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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 & CEO

As we reflect on 2022-23, it is clear that it has been a period marked by achievement, opportunity, challenge, and change. Throughout these dynamic times, our dedicated team at the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) has proven their consistent professionalism, agility, and resilience.

A pivotal moment came with the rapid adaptation to changes following the 2022 Victorian election, including our transition from the Department of Transport to the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions and new election commitments that are already creating exciting opportunities for the fishing and boating community. In the years ahead, the VFA is poised to deliver on the Government's investment in improving fishing and boating infrastructure, boosting populations of native freshwater fish species, constructing new and expanded hatcheries at Snobs Creek and Arcadia, and advancing Victoria's aquaculture prospects.

Our determination to protect and restore native fish populations was exemplified by securing a \$3.7 million collaborative research project to further the captive breeding of Macquarie perch. The initiative, which brought together 12 partners from across Australia, represents a major step toward reviving this endangered species in the Murray Darling Basin. In response to the devastating floods in October 2022, our community-minded Fisheries Officers were able to swiftly respond and help the people and communities impacted. Their dedication and professionalism demonstrated in the face of adversity was exemplary.

In February 2023, the VFA elevated Victoria to the global stage by hosting the 10th World Recreational Fishing Conference. The event, themed Keeping Pace in a Dynamic and Challenging World with Changing Fisheries included an incredible line up of keynote speakers and provided a vast array of opportunities to share knowledge, connect with others, and further enhance our capacity to showcase and manage Victoria's fisheries.

Another major highlight was the launch of our second Recreational Boating Action Plan, an initiative representing an investment of \$42 million over the year, which will result in a substantial expansion of new and improved boating and fishing infrastructure. This is in addition to our Better Boating Victoria team's exceptional work in realising significant construction projects across the State and delivering accessibility initiatives to ensure people of all abilities can enjoy recreational fishing and boating.

We are proud of the journey we have had in 2022-23, and on behalf of the VFA Board Directors and Executive, we thank the entire team at the VFA for their commitment and we present the *2022-23 Victorian Fisheries Authority Annual Report*.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Shirer', written in a cursive style.

David Shirer
VFA Board Chair



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Travis Dowling', written in a cursive style.

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 2023.



David Shirer
VFA Board Chair

8 November 2023



Our purpose and functions

The VFA is a statutory authority with the responsibility of managing and developing Victoria’s fisheries resources in a coordinated and strategic way to ensure their ongoing sustainability, as well as the promotion of responsible boating, fishing and fishing-related activities so that boating and fishing are more accessible to more people.

We work with government, stakeholders and the community to optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of Victoria’s fishing, aquaculture and recreational boating sectors and ensure that demand for resources and infrastructure can be sustainably supported into the future.

To achieve this, we deliver strategic fisheries management that is underpinned by science and research, improved recreational fishing and boating facilities and infrastructure, and enforcement of fisheries regulations.

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 the boating and fishing communities to get out on the water; and to making local seafood more readily available for everyone to enjoy.

The *Victorian Fisheries Authority Act 2016* (the Act) sets out specific objectives for the VFA to:

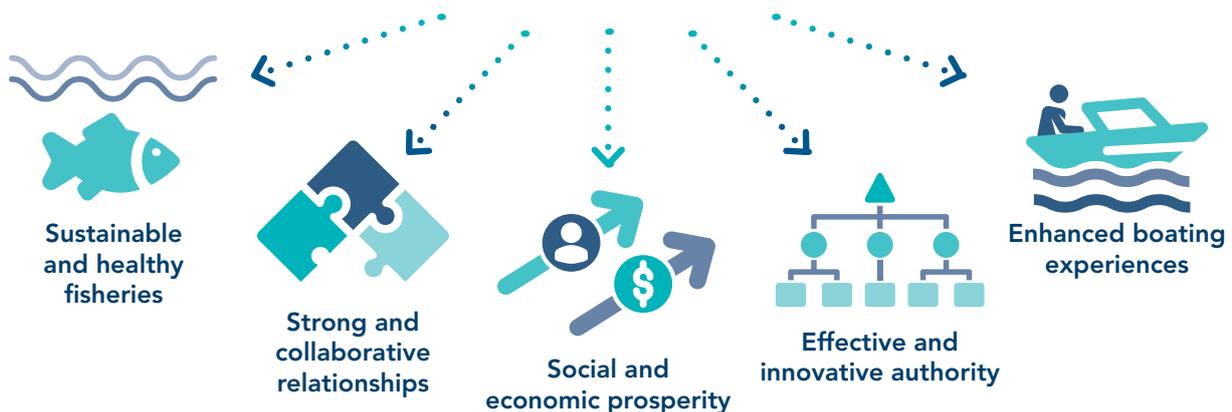
- Promote sustainability and responsibility in fishing and fishing-related activities in Victoria;
- Promote sustainability and responsibility in boating and boating-related activities in Victoria;
- Optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of the fisheries sectors;
- Optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of recreational boating and the recreational boating sector;
- Support the development of recreational fishing;
- Support the development of commercial fishing and aquaculture;
- Support the development of recreational boating and access to waterways;
- 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, sustainable fisheries and better boating experiences 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 five high level focus areas:

Healthy, sustainable fisheries and better boating experiences for all Victorians



Our values

Our Values

These values shape the VFA and all those who work within it

- Safety first**
Our safety, the safety of our team and the community comes first, always
- Professionalism**
We get things done with integrity and maintain high standards
- Leadership**
We are all leaders, no matter our role
- Support our people**
We treat everyone with respect and embrace diversity
- Accountability**
We are accountable to our self, our team, the VFA and our community





Our achievements in 2022-23



Sustainable and healthy fisheries

Monitoring the health of our marine and freshwater fisheries

The VFA's data collection programs and research projects are integral to managing Victoria's marine and freshwater resources. Information available to assess the status of stocks varies among species and locations. For example, Port Phillip and Western Port snapper and King George whiting, and Gippsland Lakes black bream fisheries are assessed through comprehensive monitoring programs. High value commercially dominated fisheries for abalone and rock lobster have well-developed annual stock assessment and data collection programs. Smaller, lower value and lower risk fisheries, such as recreational fisheries in regional Victorian rivers and estuaries are assessed using simpler and less resource intensive approaches such as an Angler Diary program.

Outputs from these programs contribute to understanding our resources and enable the VFA to deliver long term sustainable benefits to Victorian communities. A number of the VFA's innovative projects undertaken in 2022-23 are described below.

Investigating the success of Victoria's artificial reefs

In the past 12 months, VFA scientists have actively monitored our artificial rock reefs in Port Phillip Bay and the new 'Kingfish' reefs at Port Phillip Heads. Dive surveys and baited remote underwater video cameras have shown an abundance of habitat growth as well as a vast variety of fish species. These reefs provide nursery habitat and over time boost fish numbers and enhance marine biodiversity, which is good news for the environment and recreational fishers. Like reefs, the VFA's Fish Aggregation Device program has been a great success with species like yellowtail kingfish caught by recreational anglers.



Improving our understanding Victoria's Murray cod

To enhance our knowledge of Australia's largest freshwater fish species, in late 2022 the VFA completed a program of tagging 19 Murray cod, some of which were up to 113 cm in length. The information gathered from this important research will be used to gain a greater understanding of the movement and habitat preferences of Murray cod in the Upper Goulburn River and Lake Eildon. To date, electronic tags have shown that some cod remain resident, but others are quite happy move to and from river/lake systems. Data will be further analysed in 2023-24 to incorporate temperature and depth preference, and fish acceleration.



Rock lobster puerulus monitoring – a case study in community engagement

The life cycle of the southern rock lobster consists of a planktonic phase during which phyllosoma larvae drift with ocean currents for up to 24 months before moulting into the final larval stage known as puerulus, which settle on rocky reef to begin the benthic phase of their life. The settlement of puerulus has been closely monitored at a site in Apollo Bay, western Victoria, since 1994 and can be used to help inform us about the future health of the rock lobster stock.

In the past, monitoring of puerulus numbers involved placing a series of crevice collectors on the seafloor to provide an attractive artificial habitat into which puerulus could settle. Each month these collectors were retrieved by a team of commercial divers and brought to the surface where the puerulus were measured. The collectors were then cleaned and returned to the seafloor until the next month. The use of commercial divers became cost prohibitive so alternative methods of puerulus collection were sought.

A trial using plastic oyster baskets was commenced in December 2021 at a site close to the existing puerulus collectors. The baskets were suspended midwater from ropes attached to floating pontoons at a depth of between 2 – 4 metres, enabling them to be easily retrieved by hand. Initial results showed that puerulus settled and were retained in the baskets in similar numbers as were observed in the traditional crevice collectors.

At about the same time, a dedicated group of volunteers, known as Otway Ocean Care became aware of this project and wanted to become involved. Their involvement quickly grew and now Otway Ocean Care manage the puerulus monitoring each month. The numbers of puerulus are often quite low but there are plenty of other sea creatures to capture the interest of the group.

What began out of the need for a more cost-effective monitoring method, has also highlighted the benefits of community engagement and citizen science. The VFA has been able to maintain a long-term data set, but more importantly members of Otway Ocean Care, particularly the younger ones have been given an opportunity to become engaged in the marine environment.



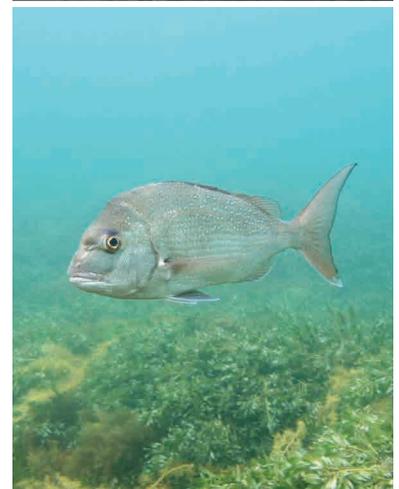
Using technology to monitor giant crab stocks

Electronic monitoring is being trialled for the first time in Victoria's Giant Crab Fishery to allow independent validation of catch and effort logbook data. In November 2022, cameras and sensors were fitted to two vessels active in the fishery. Preliminary results have been promising, with the reviewed video footage closely matching the catch and effort data reported by fishers in their logbooks. The outcomes provide a level of confidence in the current giant crab data, which is used for scientific assessments, decision making and quota setting. The trial is expected to conclude in June 2024.



Using genetics to examine fish populations

- The VFA undertook a study to assess the genetic structure of wild and captive brown trout to help guide the breeding and stocking processes of brown trout populations to ensure they are genetically healthy. Results indicated that the genetic diversity of Victoria's wild trout and hatchery-bred populations are both good and variable across populations. The hatchery-bred brown trout genetic structure falls within that of the wild population.
- Genetic analysis of a translocated (introduced) population of catfish in the Glenelg River found that these fish are genetically suitable for establishing new populations and for use as broodstock in a captive breeding program when mixed in with fish from other populations.
- The VFA collaborated with other state jurisdictions and New Zealand on a snapper population genetics study encompassing their range in the southern hemisphere. The project confirmed our understanding of the major stock in Victoria that extends from Wilson's Promontory to Kangaroo Island in South Australia. Interestingly, in eastern Victoria, there was poor stock delineation with individuals from the western Victorian stock, the eastern Australian stock, and a reasonable proportion originating from local recruitment in the region. The project, as a whole, has aided in delineating several stocks in South Australia and Australia's east coast that have been depleted and will therefore assist in managing the species as a whole throughout its entire range, including Victoria.



Maintaining long-term data collection to support fishery management decisions

- The VFA continued its 20-year monitoring of Victoria's largest recreational fisheries: Port Phillip Bay, Western Port, Corner Inlet and the Gippsland Lakes. These fisheries are generally performing well, with snapper, black bream and sand flathead catches and catch rates improving. Catch rates of King George whiting have begun to decline, as expected, due to several years of average or lower recruitment as a result of La Nina weather patterns negatively influencing larval survival.
- The annual juvenile snapper trawl survey, which is used for forecasting snapper stock abundance trends, was completed in March 2023. Recruitment was low this year, likely due to the flooding that took place in Port Phillip Bay in the Spring of 2022. Snapper spawning success varies greatly depending on environmental conditions and plankton blooms that larvae rely on for food. Thus, it is not unusual to have low recruitment as observed this year. However, due to strong recruitment in 2018-19 and 2021-22 the fishery is expected to continue to improve over coming years and there is no concern for the stock as a whole.
- The Native Fishery Report Card program has been running for seven years and is used by the VFA to engage and inform anglers about the status and health of important recreational species in the State and provide a quick and concise way of presenting complex and detailed fish population data in a simplified format for readers to digest. In collaboration with the Arthur Rylah Institute, results from annual native fish electrofishing surveys of 10 streams are summarised in a Native Fishery Report Cards report to provide fishery health assessments for nine species. The report provides an overall health rating (from Low to Excellent) for each species fishery, which is based on trends in abundance and fish size structure over time. In 2022, an overall rating of Very Good was assigned to one species (river blackfish, which was strongly influenced by results from two tributary sites), Good for four species (Australian bass, golden perch, Murray cod and trout cod), Moderate for two species (estuary perch and Macquarie perch) and Low for two species (freshwater catfish and silver perch). Since the previous assessment in 2021, the health assessment for two species has changed; estuary perch has gone from Good to Moderate, and river blackfish from Good to Very Good.



Rebuilding Victoria’s iconic fish species

Gippsland dusky flathead stocking trial

Dusky flathead is one of the most recreationally valuable and iconic species in the Gippsland Lakes. With the foundational steps taken towards rebuilding key species, including removal of commercial net fishing and the finalisation of the *Gippsland Lakes Recreational Fishery Plan* (the Plan), the VFA has for the past three years been conducting a stocking trial for dusky flathead.

Dusky flathead broodstock have been collected from wild populations during January each year and transported to a hatchery, where the fish have successfully produced offspring. The pond-reared fry were grown to approximately 3 - 5cm and stocked back into the Gippsland Lakes and Bemm River to provide a boost to existing populations.

Table 1: Number and size of hatchery-bred dusky flathead fingerlings stocked into waters 2021-2023.

Water	Location	2021	2022	2023	Total
Bemm River	Bemm River	5,000		5,000	10,000
Gippsland Lakes	Bancroft Bay (Metung)	2,000			2,000
	Cunningham Arm (Lakes Entrance)		25,000	18,200	43,200
	Lake King (Metung)	20,000		9,700	29,700
	North Arm (Lakes Entrance)	20,000	10,600	18,200	48,800
Total		47,000	35,600	51,100	133,700

The VFA has recently committed to extending the stocking trial in the Gippsland Lakes for a further two years and will be undertaking juvenile dusky flathead stock assessments and genetic analyses to gauge the success of the trial.

Historically, stocking in Victoria has focussed on enhancing freshwater fisheries however marine stocking is increasingly being considered as a management tool to enhance the sustainable management of Victoria’s fisheries. Establishing stocking programs for dusky flathead and other key recreational species, such as black bream, Australian bass and estuary perch, are a key component of the Plan and restoring the Gippsland Lakes to a recreational fishing destination.



Cracking the code on Macquarie perch captive breeding

Macquarie perch was once one of the most abundant large bodied native freshwater fish species across the Murray-Darling Basin in Victoria, NSW and the ACT, and this iconic species historically supported popular and productive recreational fisheries for food and sport. However, impacts from a variety of factors, including habitat loss, stream barriers, cold-water discharges, disease and exotic species have contributed to a huge decline in the range and abundance of the species.

The distribution of Macquarie perch is now fragmented into only a handful of small discrete populations that are reproductively isolated by a combination of distance and physical barriers. As a result, the species is listed as endangered and despite considerable fisheries management efforts over the past 50 years, the trajectory of the species was headed towards extinction.

In 2022, the VFA secured a \$3.7 million collaborative research project to 'crack the code' on captive breeding of Macquarie perch. The project will conduct dedicated research over the next three years to produce Macquarie perch using hatchery broodstock (captive breeding), rather than depleting wild populations. Captive breeding has assisted in the saving other native fish species such as Murray cod, golden perch and silver perch, and the aim is to now do the same for Macquarie perch.

The project is a multi-jurisdictional effort, bringing together a range of partners including Commonwealth and State Governments, the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, NSW Fisheries, the Northeast and Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authorities, recreational fishers across Victoria and NSW, and research partners Deakin University, University of the Sunshine Coast, Monash University, Arthur Rylah Institute and the Norwegian Institute of Aquaculture Research.

Together with the \$5 million investment committed to upgrade VFA's Snobs Creek Hatchery, the VFA aims to be producing over 500,000 Macquarie perch annually to re-establish populations and make them one of the most abundant recreational native fish species in upland Murray Darling Basin streams.



Continuing our focus on fish production and stocking

2022-23 fish stocking program

In 2022-23, the VFA grew 1.2 million native fish and 1.3 salmonid fish at the Snobs Creek and Arcadia hatcheries, which were then stocked into public waters throughout Victoria. In addition, a further 5.5 million fish of a mix of species grown in private hatcheries were collected and released into waters across the State.

Table 2: 2022-23 fish stocking numbers and stocking locations

Species	Barwon South West	Gippsland	Grampians	Hume	Loddon Mallee	Port Phillip	Grand Total
Native Species							
Australian bass	15,000	304,000	-	-	-	-	319,000
Dusky flathead	-	76,100	-	-	-	-	76,100
Estuary perch	81,000	118,000	-	-	-	45,000	244,000
Golden perch	49,000	-	169,000	1,099,700	642,200	12,600	1,972,500
Macquarie perch	-	-	-	40,900	-	-	40,900
Murray cod	608,000	-	119,000	1,027,100	1,413,000	19,000	3,186,100
Silver perch	-	-	216,000	109,600	311,600	185,600	822,800
Trout Cod	-	-	-	8,800	-	-	8,800
Natives Total	753,000	498,100	504,000	2,286,100	2,366,800	262,200	6,670,200
Salmonid species							
Brown trout	143,500	19,500	60,720	289,971	259,100	10,550	783,341
Chinook salmon	90,000	-	-	-	-	-	90,000
Rainbow trout	130,164	67,600	78,677	82,581	46,308	62,351	467,681
Tiger trout	4,625	-	-	-	-	-	4,625
Salmonids Total	368,289	87,100	139,397	372,552	305,408	72,901	1,345,647
Total	1,121,289	585,200	643,397	2,658,602	2,672,208	335,101	8,015,847

Last year, through consultation with the Victorian community, the VFA identified and stocked a number of waters with species not previously stocked into those locations.

- A total of 81,000 estuary perch were stocked into four new locations:
 - Rocklands Reservoir: 26,000
 - Lakers Cutting, Point Lonsdale: 15,000
 - Upper Stoney Creek, Meredith: 30,000
 - Little River: 10,000
- Elingamite, in southwest Victoria, was stocked with 5,000 Australian bass for the first time, adding to the annual stocking of rainbow and brown trout.
- As part of the VFA's 'school holiday catchable rainbow trout stocking program', two new waters – one at King Lake and one at Rainbow Lake in the Victorian Mallee - were added to the program, bringing the total to 85 waters stocked.

Protecting our fisheries for the future

Illegal take of abalone

In December 2022, VFA Fisheries Officers were conducting routine patrols of fishing vessels in Port Phillip Bay and approached a 6-metre recreational fishing vessel with two people onboard who were actively fishing. When questioned, the pair produced 10 abalone and four King George whiting as their total day's catch.

Fisheries Officers are trained to identify and recognise suspicious behaviour and upon inspection of the vessel discovered two elaborate and well-engineered concealed compartments. The first contained 89 abalone, most of which had been shucked (removed from the shell) to maximise the space inside the hidden cavity, and the second contained another 17 abalone. Fisheries Officers immediately seized all 116 abalone and after taking photographic evidence, returned any live animals to the water.

The pair were formally interviewed for serious fisheries offences, including taking a commercial quantity of abalone. The vessel was seized and transported to a secure holding facility. Both were charged and subsequently convicted in the Geelong Magistrates Court. The skipper of the vessel received a \$2,000 fine and was required to forfeit the vessel, worth approximately \$55,000, along with all of the dive gear. In addition to this penalty, the skipper was banned from any diving or fishing for a period of two years. The second person onboard received a \$1,000 fine for their lesser role in the offending.



Operation Topaz

Over key low tides in late February 2023, VFA Fisheries Officers from across the State participated in Operation Topaz. The operation targeted the protection of the intertidal zone and the illegal take of abalone across Port Phillip Bay and ran over a two-week period, with Fisheries Officers operating on-water and on land in both uniform and plain clothes.

Over the period of the operation, Fisheries Officers conducted 296 inspections resulting in 79 offenders, 40 infringement notices, 56 official warnings, 10 verbal warnings and six cases of significant offending that will be heard in court. One of these significant cases resulted in the detection of 469 abalone taken by a single person at Greens Point in Brighton, with a vehicle and equipment seized as a result.

Overall officers prevented a total of 690 abalone from being illegally taken from the reef, with serious potential ramifications for those accused found in possession of large quantities.





Strong and collaborative relationships

Working with the community during flood events

Helping our native fish through floods and blackwater

In Spring 2022, many Victorian waterways suffered devastating native fish kills due to major flooding and blackwater low dissolved oxygen impacts. Significant fish deaths occurred in the Little Murray River, Broken Creek, Boosey Creek, Gunbower Creek, Loddon River, Kerang lakes, and the Murray River at Echuca and Swan Hill.

The VFA worked closely with the Catchment Management Authorities (CMA's), environmental managers, VRFish, OzFish Unlimited, NSW Fisheries, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), private aquaculture producers, angling associations and local independent recreational fishers to monitor the systems, save native fish and freshwater crayfish where possible, and restock fish when water conditions returned to normal.

Over 2,000 native fish and Murray spiny freshwater crayfish were rescued from waters including Gunbower Creek, Pyramid Creek, Taylor's Creek, Racecourse Lake, Phyland Lagoon, Broken Creek and the Murray River from Echuca to Mildura. Around 550 native fish, including Murray cod, golden perch, silver perch and trout cod, were relocated from the Gunbower Creek system to areas with good water quality in the Campaspe and Loddon rivers. Around 1,200 native fish and crayfish were temporarily held in government and private hatcheries in Victoria and NSW, under the watchful eye of hatchery staff while they and their waterways recovered.

At the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery, the team received and cared for the highly endangered purple-spotted gudgeon and Tandanus catfish. At the Arcadia Hatchery, the team looked after Murray cod, golden perch, silver perch and Murray spiny freshwater crayfish. When water conditions returned to normal, the native fish and crayfish were returned to their homes with recreational fishers, Indigenous groups and CMA's. A small number of these fish were retained as broodstock for restocking affected waters, in particular, distinct genetic strains of purple-spotted gudgeon, which will form an important component of the conservation breeding and stocking program for this species.

To further assist the recovery of native fish stocking in flood affected waters, over 200,000 Murray cod, golden perch silver perch and Macquarie perch were reallocated across the Goulburn Broken, North Central and Mallee catchments into waters including Broken Creek, Little Murray River, Pyramid Creek, Loddon River, Broken River, Gunbower Creek, Boosey Creek, Hughes Creek and Kings Billabong. These fish were in addition to the regular numbers of native fish those waters were scheduled to receive and will help accelerate the recovery of native fish populations.

Overall, the efforts to rescue, relocate, care for, breed, and restock native fish will help native fish populations and fisheries recover and demonstrate we are responsive to community and environmental needs.



Fisheries Officers lending a hand in times of need

In October 2022, the Goulburn and Murray Valleys were devastated by floods and towns were inundated by flood water from several rivers and creeks, which resulted in emergency evacuation orders being put in place across the district.

To assist and support community members during their time of need, the VFA worked with the State Incident Control Centre to provide boats and Fisheries Officers to help out. Fisheries Officers were confronted with a dynamic and constantly changing environment, with their roles changing on a daily basis. Tasks undertaken included emergency food and medical resupply, welfare checks, livestock relocation, route reconnaissance and sandbagging – lots of sandbagging. At all times Fisheries Officers conducted themselves to the highest of standards, displayed a can-do attitude and won the hearts of impacted community members.



Collaborating to deliver upgraded boating facilities

Lake Bullen Merri south beach ramp

Better Boating Victoria worked closely with stakeholders to deliver upgrades at Lake Bullen Merri's south beach ramp, with the construction being managed by Corangamite Shire Council and the South Beach Foreshore Committee of Management. Construction was completed in November 2022, which saw the old ramp replaced with new grooved concrete panels and a new central pontoon. An underwater retaining wall was also constructed to provide some protection from waves and reduce sediment building up at the base of the ramp. A new concrete approach and turning circle were added to make it easier for users when reversing from the car park.



Kirk Point boat ramp

The Kirk Point Boat Ramp is a popular fishing destination on western Port Phillip Bay. The VFA's Better Boating Victoria team worked with Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water and local agencies to progress designs and complete due diligence assessments of environmental and coastal impacts to obtain permits and approvals to deliver the project.

The upgrade will provide a sheltered launching area for recreational boaters by constructing a protective breakwater and jetty. The project will also provide environmental benefits by closing access to vehicles on the Kirk Point Wildlife Spit Reserve to protect sensitive vegetation.



Construction commenced in June 2023 and once completed, will achieve the following outcomes:

- Doubling capacity to create two boat ramps.
- A new breakwater to provide shelter from wave action.
- Provision of an additional 31 car-trailer parks.
- Other incremental improvements including upgrade of the overflow carpark.

Supporting our local fishing communities

Delivering events throughout the community

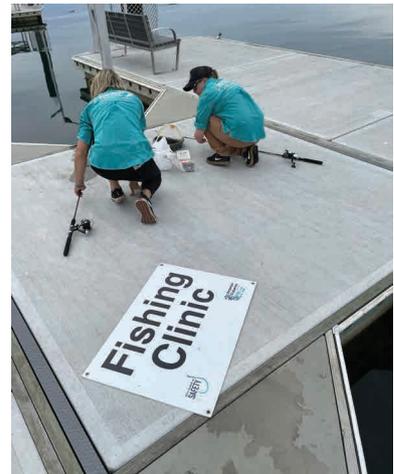
The VFA hosts a number of events throughout the year, all with a focus on safe, sustainable and responsible fishing and boating practices.

Our events cater to a wide range of audiences. The VicFishKids events place a specific focus on getting kids to give fishing a go by offering fishing clinics and a range of other educational activities. Fishing for All events are designed to ensure people of all abilities and levels of experience are able to learn how to fish. Our Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating events aim to get more women taking up fishing and boating as a sport or pastime. We also host multicultural events to ensure we're providing for Victoria's diverse recreational fishing community. These events complement the State Government's commitments, which aim to get more people fishing, more often, in more places.

The VFA also sponsors a number of events that celebrate Victoria's fresh, high-quality wild-caught and farmed seafood, such as the Apollo Bay Seafood festival, Port Campbell Crayfest and Tidal San Remo. The VFA is proud to partner with the commercial fishing industry for these events as promoting Victorian seafood is a key priority for the VFA.

Over 63,000 people attended the following VFA led or sponsored events in 2022-23:

- Ultimate Fishing Expo
- Three Hooked on Events (Portland, Lakes Entrance and Bellarine)
- Two Trout Season Opening events
- Five Vic Fish Kids events
- Snobs Creek Open Day
- Two Fishing For All events
- Six Local Forums
- Melbourne Boat Show (sponsored)
- Sea Days Corner Inlet (sponsored)
- Apollo Bay Seafood Festival (sponsored)
- Regional Fishing Show Horsham (sponsored)
- Port Campbell Crayfest (sponsored)
- Three WIRFAB networking events including the launch of the rebranded WIRFAB





Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating Network

Recreational fishing and boating offer a range of enriching experiences and benefits, contributing to improved mental and physical health outcomes. To support more women engaging in these outdoor activities and pursuing career pathways in our industry, the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating (WIRFAB) Network continues to grow.

Since its creation in 2018, the Women in Recreational Fishing Network has made considerable progress towards increasing participation, inclusion and upskilling of female fishers. To acknowledge and support women in recreational boating, the network was expanded into boating to create the WIRFAB Network in March 2023.

The WIRFAB Network has hosted a range of very successful events, including an inaugural conference in 2022, which saw over 120 attendees converge to learn more about fishing. The leadership group regularly run learning and networking events in their communities through the WIRFAB Locals program.





Social and economic prosperity

Delivering the 10th World Recreational Fishing Conference

On 19-23 February 2023, the VFA and partners hosted the 10th World Recreational Fishing Conference (WRFC10) at the Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre. It is the preeminent and largest recreational fisheries conference in the world, attracting fisheries experts, researchers, policymakers, industry and anglers from around the globe. It began in 1996 and has since been held in eight countries, including Ireland (Dublin), Canada (Vancouver), Australia (Darwin), Norway (Trondheim), USA (Fort Lauderdale), Germany (Berlin), Brazil (Campinas) and Canada (Victoria) and Netherlands (Rotterdam).

Over 360 delegates from 20 countries participated in WRFC10, sharing over 200 presentations from around the world. The headline conference theme for WRFC10 was: *Keeping Pace in a Dynamic and Challenging World with Changing Fisheries*. This is an ode to the fluid and rapidly changing landscape and acknowledges the challenges for researchers, managers and anglers involved in recreational fisheries.

The WRFC10 program covered an exciting and diverse range of themes with an incredible line up of keynotes and speakers, together with workshops and a vast array of opportunities for learning, sharing and connecting with others. Keynote presentations were provided by world leading and Australian recreational fishing experts and celebrities including Dr Elizabeth Nyboer, Robson Green, Stan Lui, Dr Ingrid van Putten and Steve Moyer.

In 2020, the VFA developed the bid to host the conference in partnership with recreational fishing organisations including VRFish, FutureFish Foundation, Women in Recreational Fishing Network, Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation, Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, the Melbourne Convention Bureau, Visit Victoria and leading recreational fisheries scientists in Australia. In June 2021, the VFA secured the hosting rights for the WRFC10. The conference provided a unique learning opportunity as well as a chance to showcase Victoria's and Australia's fishing and tourism experiences to leading and influential recreational fishing stakeholders from across the world.

Hosting the conference will continue to benefit Victoria for the next 20 years through valuable connections and collaborations with world leading experts and through fishing related tourism. As a legacy of the conference all presentations and workshops were recorded and can be viewed here: https://vfa.vic.gov.au/recreational-fishing/fisheries-management/wrfc10/_nocache

"I am writing today to communicate the absolutely stellar experience I had at the World Recreational Fisheries Congress hosted by VFA... The conference was top notch both in terms of content with world class talks and networking opportunities. The delegates were truly diverse with excellent representation across age, sector, gender, and ethnicity. The organizers clearly put extraordinary effort and thought into ensuring a successful meeting and I think I speak for many when I say I am leaving feeling inspired by this field of work and eager to build on the partnerships formed during this conference."

– Dr Elizabeth Nyboer, Fisheries Climate Change Expert, University of British Columbia, Canada

"Congrats on pulling off such a great and jam packed conference last week. I only heard good things about the way the conference was managed and the calibre of presentations throughout the event.

Thank so much for the opportunity to be a part of it and serve on the ISB!"

– Dr Faith Ochwada, Senior Scientist, NSW Fisheries

"I'm not surprised that the 10th World Recreational Fishing Conference was a huge success.... I have to say that this one has raised the bar quite high. From my own experience as well as discussions with other delegates, everyone felt very welcome and valued. The conference sessions ran smoothly and the moments in-between (i.e., lunches, tea breaks) were structured perfectly to allow for all important networking."

– Dr Andy J. Danylchuk, Professor of Fish Conservation, University of Massachusetts, USA

Partnering with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

The VFA has proudly partnered with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) to develop a native oyster industry in Gippsland.

The partnership involves investment and support for a production trial for native oysters in the Gippsland Lakes.

The trial commenced in October 2022 with over 10,000 Sydney rock oysters, which are abundant and native to the Gippsland Lakes system, placed in oyster aquaculture baskets and bags at four sites near Flanagan Island and Hopetoun channel.

The oysters are being monitored for growth across the four sites and the response to different growing systems over the first six months of trial the growth rates are very positive.

The trial also involves up to two years of regular testing and monitoring as required under the Shellfish Quality Assurance Program to ensure the product meets the required Food Standards Code, the testing for this commenced earlier this year.

On completion of a successful feasibility trial, it's envisaged GLaWAC will commence a commercial aquaculture operation at the selected trial sites, which may be with an existing industry partner.

The aim of the trial is to:

- Identify the sites within the lakes system for commercial production.
- Classify harvest areas within Gippsland Lakes approved under the Victorian Government's Shellfish Quality Assurance Program.
- Determine the commercial production and growth potential for Sydney rock oysters in the Gippsland Lakes.

The partnership is part of our commitment to bring fresh seafood to all Victorians.



Increasing production capacity at our hatcheries

Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery expansion

The VFA Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery is located approximately two hours from Melbourne on the Goulburn Valley Highway and is an established fish hatchery that has produced both native and salmonid species for recreational stocking for over 70 years.

In 2022, the Victorian Government committed \$5 million to improve the VFA's fish production capability by expanding the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery. The project will increase the capacity of the existing hatchery facility by constructing a dedicated Captive Breeding Centre along with additional ponds, tanks, and supporting infrastructure to complement the breeding centre. The breeding centre will have an initial focus on the production of Macquarie perch and trout cod, both of which are recovering native recreational species.

This expansion will support the VFA's capacity to meet native fish stocking targets, reduce reliance on external suppliers and contribute to the conservation of native fish populations and the overall sustainability of Victoria's aquatic ecosystem.

Design and planning commenced in 2023, with construction expected to commence early in 2024.

Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery

The VFA, together with DEECA, have committed funding to build a new fit for purpose conservation hatchery for threatened and endangered native fish species at the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery.

The conservation hatchery will initially focus on the production of freshwater species that exist in small, isolated populations, such as East Gippsland galaxiid and the purple spotted gudgeon. The facility system will be designed with flexibility as a core design element to enable future production of a variety of species.

Construction commenced in June 2023, with works scheduled for completion early in 2024.



Arcadia Fish Hatchery expansion and Visitors Centre

In 2019, the VFA purchased a 170-hectare property near Arcadia on the Goulburn River. The property featured a large dam, two residential buildings, high quality groundwater and abundant clay suitable for fish production pond construction. The site was developed in 2021, with the construction of 20 fish production ponds, 12 brood-stock ponds and one water reuse dam. Supporting infrastructure was also added, including a new hatchery building, a fingerling intake/quarantine building and the provision of administration facilities in one of the repurposed residential farm buildings.

The hatchery produces warm water native fish, with a focus on key recreational fishing species including Murray cod and golden perch. Over time, the VFA may expand production to include other native species such as silver perch and freshwater catfish.

In 2022, the Victorian Government committed \$10 million to expand the Arcadia Fish Hatchery as part of the *More piers, jetties and opportunities for little anglers'* election commitment. The expansion will triple the capacity of the existing hatchery through the construction of additional production ponds and supporting infrastructure to increase the number of fish produced annually and reduce the VFA's reliance on external fish suppliers. Design and planning commenced in 2023, with construction to commence early in 2024.

Through the Regional Tourism Investment Fund, the Victorian Government also committed \$3 million in 2022 to build a Visitors Centre and an activity precinct at the hatchery, which will provide activities and experiences that are complementary to the hatchery and surrounds. Concept planning and detailed design components were completed in 2022. After a delay due to the ongoing effects of COVID, combined with the devastating effects of the Goulburn Valley floods, construction began in early in 2023 and is expected to be completed by December 2023.



Promoting safe and sustainable fishing and boating

Open dialogue with CaLD community leaders

It was identified that while Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) groups represent a large portion of active fishers within Victoria, but they have a disproportionately low level of involvement in consultation and decision making processes on recreational fishing matters that may impact on them.

The Community Reference Group (CRG), incorporating 12 community leaders from a range of CaLD groups, has created a structured pathway for open communication to identify and address any gaps in information reaching the communities. As part of the two-way model of the meetings, the leaders bring to the VFA any issues that they have received from the community members to be discussed and worked through, and the VFA presents the Group with translated or targeted products and resources that they can take back to their members to spread the knowledge they are being given.

The scope of the group at present is to:

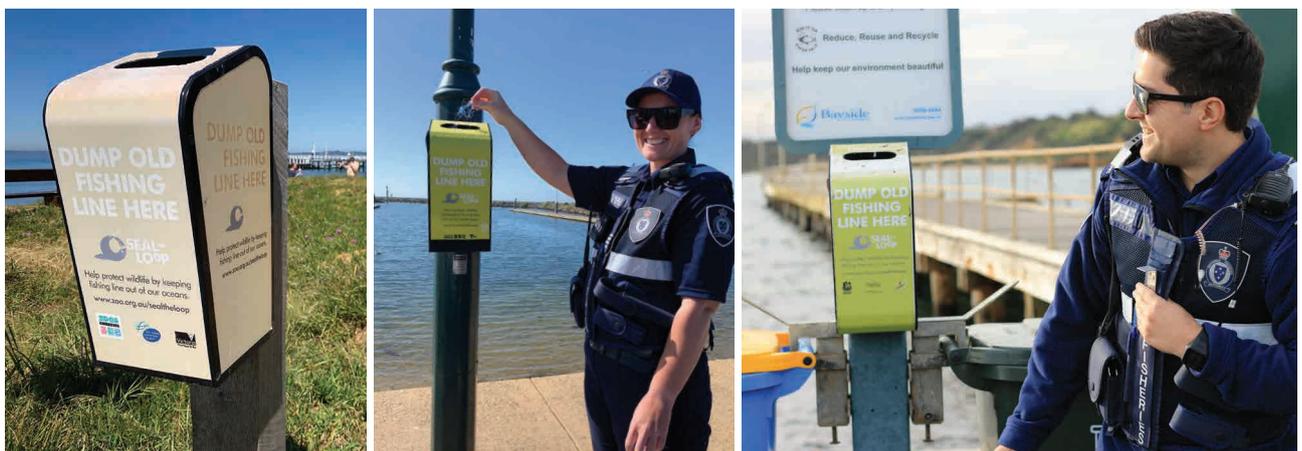
- Promote full participation by Victoria's diverse communities in the social, cultural and economic benefits of fishing.
- Promote sustainability and responsibility in fishing and fishing-related activities in Victoria.
- Support the development of recreational fishing.
- Provide a forum to enhance communication and relationships for the benefit of Victorian fisheries.

The CRG also has guest speakers each meeting from various bodies, like the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating, to ensure a wide reach in the information provided back to the communities.

Detangling our waterways one bin at a time – Seal the loop network

Discarded fishing gear can be a hazard to aquatic wildlife. To help prevent this, *Seal the Loop* bins have been placed at key fishing spots to collect the unwanted and broken fishing gear throughout Victoria. In 2022, Zoos Victoria and the VFA collaborated to breathe new life into the Seal the Loop program, which resulted in an expansion of the network. With the help of fishing clubs, community organisations, local councils, water authorities, and State Government agencies, an additional 27 bins were installed in 2022-23 taking the total to 330 across Victoria.

The aim is to continue the expansion in 2023-24 as more key fishing locations and 'bin custodian' volunteers are identified. Bin custodians can be members of fishing clubs and service organisations, local residents, individuals or families. These wonderful people are the face of the network and do their bit by emptying the bins when required, recording the content of the bins, and promoting the use of the Seal the Loop Bins within their local communities.



Supporting inclusion in fishing and boating

All Abilities Accessible network

Better Boating Victoria (BBV) was established to implement boating reforms that make it safer, cheaper, and easier for Victorians to enjoy a day on the water. Part of this commitment is ensuring that all Victorians, regardless of ability, are provided the opportunity to enjoy public boating facilities.

To implement this, BBV has facilitated the installation of accessible boating facilities across the State and aims to incorporate all possible elements of Universal Design. This includes accessible pontoons, gradient indicators, grab rails, tactile indicators as well as *Disability Discrimination Act* - compliant Car Trailer Unit and car parking spaces.

Over 2022-23, BBV expanded the network to include six new all abilities site and many more are being planned for delivery in the future.

To support facility managers to enable all abilities access, BBV has also produced the *Hansa C Crane Accessible Boating Guide*, which aims to provide facility/asset managers advice on how to use, store and maintain a Hansa C Crane. The guide will also aid in teaching local users how to both access and use the crane at their local facility.

Activating Inclusion through All Abilities Sports Days

Access for All Abilities is a Victorian Government program that has supported inclusive sport and recreation opportunities for people with a disability for over 15 years. Activate Inclusion Sports Days (AISD) are one-day programs designed to promote the pathways for inclusion sport and active recreation programs in local community areas and encourage students with disability to participate in community sport and active recreation on a regular basis.

The VFA was proud to participate in the AISD program in 2022-23 and engaged 713 students from all age groups across Melbourne metro (Parkville, Donvale, Dandenong, Geelong, North Melbourne and Keysborough) in recreational fishing activities, including fish identification, fishing games with magnetic fish and rod casting.

Autism Camp Victoria

Over every school holiday period, the VFA participates in the Autism Camp Victoria program held in Queenscliff, over four days and five nights. The program partners with Camp Wyuna YMCA and the VFA's Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre (MFDC) to support children with Autism as well as their siblings to come together, have fun, share experiences, and learn ways of dealing positively with the challenges they face as the sibling of an Autistic young person. Through the MFDC, participants can learn about the marine and freshwater fish, try the touch tank rock pool and watch animals being fed.





Effective and innovative authority

Delivering the VFA's Multicultural Diversity Action Plan 2023 – 2025

In December 2022, the VFA delivered its inaugural VFA Multicultural Diversity Action Plan 2023 – 2025. Cultural diversity and inclusion are valued at the VFA, and we want our staffing profile to reflect the diversity of the Victorian community. We also want to extend our reach through engagement and partnerships with a diverse range of cultural groups and organisations.

The Plan details the VFA's commitment and outlines objectives and actions to be undertaken to support cultural diversity, both internally and externally. Our objective is to continue to create, develop and support a culturally diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the sectors and communities we work with. We will achieve this objective by focusing on goals that enable equitable access and opportunities for, and collaboration and engagement with, people from culturally diverse communities.

Success will be measured by an increase in the employment of people with culturally diverse backgrounds by 2025 and an increased level of engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities.

This will be achieved by:

- Implementing inclusive attraction, recruitment, retention, and progression strategies for people from culturally diverse communities.
- Supporting prospective and existing culturally diverse employees and their managers.
- Continuing to provide an inclusive and respectful environment for staff and the community.
- Working with CaLD communities through education and events raising awareness of fishing and boating and promoting stewardship, social inclusion, and positive relationships.



Building our enforcement team

In early July 2022, the VFA's Education and Enforcement division commenced recruitment for five vacant fisheries officer positions at the Swan Hill, Mallacoota, Snobs Creek, Apollo Bay and Yarram stations. This was the first time in a number of years that all of the vacancies were in regional Victoria, so this created a unique opportunity to promote and highlight the benefits and also the challenges of working in a small regional town. Following the lengthy recruitment process, the five regional positions were filled, with an additional sixth position at the Altona station also filled from the successful applicants.



The new recruits commenced their training in November 2022 and headed to their stations for the busy summer period for some on-the-job training. They completed their authorised officer training in March 2023 and graduated in April 2023.

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 2022-23 is detailed in the table below.

Table 3: Summary of enforcement activities

Enforcement activities	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Inspections			
Aquaculture inspections	48	36	40
Commercial fishing inspections	645	625	926
Marine safety inspections	6,310	5,897	4,231
Recreational fishing inspections	47,232	45,838	43,799
Investigations			
13FISH calls	1,816	1,763	2,105
Investigations initiated	53	41	40
Marine Park activities			
Marine Park inspections	250	221	224
Marine Park patrols	1,544	1,648	1,533
Enforcement actions			
Offenders detected	4,999	4,835	4,653
Verbal warning given	1,522	1,779	1,357
Official warning issued	2,416	2,239	2,101
Infringement notice issued	2,099	1,584	1,913
Prosecution briefs submitted	31	28	20



Delivering improvements through the Recreational Fishing Grants Program

For over 20 years, funds from the sale of recreational fishing licences have been used to fund projects delivered by fishing clubs, community groups and government agencies to improve recreational fishing in Victoria. Grants are made available to successful applicants after assessment by the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee and approval by the Minister for Outdoor Recreation.

The Recreational Fishing Grants Program consists of four separate tiers:

1. The Commissioning Grants Program - This program funds large VFA-led priority projects. In 2022-23, a total of \$403,692 was provided for the production of products to assist recreational fishers in understanding and complying with fishing rules, including the Recreational Fishing Guide, fish rulers and measures. It also funded the collection of recreational fishing catch and effort data at key locations around the State.
2. The Large Grants Program - This program provides funds for a wide range of projects between \$5,001 and \$100,000, and in 2022-23, a total of \$1,233,563 was awarded to 10 projects.
3. The Intermediate Grants Program - This program provides grants of up to \$50,000 to angling clubs and community groups for projects to improve recreational fishing. In 2022-23, a total of \$169,800 was awarded to four projects.
4. The Small Grants Program – This program is open year-round and provides funds to angling clubs and community groups to run community fishing days and other small-scale projects. In 2022-23, a total of \$32,987 was awarded to 15 projects.

In accordance with 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).

Three key projects completed in 2022-23 were:

Kangaroo Lake Jetty

The Gannawarra Shire Council received \$70,000 to instal a floating jetty at the northern end of Kangaroo Lake, which is a key recreational fishery in the Kerang area. Located off Lake View Road, the new platform is adjacent to the boat ramp, and replaces the old pontoon that was rendered unsafe after it was damaged by waves and wind. The new improved L-shaped jetty provides plenty of room for shore-based anglers to fish from and includes features such as seating, rod holders, a bait board, and solar lighting. The pontoon also caters for boat-based anglers with fenders to provide protection and plenty of space to tie up.

Ouyen Lake Walkway

The Ouyen Inc. community organisation received \$160,000 through two separate grants to install a floating fishing walkway at Ouyen Lake to provide more fishing opportunity for land-based fishers. The floating walkway spans the lake at one end and features two fishing platforms of extra width that allow anglers of all ages to access deeper water in the lake without the need of a boat. The VFA stocks Ouyen Lake with rainbow trout for the June and September school holidays, as well as Murray cod, golden perch and silver perch to create longer term fishing opportunities.

Little Murray River Habitat

The North Central Catchment Management Authority received \$40,991 for phase three of its Little Murray River habitat restoration project. The project installed five large woody habitat structures in priority locations from Swan Hill to the Little Murray weir pool. Locations were selected in collaboration with a stakeholder group consisting of Wamba Wamba Traditional Owners, the VFA, VRFish, OzFish, Swan Hill Rural City Council and the North Central CMA, with consideration given to access, fish ecology, cultural heritage, and minimising ground disturbance. The grant also enabled additional funding to be leveraged from DEECA to install a further ten structures and there are now 67 woody habitat structures in the Little Murray River.



Enhanced boating experiences

Delivering upgrades for our boating and fishing community

The VFA's Better Boating Victoria completed a series of boating facility upgrades across the State in 2022-23. Construction was completed at Rhyll, Queenscliff, Cape Conran, Apollo Bay, Mordialloc, Point Richards, Warrnambool, Ocean Grove, Barrier Landing, Lake Lonsdale, Toolondo, Rocklands Reservoir and North Arm.



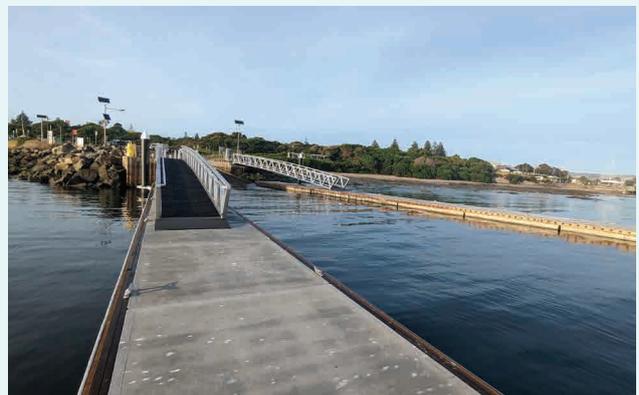
Rhyll: Works included the replacement of the existing three-lane boat ramp to extend into deeper water and allow all-tide access. There are also two new fixed and floating pontoon jetties as well as an improved car park.



Queenscliff: Works included the construction of a third boat ramp lane, floating pontoon as well as an asphalted new main carpark. A dedicated kayak launching pontoon was also installed



Cape Conran: A new concrete ramp surface, extended jetty and improved turning apron were installed. The resurfaced and improved ramp will reduce sand accumulation, thereby requiring less frequent maintenance and ensuring the ramp remains open more of the time. The jetty has been lengthened to provide more berthing space and the renewed concrete apron now sits higher to tie into the revamped ramp.



Apollo Bay: The upgrade included the delivery of two larger 50-metre-long floating pontoons on either side of the ramp. Users will have more space to tie up their boats, which will free up capacity at the ramp and in turn, make it easier for boaters to launch and retrieve their boats. The pontoons also include provision for all abilities access with a gradient indicator and davit fixings included.



Mordialloc: The car park at the Mordialloc boat ramp was refurbished providing more car trailer spaces and improved entry and exit points.



Point Richards: Construction of an overlapping rock groyne was completed to increase the safety of boat ramp operations and reduce the amount of sea grass accumulating at the ramp. Works also included the installation of new mooring poles for larger vessels.



Warrnambool: Works were completed in December with the ageing wooden jetties replaced with more modern structures and new grooved concrete ramp surface installed.



Ocean Grove: A pair of new pontoons were installed at the Ocean Grove boat ramp. The northern pontoon was refurbished while the southern pontoon was replaced following storm damage caused to the existing structures.



Barrier Landing: Eight new berthing spots are now available to boaters following the completion of jetty upgrade works at Barrier Landing on the Gippsland Lakes. Improvements consisted of a 12-metre-long extension to the outer jetty finger, where a new pontoon and gangway was also installed.



Lake Lonsdale: A new concrete ramp lane and rock beaching was installed at Lake Lonsdale to double capacity at the boat ramp.



Toolondo: The boat ramp was replaced with a concrete surface and additional car parking was provided.



Rocklands: The Hynes ramp was concreted, while formalised parking was provided to make access easier along the reservoir's eastern shoreline.



North Arm: The new-look facility includes a new concrete boat ramp and apron and a floating pontoon to the west of the ramp. A new fixed eastern jetty was installed which relocated the fishing gantry to the water's edge, making it easier to weigh in large fish.



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

This 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.

Objective Indicators:

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

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.

The VFA achievements against its departmental objective and performance targets are described in Tables 4 and 5, respectively.

Table 4: Progress towards the departmental objective

Indicator (unit of measure)	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Percentage of quota-based fish stocks that were assessed during the year as being sustainable (percent)	100	100	100	100

Table 5: Performance against output performance measures

Performance measures	Unit of measure	2022-23 target	2022-23 actual	2021-22 target	2021-22 actual
Quantity					
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	1,950	1,816	1,750	1,673
Key fisheries managed in accordance Fishery Management Plans	number	6	6	6	6
Minimum number of uniformed fisheries officers maintaining operational coverage during priority fishing periods	number	20	19	17	20
Native and salmonid fish stocked	number (000)	10,000	8,016	10,000	10,200
Recreational boating and fishing infrastructure improvements delivered	number	3	3	2	2
Quality					
Key statutory obligations relevant to the VFA complied with (tabling annual report, audits, business plan and board appointments)	percent	100	100	100	100
Percentage of investigations into serious or organised fisheries offending that result in prosecution, disruption or intelligence referral outcomes	percent	90	90	nm	nm
Timeliness					
Proportion of fisheries cost recovery levies reviewed and set prior to the commencement of the licensing year	percent	100	100	100	100
Research project milestones and reports completed on time	percent	90	90	90	90

nm' = new measure

An explanation is provided when there is a +/- 5 percent variance between the target and the actual result for the year.

Enhance levels of community participation in achieving fisheries compliance through calls to the 13FISH reporting line - 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 VFAs increasing social media presence and subsequent education of the public of the needs for fisheries rules and regulations.

Minimum number of uniformed fisheries officers maintaining operational coverage during priority fishing periods – the outcome is marginally lower than the target due to existing VFA staff vacancies and extensive flood response assistance provided by VFA staff through 2022-23.

Native and salmonid fish stocked - the 2022-23 fish production year was impacted by unseasonal cold conditions and the state-wide floods that occurred in the spring/summer of 2022-23. These conditions impacted the breeding ability of fish from VFA and private hatcheries and therefore fish availability for stocking into public waters. The VFA has communicated this with recreational fishing stakeholders, who have been understanding of the situation and how it was managed.

Delivering our 2022 State election commitments

As part of the November 2022 election campaign, the Government announced two initiatives to deliver better boating and fishing infrastructure, get more kids involved in fishing and improve Victoria's waterways to keep families out on the water for generations to come: *More Piers, Jetties and Opportunities for Little Anglers* and *Doing what matters for local communities*. Planning and program design began in early 2023, with delivery of commitments commencing from July 2023.

The fishing and boating commitments comprise:

Fishing and stocking infrastructure

- \$10.0 million to expand Victoria's native fish hatchery at Arcadia to increase production from 1.6 million to 6 million fish per year to assist in making Victoria self-sufficient for fish stocking and replenishing our waterways.
- \$5.0 million for the next major stage of works at Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery to rebuild the 80-year-old ponds and accelerate efforts to re-establish fish populations of Macquarie perch and trout cod.
- \$1.5 million to grow fishing participation in school aged children through a Little Anglers initiative, with a fishing rod, tackle box and a Kids' Guide To Fishing, which includes information about where to go fishing, how to get in touch with local clubs and links to resources to get people into the sport.
- \$5.3 million for grants to enhance recreational fishing:
 - \$2.5 million to establish a Habitat Improvement Fund to preserve marine, estuarine and freshwater fisheries.
 - \$1.2 million to support local angling clubs with grants to help them attract new members, encouraging more families to take up fishing.
 - \$1.0 million to invest in the growth of Victoria's aquaculture sector, helping the industry attract new investment and grow local jobs.
 - \$0.3 million to support the establishment of Gunaikurnai Oyster Aquaculture Farm in the Gippsland Lakes.
 - \$0.1 million over one year to support Fishcare Victoria to promote sustainable fishing practices.

Recreational Boating

- \$22.1 million to improve 15 recreational boating facilities - jetties, piers and carparks - across the State:
 - Avalon (Stage 2) - upgrade and extension of the Avalon Boat Ramp Jetty.
 - Cowes (Stage 2) - upgrade and expansion of the Cowes Boat Ramp Jetty.
 - French Island - upgrade to the Tankerton Boat Ramp.
 - Inverloch - upgrade to the Inverloch Boat Ramp to provide enhanced wave mitigation.
 - Laanecoorie - relocation of the existing Brownbill Recreational Reserve boat ramp on Laanecoorie Reservoir to a safer location.
 - Lake Boga - replacement of the Lake Boga pontoon with an all-abilities DDA compliant pontoon, including provision for a hoist.
 - Lang Lang - upgrade to the Lang Lang Boat Ramp launching facility.
 - Mildura - upgrade to the Mildura Redcliffs boating facility to improve usability.
 - Torquay - upgrade to the Fishermans Beach carpark.
 - Howqua Inlet - construction of a new boat ramp and parking at Howqua Inlet, Lake Eildon.
 - Limeburners - wave attenuator upgrade and new ramps.

- Mornington - upgrade to the Mornington Schnapper Point Boat Ramp and jetty including improved all abilities access.
 - St Leonards - upgrade to the St Leonards facility, including constructing a replacement pier with wave attenuators to make launching and retrieving easier.
 - Tooradin – upgrade to the Tooradin boating facility, including jetties, boat ramp and carpark.
 - Werribee – upgrade to the Werribee South car park and ramp.
- \$4.4 million to develop a new boating facility at Tarago Reservoir, opening it up to motorised boats as well as recreational fishing.

Ministerial Statement of Expectations 2022 – 2024 for the VFA

The Statement of Expectations sets out the Minister's expectations for the VFA's regulation of fishing and boating 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 2022 to 30 June 2024.

Table 6 outlines the Minister's expectations and the VFA's corresponding performance targets for 2022-23.

Table 6: Reporting on the implementation of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23	Status
1. Professionalism and upholding Victorian public service processes		
Promote, support and display a professional approach to work, displayed through high levels of integrity, competence, dedication, and ethical behaviour	Completion of mandatory training modules is linked to annual Performance Development and Review cycle	✓
	Staff have undertaken job-specific training such as financial authorisation, purchasing, information privacy and data security, as relevant	✓
Processes and policies are in place that ensure compliance with the public sector values, Victorian Public Service codes of conduct, and public sector employment principles and standards	The VFA's intranet is up to date with policies and procedures that enable staff awareness and compliance with the essential elements of public sector values	✓
2. Meaningful engagement with Aboriginal People		
Continue to actively engage with Aboriginal Victorians in appropriate and meaningful ways, focusing on sustainable fisheries management, recognition of Aboriginal customary fishing rights for Recognised Traditional Owner Groups and improving economic opportunities for all Aboriginal people in fishing, boating and related industries	VFA <i>Aboriginal Engagement Strategy 2021-24</i> implemented in line with deliverables	✓
	Progress development of the VFA <i>Aboriginal Fishing Strategy</i>	✓
	With Traditional Owners at Arcadia, work is undertaken to progress Indigenous aspects to the design and development of, and employment at, the Northern Native Fish Hatchery	✓
	With Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, develop a funding agreement to contribute to the existing partnership trial of Sydney rock oyster aquaculture in the Gippsland Lakes	✓
3. Encouraging more women to get involved in boating and recreational fishing		
Continue to consult and work with, amongst others, the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating network to elevate the voice and profile of women to promote increased participation of women and girls in recreational fishing and boating	The Women in Recreational Fishing Network is rebranded and relaunched as the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating Network (WIRFB)	✓
	Participation in the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating Locals Program is increased annually	✓
	VFA and BBV websites and social media are used to increase awareness of opportunities to participate in fishing and boating education and social activities	✓

Table 6 continued on next page

Table 6 continued: Reporting on the implementation of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23	Status
4. Delivering for both commercial and recreational fishers		
Continue working with the Victorian seafood industry to optimise Victoria's fisheries and aquaculture industries	Corner Inlet Fishery monitoring program, with a focus on improvements to by-product and bycatch monitoring, developed and underway	To be progressed in 2024
	Survey of the Corner Inlet Fishery collecting up-to-date information on recreational and indigenous catch undertaken	To be progressed in 2024
Actively engage with commercial and recreational fishers, aquaculture licence holders and Traditional Owner groups who have a direct interest in fishing and in decisions that affect their fishing entitlements	<p>Engagement activity is undertaken in line with the VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Strategic Action Group – quarterly • Snobs Creek Board – quarterly • State-wide Recreational Fishing Round Table – quarterly • Total Allowable Commercial Catch Forums – annually • Seafood Industry Victoria - as required • VRFish - as required • Victorian Multicultural Commission - twice yearly • Boating Industry of Australia (Victoria) – quarterly 	✓
Continue exploring opportunities to support innovation in Victoria's commercial fishing and aquaculture sectors	Requirements gathering undertaken, developmental plan and market engagement strategy developed to scope consolidation of existing electronic commercial catch reporting	✓
	Market Engagement Strategy developed to examine replacement options for the out-of-date Fisheries Integrated Licensing System	✓
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 extension undertaken through expression of interest processes	✓

Table 6 continued on next page

Table 6 continued: Reporting on the implementation of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23	Status
4. Delivering for both commercial and recreational fishers		
Continue engagement with the recreational fishing sector and seek feedback from fishers on topics to allow the VFA to invest in priority areas, make informed choices about improving recreational fishing opportunities across the State, and identify information and knowledge gaps, including research and data needs	Citizen Science data collection functionality in the Go Fish Vic app expanded to include additional species	✓
	Crown land access point mapping functionality integrated into the Rec Fishing Guide app	✓
	World Recreational Fishing Conference delivered to a national and international audience	✓
	Annual Recreational Boating Action Plan developed in consultation with recreational fishers and boat users	✓
Continue to deliver the priorities established in the Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy 2021 – 2030 for recreational boaters across the State	Boat ramp fees removed in line with timelines	✓
	Surveys conducted as per the Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plans to better understand boating behaviour and experience, with consultation summary reports released post consultation	✓
	Boating promotion campaign to encourage boating across Victoria undertaken in accordance with annual Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plans	✓
Ensure transparency on how the Better Boating Fund is used to invest revenue raised from marine licensing and boat registration fees into improving boating safety and facilities	Annual Report on Better Boating Fund acquittal delivered	✓
5. Promoting environmental sustainability		
Periodic updates on the status of key Victorian fish stocks to be prepared and made publicly available	Native Fish Report Cards produced annually	✓
	Stock assessment reports for quota fisheries published annually on the VFA website	✓
Existing marine, freshwater and aquaculture management plans continue to be implemented and routinely reviewed and for the VFA to develop new fishery management plans and strategies as the need arises	<i>Rock Lobster Management Plan</i> and harvest strategy review undertaken	✓
	Baseline data collected on native fish populations to underpin harvest strategy development as per the <i>Freshwater Fishery Management Plan 2018-2028</i> , with progress reported annually	✓

Table 6 continued on next page

Table 6 continued: Reporting on the implementation of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23	Status
5. Promoting environmental sustainability		
Continue to increase the awareness and understanding that all Victorians have a part to play in achieving sustainable and responsible use of Victoria's fisheries resources	Events aimed at educating the public on the responsible use of fisheries resources, including Vic Fish Kids, Snobs Creek Open Day, 'Hooked on', and fishing festivals, delivered	✓
	Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre education services and programs (Schools Education Program, Holiday programs delivered	✓
	Multicultural information available to culturally diverse communities on VFA's website and through culturally appropriate publications and other communication channels	✓
6. Developing a partnership approach to safety and regulation		
Continue to collaborate with state-level agencies whose fishing, boating and enforcement responsibilities overlap those of the VFA, or where the VFA can provide assistance, knowledge and advice	Intelligence services and enforcement support provided to assist Game Management Authority	✓
	In collaboration with Safe Transport Victoria and the Water Police, marine safety compliance and enforcement activities under the Marine Safety Act 2010 undertaken in accordance with the <i>Annual Control Strategy & Action Plan</i> and the <i>Recreational Boating Safety Co-regulator Plan</i> .	✓
	Contribution to Victoria's <i>All Hazards, All Emergencies</i> approach to emergency management achieved	✓
	Collaboration with DEECA undertaken on emergency management, particularly shark hazard management and cetacean entanglement in fishing gear	✓
	Collaboration with water managers and work undertaken to translocate priority fish species from lakes, rivers and channels impacted by loss or redirection of waters	✓
Continue to foster strong relationships at the national level with other fisheries management and enforcement agencies	National engagement through the Fisheries Managers Network and Australian Fisheries Managers Forum achieved	✓
	Contribution to national discussions to develop consistency in commercial fishing data collection and options for sharing across jurisdictions	✓

Table 6 continued on next page

Table 6 continued: Reporting on the implementation of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23	Status
7. Stakeholder consultation, engagement and education		
Ensure understanding of the changing needs and priorities of commercial fishers, aquaculture businesses, recreational fishers and boaters, Traditional Owner groups, and the broader community by continuing to focus on consultation and engagement	Regular meetings held with Seafood Industry Victoria and the Aquatic Strategic Action Group to collaborate on shared strategic priorities for Victoria’s seafood industry	✓
	Regular meetings of the State-wide Recreational Roundtable to ensure collaboration on shared strategic priorities for the recreational fishing community	✓
	Regular engagement with the Boating Industry of Victoria and VRFish	✓
	Regular public engagement on proposed boating facility upgrades	✓
	Meetings with the Victorian Multicultural Commission undertaken twice annually	✓
	Effective collaboration undertaken with DEECA, EPA, Parks Victoria, local governments and asset/land managers to deliver boating facility upgrades, renewals and new facilities on schedule	✓
Continue to support diversity and inclusion by removing barriers hindering people from enjoying all that Victoria’s recreational fishing and boating has to offer	All-abilities access points installed on schedule and in accordance with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan</i>	✓
	A Community Reference Group established as a platform for assisting Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities to engage with the VFA and contribute to fisheries resource management discussions	✓
	<i>VFA Accessibility Action Plan 2021 - 2025</i> delivered on schedule	✓
Continue a focus on stewardship and education across the breadth of VFA stakeholders	Two Fishing for All events held	✓
	Six Vic Fish Kids events held	✓
	Review of the <i>VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2021 – 2023</i> undertaken	✓
	An annual <i>Education and Enforcement Control Strategy & Action Plan</i> delivered	✓
8. Improving infrastructure		
Facilitate urgent upgrades and continued maintenance of boating infrastructure through the Better Boating Fund, including delivery of boat ramp renewals identified in the Victorian Boating Strategy	Upgrades to boat ramps/infrastructure at Rhyll, Queenscliff, Warrnambool, Mordialloc car park, Pt Richards harbour, Cape Conran, Apollo Bay, Ocean Grove delivered	✓
	Delivery of upgrades at Lake Bullen Merri	✓

Table 6 continued on next page

Table 6 continued: Reporting on the implementation of the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23	Status
9. Accountability and transparency		
Ensure that fisheries management and boating-related decision-making processes are clear and visible to the public; that stakeholders have involvement in the processes and that information is accessible, clear and easily understood and available in a timely manner on the VFA website	Stakeholders are provided opportunity to make submissions on fisheries management issues, as relevant	✓
	Outcomes of consultative processes, including submissions and outcomes of fishery management decision making, are published on the VFA's website	✓
Administration of regulation should be transparent and subject to public scrutiny through effective performance reporting	VFA Annual Report is tabled in Parliament	✓
	Annual Report on Better Boating Fund acquittal prepared to ensure transparency around how the Fund is used	✓
Continue to utilise the VFA's social media platforms as key avenues to ensure stakeholders and the community have accurate and up-to-date information	Continued growth in the VFA's and Better Boating Victoria's reach through social media achieved	✓
	At least four public education campaigns delivered through the VFA's social media platforms annually	✓
	Explanatory details of relevant enforcement outcomes published on our education-specific social media platforms	✓

Financial summary 2022-23

The VFA is a statutory authority in the State of Victoria, established under the *Victorian Fisheries Authority Act 2016* by amendment to the *Victorian Fisheries Act 1995*.

The table below shows the financial results for 2022-23 and the two preceding financial years

Table 7: The VFA's summary financial performance

	(\$ thousand)		
Financial performance	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Total income from transactions	76,214	78,760	57,517
Total expenses from transactions	(78,341)	(81,162)	(58,690)
<i>Net result from transactions</i>	<i>(2,128)</i>	<i>(2,400)</i>	<i>(1,173)</i>
Total other economic flows included in net result	334	721	(1,020)
Net result	(1,794)	(1680)	(2193)

	(\$ thousand)		
Financial position	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
As at 30 June			
Total assets	65,999	58,227	45,447
Total liabilities	31,475	26,519	14,483
Net Assets (Equity)	34,542	31,708	30,964

	(\$ thousand)		
Cash Flow Statement	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
for the financial year ended 30 June			
Net cash flows from operating activities	3,904	756	1,865
Net cash flows from / (used for) investing activities	(1,984)	(2,239)	(3,178)
Net cash flows from / (used for) financing activities	993	1,728	2,362
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	2,913	245	1,050
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	1,294	1,050	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	4,207	1,294	1,050

Financial performance (operating statement)

The net result from transactions was a deficit of \$2.1 million for 2022-23. This largely represents the unfunded non-cash items such as depreciation and amortisation, partially offset by income from trust fund drawdowns for capital projects.

Funding received from the VFA's portfolio department does not fund 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.

Income

The majority of the VFA's income is provided by its portfolio department. The VFA's portfolio changed from the Department of Transport (DTP) on 31 December 2022 to the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Jobs (DJSIR) on 1 January 2023.

A total of \$50.0 million was received from DJSIR and \$25.5 million was received from DTP during 2022-23. These grants represent the agreed government funding for the VFA to carry out its functions and priorities.

Expenses

Operating expenses totalled \$78.3 million for 2022-23, driven by the delivery of the VFA's core functions across the commercial and recreational fishing sectors, and investment in boating infrastructure upgrades across Victoria. Expenditure in 2022-23 covered the VFA's education, enforcement, research, fish stocking, and boating facilities improvement priorities, and was used to invest in and promote commercial and recreational fishing across the State.

Around \$28 million was spent on boating infrastructure projects. A further \$4.8 million of expenditure in 2022-23 was used to deliver the *Go Fishing Victoria - Phase 2 initiative*, including stocking ten million in Victoria's waterways during the year. The remaining expenses were used to deliver the VFA's ongoing legislative and service delivery obligations.

Financial position (balance sheet)

The VFA's net assets were \$34.5 million at 30 June 2023, an increase of \$2.8 million from the previous year. This net increase was driven by an increase in assets of \$7.8 million and a \$4.9 million increase in liabilities.

The VFA's assets increased primarily due to higher year-end cash balances, increments of building revaluation and higher receivables associated with the accrued funding from DJSIR that is driven by the level of the VFA's payables.

The VFA's total liabilities increased due to payables associated with milestone payments for boating projects, partially offset by a lower employee entitlement provision caused by a change in the changing profile of VFA employees throughout the year.

Cash flows

Cash and cash equivalents at 30 June 2023 was \$4.2 million, around \$2.9 million higher than at 30 June 2022. This increase is largely due to the higher draw-down of cash grants from DJSIR, which translated to higher net cash flows from operating activities for 2022-23 compared to the previous year.

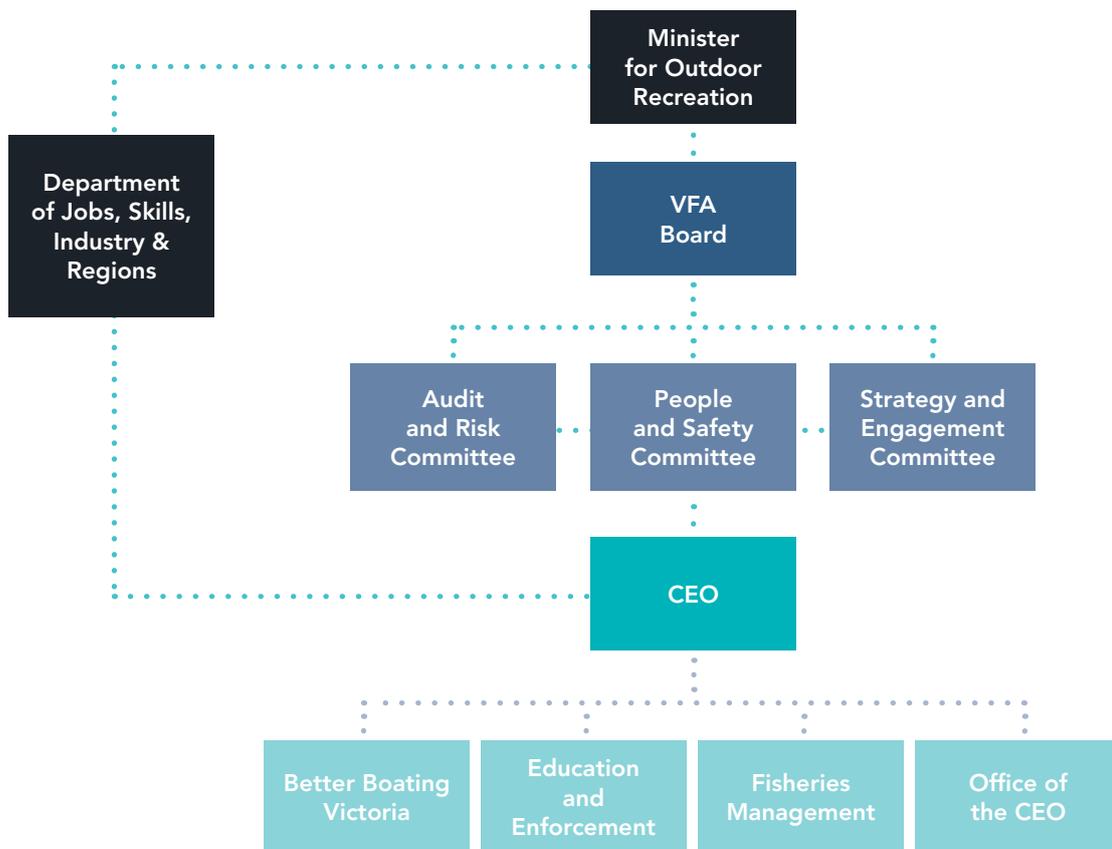
A net total of \$2.0 million was spent on investing activities during 2022-23, primarily on the development of the Visitors Centre at the Arcadia fish hatchery. Net cash flows from financing activities was \$1.0 million for 2022-23, which is lower than the \$1.7 million for 2021-22. Lower financing from capital contributions was required in 2022-23 due to capital investment being funded from upfront grant funding being provided in previous financial years and drawn down during 2022-23.



Our governance arrangements and organisational structure

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 Outdoor Recreation 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

At the commencement of the 2022-23 financial year, the VFA was located within the Fishing and Boating portfolio under the Hon. Sonya Kilkenny MP, Minister for Fishing and Boating. In early 2023, as part of the machinery of government changes resulting from the 2022 State election, a new portfolio was created with Minister Kilkenny appointed as Minister for Outdoor Recreation. The VFA was subsequently transferred into the Outdoor Recreation portfolio.

Our departmental portfolio

Machinery of government changes also restructured government departments and the VFA moved from the Department of Transport to the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR).

Under the VFA Act, the role of the DJSIR Secretary is to work with the VFA on matters relating to public administration and governance, to provide advice to the Minister on matters relating to strategic fisheries policy and to coordinate the development of regulation relating to fisheries.

Our Board and subcommittees

Members of the VFA Board are appointed by the Minister for Outdoor Recreation. The Board oversees the overall governance and strategic direction of the VFA and ensures appropriate risk management mechanisms are in place. 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

Key responsibilities of the Audit and Risk 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'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 legislation and industrial instruments.

Strategy and Engagement Committee

The Strategy and Engagement Committee oversees the development, implementation and periodic review of the VFA's Strategic Plan and the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, and monitors and reviews the VFA's Strategy Framework to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate. The Committee also reviews and advises on other strategies as requested by the Board in line with the VFA's strategic priorities.

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. Ms Owen’s term as Board Chair ended on 30 June 2023.



Mr Graeme Dear *VFA Deputy Board Chair
Strategy and Engagement 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 CEO of the East Gippsland Catch Management Authority, he has significant experience in managing a statutory authority, engaging with and building partnerships with stakeholders. Mr Dear’s term as Deputy Board Chair ended on 30 June 2023.



Ms Leigh Mackay *VFA Board Director
People and Safety Committee Chair
Strategy and Engagement Committee Member*

After working as a lawyer for 12 years, Ms Mackay has held senior executive positions in organisations such as CSR, the Port of Melbourne Authority and the National Gallery Victoria. Her recent board appointments have included the Victorian Heritage Council and the Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust. She was awarded an OAM in 2019.



Dr Bernadette Northeast *VFA Board Director
Strategy and Engagement Committee Member*

Dr Northeast is qualified in aquatic science and aquaculture, including a Ph.D. relating to Australian freshwater fish. Her science expertise is complimented by other directorships and regional community activities. Dr Northeast was appointed Deputy Chair on July 2023.



Mr David Parkin *VFA Board Director
People and Safety Committee Member*

Mr Parkin, a Trawlwulwuy man from Tebrakunna country, brings a deep cultural perspective to the VFA Board. He has widespread professional involvement in First Nations entrepreneurial and business activities and is a current Board Director of the Kinaway Chamber of Commerce. Mr Parkin received the AmCham Alliance Ambassador’s Award in 2022 in acknowledgment of his stakeholder engagement and work in regional Victoria.



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. Mr Piper stepped down from the Board in October 2023.



Mr David Shirer

VFA Board Director

Audit and Risk Committee Chair

Strategy and Engagement Committee Member

Mr Shirer brings to the Board a broad range of knowledge and skills, with many years of experience across a number of industry sectors. His qualifications and experience encompass Marine Biology, New Zealand's fisheries industry, together with business and finance. He is a fellow of the Australasian Investor Relations Association. Mr Shirer was appointed VFA Board Chair on 1 July 2023 and stepped down as Audit and Risk Committee Chair in August 2022.



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 Tabone was appointed as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee in September 2022.

Table 8: Attendance at Board and Committee meetings

Members	Attendance			
	VFA Board	Audit and Risk Committee	People and Safety Committee	Strategy and Engagement Committee
Gail Owen, Chair	6/6	4/5		
Graeme Dear, Deputy Chair	6/6			2/2
Leigh Mackay#	5/5	2/2		
Bernadette Northeast	6/6		4/4	2/2
David Parkin#	4/5		2/3	
Yorick Piper#	4/5		3/3	
David Shirer	5/6	5/5	1/1	2/2
Joelle Tabone	6/6	5/5	1/1	
Rob Hogarth*	-	5/5		

* External Audit and Risk Committee Member

Term commenced October 2022

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 the 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 200 staff across Melbourne and regional Victoria.



Divisions	Executive Leaders
<p>Better Boating Victoria</p> <p>Better Boating Victoria implements the Government's program of boating reforms focussed on making it safer, cheaper and easier for Victorians to get out on the water.</p>	<p>Director - Katherine Grech</p>
<p>Education and Enforcement</p> <p>The Education and Enforcement 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.</p>	<p>Director - Ian Parks</p>
<p>Fisheries Management</p> <p>The Fisheries Management Division delivers core regulatory marine and freshwater fisheries management, fisheries science, and aquaculture management services, including undertaking fish stock assessment and setting total allowable commercial catches for the rock lobster, abalone, giant crab, scallop, pipi, octopus and urchin fisheries. The division delivers operational policies, administers recreational and commercial licensing, quota trading, permitting, commercial catch and effort reporting, recreational fishing improvement activities, and supports the disbursement of Recreational Fishing Licence funds to improve recreational fishing in Victoria. It also oversees the fish production and stocking program for the VFA.</p>	<p>Director - Monique Leane, June-December 2022</p> <p>Director - Luke O'Sullivan, from February 2023</p>
<p>Office of the CEO</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer - Letitia Billings Chief Financial Officer - Simon Leverett</p>

Occupational health and safety

Occupational health and safety

The goal of the VFA's *Occupational Health and Safety Strategy 2021 - 2023* 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 2022-23 financial year saw the completion of the Strategy. The VFA continued to build on its strengths and act on opportunities for improvement in all areas of health and safety. We are proud of our continued efforts and achievements in putting our safety, the safety of our team and the community first. A new plan is being developed for the 2023-24 year.

As part of the Strategy, a Health & Wellbeing Program has been progressively implemented across the VFA, with staff regularly given access to key tools and promotions with which to improve their health and wellbeing, specifically addressing mental, physical, and social health. Examples of topics covered, information and tools provided include: RUOK day, mental health and resilience, mindfulness, dealing with occupational violence, dealing with burnout, the virtual gym, sleep strategies, women's heart health, social strategies, and conflict de-escalation training for events staff.

Over May and June 2023, an external OHS audit focusing on critical risk was conducted by consultants HSE Global, with results and recommendations presented to the VFA Executive for consideration. The full report of the audit was delivered in July. The VFA is planning the development of its Critical Risk Framework, which addresses key critical risks including driving, working on, in or near water, mobile plant, hazardous substances, animal vectors, working in isolation and occupational violence/psychosocial risks.

Safety Leadership and Training

The VFA acknowledges that the level of safety leadership capability within an organisation directly impacts on the culture, behaviours and therefore the safety performance. An online training module *OHS for Managers* was released to all Managers/Team Leaders covering responsibilities, hazard management, consultation, and duty of care. Online training on *Hearing Conservation* was also released to all Fisheries Officers.

The Executive and senior leaders continue to engage in the safety process through our *Stop for Safety* Program and safety interactions. The focus of the 2023 Stop for Safety sessions, which were held in May and June, was on critical risks, in addition to any other risks teams had identified. Teams were able to access tools and activities through the Victorian Public Sector Commission's Wellbeing toolkit to assist in proactively focusing on mental health and wellbeing within the team.

Safety interactions have been carried out by the VFA Executive for over five years now. These informal meetings afford VFA staff the chance to raise OHS issues directly with executives and senior leaders. The VFA Executive is currently considering the integration of critical control checks into this process.

Safety performance

Table 9: The VFA's safety performance over three years.

Measure	Indicator	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Incidents	No. of incidents [^]	74	48	28
	Rate per 100 FTE	40.97	26.68	15.1
	No. of incidents requiring first aid/or further medical treatment	22	14	14
Hazards	No. of hazards	40*	10*	18*
	Rate per 100 FTE	22.14	5.56	9.83
Claims	No. of Standard Claims	4	1	1
	Rate per 100 FTE	2.2	1.80	0.55
	No. of lost time claims	3	1	0
	Rate per 100 FTE	1.66	1.80	0
	No. of claims exceeding 13 weeks	3	0	0
	Rate per 100 FTE	1.65	0	0
Return to work	Percentage of claims with RTW plans <30 days	100%	100%	100%
Executive Safety Interactions	No. of sites visited to conduct safety interactions	24	23	12

[^] There were no fatalities.

* During 2021-22 and 2022-23, a number of close household/social COVID-19 contacts were being recorded as hazards in Periscope (OHS incident reporting system). These have not been included in the hazard number in the table as they were not workplace contacts.

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.

Employees have been correctly classified in workforce data collections.



Public sector values and employment principles

The *Public Administration Act 2004* 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 *Public Administration Act 2004*.

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 10. 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						
\$180 000 – \$199 999		3				
\$200 000 – \$219 999		3				
\$220 000 – \$239 999						
\$240 000 – \$259 999	3		1			
\$260 000 – \$279 999	1					
\$280 000 – \$299 999						
\$300 000 – \$319 999						
Total	4	6	1	0	0	0

Comparative workforce data

Table 11 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 of the previous reporting period (2022).

Table 11. Details of employment levels in June 2023 and 2022

		June 2023								
		All employees		Ongoing			Fixed Term		Casual	
		Number (Headcount)	FTE	Full-time (Headcount)	Part-time (Headcount)	FTE	Number (Headcount)	FTE	Number (Headcount)	FTE
Demographic data	Gender									
	Women	75	64.34	40	18	50.63	14	13.20	3	0.51
	Men	128	121.22	103	2	101.20	18	18.00	5	2.02
	Self-described	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL:	203	185.56	143	20	151.83	32	31.20	8	2.53
	Age									
	<30	24	22.76	9	0	9	13	13.00	2	0.76
	30-39	51	45.89	36	2	33.50	12	11.60	1	0.79
	40-49	49	44.30	40	5	42.53	1	1.00	3	0.77
	50-59	45	43.60	37	3	39	5	4.60	0	0
60+	34	29.01	21	10	27.80	1	1.00	2	0.21	
TOTAL:	203	185.56	143	20	151.83	32	31.20	8	2.53	
Classification data	VPS1-6 grades									
	VPS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	VPS 2	9	5.64	1	2	2.40	2	1.60	4	1.64
	VPS 3	45	38.69	23	3	23.20	15	14.60	4	0.89
	VPS 4	60	56.33	47	5	48.33	8	8.00	0	0
	VPS 5	50	47.80	42	6	45.80	2	2.00	0	0
	VPS 6	28	26.10	23	4	25.10	1	1.00	0	0
	Senior Employees									
	STS 7	6	6	6	0	6	0	0	0	0
	PS	1	1	1	0	1	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	4	4.00	0	0	0	4	4.00	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Employees	203	185.56	143	20	151.83	32	31.20	8	2.53
		June 2022								
		All employees		Ongoing			Fixed Term		Casual	
		Number (Headcount)	FTE	Full-time (Headcount)	Part-time (Headcount)	FTE	Number (Headcount)	FTE	Number (Headcount)	FTE
Demographic data	Gender									
	Women	73	61.77	39	19	48.73	11	10.40	4	2.64
	Men	127	122.27	107	1	106.80	14	14.00	5	1.47
	Self-described	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL:	200	184.04	146	20	155.53	25	24.40	9	4.11
	Age									
	<30	21	20.15	10	0	10.00	8	8.00	3	2.15
	30-39	42	37.45	32	0	29.00	9	8.40	1	0.05
	40-49	56	52.91	42	6	46.13	5	5.00	3	1.78
	50-59	47	43.86	40	4	41.80	2	2.00	1	0.06
60+	34	29.67	22	10	28.60	1	1.00	1	0.07	
TOTAL:	200	184.04	146	20	155.53	25	24.4	9	4.11	
Classification data	VPS1-6 grades									
	VPS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	VPS 2	14	10.06	3	3	4.80	3	3.00	5	2.26
	VPS 3	49	41.25	34	6	34.80	5	4.60	4	1.85
	VPS 4	55	53.93	42	4	44.93	9	9.00	0	0
	VPS 5	48	45.40	40	5	42.40	3	3.00	0	0
	VPS 6	24	23.40	21	2	22.60	1	0.80	0	0
	Senior Employees									
	STS 7	5	5.00	4	0	4.00	1	1.00	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	3.00	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Employees	200	184.04	146	20	155.53	25	24.40	9	4.11

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 Committee.

1. Flexibility

The VFA has continued to support flexible working arrangements through its *Flexible Work Arrangements Policy and Procedure*, which may include but is not limited to flexible start and/or finish times; days of work, such as part-time work or compressed full-time hours; patterns of work, such as job-sharing arrangements, and the location of work, such as working from home or another location.

2. Inclusion

Aboriginal Victorians

The Framework includes a commitment to increase Aboriginal employment to 2 percent by 2030. At the end of June, four of the VFA's ongoing and fixed term staff (2.05 percent) identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

In June 2023, the Board's People and Safety Committee reviewed the VFA's *Aboriginal Engagement Strategy 2021 – 2024*. The resulting changes were presented to the Board in August 2023.

Accessibility Action Plan

The implementation of the VFA *Accessibility Action Plan 2021 - 2025* has continued throughout the year with further detail provided in the Other Disclosures section of the report.

A highlight of work undertaken under the *Recreational Boating Strategy* is the installation of all-abilities pontoons and indicators across numerous sites. This is significant, noting that Victoria only had two all-abilities hoists at public boat tams (Warrnambool and Patterson River). Indicators assist those who are mobility-impaired with assessing the gradient. This is an Australian-first for public boating facilities and something that the Better Boating Victoria team is very proud of, as is all of the VFA.

LGBTIQ+

In February 2022 the Victorian Government released the LGBTIQ+ strategy, *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32*, which provides the vision and plan to drive equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) communities within all aspects of government work over the next decade.

The VFA will continue to work with the Diversity and Inclusion Team in its portfolio department DJSIR in implementing this strategy.

Multicultural Diversity

The VFA's *Multicultural Diversity Action Plan 2023 - 2025* was approved by the Board on 1 December 2022. Implementation of the plan commenced in 2023, with a reporting template approved by the People and Safety Committee in March 2023.

Human Rights

To help strengthen the human rights culture across the VFA, the People and Culture Team released a new online training module, *The Charter of Human Rights*, late in 2022. It was compulsory for all staff to complete the six-part module. The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is a Victorian law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms, and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It is about the relationship between government and the people it serves.

3. Gender Equality

The VFA's Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 - 2025

Under the VFA's *Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 - 2025* (GEAP) a number of actions were undertaken and completed over the year, notably: the approval of an updated *Sexual Harassment Policy* and the introduction of an additional reporting hotline called *Stopline* accompanied by an online staff information session for those that would like to know more about VFA's Sexual Harassment Policy; the publication and communication of the revised *Recruitment Policy and Procedure* together with supplementary recruitment documentation designed to be more inclusive and flexible; and the release of training in *Managing Unconscious Bias* for all those involved in recruitment.

4. Life Stage

The VFA continues to use flexible working arrangements and other supports to assist staff who have parental and caring responsibilities or want to transition to retirement. These arrangements are made while balancing the needs of business operations.

Through the actions of the GEAP, the VFA is seeking to improve and build on existing supports for employees taking parental leave and employees taking a career break. Guidelines for managers and employees have been drafted to support them through the process leading up to, during and returning to the workplace from a career break. These will be finalised in the second half of 2023.

Executive officer data

For the VFA, an executive officer is defined as a person employed as an executive under Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004* (PAA). For a public body, an executive 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 following tables disclose the executives of the VFA for 30 June 2023:

- Table 12 discloses the total number of executives for the VFA, broken down by gender; and
- Table 13 provides a reconciliation of executive numbers presented between the Report of Operations and Note 9.9 'Remuneration of executives' in the financial statements.

Table 12: Total number of executives for the VFA, broken down into gender

Class	All			Women			Men			Self-described		
	# 2023	# 2022	Var.	# 2023	# 2022	Var.	# 2023	# 2022	Var.	# 2023	# 2022	Var.
SES-3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n	n	n
SES-2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	n	n	n
SES-1	3	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	n	n	n
Total	4	3	1	1	1	0	3	2	1	n	n	n

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 Executives and the total remuneration paid to Executives 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 VFA during the relevant reporting period. To assist readers, these two disclosures are reconciled below.

Table 13: Reconciliation of executive numbers

	2023	2022	2021
Executives (financial statement Note 9.9)	3	2	2
Accountable Officer (CEO)	1	1	1
Less Separations	0	0	0
Total executive numbers at 30 June	4	3	3



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 2022-23.

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 2022-23, the VFA expended \$520,158 on a reportable government advertising campaign. The majority of this expenditure was on printing costs, which are predominately used to provide educational materials to promote recreational fishing and to advise fishers on how to comply with fishing regulations.

Table 14: Details of government advertising expenditure for campaigns with a media spend of \$100,000 or more

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	\$38,301	\$10,623	\$0	\$412,567	\$58,667	\$520,158

Consultancy expenditure

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

In 2022-23, there were five consultancies where the total fees payable to the consultants were \$10,000 or greater. The total expenditure incurred during 2022-23 in relation to these consultancies was \$256,515 (excluding GST). Details of individual consultancies are outlined in Table 15.

Details of consultancies under \$10,000

The VFA did not enter into any consultancies under \$10,000 during 2022-23.

Table 15: Details of consultancies valued at \$10 000 or greater incurred in 2022-23

Consultant	Purpose of consultancy	Total approved project fee (excl GST)	Expenditure 2022-23 (excl GST)	Future expenditure (excl GST)
Vidler Stephen Michael T/A Fishtech Services	Native Fish Production specialist advice	169,214	16,514	11,542
Vidler Stephen Michael T/A Fishtech Services	Native Fish Production specialist advice - renewed contract	435,000	107,300	321,700
Crowe Horwath (Aust) Pty Ltd	Internal Audit Services	204,811	90,761	7,816
The Trustee For The Colquhoun Consulting Trust	Development of a draft Victorian Aquaculture Strategy	31,560	15,780	0
HSE Global Australia Pty Ltd	Critical control effectiveness review	39,600	26,160	13,440

Note: the above consultancy projects are across multiple years. The Future expenditure (ex GST) should be read as the balance as of 30 June 2023.

Information and communication technology expenditure

Details of information and communication technology (ICT) expenditure

For the 2022-23 reporting period, the VFA had a total ICT expenditure of \$2,292,237 (Table 16).

Table 16: VFA operational ICT expenditure in 2022-23

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
\$2,292,237	\$301,816	\$1,990,421	\$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 2023.

The VFA did not enter into any contracts of a value greater than \$10 million during 2022-23.

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.

Under the FOI Act, the FOI processing time for requests received is 30 days. However, when external consultation is required under ss29, 29A, 31, 31A, 33, 34 or 35, the processing time is 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 ovic.vic.gov.au. An application fee of \$30.60 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
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
GPO Box 4509
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Enquiries can be made to the department's FOI Unit via email at foi@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

FOI Statistics for the 2022-23 period

During the 2022-23 period the VFA received one FOI application. This application was from a member of the public.

The VFA made two FOI decisions during the period, with one decision carried over from 2021-22; all decisions were made within the statutory 30-day time period.

In both decisions, access was granted in part or 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 ovic.vic.gov.au

Compliance with the *Building Act 1993*

The VFA has a presence in 25 locations across Victoria. Operations in those locations are delivered from a total of 35 office and depot sites. The VFA has management responsibility for 10 office sites and five depots, either through a Committee of Management appointment or lease agreement.

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.

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 the PD Act 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 Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions;
- The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions' 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

Further information

As an Authority within the portfolio of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, 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 17: Disclosures under the *Protected Disclosure Act 2012*

	2020-21 number	2021-22 number	2022-23 number
The number of disclosures made by an individual to the VFA and notified to the Independent Broad-based Anticorruption Commission	0	0	0
Assessible disclosures	0	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 a 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 Accessibility Action Plan 2021 - 2025* has three focus areas: building awareness through access to information; attracting and recruiting people with disability and supporting career development; and creating an accessible and inclusive environment for engagement with and the delivery of our services to people with a disability.

Reducing barriers to accessing goods, services and facilities

The VFA has continued to reduce barriers to accessing goods, services and facilities. In recent years the 'Fishing For All' series had evolved to accommodate all people, not just people living with disability. The VFA Events Team reviewed the series and concluded that when a large number of people attended the event, many people living with disability missed out on the opportunity to learn to fish.

The Events team partnered with Fishcare to re-focus the 2023 *Fishing For All* event series, targeting people living with a disability. In May, the first *Accessibility Fishing* Event was held in conjunction with Fishcare and Yarra Valley Fly Fishers at Lilydale Lake. There were attendees ranging from 8 to 90 years with their carers attending the fishing clinic which provided a bespoke experience. The event was a great success.

The BBV team partnered with the Events team at the event held in Lilydale to do a demonstration of an all-abilities hoist (the Hansa C Crane) being rolled out across Victoria. A demonstration video is available.

The VFA Events team has also established new site selection criteria for all *Vic Fish Kids* events, ensuring that future event locations are accessible.

The BBV team has also been busy with the installation of all-abilities pontoons and indicators across many sites including Hastings, Queenscliff, Apollo Bay, Lake Bullen Merri and Mordialloc.

Reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment

The VFA continues its commitment to providing career development, coaching and mentoring to support progression and improve overall engagement and job satisfaction for employees living with a disability. The VFA also continues to support the employment of Victorians living with disability through the implementation of our social procurement processes seeking product and service providers who employ people living with a disability.

The People and Culture team undertook a comprehensive review of the Recruitment Policy and Procedure and supplementary documentation which was incorporated with other initiatives being undertaken through the Gender Equality Action Plan (2021 -2025) implementation. The team applied an intersectional lens to the review to reduce barriers and be more inclusive. The team also sourced and released online training in *Managing Unconscious Bias*. This was released in June and will be a requirement for all staff participating on a recruitment selection panel to have completed the training.

Promoting inclusion and participation in the community

Both our Education and Events teams have a network within the disability sector who they work closely with in delivering inclusive education programs and events catering for all children and families.

Throughout the year the Education team has been working with *Disability Sports Australia* on the series called "Activate Inclusion Sports Days". It consists of a number of sports offered on 'come and try' days for people living with disability. Fishing is among the most popular activities at these events. An estimated 500 children living with disability have participated in fishing at these events. Eleven events were held at various locations across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

In May, the BBV team released the *Accessible Boating The Hansa C Crane* guide, a document that aims to aid facility/asset managers on how to use, store and maintain their Hansa C Crane.

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

The VFA engages with groups representing/supporting people living with disability as they hold the knowledge and expertise about what is best for their communities. Informed by the engagement we:

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

Our Education, Events and Better Boating Victoria staff are supported in their work with people with disability in the community.

Compliance with other legislation

Disclosure of Emergency Procurement

In 2022-23, the VFA did not need to activate Emergency Procurement

Environmental Reporting

The VFA is committed to environmental sustainability in its operations. The VFA supports the Victorian public sector in adopting new technology that lowers emissions and increases environmental sustainability. The VFA's total electricity consumption in VFA offices is at Table 18 and a description of the vehicle fleet is in Table 19.

Table 18: Total electricity consumption segmented by source

Indicator	2022-23
Total electricity consumption (MWh)	
Purchased electricity at departmental offices - consolidated	1996.96
Not directly purchased but from outside the organisation	n/a*
Total electricity offsets (MWh)	0

* Electricity not directly purchased is provided through a Service Level Agreement for office accommodation and not itemised.

Table 19: Transportation - Number and proportion of vehicles in the organisational boundary segmented

The VFA's fleet is comprised of 81 vehicles and 37 powered watercraft that are essential to the VFA's business and operational requirements.

Number and proportion of vehicles	2022-23 (number)	Proportion (%)
Total number and proportion	118	100
Road vehicles	81	69
Passenger vehicles - Internal combustion engines	67	57
Petrol	16	
Diesel	47	
Hybrid	4	
Goods vehicles/trucks	14	12
Diesel	14	
Marine vessels	37	31
Powered boats	29	
Jet skis	8	

Environmentally sustainable design in new buildings - NABERS Energy ratings

The VFA did not newly complete or occupy owned office buildings and has no plans for new construction or substantial fit-outs.

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 2022-23, 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 2022-23.

Asset Management Accountability Framework maturity assessment

The following section summarises 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.

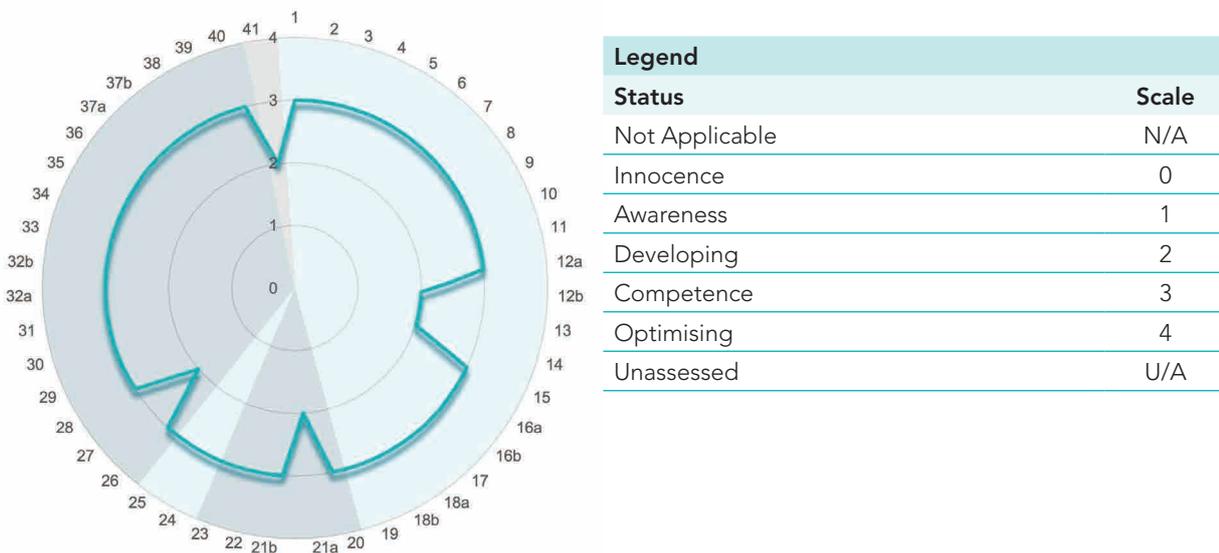


Figure 1: VFA AMAF maturity assessment

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 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.



David Shirer
VFA Board Chair
Victorian Fisheries Authority

8 November 2023



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Declaration in the financial statements

The attached Financial Statements for the Victorian Fisheries Authority 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 2023 and financial position of the Victorian Fisheries Authority at 30 June 2023.

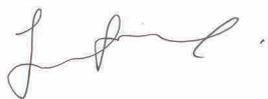
At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstance which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 8 November 2023.



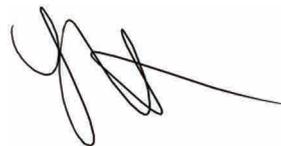
David Shirer
VFA Board Chair
Victorian Fisheries Authority

8 November 2023



Travis Dowling
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Fisheries Authority

8 November 2023



Simon Leverett
Chief Financial Officer
Victorian Fisheries Authority

8 November 2023

VAGO audit report



Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of the Victorian Fisheries Authority

Opinion	<p>I have audited the financial report of the Victorian Fisheries Authority (the authority) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance sheet as at 30 June 2023 • comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • cash flow statement for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies • declaration in the financial statements. <p>In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the authority as at 30 June 2023 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>
Basis for Opinion	<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>
Board's responsibilities for the financial report	<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
10 November 2023



Simone Bohan
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Comprehensive operating statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	(\$ thousand)	
		2023	2022
Income from transactions			
Grants	2.2.1	75,954	78,457
Sale of services	2.2.2	260	304
Total income from transactions		76,214	78,760
Expenses from transactions			
Grant disbursements	3.1	(26,371)	(29,151)
Employee benefits	3.2.1	(25,058)	(25,376)
Depreciation and amortisation	4.1.1	(3,363)	(3,094)
Interest expense	6.1.2	(64)	(75)
Laboratory and livestock expenses	3.3	(4,386)	(4,719)
Contracts and services	3.4	(6,651)	(5,361)
Computer services and equipment	3.5	(2,370)	(1,895)
Other operating expenses	3.7	(10,079)	(11,490)
Total expenses from transactions		(78,341)	(81,162)
Net result from transactions		(2,128)	(2,401)
Other economic flows included in net result			
Revaluation of land and buildings	8.1	-	1,304
Net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets	8.1	279	796
Other gains/(losses) from other economic flows	8.1	55	(1,379)
Total other economic flows included in net result		334	721
Net result		(1,794)	(1,680)
Other economic flows – other comprehensive income			
Changes in physical asset revaluation surplus	8.2	2,561	-
Total other economic flows – other comprehensive income		2,561	-
Comprehensive result		767	(1,680)

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

Balance sheet as at 30 June 2023

	Note	(\$ thousand)	
		2023	2022
Assets			
Financial assets			
Cash and deposits	6.3	4,207	1,294
Receivables	5.1	20,440	17,731
Total financial assets		24,646	19,025
Non-financial assets			
Land	4.1	6,840	6,840
Buildings	4.1	27,854	25,655
Plant and equipment	4.1	5,136	5,389
Intangible assets	4.2	218	218
Other non-financial assets	5.3	1,304	1,100
Total non-financial assets		41,352	39,203
Total assets		65,999	58,227
Liabilities			
Payables	5.2	20,447	13,788
Borrowings - lease liabilities	6.1	3,141	3,730
Employee-related provisions	3.2.2	7,868	9,000
Total liabilities		31,457	26,518
Net assets		34,542	31,708
Equity			
Contributed Capital		41,808	39,741
Reserves	8.2	2,856	294
Accumulated surplus / (deficit)		(10,121)	(8,327)
Total Equity		34,542	31,708

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 2023

	Note	(\$ thousand)			Total
		Contributed capital	Accumulated deficit	Physical asset revaluation reserves	
Balance at 1 July 2021		37,316	(6,647)	294	30,963
Contributed capital	6.3.2	2,424	-	-	2,424
Net result for the year			(1,680)	-	(1,680)
Balance at 30 June 2022		39,741	(8,327)	294	31,708
Balance at 1 July 2022		39,741	(8,327)	294	31,708
Contributed capital	6.3.2	2,067	-	-	2,067
Net result for the year		-	(1,794)	-	(1,794)
Land and building revaluation increments	8.2	-	-	2,561	2,561
Balance at 30 June 2023		41,808	(10,121)	2,856	34,542

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 2023

	Note	(\$ thousand)	
		2023	2022
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Receipts from Victorian Government		69,790	70,808
GST recovered from/(paid) to ATO		3,578	3,199
Sale of services		893	569
Total receipts		74,261	74,576
Payments			
Payments of grants and other transfers		(27,171)	(33,609)
Payments to suppliers and employees		(39,523)	(36,636)
GST on payments		(3,599)	(3,500)
Interest and other costs of finance paid		(64)	(75)
Total payments		(70,357)	(73,820)
Net cash flows from operating activities	6.3.1	3,904	756
Cash flows from investing activities			
(Purchase)/sale of non-financial assets		(2,246)	(2,625)
Receipts from/(payments) for plant and equipment		262	386
Net cash flows from / (used in) investing activities		(1,984)	(2,239)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Contributed capital from Victorian Government	6.3.2	2,067	2,714
Repayment of finance leases		(1,074)	(986)
Net cash flows from / (used in) financing activities		993	1,728
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		2,913	245
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		1,294	1,050
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	6.3.3	4,207	1,294

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.

Its principal address is:
1 Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

The Victorian Government implemented Machinery of Government (MOG) changes in December 2022. From 1 January 2023, the VFA was integrated into the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) portfolio. The VFA was previously integrated into the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) portfolio.

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.

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,
- 4.1 Property, Plant and Equipment and;
- 7.3 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 2022-23 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 DJSIR. As an administrator for the Recreational Fishing Licences Trust, DJSIR disburses funds to third parties including the VFA.

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 and invest in boating infrastructure across the State. 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.

Funding for the VFA is predominately provided as grants from its portfolio departments. Grant funding was provided by DTP from 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022. The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions became the VFA's portfolio department on 1 January 2023. Grant funding was provided by DJSIR from 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2023.

Structure

2.1 Summary of income that funds the delivery of our services

2.2 Income from transactions

2.1 Summary of income that funds the delivery of our services

	Note	(\$ thousand)	
		2023	2022
Income from transactions			
Grants	2.2.1	75,954	78,457
Sale of services	2.2.2	260	304
Total income from transactions		76,214	78,760

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

2.2.1 Grants	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Income recognised as income of non-for-profit entities		
General purpose	75,292	77,820
Other specific purpose	662	637
Total grants	75,954	78,457

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. The VFA receives grants primarily from its portfolio department, which largely reflects government funding for the delivery of the VFA's operating activities, or the drawdown of trust accounts to deliver policy initiatives. Payments received from the VFA's portfolio department to deliver the Government's capital priorities are recognised as Contributed Capital.

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.

Grant funding was provided by DTP from 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022. Grant funding was provided by DJSIR from 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2023.

2.2.2 Sale of services

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Sale of services	260	304
Total services	260	304

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 5.2). Where the performance obligations is satisfied but not yet billed, a contract asset is recorded (Note 5.1).

Payments received from entities (other than the VFA's portfolio department), for a specific purpose and outcome are recognised as grants when milestones and performance obligations are met.

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 4.1.1 and 6.1.2 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 Other operating expenses

3.1 Grant disbursements

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Grants to government agencies		
Local government	18,295	20,987
Commonwealth government	179	250
Other government agencies	2,947	670
Total grants to government agencies	21,420	21,907
Grants to external organisations and individuals		
Other non-government agencies	4,951	7,244
Total grants to external organisations and individuals	4,951	7,244
Total grants and other transfers	26,371	29,151

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. Grants paid during 2022-23 are broadly comparable to 2021-22, and largely relate to investment in boating infrastructure across Victoria. Boating grants included payments to Victorian Government agencies such as Parks Victoria for the Cape Conran boat ramp project.

3.2 Employee benefits

3.2.1 Employee benefits in the comprehensive operating statement

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Salaries, wages and other on-costs	21,202	20,639
Annual leave and long service leave expenses	1,605	2,657
Defined contribution superannuation expense	2,251	2,080
Total employee benefits	25,058	25,376

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.

The VFA does not recognise any defined benefit liabilities because it has no legal or constructive obligation to pay future benefits relating to its employees. Instead, the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) discloses in its annual financial statements the net defined benefit cost related to the members of these plans as an administered liability (on behalf of the State as the sponsoring employer).

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)	
	2023	2022
Current provisions		
Annual leave		
- Unconditional and expected to wholly settle within 12 months	1,234	1,281
- Unconditional and expected to wholly settle after 12 months	1,085	1,139
Long service leave		
- Unconditional and expected to wholly settle within 12 months	678	816
- Unconditional and expected to wholly settle after 12 months	3,674	4,057
Provisions for on-costs		
- Unconditional and expected to wholly settle within 12 months	125	335
- Unconditional and expected to wholly settle after 12 months	331	805
Total current provisions	7,126	8,434
Non-current provisions		
Employee benefits	687	495
Provisions for on-costs	55	71
Total non-current provisions	742	566
Total provisions for employee benefits	7,868	9,000

3.2 Employee benefits (continued)

3.2.2 Employee benefits in the balance sheet (continued)

Reconciliation of movement in on-cost provision

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Opening balance	1,212	1,002
Additional provisions recognised	11	1,121
Additions due to acquisitions	-	34
Increases/reductions arising from payments/other sacrifices of future economic benefits	(702)	77
Unwind of discount and effect of changes in the discount rate	(10)	(962)
Reduction transfer out	-	(60)
Closing balance	511	1,212
Current	455	1,140
Non current	55	72

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 a conditional 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

Fund	(\$ thousand)	
	Paid contribution for the year	
	2023	2022
Defined contribution plans		
Aware Super ^(a)	1,200	1,179
Australian Super ^(b)	258	194
Host Plus Super ^(b)	155	128
Other ^(b)	408	391
Defined Benefit plans		
New Super ^(b)	153	188
Other ^(b)	76	-
Total	2,251	2,080

^(a) Formerly VicSuper

^(b) These defined contribution plans were grouped as part of the *other* category in the 2021-22 VFA Annual Report

Employees of the VFA are entitled to receive superannuation benefits and the VFA contributes to defined contribution plans. The defined benefit plan(s) provides benefits based on years of service and final average salary. 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

Laboratory and livestock expenses	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Laboratory and livestock expenses	4,386	4,719

The VFA's laboratory and livestock expenses predominately relates to fish stock purchases and fish production.

3.4 Contracts and services

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Contracts and services	6,651	5,361

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. The increase in contracts and services between 2021-22 and 2022-23 is predominately due to the cost of delivering the World Recreational Fishing Conference.

3.5 Computer services and equipment

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Computer services and equipment	2,370	1,895

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

3.6 Other operating expenses

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Supplies and services		
Service level agreement - shared services provided by DTP	1,329	1,467
Occupancy	3,892	3,981
Communications	683	595
Travel and accommodation	601	329
Vehicle, equipment and marine vessel expenses	1,376	1,317
Other administrative expenses	2,198	3,801
Total supplies and services	10,079	11,490
Total other operating expenses	10,079	11,490

Other operating expenses include supplies and services costs which are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred. Other Administrative expenses are lower in 2022-23 primarily due to a refund from DTP for Workers Compensation charges.

4. 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

4.1 Property, plant and equipment

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

4.1.1 Depreciation and amortisation

4.1.2 Reconciliation of movements in carrying amount

4.2 Intangible assets

4.1 Property, plant and equipment

	(\$ thousand)					
	Gross carrying amount		Accumulated Depreciation		Net carrying amount	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Land and Buildings						
Land at fair value	6,840	6,840	-	-	6,840	6,840
Buildings and structures at fair value	30,944	27,247	(6,064)	(4,257)	24,880	22,990
Right-of-use Buildings	2,609	2,459	(1,763)	(1,324)	846	1,135
Buildings and structures - construction in progress	1,721	1,062	-	-	1,721	1,062
Building leasehold improvements	583	583	(176)	(115)	407	468
Total Land and Buildings	42,697	38,191	(8,003)	(5,696)	34,694	32,495
Plant and equipment at fair value	5,535	5,117	(2,755)	(2,267)	2,780	2,850
Motor vehicles under finance lease	4,565	3,859	(2,209)	(1,321)	2,356	2,539
Total Plant and Equipment	10,100	8,976	(4,964)	(3,587)	5,136	5,389
Net carrying amount	52,796	47,167	(12,966)	(9,284)	39,830	37,884

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 7.3 – Fair value determination, for additional information on fair value determination of property, plant and equipment.

4.1(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 2023	Accumulated depreciation 2023	Net carrying amount 2023	Gross carrying amount 2022	Accumulated depreciation 2022	Net carrying amount 2022
Right-of-use Buildings	2,609	(1,763)	846	2,459	(1,324)	1,135
Motor vehicles	4,565	(2,209)	2,356	3,859	(1,321)	2,539
Total	7,173	(3,972)	3,202	6,318	(2,645)	3,674

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

Property, plant and equipment (PPE) as well as right-of-use assets under leases 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 on the following page by asset category. In addition, for right-of-use assets the net present value of the remaining lease payments is often the appropriate proxy for fair value of relevant right-of-use assets.

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.

4.1.1 Depreciation and amortisation

Charge for the period

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Buildings and structures at fair value	1,807	1,580
Right-of-use Buildings	439	444
Building leasehold	61	64
Plant and equipment	488	448
Motor vehicles under finance lease	569	558
Total	3,363	3,094

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	
	2023	2022
Land	Indefinite	Indefinite
Buildings and structures at fair value	1 to 50	1 to 30
Right-of-use Buildings	Term of lease	Term of lease
Building leasehold	Term of lease	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. The useful life of Buildings and structures at fair value have been reviewed and adjusted to 1 to 50 years.

Right-of-use assets and building leasehold improvements 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.

4.1.2 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	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Opening balance	6,840	5,434	22,990	21,113	468	464	1,135	662	1,062	2,411	2,850	1,924	2,539	2,556	37,884	34,564
Recognition of right-of-use assets in application of AASB16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	917	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	917
Fair value of assets received free of charge or for nominal considerations	-	-	-	340	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	340
Additions	-	-	-	42	-	57	150	-	2,012	2,379	365	793	768	1,044	3,295	4,315
Additions by recognition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	-	-	-	70
Transfer in/out of assets under construction	-	102	1,136	3,075	-	11	-	-	(1,353)	(3,728)	53	542	-	-	(164)	-
Revaluations	-	1,304	2,561	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,561	1,304
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	(1,807)	(1,580)	(61)	(64)	(439)	(444)	-	-	(488)	(448)	(568)	(558)	(3,363)	(3,094)
Disposals / write-offs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(31)	(383)	(503)	(383)	(534)
Net carrying amount	6,840	6,840	24,880	22,990	407	468	846	1,135	1,721	1,062	2,780	2,850	2,356	2,539	39,830	37,884

4.2 Intangible assets

	(\$ thousand)			
	Water Access Rights		Total	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Opening balance	218	218	218	218
Additions at cost	-	-	-	-
Net book value at end of financial year	218	218	218	218

Water Access Rights

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

5. Other assets and liabilities

Introduction

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

Structure

5.1 Receivables

5.2 Payables

5.3 Other non-financial assets

5.1 Receivables

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

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Contractual		
Receivables – government (DJSIR)	15,843	12,970
Receivables – government other	3,978	2,618
Receivables – external	173	76
Total contractual receivables	19,995	15,664
Statutory		
GST input tax credit recoverable from the ATO	445	2,067
Total statutory receivables	445	2,067
Total receivables	20,440	17,731

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. Contractual receivables have increased in 2022-23 primarily due to accrued grant revenue from DJSIR for boating infrastructure grants that became payable towards the end of 2022-23 but were not yet paid.

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

5.2 Payables

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

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Contractual		
Supplies and services	13,562	6,314
Deferred capital grant revenue	4,308	3,805
Other payables	2,556	3,640
Total contractual payables	20,426	13,759
Statutory		
Other payables	21	30
Total statutory payables	21	30
Total payables	20,447	13,788

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. Contractual payables have increased in 2022-23 primarily due to accrued grant expenses for boating infrastructure grants that became payable towards the end of 2022-23 but were not yet paid.

Deferred capital grant revenue: Consideration was received from Victorian State Government entities to support the construction for a new fish hatchery at Arcadia, and expansion of the hatchery at Snobs Creek. These payments were received upfront in 2020-21 and 2021-22 before performance obligations were met. These payments were initially recognised as Deferred capital grant revenue.

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. (see note 2.1). As a result, the VFA has deferred recognition of a portion of the grant consideration as a liability for the outstanding obligations.

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.

Maturity analysis of contractual payables ^(a)

	Carrying amount	Nominal amount	(\$ thousand)			
			Maturity dates			
			Less than 1 month	1-3 months	3-12 months	1-5 years
2023						
Supplies and services	13,562	13,562	13,562	-	-	-
Deferred capital grant revenue	4,308	4,308	-	-	4,308	-
Other payables	2,556	2,556	2,556	-	-	-
Total	20,426	20,426	16,118	-	4,308	-
2022						
Supplies and services	6,314	6,314	6,314	-	-	-
Deferred capital grant revenue	3,805	3,805	-	-	3,805	-
Other payables	3,640	3,640	3,640	-	-	-
Total	13,759	13,759	9,953	-	3,805	-

^(a) 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'.

5.3 Other non-financial assets

Current other non-financial assets

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Prepayments	1,304	1,100
Total current other non-financial assets	1,304	1,100

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.

6. 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

6.1 Borrowings

6.1.1 Maturity analysis of borrowings

6.1.2 Interest expense

6.2 Leases

6.2.1 Finance lease liabilities

6.3 Cash flow information and balances

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

6.3.2 Contributed capital from Victorian Government

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

6.4 Commitments for expenditure

6.1 Borrowings

Total borrowings	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Current borrowings		
Finance lease liabilities	1,058	1,659
Total current borrowings	1,058	1,659
Non-current borrowings		
Finance lease liabilities	2,083	2,071
Total non-current borrowings	2,083	2,071
Total borrowings	3,141	3,730

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.

6.1.1 Maturity analysis of borrowings ^(a)

	(\$ thousand)						
	Carrying amount	Nominal amount	Maturity dates				
			Less than 1 month	1-3 months	3-12 months	1-5 years	Over 5 years
2022-23							
Lease liabilities	3,141	3,086	838	210	858	1,180	-
Total	3,141	3,086	838	210	858	1,180	-
2021-22							
Lease liabilities	3,730	3,818	632	328	1,054	1,804	-
Total	3,730	3,818	632	328	1,054	1,804	-

^(a) Maturity analysis is presented using the contractual and discounted cash flow.

6.1.2 Interest expense

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Interest on finance leases	64	75
Total interest expense	64	75

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.

6.2 Leases

6.2.1 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.

6.2.1 (a) Right-of-use Assets

Right-of-use assets are presented in note 4.1(a).

6.2.1 (b) Amounts recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement

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

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Interest on finance leases	64	75
Amortisation of right-of-use leases	1,007	1,002
Total	1,071	1,077

6.2.1 (c) Amounts recognised in the Statement of Cashflows

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of Cashflows for the year ending 30 June 2022 relating to leases:

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Interest and other costs of finance paid	64	75
Repayment of finance leases	1,074	986
Total	1,138	1,061

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 payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments) less any lease incentive receivable
- variable payments based on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date
- amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee
- payments arising from purchase and termination options reasonably certain to be exercised.

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.

When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset, or profit and loss if the right-of-use asset is already reduced to zero.

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.

6.3 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)	
	2023	2022
Total cash and deposits disclosed in the balance sheet	4,207	1,294
Balance as per cash flow statement	4,207	1,294

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

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Net result for the period	767	(1,680)
Non-cash movements		
Depreciation and amortisation of non-financial assets	3,363	3,094
Revaluation of long service leave liability	(55)	1,379
Revaluation and recognition of land and buildings	(2,561)	(1,304)
Assets received free of charge	-	(340)
Gain on sale of assets	(225)	(386)
Movements in assets and liabilities		
(Increase) / decrease in receivables	(2,709)	(8,987)
(Increase) / decrease in other non-financial assets	(204)	(272)
Increase / (decrease) in payables	6,659	8,908
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(1,132)	344
Net cash flows from / (used in) operating activities	3,904	756

6.3.2 Contributed capital from Victorian Government

Contributed capital was provided in 2022-23 to fund the majority of capital investment and the repayment of finance leases.

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Contributed capital for the period (Statement of Changes in Equity)	2,121	2,424
Movements in assets and liabilities		
(Increase) / decrease in receivables	(54)	290
Contributed capital (Cash Flow Statement)	2,067	2,714

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

From 1 February 2021 the VFA commenced operation of a bank account to make payments and receive receipts for accounts payable and accounts receivable transactions respectively. Grant revenue funding from DTP and DJSIR was deposited into the VFA bank account on a period basis during 2022-23.

6.4 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.

Total commitments payable	(\$ thousand)			Total
	Less than 1 year	Between 1 and 5 years	Over 5 years	
Nominal amounts: 2023				
Other operating commitments	9,726	3,063	643	13,432
Capital expenditure commitments	2,819	-	-	2,819
Grant commitments	1,927	643	-	2,571
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	14,472	3,706	643	18,821
less GST recoverable	(1,610)	(63)	-	(1,673)
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)	12,862	3,644	643	17,149
Nominal amounts: 2022				
Other operating commitments	5,032	1,996	76	7,104
Capital expenditure commitments	427	-	-	427
Grant commitments	1,808	224	-	2,032
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	7,268	2,219	76	9,563
less GST recoverable	(594)	(198)	(7)	(799)
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)	6,674	2,021	69	8,764

7. 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

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

7.1.1 Categorisation

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

7.1.3 Financial risk management objectives and policies

7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

7.3 Fair value determination

7.3.1 Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities

7.3.2 Non-financial physical assets

7.1 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 and liabilities are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial measurement, loans and 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 another 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 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.

7.1.1 Financial instruments: categorisation

	(\$ thousand)			
	Cash and deposits	Financial assets at amortised cost (AC)	Financial liabilities at amortised cost (AC)	Total
2023				
Contractual financial assets				
Cash and deposits	4,207	-	-	4,207
Receivables^(a)				
Other receivables	-	19,995	-	19,995
Total contractual financial assets	4,207	19,995	-	24,202
Contractual financial liabilities				
Payables^(a)				
Supplies and services	-	-	13,562	13,562
Deferred capital grant revenue	-	-	4,308	4,308
Other payables	-	-	2,556	2,556
Borrowings				
Finance lease liabilities	-	-	3,141	3,141
Total contractual financial liabilities	-	-	23,567	23,567
2022				
Contractual financial assets				
Cash and deposits	1,294	-	-	1,294
Receivables^(a)				
Other receivables	-	15,664	-	15,664
Total contractual financial assets	1,294	15,664	-	16,958
Contractual financial liabilities				
Payables^(a)				
Supplies and services	-	-	6,314	6,314
Deferred capital grant revenue	-	-	3,805	3,805
Other payables	-	-	3,640	3,640
Borrowings				
Finance lease liabilities	-	-	3,730	3,730
Total contractual financial liabilities	-	-	17,489	17,489

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

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

	(\$ thousand)
2023	Interest income / (expense)
Contractual financial liabilities	
Financial liabilities at amortised cost	64
Total contractual financial liabilities	64

	(\$ thousand)
2022	Interest income / (expense)
Contractual financial liabilities	
Financial liabilities at amortised cost	75
Total contractual financial liabilities	75

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.

7.1.3 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 7.3 – 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 7.1.1 – 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 DJSIR. 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 2022-23.

Credit quality of financial assets

	(\$ thousand)		
	Financial institution (A credit rating)	Victorian Government (AA credit rating)	Total
2022-23			
Financial assets with loss allowance measured at 12-month expected credit loss			
Cash and deposits (not assessed for impairment due to materiality)	4,207		4,207
Financial assets with loss allowance measured at lifetime expected credit loss:			-
Receivables (with no impairment loss recognised) ^(a)		19,995	19,995
Total contractual financial assets	4,207	19,995	24,202
2021-22			
Financial assets with loss allowance measured at 12-month expected credit loss			
Cash and deposits (not assessed for impairment due to materiality)	1,294		1,294
Financial assets with loss allowance measured at lifetime expected credit loss:			
Receivables (with no impairment loss recognised) ^(a)		15,664	15,664
Total contractual financial assets	1,294	15,664	16,958

^(a) 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 has been recording the allowance for expected credit loss for the relevant financial instruments, replacing AASB 139's incurred loss approach with 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.

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)					Total
	Current	Less than 1 month	1-3 months	3-12 months	1-5 years	
30 June 2023						
Expected loss rate	0%	-	-	-	-	-
Gross carrying amount of contractual receivables	19,995	-	-	-	-	19,995
Loss allowance	-	-	-	-	-	-
30 June 2022						
Expected loss rate	0%	-	-	-	-	-
Gross carrying amount of contractual receivables	15,664	-	-	-	-	15,664
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 has no interest-bearing assets. 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 2022-23 weighted average interest rate for right of use assets was 1.64 per cent, and 2.37 per cent for motor vehicles (2.45 & 1.98 in 2021-22).

7.2 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. (2021-22: 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. The VFA did not have any significant contingent liabilities for this financial year (2021-22: Nil)

7.3 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 7.3.1 – Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities) and non-financial physical assets (refer to Note 7.3.2 – Fair value determination: non-financial physical assets).

7.3.1 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 2022-23 reporting period.

7.3.2 Fair value determination: non-financial physical assets

2023	Carrying amount as at 30 June 2023	Fair value measurement at end of reporting period using:		
		Level 1 ^(a)	Level 2 ^(a)	Level 3 ^(a)
Land at fair value				
Specialised land	2,473	-	-	2,473
Non-specialised land	4,367	-	4,367	-
Total of land at fair value	6,840	-	4,367	2,473
Buildings at fair value				
Specialised buildings	24,880	-	-	24,880
Non-specialised buildings	-	-	-	-
Total buildings at fair value	24,880	-	-	24,880
Leasehold Improvements				
Non-specialised leasehold improvements	407	-	407	-
Total Buildings leasehold at fair value	407	-	407	-
Plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value				
Leased vehicles ^(b)	2,356	-	-	2,356
Plant and equipment	2,780	-	2,780	-
Total plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value	5,136	-	2,780	2,356
Intangible assets				
Water Access Rights	218	-	218	-
Total Intangible Assets at fair value	218	-	218	-

^(a) Classified in accordance with the fair value hierarchy.

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

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

2022	Carrying amount as at 30 June 2022	Fair value measurement at end of reporting period using:		
		Level 1 ^(a)	Level 2 ^(a)	Level 3 ^(a)
Land at fair value				
Specialised land	2,473	-	-	2,473
Non-specialised land	4,367	-	4,367	-
Total of land at fair value	6,840	-	4,367	2,473
Buildings at fair value				
Specialised buildings	22,990	-	-	22,990
Non-specialised buildings	-	-	-	-
Total buildings at fair value	22,990	-	-	22,990
Leasehold Improvements				
Non-specialised leasehold improvements	468	-	468	-
Total Buildings leasehold at fair value	468	-	468	-
Plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value				
Leased vehicles ^(b)	2,539	-	-	2,539
Plant and equipment	2,850	-	2,850	-
Total plant, equipment, vehicles at fair value	5,389	-	2,850	2,539
Intangible assets				
Water Access Rights	218	-	218	-
Total Intangible Assets at fair value	218	-	218	-

^(a) Classified in accordance with the fair value hierarchy.

^(b) 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			
	(\$ thousand)		
	Specialised land	Specialised buildings	Leased vehicles
2023			
Opening balance	2,473	22,990	2,539
Net purchases (sales)		-	(383)
Additions recognised		-	768
Transfers in (out) of Level 3		1,136	
Depreciation		(1,807)	(568)
Sub-total	2,473	22,319	2,356
Gains or losses recognised in other economic flows – other comprehensive income	-	-	
Revaluation of land and buildings		-	-
Sub-total	-	-	-
Closing Balance	2,473	22,319	2,356

Specialised buildings

The VFA's buildings were reclassified from non specialised to specialised during 2020-21 to ensure consistency with the independent valuation of the VFA's buildings performed by the Valuer-General Victoria.

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.

Non-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.

To the extent that non-specialised land does not contain significant, unobservable adjustments, these assets are classified as Level 2 under the market approach.

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 2020. 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.

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

8. Other disclosures

Introduction

This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report.

Structure

- 8.1 Other economic flows included in net result
- 8.2 Reserves
- 8.3 Responsible persons
- 8.4 Remuneration of executives
- 8.5 Related parties
- 8.6 Remuneration of auditors
- 8.7 Subsequent events
- 8.8 Other accounting policies
- 8.9 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective
- 8.10 Glossary of technical terms
- 8.11 Style conventions

8.1 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)	
	2023	2022
Revaluation of land and buildings		
Revaluation of land and buildings	-	1,304
Total revaluation of land and buildings	-	1,304
Net gain / (loss) on non-financial assets		
Revaluation of land	-	386
Gain / (loss) on disposal of leased vehicles	279	70
Gain / (loss) on disposal of property, plant and equipment	-	340
Additions by recognition	279	796
Total Net gain / (loss) on non-financial assets	796	422
Other gain / (loss) from other economic flows		
Gain / (loss) arising from revaluation of long service leave liability ^(a)	55	(1,379)
Total other gain / (loss) on other economic flows	55	(1,379)
Total other economic flows included in net result	334	721

^(a) Revaluation gain / (loss) due to changes in bond rates.

Managerial asset revaluations were applied to the VFA's land and buildings in both 2021-22 and 2022-23 due to increases in relevant Valuer General indices.

The 2021-22 managerial revaluation increased the value of VFA land by \$1.3 million. This revaluation increment was reflected as part of Other economic flows included in the net result (Note 8.1) because it reversed a previous revaluation decrement to land in 2020-21.

The 2022-23 managerial revaluation has increased the value of VFA's buildings by \$2.6 million. There are no revaluations decrements to buildings to reverse, and as a result this revaluation increment is reflected against the Reserves (Note 8.2).

8.2 Reserves

Physical asset revaluation surplus	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Balance at beginning of financial year	294	294
Revaluation of land and buildings	2,561	-
Balance at end of financial year	2,856	294

8.3 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 Sonya Kilkenny MP	1 July 2022 to 4 December 2022
Minister for Outdoor Recreation	The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP	5 December 2022 to 30 June 2023
Board Chairperson	Ms Gail Owen	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Deputy Chairperson	Dr Bernadette Northeast	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Director	Mr Graeme Dear	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Director	Mr David Shirer	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Director	Ms Joelle Tabone	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Director	Mr Yorick Piper	1 November 2022 to 30 June 2023
Director	Ms Leigh Mackay	1 November 2022 to 30 June 2023
Director	Mr David Parkin	1 November 2022 to 30 June 2023

Remuneration of Board Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, and Directors ^(a)

Band Range	Total number	
	2023	2022
\$1 - \$9,999	3	-
\$10,000 - \$19,999	3	6
\$20,000 - \$29,999	1	-
\$30,000 - \$39,999	-	1
\$240,000 - \$249,999	-	-
\$270,000 - \$279,999	1	-
\$280,000 - \$289,999	-	1
Total number	8	8
Total remuneration	\$365,398	\$391,076

^(a) Table incorporates seven Board Directors and one Accountable Officer. Only seven of the eight Board Directors are remunerated.

Accountable Officer's remuneration

As at the time of publication, the terms of Ms Gail Owen and Mr Graeme Dear had concluded on 30 June 2023 and had not been reappointed, and Yorick Piper had resigned.

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 \$270,000 - \$279,999 (2022: \$280,000 - \$289,999).

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

8.4 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	
	2023	2022
Short-term employee benefits	507	436
Post-employment benefits	48	44
Other long-term benefits	18	-
Total remuneration	573	480
Total number of executives	3	2
Total annualised employee equivalent (AEE) ^(a)	3.0	2.0

^(a) Annualised employee equivalent is based on the time fraction worked over the reporting period.

8.5 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);
- all cabinet 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 Department of Transport and Planning and the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions during the 2022-23 financial year.

The VFA also made payments to other government entities in the 2022-23 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	2023 (\$ thousand)		2022 (\$ thousand)	
		Revenue	Receivables	Revenue	Receivables
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	Provision of grant revenue; receivable in relation to restructuring of administrative arrangements as well as grant revenue	50,477	15,843	-	-
Department of Transport and Planning	Provision of grant revenue; receivable in relation to restructuring of administrative arrangements as well as grant revenue	25,427	-	76,147	12,970
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	Capital grants for Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery	72	-	-	937
Corangamite Catch Management Authority	Grant - Dunecare project	50	-	99	-
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	Grants primarily for Arcadia Native Fish Hatchery Visitors Centre	-	-	-	1,536
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	Better Boating Victoria Accessible Mordialloc Pontoon	-	-	340	-
Melbourne Water Corporation	Grant - Fish Habitat structures	-	-	151	-
Department of Treasury and Finance	Vicfleet proceeds on disposal	-	-	76	76
Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water	Grant - Toolondo Reservoir - Fish (carp) biomass reduction activities	-	-	11	-
Department of Primary Industries and Regions	World Recreational Fisheries Conference 2023	-	-	10	-

Expenditure and Payables transactions over \$10 000 with government-related entities					
Related party	Nature of transaction	2023 (\$ thousand)		2022 (\$ thousand)	
		Expenditure	Payables	Expenditure	Payable
Parks Victoria	Grant payments	6,351	3,344	691	-
Department of Transport and Planning	Provision of Corporate Services as per Service Level Agreement, ICT and accommodation	3,236	-	2,090	1,984
Cenitex	Network connections services for various VFA sites	739	739	16	-
Department of Treasury and Finance	Vicfleet Lease payments	646	-	900	1,297
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Accommodation charges	619	179	467	-
Victorian Government Solicitor's Office	Legal advice	442	-	263	-
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	Accommodation charges	203	-	498	-
East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (CMA)	Grant payments	110	-	100	-
Victorian Managed Insurance Authority	Public and product liability, professional indemnity, and motor vehicle insurance	100	-	55	-
Glenelg Hopkins CMA	Grant payments	78	-	69	-
Victorian Auditor-General Office	Audit of VFA & RFL Financial Statements	54	-	58	-
North Central CMA	Grant payments	21	-	62	-
Barwon Region Water Authority	Provision of Potable Water to Victorian Fisheries Authority Queenscliff Site	13	-	11	-
Goulburn Murray Water	Grant payments	-	-	736	-
Grampians -Wimmera Mallee Water Corporation	Grant payments	-	-	601	-
Goulburn Broken CMA	Grant payments	-	-	62	-
Vicroads	Vehicle Registration	-	-	38	-
North East CMA	Grant payments	-	-	31	-
Corrections Victoria	Construction and delivery of fish habitat structures to Avondale Heights	-	-	20	-
Corangamite CMA	Grant payments	-	-	10	-

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 8.2 – 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 State's Annual Financial Report.

Compensation of key management personnel

	(\$ thousand)	
	Total remuneration	
	2023	2022
Short-term employee benefits	329	251
Post-employment benefits	31	140
Other long-term benefits	5	-
Total compensation ^(a)	365	391

^(a) Note that the VFA's KMPs are excluded from the disclosure of remuneration of executive officers (Note 8.3 – 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 \$110,000 (\$100,000 in 2021-22) to East Gippsland Catchment Management VFA (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. This amount is included within the Commitments note 6.4.

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.

8.6 Remuneration of auditors

	(\$ thousand)	
	2023	2022
Victorian Auditor-General's Office		
Audit of the VFA financial statements	67	58
Total remuneration of auditors	67	58

8.7 Subsequent events

No matters or circumstances have arisen since 30 June 2023 that significantly affect the information disclosed in the 2022–23 financial statements.

8.8 Other changes in accounting policies

Contributions by owners

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 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 VFA. 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.

8.9 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective

Certain new and revised accounting standards have been issued but are not effective for the 2021-22 reporting period. These accounting standards have not been applied to the VFA Financial Statements.

AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities.

AASB 2022-10 amends AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement by adding authoritative implementation guidance and illustrative examples for fair value measurements of non-financial assets of not-for-profit public sector entities not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash inflows.

Among other things, the Standard:

- specifies that an entity needs to consider whether an asset's highest and best use differs from its current use only when it is held for sale or held for distributions to owners under AASB 5 Non-current Assets Held for Sale and Discontinued Operations or if it is highly probable that it will be used for an alternative purpose;

- clarifies that an asset's use is 'financially feasible' if market participants would be willing to invest in the asset's service capacity, considering both the capacity to provide needed goods or services and the resulting costs of those goods and services;
- specifies that if both market selling price and some market participant data required to fair value the asset are not observable, an entity needs to start with its own assumptions and adjust them to the extent that reasonably available information indicates that other market participants would use different data; and
- provides guidance on the application of the cost approach to fair value, including the nature of costs to be included in a reference asset and identification of economic obsolescence.

This Standard applies prospectively to annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024, with earlier application permitted.

AASB 17 *Insurance Contracts*, AASB 2022-8 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Insurance Contracts: Consequential Amendments and AASB 2022-9 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Insurance Contracts in the Public Sector

AASB 17 replaces AASB 4 Insurance Contracts, AASB 1023 General Insurance Contracts and AASB 1038 Life Insurance Contracts for not-for-profit public sector entities for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2026.

AASB 2022-9 amends AASB 17 to make public sector-related modifications (for example, it specifies the pre-requisites, indicators and other considerations in identifying arrangements that fall within the scope of AASB 17 in a public sector context). This Standard applies for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2026.

AASB 2022-8 makes consequential amendments to other Australian Accounting Standards so that public sector entities are permitted to continue to apply AASB 4 and AASB 1023 to annual periods before 1 July 2026. This Standard applies for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023.

AASB 2020-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-Current and AASB 2022-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Non-current Liabilities with Covenants

AASB 2020-1 amended AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements to clarify requirements for the presentation of liabilities in the statement of financial position as current or non-current and was applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2022.

AASB 2020-6 subsequently amended AASB 2020-1, deferring the mandatory effective date of AASB 2020-1 from 1 January 2022 to 1 January 2023. AASB 2022-6 was applicable for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2022.

AASB 2022-6 amends and clarifies the requirements contained in AASB 2020-1. Among other things, it:

- clarifies that only those covenants that an entity must comply with at or before the reporting date affect a liability's classification as current or non-current; and
- requires additional disclosures for non-current liabilities that are subject to an entity complying with covenants within twelve months after the reporting date.

AASB 2022-6 applies to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023.

The VFA is currently in the process of assessing the potential impact of these standards and amendments.

A number of other standards and amendments have also been issued that apply to future reporting periods, however they are not expected to have any significant impact on the financial statements in the period of initial application.

8.10 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 VFA's balance sheet which aims to: attribute to agency outputs the opportunity cost of capital used in service delivery; and provide incentives to VFA 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.

8.11 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 2022-23 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.

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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)

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Cover	Family fishing stocking event at Lake Pertobe	VFA stock image
iii	VFA Board Chair, David Shirer	VFA stock image
	VFA CEO, Travis Dowling	VFA stock image
1	Introducing the new generation to fishing at Crayfest 2023 event	VFA stock image
5	VFA staff stocking trout across Victoria	VFA stock image
6	Underwater photo of Kingfish reef module showing habitat growth	VFA stock image
	Underwater photo of Kingfish reef module showing habitat growth	VFA stock image
	The VFA's fish aggregation device	VFA stock image
	Tagging and measuring a Murray cod prior to release	VFA stock image
	Preparing a tagged Murray cod for release	VFA stock image
	Preparing a tagged Murray cod for release	VFA stock image
7	Rock lobster puerulus collected for measuring	VFA stock image
	Puerulus collectors being checked	VFA stock image
	Apollo Bay volunteers measuring and collecting data	VFA stock image
8	Data being collected in the Giant Crab Fishery	VFA stock image
	Trout being stocked into Victorian lakes	VFA stock image
	Underwater image of a snapper	VFA stock image
9	VFA Fisheries Officer engaging with a happy young fisher	VFA stock image
	Flathead data collection	VFA stock image
	Juvenile Murray cod being stocked into Pykes Creek	VFA stock image
10	All photos – juvenile dusky flathead being stocked into Victorian waters	VFA stock images
11	VFA Snobs Creek hatchery checking on Macquarie perch	VFA stock image
	Macquarie perch in the Melbourne Sea Life Aquarium	VFA stock image
	Melbourne Sea Life Aquarium Macquarie perch exhibit	VFA stock image
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13	Confiscated abalone after a fisheries offence	VFA stock image
	Fishing boat seized by the VFA in relation to an abalone offence	VFA stock image
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14	The VFA's fish stocking truck helping to relocate fish	VFA stock image
	Collecting and relocating estuary perch after blackwater events	VFA stock image
	Relocating native fish after flood events	VFA stock image
	VFA staff relocating Murray spiny crayfish	VFA stock image
15	VFA Fisheries Officers assisting the community after flood events	VFA stock image
	VFA Fisheries Officers assisting the community after flood events	VFA stock image
	Completed boat ramp at Lake Bullen Merri south beach	VFA stock image
	Kirk Point boat ramp works	VFA stock image

Page	Description	Photographer/source
16	Vic Fish Kids event at Casey Fields	VFA stock image
	Crowds at the Hooked on Portland event	VFA stock image
	Cooking demonstration at the Hooked on Lakes Entrance event	VFA stock image
	Fishing clinic at Hooked on Portland	VFA stock image
17	All photos - VFA community events	VFA stock images
18	Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating (WIRFAB) and VFA	VFA stock image
	WIRFAB at the World Recreational Fishing Conference	VFA stock image
	Launching WIRFAB	VFA stock image
20	Monitoring oysters in Gippsland	VFA stock image
	Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation showcasing the trial to the Hon. Sonya Kilkenny	VFA stock image
	Quality of Sydney rock oysters being produced in the trial	VFA stock image
21	Construction progress at the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery	VFA stock image
	Trout cod broodstock at Sevens Creek	Arthur Rylah Institute stock image
	Blackfish collection	Arthur Rylah Institute stock image
	Construction of the Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery	VFA stock image
22	All photos – VFA Fish Hatchery at Arcadia	VFA stock image
23	All photos – Seal the loop images	VFA stock image
24	Accessible boating facility at Hastings (first three images)	David Hannah Photography
	Autism Camp Victoria	VFA stock image
25	VFA Multicultural Diversity Action Plan 2023-25 cover	VFA stock image
	New recruits to the VFA's Education and Enforcement team	VFA stock image
26	All photos: VFA's Education and Enforcement team in action	VFA stock images
28	Better Boating Victoria works at Rhyll	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Queenscliff	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Cape Conran	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Apollo Bay	VFA stock image
29	Better Boating Victoria works at Mordialloc	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Point Richards	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Warrnambool	VFA stock image
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	Better Boating Victoria works at Barrier Landing	VFA stock image
30	Better Boating Victoria works at Lake Lonsdale	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Toolondo	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Rocklands	VFA stock image
	Better Boating Victoria works at Northarm	VFA stock image
31	Dusky flathead stocking event	VFA stock images
45	Lake Purrumbete	VFA stock image
48	VFA Board members: Gail Owen, Graeme Dear, Leigh Mackay, Bernadette Northeast, David Parkin	VFA stock images
49	VFA Board members: Yorick Piper, David Shirer, Joelle Tabone,	VFA stock images

Page	Description	Photographer/source
50	VFA CEO Travis Dowling	VFA stock image
53	VFA Fisheries Officers	VFA stock images
59	Better Boating Victoria trailer parking course at Hooked on Bellarine	VFA stock image
71	VFA Education Trailer at the VFA Snobs Creek Hatchery Open Day 2023	VFA stock image
125	Happy fishers using new boat ramp facilities	David Anderson Photography

