

Submissions on draft RFL Strategic Plan and responses to submissions

Note, identifying statements have been redacted to ensure privacy of submissions.

Submission number 1

Our club, [REDACTED] has on numerous occasions in recent times discussed the Recreational Fishing Licence arrangements and provided input into the recent examination and assessment of the system. We support the current periodic re-evaluation and review of the scheme and the formulation of a strategic plan to take us over the next ten years.

Having examined the Marsden Jacob Review of the system as presented in December 2019 we express our support for the overall recommendations of the report.

The Draft Strategic Plan 2021-2031, as we read it, appears to be endorsing the objectives and priorities of the scheme as it currently exists and as it has been performing in recent times. While this may be reasonably satisfactory overall it perhaps however fails to seize the opportunity to address some of the concerns and recommendations expressed in the Marsden Jacob Review. In particular there could be improvements introduced in the transparency and performance measuring of the RFLTA Grants Scheme. While an Annual Report and Audit may be presented to government these do not seem to be readily and easily available to the angler community.

Another issue raised quite extensively in the MJ report is the appropriateness of providing RFLTA funds to government and semi government bodies exemplified with those funds granted for the Target One Million project. This project is one promoted by the Victorian Government and not at all initiated by the recreational fisher community and which an objective, if ever achieved, of questionable benefit to the angler community or, indeed, our fisheries as well.

Whilst it may well be claimed these grants are intended for, and being directed to, fisheries enhancement measures clearly there is greater transparency and greater to measure the performance of funds granted directly to these same fisheries improvements than by way of grants to projects the objective of which will be measured by a quite different criteria.

Similarly the availability of RFLTA funds to semi government bodies, such as CMAs, for example, either directly or indirectly, is questionable. Again while the activity involved may be seen as beneficial to our fisheries such as habitat or revegetation works at issue is transparency and performance measurement quite apart from that of the appropriateness of these bodies having access to these funds as an alternative to using their own internal funding avenues.

Whilst we express these reservations which have been similarly featured in the Marsden Jacob Report and the Draft Strategic Plan our club does endorse overall the Plan as presented.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Response to submission number 1

Thank you for taking the time to provide a submission on the Draft Strategic Plan.

Regarding transparency and performance measuring of the RFLTA Grants Scheme, a report is provided to the Victorian Parliament regarding the RFLTA annually (for the last 20 years), which provides transparency and performance measuring of all aspects including the grants scheme. These reports have been publicly available to the angling community at the following website: [Recreational Fishing Grants Program - VFA](#). Within the webpage, the 'Licence Fees at Work' links list the large and commissioning grants funded each year.

In addition to the report to Parliament, the VFA communicate how RFL funds are spent through a variety of other platforms to the angling community, including:

- Webpages: [Your fishing licence fees at work - VFA](#), [More native fish habitat for box creek](#)
- Newsletters: [Celebrating 20 Years of RFL](#)
- Recreational fishing magazines (around 5 magazines, 6-8 ads per year, three examples attached below)
- Social media
- Nibbles (Fish-e-fax) newsletter
- Media releases
- Print media such as the Weekly Times.

Regarding the contribution of RFLTA funds to the implementation of the Target One Million initiative to grow participation and provide more fishing opportunities, in the last few years, significant improvements have been made in the Report to Parliament to explain how RFLTA funding has been spent and what outcomes have been achieved. For example, in 2019-20, the RFLTA contribution to Target One Million resulted in outcomes for recreational fishing including improved access, fish stocking, events and engagement, the Go Fish Vic app, and the rock lobster tagging program.

To improve the RFL Strategic Plan in response to these comments, we have strengthened wording regarding the strategy to effectively communicate with every recreational fisher to: *'Provide clear, transparent and accessible communications to recreational fishing licence holders and the broader community on promotion of purchasing an RFL, RFL investment decisions and outcomes on those investments'*.

It's worth noting that the RFL Strategic Plan also includes an objective to *'Uphold best practice, accountable and transparent systems of management'* with strategies to achieve this objective including:

- *Continue to ensure best practice governance and reporting of RFL Trust activities publicly*
- *Institute a system of continuous improvement of the implemented management systems*

Thank you again for your submission.



Your fishing licence fees at work



Better access to Corio

Geelong's Rippleside Jetty is now much safer thanks to your recreational fishing licence fees and the City of Greater Geelong.

Better seating, decking and ladders have made it easier for fishers without boats to target King George whiting, snapper, silver trevally and salmon.

Located within Rippleside Park, the jetty provides convenient access to Corio Bay, which is now free of commercial net fishing.



More homes on the Snowy

Fish habitat in the Snowy River near Marlo has been boosted by 25 large snags.

The East Gippsland CMA oversaw the project, immediately upstream of the Snowy River's confluence with the Brodribb.

Australian bass, bream, luderick and estuary perch will find new homes on the snags, which offer shelter and food.

Each snag comprises of a pile driven into the riverbed attached to two logs with a root ball. They were placed strategically to complement existing fish habitat immediately upstream of the river junction so migrating fish can seek refuge.

Tagged whiting secrets

A Melbourne University study has revealed another secret about King George whiting!

A 30cm fish caught off St Leonards in August 2019 was recaptured in May 2020 at St Leonards. The fish had grown to 38cm, an increase of 8cm in nine months, which is considered high. The average growth rate for recaptured whiting in the study is about 7cm per year.

It seems a lot depends on when whiting are tagged and recaptured because most growth occurs during summer, which is exactly when this fish was at liberty.

If you catch a tagged King George whiting, record the tag number, length of the fish, date and location, and call the phone number on the tag. You'll be doing your bit to reveal more amazing secrets like this!



Target One Million
More Victorians fishing, more often.

vfa.vic.gov.au/feesatwork
Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne



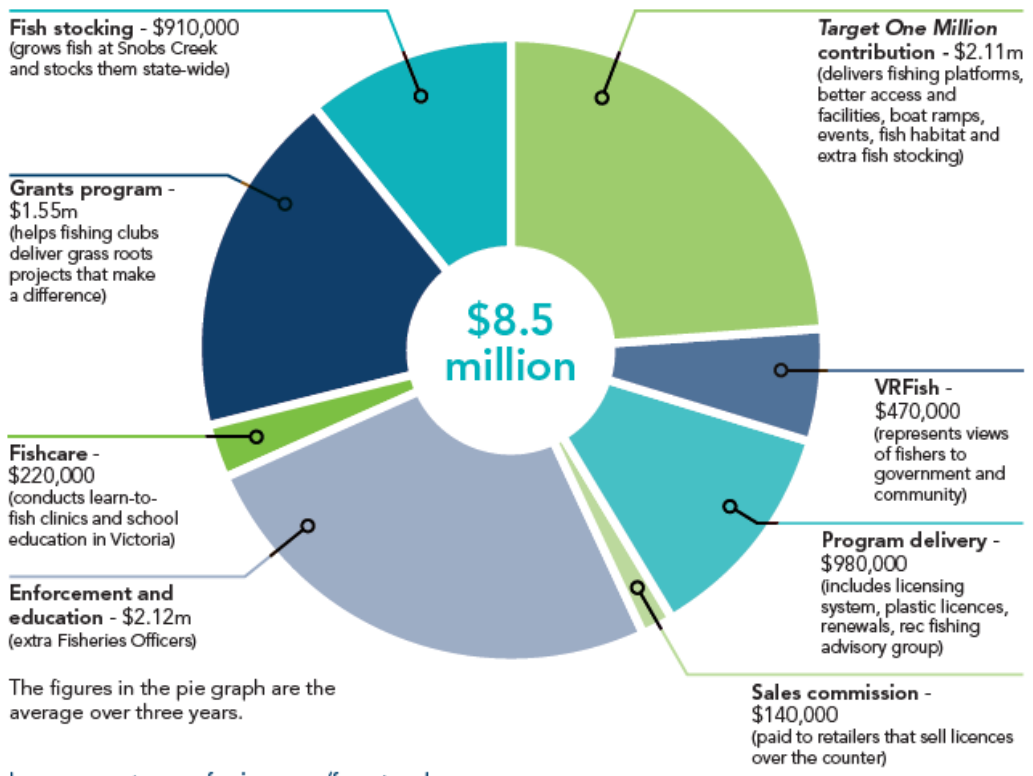


Transparent investment in your fishing future



Every year, approximately \$8.5 million of your recreational fishing licence fees are put to work making fishing even better by stocking more fish, improving access and facilities, enhancing fish habitat, and protecting fish stocks through more enforcement and education. Every single cent of your licence fees contributes to making Victoria the best state in Australia for fishing.

Your licence fees are complemented by record investment from phases one and two of the State Government's *Target One Million* plan to get more people fishing, more often. This funding is in addition to fishing licence fees.



The figures in the pie graph are the average over three years.

Learn more at www.vfa.vic.gov.au/feesatwork



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne



Your fishing licence fees at work



Recreational fishing licence fees are funding 12 projects, worth more than \$1 million, to further improve fishing opportunities in Victoria.

- › \$39,380 to install fish habitat into the Mitta Mitta River, near Katie Peters Reserve.
- › \$15,370 to realign snags in the Campaspe River, near Rochester, to enable free passage for boaters.
- › \$24,240 to increase fish habitat at Box-Pyramid Creek, near Kow Swamp.
- › \$24,920 to improve fishing access to Rainbow Lake.
- › \$110,000 to install snags into the Gippsland Lakes to benefit black bream, estuary perch and Australian bass populations.
- › \$23,000 to build shellfish reefs in Tambo Bay.
- › \$22,440 to install solar lighting along the St Helen's rock wall.
- › \$120,000 to produce native fish report cards on 10 key rivers.
- › \$110,000 to deliver the Victorian Wild Trout Fisheries Management program.
- › \$60,000 for a Fishcare Responsible Anglers Academy to deliver 250+ workshops through 50+ schools.
- › \$163,000 to undertake creel surveys and expand the angler diary program to inform sustainable management of fisheries in Port Phillip, Western Port, Corner Inlet, the Gippsland Lakes and off Lakes Entrance.
- › \$290,000 for educational products that make it easy for fishers to understand catch limits including the Recreational Fishing Guide, rulers and measures.



Licence fees also contribute to extra Fisheries Officers, fish production at our Snobs Creek hatchery, VRFish, Fishcare, the Small Grants Program and Target One Million.

Target One Million
More Victorians fishing, more often

vfa.vic.gov.au/feesatwork
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Submission number 2

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I have fully read the plan and I must say I am impressed and totally support the Draft.

It covers all I would expect and (happily) there's very little I could add to it.

Overall it's a great vision for the recreational fisher communities in Victoria.

My General Manager has also gone over it and she was equally impressed.

I thank you for your courtesy and the opportunity to input.

Can you let me know when it is OK to circulate as I would like to publish it

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Response to submission number 2

Thank you for taking the time to provide a submission on the Draft Strategic Plan.

We would be delighted to have the RFL Strategic Plan published through your platform.

Thank you again for your submission.