaper and easier for people to get out on the water and fish more often.

We continued our fish stocking success of previous years and stocked a record eight million fish in 2020-21 to provide an enormous boost to native fish stocks and other key species sought after by recreational fishers. To support future stocking and to meet the Government's target to stock 10 million fish annually, we made substantial progress in constructing our new native fish hatchery in the State's northeast. We also helped boost tourism and drive economic prosperity back into Victoria's regional areas affected by the 2019-20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic by recommencing our Golden Tag program – catch a tagged fish for a cash prize – when restrictions were eased.

Our commercial fishing and aquaculture sectors continued to feel the effects from the COVID-19 pandemic and international trade disruptions throughout 2020-21. Despite these impediments, the industry continued its important role as a primary producer, and the VFA acknowledges the strength and flexibility the sector has shown to innovate and diversify. Further, we are extremely proud of the collaborative efforts between the abalone industry, Agriculture Victoria and VFA staff in response to a resurgence of the abalone virus that devastated the industry in the early 2000's. In an already tough year, the collaborative work to combat the virus is a showcase of adversity bringing people together.

As always, our Fisheries Officers have been extremely busy in the community, providing advice, education and enforcement of our rules around fishing. In addition to their normal roles, they played an important part in supporting the Victorian Government's COVID-19 management restrictions by providing a community presence and assisting in various task forces. We are very proud of our increasing maturity as a statutory authority over the last four years and we continue to grow our corporate governance, policies and responsibilities with a focus on our people. We recognise the value and contribution of our staff, Board and committee members, and our stakeholders, and thank them for their efforts over this productive year.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

**Gail Owen**  
VFA Board Chair



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

**Travis Dowling**  
VFA Chief Executive Officer

# Declaration in report of operations

## Responsible Body's declaration

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, I am pleased to present the Victorian Fisheries Authority's Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2021.



**Gail Owen**

VFA Board Chair

20 October 2021





## Our purpose and functions

The VFA was created on 1 July 2017 by establishing the then Fisheries Victoria as a statutory authority under the *Victorian Fisheries Authority Act 2016* (the Act).

As a statutory authority, the VFA has the responsibility of managing Victoria's fisheries resources in a coordinated and strategic way to ensure their ongoing sustainability, while supporting the value they deliver to the commercial, recreational, aquaculture and Indigenous fishing sectors. We work with government and stakeholders to optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of Victoria's fisheries and aquaculture industries, while promoting sustainable and responsible practices.

The VFA supports the development of sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities in Victoria and promotion of responsible boating, fishing and fishing related activities so that boating and fishing are more accessible to more people. We are committed to getting more people fishing by creating opportunities for people of all abilities to try fishing; to making it safer, cheaper and easier for boaters and fishers to get out on the water; and to making local seafood more readily available for everyone to enjoy.

Our function is to ensure that the Government, Victorian fishing sector and general community obtain the benefits of careful management to ensure demand can be sustainably supported into the future. This is achieved by matching demand to fish stocking and infrastructure, while providing up to date information on resource condition and supporting regulatory requirements.

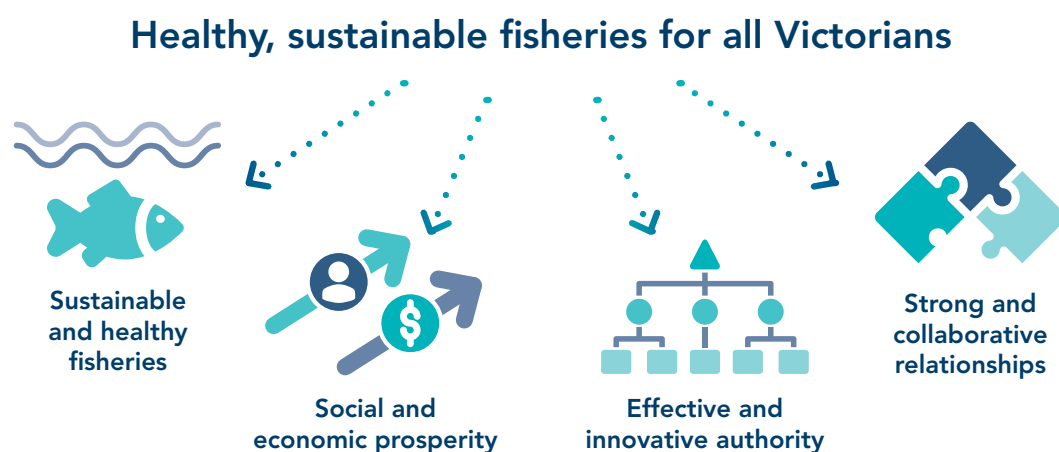
The Act sets out specific objectives for the VFA to:

- Promote sustainability and responsibility in fishing and fishing-related activities in Victoria;
- Optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of the fisheries sectors;
- Support the development of recreational fishing;
- Support the development of commercial fishing and aquaculture; and
- Work cooperatively with fisheries management bodies in other states, territories and the Commonwealth.

## Our vision and strategic direction

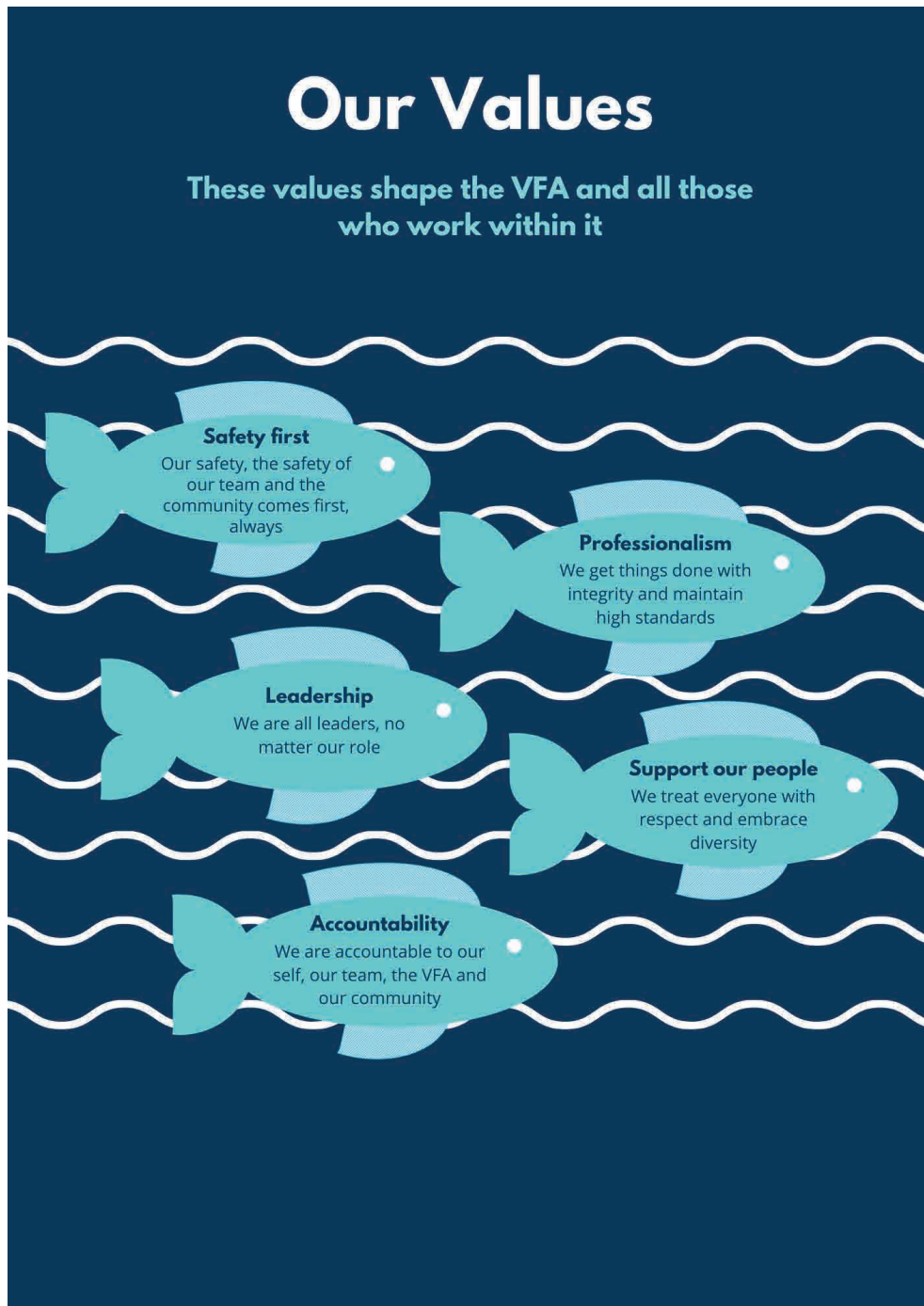
The VFA's vision is to maintain **healthy and sustainable fisheries for all Victorians**.

To achieve this vision, the *VFA Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024* reflects our commitment to our stakeholders and position as a fit-for-purpose statutory authority by setting out strategic priorities under four high level focus areas:





## Our values







# Our achievements in 2020-21

## Promoting sustainable and viable commercial fishing and aquaculture

### Our commercial fisheries are sustainably managed

The VFA is committed to supporting sustainable fishing. Sustainability is ensured by avoiding growth and recruitment overfishing, and minimising the impact of fishing operations on the surrounding environment. The VFA has developed a risk management approach to assess key stock in Victorian waters. The approach uses a qualitative assessment of current risks and takes into account the management arrangements in place.

Table 1: Status of Victoria's key commercially fished stocks

| Commercial stock                | Risk management category |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Abalone, blacklip (central)     | Recovering               |
| Abalone, blacklip (eastern)     | Recovering               |
| Abalone, blacklip (western)     | Sustainable              |
| Abalone, greenlip (central)     | Recovering               |
| Abalone, greenlip (western)     | Recovering               |
| Australian salmon (eastern)     | Sustainable              |
| Australian salmon (western)     | Sustainable              |
| Australian sardine (western)    | Sustainable              |
| Australian sardine (eastern)    | Sustainable              |
| Banded morwong                  | Sustainable              |
| Black bream                     | Sustainable              |
| Crab, giant                     | Sustainable              |
| Crab, sand                      | Sustainable              |
| Crab, velvet                    | Sustainable              |
| Eel, longfin                    | Sustainable              |
| Flathead, dusky                 | Sustainable              |
| Flathead, sand                  | Sustainable              |
| Flathead, rock                  | Recovering               |
| Golden perch                    | Sustainable              |
| King George whiting             | Sustainable              |
| Octopus (multiple species)      | Sustainable              |
| Pipi                            | Sustainable              |
| Scallop (ocean)                 | Sustainable              |
| Scallop (Port Phillip Bay)      | Sustainable              |
| Sea urchin, black               | Sustainable              |
| Sea urchin, white               | Sustainable              |
| Shark, gummy                    | Sustainable              |
| Silver trevally                 | Sustainable              |
| Snapper (eastern)               | Sustainable              |
| Snapper (western)               | Sustainable              |
| Snook (pike)                    | Sustainable              |
| Southern calamari               | Sustainable              |
| Southern garfish                | Sustainable              |
| Southern rock lobster (eastern) | Depleted                 |
| Southern rock lobster (western) | Sustainable              |
| Tailor                          | Sustainable              |
| Wrasse, bluetthroat             | Sustainable              |
| Yellow eye mullet               | Recovering               |
| Yellowtail kingfish             | Sustainable              |



| Category description |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Sustainable          | Appropriate management in place                                    |
| Recovering           | Appropriate management in place.<br>Evidence biomass is recovering |
| Depleting            | Management needed to reduce fishing mortality                      |
| Depleted             | Management needed to recover stock                                 |



## Improved management arrangements for our new fisheries

### Scallop bed discovery leads to a jump in allowable catch

The VFA has delivered a boost to Gippsland's scallop industry, lifting the allowable commercial catch for the Victorian Ocean Scallop Fishery by more than seven times after new scallop beds were discovered off the east coast of the State.

In partnership with the scallop fishing industry, a low-cost survey conducted near the Tarwhine oil and gas fields off Gippsland confirmed harvestable scallop beds had returned to the area. The survey estimated the size of the beds to be around 7,876 tonnes. Consultation between industry bodies, licence holders and the VFA resulted in an increase to the annual total allowable commercial catch (TACC) from 135 to 979 tonnes, which equates to 12 percent of the harvestable scallops. This safeguards a biomass of more than 6,000 tonnes to maintain ongoing recruitment to the fishery.

New management arrangements have also been set to ensure the future sustainability of the fishery. Half of the scallop beds will be closed to commercial fishing to secure the beds' longevity. A digital quota system has been introduced to provide real-time quota tracking, logbooks have been provided to collect information on bycatch, and a research levy has been reintroduced to fund future biomass surveys that will inform future TACC setting.

The TACC increase will see the return of commercial scallop fishing in Victorian waters and has been welcome news for fishers who have spent the past decade focusing their efforts in the Commonwealth-managed Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery. The VFA has been working to connect fishers, processors and bakers to establish 'truly-Victorian' scallop pies as a staple on the menu of every bakery in Victoria and the Victorian food industry is poised to embrace the injection of high-quality local scallops coming onto the market.



## Continued innovation in our commercial fisheries

The VFA continued to implement modern catch management technology in its commercial fisheries over 2020-21. After the successful introduction of Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) in the abalone, rock lobster, giant crab and Corner Inlet fisheries in mid-2020, the technology was rolled out in the Western Port/Port Phillip Bay, banded morwong, octopus, sea urchin, and inshore trawl fisheries in November 2020.

For fisheries that are predominantly land-based, such as the pipi and eel fisheries, devices that attach to fishing vessels are of limited use. Instead, a trial of hand-held electronic tracking devices was conducted in these fisheries over the summer of 2020-21 to determine a suitable device. Following the trial, electronic tracking was implemented in these on 1 June 2021. The introduction means that pipi and eel fishers are no longer required to pre-report their fishing activity as Fisheries Officers will be able to locate fishers quickly and efficiently when necessary.

The VFA also continued the program to transition fisheries to electronic reporting of catch and effort via the mobile phone application, eQuota. This app is a simplified and scaled down version of the VFA's Vic-eCatch app used in the key quota fisheries. The requirement for fishers to use eQuota came into effect on 1 April 2021 for pipi fishers and will be implemented on 1 July 2021 in the Octopus Fishery. The technology ensures fishers are able to record and track their quota balances in real time, thereby avoiding over-catch.

These new management arrangements, along with existing controls including quota and gear restrictions, will ensure the future sustainability of these valuable resources for years to come.





### Enhancing the sustainability of the Corner Inlet Fishery

The VFA has been working closely with key stakeholders to enhance the sustainability of the Corner Inlet Fishery. A Steering Committee comprising commercial, recreational, Indigenous and government representatives was formed in late 2020 to oversee development of a *Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan*, which is on track to be delivered before the end of 2021. The Plan will provide direction and identify measures to ensure the effective, efficient and ecologically sustainable management of fishing in Corner Inlet.

Strong relationships have been formed between commercial and recreational stakeholders, and fishers have been donating their time and resources to help with scientific research and seagrass restoration projects in the Corner Inlet. This has included participation in a rock flathead tagging

project and working with Landcare groups and other community sectors in what is considered Australia's largest community-based seagrass restoration project.

Concurrently, with the support of the commercial fishers, the VFA has reformed management of commercial netting in the fishery. The new rules mitigate sustainability and safety risks associated with towing seine nets and re-align practices with traditional methods. These actions aim to ensure species such as rock flathead, King George whiting, calamari, southern garfish, and greenback flounder can continue to be routinely provided to Victoria's top line restaurants. In recognising the exceptional quality of seafood from this area, a Corner Inlet commercial fisher won the 2020 Delicious Award in the 'From the Sea' category.



## Supporting commercial fishing and aquaculture businesses

### Helping commercial fishing businesses through COVID-19 challenges

The last 12 months have been a challenging time for Victorian seafood businesses, but also a time of innovation. Impacts from COVID-19 and the trade disruptions into China have continued to create uncertainties in the market but have also encouraged businesses to find innovative ways to adjust to the new operating environment. The VFA has been working with these businesses to identify new opportunities and assist them to access government support programs to ensure they continue to be viable, profitable, and sustainable into the future.

The Victorian rock lobster and abalone industries have relied heavily on the live Chinese market for many years, however due to current dynamics, these industries are diversifying into domestic sales. There is significant scope for this and the VFA has assisted operators by providing opportunities through the provision of 'small sales' authorisation permits. Having less reliance on volatile export markets is a proactive step towards greater autonomy and has been well received by industry.

The VFA has also been assisting seafood businesses to adapt by allowing our export-reliant fisheries to carry uncaught fishing quota over into the next fishing year to allow fish to remain in the water until markets readjust. The VFA has also provided payment plans for licence fees to assist those licence holders undergoing financial stress. Further, the VFA has facilitated access to government grants and programs including programs under the Agriculture Workplace plan, Victorian Export Recovery Packages and the Commonwealth Government Export Market Development Grants and freight assistance programs.

As consumer patterns change in response to a reduced food service sector, businesses have been taking advantage of the growth in supermarket and online sales. Marketing through promotional platforms such as Facebook and the Government's Victorian Country Market is bringing seafood to a broad range of consumers who may not typically seek out such products. The VFA is working with Global Victoria and the newly established Victorian Rock Lobster Committee on a project proposal to explore opportunities for product development and new markets. The VFA also continues to partner with industry to fund fishing and seafood festivals from Portland to Mallacoota to help promote Victorian seafood to local consumers. Helping businesses to diversify has seen innovation across the industry, helping to future-proof these important industries.





## Supporting Victorian aquaculture businesses

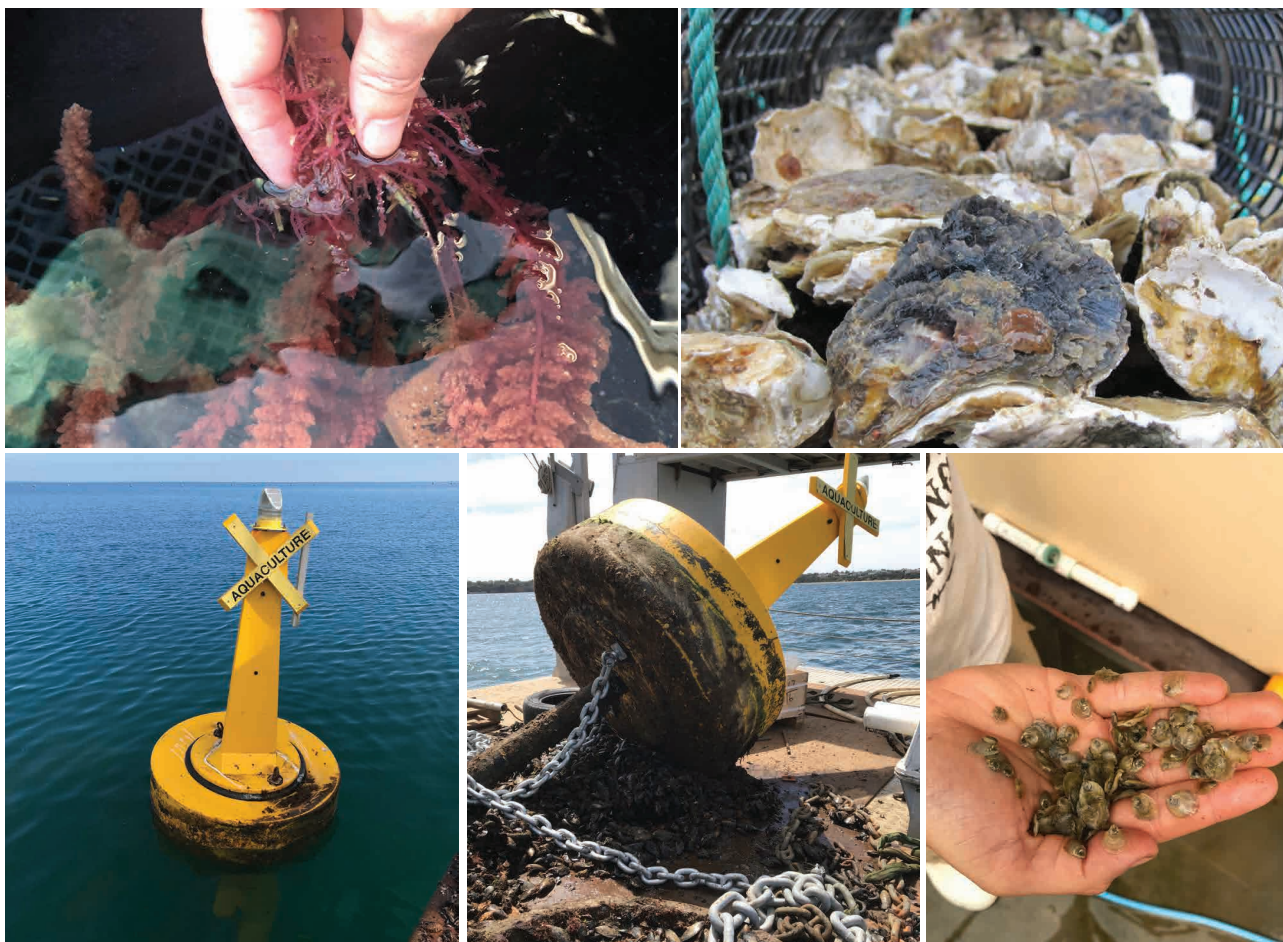
Our aquaculture farmers sell to local food outlets and export product to Asia. The combination of China's trade restrictions, the COVID-19 pandemic response and interstate restrictions following the abalone virus outbreak have together made 2020-21 a difficult year for most farmers. Showing resilience however, there has been an increasing number of requests for sites within the aquaculture reserves to trial commercial seaweed breeding and farming. To facilitate this growth, as well as mussel farming expansion, the VFA is working to provide a public tender of currently unused sites within the reserves.

We have also been working with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Cooperative (GLaWAC) in Gippsland to undertake a project to assess the suitability of the Gippsland Lakes for the farming of endemic oysters for human consumption. The GLaWAC has expressed interest in leading the development of the oyster industry and with the

VFA will explore linkages and potential for regional Indigenous job creation.

In 2020-21, the *Victorian Offshore Abalone Stocking Policy* was finalised. It sets definitive guidelines to inform decisions relating to offshore stocking activities involving abalone and the interaction of such activity with authorised abalone aquaculture, wild harvest fishing and existing policies.

The VFA manages nine offshore aquaculture reserves set aside for farming, primarily mussels, within Port Phillip Bay and Western Port. There are some 56 navigation marks that warn boating and shipping of the location of these areas for safety purposes. All navigation marks are part of an ongoing annual inspection and maintenance program with replacement occurring as required. A major program of replacement of navigation piles was undertaken this year at the Grassy Point aquaculture reserve near Portarlington.



## Responding to resurgence of the abalone virus

On 1 May 2021, an abalone diver working in an area off Cape Nelson, close to Portland, discovered a cluster of abalone that he suspected may be carrying Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG) disease. The diver collected samples and immediately notified the VFA and Agriculture Victoria (AgVic). Test results the following day confirmed the presence of AVG. The virus had not been detected in Victoria since 2010 and the recent outbreak came as devastating news to those involved in the abalone industry, particularly in the Portland area.

In response to the test result, the Chief Veterinary Officer immediately implemented a Control Order to exclude fishing and certain boating activities to limit potential spread of the virus by human activities. AgVic and the VFA established an Incident Management Team, with staff operating in functions such as situational awareness, public information, stakeholder engagement, tracing, and operations. The VFA provided the lead role in enforcement and surveillance activities and supported AgVic, who are the lead agency for aquatic biosecurity emergencies in Victoria.

The VFA and the Western Abalone Divers Association teamed up to undertake surveillance diving operations in the restricted area. The observations provided the basis for decision making and ensured an understanding of the extent of disease in the area.

Effective communication has been, and continues to be, paramount. The VFA and AgVic have ensured continual updates using social medial platforms. Key stakeholders have been kept informed and feedback has been sought through community meetings that have been live-streamed to wider audiences. The AVG disease response is ongoing, and the VFA and AGVic continue to work hard to minimise the impacts of the disease.





## Growing recreational fishing in Victoria

### Delivering the Government's *Go Fishing Victoria* election commitment

The Government announced a package of commitments during the 2018 State election to continue to grow recreational fishing in Victoria. The initiative, *Go Fishing Victoria*, commenced on 1 July 2019 and committed a further \$35 million over four years to:

- Allow anglers to use boats and kayaks with electric motors on specified lakes and reservoirs, including Tullaroop, Lauriston, Hepburn, Barkers Creek, Upper Colliban and Malmsbury, by 1 August 2020.
- Phase out commercial fishing in the Gippsland Lakes by 1 April 2021 through a compulsory buyout to make the Lakes a recreational fishing haven that will boost tourism and create jobs.
- Stock eastern king prawns into Lake Tyers by 2021.
- Invest in science and habitat restoration in the Gippsland Lakes by developing a recovery plan for the region by 2021.
- Develop a recreational fishing tourism plan with a focus on events and the marketing of regions and towns known for specific fish species by 2021.
- Improve access for fishing and camping by opening nominated areas of Crown land river frontage by 1 September 2021.
- Improve fish habitat in Port Philip Bay by investing in reef development by 30 June 2022.
- Invest in fishing infrastructure providing more fish cleaning tables and upgraded fishing platforms by 30 June 2022.
- Increase fish stocking in Victorian waters to 10 million fish annually by 2022.
- Construct a new \$7 million native fish hatchery in Shepparton by November 2022 to focus on species such as Murray cod and golden perch.
- Advocate for Southern Bluefin Tuna to protect the recreational fishery from cuts to bag limits by the Commonwealth Government.
- Introduce a new *Fishing for All* program to get more people into fishing, including a further \$200,000 into the *Vic Fish Kids* program.

Selected election commitments are showcased in the following section and progress on all commitments is detailed in the Performance Reporting chapter.

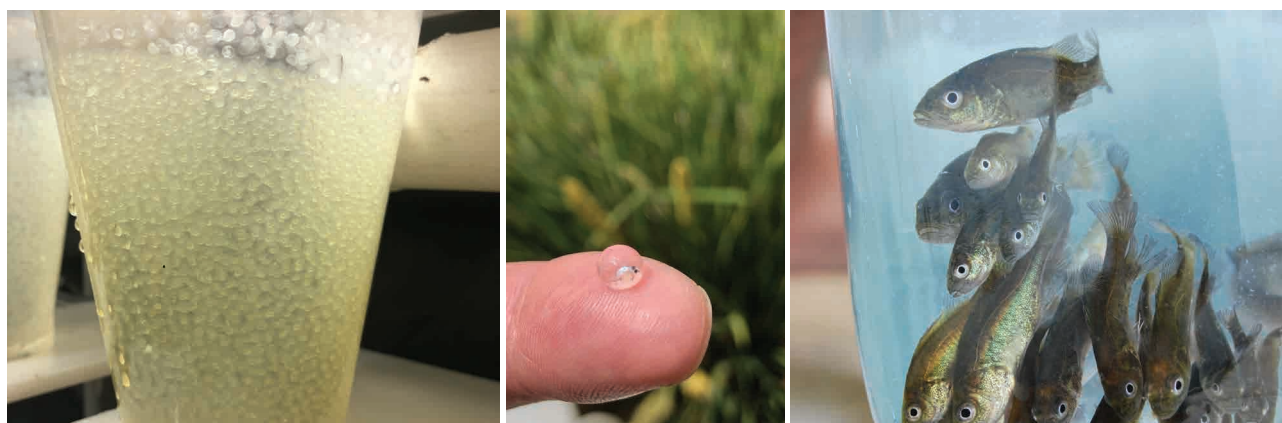


### Working towards our target to stock 10 million fish per year

The VFA's Snobs Creek Hatchery grows and stocks fish across Victoria to build fish stocks in our waterways and create recreational fishing opportunities. We successfully met our 2020-21 target to stock eight million fish (Table 2) and, after achieving all stocking targets in previous years, are well on our way to meet the target of 10 million fish per year by 2022.

Table 2: 2020-21 stocking breakdown

| Species                | Barwon South West | Gippsland      | Grampians      | Hume             | Loddon Mallee    | Port Phillip   | Total            |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Australian bass        | 5,000             | 362,750        | -              | -                | -                | 1,000          | 368,750          |
| Dusky flathead         | -                 | 47,000         | -              | -                | -                | -              | 47,000           |
| Estuary perch          | -                 | 284,100        | -              | -                | -                | -              | 284,100          |
| Golden perch           | 450,000           | -              | 161,000        | 1,222,800        | 1,174,500        | 50,000         | 3,058,300        |
| Macquarie perch        | -                 | -              | -              | 54,000           | -                | -              | 54,000           |
| Murray cod             | 659,993           | -              | 113,000        | 1,173,645        | 865,300          | 42,000         | 2,853,938        |
| Silver perch           | -                 | -              | 75,000         | 45,332           | 182,000          | 83,000         | 385,332          |
| Trout cod              | -                 | -              | -              | 20,300           | -                | -              | 20,300           |
| <b>Natives Total</b>   | <b>1,114,993</b>  | <b>693,850</b> | <b>349,000</b> | <b>2,516,077</b> | <b>2,221,800</b> | <b>176,000</b> | <b>7,071,720</b> |
| Brown trout            | 104,400           | 124,500        | 72,610         | 312,553          | 92,878           | 10,500         | 717,441          |
| Cheetah trout          | 1,251             | -              | -              | -                | -                | -              | 1,251            |
| Chinook salmon         | 102,200           | -              | -              | -                | -                | -              | 102,200          |
| Rainbow trout          | 162,450           | 30,000         | 108,644        | 140,340          | 54,871           | 39,981         | 536,286          |
| Tiger trout            | 1,257             | -              | -              | -                | -                | -              | 1,257            |
| <b>Salmonids Total</b> | <b>318,408</b>    | <b>205,500</b> | <b>130,460</b> | <b>396,645</b>   | <b>183,283</b>   | <b>71,405</b>  | <b>1,305,701</b> |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>1,433,401</b>  | <b>899,350</b> | <b>479,460</b> | <b>2,912,722</b> | <b>2,405,083</b> | <b>247,405</b> | <b>8,377,421</b> |





## This year's activity in our Snobs Creek Hatchery

### Salmonids

The 2020-21 salmon season has been a good one, with the cooler summer allowing increased fish survival and growth throughout the whole year.

We breed from our salmonids during the autumn and winter months. The Chinook salmon egg spawning in mid-March 2021 was successful due to the excellent condition of our brood fish and by the end of June 2021, we had more than 120,000 fry already hatched and feeding. These fish will be ready for delivery to the Crater Lakes, predominantly Lake Bullen Merri and Lake Purrumbete, in November 2021. The rainbow trout and brown trout spawning continues into mid-winter, and by the end of the 2020-21 spawning season, we will have achieved the target of one million rainbow trout eggs and 1.5 million brown trout eggs in incubators. When hatched, 150,000 of the brown trout fry will be provided to the Australian Trout Foundation for stocking in selected river systems as part of the VFA's partnership with the organisation.

Twice a year, prior to the second and third term school holidays, more than 60 'Family Fishing Lakes' are stocked with ready-to-catch trout. The lakes are in or nearby population centres throughout Melbourne and provincial Victoria. Whilst it's a huge logistical effort to ensure fish are ready to be stocked and then transported throughout Victoria, the VFA's staff love to see the smiles on the faces of families when they see the fish going into the water. Over the 2020-21 season, the VFA stocked 717,441 brown trout and 483,552 rainbow trout across Victoria.

In addition to the Snobs Creek Hatchery, the VFA has a lease on the Eildon Back Road Trout Farm to expand our fish production. The farm holds varying fish numbers throughout the year but specialises in growing fish to catchable size for the Family Fishing Lakes. This enables the facilities at the Snobs Creek Hatchery to be used for increased numbers of hatchlings and other sized fish.



### Natives

Preparation for the 2020-21 native fish breeding season began in August 2020 with a revamp to the VFA's Snobs Creek Hatchery native fish building to increase holding capacity of Macquarie perch brood fish. Nesting boxes were introduced into Murray cod brood ponds in September 2020 and included a trial of several alternate designs in preparation for use in the brood ponds at our new native fish hatchery being built in Arcadia.

Over 2020-21 season, the hatchery produced 455,600 Murray cod, 20,330 trout cod and 61,000 Macquarie perch fingerlings. Murray cod production was on par with the target of 450,000. While trout cod numbers did not increase from 2019-20, additional brood stock collections have been undertaken in early 2021. Production success of Macquarie perch enabled 2,000 fingerlings to be retained for grow-out trials at the hatchery as part of our commitment towards captive breeding.

### Murray cod

In line with previous seasons, Murray cod spawning commenced in the second week of October 2020. A warm start to Spring encouraged spawning through to November 2020 but cold wet weather in early December 2020 stopped fish from continuing to produce large numbers of eggs into Summer. Larvae in the hatchery were stocked into plankton ponds in January 2021.

### Macquarie perch

A new approach to Macquarie perch production was undertaken in 2020-21, which involved collaboration between the VFA, the Arthur Rylah Institute, the NSW Department of Primary Industries Fisheries, and Fishtech Services. The spawning season enabled fish production staff the opportunity to share knowledge and collaborate on hormone induction trials.

An increased brood stock collection from Dartmouth in November 2020 provided the VFA with 59 adults. With existing stock onsite, a total of 68 fish were available for the spawning season. At the Snobs Creek Hatchery, each fish was assessed and induced to spawn, if ready. Overall, 15 spawnings were transferred to egg incubation, 12 successfully hatched in late November 2020 and larvae were stocked into two designated plankton ponds in December 2020.





### Our 2020-21 stocking highlights

#### Record stockings into Lake Eildon and Rocklands Reservoir

Lake Eildon and Rocklands Reservoir are popular getaway locations for camping and on-water activities over the summer months. Native fish have been stocked into Lake Eildon since the 1990s and Rocklands Reservoir since 2017. Over 2020-21, both areas received record stockings of Murray cod and golden perch. This included over 500,000 each of Murray cod and golden perch for Lake Eildon, and more than 600,000 Murray cod and 400,000 golden perch for Rocklands.

Many long hours and many kilometres have been driven by our incredible staff at the Snobs Creek Hatchery to reach this outcome. It has been no easy task to reach such numbers and would not be achievable without the help of local Fisheries Officers and amazing stakeholders, with special thanks to members of the Balmoral Angling Club and Mansfield & District Flyfishers.

#### Australian bass records and new waters

In 2020-21, over 360,000 Australian bass were stocked into waters across Gippsland, from Cann River to Traralgon. The La Trobe River received its first ever stocking of bass, with 10,000 fingerlings at Willow Park in Rosedale and 10,000 at Sand Banks Reserve in Traralgon. Lake Glenmaggie received a record stocking with a total of 63,250 bass for the season.

The bass stocking in Gippsland over the past 19 years has been a tremendous success in rebuilding endemic bass populations impacted by low recruitment due to climate variability and in creating new and enhanced fishing opportunities for fishers. The Gippsland Bass Trail is now recognised as a destination fishery in Victoria.

#### Tiger trout stocking into Crater Lakes

In 2019, the VFA began a stocking trial at Lake Purrumbete, which has now provided more than 1,200 tiger trout and 7,400 cheetah trout to the Crater Lakes region.

Tiger trout are produced when a female brown trout is crossed with a male brook trout and results in fish with prominent striped markings resembling those of a tiger and the potential to grow large due to 'hybrid vigour'. The tiger trout released into Lake Purrumbete over the last two years have performed well, with specimens up to 2.3 kilograms caught.

Cheetah trout are a cross between a rainbow trout and a brook trout, and feature markings along their back resembling the patterns of the African cat.

Lake Purrumbete and Bullen Merri are already stocked annually with Chinook salmon, brown and rainbow trout. Now the challenge is on to see who can catch the 'salmonid grand slam' of each species, plus a tiger or cheetah trout.





### Our new native fish hatchery is taking shape

The Government's *Go Fishing Victoria* election commitment included the commitment to construct a \$7 million native fish hatchery in Shepparton to focus on species such as Murray cod and golden perch.

Over the last 12 months, the VFA has been busy constructing a purpose-built native fish hatchery at the Government's 70-hectare property at Arcadia, just south of Shepparton. After extensive planning and design work based on best practice technology, we have now constructed 32 earthen ponds, each measuring 60 metres x 30 metres, and comprising 12 brood ponds and 20 plankton ponds. We have also progressed the construction process for the hatchery building and an office building on the site.

We have built an innovative underground fingerling harvest station where all juvenile fish will be collected prior to being stocked in public waters. Two hundred megalitres of groundwater has been

purchased through a water trade and a commercial groundwater bore has been completed. A reuse reservoir has also been constructed, which will enable 70 percent of water to be reused.

We have established a course through GO TAFE Shepparton to support a Certificate III Fish Farming and hope to be able to recruit staff from from it in readiness for the first year of native fish production at the hatchery.

In May 2020, the VFA was successful in securing an additional \$3 million-dollar regional development grant to construct a visitor's facility at the front of the hatchery property. This will boost regional tourism in the area and provide an opportunity to showcase the features, not just of the hatchery, but also the heritage and unique environment of the whole region.



### Improving fish habitat in Port Phillip Bay by developing reefs

The Victorian Government committed to improve fish habitat in Port Phillip Bay by investing \$2.5 million for reef development in Port Phillip Bay. The commitment was divided into three projects:

#### Restoration of shellfish reefs in Port Phillip Bay

A two-year project between the VFA and The Nature Conservancy to build artificial reefs in Port Phillip Bay was completed in February 2021. The reefs were made by recycling 399 cubic metres of shells from restaurants, which would have otherwise ended up in landfill, to create a new substrate for new oysters and mussels to settle and grow on. Over 2020-21, 3.5 hectares of these shellfish reefs were laid down, which were seeded with 3.7 million oyster and 693,000 mussel spat.

#### Rocky recreational fishing reefs in Corio Bay

The VFA constructed three rocky recreational fishing reefs in October 2020 at St Helens, Kirks Point, and Outer Harbour, Geelong, which were then seeded with oyster and mussel spat in January and February 2021.

Each reef has been named with help from the community. The Outer Harbour reef was named Moolap, which is the Indigenous name for Point Henry in Corio Bay. Moolap recognises the cultural significance of the sea country to Wadawurrung people and means 'a place of men fishing with spears', derived from the land point of Moolap which is shaped like a man's spear.

The VFA ran a public naming competition for the remaining two reefs. The reef at Kirk Point has been named Wilson's Reef, honouring Geelong fishing writer and identity Geoff Wilson. The reef at St Helens has been called Merv's Reef, named after the late Merv McGuire, former head of Future Fish and VRFish. Merv's Reef provides an ideal opportunity for land-based fishers as it is only 60 metres from the break wall; an easy cast for recreational fishers.

The trio of reefs were constructed with 2,000 tonnes of basalt as a base, sourced from the nearby Cherry Creek with help from VRFish, and topped with 100 tonnes of limestone. This combination provided the perfect substrate upon which to seed native flat oyster and blue mussel spat. The oysters were sourced from the Victorian Shellfish Hatchery at Queenscliff and the mussels came from a local grower, Advanced Mussel Supply. As they mature, the oysters and mussels will improve water quality, create diversity in sea floor fish habitats and boost productivity for fish and invertebrates.

#### New reef habitat for kingfish

The VFA has begun the design for a recreational fishing reef that will create new habitat for kingfish, a priority species for Victorian recreational anglers. Yellowtail kingfish are commonly targeted at the entrance of Port Phillip Bay where up to 100 recreational fishing vessels are known to target these iconic species on at any one time during the warmer months of the year. The aim of this project is to deploy artificial reef modules north of Observatory Point inside of Port Phillip Heads to attract recreational fish species and therefore fishing boats away from fishing in the dangerous shipping channels especially around the 'rip' area.

The VFA has completed a tender process and construction is expected to commence on 1 October 2021.





### Investing in infrastructure to enhance the recreational fishing experience

As part of the *Go Fishing Victoria* program, the Government allocated \$600,000 to upgrade three recreational fishing platforms and install five fish cleaning tables. In partnership with land managers, the VFA was able to organise co-funding that enabled upgrades to 11 recreational fishing platforms in the following locations:

- Three fishing platforms on the Barwon River, Ocean Grove;
- Four fishing platforms on the Hopkins River, Jubilee Park; and
- Four fishing platforms in and around Geelong.

A variety of upgrades occurred across these platforms, such as the installation or replacement of fishing rod holders, seating, lighting and structural improvements. The VFA is pleased that it was able to leverage the funding allocated by the Government and upgrade the additional platforms to ensure a safe and enjoyable fishing experience for all who use them.

The VFA also facilitated the installation of new fish cleaning tables in 2020-21:

- Three fish cleaning tables at the Lake Purrumbete boat ramp;
- One fish cleaning table at the Warmies boat ramp; and
- One fish cleaning table at Point Lonsdale.

An additional two fish cleaning tables are currently under construction at Patterson River boat ramp and Avalon boat ramp. The VFA is also in discussion with the relevant land managers and local communities regarding the installation of a further two fish cleaning tables at the Queenscliff and Hastings boat ramps.





### Facilitating access to Crown land river frontage

The Government is committed to encouraging families and friends to spend time together in the outdoors, supporting State-based regional tourism and economic benefits. Through the *Go Fishing Victoria* election program, the Government committed to 'guarantee access to fishing and camping on Crown land that has grazing licenses and river frontage.'

Historically, camping on licensed Crown land river frontage was prohibited under the *Land Act 1958*, whilst accessing the area for recreation such as fishing, picnicking and hiking was allowed. In November 2020, Parliament passed amendments to the Land Act with bipartisan support to remove the prohibition on camping on licensed river frontages and allow for the making of regulations to manage camping and recreational activities on regulated watercourse land, which includes these licensed areas. These changes will allow for camping in appropriate areas from 1 September 2021 and is an excellent outcome for fishers and campers.

To support the changes, the Government drafted new regulations in consultation with stakeholders from across the community. The new regulations include appropriate controls for:

- Protecting cultural and environmental values;
- Protecting health and safety, including fire risk;
- Protecting livestock and farming equipment;
- Appropriate camping behaviour – including for waste and litter, closing of access gates, etc; and
- Protecting the public's right to access public land.



### Facilitating access to lakes and reservoirs opened to fishers with kayaks, canoes and small boats with electric motors

Over the past three years, the VFA has worked with Goulburn Murray Water and Coliban Water to provide on-water access for kayaks, canoes and small portable boats with electric motors at Tullaroop, Hepburn Lagoon, Barkers Creek, Upper Coliban, Lauriston and Malmsbury Reservoirs as part of the *Go Fishing Victoria* election commitment.

These waters were opened by 1 August 2019 and with boating activities now being undertaken at all six waterways, the VFA and Coliban Water set about providing formalised boat launching facilities and improved car parking at both Upper Coliban and Barkers Creek Reservoirs. Barkers Creek Reservoir received an upgraded car park with a new and safer entrance, as well as improved boat ramp, rigging area and improvements to the surrounds. Upper Coliban Reservoir received an expanded car park to increase the number of boat trailers that could be accommodated, as well as a new boat ramp.

In December 2020, the facilities were formally opened by Minister Horne and the member for Bendigo West, Maree Edwards at Barkers Creek, and the member for Macedon Ranges, Mary-Anne Thomas, at the Upper Coliban Reservoir.

The projects provided excellent value to recreational fishers and boaters with works at both reservoirs being delivered for \$250,000.





### Investing in science and habitat restoration in the Gippsland Lakes – a recovery plan

The *Gippsland Lakes Recreational Fishery Plan*, which was launched in January 2021, provides a roadmap for restoring the Gippsland Lakes to a recreational fishing hotspot under a six-point 'learn-by-doing' adaptive approach to management.

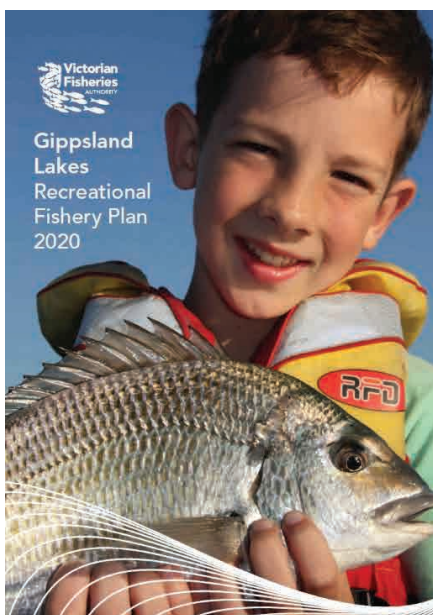
The Plan represents the culmination of over 12 months' work, a legacy of great science, strong and collaborative teamwork, and extensive stakeholder engagement. A reference group of key representatives was involved in the development of the Plan and 4,400 submissions - a record number - were received in response to the VFA's stakeholder survey.

With commercial netting in the Gippsland Lakes removed well ahead of schedule on 1 April 2020, the delivery of the five-year plan is forging ahead with a number of the key initiatives already delivered or underway, including:

1. Involvement of recreational fishers, traditional owners and community partners in the implementation of the Plan
2. New fishing regulations
3. Fish stocking throughout the Lakes system
4. Improving fish habitat and waterway health
5. Monitoring the success of our actions
6. Reviewing our processes

A new 28-38cm slot limit for black bream came into effect on 1 April 2021, which was strongly endorsed by fishers in the VFA's survey. The slot limit, which applies only to the Gippsland Lakes and tributaries, provides added protection for larger bream, which are more prolific breeders, produce more eggs and contribute more to future generations, whilst still allowing people to take home bream for the dinner table.

Another key component of the Plan is to stock key recreational species to aid their recovery and improve recreational fishing. For the first time, the VFA stocked both estuary perch and dusky flathead in the Gippsland Lakes in 2020-21. Approximately 200,000 estuary perch were stocked into the Tambo, Mitchell, Avon and Latrobe rivers and, in early March 2021, the conclusion of a three-year dusky flathead breeding trial saw 42,000 dusky flathead fingerlings successfully stocked at Metung and Lakes Entrance. The breeding trial was another Victorian first and was successful thanks to the support from local fishing groups and key stakeholders who assisted the VFA with the collection of local brood fish. The VFA will continue stocking these species into the region and is considering adding black bream to the program in the future.





### Increasing regional tourism by creating a Recreational Tourism Plan

The *Go Fishing Victoria* election commitment included the pledge to develop a *Recreational Fishing Tourism Strategy*, which has been timely given the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 bushfires in eastern Victoria. The Strategy was developed by the VFA and Visit Victoria following consultation with key stakeholders, including VRFish and the Future Fish Foundation, and released in April 2021.

The Strategy's goal is for Victoria 'to be Australia's premier multi-species, multi-region fishing tourism destination that combines everything Victoria has to offer with outstanding fishing experiences.' It provides strategic priority areas for developing fishing as a key contributor to the Victorian economy by encouraging both Victorians and interstate visitors to fish in Victoria, fish more often and stay longer. The Strategy describes actions to enable fishing to grow, and for the destinations described within the Strategy to integrate fishing with other experience pillars, product strengths and marketing campaigns the destinations may have planned or in place.

The VFA's existing work program complements the implementation of the Strategy by improving the recreational fishing experience in Victoria, not only for Victorian anglers, but also interstate and international visitors.



## Increasing participation in recreational fishing by establishing a Fishing for All program and continuing our Vic Fish Kids events

### Fishing for All

While many fishers take being able to head to the water and cast a line for granted, it has been recognised that there are barriers hindering people with disabilities from being able to do the same. Wanting to ensure recreational fishing is available to all Victorians, the *Go Fishing Victoria* program included a \$200,000 *Fishing for All* initiative to be delivered by the VFA in conjunction with Fishcare Victoria.

The Fishing for All program fosters opportunities for people living with a disability and those from marginalised communities to experience the joy of fishing. It aims to:

- Increase the active involvement of people with disabilities into recreational fishing through coordinated and regular fishing events;
- Partner with agencies, local councils and organisations and develop strategic cooperative arrangements;
- Promote responsible fishing practices as well as rules and regulations to participants and caregivers; and
- Be advocates in promoting inclusive participation in recreational fishing.

On 27 March 2021, the VFA welcomed families from the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation to enjoy a bespoke fishing experience held at the *Go Fish Nagambie* event. As part of the Fishing for All program, families were invited to try their hand at fishing and enjoyed tips and tricks shared by Lee Rayner and members of the VFA education team.

Families in Shepparton were invited to attend a free event on 17 April 2021 where they were given entertaining lessons on how to fish and were able to take home a complimentary fishing rod to continue their fishing journey. The VFA is currently working with a number of community groups and plan to hold further Fishing for All events in 2021.

### Vic Fish Kids Events

The VFA toured regional Victoria over the 2021 Easter school holidays, with Vic Fish Kids events held in Tooradin, Torquay and Shepparton. These events provided hundreds of children and their families with the opportunity to experience the joy of fishing – many for the first time.

Lee Rayner and the VFA's talented education team were on hand facilitating learning opportunities and hands on experiences. Many children caught their first fish and are now set to continue their exciting journey in recreational fishing. Events also featured live music, entertainment and food which supported a fun day out for the whole family.

New in 2021, every child who participated in a fishing clinic was given a free fishing rod to take home. This key action is set to encourage kids to continue fishing and foster a new generation of inspired anglers.





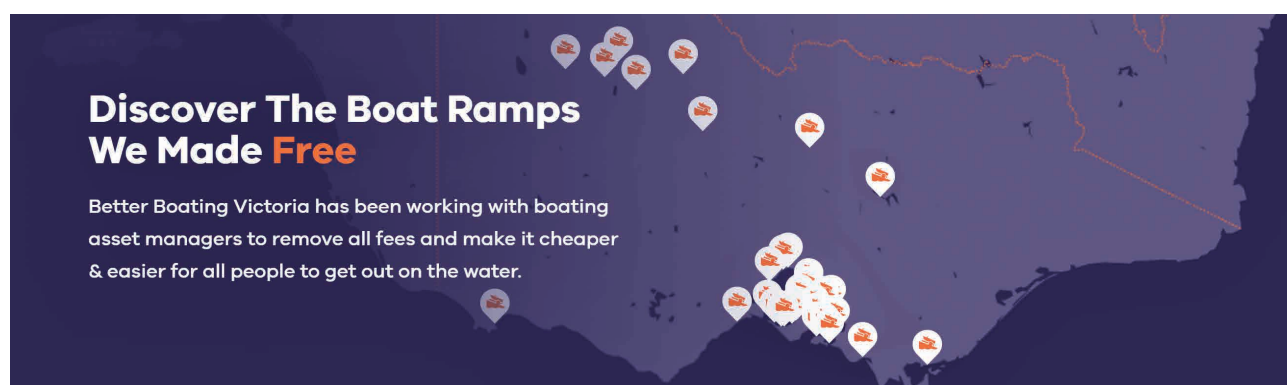
## Delivering the Government's *Better Boating Victoria* election commitment

### Making it easier, cheaper and safer to get out onto Victoria's waters

#### Abolishing car parking and boat launching fees

In 2018, the Government made a commitment to remove parking and launching fees at all publicly available boat ramps across the State. Better Boating Victoria (BBV) has progressed arrangements with foreshore Committees of Management to remove fees so it is now free to launch a boat at any public boat ramp across Victoria.

The Government has continued its commitment to make boating better and cheaper by announcing an additional \$13.2 million over four years from 2021-22 to reimburse boat launching and parking fees. The funding will support maintenance, upgrade and demand management at these facilities.



### Upgrading boating facilities throughout Victoria

Boating facilities at Rhyll, Hastings, Mordialloc, Hastings, Point Richards and Queenscliff are currently receiving major upgrades thanks to the Government's commitment of \$39.6 million to upgrade boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port. The BBV team has progressed planning and contractors have been engaged to upgrade boat ramps at Point Richards, Queenscliff and Rhyll. Meanwhile, BBV is preparing to install new pontoons at Mordialloc and a new all-tide boat ramp was installed at Hastings.

All upgrades have had major input from local communities, with meetings, drop-in sessions and online surveys organised to ensure locals and facility users have plenty of opportunity to make contributions to the design, needs, and usage. Construction has been staged across locations to minimise disruption to boaters during peak boating periods, such as holiday times and long weekends over the summer months.

#### Mordialloc – a boating facility with access for all

In June 2021, construction commenced at the Governor Road Boat Ramp and Pier Road Carpark to improve the recreational boating experience at Mordialloc Creek. The old pontoons have been replaced with new, concrete floating pontoons to increase berth capacity. The area was dredged to a meter depth at low tide to enable safe navigation when launching and retrieving vessels.

Further toward the mouth of the creek, preparation was undertaken to install an accessible floating pontoon next to Pier Road Carpark. This new facility has been specially designed to incorporate Universal Design Principles. It includes a provision for a hoist and facilitate improved access to boating for people with disability. It is intended as a pick-up and drop-off facility for members of the community who require dedicated assistance to board vessels accessing the bay.

The Governor Road Boat Ramp Carpark will be upgraded to provide increased parking capacity for boat and trailer units. Works on the carpark will start in 2022 and will be undertaken outside of the peak boating season.



### Hastings

The Hastings boating facility is being upgraded to offer all-tide access and improved berthing, launching and retrieval efficiency. In Winter 2021 the four-lane boat ramp was upgraded and extended by six metres to enable safe launching and retrieving at low tide. Dredging and a second pontoon, mirroring the existing, will be installed in 2021-22 to double the temporary berthing capacity and improve the launching and retrieval experience for boat ramp users.

### Point Richards

Works have commenced on the upgrade of the Point Richards carpark, which is receiving an upgrade to improve the parking capacity at this popular regional facility. An additional formal 50 car-trailer parking bays are being constructed in the informal overflow area. In addition, a roundabout will be installed at the entrance to assist in managing circulation, controlling traffic and improving safety.

Planning and detailed design development is also underway to construct an overlapping rock groyne to the west of the boat ramp. This will reduce the amount of sea grass which accumulates at the boat ramp and minimise the impact to boat ramp operations. These works are due to be undertaken in 2022.

### Queenscliff

Queenscliff boating facility is popular with boaters and anglers who want access to the fishing and recreational opportunities in Port Phillip Bay.

Currently underway, the works will improve traffic flow and efficiency for launching and retrieving vessels by providing formalised overflow car parking, improved car park lane system circulation and a third boat ramp lane central pontoon. The existing pontoons will be replaced and lengthened for increased berthing capacity and dredging works will provide safe and improved navigation to the facility.



### Rhyll

An historical expedition to locate and protect the remains of a local shipwreck, the *Ventnor*, was required before starting work on the upgrade of the Rhyll boating facility located on Phillip Island. The site survey uncovered the wreck, exposing the bottom frames and keelson. After carefully sampling, photographing and recording, the shipwreck's remains were once more buried for eternity.

Designs for the facility were developed in consultation with the local community and Bass Coast Shire Council. The major upgrade includes replacing the existing three-lane boat ramp to extend deeper into the bay allowing all-tide access. There will be two new fixed and floating pontoon jetties plus a car park upgrade which will provide easier and safer access to the ramps.

### St Kilda destination berths creates more opportunities for boaters

In October 2020, five pontoon arms were installed at St Kilda to provide destination moorings for visiting recreational boaters. The upgrade was funded by BBV as part of the Government's commitment to providing increased casual berths around Port Phillip Bay.

The St Kilda destination berths are designed to provide convenient access to some of Victoria's favourite locations allowing recreational boaters to visit and temporarily berth at this popular destination. The pontoons consist of a combination of 4-hour and 48-hour casual berths where the vessels can be left unattended.



### Establishment of the Better Boating Fund and development of the *Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy*

Legislation was passed in November 2020 to establish the Better Boating Fund, delivering on the Government's election commitment to establish a dedicated fund that will reinvest approximately \$30 million of boating licensing and registration fees directly back into the industry each year. The fund, which commenced on 1 July 2021, will allocate funding for:

- Provision and maintenance of boating facilities and related services;
- Boating safety, boating education and boating promotion programs;
- Safe use of recreational vessels; and
- Safe use of state waters.

To help guide the allocation of the fund, BBV has progressed the *Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy*, which is being co-designed with key boating stakeholders through the Ministerial Round Table and the boating public and asset managers to determine the priorities for investment. As a first step, BBV ran consultation in early 2021 to obtain an understanding of the boating priorities across Victoria. It was clear that boaters want better facilities and access, less congestion, better facility management, and transparency of funding used for facilities. In total, BBV has now undertaken three rounds of surveys and eight public 'drop-in sessions' across the State. The feedback has been consolidated and formalised into eight District Plans, which will form the basis of the Strategy. The Strategy will provide a roadmap to guide future investment and will be delivered through annual Action Plans, which will outline the priorities for the fund in the given 12-month period.

### Delivering the Boating Safety & Facilities Program

Over 35 projects have received grant funding for boating facilities and aids to navigation and marine search and rescue. The Boating Safety and Facilities Program (BSFP) is used to provide grant funding in three main categories:

- Construction of new boating facilities and the upgrade of current facilities;
- Support for recognised volunteer marine search and rescue groups to deliver search and rescue services to boat operators; and
- The provision and renewal of aids to navigation to waterway managers.

The Minister for Fishing and Boating approved \$5 million in funding for the 2020-21 round of the BSFP, which included funding upgrades to the Clifton Springs boat ramp and carpark, upgrade works to the Avalon Beach boat ramp, the Ocean Grove boat ramp pontoon detailed design, the Toora boat ramp jetty replacement and Warneet boating precinct plan. It also included funding upgrades to the launching and berthing facilities at Lake Purrumbete, upgrading navigational aids on Lake Eppalock and upgrading the Yarrowonga common boat ramp, dredging works, new moorings in Gippsland, multiple navigation aids, and coast guard equipment, to name a few.





## Engaging with our fishing community

### Our work to encourage participation in fishing

#### Go Fish Nagambie

The VFA continued its highly successful partnership with Go Fish Nagambie, Australia's largest inland fishing competition, which was held from 25 to 28 March 2021. The event was launched with a sell-out event celebrating the Women in Recreational Fishing Network and was followed with a weekend with thousands of visitors, wonderful fishing clinics for kids, and many opportunities to have a chat with the VFA's Fisheries Officers and staff. The event included fishing clinics run in association with the MS Foundation and aimed to support children with multiple sclerosis by giving them an opportunity to learn about fishing and catching their first fish.



## Murray cod and trout conferences

### Murray Codference

The Murray Codference continues to hold a special place in fishers' calendars with over 300 people attending the annual event, which is now in its fifth year. Held on 18 April 2021 in Shepparton, the event featured an extensive program of speakers and topics. Cameron McGregor was the keynote speaker and shared his journey and key learnings regarding Murray cod fishing. Other presentations included Better Access to Cod Fisheries by Ben Scullin, Murray Cod Diets by Dr Katie Doyle, and an update on New Native Fishing Products by Steve Trelfall.

In a new initiative, the 2021 event also included a Victorian lure maker expo. This expo showcased the tremendous work of local lure makers and provided an opportunity for attendees to support Victorian small businesses.

For those who couldn't travel, the event was also livestreamed, providing people the opportunity to experience the event from the comfort of their own home. The livestream achieved a reach of over 10,000 people and even now, people continue to enjoy the event's presentations via the VFA's YouTube channel.

### Talk Wild Trout

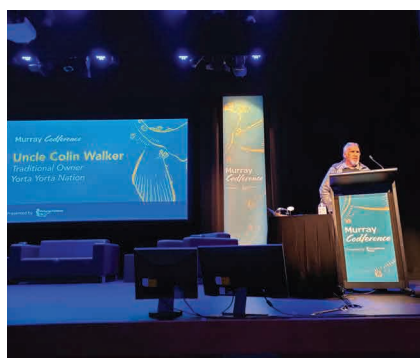
The 2020 Talk Wild Trout conference represented the event's sixth consecutive year. Things were a little different this year however, and in response to the ever changing environment resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was held online via Zoom. The three-day event was a great success and was attended by over 165 people.

Under the theme of Care for Trout, attendees heard from 12 leaders, including Paul Gaskell from the UK's Wild Trout Trust, who spoke on stream restorations and Sascha Clark Danylchuk from the USA's Keep Fish Wet, who promoted better fish handling.

Other highlights included presentations by the VFA staff, the Australian Trout Foundation, Aussie Angler, David Kramer from FutureFish, North East Catchment Management Authority, and Zoos Victoria, all providing attendees with a fantastic range of topics to increase their knowledge and understanding of all things trout.

### Virtual Trout Hub

The VFA continued to broaden its use of technology by launching The Virtual Trout Hub on Facebook. Run over six days in August and September 2020, the virtual event provided people with the opportunity to take part in fun trout-themed activities designed for the whole family. Activities included virtual tours of the VFA's Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery, talks on careers in fish production, cooking demonstrations, drawing competitions for the kids, and much more. The virtual event achieved a reach of over 41,000.





### Expansion of the Golden Tag promotion

The VFA's Golden Tag promotion has gone from strength to strength despite the challenging year it has been. It is a tag recapture program that awards a cash prize to any fisher who catches a fish tagged with the specifically designed golden tags. The VFA has tagged over 1,100 fish and the tags carry a prize of either \$10,000 or \$2,000 to the successful fisher.

The Golden Tag promotion was originally established to get recreational fishing tourism back to the bushfire affected areas of northeast Victoria and East Gippsland. It was extended in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on regional tourism businesses. In these areas, recreational fishing is one of the key tourism drivers and supports thousands of jobs.

The promotion commenced on 1 March 2020 and was extremely successful in getting visitation back to these regional communities. It was then suspended during the periods when travel was restricted as part of the COVID-19 response. The VFA relaunched an expanded program on 13 November 2020, which included extra tagged fish and extra locations across regional Victoria.

To date, the VFA has awarded 114 prizes to successful fishers. The promotion will conclude on 31 December 2021.





### Women in Recreational Fishing Network

The Women in Recreational Fishing (WIRF) network is a community of women who share a passion for and interest in fishing. The community provides a safe, supportive and inclusive network for women of all backgrounds and skill levels. The network currently includes over 2,900 women and has become an important source of inspiration and motivation for women, not only in Victoria but Australia-wide.

Over the last year, WIRF has continued to grow and increase its activity providing new and exciting opportunities for women to connect. In 2020-21, the network hosted a variety of events including online learning forums (WIRFinars), a Leadership Program, networking events and industry presentations. Each event providing key opportunities for members to connect and continue their journey in fishing.

The WIRF Leaders continue to promote the network within the broader community and are increasingly being recognised and sought after as thought leaders.

Activity in the last 12 months also included an exciting milestone for WIRF with the launch of the inaugural Celebration of Women in Fishing event at Go Fish Nagambie. Bringing together over 300 women and their families, the evening celebrated the community of women who support each other and create special memories fishing.



### Partnerships rebuilding trout populations

The VFA has a strong history of working in genuine partnership with stakeholders to deliver the best outcomes possible for our fisheries and the health of the waterways and ecosystems that support them. No better example highlights the VFA working together with stakeholders than the work that has been undertaken in partnership with trout fishers to support the health of Victoria's trout populations.

The Australian Trout Foundation (ATF) and the VFA have been collaborating on stocking trials for several years. These trials are focused on Jordan Scotty instream egg incubators and fry stocking to investigate if these stocking approaches can accelerate the recovery of trout populations impacted by bushfires, floods and other environmental events. Due to COVID-19-related impacts over the year, volunteers were not able to assist with the eggs placement into the incubators. However, the trial was able to continue with the help of a limited number of ATF volunteers to release of trout fry into the Jamieson River, Dargo River, Macalister River and a tributary of the King River. Fry were also stocked last November in Nariel and Thowgla Creeks. Follow-up surveys, monitoring and DNA analysis will be undertaken to determine trout population status and the success of the recovery restocking.

To assist in the recovery of trout habitat from bushfire impacts, a number of collaborative tree planting days have also been undertaken with fishers over the year. The most recent effort was the planting of some 10,000 trees along the Nariel Creek over a period of about a week by the ATF's Habitat Army, the Women in Recreational Fishing Network and the North East Catchment Management Authority.





## Celebrating 20 years of the Recreational Fishing Licensing Trust

Victoria became the first Australian jurisdiction to introduce an all-waters recreational fishing licence in 1999, and the following year the *Fisheries Act 1995* was amended to establish the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account. For over 20 years now, funds from the sale of recreational fishing licences have been used to fund programs and hundreds of worthwhile projects delivered by fishing clubs, community groups and government agencies.



Expenditure of all Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account funds is approved by the Minister for Fishing and Boating and is based on advice from the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee; the members of which are appointed by the Minister.

The Advisory Committee assesses and provides advice on applications for grants received under the Recreational Fishing Grants Program, which consists of four separate tiers.

### 1. The Commissioning Grants Program

This program provides funds for VFA led programs. In 2020-21, a total of \$397,749 was provided for the following:

- Monitoring of Victoria's wild catch fisheries by collecting catch and effort data from recreational fishers at key locations in Port Phillip Bay, Western Port, the Gippsland Lakes, Corner Inlet and the coastal Lakes Entrance fishery, and
- Production of communication products to assist recreational fishers in understanding and complying with fishing rules, such as the annual Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide, fish rulers and measures for rock lobster, freshwater crayfish and abalone.

### 2. The Large Grants Program

This program provides funds for a wide range of projects, including habitat rehabilitation in waterways, access improvement for recreational fishers, and provides facilities such as fishing platforms and fish cleaning tables. Funds are also provided for research projects on key recreational fisheries, and education and information projects that promote sustainable and responsible fishing practices.

In the 2020-21 financial year, a total of \$527,683 was paid to nine projects through the Large Grants Program.

### 3. The Intermediate Grants Program

This new program was introduced in 2021. It provides grants of up to \$50,000 to angling clubs and community groups for projects to improve recreational fishing.

The first application to be approved has seen the Association of Geelong & District Angling Clubs receive \$38,864 to install solar lighting along St Helens rock wall, which is a very popular land-based fishing location.

### 4. The Small Grants Program

The Small Grants Program is open year-round and provides funds to angling clubs and community groups to run community fishing days and other small-scale projects.

A total of \$38,198 was paid to 12 projects in 2020-21.



Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account funds are also disbursed for agreed priorities, including increased recreational fish stocking, additional Fisheries Officers to boost enforcement and education, and the implementation of projects to get more Victorians fishing, more often.

Funds are also provided for the operation of VRFish to represent recreational fishers and provide advice to the Government on the management of the State's fisheries resources, and to the Victorian Fishcare program to deliver sustainable fishing education and events.

The costs incurred in the administration of the Recreational Fishing Licence Program and the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group, and commissions paid to Recreational Fishing Licence sellers are also funded from the Trust Account.

Pursuant to Section 151B(4) of the Fisheries Act 1995, an annual report detailing all Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account revenue and expenditure is prepared and tabled in each House of Parliament. The report can be found on the VFA website ([www.vfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.vfa.vic.gov.au)).



## Our work to grow our social media

Social media continues to be a valuable communication tool for the VFA to keep stakeholders up to date on the latest news and in 2020-21, the VFA's ability to engage and reach fishers, boaters and the Victorian community expanded with the addition of Better Boating Victoria's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter platforms.

In the last six years, VFA's Facebook page has dramatically increased its reach and number of posts published, peaking in 2019 with a record 864 posts - eight times more than 2015 - and a combined reach of over 46 million compared with 1.5 million in 2015. The bulk of the 2019 reach was due to two videos that went viral, both featuring Murray cod nesting boxes. In 2020-21, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted greatly on the number of posts published compared with 2019-20, however our stories still reached large audiences with a combined reach of 15.5 million.

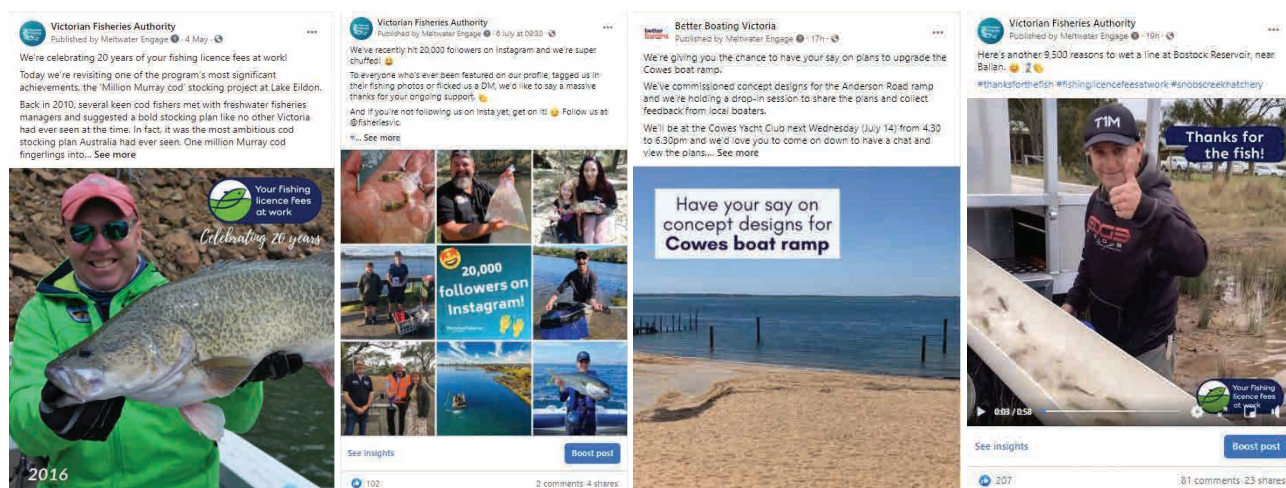
The VFA's Instagram account recently achieved the milestone of 20,000 followers, and Twitter continues to grow with more than 1,000 followers.

Social media has been a fantastic way to showcase how recreational fishing licence fees are used to deliver projects that matter to our recreational fishers. The VFA has ramped up the 'licence fees at work campaign' to tell more stories more often, ranging from fish stocking posts, access and facilities projects as they are constructed, fish habitat works, research, and a collection of stories celebrating the

Recreational Fishing Trust Fund's 20-year anniversary. It has also been used regularly to update the VFA's growing audience on the construction of the new native fish hatchery at Arcadia, enforcement and education efforts, and showing Fisheries Officers out and about on the water interacting with the public. With the inclusion of boating into the VFA, we are now keeping recreational boaters up to date on boat ramp upgrades, progress on better boating facilities and dates for public consultation.

In recent times, all social media platforms have been used to promote the latest COVID-19 restrictions and how they apply to fishing and boating. Social media has also played a major role in supporting events that transitioned to online; the VFA's YouTube channel became an invaluable resource for the Talk Wild Trout Conference and Murray Codference presentations, so those who missed out could view talks at their leisure.

In partnership with Agriculture Victoria, the VFA has also used social media to communicate information on the abalone disease near Portland and best practice biosecurity for fishers and boaters to stop its spread.





## Helping to protect Victoria's ecosystems

### Mako shark movement patterns and stakeholder engagement

Mako sharks are a highly valued recreational gamefish for their fighting ability and taste. To ensure continued sustainable management of the species, the VFA is currently conducting licenced funded research to gain greater insight into their population characteristics. Appropriate spatial scales of fishery management are important for all migratory fish species. As such, improving knowledge of their movement characteristics aims to complement existing scientific knowledge. With the distribution and genetic connectivity of recreationally caught shortfin mako sharks largely unknown in Victoria, the VFA with co-investigators from Deakin University are halfway through a two-year project to gain a greater understanding of mako shark movement characteristics and genetic connectivity.

Four mako sharks have been tagged with satellite transmitters, with data captured and automatically uploaded every time a tagged shark surfaces.

The VFA's mako shark webpage provide an outline of the project and a live shark tracking map that allowed users to enjoy an interactive experience ( <https://vfa.vic.gov.au/science-in-fisheries/mako-shark-tagging>). Social media statistics indicated that a single mako shark post reached 41,788 people and 2,200 post engagements on Facebook, and 6,417 people on Instagram. The website has been visited 1,235 times since March 2021. Six other social posts attracted an audience of over 95,000 people.

With another six sharks to be tagged later in 2021, this project is sure to deliver some fascinating data with great stakeholder engagement.





## Victoria's Giant spider crabs – engagement, management and science

Annual aggregations of Giant spider crabs (*Leptomithrax gaimardii*) occur at multiple locations in Port Phillip Bay, in Victorian coastal waters and beyond, including a regular aggregation close to Rye or Blairgowrie pier. This is the only well-known crab aggregation that is regularly accessible to both pier-based recreational divers, fishers and public. There is a high level of interest in this species from stakeholder groups, highlighting the importance of careful and informed future management.

The VFA is responsible for the management of fishing for Giant spider crab and providing for diverse fishing opportunities for future generations to enjoy. We have adopted a balanced management approach to the Giant spider crab fishery, incorporating science and providing for diverse community values. Surveys suggest stock is essentially at virgin biomass levels given the low recreational catch and the spatially and temporally discrete fishing location/periods.

The daily catch and possession limit for spider crabs, including Giant spider crabs, was recently halved from 30 to 15 to better balance the value of spider crabs across the community and provide a more equitable share between fishers and other stakeholders. The VFA has been working with land managers of Rye and Blairgowrie piers and surrounding coast, as well as recreational fishers and other research agencies, on a range of Giant spider crab education, management and science initiatives. These include a multicultural education campaign on enjoying responsible spider crab fishing.

To increase our scientific knowledge, 15 Giant spider crabs collected near Blairgowrie were fitted with satellite tracking devices and released in their natural environment to gain a greater understanding of their movement characteristics post-aggregation – an Australian first! Data supported the hypothesis that crabs disperse post-aggregation where they are likely to remain independent before aggregating again. Such movement activity supports the hypothesis that Giant spider crabs have the capacity to move large distances, are capable of stock replenishment via immigration and emigration and not solely restricted to southern Port Phillip Bay. In 2021, the VFA will begin scientific surveys to estimate giant spider crab recreational catch and abundance in southern Port Phillip Bay. Other scientific initiatives have also been funded to expand our knowledge of its stock structure and population connectivity in south eastern Australia.

The VFA continues to work with other agencies and stakeholder groups towards management approaches that will enable the Rye/Blairgowrie spider crab aggregation to continue to be shared between recreational divers, fishers and tourists both now and in the future.



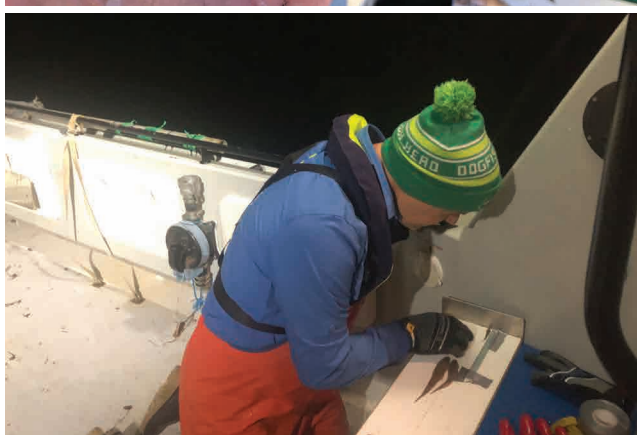
## Good news for key stocks in the Gippsland Lakes and Port Phillip Bay

The VFA is responsible for ensuring Victoria's fisheries are healthy and sustainable. Marine and estuarine environments are complex and dynamic, which has a large influence on finfish species, particularly during their vulnerable larval phases. This is true for species like snapper, sand flathead and black bream, all of which are replenished by highly variable recruitment processes. These species overcome this variability by having relatively long lives (20–40 years) that ensure they have a chance to spawn at least once in their lives when conditions are suitable. To help inform management decisions for these fisheries, VFA scientists undertake annual field surveys to measure the abundance of juvenile fish ("pre-recruits") and forecast stock replenishment trends, and hence fishery performance, in coming years.

This year, there was positive news from the survey showing that sand flathead recruitment was the highest it has been in 23 years. Sand flathead recruitment has been low since the early 1990's and abundance in Port Phillip Bay has declined as a result. Mature (>25cm) flathead abundance has been building in recent years due to a moderate spawning event in 2013, and we should see continued rebuilding from the four years onwards from the spike in recruitment seen in 2021.

The highest snapper recruitment event in nearly 30 years occurred in Port Phillip Bay in 2018, which means the snapper fishery is expected to boom over the next few years as this cohort enters the fishery. While there has been low recruitment the last few years, we know that snapper recruitment is highly variable and dictated by complex biogeochemical processes in Port Phillip Bay and its catchment.

Spawning success for black bream was good in the Gippsland Lakes, with four elevated years in succession. This is great news for the fishery, which should see increased performance over coming years.





## Recognising Indigenous fishing in Victoria

### Trialling Wallpolla Island Horseshoe Lagoon as a native fish nursery

Large numbers of native fish fingerlings including golden perch (*Macquaria ambigua*), Murray cod (*Maccullochella peelii*) and silver perch (*Bidyanus bidyanus*) are regularly stocked into Victorian waters to maintain and enhance recreational fisheries. Fingerlings of these species are typically reared in dedicated fry rearing ponds, which are fertilised to grow food for fish stocked into the ponds. This requires substantial investment in infrastructure (hatchery facilities and ponds) and resources (labour, operating and transport costs). Alternatively, utilisation of small waterbodies, such as lagoons and billabongs on floodplains, as nursery ponds for rearing fish is promoted as being less resource intensive and can be managed by local community groups.

The VFA, First People for the Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation - the formally recognised Traditional Owners, and the Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) collaborated on a native fish nursery trial at the Wallpolla Island Horseshoe Lagoon to determine if wetlands inundated flood water (known as 'environmental water') could be used to rear native fish larvae by recreating productive nursery habitats. Wallpolla Island is within a site designated by the Living Murray Initiative and as such, the Mallee CMA has been pumping environmental water into the site to increase the diversity and abundance of wetland vegetation and improve the overall health of the river systems.

The objective of the trial was to evaluate the survival and growth of golden perch and silver perch stocked into Wallpolla Island Horseshoe Lagoon following a managed watering event, and on 31 January 2019, 45,000 newly hatched golden perch and 75,000 silver perch were released into the lagoon. Over the next 27 months, four fishery surveys were undertaken, one before the stocking event and three after.

The trial concluded in 2021 and results showed that a floodplain wetland inundated with environmental water can be successfully used for rearing stocked larval golden perch as fish survived, exhibited exceptional growth and were in good condition when surveyed 16 months after stocking. The results supported the hypothesis that utilisation of flooded wetlands to grow juvenile native fish has the potential for recovering and enhancing local populations.

The trial has also provided information that could support development of a proposed First People's Native Fish Hatchery in Northwest Victoria. The proposal presents a unique opportunity to create an on-Country warm climate fish hatchery for Southern Basin fish located at Ned's Corner Station. Not only could the development utilise local wetlands to recover threatened culturally important species such as Murray cod, silver perch, golden perch and freshwater catfish, it could also include small-bodied native fish that are ecologically important locally.





## Working with traditional owner groups

On 11 November 2020, as part of NAIDOC week, the Department of Transport (DoT) launched the first-ever, 'whole-of-transport framework' that acknowledges DoT's and its agencies' role to transform our systems and service delivery to ensure our work is informed by Aboriginal Victorians and to prioritise and achieve positive outcomes with Aboriginal Victorians. Members of the Executive Leadership Team and staff attended the launch of the Transport Portfolio Aboriginal Self-Determination Plan, led by keynote speaker The Hon. Minister Jacinta Allan. The VFA contributed to the Plan's development through involvement in the DoT Aboriginal Self Determination Steering Committee.

To achieve real change and enable self-determination, Aboriginal Victorians need to be at the centre of government decision making. The VFA will support the whole-of-transport approach to engaging with Aboriginal Victorians to reduce consultative burden and ensure meaningful conversations can be held.

To this end, the VFA has made a commitment articulated in the *VFA's Aboriginal Engagement Strategy 2021 – 2024*. Endorsed by the VFA Board, the Strategy was launched and communicated to all staff in December 2020.

Through building relationships with Traditional Owners, understanding their needs, and supporting VFA staff to have a greater awareness of aboriginal culture, the VFA will:

- Have staff who understand and apply the principles of self-determination in their engagement;
- Demonstrate improved cultural capability; and
- Establish trust and effective relationships with Traditional Owners.

It is only through establishing and building relationships with Traditional Owners and understanding their needs that the VFA will be able to engage in a meaningful and productive way to deliver VFA's initiatives and projects. Traditional Owners will be engaged in the development of fishing related strategies, initiatives and projects that benefit all Victorians.

The VFA is also involved in the DoT Aboriginal Scholarship Program and will be supporting two secondary school scholarships and two university undergraduate scholarships. Successful applicants will commence their scholarships in the next financial year.

## Review of the VFA's Aboriginal Fishing Strategy

As part of the VFA's commitment to working with Traditional Owners to deliver on the Victorian Government's self-determination framework, the VFA began the process of refreshing the *Aboriginal Fishing Strategy*, which was first released by Fisheries Victoria in 2012 and remains an important policy for guiding its relationships with the State's Traditional Owners.

The VFA's goals in refreshing the Strategy are to develop strong, respectful and ongoing direct relationships that are consistent with the outcomes in existing native title agreements and guide future agreement negotiations.

The refreshed Strategy will be aligned with the intent of the *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023* and agreements established under the *Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993* and the *Victorian Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*. The review will be undertaken in close consultation with Traditional Owners on country with the intent to develop closer relationships and collaboration that leads to greater participation in natural resource management, reconciliation, self-determination and economic independence.

## Enforcing our regulations to protect the community's fisheries resources

### The VFA's enforcement activities

To protect Victoria's fisheries resources and the environment, as well as ensuring the community that fishing is carried out sustainably and responsibly, the VFA undertakes law enforcement operations to deter, detect, disrupt and dismantle unlawful activities. A summary of the enforcement activities undertaken in 2020-21 is detailed in the table below.

Table 3: Summary of enforcement activities

| Enforcement activities                | 2020-21 | 2019-20 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| <b>Education Officer engagement</b>   |         |         |
| School engagement activities          | 165     | 171     |
| Participants through school programs  | 13,949  | n/a     |
| Community engagement activities       | 84*     | 164     |
| Participants through community events | 5,943** | n/a     |
| <b>Inspections</b>                    |         |         |
| Aquaculture inspections               | 40      | 29      |
| Commercial fishing inspections        | 926     | 755     |
| Marine safety inspections             | 4,231   | 3,449   |
| Recreational fishing inspections      | 43,799  | 42,332  |
| <b>Investigations</b>                 |         |         |
| 13FISH calls                          | 2,105   | 2,050   |
| Investigations initiated              | 40^     | 21^     |
| <b>Marine Park activities</b>         |         |         |
| Marine Park inspections               | 224     | 221     |
| Marine Park patrols                   | 1,533   | 1,626   |
| <b>Enforcement actions</b>            |         |         |
| Offenders detected                    | 4,653   | 4,611   |
| Verbal warning given                  | 1,357   | 1,198   |
| Official warning issued               | 2,101   | 2,120   |
| Infringement notice issued            | 1,913   | 1,711   |
| Prosecution brief submitted           | 20      | 22      |

\* The number of events held was lower due to COVID-19 restrictions.

\*\* Does not include attendees at digital events. The use of digital events has been increased to ensure continuity of engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

^ The 2020-21 data definition was increased to include both preliminary investigations and operations initiated to more accurately reflect effort undertaken. Data for 2019-20 included operations initiated only.





## Our investigations into major fisheries crimes

A major focus for the VFA is disrupting the black-market trade of Victoria's fisheries resources. The illegal sale of fish and other marine species threatens the sustainability not only of resources but also the licenced commercial businesses who are doing the right thing.

The VFA's State-wide Investigation Group (SIG) has a pivotal role in protecting the State's fisheries by investigating and charging those who seek to profit from fisheries crime. Investigators are trained in physical surveillance and use of state-of-the-art surveillance equipment and technologies to obtain high quality evidence. This evidence is critical in the prosecution of offenders charged with Fisheries Act and Crimes Act offences.

The VFA has, on many occasions, partnered with Police and interstate Fisheries agencies interstate to investigate cross-border offending. This collaboration is highly valued, and routinely leads to the apprehension and prosecution of significant fisheries offenders.

In the past year, the VFA's SIG undertook a range of investigations targeting organised fisheries crime and black-market offences, including:

- A joint operation with New South Wales, named 'Operation Arctic', focused on the illegal trafficking of abalone by a syndicate of 13 individuals operating in eastern Melbourne and the south-eastern coast of NSW. This investigation took place during 2019-20 with Investigators seizing 130 kilograms of abalone meat. Throughout 2020-21, Investigators composed briefs of evidence to charge 13 people with a

suite of Fisheries Act and Crimes Act offences including trafficking a commercial quantity of a priority species, knowingly dealing with the proceeds of crime, and perjury. This case has been an important showcase of two jurisdictions working together to break down the illegal trade of an important and valuable resource.

- 'Operation Weelsby', partnering with Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (Fisheries), NSW Fisheries and NSW Police, targeted the illegal sale of 12 tonnes of Golden Perch harvested with mesh nets from the Darling River over a period of two years. Golden Perch are an important resource for the recreational and commercial fishing sectors and the removal of that volume of fish has the potential to have significant ramifications for the fish population in that area, and the greater Murray-Darling river system. The investigation resulted in the charge of knowingly dealing with the proceeds of crime, to the value of \$205,600, and is currently before the County Court.
- In April 2021, SIG Investigators and NSW Fisheries Officers concluded an investigation into the sale of recreationally caught Golden perch at retail outlets in Mildura. A total of eleven individuals and business owners were interviewed after nine months of investigations. A brief of evidence is currently being compiled.



## Ensuring safer and legal trade of Victorian seafood

Fisheries Officers across the State have been advising and educating on fish traceability laws and documentation requirements to ensure sustainability and seafood safety.

'Operation Steel' has been an opportunity to visit commercial seafood premises, and numerous stakeholders throughout the supply chain of Victorian seafood to explain the legislative requirements of receipting. Education material has been provided, including fact sheets, explanatory flowcharts, checklists and promotional brochures and magnets.

The *Fisheries Regulations 2019* require specific documentation to accompany all fish sold or transferred in Victoria for commercial purposes. These laws are designed to support legitimate commercial fishing operations and investigate black market seafood..

The regulations provide: *if fish has been obtained for the purposes of sale, transportation for reward, storage for reward, or processing for reward, then they must have and issue the appropriate documentation for possession and sale of those fish.* Documentation includes:

- A Catch Disposal Record (an original document that may be transferred directly from the point of landing by a licensed fisher - only used in quota fisheries); or
- A sales receipt (a receipt or tax invoice created by the seller of the fish to the buyer of the fish); or
- A fish movement record (a document created by a fish possessor for instances when fish are transported prior to a sale and/or documentation is not available, for example, fish transported to a Co-op to be sold and a Catch Disposal Record or sales receipt have not been provided).

This requirement applies to all commercial wild catch fisheries, aquaculture producers and seafood industry participants in Victoria, including processors, wholesalers, transporters, restaurants, fish and chip shops and food service retailers.

Recreational fishers selling their catch threaten the sustainability and stock assessment of our fisheries resource. Recreationally caught fish are not subject to any of the food safety measures required under the Food Standards Code. Buyers of illegal fish are placing their customers' health at risk, and the reputation of their business.

Fisheries Officers continue to work with seafood industry participants state-wide to inform them of the new rules. More information is available at: <https://vfa.vic.gov.au/enforcement/buy-safe-and-legal-seafood>





## Recruiting to the Fishery Officer team in 2021

In early 2021, the VFA commenced a recruitment process to fill seven vacant Fisheries Officer positions across the State. This recruitment process always generates a huge amount of interest as positions are generally only advertised every three years. Over 540 applications were received for the seven positions, and each application was assessed and shortlisted through six extensive recruitment stages.

This year, three additional recruitment steps were included as part of the overall shortlisting process. Shortlisted applicants completed online testing through the Australian Council for Education Research to assess their numeracy, literacy and writing skills. A video interview was conducted to provide an opportunity for the selection panel to “meet” the candidates and hear their responses to a number of questions prior to the face-to-face interview. The third new step of the recruitment process involved a face-to-face psychological interview with a psychologist to assess suitability for the role.

In line with the VFA’s strategic priority of diversity and inclusion, it was important to promote and advertise the recruitment campaign widely to attract a diverse pool of candidates. Advertising was placed in language newspapers, university recruitment pages, the Victorian Multicultural commission, WECHAT (Chinese social media platform), as well as the VFA’s social media pages and many other media outlets. For the first time, a number of live ZOOM webinars were also held with over 100 participants eager to find out about the role of a Fisheries Officer. The recruitment campaign this year attracted a more diverse pool of candidates than in previous campaigns.

The final seven successful candidates commenced their training as Fisheries Officer recruits in early July and, just like the community that we serve as Fisheries Officers, the recruits are a diverse group in gender, cultural background and life stage.





## Delivering our commitments in the Government's Budget Paper No. 3

The Government's *Budget Paper No.3 – Service Delivery* outlines the Government's priorities for the goods and services it provides to Victorians, and how these support the Government's strategic objectives. It establishes performance outputs and targets for departments and agencies and provides information on how these are being delivered.

The Government's strategic objective and performance indicators for the VFA are described below.

**Departmental Objective:** Sustainably managed fish and boating resources

### Objective Indicators:

- Sustainability of assessed fish stocks
- Improved recreational fishing and boating services and facilities

### Changes to the output structure for the VFA:

As a consequence of policy decisions announced by the Government on 2 August 2020, changes were made to the departmental objectives and output structure of the VFA during the financial year. As part of the administrative restructure, the VFA is now responsible for achieving the Government's Better Boating Victoria initiative. The responsibilities for BBV were formally transferred to the VFA on 1 February 2021.

**Table 4: Changes to the VFA's output measures**

| 2019-20 outputs                    | Reason  | 2020-21 outputs                                |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Sustainably Managed Fish Resources | This output has been renamed to highlight that boating activities are included under this output. | Sustainably Managed Fish and Boating Resources |

The VFA's departmental objective supports the development of sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities in Victoria and the delivery of improved recreational fishing and boating services and facilities so that boating and fishing are more accessible to more people and deliver outcomes that provide benefits to Victorians.

**Table 5: Progress towards the departmental objective**

| Measure (unit of measure)   | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Percentage of quota-based fish stocks that were assessed during the year as being sustainable (percent) | 100     | 100     | 100     | 100     |

### The VFA's performance measures

The VFA's performance output to sustainably manage fish resources and deliver improved boating facilities creates the conditions for the VFA to grow the natural resources economy by ensuring resources are sustainably allocated and used for recreational and commercial purposes. The VFA's performance against the measures and targets prescribed to achieve the output is described in Table 6.

Table 6: Performance against output performance measures

| Performance measures   | Unit of measure | 2020-21 target | 2020-21 actual | 2019-20 target | 2019-20 actual | Result |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------|
| <b>Quantity</b>  |                 |                |                |                |                |        |
| Better boating initiatives commenced   | number          | 8              | 8              | 7              | 7              | ✓      |
| Community and stakeholder engagement information forums – fisheries  | number          | 10             | 10             | 10             | 10             | ✓      |
| Complete stock assessment for key quota managed fish species   | number          | 3              | 3              | 3              | 3              | ✓      |
| Complete total allowable commercial catch setting processes for key quota managed fish species   | number          | 3              | 3              | 3              | 3              | ✓      |
| Develop, implement and review overarching fisheries compliance strategy  | number          | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | ✓      |
| Enhance levels of community participation in achieving fisheries compliance through calls to the 13FISH reporting line   | number          | 1,750          | 2,105          | 1,750          | 2,050          | ■      |
| <i>Annual call volumes fluctuate and have varied between 1,500 to 2,200 calls per year over the previous ten years. Call volumes can be influenced by the duration and location of major compliance operations, Fisheries Officer patrol patterns, the VFA's increasing social media presence and subsequent education of the public of the needs for fisheries rules and regulations.</i>   |                 |                |                |                |                |        |
| Key fisheries managed in accordance with best practice management plans  | number          | 6              | 6              | 6              | 6              | ✓      |
| Minimum number of uniformed fisheries officers maintaining operational coverage for priority fishing activity periods, as defined by the Compliance Strategic Assessment   | number          | 17             | 21             | 17             | 22             | ■      |
| <i>Additional patrolling was undertaken to monitor coastal closures resulting from COVID-19 restrictions and in response to an unexpected abalone virus outbreak in western Victoria which has led to the target being exceeded.</i>   |                 |                |                |                |                |        |
| Native and salmonid fish stocked   | number (000)    | 8,000          | 8,377          | 6,000          | 6,100          | ✓      |
| Recreational boating and fishing infrastructure improvements delivered   | number          | 6              | 6              | 6              | 0              | ✓      |
| Recreational fishing licences sold online as a proportion of total sales   | percent         | 90             | 92             | 80             | 90             | ✓      |
| Undertake activities to detect, disrupt and dismantle serious or organised fisheries criminal entities (individuals or groups)   | number          | 20             | 12             | 17             | 21             | ■      |
| <i>The number of activities undertaken in 2020-21 is lower than the target for three reasons: 1) two major operations were undertaken in 2020-21 requiring a large portion of the available investigative resources, 2) recreational fishing was banned for a large part of the year due to COVID-19 restrictions, which lowered the fishing activity of the public, and 3) A number of VFA enforcement resources were deployed to support the COVID-19 High Risk Industries Engagement and Enforcement Operation.</i> |                 |                |                |                |                |        |

Table 6 continued on next page



Table 6 continued: Performance against output performance measures

| Performance measures  | Unit of measure | 2020-21 target | 2020-21 actual | 2019-20 target | 2019-20 actual | Result |
|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------|
| <b>Quality</b>  |                 |                |                |                |                |        |
| Key statutory obligations relevant to the Victorian Fisheries Authority complied with (tabling annual report, audits, business plan and board appointments) | percent         | 100            | 100            | 100            | 100            | ✓      |
| <b>Timeliness</b>   |                 |                |                |                |                |        |
| Proportion of fisheries cost recovery levies reviewed and set prior to the commencement of the licensing year (1 April)                                     | percent         | 100            | 100            | 100            | 100            | ✓      |
| Research project milestones and reports completed on time (Fisheries)   | percent         | 90             | 90             | 90             | 90             | ✓      |

Note: ✓ performance target achieved;  
 ○ performance target not achieved – within 5 percent variance;  
 ■ performance target not achieved – exceeds 5 per cent variance;  
 nm new measure.

## Delivering our 2018 State election commitments

### Go Fishing Victoria

Following the highly successful *Target One Million* program in which the Government committed \$46 million towards recreational fishing to get more people fishing more often, the Government announced a package of commitments during the 2018 State election to continue to grow recreational fishing in Victoria. The initiative, *Go Fishing Victoria*, commenced on 1 July 2019 and committed a further \$35 million over four years.

**Table 7: Go Fishing Victoria - Phase 2**

| Election Commitment  | Target  | Status   |
|--|---|--|
| Phase out commercial fishing in the Gippsland Lakes through a compulsory buyout to return the Lakes to recreational fishers, boost tourism and create jobs   | Cancellation of all Gippsland Lakes commercial net fishing licences by 1 April 2021   | <b>Complete</b><br>Licenced commercial fishers requested an early buyout and all licences were surrendered by 1 April 2020.                                      |
| Grow fish stocking to 10 million fish per year by 2022   | Release 10 million fish in the year 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019-20 = 6 million</li> <li>• 2020-21 = 8 million</li> <li>• 2021-22 = 10 million</li> <li>• 2022-23 = 10 million</li> </ul> | <b>On track - milestone targets achieved</b><br>6.1 million fish were stocked in 2019-20<br>8.4 million fish stocked in 2020-21                                  |
| Construct a new \$7 million native fish hatchery in Shepparton   | Native fish hatchery operational by 2022  | <b>Underway</b><br>The project is on track to meet the completion timeline.  |
| Protect recreational fishing of Southern Bluefin Tuna from cuts to the allocation by the Commonwealth  | No changes to Victoria's existing recreational fishing rules for Southern Bluefin Tuna  | <b>Ongoing</b>   |
| Improve fish habitat in Port Phillip Bay by investing \$2.5 million into projects for reef development   | Completion of three artificial reefs by June 2022   | <b>Underway</b><br>Completed: Geelong/Dromana shellfish reef restoration and Corio Bay artificial reef. The third reef is on track to be completed by June 2022. |
| Guarantee access to more waterways – allow anglers to use small craft, such as kayaks and boats with electric motors, on specified lakes and reservoirs (Tullaroop, Lauriston, Hepburn, Barkers Creek, Upper Coliban and Malmsbury reservoirs) | Anglers can use and launch small craft such as kayaks and boats with electric motors on by 1 August 2020  | <b>Complete</b>  |
| Improve access for fishing and camping by opening Crown land river frontages, many covered by grazing licences   | Angler access has been improved at 40 sites by December 2021  | <b>Underway</b>  |

Table 7 continued on next page



Table 7 continued: Go Fishing Victoria - Phase 2

| Election Commitment   | Target  | Status   |
|---|---|--|
| Invest in fishing infrastructure providing more fish cleaning tables and fishing platforms        | Invest \$600,000 on at least five new or upgraded fish cleaning tables and three upgraded fishing platforms | <b>Underway</b><br>The VFA has completed the fishing platform upgrades and built three new fish cleaning tables. Two fish cleaning tables will be completed in late 2021.  |
| Introduce a <i>Fishing For All</i> program to promote fishing among groups with low participation | Hold three events a year in 2019-20 and 2020-21   | <b>Underway</b><br>Due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, all events scheduled between mid-March 2020 and February 2021 were cancelled or postponed. The VFA held two events in 2021 (March and April). |
| Stock Eastern King Prawns into Lake Tyers   | Eastern King Prawns are stocked into Lake Tyers by 2021   | <b>Complete</b><br>The VFA stocked 11,000 fully grown Eastern king prawns into Lake Tyers in Spring 2020.  |

## Better Boating Victoria

Better Boating Victoria was launched in 2018 to deliver on the Government's \$47 million investment to make it safer, cheaper and easier for boaters and fishers to get out on the water by fixing boat ramps, removing all boat ramp parking and launching fees, and returning fees from licensing and registrations to boating safety and facilities.

Table 8: Better Boating Victoria – making it safer, cheaper and easier to get out on the water

| Election Commitment  | Target  | Status  |
|--|---|---|
| Abolish parking and launching fees across the State  | By October 2019   | <b>Completed in 2019</b>  |
| Undertake a review of boating infrastructure management across Port Phillip and Western Port | In 2020-21  | <b>Complete</b>   |
| Upgrade boating facilities at Rhyll, Hastings, Queenscliff, Point Richards and Mordialloc    | In 2020-21  | <b>On track</b>   |
| Administer the Boating Safety and Facilities Program (BSFP)                                  | Provide grants for boating infrastructure, search and rescue functions, and navigation aids | <b>Complete</b><br>In 2020-21, 34 projects were provided through the BSFP, worth more than \$1.9 million, and nine projects, worth \$810,000, were announced by the Minister for Fishing and Boating. |
| Establish a Better Boating Fund  | Fund to commence on 1 July 2021   | <b>Complete</b>   |
| Deliver a Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy to guide future investment priorities      | Develop strategy in consultation with stakeholders by July 2021                             | <b>Underway</b><br>Draft released for public comment in August 2021.  |

## Minister's Statement of Expectations

The Statement of Expectations sets out the Minister for Fishing and Boating's expectations for the VFA's regulation of fisheries matters and outlines a range of improvements and performance targets to enhance administration and enforcement of regulations. The Statement applies to the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2022. Table 9 describes the VFA's actions to deliver the expectations.

**Table 9: Implementing the Ministerial Statement of Expectations**

| <b>1. Timeliness</b>  |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
| <b>Improve the VFA's processes, systems and online capability to create a better user experience through efficient online administrative processes</b>            |   |               |
| <b>Improvement strategy</b>   | <b>Target</b>   | <b>Status</b> |
| Replace the paper-based, resource intensive administration of commercial fishing licence processes with an online system for form submission and approval process | Scoping of requirements completed by June 2021  | ✓             |
| Provide clear guidelines on the expected timelines for processing commercial fishing forms and requests   | VFA website updated by 30 December 2020   | ✓             |
| Continue to transition Victoria's commercial fisheries to the Vic-eCatch system   | Commercial scallop dive, sea urchin, octopus and pipi fisheries transitioned to the Vic-eCatch system by 30 June 2022     | On track      |
| Continue to enhance and improve data availability for commercial fishers currently using the Vic-eCatch system  | Vic-eCatch data availability enhancement completed  | ✓             |
| Improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the recreational fishing licensing (RFL) system  | • Phase out paper-based RFL expiry reminders and replace with emails by 15 March 2021                                     | ✓             |
|   | • Network of online RFL agents expanded, with at least 95% of RFL agent sales using the online platform by 30 June 2022   | On track      |
|   | • Program to phase out paper and plastic RFLs commenced by 30 June 2022   | On track      |
| Continue to enhance existing e-capability by improving useability of VicRLTag and GoFishVic and the Rec Fishing Guide apps  | • Useability of the VicRLTag app enhanced and consideration given to digital replacement for plastic tags by 30 June 2021 | ✓             |
|   | • Integration of the VicRLTag and GoFishVic apps scoped by 30 June 2021   | ✓             |
|   | • Improvement options for Rec Fishing Guide app identified annually   | ✓             |

Table 9 continued on next page

Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| 2. Risk-based strategies   |  |          |
|--|--|----------|
| Improve methodology for data collection to inform risk-based strategies, reporting, and a risk-based approach to enforcement of regulation   |  |          |
| Improvement strategy   | Target   | Status   |
| Deliver an annual cycle of fish stock assessment and reporting and continue to improve the assessment framework process and reporting of non-quota species and fisheries, including publication of all reports on the VFA website      | Aligned with quota seasons, annually   | On track |
| Under the <i>Freshwater Fishery Management Plan 2018-2028</i> , systematically collect fish population health and recreational fishing information to enable the development of harvest strategies for priority recreational fisheries | • Baseline data collected on native fish populations to underpin harvest strategy development underway with progress reported annually | On track |
|  | • Draft harvest strategy, which includes predetermined triggers for high-risk fisheries on track to be completed by 2023               | On track |
| Improve data collection and monitoring programs to enable meaningful targets to be established to measure native freshwater fish populations   |  |          |
| Improvement strategy   | Target   | Status   |
| Continue the <i>Native Fish Report Card</i> program to keep the community updated about the state of native fish populations in Victorian rivers   | Native Fish Report Cards produced annually   | ✓        |
| Rebuild and replenish stocks of our priority native fish species   | • Stocking targets outlined in Go Fishing Victoria met   | ✓        |
|  | • A new native fish hatchery built in northern Victoria by November 2022   | On track |
| Continue to implement an intelligence-informed risk-based compliance model   | • Biennial strategic assessment undertaken to identify emerging risks to the sustainability of aquatic resources (31 Dec 2020)         | ✓        |
|  | • Quarterly analyses of 13Fish calls undertaken to identify common themes and locations  | ✓        |
|  | • Annual review of enforcement actions required in recreational and commercial fisheries undertaken                                    | ✓        |
|  |  |          |
| Improve data collection and monitoring programs to enable meaningful targets to be established to measure native freshwater fish populations   |  |          |
| Improvement strategy   | Target   | Status   |
| Maintain community confidence and create a general deterrence  | Base model of cover across all fisheries and over holiday and peak activity periods maintained   | ✓        |

Table 9 continued on next page



Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| <b>3. Compliance-related assistance and advice</b>  |  |                  |
|---|--|------------------|
| <b>Continue to provide comprehensive, straight forward and easily accessible information to the community</b>   |  |                  |
| <b>Improvement strategy</b>   | <b>Target</b>  | <b>Status</b>    |
| Continue to utilise traditional and emerging social media platforms to deliver key information about fisheries compliance and public safety issues to the community | Closed VFA Fisheries Education Facebook group established to better connect with our schools and family audiences  | ✓                |
| Continue to develop, review and refine fisheries products to improve the recreational fisher's understanding of regulations and legislation                         | • Rock Fishing Safety brochures in English, Vietnamese, Chinese, Pashto, Dari and Farsi produced by December 2020  | ✓                |
|   | • Bite-sized Fishing Guides in English, Vietnamese and Chinese published and educational trailer displays – bi-lingual English/Chinese and English/Vietnamese produced by December 2020  | ✓                |
| Build on previous work promoting stewardship within priority communities and fostering cross-cultural understanding of fishing and sustainable resource use         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of participants in the Schools Education Program drawn from priority communities achieved annually</li> <li>• Through the Fishing for Culture program, tailored education to assist newly arrived communities understand recreational fishing rules and how to fish responsibly undertaken</li> </ul> | ✓<br><br>Ongoing |
| Continue educational programs and events that recognise the VFA's diverse stakeholders and that are implemented in an accessible and inclusive way                  | Through the Go Fishing Victoria program, family-orientated fishing days to encourage all Victorians of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to give fishing a go are conducted  | Ongoing          |
| <b>Continue to find innovative and efficient ways to make information for commercial fishers and aquaculture businesses more easily accessible and understood</b>   |  |                  |
| <b>Improvement strategy</b>   | <b>Target</b>  | <b>Status</b>    |
| Identify improved methods and avenues to deliver essential information to commercial fishers  | • Commercial fishing guide and supplements for all licence classes published and update annually as required   | Ongoing          |
|   | • Information platform/gateway for commercial fishers (aligned with the Vic-eCatch reporting function) considered and scoped by 30 June 2022   | On track         |

Table 9 continued on next page

Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| 4. Incentive-based regulation   |   |        |
|---|---|--------|
| Continue collecting data that enables evaluation of fishing activities to identify opportunities for reduced/redirected enforcement effort                  |   |        |
| Improvement strategy  | Target  | Status |
| Continue to expand the roll-out VMS units across commercial fishing vessels   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VMS units operational in commercial fisheries specified in the Fisheries Regulations 2019:</li> </ul>                                    |        |
|   | - Abalone, rock lobster, giant crab by 1 July 2020  | ✓      |
|   | - Corner Inlet Fishery by 1 August 2020   | ✓      |
|   | - Sea urchin, banded morwong, trawl, Western Port/Port Phillip Bay, octopus by 1 November 2020  | ✓      |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trial of VMS units in the eel and pipi fisheries completed by 30 June 2021</li> </ul>  | ✓      |
| Consider incentive-based approaches to infringements  |   |        |
| Improvement strategy  | Target  | Status |
| Develop a tiered infringement system for breaches of size and catch limits  | Proposed model for setting tiered infringements developed by 30 June 2021   | ✓      |
| 5. Cooperation amongst regulators   |   |        |
| Continue to build a more effective and efficient compliance management system across government   |   |        |
| Improvement strategy  | Target  | Status |
| Continue collaboration on a national level with other agencies involved in fisheries management and enforcement to identify good practice and share lessons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National engagement through the Fisheries Managers Network and Australian Fisheries Managers Forum achieved annually</li> </ul>          | ✓      |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration with state and national crime fighting entities undertaken annually</li> </ul>   | ✓      |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian Fisheries Crime Prevention Framework completed by 30 June 2021</li> </ul>   | ✓      |
|   |   |        |
| Facilitate data sharing and collection amongst relevant agencies  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in the national Status of Australian Fish Stocks reporting processes to deliver updated reports every two years</li> </ul> | ✓      |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assistance in national shark research provided by collaborating with CSIRO</li> </ul>  | ✓      |

Table 9 continued on next page

Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| 5. Cooperation amongst regulators (continued)   |  |        |
|---|--|--------|
| Continue to engage and coordinate on a regular basis with other regulators whose roles and responsibilities overlap with those of the VFA   |  |        |
| Improvement strategy  | Target   | Status |
| Continue collaboration with state level regulators and agencies   | • In support of Game Management Victoria, intelligence services and enforcement support provided   | ✓      |
|   | • In support of Maritime Safety Victoria, inspections to ensure compliance with maritime safety legislation and promote safe fishing activities undertaken   | ✓      |
|   | • Contribution to Victoria's All Hazards, All Emergencies approach to emergency management achieved  | ✓      |
|   | • <i>State Emergency Management Plan</i> and <i>State Shark Hazard Plan</i> responsibilities met   | ✓      |
|   | • Collaboration with DELWP on emergency management, particularly shark hazard management, undertaken   | ✓      |
|   | • VFA and DELWP MOU detailing collaboration arrangements to minimise protected species interactions developed  | ✓      |
|   |  |        |
| Continue collaboration with DELWP, EPA, PV, BBV and local governments to deliver <i>Go Fishing Victoria</i> election commitments            | Effective collaboration undertaken with DELWP, PV, BBV to deliver <i>Go Fishing Victoria</i> election commitments: implement fish cleaning tables, new reefs, upgrade fishing platforms, provide access to river frontage on Crown land for recreational fishers | ✓      |
| 6. Stakeholder consultation and engagement  |  |        |
| The VFA understands the changing needs and priorities of commercial fishers, aquaculture businesses, recreational fishers and the community |  |        |
| Improvement strategy  | Target   | Status |
| Continue to build strong collaborative relationships with representative bodies and stakeholder groups through regular engagement           | • Regular meetings held with Seafood Industry Victoria (SIV) and the Aquatic Strategic Action Group to collaborate on shared strategic priorities for Victoria's seafood industry  | ✓      |
|   | • Regular meeting of the State-wide Recreational Roundtable to ensure collaboration on shared strategic priorities for the recreational fishing community  | ✓      |
|   | • Meetings with SIV, VRFish and the Victorian Multicultural Commission undertaken twice annually   | ✓      |

Table 9 continued on next page



Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| 6. Stakeholder consultation and engagement (continued)   |   |                   |
|--|---|-------------------|
| Pursue genuine engagement, partnership and participation with Indigenous Victorians  |   |                   |
| Improvement strategy   | Target  | Status            |
| Continue to actively engage with Traditional Owner groups who have an interest in fishery management issues  | • VFA <i>Aboriginal Engagement Strategy</i> developed by 31 March 2021  | ✓                 |
|  | • Review of the VFA <i>Aboriginal Fishing Strategy</i> completed and a redeveloped strategy published by 30 June 2022   | On track          |
|  | • Indigenous Victorians employment targets for the new native fish hatchery in Shepparton met by 30 June 2022   | On track          |
|  | • Wallpolla 'Culture Based Fisheries' Stocking Pilot Trial complete by 30 December 2021   | On track          |
| Continue to remove barriers hindering people from enjoying all that Victoria's recreational fishing has to offer   |   |                   |
| Improvement strategy   | Target  | Status            |
| Continue to deliver events that are aimed at providing a safe and enjoyable environment for people to learn about fishing – focussed on all-abilities, families and multicultural communities                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three <i>Fishing for All</i> events held annually</li> <li>• Five <i>Vic Fish Kids</i> events held annually</li> </ul> | COVID-19 affected |
| 7. Accountability and transparency   |   |                   |
| Ensure that all stakeholders have access to reliable and relevant information in appropriate forms to facilitate a good understanding of fisheries issues and the process by which fisheries management decisions are made |   |                   |
| Improvement strategy   | Target  | Status            |
| Remain committed to maintaining an effective and productive consultation and engagement process that involves all stakeholders   | • Progress against the VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 reviewed annually  | ✓                 |
|  | • Review of VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 undertaken by January 2021  | ✓                 |
|  | • VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2021-2023 drafted by 31 March 2021  | ✓                 |
| Ensure the VFA website and social media provide accurate and up-to-date information  | • The VFA website is reviewed to remain fit for purpose and updated as required   | ✓                 |
|  | • VFA's social media reach is reviewed annually   | ✓                 |
| Ensure that the VFA website provides timely and transparent information to encourage stakeholders to participate in fishery management decision-making processes   | Outcomes of consultative processes on the VFA's website published in a timely manner  | ✓                 |

Table 9 continued on next page

Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| 7. Accountability and transparency (continued)  |   |          |
|---|---|----------|
| Improved transparency and timeliness in publicly reporting on fishery performance to ensure the VFA's objective to sustainably manage Victoria's aquatic resources is being met |   |          |
| Improvement strategy  | Target  | Status   |
| Continue to report on the status of Victoria's key fish stocks and ensure reports are published on the VFA website in a time appropriate manner                                 | • Stock assessment reports for quota fisheries are published annually on the VFA website                                    | ✓        |
|   | • <i>Victorian Fish Stock Status Report</i> published on the VFA website  | Underway |
|   | • Fishery Report Cards provided to industry   | ✓        |
|   | • Completed scientific reports are published on the VFA website   | ✓        |
| Continue to deliver existing marine and aquaculture management plans and strategies, and review and develop new plans and strategies as required                                | • Review of the <i>Giant Crab Fishery Management Plan</i> undertaken, and a revitalised plan developed by December 2021     | On track |
|   | • <i>Octopus Fishery Management Plan</i> and <i>Harvest Strategy</i> drafted by 30 June 2022                                | On track |
|   | • <i>Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan</i> drafted by December 2021  | ✓        |
|   | • Review of the <i>Victorian Aquaculture Strategy</i> undertaken by 30 June 2021  | On track |
| Continue to implement the <i>Freshwater Fishery Management Plan 2018-2028</i>   | VAGO actions implemented as required  | On track |
| Continue to deliver priority actions and measures in the <i>Victorian Wild Trout Strategy</i>   | Phase 3 of the Wild Trout Management Program implemented by 30 June 2022  | ✓        |
| Develop a <i>Native Fish Stocking Strategy</i>  | <i>Native Fish Stocking Strategy</i> drafted for consultation by 30 June 2021   | ✓        |
| Develop an <i>RFL Strategic Plan</i>  | Draft <i>RFL Strategic Plan</i> finalised by early 2021   | ✓        |
| Develop a recreational snapper fishery harvest strategy   | • <i>Recreational Snapper Fishery Harvest Strategy</i> Pilot commenced by December 2020                                     | ✓        |
|   | • <i>Recreational Snapper Fishery Harvest Strategy</i> delivered by 30 September 2021                                       | On track |
| Deliver a recovery plan for the Gippsland Lakes   | <i>Gippsland Lakes Recreational Fishery Recovery Plan</i> delivered by 30 December 2020                                     | ✓        |
| Increase transparency around how the VFA administers, and where appropriate, enforces regulation  |   |          |
| Improvement strategy  | Target  | Status   |
| Continue to enhance public understanding of fisheries compliance  | • Compliance information published on the VFA website on a quarterly basis  | ✓        |
|   | • Explanatory details of relevant enforcement outcomes published on our education-specific social media platforms as needed | ✓        |

Table 9 continued on next page

Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| 7. Accountability and transparency (continued)  |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
| Continue the growth of the VFA as a mature statutory authority by demonstrating that government priorities are addressed, and regulatory performance is efficient and effective                           |  |          |
| Improvement strategy  | Target   | Status   |
| Reporting requirements described in legislation are adhered to by the VFA   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Report published</li> <li>Performance against the SOE, Victorian Government's <i>Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery</i> and the Victorian Government's election commitments published annually</li> </ul> | ✓<br>✓   |
| Continue to build the VFA as an effective and innovative organisation, where processes and systems are modern, cost efficient, fit for purpose, accessible, secure and enable collaboration and reporting | Strategies and plans developed in accordance with the <i>Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2019 – 2024</i> by 30 June 2022   | On track |
|   | Compliance testing of procurement, contract management, recruitment and IT undertaken in accordance with the <i>Corporate Services Strategic Plan 2020-2021</i> by December 2021   | On track |
| Continue the ongoing transition to a mature stand-alone organisation  | Risk Management Framework developed/ updated and implemented in line with Victorian Government <i>Risk Management Framework's</i> changed requirements by 30 June 2021   | ✓        |
|   | <i>Workforce Strategy</i> developed by 30 June 2022  | On track |
|   | <i>Asset Management Strategy</i> revised and <i>Asset Management Plans</i> for major assets developed by 30 June 2021  | ✓        |
|   | <i>Fraud and Corruption Control Policy</i> fully implemented by 30 June 2021   | ✓        |
| Continue to implement the VFA Governance Framework to achieve maturity in all governance principles in the framework  | Development and implementation of mechanisms used to drive and support good governance progressed  | On track |
| As part of good governance, review the efficiency and effectiveness of the cost recovery model to determine best practice   |  |          |
| Improvement strategy  | Target   | Status   |
| Review current cost recovery arrangements and investigate alternative models in consultation with the commercial fishing and aquaculture sector   | Discussion paper for consultation developed by 30 June 2021  | ✓        |

Table 9 continued on next page



Table 9 continued: Reporting of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

| 8. Clear and consistent regulatory activities   |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
| Ensure that regulatory practices are efficient and do not impose an unnecessary burden on regulated parties and the community   |  |          |
| Improvement strategy  | Target   | Status   |
| Continue to deliver an annual Education and Enforcement Action Plan   | Deliver annual action plan by June each year   | ✓        |
| Deliver changes to Crown land access to enable camping accessibility on licensed Crown land   | <i>Land Act 1958</i> amended to remove the prohibition on camping on Crown land river frontage and 40 new access points created  | ✓        |
| Explore opportunities to support innovation in Victoria's commercial fishing and aquaculture sectors  |  |          |
| Improvement strategy  | Target   | Status   |
| Investigate opportunities to increase consumer access to local markets, improve consumers' understanding of local products, and support seafood supply chain value-adding and diversification | • Small sales permit trial evaluated and options for extension into the future considered by 30 June 2022  | ✓        |
|   | • Central and Western Zone Octopus Exploratory Permits evaluated and options for the future considered by 30 June 2022   | On track |
|   | • Review of supply chain project finalised by 1 October 2021   | On track |
|   | • In consultation with industry/ASAG, options to support seafood supply chain value-adding, diversification, and improving domestic market opportunities to increase consumer access to local markets explored by 30 June 2022 | ✓        |

## Delivering our VFA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024

The VFA Strategic Plan commits to increasing the number and diversity of people fishing and enjoying Victoria's local seafood, growing healthy and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture sectors, and contributing to Victoria's social and economic prosperity. It guides the way we work with our diverse stakeholders to optimise the value of Victoria's fisheries resources now and into the future.

Each of the four focus areas has associated priorities, measures and targets. The table below describes our progress and achievements against the 2020-21 targets.

**Table 10: Implementing the VFA Strategic Plan**

| Focus area: 1. Sustainable and healthy fisheries  |  |  |        |
|---|--|--|--------|
| Priority  | Measure  | 2020-21 Targets  | Status |
| 1.1 Victorian marine and freshwater fisheries, fish stocks and habitats are healthy and productive                | Fish stocks managed in line with management plan objectives  | Key fisheries managed in line with Fishery Management Plans  | ✓      |
|   |  | Total Allowable Commercial Catch setting undertaken annually for quota managed fisheries   | ✓      |
| 1.2 Fisheries management is integrated, considers the interests of all stakeholders and reflects community values | Community and stakeholder surveys conducted three-yearly   | Next milestone is due 2022-23  | n/a    |
|   | Number of stakeholder meetings conducted   | Engagement activity undertaken in line with the <i>VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aquatic Strategic Action Group – quarterly</li> <li>Snobs Creek Advisory – quarterly</li> <li>State-wide Recreational Fishing RoundTable – quarterly</li> <li>Translocation Advisory Panel – six-weekly</li> <li>Total Allowable Commercial Catch Forums – five forums (2 Rock lobster, 3 Abalone)</li> <li>RFL Working Group</li> </ul> | ✓      |
| 1.3 Decision making is transparent, proactive, reflects policy and leverages research, monitoring and evaluation  | Management Plans in place for key fisheries and decision making is in line with the management plan objectives | Statutory consultation is undertaken in line with the <i>Fisheries Act 1995</i> , a foreword agenda, current consultation and the results of past consultation is published on the VFA website.  | ✓      |
|   | Number of opportunities for stakeholder involvement in decision making   | Quarterly meetings held for the Aquatic Strategic Action Group and State-wide Recreational Fishing RoundTable  | ✓      |
| 1.4 Ethical, responsible and respectful practices are adopted across the sector                                   | New fishing practice standards are completed and communicated  | Develop, implement and review 'responsible fishing behaviour engagement plan' annually   | ✓      |
|   |  | Develop a management plan for the Corner Inlet Fishery   | ✓      |
|   |  | Implement the new pipi and octopus quota fisheries   | ✓      |
|   |  | Deliver a recovery plan for the Gippsland Lakes  | ✓      |
|   |  | Develop and implement annual fisheries compliance strategy   | ✓      |

Table 10 continued on next page

Table 10 continued: Implementing the VFA Strategic Plan

| Focus area: 2. Social and economic prosperity  |  |  |        |
|--|--|--|--------|
| Priority   | Measure  | 2020-21 Targets  | Status |
| 2.1 Victoria's fisheries sector is dynamic and resilient, offering great economic opportunities and career pathways for Victorians   | Economic returns from value adding in Victoria's fisheries                                 | Evaluation of Central and Western Zone Octopus Exploratory Permits commenced   | ✓      |
|  |  | Review of supply chain project finalised   | ✓      |
|  |  | In consultation with industry, options explored to support seafood supply chain value adding and diversification, and improve domestic market opportunities to increase consumer access to local markets | ✓      |
|  |  | Project underway to build a new native fish hatchery in Shepparton   | ✓      |
|  |  |  |        |
| 2.2 Recreational, indigenous customary and commercial fishing and aquaculture are all recognised for their contribution to the social and economic prosperity of Victoria              | Community awareness and understanding of the social and economic contribution of fisheries | VFA <i>Aboriginal Engagement Strategy</i> developed  | ✓      |
|  |  | Review of the VFA <i>Aboriginal Fishing Strategy</i> commenced   | ✓      |
|  |  | Through the <i>Fishing for Culture</i> program, tailored education to assist newly arrived communities understand recreational fishing rules and how to fish responsibly undertaken                      | ✓      |
| 2.3 Victoria's high quality, fresh fish and seafood products are readily accessible at the source and across Victoria, the first choice for Victorians and recognised around the world | Number of locations with locally caught fish available                                     | Continue second year of the two-year trial to sell fresh, line-caught seafood directly from the boat to the public – extended to Mallacoota, San Remo, Queenscliff and Apollo Bay                        | ✓      |
| 2.4 Recreational fishing is widely accessible and enjoyed by a diverse range and growing number of Victorians  | Recreational fishing participation diversity and rate                                      | <i>Go Fishing Victoria - Phase 2</i> election commitments completed on schedule  | ✓      |
|  |  | Through the <i>Go Fishing Victoria</i> program, family-orientated fishing days held to encourage all Victorians of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to 'give fishing a go'                            | ✓      |
| 2.5 Victoria is renowned as a great fishing destination  | Number of fishing destinations   | Collaborate with Visit Victoria to develop a Recreational Fishing Tourism Plan, which includes the 10 priority fishing destinations  | ✓      |

Table 10 continued on next page



Table 10 continued: Implementing the VFA Strategic Plan

| Focus area: 3. Effective and innovative authority  |   |   |        |
|--|---|---|--------|
| Priority   | Measure   | 2020-21 Targets   | Status |
| 3.1 The health and safety of our staff and community comes first   | Staff perception of effectiveness of safety, health and wellbeing programs measured through the People Matters Survey | People Matters Survey completed, outcomes discussed with staff and measures put in place to address any arising issues as appropriate                         | ✓      |
|  |   | Installation of mobile phone cradles in VFA vehicles and training staff in advanced driver skills and water safety undertaken                                 | ✓      |
| 3.2 Diversity, inclusion and flexibility are valued, and our people can develop their skills, and experience rewarding career pathways | A staff retention rate between 85 – 95%   | Staff retention rate achieved   | ✓      |
| 3.3 We are enabled by strong communication across the organisation and with stakeholders and the Victorian community                   | Stakeholder Engagement Strategy reviewed annually   | Annual <i>Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i> reviewed by VFA management and the Strategy & Engagement Advisory Committee                                     | ✓      |
|  | People Matter Survey outcomes considered by VFA Executive   | People Matters Survey completed, outcomes discussed with staff and measures put in place to address any arising issues as appropriate                         | ✓      |
| 3.4 Business processes and systems are fit-for-purpose   | Progress against VFA Transition Plan  | Strategies and plans developed in accordance with the <i>Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2019-2024</i>  | ✓      |
|  |   | Compliance testing of procurement, contract management, recruitment and IT in accordance with the <i>Corporate Services Strategic Plan 2020-21</i> undertaken | ✓      |
|  |   | <i>Risk Management Framework</i> and <i>Fraud Corruption and Control Framework</i> implemented  | ✓      |
|  |   | Greater financial transparency and budget management with a focus on reducing cost pressures  | ✓      |
|  |   | <i>Workforce Strategy</i> to support the effective and efficient delivery of our strategic objectives developed   | ✓      |
|  |   |   |        |
| 3.5 We are a forward-looking, innovative, consistent and measured, and have a proud reputation for getting things done                 | Outcomes of People Matter Survey, and community and stakeholder surveys   | Outcomes of People Matter Survey indicate annual improvement on the innovative behaviour index  | ✓      |
|  |   | The VFA's reach through social media has steadily increased   | ✓      |

Table 10 continued on next page

Table 10 continued: Implementing the VFA Strategic Plan

| Focus area: 4. Strong and collaborative relationships   |  |   |        |
|---|--|---|--------|
| Priority  | Measure  | 2020-21 Targets   | Status |
| 4.1 Working relationships are a cornerstone of how we do business   | Number and diversity of formal relationships   | Regular meetings held with Seafood Industry Victoria, the Aquatic Strategic Action Group, State-wide Recreational Roundtable, VRFish and the Victorian Multicultural Commission | ✓      |
| 4.2 Structured and clearly defined processes for consultation and co-management underpin broad participation in decision making     | Plans in place for all key partners and stakeholders   | Annual <i>Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i> reviewed by VFA management and the Strategy & Engagement Advisory Committee   | ✓      |
|   |  | Stakeholder consultation/engagement plans drafted and approved for key projects   | ✓      |
| 4.3 Informed and capable stakeholders and representative bodies work closely with us to deliver well-planned and coordinated action | Participation of key stakeholders in the development of plans and actions                                      | Review of mandatory levy for commercial fisheries industry representation underway  | ✓      |
| 4.4 We extend our reach and impact through partnerships with a diverse range of organisations                                       | Number of engagement activities with diverse range of organisations and cohorts, including other jurisdictions | <i>Go Fishing Victoria Phase 2</i> election commitments completed on schedule   | ✓      |
| 4.5 Work closely with Traditional Owners to develop a greater understanding of culturally important matters                         | Traditional Owners engagement plan in place  | <i>VFA Aboriginal Engagement Strategy</i> developed   | ✓      |

## Financial Summary 2020-21

The VFA is a statutory authority in the State of Victoria, established under the *Victorian Fisheries Authority Act 2016* by amendment to the *Fisheries Act 1995*. This is the fourth reporting period that has ended since the VFA was established on 1 July 2017.

The table below shows the financial results for 2020-21 and the two preceding financial years.

**Table 11: The VFA's summary financial performance**

|   | (\$ thousand)  |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Financial performance</b>                      | <b>2020-21</b> | <b>2019-20</b> | <b>2018-19</b> |
| Total income from transactions                    | 57,517         | 54,054         | 40,500         |
| Total expenses from transactions                  | (58,690)       | (56,390)       | (42,409)       |
| Net result from transactions                      | (1,173)        | (2,337)        | (1,909)        |
| Total other economic flows included in net result | (1,020)        | 21             | 30             |
| <b>Net result</b>                                 | <b>(2,193)</b> | <b>(2,316)</b> | <b>(1,880)</b> |

|                            | (\$ thousand)  |                |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Financial position</b>  | <b>2020-21</b> | <b>2019-20</b> | <b>2018-19</b> |
| <b>As at 30 June 2021</b>  |                |                |                |
| Total assets               | 45,447         | 41,247         | 40,343         |
| Total liabilities          | 14,483         | 12,048         | 11,686         |
| <b>Net Assets (Equity)</b> | <b>30,964</b>  | <b>29,199</b>  | <b>28,656</b>  |

|   | (\$ thousand)  |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Cash Flow Statement</b>  | <b>2020-21</b> | <b>2019-20</b> | <b>2018-19</b> |
| <b>for the financial year ended 30 June 2021</b>                        |                |                |                |
| Net cash flows from operating activities                                | 1,865          | 463            | 953            |
| Net cash flows from / (used for) investing activities                   | (3,178)        | (2,033)        | (409)          |
| Net cash flows from / (used for) financing activities                   | 2,362          | 1,570          | (544)          |
| <b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>                        | <b>1,050</b>   | <b>-</b>       | <b>-</b>       |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>-</b>       | <b>-</b>       |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year</b>       | <b>1,050</b>   | <b>-</b>       | <b>-</b>       |



## Financial performance (operating statement)

The *net result from transactions* was a deficit of \$1.2 million for 2020-21. This largely represents the unfunded non-cash items such as depreciation and amortisation, partially offset by income from trust fund draw-downs for capital projects. Funding received from the Department of Transport (DoT) does not fund the VFA for depreciation and amortisation as these are considered to be non-controllable transactions. This will have a cumulative impact on the accumulated deficit in future financial years.

The net result from transactions has increased by \$1.2 million since 2019-20 largely due to additional income from trust fund draw-downs for capital projects.

### Income

Almost all of the VFA's income were grants from DoT. These grants represent the agreed government funding for the VFA to carry out its functions and priorities.

### Expenses

Operating expenses totalled \$58.7 million for 2020-21, driven by the delivery of the VFA's core functions across the commercial and recreational fishing sectors, and the transfer of Better Boating Victoria (BBV) to the VFA. Expenditure in 2020-21 covered the VFA's education, enforcement, research, fish stocking, and boating facilities improvement priorities, and was used to invest in and promote recreational fishing across the State.

Around \$4.6 million of expenditure in 2020-21 was used to deliver the Government's *Go Fishing Victoria* initiative, including additional fish purchases to meet the target to stock eight million fish during the year. A further \$6.8 million was spent on upgrading boating facilities since February 2021 when BBV became part of the VFA.

The increase in operating expenses in 2020-21 of \$2.3 million from the previous year was primarily driven by the transfer of BBV to the VFA, partially offset by the absence of payments to remove netting licences from Gippsland Lakes (which were completed in 2019-20).

## Financial position (balance sheet)

The VFA's net assets were \$31.0 million as at 30 June 2021, an increase of \$1.8 million from the previous year. This increase was driven by an increase in assets of \$4.2 million, offset by a \$2.4 million increase in liabilities.

The increase in the VFA's assets was primarily driven by further development of the new fish hatchery at Arcadia, higher financial assets due to the prepayment of \$1.5 million to develop a visitors' centre at the new hatchery, partially offset by the depreciation of existing assets.

Total liabilities increased primarily due to the prepayment of \$1.5 million to develop the visitors' centre at the new hatchery.

## Cash flows

The \$3.5 million cost of the VFA's investing activities during 2020-21 was funded by \$2.4 million of contributed capital from Government, and \$1.1 million of operating grants from trust funds. The \$3.5 million capital investment during 2020-21 primarily reflected the continued development of the new fish hatchery at Arcadia and the refurbishment of the existing fish hatchery at Snobs Creek.

The VFA commenced using its own bank account for the majority of its expenditure from 1 February 2021. All cash payments were previously made by DoT on the VFA's behalf. The VFA received grant payments from DoT on a periodic basis throughout the financial year. The cash balance as at 30 June 2021 was \$1.1 million.



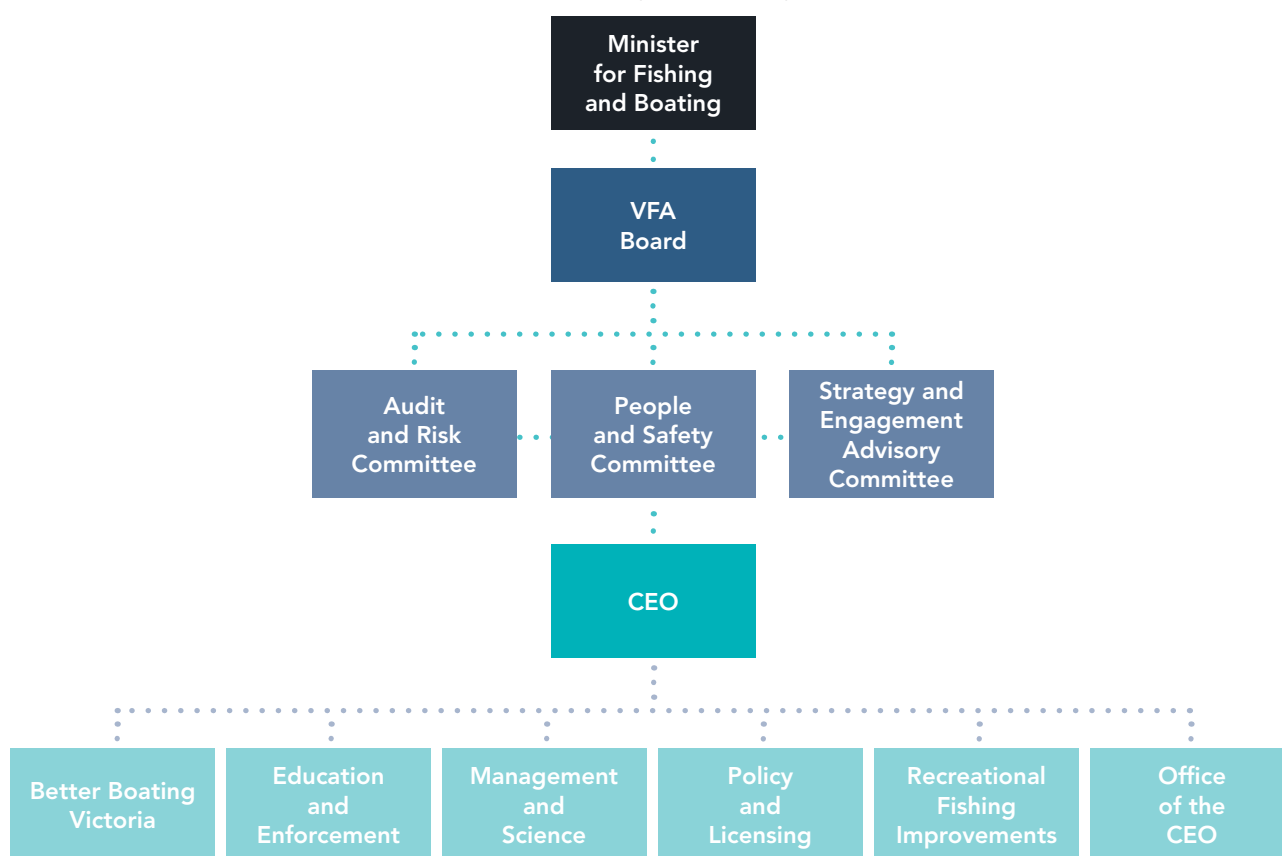




## Our governance arrangements and organisational structure

The *Victorian Fisheries Authority Act 2016* (the VFA Act) establishes the VFA Board as the governing body of the VFA. The Board is responsible for the VFA's governance, strategic planning and risk management and is accountable to the Minister for Fishing and Boating for the exercise of its functions.

The VFA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) manages the day-to-day operations of the VFA under the direction of the Board and is responsible for implementing the VFA's vision and ensuring performance objectives are met. The CEO is accountable to the Board for the VFA's expenditure, operational activities and administration.



### Our Minister

The VFA is located within the portfolio of the Minister for Fishing and Boating. The Hon. Melissa Horne MP was appointed as Minister for Fishing and Boating in June 2020.

### Our departmental portfolio

While the VFA remains an independent statutory authority, it forms part of the transport portfolio, led by the Department of Transport (DoT). The vision of the transport portfolio is to deliver an integrated and sustainable transport system that promotes:

- Social and economic inclusion
- Economic prosperity
- Environmental sustainability
- Integration of transport and land use
- Efficiency, coordination and reliability
- Safety and health and wellbeing

Under the VFA Act, the role of the DoT Secretary is to work with the VFA on matters relating to public administration and governance.

## Our Board and subcommittees

Members of the VFA Board are appointed by the Minister for Fishing and Boating. The Board oversees the overall governance and strategic direction of the VFA and ensures appropriate risk management mechanisms are in place. The key responsibilities include:

- Setting significant strategic initiatives and business objectives for the VFA;
- Approving annual targets, budgets and financial statements, and monitoring financial performance against planned expenditure;
- Considering and approving the VFA's risk frameworks and monitoring the effectiveness of the risk management; and
- Providing oversight and monitoring of occupational, health and safety issues in the VFA.

Three subcommittees have been established to assist the Board in its functions and to provide independent assurance and assistance to Board to ensure that the VFA meets its corporate governance requirements.

### Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee was established on 13 September 2017. Key responsibilities of the Committee are ensuring that the VFA operates effectively, efficiently, ethically and legally. It monitors the integrity and quality of the financial statements, compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, appropriateness of accounting policies, and reviews significant financial reporting judgements. The Committee determines the scope of the internal audit function, ensuring there are adequate and effectively used resources and coordination with external auditors. It maintains effective communication with external auditors and considers the recommendations from internal and external auditors. The Committee also ensures that processes are in place for the identification, management and reporting of business risks.

### People and Safety Committee

The People and Safety Committee was established on 13 September 2017. The Committee's key responsibilities are to review, monitor and make recommendations to the Board on workplace health and safety, performance measures of the CEO and Executives, human resource policies, and the VFA's obligations under industrial instruments.

### Strategy and Engagement Committee

The Strategy and Engagement Committee was established on 9 March 2018. The key responsibilities of the Committee are to coordinate and oversee the completion and implementation of the VFA's Strategic Plan and the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

## Our Board members



**Ms Gail Owen**

*VFA Board Chair  
Audit and Risk Committee Member*

Ms Owen is an experienced chairperson, a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and an order of Australia medal recipient. An inaugural member of two Boards previously, Ms Owen provides strong, integrity-driven leadership. Her background provides a broad knowledge and exposure to many areas relevant to the VFA.



**Dr Bernadette Northeast**

*VFA Deputy Board Chair  
Audit and Risk Committee Member  
People and Safety Committee Member*

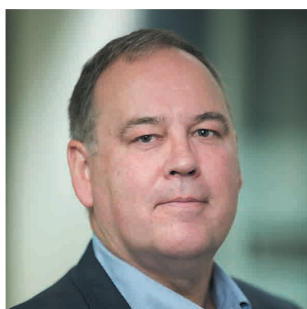
Dr Northeast is qualified in aquatic science and aquaculture and has earned a Ph.D. relating to Australian freshwater fish. Her science expertise is well complimented by other directorships and regional community activities.



**Mr Chris Rose**

*VFA Board Director  
People and Safety Committee Chair*

Mr Rose brings over 35 years' experience managing public land and recreational activities with a significant career with Parks Victoria including as Acting CEO. He has a good working knowledge of fisheries and natural resource management with an understanding of government and extensive stakeholder engagement experience.



**Mr David Shirer**

*VFA Board Director  
Audit and Risk Committee Chair  
Strategy and Engagement Advisory  
Committee Member*

Mr Shirer brings a broad range of knowledge and skills with many years of experience to the Board across a number of industry sectors. His qualifications and experience encompass Marine Biology, New Zealand's fisheries industry, together with business and finance and he is a fellow of the Australasian Investor Relations Association.



**Mr Graeme Dear**

*VFA Board Director  
Strategy and Engagement Advisory  
Committee Chair*

Mr Dear has had a long association with fisheries management and research scientists, providing him with knowledge and expertise in the issues pertaining to recreational and commercial fishing decisions in Victoria. As the CEO of the East Gippsland Catch Management Authority, he has significant experience in managing a statutory authority and engaging with and building partnerships with stakeholders.



**Ms Joelle Tabone***VFA Board Director**Audit and Risk Committee Member*

Ms Tabone is a Chartered Accountant with over 20 years' experience providing business advisory and compliance services to a wide range of private, government and not-for-profit organisations. Her expertise spans several disciplines, including business strategy, accounting, structuring and financial reporting, and her significant business, governance and accounting skills enables her to assist the VFA from a position of knowledge and experience.

**Ms Sophie Harris***VFA Board Director**People and Safety Committee Member*

Ms Harris has widespread professional involvement in project management, strategic planning, industrial relations and in the superannuation industry. She has highly developed stakeholder engagement skills and experience developing and leading education and training programs for a wide range of stakeholders.

**Mr Yorick Piper***VFA Board Director**People and Safety Committee Member*

Mr Piper is an experienced advisor, having spent time in the Office of Premier and as a Ministerial Chief of Staff. Combined with a deep knowledge of government and stakeholder engagement and industrial relations, he brings a passion for fishing, fishing policy development and the importance of education in the VFA.

**Table 12: Attendance at Board and Committee meetings**

| Members              | Attendance |                          |                             |                                   |
|----------------------|------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                      | VFA Board  | Audit and Risk Committee | People and Safety Committee | Strategy and Engagement Committee |
| Gail Owen            | 7/7        | 5/5                      |                             |                                   |
| Bernadette Northeast | 7/7        |                          |                             | 2/2                               |
| Chris Rose           | 6/7        |                          | 4/4                         |                                   |
| David Shirer         | 7/7        | 5/5                      |                             | 2/2                               |
| Graeme Dear          | 7/7        |                          |                             | 2/2                               |
| Joelle Tabone        | 7/7        | 5/5                      |                             |                                   |
| Sophie Harris        | 6/7        |                          | 4/4                         |                                   |
| Yorick Piper         | 7/7        |                          | 4/4                         |                                   |
| Rob Hogarth*         |            | 5/5                      |                             |                                   |

\* External Audit and Risk Committee Member

## VFA divisions and executive leaders

The VFA is managed by a senior executive team who work closely with the Board to establish, monitor and review the VFA's strategic direction.

### Chief Executive Officer – Mr Travis Dowling

Travis is an accomplished executive with over 20 years' experience in senior leadership and management roles across natural resources and politics in Victoria and the Northern Territory. Travis was appointed to the role of Executive Director of Fisheries Victoria in June 2015 and continued as CEO of the VFA when the Authority commenced on 1 July 2017.

As CEO, Travis is supported by a highly experienced and cohesive executive team specialising in regulation and enforcement, policy, science, fisheries management and program implementation. The role is also directly responsible for over 185 staff across Melbourne and regional Victoria.



| Divisions  | Executive Leaders  |
|--|--|
| <b>Better Boating Victoria</b><br>The Division came into the VFA in February 2021. It delivers the Government's program of boating reforms focussed on making it safer, cheaper and easier for Victorians to get out on the water.   | <b>Director Better Boating Victoria - Katherine Grech</b>  |
| <b>Education and Enforcement</b><br>The Division develops and implements state-wide education and enforcement strategies. It also undertakes state-wide investigations and compliance operations to tackle serious organised criminal activity exploiting fisheries resources.   | <b>Director Fisheries Education and Enforcement - Ian Parks</b>                                      |
| <b>Management and Science</b><br>The Division delivers core regulatory fisheries science, management and aquaculture services, including fish stock assessment, fisheries monitoring and setting total allowable commercial catches for the rock lobster, abalone, giant crab, Port Phillip Bay, and ocean scallop and urchin fisheries. | <b>Director Fisheries Policy, Management, Science and Licensing - Dallas D'Silva</b>                 |
| <b>Policy and Licensing</b><br>The Division delivers operational policy, access and governance arrangements, planning and program management. It also administers recreational and commercial licensing, quota trading, permits and commercial catch and effort reporting.   | <b>Director Fisheries Policy, Management, Science and Licensing - Dallas D'Silva</b>                 |
| <b>Recreational Fishing Improvements</b><br>The Division delivers recreational fishing improvements activities and projects and supports the disbursement of Recreational Fishing Licence funds to improve recreational fishing opportunities.   | <b>Director Recreational Fishing Improvements - Brian Mottram</b>                                    |
| <b>Office of the CEO</b><br>The Division manages day to day corporate operations of the authority and delivers business management, financial services and corporate services, including board support and administration.   | <b>Chief Operating Officer - Letitia Billings</b><br><b>Chief Financial Officer – Simon Leverett</b> |

## Occupational health and safety

The goal of the VFA's Occupational Health and Safety Strategy is to ensure all staff remain safe and healthy at work, through a focus on safety leadership, safe behaviour, and safe systems and structure.

The 2020-21 financial year saw further implementation of the Strategy, enabling us to continue to build on our strengths and act on opportunities for development. It was also a time to review the Strategy and articulate our focus and priorities for coming years.

### OHS Strategic Plan 2021-2023

Following an extensive consultation process with Health and Safety Representatives, the Executive, the People & Safety Committee and external consultant HSE Global, the VFA's new *OHS Strategic Plan 2021-2023* was developed and approved by the Board at the 10 June 2021 meeting.

The Plan's key focus areas over 2021-2023 include:

- Health & Wellbeing
- Safety Leadership
- Critical Risk Control (Hazard Management)
- OHS Training
- Contractor Management
- Coach & Audit

We are proud of our continued efforts and achievements in putting our safety, the safety of our team and the community first.

### Health & Wellbeing Program 2021-2023

A key part of the VFA's commitment to OHS is employee wellbeing. In keeping with the VFA's values, the *VFA Health & Wellbeing Program 2021-2023* has been developed specifically addressing mental, physical and social health.

The Program will be progressively implemented across the organisation.

### Training

The VFA has used a combination of both online training and virtual workshops throughout the year and where possible face to face sessions. The VFA Executive as well as Managers took part in *Mental Health for Leaders Training* providing them with information and skills to assist them to understand, manage and support mental health and wellbeing. With a focus on the VPS Mental Health Charter training covered mental health facts and figures,

mental health indicators, ways to promote positive mental health and wellbeing and the importance of education and training that is needed to enable management and staff to identify risks to mental health and promote mental wellbeing.

Online training modules were provided to all staff on Appropriate Workplace Behaviour, Sexual Harassment, and Return to the Office.

### Critical Risk Control

The identification, assessment and control of hazards and risks is an essential part of our OHS management. Through February, March and April, all areas of the organisation participated in carrying out critical risk assessments and developing appropriate controls.

Hazard reporting has increased notably with education on the importance of reporting hazards, enabling controls to be put in place to reduce the risk of injury.

With these assessments now uploaded into the VFA's OHS Risk Register, monitoring and review of identified critical risk controls has now been planned to ensure compliance and robust management of risks. These will commence in second half of the 2021 calendar year with ongoing monitoring also put in place.



## Contractor Management

In accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) (OHS Act), the VFA and its staff who engage or manage contractors are responsible for the health and safety of the contractor and the contractor's employees, in relation to all matters over which the VFA has control.

In order to address its duties under the OHS Act 2004 and the *OHS Regulations 2017*, the VFA has implemented an online contractor induction tool, which all suppliers and their employees must comply with. The new system allows for tracking of contractor safety requirements, such as risk assessments and relevant insurances.

## Safety performance

Table 13: The VFA's safety performance over three years.

| Measure                       | Indicator   | VFA<br>2018-19 | VFA<br>2019-20 | VFA<br>2020-21 |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Incidents                     | No. of incidents <sup>^</sup>                                     | 25             | 70             | 74             |
|                               | Rate per 100 FTE  | 15.60          | 43.42          | 40.97          |
|                               | No. of incidents requiring first aid/or further medical treatment | 23             | 28             | 22             |
| Hazards                       | No. of hazards  | 3              | 10             | 40             |
|                               | Rate per 100 FTE  | 1.87           | 6.20           | 22.14          |
| Claims                        | No. of Standard Claims  | 6              | 5              | 4              |
|                               | Rate per 100 FTE  | 3.74           | 3.10           | 2.2            |
|                               | No. of lost time claims   | 3              | 1              | 3              |
|                               | Rate per 100 FTE  | 1.87           | 0.62           | 1.66           |
|                               | No. of claims exceeding 13 weeks                                  | 0              | 1              | 3              |
|                               | Rate per 100 FTE  | 0              | 0.62           | 1.65           |
| Return to work                | Percentage of claims with RTW plans <30 days                      | 100%           | 67%            | 100%           |
| Executive Safety Interactions | No. of sites visited to conduct safety interactions <sup>**</sup> | 15             | 23             | 24             |

<sup>^</sup> There were no fatalities over three years.

\* Incident reporting including hazards and near misses increased with the introduction of the new reporting system which included an App for in field use. The total incidents requiring first aid and/or further medical treatment as a proportion of total incidents has decreased.

\*\* Executive Safety Interactions were introduced in 2019.

## Employment conduct principles

The VFA is committed to applying merit and equity principles when appointing staff. The selection processes ensure applicants are assessed and evaluated fairly and equitably on the basis of the key selection criteria and other accountabilities without discrimination. The VFA created a new recruitment policy and procedure following consultation with staff through focus groups and surveys. There was a focus on ensuring a diverse lens is used in recruitment. The work undertaken included a review of all policies and procedures related to recruitment such as privacy, probation, conflict of interest and workplace adjustments. Employees have been correctly classified in workforce data collections.



## Public sector values and employment principles

The *Public Administration Act 2004* (PAA Act) established the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC). The VPSC's role is to strengthen public sector efficiency, effectiveness and capability, and advocate for public sector professionalism and integrity.

The VFA has policies and practices that are consistent with the VPSC's employment standards and provide for fair treatment, career opportunities and the early resolution of workplace issues.

The VFA has advised its employees on how to avoid conflicts of interest, how to respond to offers of gifts and how we deal with misconduct. The VPSC Code of Conduct and VFA Policies are available through the VFA intranet. Employees of the VFA can request a review of an action taken that relates to their employment in accordance with PAA Act.

The following table discloses the annualised total salary for senior employees of the VFA, categorised by classification. The salary amount is reported as the full-time annualised salary.

**Table 14. Annualised total salary, by \$20 000 bands, for executives and other senior non-executive staff**

| Income band (salary)  | Executives | STS      | PS       | SMA      | SRA      | Other    |
|-----------------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| < \$160 000           |            |          |          |          |          |          |
| \$160 000 – \$179 999 |            | 1        |          |          |          |          |
| \$180 000 – \$199 999 |            | 1        |          |          |          |          |
| \$200 000 – \$219 999 |            | 2        |          |          |          |          |
| \$220 000 – \$239 999 | 2          |          | 2        |          |          |          |
| \$240 000 – \$259 999 | 1          |          |          |          |          |          |
| \$260 000 – \$279 999 |            |          |          |          |          |          |
| \$280 000 – \$299 999 |            |          |          |          |          |          |
| \$300 000 – \$319 999 |            |          |          |          |          |          |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>         | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> |

## Comparative workforce data

The following table discloses the head count and full-time staff equivalent (FTE) of all active public service employees of the VFA employed in the last full pay period in June of the current reporting period, and in the last full pay period in June (2020) of the previous reporting period (2020).

The increase in headcount is due to the integration of Policy staff from DoT, the transfer of Better Boating Victoria to the VFA, recruitment into positions previously filled temporarily by agency on hire staff, maternity leave vacancies, additional roles required to meet increasing demand for service delivery and a higher use of casuals at the end of June 2021. The headcount and FTE includes two staff funded by another department and an authority to perform intelligence functions for them.

Note: in the 2019-20 Annual Report, the Executive headcount was incorrectly recorded and should have been shown as two fixed term executives.



Table 15. Details of employment levels in June 2020 and 2021

| June 2021           |                       |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------|-----------------------|-----|-----------------------|------|------|
| All employees       |                       |        | Ongoing                  |                          |        | Fixed Term            |     | Casual                |      |      |
|                     | Number<br>(Headcount) | FTE    | Full-time<br>(Headcount) | Part-time<br>(Headcount) | FTE    | Number<br>(Headcount) | FTE | Number<br>(Headcount) | FTE  |      |
| Demographic data    | Gender                |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | Women                 | 71     | 63.57                    | 38                       | 20     | 51.93                 | 9   | 9                     | 4    | 2.64 |
|                     | Men                   | 127    | 123.96                   | 110                      | 3      | 111.70                | 11  | 11                    | 3    | 1.26 |
|                     | Self-described        | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | TOTAL:                | 198    | 187.53                   | 148                      | 23     | 163.63                | 20  | 20                    | 7    | 3.90 |
|                     | Age                   |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | <30                   | 20     | 20.00                    | 15                       | 0      | 15.00                 | 5   | 5                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | 30-39                 | 39     | 38.40                    | 33                       | 1      | 33.80                 | 4   | 4                     | 1    | 0.60 |
|                     | 40-49                 | 58     | 54.97                    | 41                       | 6      | 45.33                 | 7   | 7                     | 4    | 2.64 |
|                     | 50-59                 | 50     | 46.76                    | 41                       | 6      | 43.70                 | 3   | 3                     | 1    | 0.06 |
| 60+                 | 31                    | 27.40  | 19                       | 10                       | 25.80  | 1                     | 1   | 1                     | 0.60 |      |
| TOTAL:              | 198                   | 187.53 | 148                      | 23                       | 163.63 | 20                    | 20  | 7                     | 3.90 |      |
| Classification data | VPS1-6 grades         |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | VPS 1                 | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | VPS 2                 | 16     | 13.26                    | 5                        | 4      | 7.60                  | 3   | 3                     | 4    | 2.66 |
|                     | VPS 3                 | 70     | 66.17                    | 60                       | 6      | 63.93                 | 1   | 1                     | 3    | 1.24 |
|                     | VPS 4                 | 49     | 48.20                    | 39                       | 4      | 42.20                 | 6   | 6                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | VPS 5                 | 35     | 33.20                    | 26                       | 5      | 29.20                 | 4   | 4                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | VPS 6                 | 19     | 17.70                    | 14                       | 4      | 16.70                 | 1   | 1                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | Senior Employees      |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | STS 7                 | 4      | 4.00                     | 2                        | 0      | 2.00                  | 2   | 2                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | PS                    | 2      | 2.00                     | 2                        | 0      | 2.00                  | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | SMA                   | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | SRA                   | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | Executives            | 3      | 3.00                     | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 3   | 3                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | Other                 | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
| Total Employees     | 198                   | 187.53 | 148                      | 23                       | 163.63 | 20                    | 20  | 7                     | 3.90 |      |

| June 2020           |                       |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------|-----------------------|-----|-----------------------|------|------|
| All employees       |                       |        | Ongoing                  |                          |        | Fixed Term            |     | Casual                |      |      |
|                     | Number<br>(Headcount) | FTE    | Full-time<br>(Headcount) | Part-time<br>(Headcount) | FTE    | Number<br>(Headcount) | FTE | Number<br>(Headcount) | FTE  |      |
| Demographic data    | Gender                |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | Women                 | 57     | 50.60                    | 33                       | 20     | 47.39                 | 2   | 2                     | 2    | 1.20 |
|                     | Men                   | 114    | 112.46                   | 106                      | 3      | 108.20                | 3   | 3                     | 2    | 1.26 |
|                     | Self-described        | 1      | 0.60                     | 0                        | 1      | 0.60                  | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | TOTAL:                | 172    | 163.66                   | 139                      | 24     | 156.19                | 5   | 5                     | 4    | 2.46 |
|                     | Age                   |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | <30                   | 16     | 16.00                    | 14                       | 0      | 14.00                 | 2   | 2                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | 30-39                 | 38     | 37.80                    | 35                       | 1      | 35.80                 | 1   | 1                     | 1    | 1.00 |
|                     | 40-49                 | 46     | 43.40                    | 36                       | 7      | 41.20                 | 1   | 1                     | 2    | 1.20 |
|                     | 50-59                 | 48     | 45.26                    | 39                       | 7      | 43.99                 | 1   | 1                     | 1    | 0.26 |
| 60+                 | 24                    | 21.20  | 15                       | 9                        | 21.20  | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    |      |
| TOTAL:              | 172                   | 163.66 | 139                      | 24                       | 156.19 | 5                     | 5   | 4                     | 2.46 |      |
| Classification data | VPS1-6 grades         |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | VPS 1                 | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | VPS 2                 | 13     | 9.86                     | 5                        | 5      | 8.39                  | 0   | 0                     | 3    | 1.46 |
|                     | VPS 3                 | 68     | 66.60                    | 60                       | 4      | 62.60                 | 3   | 3                     | 1    | 1.00 |
|                     | VPS 4                 | 44     | 42.80                    | 38                       | 6      | 42.80                 | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | VPS 5                 | 26     | 24.40                    | 22                       | 4      | 24.40                 | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | VPS 6                 | 15     | 14.00                    | 10                       | 5      | 14.00                 | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | Senior Employees      |        |                          |                          |        |                       |     |                       |      |      |
|                     | STS 7                 | 2      | 2.00                     | 1                        | 0      | 1.00                  | 1   | 1                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | PS                    | 2      | 2.00                     | 2                        | 0      | 2.00                  | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | SMA                   | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | SRA                   | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | Executives            | 2      | 2.00                     | 1                        | 0      | 1.00                  | 1   | 1                     | 0    | 0    |
|                     | Other                 | 0      | 0                        | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0   | 0                     | 0    | 0    |
| Total Employees     | 172                   | 163.66 | 139                      | 24                       | 156.19 | 5                     | 5   | 4                     | 2.46 |      |

Note: FTE numbers rounded to two decimal places

## Workforce inclusion policy

The VFA Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2019 – 2024 has four key focus areas: flexibility, inclusion, gender equality, and life stage. The Framework guides our actions around the focus areas, which are reported to the VFA's People and Safety Board sub-committee.

### 1. Flexibility

The impact of pandemic led to the implementation of COVID-19 flexible working arrangements, which have remained in place during this financial year.

The VFA will implement the Whole of Victorian Government (WoVG) Flexible Working Policy in line with DoT's processes and guidelines. Implementation is expected to commence in July 2021 subject to Chief Health Officer and WoVG guidance. Staff will be supported through this change with guidance materials for employees and people leaders to help navigate the key changes and the new processes to request flexible work arrangements under the new WoVG policy.

### 2. Inclusion

#### Aboriginal Victorians

As at the end of June 2021, 1.2 percent of VFA's employees are Aboriginal. The VFA recognises Aboriginal people's deep cultural connection to country and, their interest in native fish recovery. The VFA has established a 50 percent Aboriginal employment target for staff at the Arcadia fish farm. As part of this initiative, the VFA will also offer employees a traineeship program linked to Certificate Level 3 accreditation in aquaculture. The VFA aims to assist Aboriginal people develop career skills in fish farming that are highly transferable to commercial a growing aquaculture sector.

#### Disability Action Plan

The VFA Accessibility Action Plan was approved by the VFA Board at the 10 June 2021. The Plan was communicated to all staff by the CEO on 23 June 2021 and placed on the VFA intranet.

Implementation has commenced with one of our first actions to recruit an inclusion and accessibility officer to advocate and work on improving VFA's capability and performance both internally and externally to assist those with a disability.

### LGBTIQ+

The Minister for Equality has publicly released the LGBTIQ+ Strategy Directions Paper, which was endorsed by the Victorian Government in late November 2020. The Directions Paper sets out a vision for LGBTIQ+ equality in Victoria and four key reform directions, drawing upon what was heard through consultation with LGBTIQ+ communities, service providers and across government this year. Some key VFA peak body stakeholders were invited to join the consultation.

A further opportunity for community members and stakeholders to provide feedback on the vision and proposed reform directions was put in place until late February 2021 through an online survey. VFA staff were made aware of this through the staff weekly newsletter.

The LGBTIQ+ Strategy being developed will feature specific commitments for the Victorian Government to action. All Victorian Government Ministers and departments will be asked to commit to steps they can take over the coming years to ensure we all continue to strive for LGBTIQ+ equality.

The Victorian Government's LGBTIQ+ Taskforce will be asked to provide regular feedback on both the development and implementation of the strategy. The LGBTIQ+ Taskforce is made up of LGBTIQ+ community members.

The LGBTIQ+ Strategy is expected to be released late 2021. The VFA will be guided by this strategy.

### 3. Gender Equality

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* (the Act) applies to the Victorian public sector, universities and local councils with 50 or more employees. Obligations under the Act commenced on 31 March 2021 and include:

- Promote gender equality by applying a gender lens when developing policies and programs and delivering services to Victorians.
- Conduct gender impact assessments to ensure we make lasting and genuine progress towards gender equality in our community.

The Office of the CEO will lead the work being done to meet the 2021 requirements in relation to conducting a workplace gender audit and creating the *VFA Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025*.

Earlier in 2021, the VFA launched its new Recruitment Policy and procedure, which has incorporated a diverse lens into the process and other outcomes from focus groups run with hiring managers and women in senior VPS roles.

### 4. Life Stage

The VFA has flexible working arrangements to assist staff wanting to transition to retirement while balancing the needs of business operations.

The VFA supported the Youth Employment Program with three trainees due to finish later in 2021. These positions are funded by the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions.



## Executive officer data

For the VFA, an executive officer (EO) is defined as a person employed as an executive under Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004* (PAA). For a public body, an EO is defined as an executive under Part 3 of the PAA or a person to whom the Victorian Government's Public Entity Executive Remuneration Policy applies. All figures reflect employment levels at the last full pay period in June of the current and corresponding previous reporting year.

The definition of an EO does not include a statutory office holder or an Accountable Officer.

The following tables disclose the EOs of the VFA for 30 June 2021:

- Table 16 discloses the total number of EOs for the VFA, broken down by gender; and
- Table 17 provides a reconciliation of executive numbers presented between the report of operations and Note 9.3 'Remuneration of executives' in the financial statements.

**Table 16: Total number of EOs for the VFA, broken down into gender**

| Class        | All      |          |          | Women    |          |          | Men      |          |          | Self-described |          |          |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|
|              | # 2021   | # 2020   | Var.     | # 2021   | # 2020   | Var.     | # 2021   | # 2020   | Var.     | # 2021         | # 2020   | Var.     |
| EO-1         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | n              | n        | n        |
| EO-2         | 1        | 1        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 1        | 1        | 0        | n              | n        | n        |
| EO-3         | 2        | 2        | 0        | 1        | 1        | 0        | 1        | 1        | 0        | n              | n        | n        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>n</b>       | <b>n</b> | <b>n</b> |

The number of executives in the report of operations is based on the number of executive positions that are occupied at the end of the financial year. Note 9.9 in the financial statements lists the actual number of EOs and the total remuneration paid to EOs over the course of the reporting period. The financial statements note does not include the Accountable Officer, nor does it distinguish between executive levels or disclose separations. Separations are executives who have left the Department during the relevant reporting period. To assist readers, these two disclosures are reconciled below.

**Table 17: Reconciliation of executive numbers**

|   | 2021     | 2020     |
|---|----------|----------|
| Executives (financial statement Note 9.9) | 2        | 2        |
| Accountable Officer (CEO)                 | 1        | 1        |
| Less Separations                          | 0        | 1        |
| <b>Total executive numbers at 30 June</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>2</b> |



## Local Jobs First

The *Local Jobs First Act 2003*, introduced in August 2018, brings together the Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPP) and the Major Project Skills Guarantee Policy (MPSG), which were previously administered separately.

Departments and public sector bodies are required to apply the Local Jobs First Policy in all projects valued at \$3 million or more in Metropolitan Melbourne or for state-wide projects, or \$1 million or more for projects in regional Victoria.

The MPSG applies to all construction projects valued at \$20 million or more.

The MPSG guidelines and the VIPP guidelines will continue to apply to MPSG-applicable and VIPP-applicable projects, respectively, where contracts have been entered into prior to 15 August 2018.

The VFA did not enter into any contracts that were considered Local Jobs First contracts during 2020-21.

## Government advertising expenditure

In accordance with the Financial Reporting Direction 22H, the details of government campaigns with a total media spend of \$100,000 or greater (exclusive of GST) must be detailed in the annual report. In 2020-21, the VFA expended \$167,643 on a reportable government advertising campaign, as detailed in the table below.

**Table 18: Details of government advertising expenditure for campaigns with a media spend of \$100,000 or more**

| Name of campaign                            | Campaign summary  | Advertising (media) expenditure (excl GST) | Creative and campaign development expenditure (excl GST) | Research and evaluation expenditure (excl GST) | Print and collateral expenditure (excl GST) | Other campaign expenditure (excl GST) | Total     |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Recreational Fishing Licence and Operations | The VFA commits funds collected from recreational fishing licence sales into material, such as the Recreational Fishing Guide, for the recreational fishing community | \$53,095                                   | \$14,453   | \$0  | \$52,281                                    | \$47,813                              | \$167,643 |



## Consultancy expenditure

### Details of consultancies (valued at \$10,000 or greater)

In 2020-21, there were 11 consultancies where the total fees payable to the consultants were \$10,000 or greater. The total expenditure incurred during 2020-21 in relation to these consultancies is \$629,635 (excluding GST). Details of individual consultancies are outlined in Table 19.

### Details of consultancies under \$10,000

In 2020-21, there were 11 consultancies engaged during the year, where the total fees payable to the individual consultancies was less than \$10,000. The total expenditure incurred during 2020-21 in relation to these consultancies was \$57,449 (excluding GST). Details of individual consultancies are outlined in Table 20.

**Table 19: Details of consultancies valued at \$10 000 or greater incurred in 2020-21**

| Consultant                                   | Purpose of consultancy  | Total approved project fee (excl GST) | Expenditure 2020-21 (excl GST) | Future expenditure (excl GST) |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mrag Asia Pacific Pty Ltd                    | Abalone Scientific Assessments  | 747,500                               | 177,900                        | 342,782                       |
| The Wedge Group Pty Ltd                      | Northern Hatchery Owners Engineer services  | 270,160                               | 121,210                        | 148,950                       |
| Vidler Stephen Michael T/A Fishtech Services | Native Fish Production specialist advice  | 272,364                               | 103,790                        | 101,996                       |
| Crowe Horwath (Aust) Pty Ltd                 | Internal Audit Services   | 73,460                                | 73,460                         | 0                             |
| Total Hydrographic Pty Ltd                   | Hydrographic survey at the proposed kingfish reef site  | 57,748                                | 57,748                         | 0                             |
| Sureside Consulting Pty Ltd                  | Concept design and development for Lang Lang, and Stony Point, boat ramp upgrades                           | 58,700                                | 24,460                         | 34,240                        |
| Edg.Space Pty Ltd                            | Northern Hatchery visitors facility concept design  | 40,782                                | 15,639                         | 9,504                         |
| Ozfish Unlimited Limited                     | Historical review of fish habitat in the Maribyrnong River  | 22,727                                | 15,227                         | 0                             |
| Austral Research & Consulting                | Fish surveys for Wallpolla Horseshoe Lagoon Native Fish Nursery Trial                                       | 26,318                                | 14,500                         | 11,818                        |
| The Public Land Consultancy                  | Identification of potential locations for new boat launching facilities in Port Phillip Bay and Westernport | 27,400                                | 13,700                         | 13,700                        |
| Zeb M & Stacey L Johnston                    | Western Zone Rock Lobster Fixed Site Surveys  | 12,000                                | 12,000                         | 0                             |
| Biscuit Interactive Pty Ltd                  | Northern Hatchery fish sculpture concept designs  | 40,000                                | 1,091                          | 22,045                        |

Table 20: Details of consultancies valued at less than \$10 000 incurred in 2020-21

| Consultant                                 | Purpose of consultancy   | Total approved project fee (excl GST) | Expenditure 2020-21 (excl GST) | Future expenditure (excl GST) |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Julia Menzies                              | Chair services for the VRFish Review Working Group meeting     | 8,400                                 | 8,400                          | 0                             |
| Ochre Imprints Pty Ltd                     | Point Richards Rock Groyne - Cultural Heritage Management Plan | 6,850                                 | 6,850                          | 0                             |
| Lloyd Family Trust                         | Western Zone Rock Lobster Fixed Site Surveys                   | 6,000                                 | 6,000                          | 0                             |
| Pescatore Di Mare Pty Ltd                  | Western Zone Rock Lobster Fixed Site Surveys                   | 6,000                                 | 6,000                          | 0                             |
| Spiteri Harrison                           | Fixed site survey at Torquay                                   | 6,000                                 | 6,000                          | 0                             |
| The Trustee For The Astbury Business Trust | Western Zone Rock Lobster Fixed Site Surveys                   | 6,000                                 | 6,000                          | 0                             |
| Trevor Evans                               | Western Zone Rock Lobster Fixed Site Surveys                   | 6,000                                 | 6,000                          | 0                             |
| Damien O'Mahony                            | Creel surveys conducted in Port Phillip Bay                    | 4,199                                 | 4,199                          | 0                             |
| Mjk Fisheries Pty Ltd                      | Fixed Site Survey at Ocean Grove                               | 4,000                                 | 4,000                          | 0                             |
| Penfold Noel                               | Northern hatchery design workshop                              | 2,909                                 | 2,909                          | 0                             |

## Information and communication technology expenditure

### Details of information and communication technology (ICT) expenditure

For the 2020-21 reporting period, the VFA had a total ICT expenditure of \$ 2,244,890, with the details shown in Table 21 below.

**Table 21: VFA operational ICT expenditure in 2019-20**

| All operational ICT expenditure         | ICT expenditure related to projects to create or enhance ICT capabilities |                         |                     |
|---|---|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Business As Usual (BAU) ICT expenditure | Non-Business As Usual (non-BAU) ICT expenditure                           | Operational expenditure | Capital expenditure |
| \$ 2,244,890                            | \$367,100   | \$367,100               | \$0                 |

The ICT expenditure refers to the VFA's costs in providing business enabling ICT services within the current reporting period. It comprises Business As Usual (BAU) ICT expenditure and Non-Business As Usual (Non-BAU) ICT expenditure. Non-BAU ICT expenditure relates to extending or enhancing the VFA's current ICT capabilities. BAU ICT expenditure is all remaining ICT expenditure that primarily relates to ongoing activities to operate and maintain the current ICT capability.

### Disclosure of major contracts

In accordance with the requirements of government policy and accompanying guidelines, the VFA must disclose any and all contracts greater than \$10 million in value that it entered into during the year ending 30 June 2021.

The VFA did not enter into any contracts of a value greater than \$10 million in value during 2020-21.

### Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act* (Vic) 1982 (the FOI Act) allows the public a right of access to documents held by the VFA. The purpose of the FOI Act is to extend as far as possible the right of the community to access information held by government departments, local councils, Ministers and other bodies subject to the FOI Act.

An applicant has a right to apply for access to documents held by the VFA. This comprises documents both created by the VFA or supplied to the VFA by an external organisation or individual, and may also include maps, films, microfiche, photographs, computer printouts, computer discs, tape recordings and videotapes.

The FOI Act allows a department to refuse access, either fully or partially, to certain documents or information. Examples of documents that may not be accessed include: cabinet documents; some internal working documents; law enforcement documents; documents covered by legal professional privilege, such as legal advice; personal information about other people; and information provided to a department in-confidence.

From 1 September 2017, the FOI Act was amended to reduce the Freedom of Information (FOI) processing time for requests received from 45 to 30 days. However, when external consultation is required under ss29, 29A, 31, 31A, 33, 34 or 35, the processing time automatically reverts to 45 days. Processing time may also be extended by periods of 30 days, in consultation with the applicant. With the applicant's agreement this may occur any number of times. However, obtaining an applicant's agreement for an extension cannot occur after the expiry of the timeframe for deciding a request.

If an applicant is not satisfied by a decision made by the VFA, under section 49A of the FOI Act, they have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner within 28 days of receiving a decision letter.



### Making a request

Freedom of Information requests can be lodged online at [www.foi.vic.gov.au](http://www.foi.vic.gov.au). An application fee of \$29.60 applies. Access charges may also be payable if the document pool is large, and the search for material time consuming.

Access to documents can also be obtained through a written request to the VFA's FOI Unit, as detailed in s17 of the FOI Act.

When making a FOI request, applicants should ensure requests are in writing, and clearly identify what types of material/documents are being sought.

Requests for documents in the possession of the VFA should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Unit  
Manager, Corporate Operations  
Victorian Fisheries Authority  
Level 19, 1 Spring St  
Melbourne VIC 3000

### FOI Statistics for the 2020-21 period

During the 2020-21 period the VFA received six FOI applications. These applications were from members of Parliament and members of the general public.

The VFA made six FOI decisions during the period; all decisions were made within the statutory 30-day time period.

In all six decisions, access was granted in full to all documents.

### Further information

Further information regarding the operation and scope of FOI can be obtained from the FOI Act, regulations made under the FOI Act and from [www.foi.vic.gov.au](http://www.foi.vic.gov.au)

### Compliance with the *Building Act 1993*

The VFA has a presence at 36 sites across Victoria, 12 of which are directly managed by the VFA.

The VFA complies with its obligations under the Building Act 1993, the Building Regulations and associated statutory requirements and amendments. The VFA undertakes significant proactive scheduled maintenance to ensure these facilities are presented in a safe and serviceable condition. The VFA engages industry experts to provide condition audits and to complete inspections of and provide reports on its owned and leased buildings to ensure compliance with building standards and regulations.

In 2020-21, the VFA completed two projects greater than \$50,000, which were:

- A refurbishment of the Snobs Creek fish hatchery; and
- A fit out at the VFA's new leased station facility at Braeside.

### Competitive Neutral Policy

Competitive neutrality requires government businesses to ensure where services compete, or potentially compete with the private sector, any advantage arising solely from their government ownership be removed if it is not in the public interest. Government businesses are required to cost and price these services as if they were privately owned. The *Competitive Neutrality Policy* supports fair competition between public and private businesses and provides government businesses with a tool to enhance decisions on resource allocation. This policy does not override other policy objectives of government and focuses on efficiency in the provision of service.

The VFA, where applicable, continues to comply with the requirements of the National Competition Policy and the requirements of policy statement, *Competitive Neutrality Policy* Victoria.

## Compliance with the *Protected Disclosure Act 2012*

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012* (the PD Act) encourages and assists people in making disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies. The PD Act provides protection to people who make disclosures in accordance with it and establishes a system for the matters disclosed to be investigated and rectifying action to be taken.

The VFA does not tolerate improper conduct by employees, nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct. It is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices and supports the making of disclosures that reveal corrupt conduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health and safety or the environment.

The VFA will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for making the disclosure. It will also afford natural justice to the person who is the subject of the disclosure to the extent it is legally possible.

### Reporting Procedures

Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by the VFA or any of its employees may be made to any of the following personnel:

- The Department of Transport Secretary;
- The Department of Transport's Protected Disclosure Coordinator;
- The VFA Chief Executive Officer;
- The manager or supervisor of the person making the disclosure;
- The manager or supervisor of the person who is the subject of the disclosure; or
- A person acting in any of the above roles.

Alternatively, disclosures may also be made directly to the Independent Broad-based Anticorruption Commission:

Level 1, North Tower, 459 Collins Street  
Melbourne, VIC 3000  
Phone: 1300 735 135  
Internet: [www.ibac.vic.gov.au](http://www.ibac.vic.gov.au)

### Further information

As an Authority within the portfolio of the Department of Transport, the VFA or any of its employees can access the Protected Disclosure Policy and Procedures, which outline the system for reporting disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by the VFA or any of its employees and/or officers, on the Department's intranet.

**Table 22: Disclosures under the *Protected Disclosure Act 2012***

|  | 2019-20<br>number | 2020-21<br>number |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| The number of disclosures made by an individual to the VFA and notified to the Independent Broad-based Anticorruption Commission | 0                 | 0                 |
| Assessible disclosures   | 0                 | 0                 |

## Compliance with the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*

The VFA has taken all practical measures to comply with its obligations under the *Carers Recognition Act 2012* (the CR Act). These include:

- Ensuring our staff have an awareness and understanding of the care relationship principles set out in the CR Act; and
- Considering the care relationships principles set out in the CR Act when setting policies and providing services, such as flexible working arrangements and leave provisions to ensure that these comply with the statement of principles in the CR Act.

## Compliance with the *Disability Act 2006*

The *Disability Act 2006* reaffirms and strengthens the rights of people with a disability and recognises that this requires support across the government sector and within the community.

The VFA has complied with its obligations under the Disability Act to prepare a Disability Action Plan for the purpose of: reducing barriers to access goods, services and facilities, reducing barriers to person with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment, promoting inclusion and participation in community and achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices that discriminate against people with a disability.

The VFA's draft Disability Action Plan was first presented to the Board's People and Safety Committee in late 2020. To seek wider consultation, the draft was provided to the DoT Diversity and Inclusion Team which resulted in further enhancements and it was renamed the *VFA Accessibility Action Plan* to focus on how the VFA is making its workplace and both its fishing and boating related services accessible to people with disability. The final draft was released to all staff for feedback and comment prior to being presented to the Board.

The *VFA Accessibility Plan 2021-2025* was approved by the VFA Board on 10 June 2021.

### Reducing barriers to accessing goods, services and facilities

The VFA has completed its redesign of the administration block at the Snobs Creek Hatchery, which is compliant with accessible amenities. The construction and fit-out of the public facing VFA office on the lower ground at 1 Spring Street has also been completed. It will open to the public in the new financial year.

The VFA implements recreational fishing structures that cater for people of all abilities. Upgrades to 11 fishing platforms facilitated by the VFA included enhancements such as extending platforms, additional seating, rod holders and lighting. Each of the platforms already provided all abilities access. For the boat ramps that were constructed by Coliban Water at Barkers Creek and Upper Colin reservoir, car parking facilities were also built, which included disabled car parking near the ramps. Fish cleaning tables, based on inclusive design principles can be used by anglers in a wheelchair were built near other infrastructure, close to disabled parking on a flat concrete surface.

Better Boating Victoria in partnership with Department of Environment Land Water and Planning, Parks Victoria and Kingston Council has made it easier for people with limited mobility to get out on the water through the installation of a new accessible pontoon at Mordialloc Creek. The pontoon serves as a temporary drop-off and pick-up spot for people with low mobility, providing greater access to boating on Port Phillip Bay. Wider gangways, intermediate landings, grab rails and tactile surfaces will be features of the accessible pontoon, with provisions made for the future addition of a hoist. Better Boating Victoria also funded Wellington Shire Council to install a new accessible platform at Seacombe Boat Ramp and worked with Parks Victoria to install a new accessible pontoon and relocate the access hoist at Patterson River.



### Reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment

People with disability are half as likely to be employed as people without disability. The VFA aspires to create employment pathways and is committed to educating managers who hire staff about inclusive policy and process. The VFA has created a new recruitment policy and procedure with the view of all steps of the process being undertaken with an inclusive lens. A Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedure has also been developed.

The VFA is committed to providing career development, coaching and mentoring to support progression and improve overall engagement and job satisfaction for employees with a disability.

The VFA also supports the employment of Victorians with a disability through the implementation of our social procurement processes seeking product and service providers who employ people with a disability. The VFA secured an eight-month contract through ConnectGV for grounds maintenance at the new native fish hatchery currently under construction. ConnectGV is a registered NDIS service provider within the Goulburn Valley providing individualised options for people with a disability.

### Promoting inclusion and participation in the community

The VFA, in conjunction with Fishcare Victoria, has continued working to reduce barriers hindering people with disabilities from being able to enjoy the experience of recreationally fishing through the *Fishing for All* program.

We've engaged and sought feedback from the public to identify locations to expand our accessible network through the development of the Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy; ensuring more people have access to waterways at our public boating facilities

### Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices that discriminate against people with a disability

Building an inclusive environment free from discrimination is the first step towards attracting people with disability to apply for roles. Employees need to feel safe, confident, and supported.

The VFA has identified the need to firstly engage with peak disability groups as they hold the knowledge and expertise about what is best for their communities. Informed by the engagement we aim to:

- Design and implement education programs and community events in partnership with people with disability, and
- Work with peak disability groups and land managers to improve access and participation in recreational fishing and boating.

Our Education, Events and Boating staff will be supported in their work with people with disability in the community.

## Social Procurement Framework

In 2018, the Victorian Government launched the Social Procurement Framework (SPF) to enable government buyers and suppliers to deliver social, economic and environmental outcomes that benefit the Victorian community, economy and environment.

Social procurement occurs *when organisations use their buying power to generate social value above and beyond the value of the goods, services or construction being procured* (Victoria's Social Procurement Framework, pg. 11).

The SPF applies to the procurement of all goods, services and construction undertaken by, or on behalf of, the Government, and is defined by ten objectives:

1. Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people
2. Opportunities for Victorians with disability
3. Women's equality and safety
4. Opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians
5. Supporting safe and fair workplaces
6. Sustainable Victorian social enterprise and Aboriginal business sectors
7. Sustainable Victorian regions
8. Environmentally sustainable outputs
9. Environmentally sustainable business practices
10. Implementation of the climate change policy objectives

In 2020-21, the VFA undertook several activities to support the SPF:

- Collaborated with the Department of Health and Human Services, DELWP, Parks Victoria and local councils to design and build pontoons to meet accessibility standards for people with disabilities at the Mordialloc, Seacombe and Patterson River boat ramps.
- Developed the VFA's Accessibility Plan 2021-2025.
- Completed the redevelopment of the VFA's Snobs Creek Hatchery administration building to be compliant with accessible amenities.
- Commenced the revision and redevelopment of the VFA's Aboriginal Fishing Strategy.

- Conducted fish farming workshops through GO TAFE Shepparton to support the creation of employment opportunities for Indigenous people at the new native fish hatchery in Arcadia.
- Completed the Wallpolla Stocking Trials - 'Culture Based Fisheries'
- Completed the development of the VFA Disability Action Plan
- Commenced the *Fishing for All* program to increase the participation of people with disabilities in recreational fishing.
- Developed the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Framework
- Put strategies and actions in place to use sustainable merchandise and have eco-friendly events

## Compliance with the *Fisheries Act 1995*

Under section 101 of the *Fisheries Act 1995*, the VFA is required to report on the number of personal searches conducted each year, including the type and number of priority species found during those searches.

In 2020-21, there were no personal searches conducted.

## Compliance with DataVic Access Policy

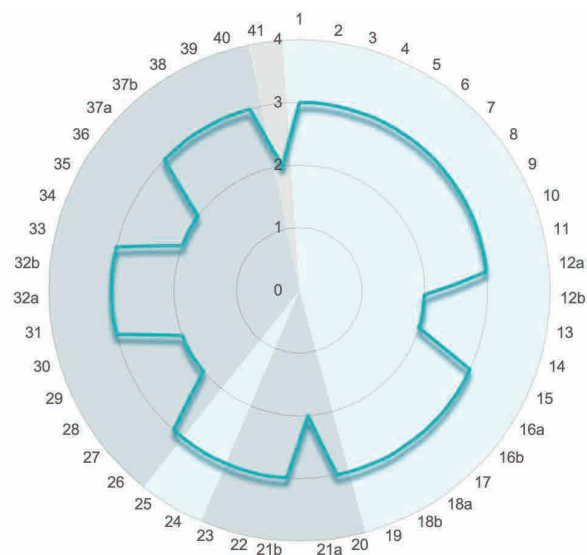
The VFA did not have any datasets requiring submission to the DataVic website in 2020-21.

## Asset Management Accountability Framework maturity assessment

The following sections summarise the VFA's assessment of maturity against the requirements of the *Asset Management Accountability Framework* (AMAF). The AMAF is a non-prescriptive, devolved accountability model of asset management that requires compliance with 41 mandatory requirements. These requirements can be found on the DTF website (<https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/infrastructure-investment/asset-management-accountability-framework>).

The VFA's target maturity rating is 'competence' (Level 3 on Figure 1 below), meaning systems and processes are fully in place, consistently applied and systematically meeting the AMAF requirement, including a continuous improvement process to expand system performance above AMAF minimum requirements.

Figure 1: VFA AMAF maturity assessment



| Legend         |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Status         | Scale |
| Not Applicable | N/A   |
| Innocence      | 0     |
| Awareness      | 1     |
| Developing     | 2     |
| Competence     | 3     |
| Optimising     | 4     |
| Unassessed     | U/A   |

### Leadership and Accountability (requirements 1-19)

The VFA has met its target maturity level under most requirements within this category. However, the VFA only partially complied with three measures relating to the monitoring of asset performance. There is no material non compliance reported in this category. Plans for improvement are being developed to improve the VFA's maturity rating in these areas.

### Planning (requirements 20-23)

The VFA has mostly met its target maturity level in this category. There is no material non compliance reported in this category. Work is ongoing to better link the VFA's asset plan with its asset strategy.

### Acquisition (requirements 24 and 25)

The VFA met its target maturity level in this category.

### Operation (requirements 26-40)

The VFA partially met its target maturity level under this category. There is no material non compliance reported in this category.

The VFA continues to develop its competence in monitoring asset condition and performance, including improving its asset information management systems and processes.

### Disposal (requirement 41)

The VFA partially met its target maturity level under this category. There is no material non compliance reported in this category. The VFA is continuing to develop its asset disposal processes to ensure at least full competence.



## Additional departmental information available on request

In compliance with the requirements of the Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, details in respect of the items listed below have been retained by the Department and are available on request, subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

- a. A statement that declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant officers of the VFA;
- b. Details of shares held by a senior officer as a nominee or held beneficially in a statutory authority or subsidiary;
- c. Details of publications produced by the entity about the entity, and how these can be obtained;
- d. Details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged by the entity;
- e. Details of any major external reviews carried out by the entity;
- f. Details of major research and development activities undertaken by the entity;
- g. Details of overseas visits undertaken including a summary of the objectives and outcomes of each visit;
- h. Details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by the entity to develop community awareness of the entity and its services;
- i. Details of assessment and measures undertaken to improve the occupational health and safety of employees;
- j. General statements on industrial relations within the entity and details of time lost through industrial accidents and disputes;
- k. A list of major committees sponsored by the entity, the purposes of each committee and the extent to which the purposes have been achieved; and
- l. Details of all consultancies and contractors engaged, services provided, and expenditure committed.

The information is available on request, subject to the provisions of the FOI Act, from:

Chief Financial Officer  
Victorian Fisheries Authority  
Level 19, 1 Spring St  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
Phone: 136 181

## Attestation for financial management compliance with Standing Direction 5.1.4

The Victorian Fisheries Authority Financial Management Compliance Attestation Statement

I, Gail Owen, on behalf of the Responsible Body, certify that the Victorian Fisheries Authority has complied with the applicable Standing Directions under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Instructions.



**Gail Owen**  
VFA Board Chair  
Victorian Fisheries Authority

20 October 2021



## Contents

The VFA has presented its audited general purpose financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 in the following structure to provide users with the information about the VFA's stewardship of resources entrusted to it.

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## Declaration in the financial statements

The attached financial statements for the VFA have been prepared in accordance with Direction 5.2 of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian Accounting Standards including Interpretations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement and accompanying notes, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2021 and financial position of the VFA at 30 June 2021.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstance which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 20 October 2021.



**Gail Owen**  
VFA Board Chair  
Victorian Fisheries Authority

20 October 2021



**Travis Dowling**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Victorian Fisheries Authority

20 October 2021



**Simon Leverett**  
Chief Financial Officer  
Victorian Fisheries Authority

20 October 2021

# VAGO audit report



Victorian Auditor-General's Office

## Independent Auditor's Report

### To the Board of the Victorian Fisheries Authority

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Opinion</b>   | <p>I have audited the financial report of the Victorian Fisheries Authority (the authority) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• balance sheet as at 30 June 2021</li> <li>• comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended</li> <li>• statement of changes in equity for the year then ended</li> <li>• cash flow statement for the year then ended</li> <li>• notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies</li> <li>• declaration in the financial statements.</li> </ul> <p>In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the authority as at 30 June 2021 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 7 of the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i> and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.</p> |
| <b>Basis for Opinion</b>                                 | <p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the authority in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>          |
| <b>Board's responsibilities for the financial report</b> | <p>The Board of the authority is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i>, and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p> <p>In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.</p>   |



**Auditor's  
responsibilities  
for the audit  
of the financial  
report**

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the authority's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the authority to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE  
22 October 2021

Simone Bohan  
*as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria*

## Comprehensive operating statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2021

|  | Note  | (\$ thousand)  |                |
|--|-------|----------------|----------------|
|  |       | 2021           | 2020           |
| <b>Income from transactions</b>                          |       |                |                |
| Grants   | 2.2.1 | 57,319         | 54,054         |
| Sale of services   | 2.2.2 | 198            | -              |
| Total income from transactions                           |       | 57,517         | 54,054         |
| <b>Expenses from transactions</b>                        |       |                |                |
| Grant disbursements                                      | 3.1   | (9,934)        | (2,611)        |
| Employee benefits  | 3.2.1 | (22,636)       | (20,167)       |
| Depreciation and amortisation                            | 5.1.1 | (2,696)        | (2,660)        |
| Interest expense   | 7.1.2 | (96)           | (109)          |
| Laboratory and livestock expenses                        | 3.3   | (4,703)        | (12,625)       |
| Contracts and services                                   | 3.4   | (4,260)        | (4,989)        |
| Computer services and equipment                          | 3.5   | (2,245)        | (2,126)        |
| Capital asset charge                                     | 3.6   | (2,400)        | (2,400)        |
| Other operating expenses                                 | 3.7   | (9,721)        | (8,704)        |
| Total expenses from transactions                         |       | (58,690)       | (56,390)       |
| <b>Net result from transactions</b>                      |       | <b>(1,173)</b> | <b>(2,337)</b> |
| <b>Other economic flows included in net result</b>       |       |                |                |
| Revaluation of land and buildings                        | 9.1   | (1,378)        | -              |
| Net gain / (loss) on non-financial assets                | 9.1   | 422            | 130            |
| Other gains / (losses) from other economic flows         | 9.1   | (63)           | (109)          |
| Total other economic flows included in net result        |       | (1,020)        | 21             |
| <b>Net result</b>  |       | <b>(2,193)</b> | <b>(2,316)</b> |
| <b>Other economic flows – other comprehensive income</b> |       |                |                |
| Changes in physical asset revaluation surplus            | 9.2   | 294            | -              |
| Total other economic flows – other comprehensive income  |       | 294            | -              |
| <b>Comprehensive result</b>                              |       | <b>(1,898)</b> | <b>(2,316)</b> |

The above comprehensive operating statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

## Balance sheet as at 30 June 2021

|                                   | Note  | (\$ thousand) |               |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------|---------------|
|                                   |       | 2021          | 2020          |
| <b>Assets</b>                     |       |               |               |
| <b>Financial assets</b>           |       |               |               |
| Cash and deposits                 | 7.3   | 1,050         | -             |
| Receivables                       | 6.1   | 8,788         | 6,834         |
| <b>Total financial assets</b>     |       | <b>9,838</b>  | <b>6,834</b>  |
| <b>Non-financial assets</b>       |       |               |               |
| Land                              | 5.1   | 5,434         | 6,812         |
| Buildings                         | 5.1   | 24,650        | 21,938        |
| Plant and equipment               | 5.1   | 4,480         | 4,758         |
| Intangible assets                 | 5.2   | 218           | -             |
| Other non-financial assets        | 6.3   | 828           | 906           |
| <b>Total non-financial assets</b> |       | <b>35,609</b> | <b>34,413</b> |
| <b>Total assets</b>               |       | <b>45,447</b> | <b>41,247</b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                |       |               |               |
| Payables                          | 6.2   | 3,940         | 1,754         |
| Borrowings - lease liabilities    | 7.1   | 3,267         | 3,519         |
| Employee-related provisions       | 3.2.2 | 7,276         | 6,776         |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>          |       | <b>14,483</b> | <b>12,048</b> |
| <b>Net assets</b>                 |       | <b>30,964</b> | <b>29,199</b> |
| <b>Equity</b>                     |       |               |               |
| Contributed Capital               |       | 37,316        | 33,653        |
| <b>Reserves</b>                   |       | <b>294</b>    | <b>-</b>      |
| Accumulated surplus / (deficit)   |       | (6,647)       | (4,454)       |
| <b>Total Equity</b>               |       | <b>30,964</b> | <b>29,199</b> |

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

## Statement of changes in equity as at 30 June 2021

|                                 | Note  | (\$ thousand)       |                     |                                    | Total   |
|---------------------------------|-------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
|                                 |       | Contributed capital | Accumulated deficit | Physical asset revaluation surplus |         |
| Balance at 1 July 2019          |       | 30,794              | (2,138)             | -                                  | 28,656  |
| Contributed capital             | 7.3.2 | 2,859               | -                   | -                                  | 2,859   |
| Net result for the year         |       |                     | (2,316)             | -                                  | (2,316) |
| Balance at 30 June 2020         |       | 33,653              | (4,454)             | -                                  | 29,199  |
| Balance at 1 July 2020          |       | 33,653              | (4,454)             | -                                  | 29,199  |
| Contributed capital             | 7.3.2 | 3,664               | -                   | -                                  | 3,664   |
| Net result for the year         |       |                     | (2,193)             | -                                  | (2,193) |
| Transfer to accumulated surplus | 9.2   |                     |                     | 294                                | 294     |
| Balance at 30 June 2021         |       | 37,316              | (6,647)             | 294                                | 30,964  |

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.



## Cash flow statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2021

|   | Note         | 2021            | 2020            |
|---|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| (\$ thousand)   |              |                 |                 |
| <b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>                       |              |                 |                 |
| <b>Receipts</b>   |              |                 |                 |
| Receipts from Victorian Government                                |              | 55,886          | 53,751          |
| GST recovered from / (paid) to ATO                                |              | 2,112           | 3,248           |
| Sale of services  |              | 62              | 1,015           |
| <b>Total receipts</b>   |              | <b>58,060</b>   | <b>58,013</b>   |
| <b>Payments</b>   |              |                 |                 |
| Payments of grants and other transfers                            |              | (9,934)         | (2,696)         |
| Payments to suppliers and employees                               |              | (41,572)        | (49,199)        |
| GST on payments   |              | (2,193)         | (3,146)         |
| Capital asset charge payments                                     |              | (2,400)         | (2,400)         |
| Interest and other costs of finance paid                          |              | (96)            | (109)           |
| <b>Total payments</b>   |              | <b>(56,195)</b> | <b>(57,550)</b> |
| <b>Net cash flows from operating activities</b>                   | <b>7.3.1</b> | <b>1,865</b>    | <b>463</b>      |
| <b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>                       |              |                 |                 |
| (Purchase) / sale of non-financial assets                         |              | (3,480)         | (2,283)         |
| Receipts from / (payments) for plant and equipment                |              | 302             | 183             |
| <b>Net cash flows from / (used in) investing activities</b>       |              | <b>(3,178)</b>  | <b>(2,101)</b>  |
| <b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>                       |              |                 |                 |
| Contributed capital from Victorian Government                     | <b>7.3.2</b> | 3,372           | 2,573           |
| Repayment of finance leases                                       |              | (1,010)         | (935)           |
| <b>Net cash flows from / (used in) financing activities</b>       |              | <b>2,362</b>    | <b>1,637</b>    |
| <b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>                  |              | <b>1,050</b>    | <b>-</b>        |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year  |              | -               | -               |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year</b> | <b>7.3.3</b> | <b>1,050</b>    | <b>-</b>        |

The above cash flow statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

# 1. About this report

The Victorian Fisheries Authority (the VFA) is a statutory authority of the State of Victoria, established under the *Victorian Fisheries Authority Act 2016* by amendment to the *Victorian Fisheries Act 1995*. The VFA commenced operations as an independent authority on 1 July 2017 and is part of Victoria's integrated transport portfolio led by the Department of Transport (DoT).

Its principal address is:  
1 Spring Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

A description of the nature of its operations and its principal activities is included in the Report of Operations, which does not form part of these financial statements.

## Basis of preparation

These financial statements are in Australian dollars and the historical cost convention is used unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the note associated with the item measured on a different basis.

The accrual basis of accounting has been applied in preparing these financial statements, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Consistent with the requirements of *AASB 1004 Contributions*, contributions by owners (that is, contributed capital and its repayment) are treated as equity transactions and, therefore, do not form part of the income and expenses of the VFA.

Additions to net assets which have been designated as contributions by owners are recognised as contributed capital. Other transfers that are in the nature of contributions to or distributions by owners have also been designated as contributions by owners.

Transfers of net assets arising from administrative restructurings are treated as distributions to or contributions by owners. Transfers of net liabilities arising from administrative restructurings are treated as distributions to owners.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about financial information being presented. The significant judgements made in the preparation of these financial statements are disclosed in the notes where amounts affected by those judgements are disclosed. Estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions have been applied by management for Note disclosures:

- 3.2.2 Employee Benefits in the Balance Sheet,
- 5.1 Property, Plant and Equipment and;
- 8.3 Fair value determination.

These financial statements cover the VFA as an individual reporting entity and include all the controlled activities of the VFA.

Amounts in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 unless otherwise stated. Figures in the 2020-21 Financial Statements may not add due to rounding.

## Recreational fishing licences trust account

The Recreational Fishing Licences Trust Account operates under section 151B of the *Fisheries Act 1995* to disburse revenue derived from the sale of recreational fishing licences to projects that will further improve recreational fishing opportunities in Victoria, and to fund costs incurred in the administration of recreational fishing licences.

The Recreational Fishing Licences Trust is a controlled trust under DoT and DoT is an administrator for the Recreational Fishing Licences Trust disburses funds to the VFA.

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In January 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared an outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) a public health emergency of international concern and in March 2020, announced that the virus was a global pandemic. This pandemic continued for the entire 2020-21 financial year.

During 2020-21, Victoria entered into multiple periods of restrictions, to varying degrees, to reduce transmission and cases of the virus across Victoria. These restrictions included work from home requirements, and stay at home orders. However, due to limited opportunities for Victorians to travel overseas or interstate, there was increased levels of travel and outdoor activity within the State between the periods of restrictions.

The increased recreation across Victoria resulted in increased, and higher than average, revenue from the sale of recreational fishing licences. These revenues are withheld in the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account.

The periods of COVID-19 restrictions had minor impacts on operating expenditure, primarily through the reduction of expenditure on events and travel across Victoria. The VFA estimates the impact on expenditure of the pandemic to be around \$400,000.

### Compliance information

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* (FMA) and applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AASs), which include Interpretations, issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). In particular, they are presented in a manner consistent with the requirements of AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.

Where appropriate, those AAS paragraphs applicable to not-for-profit entities have been applied.

Accounting policies selected and applied in these financial statements ensure that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported.

## 2. Funding our delivery services

### Introduction

The VFA's objective is to effectively manage Victoria's fisheries resources. The VFA works with stakeholders to deliver sustainable fishing and aquaculture for future generations, clear resource access and sharing arrangements amongst the community, and increased economic, social and cultural value through management, consultation and compliance.

On 1 February 2021, the Better Boating Victoria division of DoT was transferred to the VFA. The VFA is now also responsible for the delivery of the Government's initiatives to improve boating facilities across Victoria (refer to Note 4 - Restructuring of administrative arrangements).

### Structure

#### 2.1 Summary of income that funds the delivery of our services

#### 2.2 Income from transactions

##### 2.2.1 Grants

##### 2.2.2 Sale of Services

#### 2.1 Summary of income that funds the delivery of our services

|                                       | Note  | (\$ thousand) |               |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---------------|---------------|
|                                       |       | 2021          | 2020          |
| <b>Income from transactions</b>       |       |               |               |
| Grants                                | 2.2.1 | 57,319        | 54,054        |
| Sale of services                      | 2.2.2 | 198           | -             |
| <b>Total income from transactions</b> |       | <b>57,517</b> | <b>54,054</b> |

Income is recognised to the extent it is probable the economic benefits will flow to the VFA and the income can be reliably measured.

#### 2.2 Income from transactions

| <b>2.2.1 Grants</b>   |  |               |               |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|
|   |  | (\$ thousand) |               |
|   |  | 2021          | 2020          |
| <b>Income recognised as income from non-for-profit entities</b> |  |               |               |
| General purpose   |  | 57,319        | 54,026        |
| Other specific purpose  |  | -             | 28            |
| <b>Total grants</b>   |  | <b>57,319</b> | <b>54,054</b> |



### Grants recognised under AASB 1058

The VFA has determined that the grant income included in the table above under AASB 1058 has been earned under arrangements that are either not enforceable and/or linked to sufficiently specific performance obligations.

Income from grants without any sufficiently specific performance obligations, or that are not enforceable, is recognised when the VFA has an unconditional right to receive cash which usually coincides with receipt of cash. On initial recognition of the asset, the VFA recognises any related contributions by owners, increases in liabilities, decreases in assets, and revenue ('related amounts') in accordance with other Australian Accounting Standards. Related amounts may take the form of:

- contributions by owners, in accordance with AASB 1004;
- revenue or a contract liability arising from a contract with a customer, in accordance with AASB 15;
- a lease liability in accordance with AASB 16;
- a financial instrument, in accordance with AASB 9; or
- a provision, in accordance with AASB 137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets.

#### 2.2.2 Sale of services

|                       | (\$ thousand) |          |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------|
|                       | 2021          | 2020     |
| Sale of services      | 198           | -        |
| <b>Total services</b> | <b>198</b>    | <b>-</b> |

The sale of goods and services included in the table above are transactions that the VFA has determined to be classified as revenue from contracts with customers in accordance with AASB 15.

### Performance obligations and revenue recognition policies

Revenue is measured based on the consideration specified in the contract with the customer. The VFA recognises revenue when it transfers control of a good or service to the customer, i.e. when, or as, the performance obligations for the sale of goods, biological assets and services to the customer are satisfied.

- Customers obtain control of the supplies and consumables at a point in time when the goods are delivered to and have been accepted at their premises.
- Revenue from the sale of goods are recognised when the goods are delivered and have been accepted by the customer at their premises
- Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised at a point in time when the performance obligation is satisfied when the service is completed; and over time when the customer simultaneously receives and consumes the services as it is provided.

Customers are invoiced and revenue is recognised when the goods are delivered and accepted by customers. In rare circumstance where there may be a change in the scope of services provided, the customer will be provided with a new contract for the additional services to be rendered and revenue is recognised consistent with accounting policy above.

Consideration received in advance of recognising the associated revenue from the customer is recorded as a contract liability (Note 6.2). Where the performance obligations is satisfied but not yet billed, a contract asset is recorded (Note 6.1).

## 3. The cost of delivering services

### Introduction

This section details the major component of the expenses incurred by the VFA in delivering services and outputs. In Note 2 – Funding delivery of our services, the funds that enable the provision of services were disclosed; in this note, the costs associated with provision of services are recorded. Notes 5.1.1 and 7.1.2 provide additional information regarding depreciation, amortisation and interest expense.

### Structure

#### 3.1 Grant disbursements

#### 3.2 Employee benefits

3.2.1 Employee benefits in the comprehensive operating statement

3.2.2 Employee benefits in the balance sheet

3.2.3 Superannuation contributions

#### 3.3 Laboratory and livestock expenses

#### 3.4 Contracts and services

#### 3.5 Computer services and equipment

#### 3.6 Capital asset charge

#### 3.7 Other operating expenses

### 3.1 Grant disbursements

|   | (\$ thousand) |              |
|---|---------------|--------------|
|   | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Grants to government agencies</b>                          |               |              |
| Local government  | 4,041         | 108          |
| Commonwealth government                                       | 317           | 217          |
| Other government agencies                                     | 2,151         | 354          |
| <b>Total grants to government agencies</b>                    | <b>6,509</b>  | <b>679</b>   |
| <b>Grants to external organisations and individuals</b>       |               |              |
| Other non-government agencies                                 | 3,425         | 1,932        |
| <b>Total grants to external organisations and individuals</b> | <b>3,425</b>  | <b>1,932</b> |
| <b>Total grants and other transfers</b>                       | <b>9,934</b>  | <b>2,611</b> |

Grant disbursements are contributions of the VFA's resources to another party for specific or general purposes where there is no expectation that the amount will be repaid in equal value (either by money, goods or services).

Grants can be either operating or capital in nature. Grants can be paid as general purpose grants, which refer to grants that are not subject to conditions regarding their use. Alternatively, they may be paid as specific purpose grants, which are paid for a particular purpose and / or have conditions attached to their use.

Grant expenses are recognised in the reporting period in which they are paid or payable. Grant expenses in 2020-21 increased by around \$7.3 million from 2019-20 primarily due to payments for the development of new and upgraded boating facilities across the State, and the on passing of grants under the Commonwealth's *Recreational Fishing and Camping Facilities Program*.

### 3.2 Employee benefits

#### 3.2.1 Employee benefits in the comprehensive operating statement

|  | (\$ thousand) |               |
|--|---------------|---------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020          |
| Salaries, wages and other on-costs           | 19,120        | 17,288        |
| Annual leave and long service leave expenses | 1,664         | 1,231         |
| Defined contribution superannuation expense  | 1,851         | 1,649         |
| <b>Total employee benefits</b>               | <b>22,636</b> | <b>20,167</b> |

Employee benefit expenses include all costs related to employment including wages and salaries, fringe benefits tax, leave entitlements, redundancy and termination payments, WorkCover premiums, defined benefits superannuation plans, and defined contribution superannuation plans.

The amount recognised in the comprehensive operating statement in relation to superannuation is the employer contributions for members of both defined benefit and defined contribution superannuation plans that are paid or payable during the reporting period.

#### 3.2.2 Employee benefits in the balance sheet

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave (LSL) for services rendered to the reporting date and recorded as an expense during the period the services are delivered.

|  | (\$ thousand) |              |
|--|---------------|--------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Current provisions</b>                                      |               |              |
| <b>Annual leave</b>  |               |              |
| - Unconditional and expected to wholly settle within 12 months | 1,112         | 952          |
| - Unconditional and expected to wholly settle after 12 months  | 915           | 670          |
| <b>Long service leave</b>                                      |               |              |
| - Unconditional and expected to wholly settle within 12 months | 562           | 610          |
| - Unconditional and expected to wholly settle after 12 months  | 2,793         | 2,873        |
| <b>Provisions for on-costs</b>                                 |               |              |
| - Unconditional and expected to wholly settle within 12 months | 268           | 249          |
| - Unconditional and expected to wholly settle after 12 months  | 597           | 563          |
| <b>Total current provisions</b>                                | <b>6,248</b>  | <b>5,916</b> |
| <b>Non-current provisions</b>                                  |               |              |
| Employee benefits  | 892           | 742          |
| Provisions for on-costs  | 137           | 117          |
| <b>Total non-current provisions</b>                            | <b>1,029</b>  | <b>859</b>   |
| <b>Total provisions for employee benefits</b>                  | <b>7,276</b>  | <b>6,776</b> |

### 3.2 Employee benefits (continued)

#### 3.2.2 Employee benefits in the balance sheet (continued)

##### Reconciliation of movement in on-cost provision

|   | (\$ thousand) |            |
|---|---------------|------------|
|   | 2021          | 2020       |
| Opening balance   | 929           | 946        |
| Additions due to transfer in  | 25            | -          |
| Additional provisions recognised  | 707           | 6          |
| Additions due to acquisitions   | 54            | 10         |
| Reductions arising from payments/other sacrifices of future economic benefits | 39            | 1          |
| Unwind of discount and effect of changes in the discount rate                 | (746)         | 15         |
| Reduction transfer out  | (6)           | (50)       |
| <b>Closing balance</b>  | <b>1,002</b>  | <b>929</b> |
| <b>Current</b>  | <b>865</b>    | <b>812</b> |
| <b>Non current</b>  | <b>137</b>    | <b>117</b> |

**Wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave:** Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and on-costs) are recognised as part of the employee benefit provision as current liabilities, because the VFA does not have an unconditional right to defer settlements of these liabilities.

Liabilities for salaries and wages are recognised in the balance sheet at remuneration rates which are current at the reporting date. As the VFA expects the liabilities to be wholly settled within 12 months of reporting date, they are measured at undiscounted amounts.

The annual leave liability is classified as a current liability and measured at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid, as the VFA does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and it is not considered probable that the average sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the benefits accrued in the future. As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised in the comprehensive operating statement as it is taken.

Employment on-costs such as payroll tax, workers compensation and superannuation are not employee benefits. They are disclosed separately as a component of the provision for employee benefits when the employment to which they relate has occurred.

**Unconditional LSL** is disclosed as a current liability even where the VFA does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months because it will not have an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement should an employee take leave within 12 months.

The components of this current LSL liability are measured at:

- undiscounted value if the VFA expects to wholly settle within 12 months; or
- present value if the VFA does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.



**Conditional LSL** is disclosed as a non-current liability. There is an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement until the employee has completed the requisite years of service. This non-current long service liability is measured at present value.

Any gain or loss following revaluation of the present value of non-current LSL liability is recognised as a transaction, except to the extent that a gain or loss arises due to changes in bond interest rates for which it is then recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the net result.

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave for services rendered to the reporting date.

### 3.2.3 Superannuation contributions

|                                   | (\$ thousand)                  |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
|                                   | Paid contribution for the year |              |
|                                   | 2021                           | 2020         |
| <b>Fund</b>                       |                                |              |
| <b>Defined contribution plans</b> |                                |              |
| VicSuper                          | 1,037                          | 933          |
| Other                             | 814                            | 716          |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>1,851</b>                   | <b>1,649</b> |

Employees of the VFA are entitled to receive superannuation benefits and the VFA contributes to defined contribution plans.

Superannuation contributions paid or payable for the reporting period are included as part of employee benefits in the comprehensive operating statement of the VFA.

The VFA does not recognise any defined benefit liability in respect of the plans because the entity has no legal or constructive obligation to pay future benefits relating to its employees; its only obligation is to pay superannuation contributions as they fall due. The Department of Treasury and Finance recognises and discloses the State's defined benefit liabilities in its financial statements as an administered liability.

## 3.3 Laboratory and livestock expenses

|  | (\$ thousand) |               |
|--|---------------|---------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020          |
| <b>Laboratory and livestock expenses</b> | <b>4,703</b>  | <b>12,625</b> |

The VFA's laboratory and livestock expenses predominately relates to fish stock purchases, fish production supplies and commercial licence buy backs. The decrease from 2019-20 to 2020-21 reflects the absence of payments to remove netting licences from Gippsland Lakes, which were completed in 2019-20.

## 3.4 Contracts and services

|                               | (\$ thousand) |              |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|                               | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Contracts and services</b> | <b>4,260</b>  | <b>4,989</b> |

The VFA engages contractors to supplement existing staff resources. The VFA also engages specialist consultants for the purposes of performing a discrete task that facilitates decision-making through the provision of expert analysis and advice, or the development of a written report or other intellectual output.

### 3.5 Computer services and equipment

|  | (\$ thousand) |              |
|--|---------------|--------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Computer services and equipment</b> | <b>2,245</b>  | <b>2,126</b> |

The VFA's computer services and equipment expenditure includes costs relating to IT expenses and telecommunications costs.

### 3.6 Capital asset charge

|                             | (\$ thousand) |              |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|                             | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Capital Asset Charge</b> | <b>2,400</b>  | <b>2,400</b> |

A **capital asset charge** is a charge levied on the written down value of controlled non-current physical assets in an VFA's balance sheet. It aims to attribute to the VFA outputs, a cost of capital used in service delivery. Imposing this charge provides incentives for the VFA to identify and dispose of underutilised or surplus non-current physical assets.

### 3.7 Other operating expenses

|  | (\$ thousand) |              |
|--|---------------|--------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Supplies and services</b>                                       |               |              |
| Service level agreement - shared services provided by DOT and DJPR | 1,472         | 1,349        |
| Occupancy  | 4,232         | 3,381        |
| Communications   | 355           | 724          |
| Travel and accommodation   | 263           | 490          |
| Vehicle, equipment and marine vessel expenses                      | 1,290         | 1,287        |
| Other administrative expenses                                      | 2,109         | 1,472        |
| <b>Total supplies and services</b>                                 | <b>9,721</b>  | <b>8,704</b> |
| <b>Operating lease rental expenses</b>                             |               |              |
| Lease payments   | -             | -            |
| <b>Total operating lease rental expenses</b>                       | <b>-</b>      | <b>-</b>     |
| <b>Total other operating expenses</b>                              | <b>9,721</b>  | <b>8,704</b> |

Other operating expenses include **supplies and services** costs which are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

## 4. Restructuring of administrative arrangements

On 1 February 2021, the Better Boating Victoria Division of DoT transferred to the VFA. Better Boating Victoria is responsible for delivering significant improvements to boating facilities across Victoria, including administering the Government's \$47 million Better Boating initiative.

Five staff members transferred from DoT to the VFA on 1 February 2021. As a result the employee provisions for these five employees transferred to the VFA, along with an equivalent receivable with DoT.

There were no physical assets transferred. Boating facilities such as boat ramps and car parks are owned by non Victorian government entities such as local governments and committees of management.

There were no administrative restructures during 2019-20.

|  | Note  | (\$ thousand) |          |
|--|-------|---------------|----------|
|  |       | 2021          | 2020     |
| <b>Assets</b>  |       |               |          |
| Land   | 5.1   | -             | -        |
| Buildings  | 5.1   | -             | -        |
| Leasehold Improvements   | 5.1   | -             | -        |
| Receivables - DOT  | 6.1   | 184           | -        |
| <b>Total assets</b>  |       | <b>184</b>    | <b>-</b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>   |       |               |          |
| Provision for employee benefits (current)                          | 3.2.2 | 177           | -        |
| Provision for employee benefits (non-current)                      | 3.2.2 | 7             | -        |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>   |       | <b>184</b>    | <b>-</b> |
| <b>Net assets transferred to the Victorian Fisheries Authority</b> |       | <b>-</b>      | <b>-</b> |

## 5. Key assets to support output delivery

### Introduction

The VFA controls land, buildings, plant and equipment that are utilised in fulfilling its objectives and conducting its activities. They represent the resources that have been entrusted to the VFA for delivery of those outputs.

### Structure

#### 5.1 Property, plant and equipment

5.1(a) Right-of-use assets: buildings, plant, equipment and vehicles

5.1.1 Depreciation and amortisation

5.1.2 Reconciliation of movements in carrying amount

#### 5.2 Intangible assets

#### 5.1 Property, plant and equipment

|   | (\$ thousand)         |               |                          |                |                     |               |
|---|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------|
|   | Gross carrying amount |               | Accumulated Depreciation |                | Net carrying amount |               |
|   | 2021                  | 2020          | 2021                     | 2020           | 2021                | 2020          |
| <b>Land and Buildings</b>                           |                       |               |                          |                |                     |               |
| Land at fair value                                  | 5,434                 | 6,812         | -                        | -              | 5,434               | 6,812         |
| Buildings and structures at fair value              | 23,790                | 22,032        | (2,677)                  | (1,469)        | 21,113              | 20,564        |
| Right-of-use Buildings                              | 1,542                 | 1,281         | (880)                    | (408)          | 662                 | 872           |
| Buildings and structures - construction in progress | 2,411                 | 241           | -                        | -              | 2,411               | 241           |
| Building leasehold                                  | 516                   | 296           | (52)                     | (35)           | 464                 | 261           |
| <b>Total Land and Buildings</b>                     | <b>33,693</b>         | <b>30,662</b> | <b>(3,609)</b>           | <b>(1,912)</b> | <b>30,084</b>       | <b>28,750</b> |
| Plant and equipment at fair value                   | 3,804                 | 3,574         | (1,882)                  | (1,428)        | 1,923               | 2,146         |
| Motor vehicles under finance lease                  | 3,506                 | 3,376         | (949)                    | (765)          | 2,557               | 2,611         |
| <b>Total Plant and Equipment</b>                    | <b>7,311</b>          | <b>6,950</b>  | <b>(2,831)</b>           | <b>(2,193)</b> | <b>4,480</b>        | <b>4,758</b>  |
| <b>Net carrying amount</b>                          | <b>41,003</b>         | <b>37,612</b> | <b>(6,439)</b>           | <b>(4,104)</b> | <b>34,564</b>       | <b>33,507</b> |

#### Initial recognition

Items of property, plant and equipment are measured initially at cost, and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment.

A purchased item is recognised as property, plant and equipment if:

- it is probable that future economic benefits of the asset will flow to the entity;
- it is not of a consumable nature;
- it has a useful life of one year or more; and
- its individual cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold of greater than \$5,000.

The initial cost for non-financial physical assets under a finance lease is measured at amounts equal to the fair value of the leased asset or, if lower, the present value of the minimum lease payments, each determined at the inception of the lease.

Where an asset is acquired for no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value at the date of acquisition. Assets transferred as part of a machinery of government change are transferred at their carrying amount.



The fair value of property, plant, equipment and vehicles is normally determined by reference to each asset's depreciated replacement cost. For property, plant, equipment and vehicles, existing depreciated historical cost is generally a reasonable proxy for depreciated replacement cost because of the short lives of the assets concerned.

The cost of a leasehold improvement is capitalised and depreciated over the shorter of the remaining term of the lease or their estimated useful lives.

#### Subsequent measurement

Property, plant and equipment are subsequently measured at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Fair value is determined with regard to the asset's highest and best use (considering legal or physical restrictions imposed on the asset, public announcements or commitments made in relation to the intended use of the asset) and is summarised below by asset category.

#### Non-specialised land and non-specialised buildings

Non-specialised land and non-specialised buildings are valued using the market approach, whereby assets are compared to recent comparable sales or sales of comparable assets that are considered to have nominal value.

#### Vehicles

Vehicles are valued using the depreciated replacement cost method. The VFA acquires new vehicles and at times disposes of them before the end of their economic life. The process of acquisition, use and disposal in the market is managed by experienced fleet managers in the VFA who set relevant depreciation rates during use to reflect the utilisation of the vehicles.

#### Plant and equipment

Fair value for plant and equipment that are specialised in use (such that it is rarely sold other than as part of a going concern) is determined using the depreciated replacement cost method.

Refer to Note 8.3 – Fair value determination, for additional information on fair value determination of property, plant and equipment.

### 5.1(a) Right-of-use assets: buildings, plant, equipment and vehicles

The following tables are subsets of buildings, plant and equipment by right-of-use assets.

|                        | (\$ thousand)              |                               |                          |                            |                               |                          |
|------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
|                        | Gross carrying amount 2021 | Accumulated depreciation 2021 | Net carrying amount 2021 | Gross carrying amount 2020 | Accumulated depreciation 2020 | Net carrying amount 2020 |
| Right-of-use Buildings | 1,542                      | (880)                         | 662                      | 1,281                      | (408)                         | 872                      |
| Motor vehicles         | 3,506                      | (949)                         | 2,557                    | 3,376                      | (765)                         | 2,611                    |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>5,048</b>               | <b>(1,829)</b>                | <b>3,219</b>             | <b>4,657</b>               | <b>(1,174)</b>                | <b>3,484</b>             |

#### Right-of-use asset acquired by lessees (Under AASB 16 – Leases from 1 July 2019) – Initial Measurement

The VFA recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right of use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located, less any lease incentive received.

### Right-of-use asset – Subsequent measurement

The VFA depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful life of the right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as property, plant and equipment. The right-of-use assets are also subject to revaluation.

In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any and adjusted for certain remeasurements of the lease liability.

#### 5.1.1 Depreciation and amortisation

##### Charge for the period

|  | (\$ thousand) |              |
|--|---------------|--------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020         |
| Buildings and structures at fair value | 1,182         | 1,175        |
| Right-of-use Buildings                 | 471           | 408          |
| Building leasehold                     | 43            | 28           |
| Plant and equipment                    | 448           | 488          |
| Motor vehicles under finance lease     | 551           | 560          |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>2,696</b>  | <b>2,660</b> |

All infrastructure assets, buildings, plant and equipment and other non-financial physical assets that have finite useful lives, are depreciated. The exceptions to this rule include items under operating leases, assets held for sale, land and investment properties.

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis at rates that allocate each asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life. Typical estimated useful lives for the different asset classes are included in the table below:

##### Useful life by asset class

|  | Years      |            |
|--|------------|------------|
|  | 2021       | 2020       |
| Land                                   | Indefinite | Indefinite |
| Buildings and structures at fair value | 1 to 30    | 1 to 30    |
| Right-of-use Buildings                 | 1 to 5     | N/A        |
| Building leasehold                     | 1 to 5     | 1 to 5     |
| Plant and equipment                    | 1 to 50    | 1 to 50    |
| Motor vehicles under finance lease     | 1 to 3     | 1 to 3     |

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation methods are reviewed at the end of each annual reporting period and adjustments made where appropriate.

Right-of-use assets are generally depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life and the lease term. Where the VFA obtains ownership of the underlying leased asset or if the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the entity will exercise a purchase option, the entity depreciates the right-of-use asset over its useful life.

Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful lives.

**Indefinite life assets:** Land is considered to have an indefinite life. Depreciation is not recognised in respect of these assets because their service potential has not, in any material sense, been consumed during the reporting period.

## 5.1.2 Reconciliation of movements in carrying amount

|   | (\$ thousand) |              |  |               |                        |            |   |            |                     |            |                             |              |                                    |              |               |               |
|---|---------------|--------------|--|---------------|------------------------|------------|---|------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Land          |              | Buildings and structures at fair value |               | Right-of-use Buildings |            | Buildings and structures - construction in progress |            | Buildings Leasehold |            | Property, Plant & Equipment |              | Motor vehicles under finance lease |              | Total         |               |
|   | 2021          | 2020         | 2021                                   | 2020          | 2021                   | 2020       | 2021  | 2020       | 2021                | 2020       | 2021                        | 2020         | 2021                               | 2020         | 2021          | 2020          |
| Opening balance   | 6,812         | 5,307        | 20,564                                 | 21,425        | 872                    |            | 241   | 69         | 261                 | 258        | 2,146                       | 2,426        | 2,611                              | 2,537        | 33,507        | 32,022        |
| Recognition of right-of-use assets in application of AASB16 | -             | -            | -                                      | -             | 261                    | 1,059      | -   | -          | -                   | -          | -                           | -            | -                                  | -            | 261           | 1,059         |
| Additions   | -             | 1,505        | 1,098                                  | 315           |                        | 221        | 2,405   | 172        | 244                 | 31         | 232                         | 262          | 1,069                              | 1,355        | 5,049         | 3,862         |
| Additions by recognition                                    | -             | -            | 105                                    | -             | -                      | -          | -   | -          | -                   | -          | -                           | -            | -                                  | -            | 105           | -             |
| Transfer in/out of assets under construction                | -             | -            | 236                                    | -             | -                      | -          | (236)   | -          | -                   | -          | -                           | -            | -                                  | -            | -             | -             |
| Revaluations <sup>(a)</sup>                                 | (1,378)       | -            | 294                                    | -             | -                      | -          | -   | -          | 2                   | -          | -                           | -            | -                                  | -            | (1,082)       | -             |
| Depreciation and amortisation                               | -             | -            | (1,182)                                | (1,175)       | (471)                  | (408)      | -   | -          | (43)                | (28)       | (448)                       | (488)        | (551)                              | (560)        | (2,696)       | (2,660)       |
| Disposals / write-offs                                      | -             | -            | -                                      | -             | -                      | -          | -   | -          | -                   | -          | (7)                         | (55)         | (574)                              | (721)        | (580)         | (776)         |
| <b>Net carrying amount</b>                                  | <b>5,434</b>  | <b>6,812</b> | <b>21,113</b>                          | <b>20,564</b> | <b>662</b>             | <b>872</b> | <b>2,411</b>  | <b>241</b> | <b>464</b>          | <b>261</b> | <b>1,923</b>                | <b>2,146</b> | <b>2,557</b>                       | <b>2,611</b> | <b>34,564</b> | <b>33,507</b> |

(a) The downwards revaluation of land is primarily due to an error in the Valuer-General Victoria's 2016 land valuation, which overestimated the number of hectares of land, and an incorrect zoning of the land, at Snobs Creek.

#### Revaluations of Property Plant and Equipment

The VFA's assets relating to land and buildings were independently valued by Valuer General Victoria (VGV) as at 30 June 2021. The valuer advised that the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the market environment, in which the valuation was performed. This impact has resulted in significant valuation uncertainty at the valuation date (30 June 2021).

The fair value of the VFA's non financial physical assets at 30 June 2021 is subject to high level of valuation uncertainty. The current value may therefore change over a relatively short period. Refer to Note 8.3.2 Fair Value Determination for further information on the revaluation methods used for the asset classes.

## 5.2 Intangible assets

|   | (\$ thousand)       |      |       |      |
|---|---------------------|------|-------|------|
|   | Water Access Rights |      | Total |      |
|   | 2021                | 2020 | 2021  | 2020 |
| Opening balance                         | -                   | -    | -     | -    |
| Additions at cost                       | 218                 | -    | 218   | -    |
| Net book value at end of financial year | 218                 | -    | 218   | -    |

### Water Access Rights

The VFA purchased water access rights during 2020-21 for use at the Arcadia Hatchery, which is currently under construction. These access rights provide the authority to consume 200 megalitres of water each year. These water rights have an indefinite useful life because its value does not diminish with use, and they can be used multiple times with no foreseeable limit.



## 6. Other assets and liabilities

### Introduction

This section sets out those other assets and liabilities that arose from the VFA's operations.

### Structure

#### 6.1 Receivables

#### 6.2 Payables

#### 6.3 Other non-financial assets

### 6.1 Receivables

Receivables includes amounts owing from government and non-government through accounts receivable, grants and taxes.

|   | (\$ thousand) |              |
|---|---------------|--------------|
|   | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Contractual</b>                            |               |              |
| Receivables – government (DOT)                | 8,305         | 6,582        |
| Receivables – external                        | 195           | 58           |
| <b>Total contractual receivables</b>          | <b>8,500</b>  | <b>6,640</b> |
| <b>Statutory</b>                              |               |              |
| GST input tax credit recoverable from the ATO | 288           | 194          |
| <b>Total statutory receivables</b>            | <b>288</b>    | <b>194</b>   |
| <b>Total receivables</b>                      | <b>8,788</b>  | <b>6,834</b> |

Contractual receivables are classified as financial instruments and categorised as loans and receivables. They are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs.

Statutory receivables do not arise from contracts and are recognised and measured similarly to contractual receivables (except for impairment) but are not classified as financial instruments.

### 6.2 Payables

Payables includes short and long-term trade debt and accounts payable, grants and taxes.

|                                   | (\$ thousand) |              |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|                                   | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Contractual</b>                |               |              |
| Supplies and services             | 1,287         | 84           |
| Deferred capital grant revenue    | 1,500         | -            |
| Other payables                    | 1,404         | 1,689        |
| <b>Total contractual payables</b> | <b>4,190</b>  | <b>1,773</b> |
| <b>Statutory</b>                  |               |              |
| Other payables                    | (251)         | (19)         |
| <b>Total statutory payables</b>   | <b>(251)</b>  | <b>(19)</b>  |
| <b>Total payables</b>             | <b>3,940</b>  | <b>1,754</b> |

**Contractual payables** are classified as financial instruments and measured at amortised cost. Accounts payable represents liabilities for goods and services provided to the VFA prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid.

**Statutory payables** are recognised and measured similarly to contractual payables, but are not classified as financial instruments and not included in the category of financial liabilities at amortised cost, because they do not arise from a contract.

#### Deferred capital grant revenue

Grant consideration was received from the Victorian State Government to support the construction of a visitors' centre at the new fish hatchery at Arcadia. Grant revenue is recognised progressively as the asset is constructed, since this is the time when the VFA satisfies its obligations under the transfer by controlling the asset as and when it is constructed. The progressive percentage costs incurred is used to recognise income because this most closely reflects the progress to completion as costs are incurred as the works are done.

The VFA has deferred recognition of the grant consideration received as a liability for the outstanding obligations.

|  | (\$ thousand) |      |
|--|---------------|------|
|  | 2021          | 2020 |
| Grant consideration for capital works received during the year             | 1,500         | -    |
| Closing balance of deferred grant consideration received for capital works | 1,500         | -    |

#### Maturity analysis of contractual payables <sup>(a)</sup>

|                                | Carrying amount | Nominal amount | (\$ thousand)     |            |              |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|--------------|-----------|
|                                |                 |                | Maturity dates    |            |              |           |
|                                |                 |                | Less than 1 month | 1-3 months | 3-12 months  | 1-5 years |
| <b>2021</b>                    |                 |                |                   |            |              |           |
| Supplies and services          | 1,287           | 1,287          | 1,287             | -          | -            | -         |
| Deferred capital grant revenue | 1,500           | 1,500          | -                 | -          | 1,500        | -         |
| Other payables                 | 1,404           | 1,404          | 1,404             | -          | -            | -         |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>4,190</b>    | <b>4,190</b>   | <b>2,690</b>      | <b>-</b>   | <b>1,500</b> | <b>-</b>  |
| <b>2020</b>                    |                 |                |                   |            |              |           |
| Supplies and services          | 84              | 84             | 84                | -          | -            | -         |
| Other payables                 | 1,689           | 1,689          | 1,689             | -          | -            | -         |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>1,773</b>    | <b>1,773</b>   | <b>1,773</b>      | <b>-</b>   | <b>-</b>     | <b>-</b>  |

<sup>(a)</sup> Maturity analysis is presented using the contractual and discounted cash flow.

Payables for supplies and services have an average credit period of 30 days. No interest is charged on late payments for 'other payables'.

### 6.3 Other non-financial assets

| Current other non-financial assets              |               |            |
|---|---------------|------------|
|   | (\$ thousand) |            |
|   | 2021          | 2020       |
| Prepayments                                     | 828           | 906        |
| <b>Total current other non-financial assets</b> | <b>828</b>    | <b>906</b> |

Other non-financial assets include **prepayments** which represent payments in advance of receipt of goods or services or that part of expenditure made in one accounting period covering a term extending beyond that period.

## 7. Financing our operations

### Introduction

This section provides information on the sources of finance utilised by the VFA during its operations, along with interest expenses (the cost of borrowings) and other information related to financing activities of the VFA.

This section includes disclosures of balances that are financial instruments (such as borrowings). Notes 7.1 and 7.2 provide additional, specific financial instrument disclosures.

### Structure

#### 7.1 Borrowings

7.1.1 Maturity analysis of borrowings

7.1.2 Interest expense

#### 7.2 Leases

7.2.1 Finance lease liabilities

#### 7.3 Cash flow information and balances

7.3.1 Reconciliation of net result for the period to cash flow from operating activities

7.3.2 Contributed capital from Victorian

7.3.3 Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year

#### 7.4 Commitments for expenditure

### 7.1 Borrowings

| Total borrowings                    | (\$ thousand) |              |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|                                     | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Current borrowings</b>           |               |              |
| Finance lease liabilities           | 1,679         | 1,423        |
| <b>Total current borrowings</b>     | <b>1,679</b>  | <b>1,423</b> |
| <b>Non-current borrowings</b>       |               |              |
| Finance lease liabilities           | 1,588         | 2,095        |
| <b>Total non-current borrowings</b> | <b>1,588</b>  | <b>2,095</b> |
| <b>Total borrowings</b>             | <b>3,267</b>  | <b>3,519</b> |

Borrowings refer to interest bearing liabilities mainly raised from public borrowings raised through finance leases.

Borrowings are classified as financial instruments. All interest-bearing liabilities are initially recognised at the fair value of the consideration received, less directly attributable transaction costs.

The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether the VFA has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through profit or loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest-bearing liabilities. The VFA determines the classification of its interest-bearing liabilities at initial recognition. All of the VFA's interest-bearing liabilities are categorised as financial liabilities at amortised cost.

### 7.1.1 Maturity analysis of borrowings <sup>(a)</sup>

|                   | (\$ thousand)   |                |                   |            |              |              |              |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                   | Carrying amount | Nominal amount | Maturity dates    |            |              |              |              |
|                   |                 |                | Less than 1 month | 1-3 months | 3-12 months  | 1-5 years    | Over 5 years |
| <b>2020-21</b>    |                 |                |                   |            |              |              |              |
| Lease liabilities | 3,267           | 3,326          | 335               | 156        | 1,204        | 1,631        | -            |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>3,267</b>    | <b>3,326</b>   | <b>335</b>        | <b>156</b> | <b>1,204</b> | <b>1,631</b> | <b>-</b>     |
| <b>2019-20</b>    |                 |                |                   |            |              |              |              |
| Lease liabilities | 3,519           | 3,719          | 278               | 313        | 933          | 2,194        | -            |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>3,519</b>    | <b>3,719</b>   | <b>278</b>        | <b>313</b> | <b>933</b>   | <b>2,194</b> | <b>-</b>     |

<sup>(a)</sup> Maturity analysis is presented using the contractual and discounted cash flow.

### 7.1.2 Interest expense

|                               | (\$ thousand) |            |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|
|                               | 2021          | 2020       |
| Interest on finance leases    | 96            | 109        |
| <b>Total interest expense</b> | <b>96</b>     | <b>109</b> |

Interest expense is the cost incurred in connection with borrowings. It includes interest on components of finance lease repayments.

Interest expense is recognised as an expense in the period in which it is incurred.

## 7.2 Leases

### 7.2.1 Finance lease liabilities

Information about leases for which the VFA is a lessee is presented below.

#### The VFA's leasing activities

The VFA leases various properties and motor vehicles. The lease contracts are typically made for fixed periods of 1-5 years with an option to renew the lease after that date. Property lease payments are renegotiated upon renewal to reflect market rentals.

#### 7.2.1 (a) Right-of-use Assets

Right-of-use assets are presented in note 5.1(a).

#### 7.2.1 (b) Amounts recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Operating Statement relating to leases:

|                                     | (\$ thousand) |              |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|                                     | 2021          | 2020         |
| Interest on finance leases          | 96            | 109          |
| Amortisation of right-of-use leases | 1,023         | 968          |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>1,119</b>  | <b>1,077</b> |



**7.2.1 (c) Amounts recognised in the Statement of Cashflows**

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of Cashflows for the year ending 30 June 2021 relating to leases

|  | (\$ thousand) |              |
|--|---------------|--------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020         |
| Interest and other costs of finance paid | 96            | 109          |
| Repayment of finance leases              | 1,010         | 935          |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>1,106</b>  | <b>1,044</b> |

For any new contracts entered into, the VFA considers whether a contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'. To apply this definition, the VFA assesses whether the contract meets three key evaluations which are whether:

- the contract contains an identified asset, which is either explicitly identified in the contract or implicitly specified by being identified at the time the asset is made available to the VFA and for which the supplier does not have substantive substitution rights;
- the VFA has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the identified asset throughout the period of use, considering its rights within the defined scope of the contract and the VFA has the right to direct the use of the identified asset throughout the period of use; and
- the VFA has the right to take decisions in respect of 'how and for what purpose' the asset is used throughout the period of use.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

**Recognition and measurement of leases as a lessee****Lease Liability – initial measurement**

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease if that rate is readily determinable or the VFA's incremental borrowing rate.

**Lease Liability – subsequent measurement**

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification, or if there are changes in-substance fixed payments.

**Presentation of right-of-use assets and lease liabilities**

The VFA presents right-of-use assets as 'property plant equipment' unless they meet the definition of investment property, in which case they are disclosed as 'investment property' in the balance sheet. Lease liabilities are presented as 'borrowings' in the balance sheet.

### 7.3 Cash flow information and balances

Cash and deposits, including cash equivalents, comprise cash at bank. Due to the State's investment policy and funding arrangements, the VFA does not hold a large cash reserve in its bank accounts.

|  | (\$ thousand) |          |
|--|---------------|----------|
|  | 2021          | 2020     |
| Total cash and deposits disclosed in the balance sheet | 1,050         | -        |
| <b>Balance as per cash flow statement</b>              | <b>1,050</b>  | <b>-</b> |

#### 7.3.1 Reconciliation of net result for the period to cash flow from operating activities

|   | (\$ thousand)  |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|
|   | 2021           | 2020           |
| <b>Net result for the period</b>                            | <b>(2,193)</b> | <b>(2,316)</b> |
| <b>Non-cash movements</b>                                   |                |                |
| Depreciation and amortisation of non-financial assets       | 2,696          | 2,660          |
| Revaluation of long service leave liability                 | 106            | (109)          |
| Revaluation and recognition of land and buildings           | 1,273          | -              |
| Sale of assets  | (317)          | (130)          |
| <b>Movements in assets and liabilities</b>                  |                |                |
| (Increase) / decrease in receivables                        | (1,664)        | 814            |
| (Increase) / decrease in other non-financial assets         | 78             | 52             |
| Increase / (decrease) in payables                           | 1,491          | (471)          |
| Increase / (decrease) in provisions                         | 395            | (37)           |
| <b>Net cash flows from / (used in) operating activities</b> | <b>1,865</b>   | <b>463</b>     |

#### 7.3.2 Non-cash financing and investing activities

Contributed capital was provided by the Victorian Government during 2020-21 to fund the majority of capital investment and the repayment of finance leases. Capital contributions from the Statement of Changes in Equity are reflective of capital investment and payments for finance leases.

The difference between Contributed Capital in the Statement of Changes in Equity and the Cash Flow Statement is due to the accrued cost of capital investment. Earthworks at the new fish hatchery at Arcadia that were completed and invoiced during 2020-21, were not paid by 30 June 2021.

|  | (\$ thousand) |              |
|--|---------------|--------------|
|  | 2021          | 2020         |
| <b>Contributed capital for the period (Statement of Changes in Equity)</b> | <b>3,664</b>  | <b>2,859</b> |
| <b>Movements in assets and liabilities</b>                                 |               |              |
| (Increase) / decrease in receivables                                       | (292)         | (286)        |
| <b>Contributed capital (Cash Flow Statement)</b>                           | <b>3,372</b>  | <b>2,573</b> |

### 7.3.3 Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year

From 1 February 2021 the VFA commenced operation of a bank account. The VFA uses this bank account to make payments and receive receipts for accounts payable and accounts receivable transactions respectively. Grant funding from DoT is deposited into the VFA bank account on a period basis.

The cash balance represents the timing difference between grant deposits and the payments for the VFA's goods and services. Prior to 1 February 2021, the VFA was entirely funded on a reimbursement basis through a receivable from DoT.

## 7.4 Commitments for expenditure

Commitments for future expenditure include operating and capital commitments arising from contracts. These commitments are recorded below at their nominal value and inclusive of GST. Where it is considered appropriate and provides additional relevant information to users, the net present values of significant individual projects are stated. These future expenditures cease to be disclosed as commitments once the related liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet.

Commitments for future expenditure increased in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20 primarily due to increasing value of fish stock contracts, and improved procurement and contract management processes introduced during 2020-21.

### Total commitments payable

|   | (\$ thousand)       |                          |              |               |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|
|   | Less than<br>1 year | Between<br>1 and 5 years | Over 5 years | Total         |
| Nominal amounts: 2021                       |                     |                          |              |               |
| Other operating commitments                 | 9,518               | 1,806                    | -            | 11,323        |
| Capital expenditure commitments             | 190                 | -                        | -            | 190           |
| Grant commitments (a)                       | 2,104               | 52                       | -            | 2,156         |
| <b>Total commitments (inclusive of GST)</b> | <b>11,812</b>       | <b>1,858</b>             | <b>-</b>     | <b>13,670</b> |
| less GST recoverable                        | (959)               | (165)                    | -            | (1,124)       |
| <b>Total commitments (exclusive of GST)</b> | <b>10,853</b>       | <b>1,692</b>             | <b>-</b>     | <b>12,546</b> |
| Nominal amounts: 2020                       |                     |                          |              |               |
| Other operating commitments                 | 3,725               | 1,873                    |              | 5,598         |
| Grant commitments (a)                       | 1,503               | 118                      |              | 1,621         |
| <b>Total commitments (inclusive of GST)</b> | <b>5,228</b>        | <b>1,991</b>             |              | <b>7,219</b>  |
| less GST recoverable                        | (425)               | (211)                    |              | (636)         |
| <b>Total commitments (exclusive of GST)</b> | <b>4,803</b>        | <b>1,780</b>             |              | <b>6,583</b>  |

<sup>(a)</sup> Grant commitments related to commitments by the VFA funded by the Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) trust.

## 8. Risks, contingencies and valuation judgements

### Introduction

The VFA is exposed to risk from its activities and outside factors. In addition, it is often necessary to make judgements and estimates associated with recognition and measurement of items in the financial statements.

This section sets out financial instrument-specific information, including exposures to financial risks as well as those items that are contingent in nature or require a higher level of judgement to be applied. For the VFA, this related mainly to fair value determination.

### Structure

#### 8.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

##### 8.1.1 Categorisation

##### 8.1.2 Net holding gain / (loss) on financial instruments by category

##### 8.1.3 Financial risk management objectives and policies

#### 8.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

#### 8.3 Fair value determination

##### 8.3.1 Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities

##### 8.3.2 Non-financial physical assets

### 8.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

#### Introduction

Financial instruments arise out of contractual agreements that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Due to the nature of the VFA's activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statute rather than a contract (for example taxes, fines and penalties). Such assets and liabilities do not meet the definition of financial instruments in AASB 132 Financial Instruments: Presentation.

Guarantees issued on behalf of the VFA are financial instruments because, although authorised under statute, terms and conditions for each financial guarantee may vary and are subject to an agreement.

#### Categories of financial assets

##### Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets are measured at amortised costs if both of the following criteria are met and the assets are not designated as fair value through net result:

- the assets are held by the VFA to collect the contractual cash flows; and
- the assets' contractual terms give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interests.

These assets are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less any impairment. The VFA recognises the receivables assets (excluding statutory receivables) in this category.

The VFA recognises the following assets in this category:

- cash and deposits; and
- receivables (excluding statutory receivables).

**Receivables** are financial instrument assets with fixed and determinable payments that are not quoted on an active market. These assets are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial measurement, receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method (and for assets, less any impairment).

The VFA recognises receivables (excluding statutory receivables) in this category.



### Categories of financial liabilities

**Financial liabilities at amortised cost** are initially recognised on the date they are originated. They are initially measured at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial recognition, these financial instruments are measured at amortised cost with any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value being recognised in profit and loss over the period of the interest-bearing liability, using the effective interest rate method. The VFA recognises the following liabilities in this category:

- payables (excluding statutory payables); and
- borrowings (including lease liabilities).

**Derecognition of financial assets:** A financial asset (or, where applicable, a part of a financial asset or part of a group of similar financial assets) is derecognised when:

- the rights to receive cash flows from the asset have expired; or
- the VFA retains the right to receive cash flows from the asset, but has assumed an obligation to pay them in full without material delay to a third party under a 'pass through' arrangement; or
- the VFA has transferred its rights to receive cash flows from the asset and either:
  - a. has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of the asset; or
  - b. has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards of the asset but has transferred control of the asset.

Where the VFA has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards or transferred control, the asset is recognised to the extent of the VFA's continuing involvement in the asset.

**Derecognition of financial liabilities:** A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation under the liability is discharged, cancelled or expires.

When an existing financial liability is replaced by another from the same lender on substantially different terms, or the terms of an existing liability are substantially modified, such an exchange or modification is treated as a derecognition of the original liability and the recognition of a new liability. The difference in the respective carrying amounts is recognised as an other economic flow in the estimated consolidated comprehensive operating statement.

**Reclassification of financial instruments:** Subsequent to initial recognition reclassification of financial liabilities is not permitted. Financial assets are required to be reclassified between fair value through net result, fair value through other comprehensive income and amortised cost when and only when the VFA's business model for managing its financial assets has changed such that its previous model would no longer apply.

However, the VFA is generally unable to change its business model because it is determined by the Performance Management Framework (PMF) and all Victorian government departments and agencies are required to apply the PMF under the Standing Directions 2018 under the FMA.

If under rare circumstances an asset is reclassified, the reclassification is applied prospectively from the reclassification date and previously recognised gains, losses or interest should not be restated. If the asset is reclassified to fair value, the fair value should be determined at the reclassification date and any gain or loss arising from a difference between the previous carrying amount and fair value is recognised in net result.

### 8.1.1 Financial instruments: categorisation

|  | (\$ thousand)        |   |   |              |
|--|----------------------|---|---|--------------|
|  | Cash and<br>deposits | Financial assets<br>at amortised<br>cost (AC) | Financial<br>liabilities at<br>amortised cost<br>(AC) | Total        |
| <b>2021</b>                                    |                      |   |   |              |
| <b>Contractual financial assets</b>            |                      |   |   |              |
| Cash and deposits                              | 1,050                | -   | -   | 1,050        |
| Receivables <sup>(a)</sup>                     | -                    | -   | -   | -            |
| Other receivables                              | -                    | 8,500   | -   | 8,500        |
| <b>Total contractual financial assets</b>      | <b>1,050</b>         | <b>8,500</b>                                  | <b>-</b>  | <b>9,550</b> |
| <b>Contractual financial liabilities</b>       |                      |   |   |              |
| <b>Payables <sup>(a)</sup></b>                 |                      |   |   |              |
| Supplies and services                          | -                    | -   | 1,287   | 1,287        |
| Deferred capital grant revenue                 |                      |   | 1,500   | 1,500        |
| Other payables                                 | -                    | -   | 1,404   | 1,404        |
| <b>Borrowings</b>                              | -                    | -   |   |              |
| Finance lease liabilities                      | -                    | -   | 3,267   | 3,267        |
| <b>Total contractual financial liabilities</b> | <b>-</b>             | <b>-</b>                                      | <b>7,457</b>  | <b>7,457</b> |
|  |                      |   |   |              |
|  | (\$ thousand)        |   |   |              |
|  |                      | Financial assets<br>at amortised<br>cost (AC) | Financial<br>liabilities at<br>amortised cost<br>(AC) | Total        |
| <b>2020</b>                                    |                      |   |   |              |
| <b>Contractual financial assets</b>            |                      |   |   |              |
| Receivables <sup>(a)</sup>                     |                      |   |   |              |
| Other receivables                              |                      | 6,640   | -   | 6,640        |
| <b>Total contractual financial assets</b>      |                      | <b>6,640</b>                                  | <b>-</b>  | <b>6,640</b> |
| <b>Contractual financial liabilities</b>       |                      |   |   |              |
| <b>Payables <sup>(a)</sup></b>                 |                      |   |   |              |
| Supplies and services                          |                      | -   | 84  | 84           |
| Other payables                                 |                      | -   | 1,689   | 1,689        |
| <b>Borrowings</b>                              |                      |   |   |              |
| Finance lease liabilities                      |                      | -   | 3,519   | 3,519        |
| <b>Total contractual financial liabilities</b> |                      | <b>-</b>                                      | <b>5,292</b>  | <b>5,292</b> |

<sup>(a)</sup> The total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts (e.g. amounts owing from Victorian Government and GST input tax credit recoverable and taxes payable).

**8.1.2 Financial instruments: Net holding gain / (loss) on financial instruments by category**

(\$ thousand)

| 2021   | Interest income / (expense) |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Contractual financial liabilities</b>       |                             |
| Financial liabilities at amortised cost        | 96                          |
| <b>Total contractual financial liabilities</b> | <b>96</b>                   |

(\$ thousand)

| 2020   | Interest income / (expense) |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Contractual financial liabilities</b>       |                             |
| Financial liabilities at amortised cost        | 109                         |
| <b>Total contractual financial liabilities</b> | <b>109</b>                  |

The net holding gain or loss on receivables is calculated by taking the movement in the fair value of the asset, the interest income, minus any impairment recognised in the net result.

**8.1.3 Financial risk management objectives and policies**

The VFA's activities expose it primarily to the financial risk of changes in interest rates. The VFA does not enter into derivative financial instruments to manage its exposure to interest rate.

The VFA does not enter into or trade financial instruments, including derivative financial instruments, for speculative purposes.

- The VFA's principal financial instruments comprise:
- cash and deposits;
- receivables (excluding statutory receivables);
- payables (excluding statutory payables); and
- borrowings.

Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement, and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, with respect to each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument above are disclosed in Note 8.3 – Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities, to the financial statements.

The main purpose in holding financial instruments is to prudentially manage the VFA's financial risks within government policy parameters.

The VFA uses different methods to measure and manage the different risks to which it is exposed.

The carrying amounts of the VFA's contractual financial assets and financial liabilities by category are disclosed in the Note 8.1.1 – Financial instruments: categorisation.

### Financial instruments: credit risk

Credit risk arises from the contractual financial assets of the VFA, which comprise non-statutory receivables. The VFA's exposure to credit risk arises from the potential default of the counter party on their contractual obligations resulting in financial loss to the VFA. Credit risk is measured at fair value and is monitored on a regular basis.

Credit risk associated with the VFA's financial assets is minimal because its main debtor is DOT. For debtors other than government, it is the VFA's policy to obtain sufficient collateral or credit enhancements where appropriate.

Provision for impairment for contractual financial assets is recognised when there is objective evidence that the VFA will not be able to collect a receivable. Objective evidence includes financial difficulties of the debtor, default payments, debts which are more than 60 days overdue, and changes in debtor credit ratings.

Except as otherwise detailed in the following table, the carrying amount of financial assets recorded in the financial statements, net of any allowances for losses, represents the VFA's maximum exposure to credit risk without taking account of the value of any collateral obtained.

There has been no material change to the VFA's credit risk profile in 2020-21.

| Credit quality of financial assets   |  |  |              |
|--|--|--|--------------|
|  | (\$ thousand)                              |  |              |
|  | Financial institution<br>(A credit rating) | Victorian Government<br>(AA credit rating) | Total        |
| <b>2020-21</b>   |  |  |              |
| <b>Financial assets with loss allowance measured at 12-month expected credit loss</b>  |  |  |              |
| Cash and deposits (not assessed for impairment due to materiality)                     | 1,050                                      | -  | 1,050        |
| <b>Financial assets with loss allowance measured at lifetime expected credit loss:</b> |  |  |              |
| Receivables (with no impairment loss recognised) <sup>(a)</sup>                        | -  | 8,500                                      | 8,500        |
| <b>Total contractual financial assets</b>  | <b>1,050</b>                               | <b>8,500</b>                               | <b>9,550</b> |
| <b>2019-20</b>   |  |  |              |
| <b>Financial assets with loss allowance measured at lifetime expected credit loss:</b> |  |  |              |
| Receivables (with no impairment loss recognised) <sup>(a)</sup>                        | 6,640                                      | -  | 6,640        |
| <b>Total contractual financial assets</b>  | <b>6,640</b>                               | <b>-</b>                                   | <b>6,640</b> |

<sup>(a)</sup> The carrying amounts disclosed exclude statutory receivables (e.g. amounts owing from the State of Victoria and GST recoverable).

### Impairment of financial assets under AASB 9 – applicable from 1 July 2019

The VFA records the allowance for expected credit loss for the relevant financial instruments applying AASB 9's. Expected Credit Loss approach. Subject to AASB 9 impairment assessment include the VFA's contractual receivables, statutory receivables and its investment in debt instruments.

Equity instruments are not subject to impairment under AASB 9. Other financial assets mandatorily measured or designated at fair value through net result are not subject to impairment assessment under AASB 9. While cash and cash equivalents are also subject to the impairment requirements of AASB 9, the identified impairment loss was immaterial.

Although not a financial asset, contract assets recognised applying AASB 15 are also subject to impairment however it is immaterial.



### Contractual receivables at amortised cost

The VFA applies AASB 9 simplified approach for all contractual receivables to measure expected credit losses using a lifetime expected loss allowance based on the assumptions about risk of default and expected loss rates. The VFA has grouped contractual receivables on shared credit risk characteristics and days past due and select the expected credit loss rate based on the VFA's past history, existing market conditions, as well as forward-looking estimates at the end of the financial year.

On this basis, the VFA determines the opening loss allowance on initial application date of AASB 9 and the closing loss allowance at end of the financial year as follows:

|  | (\$ thousand) |                      |               |                |              |       |
|--|---------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------|
|  | Current       | Less than<br>1 month | 1-3<br>months | 3-12<br>months | 1-5<br>years | Total |
| 30 June 2021                                     |               |                      |               |                |              |       |
| Expected loss rate                               | 0%            | -                    | -             | -              | -            | -     |
| Gross carrying amount of contractual receivables | 8,500         | -                    | -             | -              | -            | 8,500 |
| Loss allowance                                   | -             | -                    | -             | -              | -            | -     |
| 30 June 2020                                     |               |                      |               |                |              |       |
| Expected loss rate                               | 0%            | -                    | -             | -              | -            | -     |
| Gross carrying amount of contractual receivables | 6,640         | -                    | -             | -              | -            | 6,640 |
| Loss allowance                                   | -             | -                    | -             | -              | -            | -     |

### Financial instruments: liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the VFA would be unable to meet its financial obligations as and when they fall due. The VFA operates under the Government fair payments policy of settling financial obligations within 30 days and in the event of a dispute, making payments within 30 days from the date of resolution.

The VFA's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed in the balance sheet.

The VFA's exposure to liquidity risk is deemed insignificant based on current assessment of risk. Maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed in the balance sheet.

### Financial instruments: market risk

#### Interest rate risk

The VFA commenced operating a bank account during 2020-21. This bank account is for transactional purposes and balances are expected to be kept at low levels, resulting in minimal interest revenue. The weighted average interest rate for the VFA's transactional bank account was 0.1 per cent.

The VFA's only interest-bearing liabilities relate to finance lease liabilities. Interest rates in relation to the VFA's finance lease liabilities are fixed. The 2020-21 weighted average interest rate was 3.87 percent for right of use assets, and 2.55 percent for motor vehicles (3.87 & 2.75 in 2019-20 for right of use assets and motor vehicles respectively).

## 8.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the balance sheet, but are disclosed and, if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable respectively.

### Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the VFA. These are classified as either quantifiable, where the potential economic benefit is known, or non-quantifiable.

The VFA did not have any significant contingent assets for this financial year. (2019-20: Nil).

### Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
  - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligations; or
  - the amount of the obligations cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Contingent liabilities are also classified as either quantifiable or non-quantifiable.

### Quantifiable contingent liabilities – Port Phillip Bay fishing licences

The State commenced the compulsory buyout of a number of fishing licences in Port Phillip Bay in 2015. This program was enacted by legislation passed by parliament in 2015, with compensation payments to be finalised by the end of 2022.

| Quantifiable contingent liabilities | (\$ thousand) |      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------|
|                                     | 2021          | 2020 |
| Port Philip Pay fishing licences    | 2,111         | -    |
| Balance as per cash flow statement  | 2,111         | -    |

### 8.3 Fair value determination

This section sets out information on how the VFA determined fair value for financial reporting purposes. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

The following assets and liabilities are carried at fair value:

- financial assets and liabilities at fair value through operating result; and
- land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment.

#### Fair value hierarchy

A number of inputs are used in determining fair values. To increase consistency and comparability in the financial statements, these inputs are categorised into three levels, also known as the fair value hierarchy. The levels are as follows:

- Level 1 – quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2 – valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and
- Level 3 – valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

The VFA determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by reassessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

The Valuer-General Victoria (VGV) is the VFA's independent valuation agency and monitors changes in the fair value of each asset and liability through relevant data sources to determine whether revaluation is required.

#### How this section is structured

For those assets and liabilities for which fair values are determined, the following disclosures are provided:

- carrying amount and the fair value (which would be the same for those assets measured at fair value);
- which level of the fair value hierarchy was used to determine the fair value; and
- in respect of those assets and liabilities subject to fair value determination using Level 3 inputs:
  - a reconciliation of the movements in fair values from the beginning of the year to the end; and
  - details of significant unobservable inputs used in the fair value determination.

This section is divided between disclosures in connection with fair value determination for financial instruments (refer to Note 8.3.1 – Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities) and non-financial physical assets (refer to Note 8.3.2 – Fair value determination: non-financial physical assets).

#### 8.3.1 Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities

The VFA currently holds a range of financial instruments that are recorded in the financial statements where the carrying amounts are a reasonable approximation of fair value, either due to their short-term nature or with the expectation that they will be paid in full by the end of the 2020-21 reporting period.

## 8.3.2 Fair value determination: non-financial physical assets

|   | Carrying amount as at<br>30 June 2021 | Fair value measurement at end of<br>reporting period using: |                        |                        |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| 2021  |                                       | Level 1 <sup>(a)</sup>                                      | Level 2 <sup>(a)</sup> | Level 3 <sup>(a)</sup> |
| Land at fair value                                    |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Specialised land                                      | 2,054                                 | -   | -                      | 2,054                  |
| Non-specialised land                                  | 3,380                                 | -   | 3,380                  | -                      |
| <b>Total of land at fair value</b>                    | <b>5,434</b>                          | <b>-</b>  | <b>3,380</b>           | <b>2,054</b>           |
| Buildings at fair value                               |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Specialised buildings                                 | 21,113                                | -   | -                      | 21,113                 |
| Non-specialised buildings                             | -                                     | -   | -                      | -                      |
| <b>Total buildings at fair value</b>                  | <b>21,113</b>                         | <b>-</b>  | <b>-</b>               | <b>21,113</b>          |
| Leasehold Improvements                                |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Non-specialised leasehold improvements                | 464                                   | -   | 464                    | -                      |
| <b>Total Buildings leasehold at fair value</b>        | <b>464</b>                            | <b>-</b>  | <b>464</b>             | <b>-</b>               |
| Plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value              |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Leased vehicles <sup>(b)</sup>                        | 2,557                                 | -   | -                      | 2,557                  |
| Plant and equipment                                   | 1,923                                 | -   | 1,923                  | -                      |
| <b>Total plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value</b> | <b>4,480</b>                          | <b>-</b>  | <b>1,923</b>           | <b>2,557</b>           |
| Intangible assets                                     |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Water Access Rights                                   | 218                                   | -   | 218                    | -                      |
| <b>Total Intangible Assets at fair value</b>          | <b>218</b>                            | <b>-</b>  | <b>218</b>             | <b>-</b>               |

<sup>(a)</sup> Classified in accordance with the fair value hierarchy.

<sup>(b)</sup> Vehicles are categorised to level 3 assets as current replacement cost (not market value) is used in estimating fair value.



## 8.3.2 Fair value determination: non-financial physical assets (continued)

|   | Carrying amount as at<br>30 June 2020 | Fair value measurement at end of<br>reporting period using: |                        |                        |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| 2020  |                                       | Level 1 <sup>(a)</sup>                                      | Level 2 <sup>(a)</sup> | Level 3 <sup>(a)</sup> |
| Land at fair value                                    |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Specialised land                                      | 5,307                                 | -   | -                      | 5,307                  |
| Non-specialised land                                  | 1,505                                 | -   | 1,505                  | -                      |
| <b>Total of land at fair value</b>                    | <b>6,812</b>                          | <b>-</b>  | <b>1,505</b>           | <b>5,307</b>           |
| Buildings at fair value                               |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Specialised buildings                                 | 20,249                                | -   | -                      | 20,249                 |
| Non-specialised buildings                             | 315                                   | -   | 315                    | -                      |
| <b>Total buildings at fair value</b>                  | <b>20,564</b>                         | <b>-</b>  | <b>315</b>             | <b>20,249</b>          |
| Leasehold Improvements                                |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Non-specialised leasehold improvements                | 261                                   | -   | 261                    | -                      |
| <b>Total Buildings leasehold at fair value</b>        | <b>261</b>                            | <b>-</b>  | <b>261</b>             | <b>-</b>               |
| Plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value              |                                       |   |                        |                        |
| Leased vehicles <sup>(b)</sup>                        | 2,611                                 | -   | -                      | 2,611                  |
| Plant and equipment                                   | 2,146                                 | -   | 2,146                  | -                      |
| <b>Total plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value</b> | <b>4,758</b>                          | <b>-</b>  | <b>2,146</b>           | <b>2,611</b>           |

<sup>(a)</sup> Classified in accordance with the fair value hierarchy.<sup>(b)</sup> Vehicles are categorised to level 3 assets as current replacement cost (not market value) is used in estimating fair value.

## Reconciliation of Level 3 fair value movements

| 2021  | (\$ thousand)       |                          |                 |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
|   | Specialised<br>land | Specialised<br>buildings | Leased vehicles |
| Opening balance   | 5,307               | 20,249                   | 2,611           |
| Net purchases (sales)   | -                   | 1,333                    | 495             |
| Additions recognised  | -                   | 104                      | -               |
| Transfers in (out) of Level 3   | (1,238)             | 315                      | -               |
| Depreciation  | -                   | (1,182)                  | (551)           |
| <b>Sub-total</b>  | <b>4,069</b>        | <b>20,819</b>            | <b>2,557</b>    |
| Gains or losses recognised in other<br>economic flows – other<br>comprehensive income | -                   | -                        | -               |
| Revaluation of land and buildings   | (2,015)             | 294                      | -               |
| <b>Sub-total</b>  | <b>(2,015)</b>      | <b>294</b>               | <b>-</b>        |
| <b>Closing Balance</b>  | <b>2,054</b>        | <b>21,113</b>            | <b>2,557</b>    |

### Specialised buildings

The VFA's buildings were classified as specialised for 2020-21 to ensure consistency with the independent valuation of the VFA's buildings performed by the Valuer-General Victoria. The effective date of the valuation is 30 June 2021.

For the majority of the VFA's specialised buildings, the current replacement cost method is used, adjusting for the associated depreciations. As depreciation adjustments are considered as significant, unobservable inputs in nature, specialised buildings are classified as Level 3 fair value measurements.

### Specialised land

Non-specialised land is valued using the market approach, whereby assets are compared to recent comparable sales or sales of comparable assets that are considered to have nominal value.

Some of the VFA's land was reclassified from specialised to non-specialised 2020-21 to ensure consistency with the independent valuation of the VFA's buildings performed by the Valuer-General Victoria. The effective date of the valuation is 30 June 2021.

It was also discovered as part of 2020-21 land valuation that the previous Valuer-General Victoria's valuation from 2015-16 used incorrect land allotment and zoning assumptions for the VFA's Snobs Creek property, which resulted in a downwards land revaluation of \$1.4 million.

### Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is held at fair value. When plant and equipment is specialised in use, such that it is rarely sold other than as part of a going concern, fair value is determined using the depreciated replacement cost method. There were no changes in valuation techniques throughout the period to 30 June 2021. For all assets measured at fair value, the current use is considered the highest and best use.

### Motor vehicles under finance lease

Vehicles are valued using the depreciated cost method. The VFA acquires new vehicles and at times disposes of them before the end of their economic life. The process of acquisition, use and disposal in the market is managed by experienced fleet managers who set relevant depreciation rates during use to reflect the utilisation of the vehicles.

### Intangible Assets

The VFA's water access rights are valued using the market approach. The water access rights were purchased in March 2021 and their purchase price is the basis for the 2020-21 valuation.

### Description of significant unobservable inputs to Level 3 valuations

| Asset class           | Valuation technique          | Significant unobservable inputs       |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Specialised buildings | Depreciated replacement cost | Recognised building cost indicators   |
| Leased Vehicles       | Current replacement cost     | Cost per unit: Useful life of vehicle |

## 9. Other disclosures

### Introduction

This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report.

### Structure

- 9.1 Other economic flows included in net result
- 9.2 Reserves
- 9.3 Responsible persons
- 9.4 Remuneration of executives
- 9.5 Related parties
- 9.6 Remuneration of auditors
- 9.7 Subsequent events
- 9.8 Other changes in accounting policies
- 9.9 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective
- 9.10 Glossary of technical terms
- 9.11 Style conventions

### 9.1 Other economic flows included in net result

Other economic flows are changes in the volume or value of an asset or liability that do not result from transactions.

Other gains / (losses) from other economic flows include the gains or losses from:

- the revaluation of the present value of the long service leave liability due to changes in the bond interest rates; and
- reclassified amounts relating to available-for-sale financial instruments from the reserves to net result due to a disposal or derecognition of the financial instrument. This does not include reclassification between equity accounts due to machinery of government changes or 'other transfers' of assets.

#### Other economic flows included in net result

|  | (\$ thousand)  |              |
|--|----------------|--------------|
|  | 2021           | 2020         |
| <b>Net gain / (loss) on non-financial assets</b>                           |                |              |
| Revaluation of land  | (1,378)        | -            |
| Gain / (loss) on disposal of leased vehicles                               | 302            | 130          |
| Gain / (loss) on disposal of property, plant and equipment                 | 15             | -            |
| Additions by recognition   | 105            | -            |
| <b>Total Net gain / (loss) on non-financial assets</b>                     | <b>(956)</b>   | <b>130</b>   |
| <b>Other gain / (loss) from other economic flows</b>                       |                |              |
| Gain / (loss) arising from revaluation of long service leave liability (a) | (63)           | (109)        |
| <b>Total other gain / (loss) on other economic flows</b>                   | <b>(63)</b>    | <b>(109)</b> |
| <b>Total other economic flows included in net result</b>                   | <b>(1,020)</b> | <b>21</b>    |

<sup>(a)</sup> Revaluation gain / (loss) due to changes in bond rates.

The downwards revaluation of land is primarily due to an error in the Valuer General Victoria's 2016 land valuation, which overestimated the number of hectares of land, and in incorrect zoning of the land, at Snobs Creek.

## 9.2 Reserves

|   | (\$ thousand) |          |
|---|---------------|----------|
|   | 2021          | 2020     |
| <b>Physical asset revaluation surplus</b> |               |          |
| Balance at beginning of financial year    | -             | -        |
| Revaluation increments/(decrements)       | 294           | -        |
| <b>Balance at end of financial year</b>   | <b>294</b>    | <b>-</b> |

During the year, land and buildings were revalued for the first time since the commencement of the Victorian Fisheries Authority on 1 July 2017. The valuation of buildings increased by \$294,000.

## 9.3 Responsible persons

In accordance with the Ministerial Directions issued by the Assistant Treasurer under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the following disclosures are made regarding responsible persons for the reporting period.

The roles of Minister, Board of Directors and Accountable Officer for the VFA were performed by the following persons:

|                                  |                            |                             |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Minister for Fishing and Boating | The Hon. Melissa Horne MLA | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Board Chairperson                | Ms Gail Owen               | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Deputy Chairperson               | Dr Bernadette Northeast    | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Director                         | Ms Sophie Harris           | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Director                         | Mr Chris Rose              | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Director                         | Mr Graeme Dear             | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Director                         | Mr David Shirer            | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Director                         | Ms Joelle Tabone           | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Director                         | Mr Yorick Piper            | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |
| Chief Executive Officer          | Mr Travis Dowling          | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 |

### Remuneration of Board Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, and Directors <sup>(a)</sup>

|                           | Total number     |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                           | 2021             | 2020             |
| <b>Band Range</b>         |                  |                  |
| \$10,000 - \$19,000       | 6                | 6                |
| \$20,000 - \$29,000       | -                | -                |
| \$30,000 - \$39,000       | 1                | 1                |
| \$240,000 - \$249,000     | 1                | 1                |
| <b>Total number</b>       | <b>8</b>         | <b>8</b>         |
| <b>Total remuneration</b> | <b>\$363,055</b> | <b>\$360,587</b> |

<sup>(a)</sup> Table incorporates seven Board Directors and one Accountable Officer. Only seven of the eight Board Directors are remunerated.



### Accountable Officer's remuneration

Total remuneration received or receivable by the Accountable Officer in connection with the management of the VFA during the reporting period was in the range of \$240,000 - \$249,000 (2020: \$240,000 - \$249,000).

Other related transactions and loans requiring disclosure under the Directions of the Assistant Treasurer have been considered and there are no matters to report.

Amounts relating to ministers are reported in the financial statements of the Department of Parliamentary Services. For information regarding related party transactions of ministers, the register of members' interests is publicly available from: [www.parliament.vic.gov.au/publications/register-of-interests](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/publications/register-of-interests)

## 9.4 Remuneration of executives

The number of executive officers, other than ministers and accountable officers, and their total remuneration during the reporting period are shown in the table below. Total annualised employee equivalents provides a measure of full-time equivalent executive officers over the reporting period.

Remuneration comprises employee benefits in all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by the entity, or on behalf of the entity, in exchange for services rendered, and is disclosed in the following categories.

**Short-term employee benefits** include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

**Post-employment benefits** include pensions and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

**Other long-term benefits** include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

| Remuneration of executive officers                               | (\$ thousand)      |             |
|--|--------------------|-------------|
|  | Total remuneration |             |
|  | 2021               | 2020        |
| Short-term employee benefits                                     | 422                | 459         |
| Post-employment benefits   | 32                 | 30          |
| Other long-term benefits   | 0                  | 9           |
| <b>Total remuneration</b>  | <b>454</b>         | <b>498</b>  |
| <b>Total number of executives</b>                                | <b>2</b>           | <b>2</b>    |
| <b>Total annualised employee equivalent (AEE) <sup>(a)</sup></b> | <b>2.00</b>        | <b>2.00</b> |

<sup>(a)</sup> Annualised employee equivalent is based on the time fraction worked over the reporting period.

## 9.5 Related parties

The VFA is a statutory authority of the State of Victoria.

Related parties of the VFA include:

- all key management personnel and their close family members and personal business interests (controlled entities, joint ventures and entities they have significant influence over);
- Portfolio Ministers and their close family members; and
- all departments and public sector entities that are controlled and consolidated into the whole of state consolidated financial statements.

All related party transactions have been entered into on an arm's length basis.

### Significant transactions with government-related entities

The VFA received funding in the form of grants from the DoT and made payments to other government entities in the 2020-21 financial year.

During the year the VFA had the following significant government-related entity transactions:

| Revenue and receivables transactions over \$10 000 with government-related entities |   |                       |             |                       |             |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Related party   | Nature of transaction   | 2021<br>(\$ thousand) |             | 2020<br>(\$ thousand) |             |
|   |   | Revenue               | Receivables | Revenue               | Receivables |
| Department of Transport   | Provision of grant revenue; receivable in relation to restructuring of administrative arrangements as well as grant revenue | 57,319                | 8,305       | 54,026                | 6,691       |
| Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions   | Pre-paid capital grants for Acradia Native Fish Hatchery Visit Centre   | 1,500                 | -           | -                     | -           |
| Department of Premier and Cabinet   | Grant - Gender Equality Bill Implementation Pilots.   | -                     | -           | 18                    | -           |
| Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning                                 | Grant - Port Phillip Bay Spider Crab Aggregations   | -                     | -           | 10                    | -           |

| Expenditure and Payables transactions over \$10 000 with government-related entities |   |                       |          |                       |         |
|--|---|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|---------|
| Related party  | Nature of transaction   | 2021<br>(\$ thousand) |          | 2020<br>(\$ thousand) |         |
|  |   | Expenditure           | Payables | Expenditure           | Payable |
| Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning                                  | Provision of Corporate Services as per Service Level Agreement                        | 654                   | -        | 451                   | -       |
| Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions  | Provision of Corporate Services as per Service Level Agreement; accommodation charges | 609                   | 390      | 1,364                 | 1,466   |
| Department of Transport  | Provision of Corporate Services as per Service Level Agreement                        | 1,230                 | -        | 377                   | -       |
| Victorian Managed Insurance Authority  | Public and product liability, professional indemnity, and motor vehicle insurance     | 146                   | -        | 180                   | -       |
| Department of Treasury and Finance   | Grant payments  | 105                   | -        | 31                    | -       |
| Game Management Authority  |   | 23                    | -        | 87                    | -       |

## Expenditure and Payables transactions over \$10 000 with government-related entities (continued)

| Related party                               | Nature of transaction                   | 2021<br>(\$ thousand) |          | 2020<br>(\$ thousand) |         |
|---|---|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|---------|
|   |   | Expenditure           | Payables | Expenditure           | Payable |
| Gippsland Ports Committee of Management     | Infrastructure improvements             | -                     |          | 81                    |         |
| Goulburn Murray Water                       | Grant payments                          | 56                    |          | 96                    |         |
| Coliban Regional Water Corporation          | Boat ramp design and construction       | -                     |          | 64                    |         |
| Victorian Government Solicitor's Office     | Legal advice                            | 110                   |          | 31                    |         |
| North East CMA                              | Grant payments                          | 51                    |          | -                     |         |
| East Gippsland CMA                          | Grant payments                          | 90                    |          | 100                   |         |
| Goulburn Broken CMA                         | Grant payments                          | -                     |          | 15                    |         |
| Victorian Auditor-General Office            | Audit of VFA & RFL Financial Statements | 76                    |          | 56                    |         |
| Mallee CMA                                  | Grant payments                          | -                     |          | 18                    |         |
| Department of Transport                     | Biometrics support                      | -                     |          | 377                   |         |
| Corangamite Catchment Management Authority  | Grant Payments                          | 40                    |          | -                     |         |
| Vicroads                                    | Vehicle Registration                    | 41                    |          | 38                    |         |
| Department of Premier and Cabinet           | Fishing Products                        | 40                    |          | -                     |         |
| North Central CMA                           | Grant payments                          | 42                    |          | 58                    |         |
| Corinella Foreshore Committee of Management | Construction of boat ramp               | -                     |          | 20                    |         |

<sup>(a)</sup> The provision of corporate services, and some accommodation charges, that were provided by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions in 2019/20 transferred to the Department of Transport in 2020-21.

CMA = Catchment Management Authority.

### Key management personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) of the VFA include:

- the Portfolio Minister;
- members of the board of directors; and
- the Chief Executive Officer.

Individual KMP are identified in Note 9.2 – Responsible persons.

The compensation detailed below excludes the salaries and benefits the Portfolio Minister receives. The Minister's remuneration and allowances is set by the Parliamentary Salaries and Superannuation Act 1968 and is reported within the Department of Parliamentary Services' Financial Report.

### Compensation of key management personnel

|  | (\$ thousand)      |            |
|--|--------------------|------------|
|  | Total remuneration |            |
|  | 2021               | 2020       |
| Short-term employee benefits             | 335                | 327        |
| Post-employment benefits                 | 28                 | 29         |
| Other long-term benefits                 | 0                  | 5          |
| <b>Total compensation <sup>(a)</sup></b> | <b>363</b>         | <b>361</b> |

<sup>(a)</sup> (a) Note that the VFA's KMPs are excluded from the disclosure of remuneration of executive officers (Note 9.3 – Remuneration of executives)

### Transactions and balances with key management personnel and other related parties

Given the breadth and depth of state government activities, related parties transact with the Victorian public sector in a manner consistent with other members of the public, e.g. stamp duty and other government fees and charges. Further employment of processes within the Victorian public sector occur on terms and conditions consistent with the *Public Administration Act 2004* and Codes of Conduct and Standards issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. Procurement processes occur on terms and conditions consistent with the Victorian Government Procurement Board requirements.

During the year, the VFA made grant payments of \$90,000 (\$100,000 in 2019-20) to East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (CMA), a related entity of Director Mr Graeme Dear. The terms and conditions of the grant were equivalent to those that prevail in an arm's length transaction under the State's procurement process.

The VFA also made payments of \$23,000 to the Game Management Authority (GMA) in 2020-21 for a Shared Intelligence Officer. VFA Director Mr Christopher Rose is also a Director of the GMA.

Outside of normal citizen type transactions with the VFA, with the exception of the above, there were no other reportable related party transactions that involved key management personnel, their close family members and their personal business interests. No provision has been required, nor any expense recognised, for impairment of receivables from related parties.

### 9.6 Remuneration of auditors<sup>(a)</sup>

|   | (\$ thousand) |           |
|---|---------------|-----------|
|   | 2021          | 2020      |
| <b>Victorian Auditor-General's Office</b> |               |           |
| Audit of the VFA financial statements     | 66            | 66        |
| <b>Total remuneration of auditors</b>     | <b>66</b>     | <b>66</b> |

Note:

<sup>(a)</sup> The Victorian Auditor-General's Office is prohibited from providing non-audit services.



## 9.7 Subsequent events

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic remains an ongoing challenge across the world, and is expected to impact the VFA during 2021-22 and beyond.

Although the impacts are difficult to predict, stay at home and travel restrictions could impact upon revenues received from Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) licence sales. Revenues could increase if restrictions are minimal and opportunities to travel outside of Victoria remain limited. However, prolonged restrictions over the peak fishing months could reduce expected revenues, and the VFA's ability for expenditure on recreational fishing in the future.

The ongoing impacts of COVID-19 could also impact upon:

- The fair value of land and buildings across regional Victoria; and
- Provisions for Annual Leave and Long Service Leave due to reduced opportunities for staff to take leave.

## 9.8 Other changes in accounting policies

### Contributions by owners

Consistent with the requirements of AASB 1004 Contributions, contributions by owners (that is, contributed capital) are treated as equity transactions and, therefore, do not form part of the income and expenses of the VFA.

Additions to net assets that have been designated as contributions by owners are recognised as contributed capital. Other transfers that are in the nature of contributions to or distributions by owners have also been designated as contributions by owners.

Transfers of net assets arising from administrative restructurings are treated as distributions to or contributions by owners. Transfers of net liabilities arising from administrative restructurings are treated as distributions to owners.

### Accounting for the goods and services tax (GST)

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, except where GST incurred is not recoverable from the taxation authority. In this case, the GST payable is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from or payable to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis.

Commitments, contingent assets and liabilities are also stated inclusive of GST.

## 9.9 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective

Certain new and revised accounting standards have been issued but are not effective for the 2020-21 reporting period. These accounting standards have not been applied to the Model Financial Statements. The State is reviewing its existing policies and assessing the potential implications of these accounting standards which includes:

- AASB 2020-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-Current

This Standard amends AASB 101 to clarify requirements for the presentation of liabilities in the statement of financial position as current or non-current. It initially applied to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2022 with earlier application permitted however the AASB has recently issued AASB 2020-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current – Deferral of Effective Date to defer the application by one year to periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023. The VFA will not early adopt the Standard.

The VFA is in the process of analysing the impacts of this Standard. However, it is not anticipated to have a material impact.

Several other amending standards and AASB interpretations have been issued that apply to future reporting periods, but are considered to have *limited impact on the VFA's reporting*.

- AASB 17 *Insurance Contracts*.
- AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* (Appendix C).
- AASB 2020-2 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Removal of Special Purpose Financial Statements for Certain For-Profit Private Sector Entities*.
- AASB 2020-3 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Annual Improvements 2018-2020 and Other Amendments*.
- AASB 2020-7 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Covid-19-Rent Related Concessions: Tier 2 Disclosures*.
- AASB 2020-8 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Interest Rate Benchmark Reform – Phase 2*.
- AASB 2020-9 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Tier 2 Disclosures: Interest Rate Benchmark Reform (Phase 2) and Other Amendments*.

## 9.10 Glossary of technical terms

The following is a summary of the major technical items used in this report.

### Amortisation

Amortisation is the expense which results from the consumption, extraction or use over time of a non-produced physical or intangible asset. This expense is classified as an 'other economic flow'.

### Borrowings

Borrowings refers to interest bearing liabilities mainly from public borrowings raised through the TCV, finance leases and other interest bearing arrangements. Borrowings also include non-interest bearing advances from government that are acquired for policy purposes.

### Capital Asset charge

A charge levied on the written-down value of controlled non-current physical assets in an authority's balance sheet which aims to: attribute to agency outputs the opportunity cost of capital used in service delivery; and provide incentives to authority to identified and dispose or surplus assets in a timely manner.

### Commitments

Commitments include those operating, capital and other outsourcing commitments arising from non-cancellable contractual or statutory sources.

### Current grants

Amounts payable or receivable for current purposes for which no economic benefits of equal value are receivable or payable in return.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is an expense that arises from the consumption through wear or time of a produced physical asset. This expense is classified as a 'transaction' and so reduces the 'net result from transaction'.

### Effective interest method

The effective interest method is used to calculate the amortised cost of a financial asset or liability and of allocating interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial instrument, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

### Financial asset

A financial asset is any asset that is:

- a. cash;
- b. an equity instrument of another entity;
- c. a contractual right or statutory right:
  - to receive cash or another financial asset from another entity; or
  - to exchange financial assets or financial liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially favourable to the entity; or
- d. a contract that will or may be settled in the entity's own equity instruments and is:
  - a non-derivative for which the entity is or may be obliged to receive a variable number of the entity's own equity instruments; or
  - a derivative that will or may be settled other than by the exchange of a fixed amount of cash or another financial asset for a fixed number of the entity's own equity instruments.

### Financial instrument

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Financial assets or liabilities that are not contractual (such as statutory receivables or payables that arise as a result of statutory requirements imposed by governments) are not financial instruments.

### Financial liability

A financial liability is any liability that is:

- a. a contractual or statutory obligation:
  - to deliver cash or another financial asset to another entity; or
  - to exchange financial assets or financial liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially unfavourable to the entity; or
- b. a contract that will or may be settled in the entity's own equity instruments and is:
  - a non-derivative for which the entity is or may be obliged to deliver a variable number of the entity's own equity instruments; or
  - a derivative that will or may be settled other than by the exchange of a fixed amount of cash or another financial asset for a fixed number of the entity's own equity instruments. For this purpose, the entity's own equity instruments do not include instruments that are themselves contracts for the future receipt or delivery of the entity's own equity instruments.

### Grants and other transfers

Transactions in which one unit provides goods, services, assets (or extinguishes a liability) or labour to another unit without receiving approximately equal value in return. Grants can either be operating or capital in nature.

While grants to governments may result in the provision of some goods or services to the transferor, they do not give the transferor a claim to receive directly benefits of approximately equal value. For this reason, grants are referred to by the AASB as involuntary transfers and are termed non-reciprocal transfers. Receipt and sacrifice of approximately equal value may occur, but only by coincidence. For example, governments are not obliged to provide commensurate benefits in the form of goods or services to particular taxpayers in return for their taxes.

Grants can be paid as general purpose grants which refer to grants that are not subject to conditions regarding their use. Alternatively, they may be paid as specific purpose grants which are paid for a particular purpose and / or have conditions attached regarding their use.

### Leases

Leases are rights conveyed in a contract, or part of a contract, the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

**Net acquisition of non-financial assets (from transactions)**

Purchases (and other acquisitions) of non-financial assets less sales (or disposals) of non-financial assets less depreciation plus changes in inventories and other movements in non-financial assets. Includes only those increases or decreases in non-financial assets resulting from transactions and therefore excludes write offs, impairment write-downs and revaluations.

**Net result**

Net result is a measure of financial performance of the operations for the period. It is the net result of items of income, gains and expenses (including losses) recognised for the period, excluding those that are classified as 'other economic flows – other comprehensive income'.

**Net result from transactions / net operating balance**

Net result from transactions or net operating balance is a key fiscal aggregate and is income from transactions minus expenses from transactions. It is a summary measure of the ongoing sustainability of operations. It excludes gains and losses resulting from changes in price levels and other changes in the volume of assets. It is the component of the change in net worth that is due to transactions and can be attributed directly to government policies.

**Net worth**

Assets less liabilities, which is an economic measure of wealth.

**Non-financial assets**

Non-financial assets are all assets that are not 'financial assets'. It includes land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment, investment properties, cultural and heritage assets, and intangible assets.

**Other economic flows – other comprehensive income**

Other economic flows – other comprehensive income comprises items (including reclassification adjustments) that are not recognised in net result as required or permitted by other Australian Accounting Standards.

The components of other economic flows – other comprehensive income include:

- changes in physical asset revaluation surplus;
- share of net movement in revaluation surplus of associates and joint ventures; and
- gains and losses on remeasuring available-for-sale financial assets.

**Supplies and services**

Supplies and services generally represent cost of goods sold and the day-to-day running costs, including maintenance costs incurred in the normal operations of the VFA.

**Transactions**

Transactions are those economic flows that are considered to arise as a result of policy decisions, usually an interaction between two entities by mutual agreement. They also include flows within an entity such as depreciation, where the owner is simultaneously acting as the owner of the depreciating asset and as the consumer of the service provided by the asset. Taxation is regarded as mutually agreed interactions between the government and taxpayers. Transactions can be in kind (e.g. assets provided / given free of charge or for nominal consideration) or where the final consideration is cash. In simple terms, transactions arise from the policy decisions of the government.





9.11 Style conventions

Figures in the tables and in the text have been rounded. Discrepancies in tables between totals and sums of components reflect rounding. Percentage variations in all tables are based on the underlying unrounded amounts.

The notation used in the tables is as follows:

|         |                          |
|---------|--------------------------|
| -       | zero, or rounded to zero |
| (xxx)   | negative numbers         |
| 201x    | year period              |
| 201x-1x | year period              |

The financial statements and notes are presented based on the illustration for a statutory authority in the 2020-21 Model Report for Victorian Government departments.



## 1. Disclosure index

The VFA's Annual Report is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislation and pronouncements. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of the VFA's compliance with the statutory disclosure requirements.

| Legislation   | Requirement  | Page reference |
|---|--|----------------|
| <b>Standing Directions and Financial Reporting Directions</b> |  |                |
| <b>Report of Operations</b>                                   |  |                |
| <b>Charter and purpose</b>                                    |  |                |
| FRD 22H   | Manner of establishment and the relevant Minister                            | 2, 70          |
| FRD 22H   | Purpose, functions, powers and duties  | 2              |
| FRD 8D  | Departmental objectives, indicators and outputs                              | 2,48           |
| FRD 22H   | Key initiatives and projects   | 5-46           |
| FRD 22H   | Nature and range of services provided  | 74             |
| <b>Management and structure</b>                               |  |                |
| FRD 22H   | Organisational structure   | 70             |
| <b>Financial and other information</b>                        |  |                |
| FRD 8D  | Performance against output performance measures                              | 48-65          |
| FRD 8D  | Budget portfolio outcomes  | 48-50          |
| FRD 10A   | Disclosure index   | 150            |
| FRD 12B   | Disclosure of major contracts  | 87             |
| FRD 15D   | Executive officer disclosures  | 82             |
| FRD 22H   | Employment and conduct principles  | 76             |
| FRD 22H   | Occupational health and safety policy  | 75-76          |
| FRD 22H   | Summary of the financial results for the year                                | 66-67          |
| FRD 22H   | Significant changes in financial position during the year                    | 67             |
| FRD 22H   | Major changes or factors affecting performance                               | 144            |
| FRD 22H   | Subsequent events  | 144            |
| FRD 22H   | Application and operation of the Freedom of Information Act 1982             | 87-88          |
| FRD 22H   | Compliance with building and maintenance provisions of the Building Act 1993 | 88             |
| FRD 22H   | Statement on the Competitive Neutral Policy                                  | 88             |
| FRD 22H   | Application and operation of the Protected Disclosure Act 2012               | 89             |
| FRD 22H   | Application and operation of the Carers Recognition Act 2012                 | 90             |
| FRD 22H   | Details of consultancies over \$10,000                                       | 85             |
| FRD 22H   | Details of consultancies under \$10,000                                      | 86             |
| FRD 22H   | Disclosure of government advertising expenditure                             | 84             |
| FRD 22H   | Disclosure of ICT expenditure  | 87             |
| FRD 22H   | Statement of availability of other information                               | 94             |
| FRD 24C   | Reporting of office-based environmental impacts                              | n/a            |

| Legislation   | Requirement  | Page reference                  |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| FRD 25D   | Local Jobs First   | 84                              |
| FRD 29C   | Workforce Data disclosures   | 78-82                           |
| SD 5.2  | Specific information requirements under Standing Direction 5.2   | n/a                             |
| <b>Compliance attestation and declaration</b>                                     |  |                                 |
| SD 3.7.1  | Attestation for compliance with Ministerial Standing Direction   | 94                              |
| SD 5.2.3  | Declaration in report of operations  | iv                              |
| <b>Financial statements</b>   |  |                                 |
| <b>Declaration</b>  |  |                                 |
| SD 5.2.2  | Declaration in financial statements  | 98                              |
| <b>Other requirements under Standing Directions 5.2</b>                           |  |                                 |
| SD 5.2.1(a)   | Compliance with Australian accounting standards and other authoritative pronouncements   | 106                             |
| SD 5.2.1(a)   | Compliance with Standing Directions  | 106                             |
| SD 5.2.1(b)   | Compliance with Model Financial Report   | 106                             |
| <b>Other disclosures as required by FRDs in notes to the financial statements</b> |  |                                 |
| FRD 9B  | Departmental Disclosure of Administered Assets and Liabilities by Activity   | n/a                             |
| FRD 11A   | Disclosure of Ex gratia Expenses   | n/a                             |
| FRD 13  | Disclosure of Parliamentary Appropriations   | n/a                             |
| FRD 21C   | Disclosures of Responsible Persons, Executive Officers and other Personnel (Con-tractors with Significant Management Responsibilities) in the Financial Report | 139-140                         |
| FRD 103H  | Non-Financial Physical Assets  | 115-117, 119, 121, 125, 135-136 |
| FRD 110A  | Cash Flow Statements   | 66-67, 104                      |
| FRD 112D  | Defined Benefit Superannuation Obligations   | 112                             |
| FRD 114C  | Financial Instruments – general government entities and public non-financial corporations  | 127-132                         |
| <b>Legislation</b>  |  |                                 |
| <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>  |  | 87-88                           |
| <i>Building Act 1993</i>  |  | 88                              |
| <i>Protected Disclosure Act 2012</i>  |  | 89                              |
| <i>Carers Recognition Act 2012</i>  |  | 90                              |
| <i>Disability Act 2006</i>  |  | 90                              |
| <i>Local Jobs Act 2003</i>  |  | 84                              |
| <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i>  |  | iv, 94, 98, 106, 139            |
| <i>Victorian Fisheries Authority Act 2016</i>                                     |  | 2, 70, 105                      |
| <i>Fisheries Act 1995</i>   |  | 35,36, 66, 92, 105              |



## 2. Image acknowledgements

The images used in this Annual Report have been supplied by various groups and individuals. Their contribution is gratefully acknowledged. (Where relevant, descriptions are from left to right and clockwise)

| Page  | Description   | Photographer/source |
|-------|---|---------------------|
| Cover | VFA stocking Murray cod at Pykes Creek  | VFA stock image     |
|       | VFA out on the water near Cowes   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Scallop fishing vessel unloading its catch at Lakes Entrance  | VFA stock image     |
|       | Boating facility upgrades at Altona   | VFA stock image     |
|       | The VFA's Recreational Fishing Guide app in use   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Learning to fish with FishCare  | VFA stock image     |
| iii   | VFA Board Chair, Gail Owen  | VFA stock image     |
|       | VFA CEO, Travis Dowling   | VFA stock image     |
| 1     | Family fishing at Campaspe  | VFA stock image     |
| 5     | The VFA's research vessel collecting fish aggregation devices   | VFA stock image     |
| 6     | Fishing for Victorian southern rock lobster   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Fishing for Victorian giant crab  | VFA stock image     |
| 7     | Fully loaded scallop fishing vessel   | Andrew Watts        |
|       | Freshly caught and unloaded scallop at Lakes Entrance   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Unloading process on board a scallop fishing vessel   | VFA stock image     |
| 8     | VFA Fisheries Officer inspecting a commercial eel catch   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Victorian pipis   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Commercial rock lobster fishing vessel  | VFA stock image     |
| 9     | Fishing in Corner Inlet   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Garfish and King George whiting on ice  | VFA stock image     |
|       | Corner Inlet commercial fisher bring in his catch   | VFA stock image     |
| 10    | Victoria's quality seafood for sale   | VFA stock image     |
| 11    | Seaweed farming – Asparagopsis growing in tanks   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Angasi oysters on-grown in baskets  | VFA stock image     |
|       | Angasi oyster spat from Queenscliff shellfish hatchery  | VFA stock image     |
|       | Navigation marker identifying an aquaculture reserve  | VFA stock image     |
|       | Navigation marker out of the water for servicing  | VFA stock image     |
| 12    | VFA and the Western Abalone Divers Association conducting surveys to determine extent of abalone virus outbreak                                     | VFA stock image     |
|       | Washing down survey boat to ensure no transfer of the abalone virus   | VFA stock image     |
| 13    | Family kayaking on the water at Campaspe  | VFA stock image     |
|       | Family fishing from the banks at Campaspe   | VFA stock image     |
| 14    | Macquarie perch eggs at the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery   | VFA stock image     |
|       | Single Macquarie perch egg  | VFA stock image     |
|       | VFA staff stocking golden perch fingerlings   | VFA stock image     |
| 15    | All photos - fish stocking event at Albert Park Lake with Minister Horne to celebrate reaching the target of stocking eight million fish in 2020-21 | VFA stock image     |

| Page | Description  | Photographer/source      |
|------|--|--------------------------|
| 16   | VFA staff checking the tanks at the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery                          | VFA stock image          |
|      | VFA staff stocking Murray cod fingerlings at Pykes Creek                               | VFA stock image          |
|      | VFA staff stocking Macquarie perch fingerlings   | VFA stock image          |
|      | VFA staff stocking at Navan Park Lake  | VFA stock image          |
| 17   | VFA staff stocking Golden perch  | VFA stock image          |
|      | VFA staff stocking tiger trout at Lake Purrumbete                                      | VFA stock image          |
|      | VFA staff stocking trout fingerlings   | VFA stock image          |
| 18   | Progress at the Arcadia native fish hatchery- aerial photo 1                           | Apex Earthworks          |
|      | Progress at the Arcadia native fish hatchery- aerial photo 2                           | Apex Earthworks          |
|      | Aerial photo of Arcadia site   | Wedge Group              |
| 19   | Restoration of shellfish reefs in Port Phillip Bay                                     | Jarrold Boord            |
|      | Seeding reefs at Dromana   | The Nature Conservancy   |
|      | VFA divers returning to the VFA's research vessel                                      | VFA stock image          |
| 20   | Restored fishing platform – Warrnambool  | VFA stock image          |
|      | Restored fishing platform – Pelican River  | VFA stock image          |
|      | Fish cleaning tables – Warrnambool   | VFA stock image          |
|      | Fish cleaning tables – Warrnambool   | VFA stock image          |
|      | Fish cleaning tables – The Warmies   | VFA stock image          |
|      | Restored fishing platform - Geelong  | VFA stock image          |
| 21   | All photos - fishing and camping at Campaspe   | VFA stock images         |
| 22   | Vehicle and boat access facilities at Barkers Creek                                    | VFA stock image          |
|      | Vehicle and boat access facilities at Barkers Creek                                    | VFA stock image          |
|      | Official opening the new Barkers Creek Upper Coliban Reservoir facilities              | VFA stock image          |
| 23   | Cover of the Gippsland Lakes Fishery Management Plan                                   | VFA stock image          |
|      | Dusky flathead breeding program (middle photo stack)                                   | VFA stock image          |
|      | VFA staff with flathead  | VFA stock image          |
| 24   | Recreational fishers – image from Recreational Fishing Tourism Plan                    | David Hannah Photography |
|      | Fishing from a kayak in the Gippsland Lakes  | VFA stock image          |
|      | Happy fishers with a giant Murray cod  | Ebb Tide Adventures      |
|      | Happy fisher with an impressive kingfish   | Ebb Tide Adventures      |
| 25   | Fishing is for everyone  | VFA stock image          |
|      | VFA staff at a Vic Fish Kids event   | VFA stock image          |
|      | Fishing for All event at as part of the Go Fish Nagambie fishing competition           | VFA stock image          |
| 26   | Better Boating Victoria website image showing free boat ramp locations around Victoria | VFA stock image          |
| 27   | All access ramp and floating pontoon installed at Mordialloc                           | VFA stock image          |
|      | Improved boat ramp and vehicle access at Mordialloc                                    | VFA stock image          |
| 28   | Destination moorings at St Kilda   | VFA stock image          |
|      | The new St Helens boat ramp  | VFA stock image          |
|      | Completed works at the Rye Pier  | VFA stock image          |
|      | Improvements to the Point Richards boat ramp   | VFA stock image          |

| Page | Description   | Photographer/source                   |
|------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 29   | New boat ramp facilities at Lake Tyers  | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Improved facilities at the New Haven boat ramp  | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Lake Eildon ramp facilities   | VFA stock image                       |
| 30   | Go Fish Nagambie and VFA representatives presenting the award to the winner of the largest Murray cod catch | VFA stock image                       |
|      | VFA Fisheries Officers and some friends   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | 'How to fish' clinics with Lee Rayner   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | First trout with Lee Rayner   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | VFA staff supporting Go Fish Nagambie   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Happy fisher at Go Fish Nagambie  | VFA stock image                       |
| 31   | Uncle Colin Walker at the Murray Codference   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Virtual Trout Hub imagery   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Talk Wild Trout guest speaker and renowned fly fisher, Rick Dobson  | VFA stock image                       |
| 32   | All photos – a selection of the winners from the VFA's Golden Tag fishing promotion                         | VFA stock images                      |
| 33   | All photos – the Women in Recreational Fishing Network's leadership group in action                         | VFA stock images                      |
| 34   | All photos - Waterway health improvement at Nariel Creek with the Australian Trout Foundation and VFA staff | VFA stock images                      |
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| 37   | All photos – examples of VFA social media posts   | VFA stock images                      |
| 38   | All photos – VFA scientist attaching a satellite transmitter to a Mako shark                                | VFA stock images                      |
| 39   | Giant spider crab in its natural environment  | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Giant spider crab with satellite tracking device attached   | VFA stock image                       |
| 40   | VFA scientists undertaking survey work  | VFA stock image                       |
|      | A juvenile black bream from the Gippsland Lakes   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | VFA scientist collecting measurement data of juvenile flathead  | VFA stock image                       |
|      | A juvenile flathead from Port Phillip Bay   | VFA stock image                       |
| 41   | Releasing fish into Wallpolla Island Horseshoe Lagoon   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Taking measurements pre-stocking in Wallpolla Island Horseshoe Lagoon                                       | Mallee Catchment Management Authority |
|      | Setting up for the survey in the Wallpolla Island Horseshoe Lagoon  | VFA stock image                       |
| 43   | VFA Fisheries Officers – Queenscliff  | Geelong Advertiser                    |
|      | Across the bow of a VFA Fisheries vessel  | VFA stock image                       |
|      | VFA Fisheries vehicle and jet ski   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | VFA Fisheries Officer badge   | VFA stock image                       |
| 44   | VFA and NSW Fisheries Officers collaborating on a joint operation   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | VFA Fisheries Officers heading to an inspection   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Illegally taken abalone seized by the VFA as part of Operation Arctic                                       | VFA stock image                       |
| 45   | The VFA's 'Buy only licensed commercial seafood' magnet   | VFA stock image                       |
|      | Showcasing Victoria's freshly caught seafood  | VFA stock image                       |
| 47   | Rock lobster pots on a commercial fishing vessel  | VFA stock image                       |

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|------|---|---------------------|
| 77   | VFA Fisheries Officer onboard vessel near Cowes | VFA stock image     |
| 83   | VFA scientists undertaking a bream survey       | VFA stock image     |
| 95   | VFA Fisheries vessels in waters off Queenscliff | VFA stock image     |
| 149  | Fishing as the sun goes down over the water     | VFA stock image     |



