

Get outside,
GO FISHING

PORT PHILLIP BAY



WHAT'S INSIDE

- 3 Go fishing
- 4 Why go fishing?
- 5 Planning your fishing trip
- 7 Safety around water
- 8 Fishing locations
- 13 What you'll catch: native
- 19 Unwanted and unrequired fish
- 20 Responsible fishing behaviour
- 22 Understanding the fishing rules
- 23 What are the fishing rules?
- 24 Fisheries Officers

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more than **30,000** known species of fish. And over **5,000** of those are in Australia.



GO FISHING

Fishing is a fun and healthy activity available to everyone.

This beginners booklet will help people find safe fishing spots around Port Phillip Bay. It will explain:

- the basic fisheries rules
- the role of Fisheries Officers
- tips for fishing safely
- how to rig your fishing rod
- how to handle fish
- what to do with unwanted fish
- how to keep your catch fresh and safe to eat
- the best places, times and bait to catch a variety of fish.

WHY GO FISHING?

Fishing can be fun in so many ways.

It is a good way to:

- spend time with family and friends
- have some time away from your electronic devices
- enjoy the natural world. You never know what you will see
- help keep your mind and body healthy
- experience the thrill of catching your own dinner
- learn patience while you wait to catch a fish.

Fishing also helps children to learn respect for:

- our environment by taking your rubbish home
- our fisheries by knowing and following the rules
- other people fishing by not crowding them
- our fish by treating them carefully and not hurting them
- our fish populations by reporting illegal fishing to 13 FISH (13 3474).



PLANNING YOUR FISHING TRIP

Like most activities, a little planning can help make your day special. The basic gear you will need to take with you to go fishing is:

Up-to-date fishing information

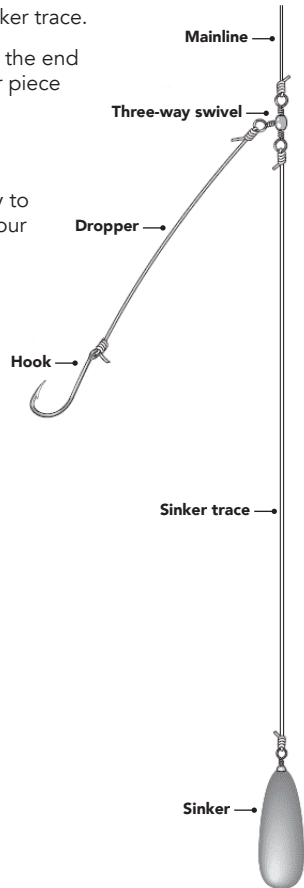
- Your fishing licence or proof of exemption (see pg 22 for more information).
- Your free Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide or the free Vic Fishing App.
- Your free fish measuring ruler.

Your fishing gear (a fishing tackle shop will be able to help you with this equipment)

- A fishing rod and reel or a hand line.
Talk to your local tackle shop to get the best equipment for the fish you would like to catch.
- Biodegradable fishing line.
Talk to your local tackle shop to get the best weight for the fish you would like to catch.
- Circle hooks.
- Non-lead sinkers.
- Three way swivel to tie a paternoster rig (see pg 6).
- Towel or gloves.
A wet towel or gloves protects both you and the fish when you are holding it.
- A bucket or esky with a rope attached.
This is used to keep your catch cool and safe to eat (and it can also be a float to throw to a person if they fall in the water).
- A knotless landing net.
This allows you to bring the fish to land without hurting it.
- A hook remover or long nosed pliers.
- A fishing priest.
This is a wooden or metal tool with a heavy blunt end that is used to kill fish very quickly and painlessly. To kill a fish, strike the top of the head just behind the eyes with a sharp heavy blow.
- Sharp knife (to cut up bait, gut fish and cut the fishing line).
- Bait and ice.

Paternoster rig

- Cut a length of fishing line off the end of your fishing line that is attached to the rod, this is called the Mainline.
- Tie a snap swivel to the end of the mainline.
- Take the length of fishing line and fold it so there is a longer length and a shorter length.
- Wrap the folded end over your finger, then around the doubled line and poke it back through the loop made by your finger. Grab each end of the line and pull tight.
- Tie a sinker to the end of the longer piece of line. This is called the sinker trace.
- Tie a hook to the end of the shorter piece of line. This is called the Dropper.
- You are ready to put bait on your line and start fishing.



SAFETY AROUND WATER

**Our waterways are beautiful and must be treated with respect.
For a fun filled, safe fishing adventure use the following checklist.**

Check the weather and water forecast BEFORE you go fishing

The BOM (Bureau of Meteorology) has all the information on weather across Victoria.

If the weather looks bad at the place where you would like to go fishing then it is best to find another place to fish or fish another day.

Tell someone, who is not fishing with you, your fishing plans

Always:

- tell someone where you are going fishing
- who you are going with
- the mobile phone of all the people you are going fishing with
- what time you will get home

Should the worst happen, this person will be able to get you help.

Remember if you change your plans, let this person know.

Never fish alone

Always fish with another person. You can keep each other safe.

Take your safety gear and keep it close to you

Basic safety gear includes a first aid kit, esky/bucket and rope, phone, water, sunscreen, hat and non-slip shoes.

Fish from a jetty or fishing platform

These areas are the safest places to fish from.

If there is not a jetty or fishing platform at the fishing spot you go to, choose a flat, safe place to fish from instead.

Make sure this area is easy to come and go from, has no rocks, holes or steep banks or overhangs.

Don't drink alcohol

Keep your eye on the water

Water conditions can change quickly and be unpredictable.

If someone falls into the water:

1. Tell the person to **stay calm** and roll onto their back
2. Throw them something that floats like a bucket or esky lid with a rope tied to it so you can pull them to safety
3. Call or Phone 000 if the person needs medical help
4. **DO NOT** enter the water yourself unless you are a trained lifesaver.

FISHING LOCATIONS



Wangim Walk

3

Barwon River Mouth Bridge

2



Altona Pier

1

11

St Kilda Pier

12

Werribee South Beach

7

Portarlington Pier

Mordialloc Pier

5

Frankston Pier

4

Mornington Pier

6

9

Queenscliff Jetty

8

Portsea Pier

10

Rye Pier

FISHING LOCATIONS

1 ALTONA PIER

At end of this 400m long, lovely wooden pier built in 1888, you will find one of Port Phillip Bay's three inshore fishing reefs. These artificial fishing reefs are only 40m from the end of the pier. It creates a great habitat for fish like Snapper and Bream.

Likely to catch: Bream, Snapper and Squid.

Attractions close by: Scienceworks, Jawbone Marine Sanctuary, Glow Golf Docklands.



2 BARWON RIVER MOUTH BRIDGE

The spectacular holiday town of Barwon Heads is in dream position, with a mix of gentle estuary, rocky coastal headland and ocean beaches. The river mouth and bridge, with its tranquil views, offers some great beginner's fishing.

Likely to catch: Bream, King George Whiting, Yellow-eye Mullet and Elephantfish.

Attractions close by: Queenscliff historic railway, numerous walking and biking tracks including the Bellarine Rail Trail, Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary.



3 WANGIM WALK, GEELONG

Named after the Wadawurrung language for Boomerang, Wangim Walk stretches out over Corio Bay to form one of Australia's longest on-water walkways, providing safe harbour to the Royal Geelong Yacht Club and allowing the public to walk on water.

Wangim Walk is protected with a safety gate installed at the start of the landmark, allowing the attraction to be closed when the weather turns dangerous.

Likely to catch: Snapper, Australian Salmon, King George Whiting and Silver Trevally.

Attractions close by: carousel, shopping, Adventure Park, numerous eateries.

Tip: You can drive onto this pier and fish next to it, however, this is a private pier and fishing hours are restricted.



4 FRANKSTON PIER

Built in 1857, Frankston Pier has always been a popular destination for anglers. A large variety of fish can be caught here throughout the year. An artificial inshore reef near the end of the pier has improved the habitat for several species.

Likely to catch: Garfish, Australian Salmon, Snapper, Flathead and Silver Trevally.

Attractions close by: 'Sight Line' nautical sculpture, Frankston Sunday Market, Performing Arts Centre.



5

MORDIALLOC PIER

Situated on Beach Road in Mordialloc, this long pier provides a range of fishing opportunities. Mordialloc Creek, which runs into the bay alongside this pier, offers additional fishing opportunities. Please note if you decide to fish in the river you can only use 2 lines. (See page 23)

Likely to catch: Bream, Australian Salmon, Yellow-eye Mullet and Snapper.

Attractions close by: Mordialloc Skating Centre.



6

MORNINGTON PIER

The picturesque Mornington Pier, which also acts as a breakwater for a boat harbour, provides quality fishing all year round with summer and autumn being the best times. Mornington is known for its village atmosphere and its beautiful beaches. It's also a fantastic spot to try your luck fishing.

Likely to catch: Squid, Australian Salmon, Snapper, Flathead, Silver Trevally, King George Whiting, Leatherjacket, Garfish and Yellowtail Kingfish.

Attractions close by: cafés, shopping, cinema.



7

PORT ARLINGTON PIER

Quiet and sheltered, Portarlington offers great fishing from the pier. Enjoy the sweeping views of Corio Bay and the Melbourne skyline while waiting for a bite.

Likely to catch: Snapper, King George Whiting and Flathead.

Attractions close by: Portarlington Bayside Miniature Railway, cafés, safe swimming beaches, ferry to Docklands.



8

PORTSEA PIER

Portsea is located on a thin strip of land just two kilometres wide, fronting the calm waters of Port Phillip in the north and the rugged surf beaches along Bass Strait in the south. Portsea Pier, jutting out from a sheltered bay, is an idyllic spot to cast a fishing line, take in bayside views and explore the underwater world with a snorkel.

Likely to catch: Snapper and Squid.

Attractions close by: Point Nepean National Park, swimming with dolphins and seals, celebrity spotting, diving.



9

QUEENSLIFF JETTY

The Borough of Queenscliff – take a deep breath, look around and fall in love. Queenscliff built its history on fishing fleets and cotta boats which used to operate from the historical jetty. The jetty caters well for the recreational fisher.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Snapper and Whiting.

Attractions close by: Queenscliff/Sorrento Ferry, Maritime Museum, Point Lonsdale Lighthouse, Queenscliff historic railway.



10

RYE PIER

The coastal town of Rye is situated on the popular holiday destination of the Mornington Peninsula, nestled between Rosebud and Blairgowrie. Rye's main beach, fronting Port Phillip, offers safe sandy beaches, ideal for swimming and boating. There is a jetty and attractive foreshore facilities.

Likely to catch: Salmon, Squid, Flathead, Leatherjacket and Whiting.

Attractions close by: Summer Carnival, Peninsular Hot Springs, Wineries, Gunnamatta horse riding, golf courses, walking tracks.



11

ST KILDA PIER

A colony of little penguins have made their home at this beautiful pier and kiosk. Built in 1853 followed by the breath-taking kiosk in 1904, this historical landmark is also a great fishing spot.

Likely to catch: Snapper, Flathead and Squid.

Attractions close by: Luna Park, St Kilda Botanical Gardens, Fitzroy Street shopping.



12

WERRIBEE SOUTH BEACH

When people think of Werribee they don't think of a lovely white beach, large grassy areas and great fishing, but that's exactly what you'll find here, nestled amongst the market gardens. Off the jetty, there is fish to be caught.

Likely to catch: Bream, Australian Salmon, Yellow-eye Mullet and Snapper.

Attractions close by: Werribee Open Range Zoo, Werribee Mansion.



There are many marine protected areas along the Victorian coast line that you are not allowed to fish in.

If you choose to fish in a location not covered in this book make sure it is not in a one of these areas. For a full list of these sites visit www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/find-a-park/marine-protected-areas

WHAT YOU'LL CATCH: NATIVE



Australian Salmon

NOTE: Young Australian Salmon can be mistaken for Australian Herring (Tommy rough). Please see the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide to learn how to identify the difference.

Peak season: March – September.

Minimum legal size: 21cm.

Bag limit: 20 per person per day (a total limit of 20 Australian salmon and/or Australian Herring).

Baits: Pilchards, whitebait, pipis, squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon. A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



Bream

Peak season: June – November.

Minimum legal size: 28cm (must be kept whole until you get home – can be gutted and scaled – see pg 16).

Bag limit: 10 per person per day.

Baits: Bass yabbies, sandworms, prawns, mussels.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon. A few hours either side of high tide.

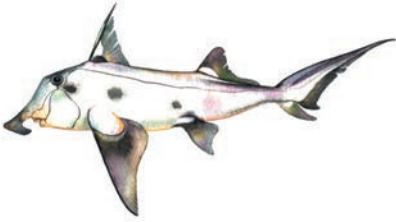
Locations:



! Measure fish from the tip of the nose with the mouth closed to the end of the tail.



WHAT YOU'LL CATCH: NATIVE



Elephantfish

Peak season: March – May.

Minimum legal size: no minimum (must be kept whole until you get home – can be gutted and scaled – see pg 16).

Bag limit: 1 per person per day

Baits: Pilchards, squid, fish fillets.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day. A few hours either side of high tide.

Location:

2



Flathead

Peak season: October – March.

Minimum legal size: 27cm.

Bag limit: 20 per person per day.

Baits: Pilchards, whitebait, prawns, squid.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day. A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:

4

6

7

10

11

12

! Elephantfish are actually a species of shark. You measure shark differently to fin fish. You must measure them from the rear-most gill slit to the base of the tail fin.





Garfish

Peak season: November – July.

Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 40 per person per day.

Baits: Pipis, prawns or any fish flesh.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day.

Locations:



King George Whiting

Peak season: November – April.

Minimum legal size: 27cm
(must be kept whole until you get home – can be gutted and scaled – see pg 16).

Bag limit: 20 per person per day

Baits: Pipis, mussels, bass yabbies, squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon.
A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



WHAT YOU'LL CATCH: NATIVE



Leatherjacket

Peak season: Year round.

Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 20 per person per day.

Baits: Small pieces of pipi or squid.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day.

Locations:



Silver Trevally

Peak season: October – May.

Minimum legal size: 20cm.


Bag limit: 20 per person per day.

Baits: Pilchards, whitebait, pipis, squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon. A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



 **Keep your fish whole as this enables Fisheries Officers to measure the fish to make sure they are the legal size.**



Snapper

Peak season: October – May.

Minimum legal size: 28cm
(must be kept whole until you get home
– can be gutted and scaled – see pg 16).

Bag limit: 10 per person per day
(of which no more than 3 can exceed 40cm).

Baits: Pilchards, silver whiting, whitebait,
squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon.
A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



Squid

Peak season: April – October.

Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 10 per person per day.

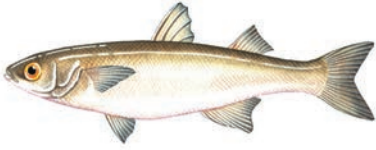
Baits: Pilchards, silver whiting.

Time and tides: Can be caught through
the day and at night under lights.

Locations:



WHAT YOU'LL CATCH: NATIVE



Yellow-eye Mullet

Peak season: March – September.

Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 40 per person per day.

Baits: Sandworms, small pieces of pipi, whitebait or chicken, bread crust.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day.

Locations:

2

5

12



Yellowtail Kingfish

Peak season: December – January.

Minimum legal size: 60cm.

Bag limit: 5 per person per day.

Baits: Lures.

Time and tides: Morning and afternoon fishing best but can be caught all day.

Location:

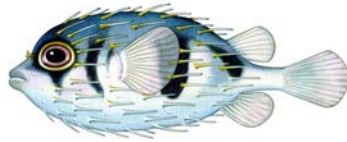
6

UNWANTED AND UNREQUIRED FISH

Unwanted fish (e.g. puffers, toadies) are fish that you don't want or are not allowed to keep. They must be returned to the water immediately and without hurting them.



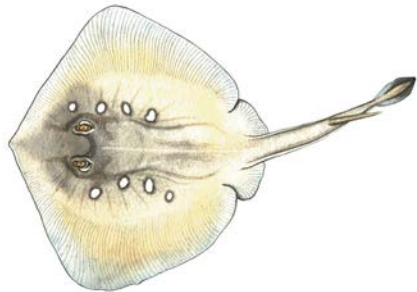
Toadfish



Puffer



Eleven Armed Seastar



Ray



There are new restrictions around taking rays.

For further information download the free Vic Fishing App on page 23.

RESPONSIBLE FISHING BEHAVIOUR

Responsible fishing is not only about fishing within the rules but also about respecting and caring for the fish, native animals, the environment, other water users and fishers.

Responsible fishers care for:

- **the fish they catch by:**

- never leaving their fishing rod unattended
- using a net without knotted mesh to bring the fish in
- handling the fish carefully using a wet glove or towel
- supporting the fish in a flat position, not dangling it from a line
- removing the hook from the mouth quickly with a hook remover or long nosed pliers
- cutting the line as close as possible to the fish's mouth if it has swallowed the hook
- identifying the fish quickly
- measuring the fish quickly on a cool, wet surface
- quickly deciding if you can and want to keep the fish if they are the correct size.

- **the fish they release by:**

- gently and quickly lowering them into the water. If you are close to the water, you can do this with your hands. If you are higher above the water put the fish into a bucket of water and lower it down
- putting back unwanted fish immediately and carefully into the water. **DO NOT** release NOXIOUS species.

- **the fish they are allowed to keep by:**

- killing them quickly with a fishing priest, using the method described on pg 5
- storing them on ice to keep them safe to eat.

- **our fish populations by:**

- ALWAYS following the rules
- reporting illegal fishing to 13 FISH (13 3474)
- respecting Fisheries Officers who help people understand and enforce the rules.

- **their fishing spots by:**

- leaving the area clean. Take all your rubbish home including leftover bait and any fish waste
- using environmentally friendly fishing tackle
- sharing the space respectfully with other people including other anglers, swimmers and snorkelers
- Place tangled fishing line into a 'Seal-the-Loop' rubbish bin so that it cannot hurt or kill our native wildlife. If there is not a 'Seal-the-Loop' bin at the fishing spot, take it home with you and put it in your rubbish bin.



UNDERSTANDING THE FISHING RULES

There are many rules to remember when you go fishing in Victoria. Not all are covered in this beginners guide. For information on all the fishing rules search online for 'Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide' or download the free 'Vic Fishing' App.

Why do we have fishing rules?

Fishing rules make sure that we have fish now and in the future by:

- not allowing people to take too many (called a bag limit)
- putting small fish back into the water so they can grow and breed (called a minimum size)
- returning the larger, best breeding fish to the water (called a maximum size)
- stopping people from fishing in certain areas and at certain times to protect fish (called a closed season)
- only using the equipment we are allowed to.

Fishing rules protect fish. If you don't know what the rules for a fish you catch, put it straight back in the water.

Never put it in a bucket or bag. If you do this and it is not the right size or you shouldn't have it at all, you can get in trouble with a Fisheries Officer.

Do I need a fishing licence?

If you are between the age of 18 and 70 and fishing in Victoria then yes, you need a licence, even if you are just helping your children.

Some people don't need to have a fishing licence; this is called an exemption. For a list of exemptions search online.

Where can I buy a fishing licence?

Fishing licences can be bought online (search Victorian Recreational Fishing Licence).

You can also buy them at shops where you can buy your fishing equipment.

A licence can be purchased for 3 days, 28 days, 1 year and 3 years.

IMPORTANT information: If you are fishing in the Murray River you will need to get a NSW fishing licence.

WHAT ARE THE FISHING RULES?

Basic fishing rules

If you want to go fishing, this information will help you understand the fishing rules.

1. Legal size

legal size means the smallest (minimum legal size) and the largest (maximum legal size) fish you can legally keep.

If you catch a fish that is too small or too big, you must put it back into the water straight away.

The legal size of fish must be checked quickly.

Measure fish from the tip of the nose with the mouth closed to the end of the tail.



Fish that you wish to keep should be killed immediately and placed on ice.

2. Bag limit

Bag limits are the maximum number of the right sized fish you catch and keep in one day.

3. Return unwanted fish

You must return unwanted fish to water immediately and without hurting them, except for noxious species like carp. These must NOT be returned to the water alive.

4. Closed seasons

A time of the year when you cannot take some fish. This is to give them some extra protection while they breed and look after their babies.

5. Legal fishing equipment

Each person fishing can have:

- 2 fishing rods with 2 hooks attached in rivers and lakes (inland waters)
- 4 fishing rods with 2 hooks attached in marine waters
- you must stay close to your rods while they are in the water.

6. Don't fillet your fish while you are fishing

You can gut and scale your dead fish.

If you are fishing in areas not included in this beginners guide you will need to also check that you are:

- **not** in prohibited, restricted areas
- **not** fishing in a closed season.

All the fishing rules can be found in the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide and the Vic Fishing App.

Where to get the correct information

- download the free Vic Fishing App
- get a free paper copy of the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide sent to you by calling 13 61 86

Breaking the fishing rules can result in large fines and other serious consequences.

STAY UP TO DATE

Download the free Vic Fishing App here



FISHERIES OFFICERS

A Fisheries Officer's main responsibility is to help people fish within the rules.

How will I recognise a Fisheries Officer?

Fisheries Officers usually wear a dark blue uniform that shows the Officer's name and title.

Sometimes a Fisheries Officer will not be in uniform. If not, they will always show you official identification when they come to talk to you.

What can I expect when a Fisheries Officer comes to talk to me?

A Fisheries Officer can:

- give you information about fishing and the rules
- ask you to show them your current fishing licence or proof of your exemption and your driver's licence
- ask to look in your bag, fishing equipment, esky, container, vehicle and/or boat
- measure and count the fish you've kept to check they are the right size and the correct number.

What powers do Fisheries Officers have?

By law Fisheries Officers can:

- stop and look in any boat or vehicle
- ask for your name and home address
- search any equipment such as baskets, eskies or other containers
- issue 'on the spot' fines called an infringement notice
- take any fish, fishing gear or other equipment, including vehicles and boats, that may have been used to commit an offence
- place alleged offenders under arrest.

Fisheries Officers are also authorised to enforce laws relating to:

- litter, maritime safety and protected areas.

What happens if I am caught not following the rules?

Under the *Fisheries Act 1995*, Fisheries Officers have powers of arrest, search and seizure.

If you are caught doing the wrong thing, or the Officers believe you have not followed the rules, they will:

- explain what it is you have done wrong
- request your full name and home address which you **MUST** provide
- ask you questions
- issue a receipt if any fish, property or documents have been seized
- advise you of the likely outcome.



REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING

If you see or think someone is breaking our fishing rules, move away and call

13 FISH (13 3474).

Provide as much detail as possible including:

- time and date
- location
- car or boat registration numbers
- the number of people involved
- what the people are doing.

Information you give is very valuable and is treated in strict confidence. Your information helps us to plan patrols and other enforcement operations.



GET OUTSIDE GO FISHING

Why not include fishing in all your family's holidays or short trips around Victoria.

These guides will give you all the information you need to take your family fishing wherever you are in Victoria.

Get Outside Go Fishing:

- East Gippsland
- Family fishing lakes
- Lake Eildon
- Murray Cod in urban lakes
- North East
- North West
- Port Phillip Bay
- South West
- Western Port Bay

To get a copy of any or all of these booklets please ring 136 186 (our customer service centre) and ask to have it sent to you.

© The State of Victoria, Victorian Fisheries Authority, May 2023.

Designed by Intrepid Design (www.intrepiddesign.com.au).

Except for any logos, emblems, trademarks, artwork and photography this document is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Australia licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone the Customer Service Centre 136 186, email improving.fishing@vfa.vic.gov.au, or contact the National Relay Service on 133 677 or www.relayservice.gov.au

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

For more information call the Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or visit www.vfa.vic.gov.au

vfa.vic.gov.au

