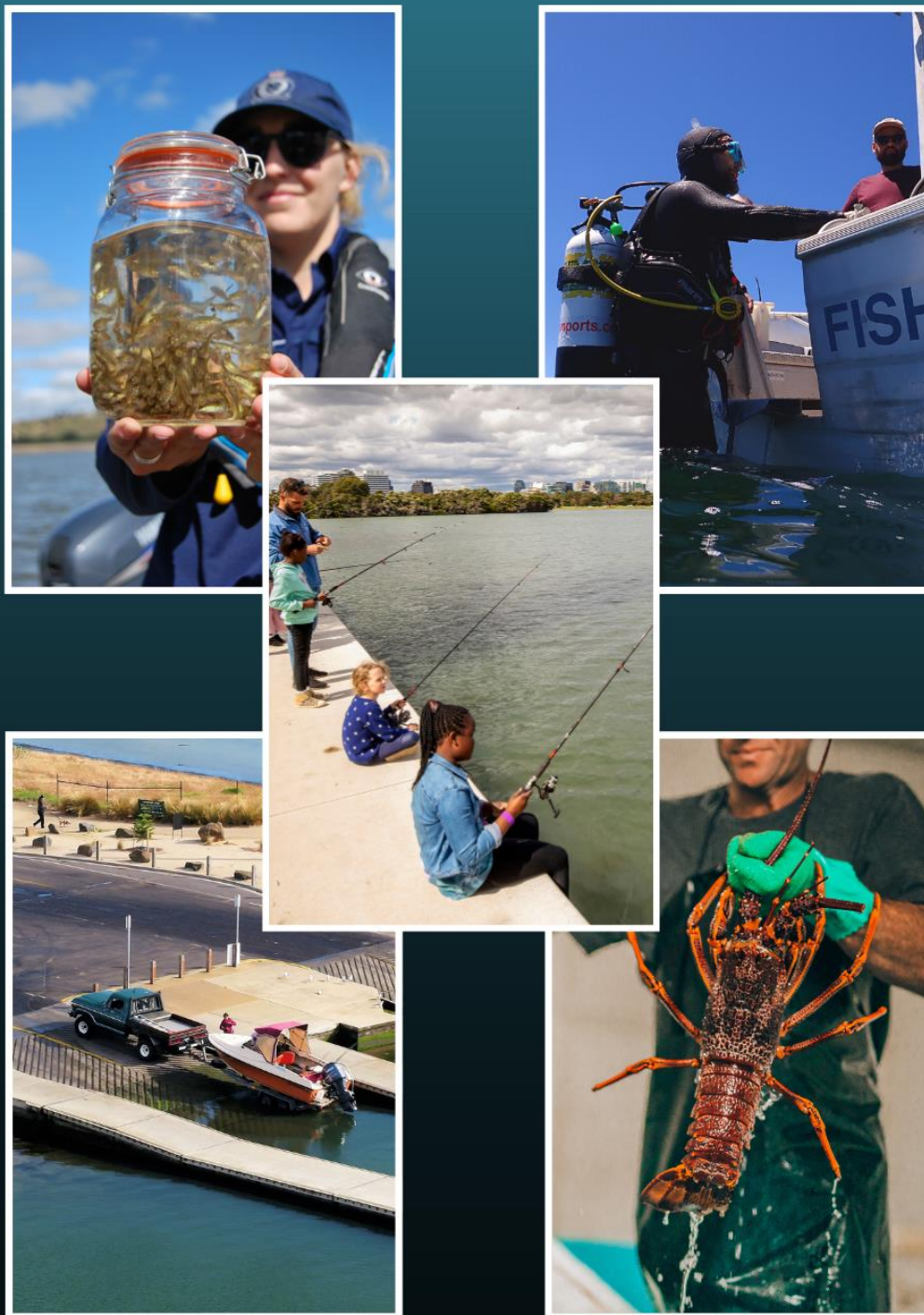


## VICTORIAN FISHERIES AUTHORITY BUSINESS PLAN 2022-2023



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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 our Board Chair and CEO

It is with pleasure that we present the *Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) Annual Business Plan 2022-23* on behalf of our staff, the VFA Executive and Board.

The Plan sets out the VFA's priorities for 2022-23 to ensure that we effectively allocate our available resources to support the development of sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities in Victoria and deliver improved recreational fishing and boating services and facilities to all Victorians.

It describes our 2022-23 performance targets established through the *VFA Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024*, our performance requirements set by the Victorian Government through the *State Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery* and the *Minister's Statement of Expectations 2022 – 2024*, and our estimated budget projections for the next three financial years.

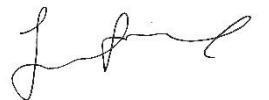
The VFA's key focus areas for 2022-23 include:

- Delivering the Government's 2022 *More Piers, Jetties and Opportunities for Little Anglers* election campaign, which will get more kids involved in fishing, deliver better boating and fishing infrastructure, and improve Victorian waterways to enable families to get out on the water for generations to come\*.
- Completing the final stages of the new Northern Native Fish Hatchery in Arcadia, including construction of the Arcadia Visitors Centre to provide a fantastic place to educate the community about our native fisheries, the environment and the history of the area.
- Continuing our dedication to the stocking program, which will improve native freshwater fish populations, provide increased opportunities for people to experience the joy of fishing, and help to achieve our stocking target of 10 million fish per year.
- Hosting and delivering the 10<sup>th</sup> World Recreational Fishing Conference in Melbourne on 20-22 February 2023. The conference is the world's most prominent gathering of the recreational fishing community and is an amazing opportunity to showcase all that Victoria has to offer.
- Continuing to ensure that it is safer, cheaper and easier for our boating community to get out on the water by delivering upgrades to boat ramps, boating facilities and infrastructure, as well as collaborating with the community to identify and fund boating facilities and safety projects that return all money collected through marine licensing and boat registration fees to these vital improvements.
- Maintaining our focus on e-capability by extending our social media reach and enhancing the useability of the commercial fishing e-catch platform and the GoFishVic and Rec Fishing Guide applications.

We have many positive opportunities ahead of us in delivering best practice fisheries management on behalf of the Victorian Government and community.



Gail Owen  
VFA Board Chair



Travis Dowling  
VFA Chief Executive Officer

\* The Victorian election was held in November 2022 and this plan has been updated to reflect the resulting election commitments, budgets and other relevant changes.

# 1. Who we are

## Our purpose

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

The VFA supports the development of sustainable recreational and commercial fishing and aquaculture activities in Victoria and delivers recreational fishing and boating infrastructure projects and programs. 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.

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

## Our vision

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

To achieve our vision, we operate under the *VFA Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024* (the Strategic Plan), which describes four high level focus areas:



Figure 1: The VFA's focus areas as described in the Strategic Plan 2019-2024.

Each of the focus areas has a series of priorities, measures and longer-term targets, which are described in the Strategic Plan. The focus areas are also used to establish the annual strategic priorities and associated targets outlined in this Business Plan (see section 4.1).

## Our values



Figure 2: The VFA's values.



## 2. Our governance arrangements and structure

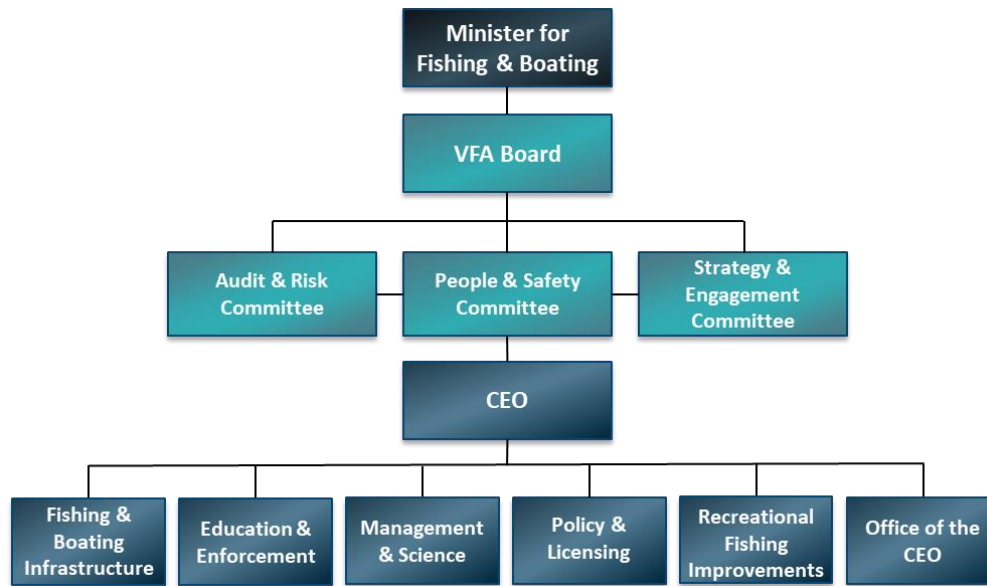


Figure 3: The VFA's organisational structure.

### Our Minister

The VFA is located within the portfolio of the Minister for Fishing and Boating\*. The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny MP was appointed as Minister for Fishing and Boating in July 2022.

The VFA sits in the Department of Transport (DoT)\* and under the VFA Act, the role of the DoT 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

The VFA Act establishes the VFA Board as the governing body of the VFA and members of the VFA Board are appointed by the Minister. The Board is responsible for the VFA's governance, strategic planning and risk management and is accountable to the Minister for Fishing and Boating for the exercise of its functions.

The 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:

- The Audit and Risk Committee;
- The People and Safety Committee; and
- The Strategy and Engagement Committee.

\* On 5 December 2022, a range of machinery of government changes were announced, one of which was the transition of the VFA to the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions in the portfolio of Outdoor Recreation. The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny became the Minister for Outdoor Recreation. The Departmental Secretary's role in working with the VFA was unchanged.



## Our CEO

The VFA 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 people

Six business units deliver a suite of programs and initiatives to support the CEO and the functions of the VFA:

### Fishing and Boating Infrastructure (incorporates Better Boating Victoria)

Fishing and Boating Infrastructure implements the Government's program of boating reforms focussed on making it safer, cheaper and easier for Victorians to get out on the water. This division also oversees the Fisheries Infrastructure program, including the Northern Native Fish Hatchery.

### Education and Enforcement

The Education and Enforcement Division develops and implements state-wide education and enforcement strategies and plans, policies and standards, tasking and coordination, governance, performance management and reporting processes. The division also undertakes state-wide investigations and compliance operations to address serious organised fisheries criminal activity and delivers regional compliance operations that address strategic priorities as set out in the annual *Compliance Strategic Assessment* and associated *Control Strategy*.

### Fisheries Management, Aquaculture and Science

The Fisheries Management, Aquaculture and Science Division delivers core regulatory fisheries science, commercial fisheries and aquaculture management services, including undertaking fish stock assessment and monitoring and setting total allowable commercial catch for the rock lobster, abalone, giant crab, scallop, pipi, octopus and urchin fisheries.

### Policy and Licensing

The Policy and Licensing Division delivers operational policy, access and governance arrangements, planning, and program management. The division also administers recreational and commercial licensing, quota trading, permitting and commercial catch and effort reporting.

### Recreational Fishing Improvements

The Recreational Fishing Improvements Division delivers recreational fishing improvement activities, supports the disbursement of Recreational Fishing Licence funds to improve recreational fishing in Victoria and manages formal consultation on statutory decisions such as proposals to amend bag and size limits.

### Office of the CEO

The Office of the CEO supports the CEO in managing the day-to-day operations of the VFA, particularly for financial and other corporate service functions. The office plays a leading role in supporting the effective operation of the VFA board and committees by providing secretariat and other services.

### 3. Our regulatory operating environment

#### The *Victorian Fisheries Act 2016*

The VFA was established on 1 July 2017 under the *Victorian Fisheries Act 2016* (the VFA Act). The VFA Act outlines the objectives of the VFA and describes the operating environment as including regulatory enforcement; supporting the development of sustainable and responsible recreational and commercial fishing and aquaculture industries; development of fisheries management plans; provision of advice to the Minister; and administration of the licensing scheme.

The objectives of the VFA Act are to:

- a) Promote sustainability and responsibility in fishing and fishing-related activities in Victoria;
- b) Optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of the fisheries sectors;
- c) Support the development of recreational fishing;
- d) Support the development of commercial fishing and aquaculture;
- e) Work cooperatively with fisheries management bodies in other States, Territories and the Commonwealth; and
- f) To perform its functions and exercise its powers in any manner it considers best to achieve its objectives.

With the integration of Better Boating Victoria into the VFA, the VFA Act was amended through the *Transport Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Bill 2021* (the Bill) to add a range of new functions to the VFA's area of responsibility. These include:

- Informing and educating the recreational boating sector and public about their rights and obligations in relation to recreational boating;
- Monitoring, investigating, enforcing and promoting compliance with the *Marine Safety Act 2010* in so far as they relate to recreational boating activities;
- Developing operational plans and procedures under the *Marine Safety Act 2010*;
- Providing advice on the development of strategic policy or legislation in relation to recreational boating facilities;
- Administering grants for recreational boating and related matters;
- Working with land, water, waterway and coastal managers and public sector bodies to improve recreational boating;
- Supporting the provision and maintenance of fishing and boating infrastructure;
- Controlling and managing land for fishing and boating purposes, including carrying out works, improvements and other related activities; and
- Responding to any emergency or undertaking compliance and enforcement activities.

The Bill also provides new offences with respect to assaulting, obstructing, hindering, abusing and insulting authorised officers.

#### Other acts relevant to the VFA

In addition to the VFA Act, the VFA exercises its functions through the *Fisheries Act 1995*, which provides a legislative framework for the regulation, management and conservation of Victorian fisheries and establishes the *Fisheries Regulations 2019* and the *Fisheries (Fees, Royalties and Levies) Regulations 2017*.

The VFA also exercises its functions through the *Marine Safety Act 2010* and the *Transport Integration Act 2010*.

## 4. Our performance and reporting framework

The VFA has numerous planning and reporting requirements that shape the funding arrangements, priority focus areas and performance measures each year. The VFA's performance and reporting framework is described in Figure 4.

At a high level, the Victorian Government's State Budget and election commitments and the Minister's Statement of Expectations outline the services to be undertaken by the VFA, the funding provided, and the performance targets the VFA is required to meet.

These documents, in association with the VFA Strategic Plan, determine the priorities to be set out in the VFA's Annual Business Plan and the measures upon which the VFA reports through its annual and quarterly reports.

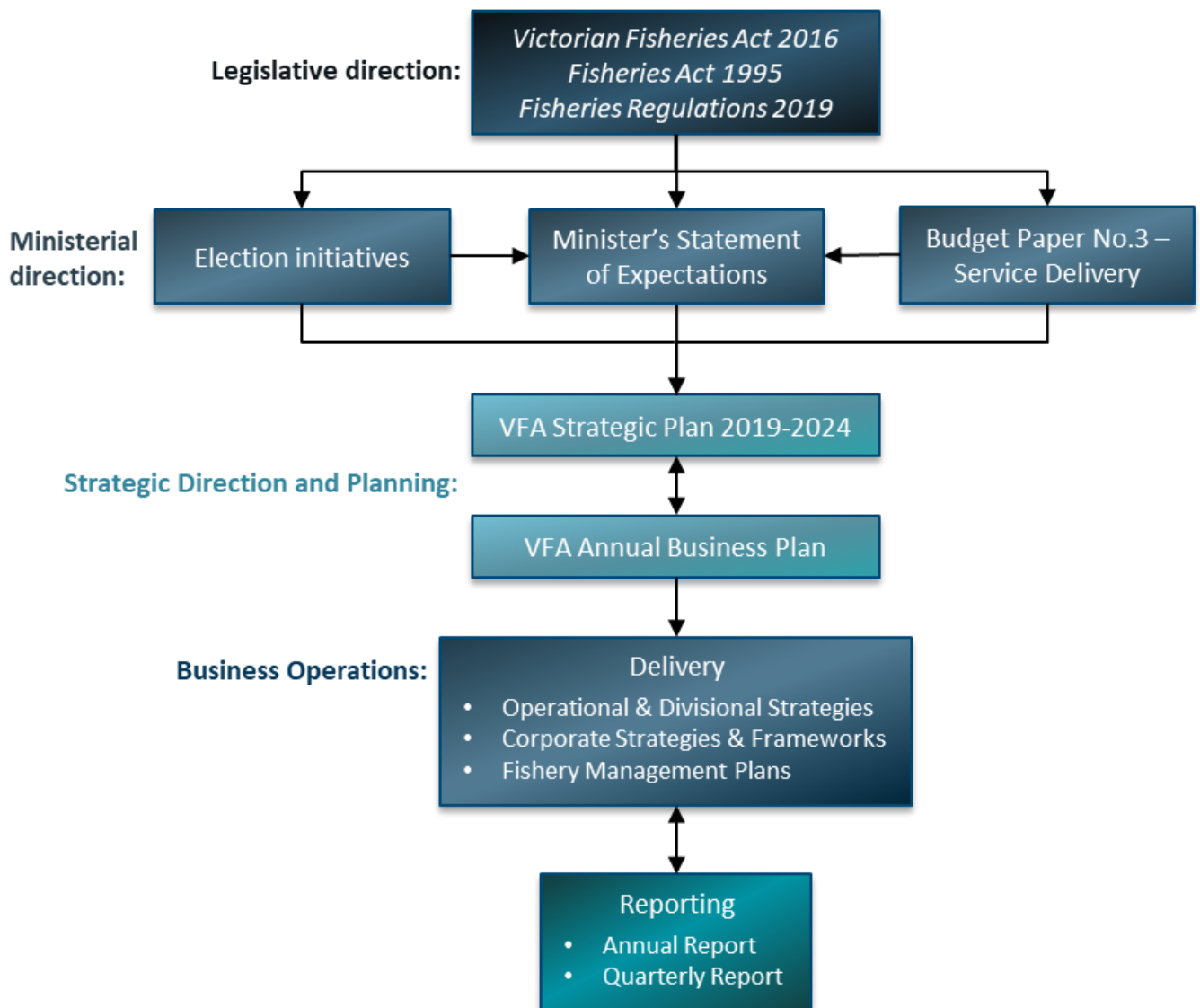


Figure 4: The VFA's performance and reporting framework.

#### 4.1 Victorian Government 2022 Election Commitments

The Government's 2022 *More Piers, Jetties and Opportunities for Little Anglers* election campaign included a package of initiatives to get more kids involved in fishing, deliver better boating and fishing infrastructure, and improve Victorian waterways to keep families out on the water for generations to come. As a priority, the VFA will begin delivering these election commitments in early 2023. Timing of delivery will be dependent on budget.

Election commitment	Description	Funding (\$ million)	Delivery timeframe
<b>Fishing</b>			
Establish a Habitat Improvement Fund	Provision of grants to eligible organisations to preserve and improve marine, estuarine and freshwater fisheries	\$2.5	2023
Establish a Little Anglers Program	Provide 60,000 Little Angler Kits to primary school-aged children, which will include a fishing rod, tackle box, and a <i>Kids' Guide to Fishing</i>	\$1.5	2023
Grants to support local fishing clubs to attract new members	Provision of grants of up to \$10,000 to angling clubs and associations for a range of projects to assist in retaining and attracting new membership	\$1.2	2023
Promote and grow Victoria's aquaculture sector	Increase the profile of the aquaculture sector, secure new industry investment and grow local jobs	\$1.0	2023
Establish Gunaikurnai Oyster Aquaculture	Grant to establish the Gunaikurnai Oyster Aquaculture farm in the Gippsland Lakes	\$0.25	2023
Grant for the Corinella Boating and Angling Club	To enable the Corinella Boating and Angling Club to build new facilities	\$0.2	2023
Support Fishcare Victoria to promote sustainable fishing practices	Enable Fishcare Victoria to continue its community education program to promote sustainable fishing practice	\$0.1	2023
<b>Fish stocking infrastructure</b>			
Expand the Northern Native Fish Hatchery, Arcadia	Enable native fish hatchery production to increase from 1.6 million to 6 million fish per year	\$10.0	2023 - 2025
Build new facilities at the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery	Construct new facilities to increase production of threatened species Macquarie perch and trout cod	\$5.0	2023 - 2024
<b>Boating</b>			
Invest in better boating infrastructure by maintaining and rebuilding local piers, jetties and boating facilities	Improve 15 ramps, jetties and car parks across the State <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avalon - Stage 2: jetty upgrade and extension</li> <li>Cowes - Stage 2: jetty upgrade and expansion</li> <li>French Island - Tankerton boat ramp and jetty upgrade</li> <li>Inverloch boat ramp upgrade and additional car parking</li> <li>Laanecoorie boat ramp relocation</li> <li>Lake Boga pontoon replaced with an all-abilities pontoon, including provision for a hoist</li> <li>Lang Lang boat ramp launching facility upgrade</li> <li>Mildura - Redcliffs boat ramp upgrade</li> <li>Torquay - Fishermans Beach carpark upgrade</li> <li>Howqua Inlet boat ramp and parking</li> <li>Limeburners (Stage 2: wave attenuator and ramps)</li> <li>Mornington - Schnapper Point boat ramp upgrade</li> <li>St Leonards pier upgrade, including wave attenuator</li> <li>Tooradin boat ramp, jetty and carpark upgrade</li> <li>Werribee South boat ramp and carpark upgrade</li> </ul>	\$22.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$0.8</li> <li>\$0.8</li> <li>\$0.9</li> <li>\$2.0</li> <li>\$0.8</li> <li>\$0.2</li> <li>\$1.8</li> <li>\$0.5</li> <li>\$0.8</li> <li>\$0.8</li> <li>\$3.5</li> <li>\$1.6</li> <li>\$2.6</li> <li>2.8</li> <li>2.2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2023-24</li> <li>2024-25</li> <li>2024-25</li> <li>2024-25</li> <li>2024-25</li> <li>2024-25</li> <li>2024-25</li> </ul>
Develop a new boating facility at Tarago Reservoir	Facilitate upgrades at Tarago Reservoir, opening it up to motorised boats as well as recreational fishing	\$4.4	2023 - 2025

## 4.2 Victorian Government State Budget – Budget Paper No.3: Service Delivery

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.

### Objective: Sustainably managed fish and boating resources

#### Performance Indicators:

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

The objective and indicators support 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.

### Delivering our BP3 performance measures in 2022-23

Performance measures	Unit of measure	2022-23 target
<b>Quantity</b>		
Community and stakeholder engagement information forums	number	10
Complete stock assessment for key quota managed fish stocks	number	3
Complete quota setting processes for key quota managed fish stocks	number	3
Develop, implement and review overarching fisheries compliance strategy	number	1
Enhance levels of community participation in achieving fisheries compliance through calls to the 13FISH reporting line	number	1,950
Key fisheries managed in accordance with fishery management plans	number	6
Minimum uniformed fisheries officers maintaining operational coverage during priority fishing activity periods	number	20
Native and salmonid fish stocked	number (000)	10,000
Recreational boating and fishing infrastructure improvements delivered	number	3
Percentage of investigations into serious or organised fisheries offending that result in a prosecution, disruption or intelligence referral outcome	percent	90
<b>Quality</b>		
Key statutory obligations relevant to the VFA complied with (tabling annual report, audits, business plan and board appointments)	percent	100
<b>Timeliness</b>		
Proportion of fisheries cost recovery levies reviewed and set prior to the commencement of the licensing year	percent	100
Research project milestones and reports completed on time	percent	90

### 4.3 VFA Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024

The Strategic Plan commits to increasing the number and diversity of people fishing and enjoying Victoria's local seafood, growing healthy and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture sectors, and contributing to Victoria's social and economic prosperity.

The strategy guides the way we work with our diverse stakeholders to optimise the value of Victoria's fisheries resources now and into the future. Each of the four focus areas has associated priorities, measures and targets.

The table below describes the VFA's 2022-23 targets.

Focus area: 1. Sustainable and healthy fisheries		
Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
1.1	Victorian marine and freshwater fisheries, fish stocks and habitats are healthy and productive	Fish stocks managed in line with management plan objectives
		Review of progress against Management Plan objectives and actions undertaken
		Stock assessments and quota setting for the abalone, rock lobster, giant crab, octopus, pipi and sea urchin fisheries completed on schedule
1.2	Fisheries management is integrated, considers the interests of all stakeholders and reflects community values	Work to recover Victoria's most at-risk freshwater fish species, such as Macquarie perch and trout cod, continued in line with the <i>Freshwater Fisheries Management Plan</i>
		Policy to outline the use of Victorian recreational fishing reefs developed
		Community survey conducted
1.3	Decision making is transparent, proactive, reflects policy and leverages research, monitoring and evaluation	At least 10 community and stakeholder engagement information forums held annually
		At least three statutory consultation processes to be undertaken
		Review of <i>Sea urchin Fishery Management Plan</i> commenced
1.3	Management Plans in place for key fisheries and decision making is in line with the management plan objectives	Review of <i>Rock Lobster Fishery Management Plan</i> completed
		Review of <i>Abalone Fishery Management Plan</i> commenced
		Engagement activity is undertaken in line with the <i>VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i>
1.3	Number of opportunities for stakeholder involvement in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aquatic Strategic Action Group – quarterly</li> <li>Snobs Creek Board – quarterly</li> <li>State-wide Recreational Fishing Round Table – quarterly</li> <li>Total Allowable Commercial Catch Forums - annually</li> <li>Public engagement on proposed boating facility upgrades – as needed</li> </ul>
		Community Reference Group established to enable Cultural and Linguistically Diverse communities engage with the VFA and provide input into fisheries management decision making
		Corner Inlet Fishery Management Advisory Committee established



## Focus area: 1. Sustainable and healthy fisheries



Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
1.4 Ethical, responsible and respectful practices are adopted across the sector	New fishing practice standards are completed and communicated	<p><i>Responsible Fishing Behaviour Engagement Plan</i> developed</p> <p>Rec Fishing Guide and app reviewed to identify options for enhancements and improvements</p> <p>'How to Fish Eildon' Guide developed as part of the Recreational Fishing Tourism Plan implementation</p> <p>Trial to implement electronic monitoring in the Giant Crab Fishery commenced</p> <p>Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis Industry Code of Practice and Action Plans completed</p> <p>A revised <i>Aquaculture Fisheries Strategy</i> developed</p> <p>An <i>Annual Education and Enforcement Action Plan</i> developed and implemented</p> <p>A cross-agency Seaweed Management Plan developed and implemented</p> <p>Two-year trial of new laws requiring rock fishers to wear life jackets at high-risk locations implemented</p> <p>Education material to support Victorian commercial fishers developed</p>
	Improve waterway and boating safety	<p>Funding waterway safety measures including navigation aid and waterway audits, in accordance with priorities established by Transport Safety Victoria, in accordance with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i></p> <p>Marine safety compliance and enforcement activities undertaken in accordance with the Education &amp; Enforcement Division <i>Annual Action Plan</i> and the <i>Recreational Boating Safety Co-regulator Plan</i></p>

## Focus area: 2. Social and economic prosperity



Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
2.1 Victoria's fishing and boating sector is dynamic and resilient, offering great economic opportunities and career pathways for Victorians	Economic returns from value adding in Victoria's fisheries	<p>Northern Native Fish Hatchery (Arcadia) producing fish for stocking</p> <p><i>Vic Fish Stock Plan</i> developed and implemented to achieve target of stocking 10 million fish into 258 waters across Victoria per year</p> <p>Survey undertaken to collect up-to-date information on recreational and indigenous catch in the Corner Inlet Fishery</p> <p>Working with DELWP, a public tender process to allocate additional sites within existing aquaculture fisheries reserves completed</p> <p>Working with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, a feasibility trial to assess suitability of farming Sydney Rock Oyster in the Gippsland Lakes commenced</p>
	Economic growth in the industries directly associated with vessels, vessel safety and associated sports, such as angling and water sports, as well as tourism	<p>Continue to enhance the Victorian boating experience by investing in renewed and new boating facilities across Victoria in accordance with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i></p>





## Focus area: 2. Social and economic prosperity

Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
<b>2.2</b> Recreational, indigenous customary and commercial fishing and aquaculture are all recognised for their contribution to the social and economic prosperity of Victoria	Community awareness and understanding of the social and economic contribution of fisheries	<p>At least two community events to celebrate Victorian seafood held and/or sponsored</p> <p>‘Murray Codference’ and ‘Talk Wild Trout’ conferences held</p> <p>Promotion of Victoria as a premier fishing destination achieved by hosting of the 2023 World Recreational Fishing Conference</p> <p>Construction of the Arcadia Visitors Centre to educate the community about our native fisheries</p>
<b>2.3</b> Victoria’s high quality, fresh fish and seafood products are readily accessible at the source and across Victoria, the first choice for Victorians and recognised around the world	Number of locations with locally caught fish available	<p>Expression of interest process undertaken to continue the small sales permit initiative</p> <p>Work continued to determine the future direction of the Central Zone Octopus Fishery</p>
<b>2.4</b> Recreational fishing and boating are widely accessible and enjoyed by a diverse range and growing number of Victorians	Recreational fishing participation diversity and rate	<p>Participation in the Women In Recreational Fishing (WIRF) Locals Program increased</p> <p>Through the WIRF Strategy, an initiative to showcase career opportunities in fishing for women undertaken</p> <p>At least six <i>Vic Fish Kids</i> events held around Victoria to enable children to experience fishing</p> <p>At least two <i>Fishing For All</i> events held around Victoria to encourage all-abilities fishing opportunities</p> <p>Minor infrastructure and amenity improvements (such as picnic tables, boat ramps) at Lake Glenmaggie completed</p> <p>Installation of fish cleaning tables at Tarwin Lower and Tamboon completed</p> <p>Feasibility of developing an Angler Adventure Trail (point-to-point walkable and existing canoe trails) on Campaspe and/or Loddon Rivers investigated.</p> <p>Fifty additional ‘River Access’ directional signs for priority rivers installed on key roads/highway access points</p> <p>Facility gap audit and mapping undertaken to manage responsible public use of recreational fishing and boating infrastructure</p>
	Enhance the Victorian boating experience by supporting and improving maintenance of our public facilities	Continued removal of boat ramp fees in line with <i>the Boating Action Plan 2022 - 23</i>
	Increase the Victorian Fishing and Boating all-abilities network	Continued installation of all-abilities access points across Victoria to enhance the fishing and boating experience, particularly at public boat ramps in accordance with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i>

## Focus area: 2. Social and economic prosperity



Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
2.5	Victoria is renowned as a great fishing and boating destination	Number of fishing destinations
		The <i>Recreational Fishing Tourism Strategy</i> implemented on schedule
		Online content to promote the <i>Recreational Fishing Tourism Strategy</i> and 10 destinations developed
		Promotion of Victoria as a premier fishing destination achieved by hosting of the <i>2023 World Recreational Fishing Conference</i>
		Improved recreational fishing opportunities in lakes and rivers achieved by reaching target of 10 million fish stocked per year
		Tourism and visitation improved at the completion of the extended Golden Tag Promotion
		Boating infrastructure development and design planning completed in line with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i>
		Upgrade of new boating facilities in accordance with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i>
	Enhance the Victorian boating experience by renewing existing facilities and building new ones	Expansion of the all-abilities boating network across Victoria in accordance with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i>
		Boating promotion campaign progressed to encourage boating across Victoria, in accordance with the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i>
	Enhance the Victorian boating experience by promoting boating across Victoria	

## Focus area: 3. Effective and innovative authority



Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
3.1	The health and safety of our staff and community comes first	Staff perception of effectiveness of safety, health and wellbeing programs measured through the People Matters Survey
		Annual increase in the respondents from the People Matter Survey who 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the VFA provides a safe work environment
		<i>Stop for Safety Program</i> undertaken annually
		<i>OHS Strategic Plan 2021 - 23</i> fully implemented
3.2	Diversity, inclusion and flexibility are valued, and our people can develop their skills, and experience rewarding career pathways	OHS Critical Risk Control module amended and available for staff training
		Staff retention rate of 85 - 95% achieved
		Programs to provide career development in place
		<i>VFA Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025</i> implemented in line with 2022 - 23 key deliverables and
	Representation of gender and cultural diversity in the workplace and senior leadership groups	<i>2023 - 24 GEAP Implementation Plan</i> developed
		Development of a <i>VFA Talent Strategy</i> commenced
		Strategies and plans developed in accordance with the <i>Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2019 - 2024</i>
		<i>Accessibility Action Plan 2021 - 2025</i> actions implemented in line with deliverables

## Focus area: 3. Effective and innovative authority



Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
3.3 We are enabled by strong communication across the organisation and with stakeholders and the Victorian community	Stakeholder Engagement Strategy reviewed annually	Annual <i>Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i> reviewed  Social media reach shows annual growth  Community events run on schedule and participation of VFA Education and Enforcement staff achieved
	People Matter Survey outcomes considered by VFA Executive	People Matter Survey completed, outcomes discussed with staff and measures put in place to address any arising issues as appropriate
3.4 Business processes and systems are fit-for-purpose	Progress against VFA Transition Plan	Strategies and plans developed in accordance with the <i>Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2019 - 2024</i>  <i>Accommodation Strategy 2019 - 2024</i> reviewed with consideration given to hybrid flexible working arrangements.  <i>Internal Communications Strategy</i> developed  The revised <i>VFA Child Safety Policy</i> fully implemented  Standards met under the <i>Protective Data Security Plan</i>
3.5 We are a forward-looking, innovative, consistent and measured, and have a proud reputation for getting things done	Outcomes of People Matter Survey, and community and stakeholder surveys	Outcomes of People Matter Survey indicate annual improvement on the innovative behaviour index  WIRF Survey and a community survey undertaken

## Focus area: 4. Strong and collaborative relationships



Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
4.1 Working relationships are a cornerstone of how we do business	Number and diversity of formal relationships	Regular meetings held with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seafood Industry Victoria</li> <li>- the Aquatic Strategic Action Group</li> <li>- State-wide Recreational Round Table</li> <li>- VRFish</li> <li>- Victorian Multicultural Commission</li> <li>- Boating Industry of Victoria</li> <li>- Victorian Government Agencies and Local Government</li> </ul> Representation at the Australian Fisheries Managers Forum continued  Representation at the National Fisheries Compliance Committee continued  Continued delivery through the RFL Grant Program achieved and RFL Trust Account Annual Report tabled in Parliament  Stronger Fishing Club Grant Program established  Effective collaboration with FishCare continued to facilitate the <i>Fishing for All</i> program



## Focus area: 4. Strong and collaborative relationships

Priority	Measure	2022-23 Targets
<b>4.1 Continued</b>		
Working relationships are a cornerstone of how we do business	Number and diversity of formal relationships	<p>Collaboration with water managers and recreational fishers to translocate priority species from impacted lakes, such as Greens Lake, and channels and maintain access achieved</p> <p>Partnerships established to facilitate priorities identified in the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy</i>, including asset managers/local government, Government entities and boating facility users</p>
<b>4.2</b> Structured and clearly defined processes for consultation and co-management underpin broad participation in decision making	Plans in place for all key partners and stakeholders	<p>Annual <i>Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i> reviewed</p> <p><i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2022-23</i> developed</p> <p>Stakeholder consultation/engagement plans in place for key projects</p> <p>With Marine Safety Victoria and the Water Police, a <i>Recreational Boating Safety Co-Regulator Plan</i> developed and implemented</p>
<b>4.3</b> Informed and capable stakeholders and representative bodies work closely with us to deliver well-planned and coordinated action	Participation of key stakeholders in the development of plans and actions	<p>Key stakeholder groups established for the development of management plans for the rock lobster, giant crab, sea urchin and abalone fisheries</p> <p>Key stakeholder group established for the development of the <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan 2023-24</i></p> <p>Engagement with the Victorian public to ensure feedback is received during planning for upgrades to boating facilities</p>
<b>4.4</b> We extend our reach and impact through partnerships with a diverse range of organisations	Number of engagement activities with diverse range of organisations and cohorts, including other jurisdictions	<p>Community Reference Group established to enable Cultural and Linguistically Diverse communities engage with the VFA and provide input into fisheries management decision making</p> <p>At least 10 community and multi-cultural events held</p>
<b>4.5</b> Work closely with Traditional Owners to develop a greater understanding of culturally important matters	Traditional Owners engagement plan in place	<p><i>VFA Aboriginal Engagement Strategy 2021-2024</i> implementation in line with 2022-23 deliverables</p> <p>Continued engagement with Regional Chapters to progress development of the <i>VFA Aboriginal Fishing Strategy</i>.</p> <p>Working with Traditional Owners at Arcadia to progress the development of our Northern Native Fish Hatchery</p>

#### 4.4 Ministerial Statement of Expectations 2022 – 2024 for the VFA

The *Statement of Expectations* (SOE) 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 SOE applies to the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024.

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23
<b>1. Professionalism and upholding Victorian public service processes</b>	
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
<b>2. Meaningful engagement with Aboriginal People</b>	
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
<b>3. Encouraging more women to get involved in boating and recreational fishing</b>	
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 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
<b>4. Delivering for both commercial and recreational fishers</b>	
Continue working with the Victorian seafood industry to optimise Victoria’s fisheries and aquaculture industries	Stock assessments and quota setting for the abalone, rock lobster, giant crab, octopus, pipi and sea urchin fisheries completed on schedule Corner Inlet Fishery monitoring program, with a focus on improvements to by-product and bycatch monitoring, developed and underway Survey of the Corner Inlet Fishery collecting up-to-date information on recreational and indigenous catch undertaken

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23
<b>4. Delivering for both commercial and recreational fishers (continued)</b>	
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"> <li>• Aquatic Strategic Action Group – quarterly</li> <li>• Snobs Creek Board – quarterly</li> <li>• State-wide Recreational Fishing Round Table – quarterly</li> <li>• Total Allowable Commercial Catch Forums – annually</li> <li>• Seafood Industry Victoria - as required</li> <li>• VRFish - as required</li> <li>• Victorian Multicultural Commission - twice yearly</li> <li>• Boating Industry of Australia (Victoria) – quarterly</li> </ul>
Continue exploring opportunities to support innovation in Victoria's commercial fishing and aquaculture sectors	<p>Requirements gathering undertaken, developmental plan and market engagement strategy developed to scope consolidation of existing electronic commercial catch reporting</p> <p>Market Engagement Strategy developed to examine replacement options for the out-of-date Fisheries Integrated Licensing System</p>
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
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 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 <i>Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy 2021 – 2030</i> 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

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23
<b>5. Promoting environmental sustainability</b>	
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	Rock Lobster Management Plan and harvest strategy review undertaken
	Baseline data collected on native fish populations to underpin harvest strategy development as per the Freshwater Fishery Management Plan 2018-2028, with progress reported annually
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, Vic Fish Ed (a Facebook interactive fisheries education group) delivered
	Multicultural information available to culturally diverse communities on VFA's website and through culturally appropriate publications and other communication channels
<b>6. Developing a partnership approach to safety and regulation</b>	
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 Victoria
	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 &amp; Action Plan</i> and the <i>Recreational Boating Safety Co-regulator Plan</i> .
	Contribution to Victoria's All Hazards, All Emergencies approach to emergency management achieved
	Collaboration with DEECA on emergency management, particularly shark hazard management and cetacean entanglement in fishing gear, undertaken
	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



Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23
<b>7. Stakeholder consultation, engagement and education</b>	
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, PV, 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 Victorian Recreational Boating Action Plan
	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
	VFA Accessibility Action Plan 2021 - 2025 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 &amp; Action Plan</i> delivered
<b>8. Improving infrastructure</b>	
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
<b>9. Accountability and transparency</b>	
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

Ministerial Expectation	VFA performance target 2022-23
<b>9. Accountability and transparency (continued)</b>	
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
<b>10. Reporting and evaluation</b>	
The VFA incorporates the Minister's expectations into business plans	Annual business plans reflect the Minister's Statement of Expectations for the VFA 2022 - 2024
	VFA Annual Report includes progress against performance expectations

## 5. Budget

### Three-year indicative financial projection

	Three-year projection		
	2022-23 (\$'000)	2023-24 (\$'000)	2024-25 (\$'000)
<b>REVENUE BUDGET – FUNDING ALLOCATION</b>			
<b>Recurrent</b>			
Recurrent	15 450	15 661	15 717
Fisheries Catch & Effort	737	737	737
Fisheries Reform	515	515	515
Marine Parks Compensation	5 768	5 768	5 768
Improving Recreational Fishing Operations	824	824	824
Better Boating initiative	15 731		
Restoring our local ports and boating infrastructure	1 451		
Boating Safety and Facilities upgrade	6 771	5 000	5 000
Go Fishing Victoria <sup>1</sup>	5 760		
2021-22 State Budget	524	542	507
<b>Industry and Research (\$29)</b>	4 391	4 435	4 480
<b>Trusts</b>			
Agriculture project trust account	100	100	100
Better Boating Fund allocation <sup>2</sup>	26 777	16 316	16 648
Fisheries plant and equipment	60	60	60
Recreational Fishing Licence <sup>2</sup>	10 177	10 177	10 177
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	95 036	60 134	60 532
<b>Additional funding <sup>3</sup></b>	5 200	6 012	6 589
<b>TOTAL REVENUE (INC ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOUGHT)</b>	100 236	66 146	67 121
<b>EXPENDITURE BUDGET – BY COST TYPE</b>			
<b>Employee related expenses</b>	24 723	25 573	26 323
<b>Grants</b>	52 663	23 227	23 192
<b>Supplies &amp; Consumables</b>	22 850	17 346	17 607
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES (INC ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOUGHT)</b> <sup>4</sup>	100 236	66 146	67 121

<sup>1</sup> Funding for 2022-23 primarily relates to the commitment of stocking Victoria's waterways with 10 million fish.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary estimates.

<sup>3</sup> This reflects expected budget shortfall for 2022-23 to 2024-25. The VFA will look to identify savings measures and will work with DoT to identify strategies, including alternative funding sources, to address the cost pressures.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Our Board

#### Gail Owen

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.

*VFA Board Chair*

*Audit and Risk Committee Member*



#### Graeme Dear

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.

*VFA Deputy Board Chair*

*Strategy and Engagement Committee Chair*



#### Leigh Mackay

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

*VFA Director*

*Audit and Risk Committee Member*



#### Bernadette Northeast

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.

*VFA Director*

*People and Safety Committee Chair*

*Strategy and Engagement Committee Member*



### David Parkin

Mr Parkin is a Trawlwulwuy man from Tebrakunna country and a current Director on the Board of the Kinaway Chamber of Commerce. He brings a deep cultural perspective to the VFA and any future planned activities. Mr Parkin has widespread professional involvement in First Nations entrepreneurial and business activities and highly developed stakeholder engagement skills that consistently build productive working relationships. Much of his work has been in areas of regional Victoria, recognised by the AmCham Alliance Ambassador's Award in 2022.

*VFA Director*

*People and Safety Committee Member*



### Yorick Piper

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.

*VFA Director*

*People and Safety Committee Member*



### David Shirer

Mr Shirer brings a broad range of knowledge 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.

*VFA Director*

*Audit and Risk Committee Member*

*Strategy and Engagement Committee Member*



### Joelle Tabone

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.

*VFA Director*

*Audit and Risk Committee Chair*



*\* Ms Sophie Harris and Mr Chris Rose completed their tenure on the Board in December 2022. New Board Directors were appointed: Ms Leslie Mackay and Mr David Parkin.*



