

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020 - 21



VICTORIAN FISHERIES
AUTHORITY



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Message from our Board Chair and CEO

It is with pleasure that we present the *Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) Annual Business Plan 2020-21* (the Plan). The Plan is our third since becoming a statutory authority in mid-2017 and demonstrates the VFA's ongoing transition to a mature stand-alone organisation.

The Plan details the VFA's focus for 2020-21 by describing the external performance requirements set by the Victorian Government's 2018 election commitments and the *State Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery* and the *Minister's Statement of Expectations* for the VFA. It also describes the performance targets established through the *VFA Strategic Plan 2019-2024* (the Strategic Plan) and budget projections for the next three financial years.

This Plan ensures that the VFA can prioritise and allocate our available resources to optimise the health and sustainability of our fisheries for all Victorians and continue to build resilient commercial, aquaculture and recreational fishing sectors; something that is even more vital due to the challenges caused by global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The VFA's key external focus areas for 2020-21 include:

- Continuing to collaborate with our stakeholders through quarterly meetings of the Aquatic Strategic Action Group and the State-wide Recreational Fishing Roundtable to ensure we stay up to date with the needs of these sectors.
- Taking further steps to ensure fresh fish is more accessible to consumers through supermarkets and in regional ports by extending the line caught permit trial to commercial fishers.
- Developing a management plan for the Corner Inlet fishery and implementing the new pipi and octopus fisheries.
- Delivering a recovery plan for the Gippsland Lakes.
- Building Victoria's aquaculture capacity.
- Identifying innovative ways to continue engagement with our recreational fishers, including holding virtual conferences and events, such as our Trout and Cod conferences and Vic Fish Kids events.
- Providing at least 20 new access points as part of "clear path" access.
- Delivering our election commitments.

In addition to providing our staff with a healthy and safe working environment, we have a number of key internal focus areas in 2020-21, including:

- Completing the VFA's 'Big Build', which includes refurbishments at our Snobs Creek, Queenscliff, Braeside and Melbourne offices.
- Focusing on a broader demographic recruitment in the VFA to celebrate and encourage diversity.
- Ensuring greater transparency on budget management at Director and Manager level and a focus on reducing cost pressures.
- Ensuring a continued safety focus by installing mobile phone cradles in all VFA vehicles, training staff in advanced driver skills and water safety, and ensuring staff are aware of and understand their responsibilities under the new Industrial manslaughter laws.

Underpinning all the work we do is an emphasis on improving outcomes from our fisheries for all Victorians and it with this aim that we, on behalf of the VFA Board, the executive and staff, present the *VFA Annual Business Plan* for 2020-21.

Gail Owen
VFA Board Chair

Travis Dowling
VFA Chief Executive Officer

1. Who we are

Our purpose

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 and Aboriginal fishing sectors and aquaculture operators.

We work with government and stakeholders to optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of Victoria's fisheries and aquaculture industry, while promoting sustainable and responsible practices.

We are committed to getting more people fishing and enjoying Victoria's local seafood, growing healthy and sustainable fishing and aquaculture sectors, and contributing to Victoria's social and economic prosperity.

Our vision

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

To achieve our vision, the Strategic Plan establishes four high level focus areas:



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

These focus areas establish the strategic priorities and associated targets for 2020-21 that are outlined in this Business Plan (see section 4.1). More broadly, each of the focus areas has a series of priorities, measures and longer-term targets, which are described in the Strategic Plan.

Our values

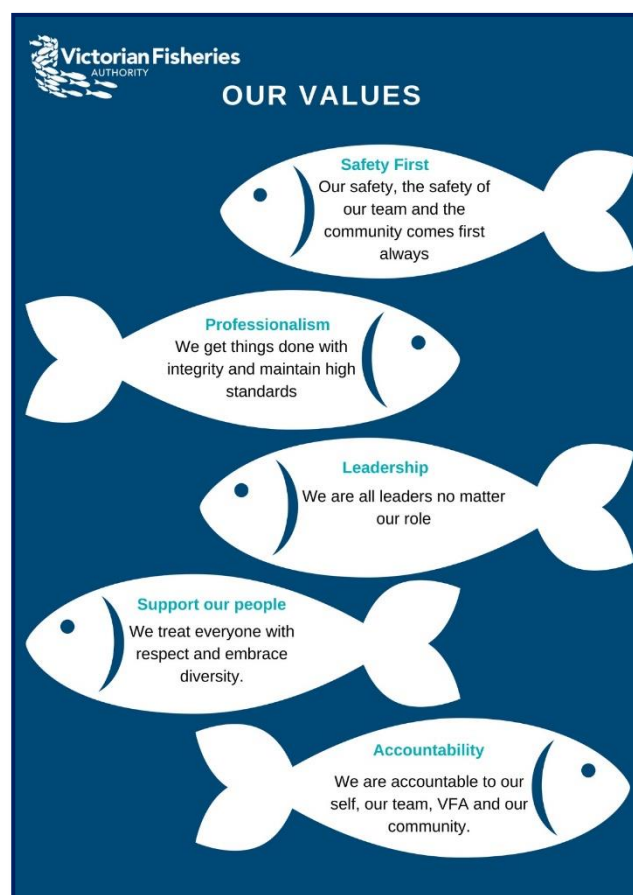


Figure 2: The values that shape the VFA and all those who work within it.

2. Our regulatory operating environment

The *Victorian Fisheries Act 2016*

The VFA was established on 1 July 2017 under the *Victorian Fisheries Act 2016* (the Act). The 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 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.

The Act sets out guiding principles for the VFA to ensure that it:

- Uses integrated decision-making;
- Applies the triple bottom-line of economic, social and environmental cost and benefits assessments;
- Ensures equality;
- Uses an evidence-based approach when making decisions;
- Consults effectively and engages appropriately with stakeholders; and
- Makes open and transparent decisions based on the best available information.

Other acts relevant to the VFA

In addition to the 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*.



3. Our governance arrangements and structure

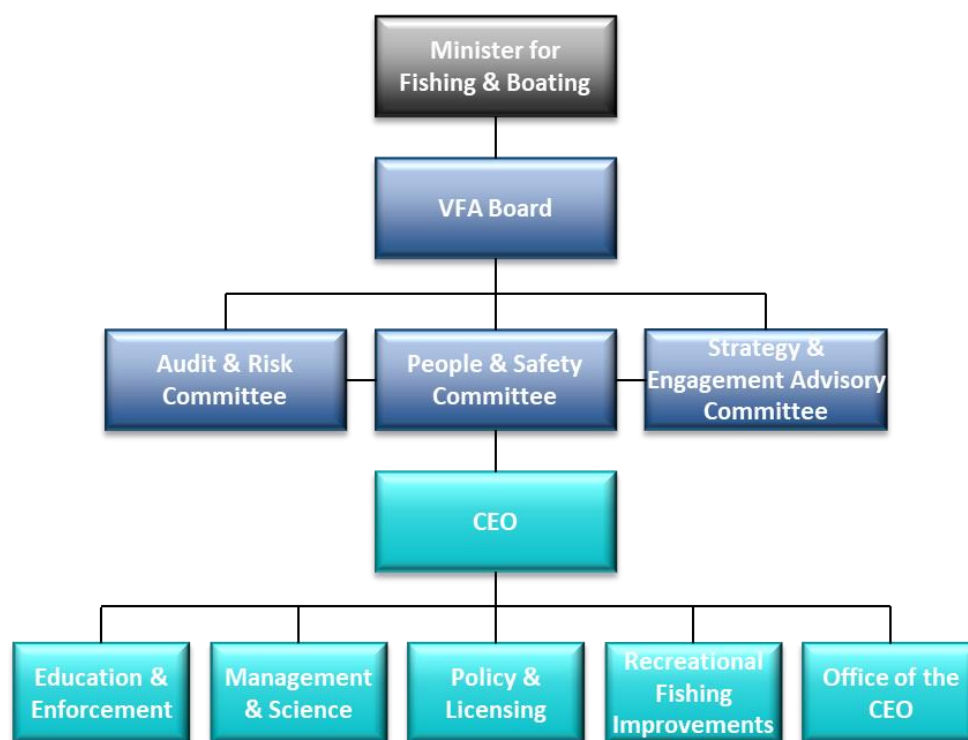


Figure 3: The VFA's organisational structure.

Our Minister

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

In the machinery of government changes resulting from the 2018 State election, the VFA was transferred to the portfolio of the Department of Transport (DoT). Under the Act and the *Fisheries Act 1995*, 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 Advisory Committee.

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

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

Fisheries Management, Aquaculture and Science

The unit delivers core regulatory fisheries science, management and aquaculture services, including undertaking fish stock assessment and monitoring and setting total allowable commercial catch for the rock lobster, abalone, giant crab, Port Phillip Bay and ocean scallop and urchin fisheries.

Policy and Licensing

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

Education and Enforcement

The unit develops and implements state-wide education and enforcement strategies and plans, policies and standards, tasking and coordination, governance, performance management and reporting processes. The unit 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*.

Recreational Fishing Improvements

The unit 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 unit 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.

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.

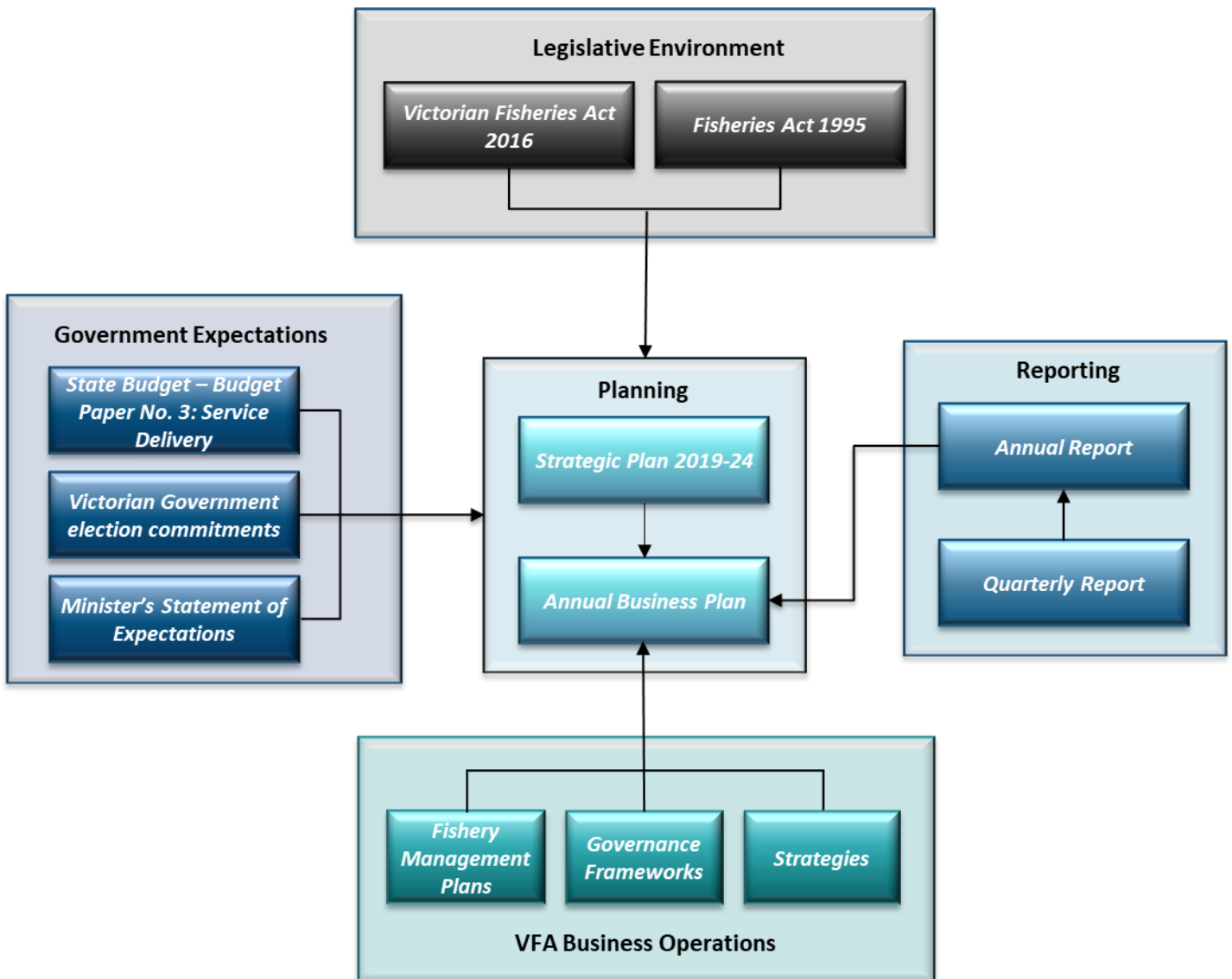


Figure 4: The VFA's performance and reporting framework.

4.1 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 how the VFA will work to achieve its 2020-21 targets.

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

Focus area: 2. Social and economic prosperity



Priority	Measure	2020-21 Targets
2.1	Victoria's fisheries sector is dynamic and resilient, offering great economic opportunities and career pathways for Victorians	<p>Economic returns from value adding in Victoria's fisheries</p> <p>Evaluation of Central and Western Zone Octopus Exploratory Permits commenced</p> <p>Review of supply chain project finalised</p> <p>In consultation with industry, options explored to support seafood supply chain value adding and diversification, and improve domestic market opportunities to increase consumer access to local markets</p> <p>Project underway to build a new native fish hatchery in Shepparton</p>
2.2	Recreational, indigenous customary and commercial fishing and aquaculture are all recognised for their contribution to the social and economic prosperity of Victoria	<p>Community awareness and understanding of the social and economic contribution of fisheries</p> <p><i>VFA Aboriginal Engagement Strategy</i> developed</p> <p>Review of the <i>VFA Aboriginal Fishing Strategy</i> commenced</p> <p>Through the <i>Fishing for Culture</i> program, tailored education to assist newly arrived communities understand recreational fishing rules and how to fish responsibly undertaken</p>
2.3	Victoria's high quality, fresh fish and seafood products are readily accessible at the source and across Victoria, the first choice for Victorians and recognised around the world	<p>Number of locations with locally caught fish available</p> <p>Continue second year of the two-year trial to sell fresh, line-caught seafood directly from the boat to the public – extended to Mallacoota, San Remo, Queenscliff and Apollo Bay</p>
2.4	Recreational fishing is widely accessible and enjoyed by a diverse range and growing number of Victorians	<p>Recreational fishing participation diversity and rate</p> <p><i>Target One Million Phase 2</i> election commitments completed on schedule (refer to section 4.3, pg 12)</p> <p>Through the <i>Target One Million</i> program, family-orientated fishing days held to encourage all Victorians of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to 'give fishing a go'</p>
2.5	Victoria is renowned as a great fishing destination	<p>Number of fishing destinations</p> <p>Collaborate with Visit Victoria to develop a <i>Recreational Fishing Tourism Plan</i>, which includes the 10 priority fishing destinations</p>

Focus area: 3. Effective and innovative authority



Priority	Measure	2020-21 Targets
3.1	The health and safety of our staff and community comes first	<p>Staff perception of effectiveness of safety, health and wellbeing programs measured through the People Matters Survey</p> <p>People Matters Survey completed, outcomes discussed with staff and measures put in place to address any arising issues as appropriate</p> <p>Installation of mobile phone cradles in VFA vehicles and training staff in advanced driver skills and water safety undertaken</p>

Focus area: 3. Effective and innovative authority (cont.)		
Priority	Measure	2020-21 Targets
3.2	Diversity, inclusion and flexibility are valued, and our people can develop their skills, and experience rewarding career pathways	A staff retention rate between 85 – 95%
3.3	We are enabled by strong communication across the organisation and with stakeholders and the Victorian community	Stakeholder Engagement Strategy reviewed annually
		People Matter Survey outcomes considered by VFA Executive
3.4	Business processes and systems are fit-for-purpose	Progress against VFA Transition Plan
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

Focus area: 4. Strong and collaborative relationships		
Priority	Measure	2020-21 Targets
4.1	Working relationships are a cornerstone of how we do business	Number and diversity of formal relationships
4.2	Structured and clearly defined processes for consultation and co-management underpin broad participation in decision making	Plans in place for all key partners and stakeholders
4.3	Informed and capable stakeholders and representative bodies work closely with us to deliver well-planned and coordinated action	Participation of key stakeholders in the development of plans and actions
4.4	We extend our reach and impact through partnerships with a diverse range of organisations	Number of engagement activities with diverse range of organisations and cohorts, including other jurisdictions
4.5	Work closely with Traditional Owners to develop a greater understanding of culturally important matters	Traditional Owners engagement plan in place



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 indicator for the VFA are described below.

Departmental Objective: Sustainably Managed Fish Resources

Objective Indicator: Sustainability of assessed fish stocks

This objective and indicator support the development of sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities in Victoria and promotion of responsible fishing and fishing-related activities. The objective creates performance measures for the VFA that support conditions to grow the natural resources economy by ensuring fish resources are sustainably allocated and used for both recreational and commercial purposes.

Delivering our BP3 performance measures in 2020-21

Performance measures	Unit of measure	2020-21 target
Quantity		
Community and stakeholder engagement information forums	number	10
Complete stock assessment for key quota managed fish species	number	3
Complete total allowable commercial catch setting processes for key quota managed fish species	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	1,750
Key fisheries managed in accordance with best practice management plans	number	6
Minimum number of uniformed fisheries officers maintaining operational coverage for priority fishing activity periods, as defined by the Compliance Strategic Assessment	number	17
Native and salmonid fish stocked	number (000)	8,000
Recreational fishing infrastructure improvements delivered	number	6
Recreational fishing licences sold online as a proportion of total sales	per cent	90
Undertake activities to detect, disrupt and dismantle serious or organised fisheries criminal entities (individuals or groups)	number	20
Quality		
Key statutory obligations relevant to the VFA complied with (tabling annual report, audits, business plan and board appointments)	per cent	100
Timeliness		
Proportion of fisheries cost recovery levies reviewed and set prior to the commencement of the licensing year (1 April)	per cent	100
Research project milestones and reports completed on time	per cent	90

4.3 Victorian Government election commitments


In its 2018 election campaign, the Government extended its commitment to recreational fishers in Victoria. The second phase of the *Target One Million* program will invest over \$35 million in a range of initiatives to get more people fishing more often by improving their fishing experience.

Delivering the Government's election commitments in 2020-21


Election commitment	Election commitment target	2020-21 performance expectations
Phase out commercial net fishing in Gippsland Lakes over 4 years	Cessation of commercial finfish netting by April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Gippsland Lakes Fishery Access Licences removed by April 2021
Grow fish stocking to 10 million per year by 2022	2019/20 – 6 million 2020/21 – 8 million 2021/22 – 10 million 2022/23 – 10 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 8 million fish stocked in 2020/21
Advocate protection of Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) from cuts to bag limits by the Commonwealth	No changes to the existing recreational fishing rules for SBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with the Commonwealth and liaise with recreational fishers
Improve fish habitat in Port Phillip Bay by investing \$2.5 million into projects for reef development	Completion of reef habitat projects by June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 reef projects
Invest \$600,000 in fishing infrastructure providing more fish cleaning tables and platform construction	Fish cleaning and platform infrastructure in place by December 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 new fish cleaning tables 3 upgraded fishing platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 new fish cleaning tables delivered 2 upgraded fishing platforms delivered
Introduce a <i>Fishing for All Program</i> to get more people into fishing, including investing a further \$200,000 in the <i>Vic Fish Kids</i> program	Hold six <i>Fishing for All</i> events and 10 <i>Vic Fish Kids</i> over a two-year period (to 2019/20 - 2020/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 <i>Fishing for All</i> events held 5 <i>Vic Fish Kids</i> events held
Offer recreational fishing number plates for cars and trailers	Custom plates available by end 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete
Develop a Recreational Fishing Tourism Plan	Tourism Plan delivered by 31 December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational Fishing Tourism plan delivered by 31 December 2020
Build a new fish hatchery in Shepparton specialising in warm water species such as Murray cod and golden perch	Construction completed by 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early works program completed by November 2020 Earth and civil works program completed by January 2021
Allow anglers to use small craft (kayaks, boats with electric motors) on specified waters	Anglers can use and launch small craft on specified waters and reservoirs by 1 August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All reservoirs open by 1 August 2020 Launching facilities (boat ramp and carpark) at Barkers Creek and Upper Coliban completed by end 2020
Guarantee access to fishing and camping on Crown land	Angler access has been improved at 50 sites by December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation passed by 31 December 2020 Communication and Engagement Plan developed by 31 December 2020
Invest into science and habitat restoration in the Gippsland Lakes	Gippsland Lakes Recovery Plan delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gippsland Lakes Recovery Plan completed by 31 December 2020
Stock eastern king prawns into Lake Tyers	Stock 15,000 eastern king prawns by 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete

4.4 Minister's Statement of Expectations for the VFA



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

Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
1. Timeliness				
Improve the VFA's processes, systems and online capability to create a better user experience through efficient online administrative processes	Replace the paper-based, resource intensive administration of commercial fishing licence processes with an online system for form submission and approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping of requirements completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun 2021 	3: Effective and innovative authority 
	Provide clear guidelines on the expected timelines for processing commercial fishing forms and requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VFA website updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Dec 2020 	
	Continue to transition Victoria's commercial fisheries to the Vic-eCatch system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial scallop dive, sea urchin, octopus and pipi fisheries transitioned to the Vic-eCatch system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun 2022 	
	Continue to enhance and improve data availability for commercial fishers currently using the Vic-eCatch system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vic-eCatch data availability enhancement completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Dec 2020 	
	Improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the recreational fishing licensing (RFL) system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase out paper-based RFL expiry reminders and replace with emails Network of online RFL agents expanded, with at least 95% of RFL agent sales using the online platform Program to phase out paper and plastic RFLs commenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Mar 2021 By 30 Jun 2022 By 30 Jun 2022 	
	Continue to enhance existing e-capability by improving useability of VicRLTag and GoFishVic and the Rec Fishing Guide apps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useability of the VicRLTag app enhanced and consideration digital replacement for plastic tags Integration of the VicRLTag and GoFishVic apps scoped Improvement options for Rec Fishing Guide app identified annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun 2021 30 Jun 2021 Report annually, 30 Jun 	



Victorian Fisheries Authority Annual Business Plan 2020-2021

Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
2. Risk-based strategies				
Improve methodology for data collection to inform risk-based strategies, reporting, and a risk-based approach to enforcement of regulation	Deliver an annual cycle of fish stock assessment and reporting and continue to improve the assessment framework process and reporting of non-quota species and fisheries, including publication of all reports on the VFA website	Annual cycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quota species: Stock assessment reports for the abalone, rock lobster, giant crab, pipi and octopus fisheries published annually on the VFA website Non-quota species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Victorian Stock Status Report</i> updated and published Fishery Report Cards provided to industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned with quota seasons Jan, annually Feb, annually 	1: Sustainable and healthy fisheries 
	Under the <i>Freshwater Fishery Management Plan 2018-2028</i> , systematically collect fish population health and recreational fishing information to enable the development of harvest strategies for priority recreational fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline data collected on native fish populations to underpin harvest strategy development underway with progress reported annually Draft harvest strategy, which includes predetermined triggers for high-risk fisheries on track to be completed by 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun 	
Improve data collection and monitoring programs to enable meaningful targets to be established to measure native freshwater fish populations	Continue the <i>Native Fish Report Card</i> program to keep the community updated about the state of native fish populations in Victorian rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native Fish Report Cards produced annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun, annually 	
	Rebuild and replenish stocks of our priority native fish species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stocking targets outlined in <i>Target One Million Phase Two</i> met A new native fish hatchery built in northern Victoria to expand Victoria's breeding and stocking of warm-water native fish species including Murray cod, golden perch, silver perch and freshwater catfish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun, annually Build completed by Aug 2021 Operational by Nov 2021 Producing fish by 2022 	
	Continue to implement an intelligence-informed risk-based compliance model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biennial strategic assessment undertaken to identify emerging risks to the sustainability of aquatic resources Analyses of 13Fish calls undertaken to identify common themes and locations in the calls Annual review of enforcement actions required in recreational and commercial fisheries undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 31 Dec 2020 and 31 Dec 2022 Quarterly Report annually, 30 Jun 	
Ensure planning is in place to manage current and emerging risks	Maintain community confidence and create a general deterrence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Base model of cover across all fisheries and over holiday and peak activity periods maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun 	



Victorian Fisheries Authority Annual Business Plan 2020-2021

Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
3. Compliance-related assistance and advice				
Continue to provide comprehensive, straightforward and easily accessible information to the community	Continue to utilise traditional and emerging social media platforms to deliver key information about fisheries compliance and public safety issues to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed VFA Fisheries Education Facebook group established to better connect with our schools and family audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oct 2020 	4: Strong and collaborative relationships 
	Continue to develop, review and refine fisheries products to improve the recreational fisher's understanding of regulations and legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Rock Fishing Safety</i> brochures in English, Vietnamese, Chinese, Pashto, Dari and Farsi produced <i>Bite-sized Fishing Guides</i> in English, Vietnamese and Chinese published and educational trailer displays – bi-lingual English/Chinese and English/Vietnamese produced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dec 2020 Dec 2020 	
	Build on previous work promoting stewardship within priority communities and fostering cross-cultural understanding of fishing and sustainable resource use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of participants in the Schools Education Program drawn from priority communities achieved Through the <i>Fishing for Culture</i> program, tailored education to assist newly arrived communities understand recreational fishing rules and how to fish responsibly undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun 	
	Continue educational programs and events that recognise the VFA's diverse stakeholders and that are implemented in an accessible and inclusive way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the <i>Target One Million</i> program, family-orientated fishing days to encourage all Victorians of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to give fishing a go are conducted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun 	
Continue to find innovative and efficient ways to make information for commercial fishers and aquaculture businesses more easily accessible and understood	Identify improved methods and avenues to deliver essential information to commercial fishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial fishing guide and supplements for all licence classes published and update annually as required Information platform/gateway for commercial fishers (aligned with the Vic-eCatch reporting function) considered and scoped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun, annually 30 Jun 2022 	3: Effective and innovative authority 



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Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
4. Incentive-based regulation				
Continue collecting data that enables evaluation of fishing activities to identify opportunities for reduced/redirected enforcement effort	Continue to expand the roll-out VMS units across commercial fishing vessels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VMS units operational in commercial fisheries specified in the <i>Fisheries Regulations 2019</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abalone, rock lobster, giant crab Corner Inlet Fishery Sea urchin, banded morwong, trawl, Western Port/Port Phillip Bay, Octopus Trial of VMS units in the eel and pipi fisheries completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Jul 2020 1 Aug 2020 1 Nov 2020 30 Jun 2021 	3: Effective and innovative authority 
Consider incentive-based approaches to infringements	Develop a tiered infringement system for breaches of size and catch limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed model for setting tiered infringements developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun 2021 	
5. Cooperation amongst regulators				
Continue to build a more effective and efficient compliance management system across government	Continue collaboration on a national level with other agencies involved in fisheries management and enforcement to identify good practice and share lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National engagement through the Fisheries Managers Network and Australian Fisheries Managers Forum achieved Collaboration with state and national crime fighting entities undertaken <i>Australian Fisheries Crime Prevention Framework</i> completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing, report annually, 30 Jun Ongoing, report annually, 30 Jun 30 Jun 2021 	4: Strong and collaborative relationships 
	Facilitate data sharing and collection amongst relevant agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the national <i>Status of Australian Fish Stocks</i> reporting processes to deliver updated reports every two years Assistance in national shark research provided by collaborating with CSIRO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biennial Ongoing, report annually, 30 Jun 	



Victorian Fisheries Authority Annual Business Plan 2020-2021

Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
Continue to engage and coordinate on a regular basis with other regulators whose roles and responsibilities overlap with those of the VFA	Continue collaboration with state level regulators and agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In support of Game Management Victoria, intelligence services and enforcement support provided In support of Maritime Safety Victoria, inspections to ensure compliance with maritime safety legislation and promote safe fishing activities undertaken Contribution to Victoria's All Hazards, All Emergencies approach to emergency management achieved State Emergency Management Plan and State Shark Hazard Plan responsibilities met Collaboration with DELWP on emergency management, particularly shark hazard management, undertaken VFA and DELWP MOU detailing collaboration arrangements to minimise protected species interactions developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun Nov 2020 	4: Strong and collaborative relationships 
	Continue collaboration with DELWP, EPA, PV, BBV and local governments to deliver <i>Target One Million (TOM) Phase Two</i> election commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective collaboration undertaken with DELWP, PV, BBV to deliver TOM Phase Two election commitments: implement fish cleaning tables, new reefs, upgrade fishing platforms, provide access to river frontage on Crown land for recreational fishers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun 	
6. Stakeholder consultation and engagement				
The VFA understands the changing needs and priorities of commercial fishers, aquaculture businesses, recreational fishers and the community	Continue to build strong collaborative relationships with representative bodies and stakeholder groups through regular engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 meeting of the State-wide Recreational Roundtable to ensure collaboration on shared strategic priorities for the recreational fishing community Meetings with SIV, VRFish and the Victorian Multicultural Commission undertaken twice annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing, report annually, 30 Jun Ongoing, report annually, 30 Jun Ongoing, report annually, 30 Jun 	
Pursue genuine engagement, partnership and participation with Indigenous Victorians	Continue to actively engage with Traditional Owner groups who have an interest in fishery management issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VFA <i>Aboriginal Engagement Strategy</i> developed Review of the VFA <i>Aboriginal Fishing Strategy</i> completed and a redeveloped strategy published Indigenous Victorians employment targets for the new native fish hatchery in Shepparton met Wallpolla 'Culture Based Fisheries' Stocking Pilot Trial complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31 Mar 2021 30 Jun 2022 30 Jun 2022 30 Dec 2021 	4: Strong and collaborative relationships 





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Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
Continue to remove barriers hindering people from enjoying all that Victoria's recreational fishing has to offer	Continue to deliver events that are aimed at providing a safe and enjoyable environment for people to learn about fishing – focussed on all-abilities, families and multicultural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three <i>Fishing for All</i> events held annually Five <i>Vic Fish Kids</i> events held annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun 	
7. Accountability and transparency				
Ensure that all stakeholders have access to reliable and relevant information in appropriate forms to facilitate a good understanding of fisheries issues and the process by which fisheries management decisions are made	Remain committed to maintaining an effective and productive consultation and engagement process that involves all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress against the <i>VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2019-2021</i> reviewed annually Review of <i>VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2019-2021</i> undertaken <i>VFA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2021 – 2023</i> drafted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun Jan 2021 31 Mar 2021 	3: Effective and innovative authority 
	Ensure the VFA website and social media provide accurate and up-to-date information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The VFA website is reviewed to remain fit for purpose and updated as required VFA's social media reach is reviewed annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun 2021 Report annually, 30 Jun 	
	Ensure that the VFA website provides timely and transparent information to encourage stakeholders to participate in fishery management decision-making processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes of consultative processes on the VFA's website, including submissions and outcomes, in a timely manner published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	
Improved transparency and timeliness in publicly reporting on fishery performance to ensure the VFA's objective to sustainably manage Victoria's aquatic resources is being met	Continue to report on the status of Victoria's key fish stocks and ensure reports are published on the VFA website in a time appropriate manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stock assessment reports for quota fisheries are published annually on the VFA website <i>Victorian Fish Stock Status Report</i> published on the VFA website Fishery Report Cards provided to industry Completed scientific reports are published on the VFA website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned with quota seasons Jan, annually Feb, annually As completed 	1: Sustainable and healthy fisheries 
	Continue to deliver existing marine and aquaculture management plans and strategies, and review and develop new plans and strategies as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the <i>Giant Crab Fishery Management Plan</i> undertaken, and a revitalised plan developed <i>Octopus Fishery Management Plan</i> and Harvest Strategy drafted <i>Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan</i> drafted Review of the <i>Victorian Aquaculture</i> undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dec 2021 30 Jun 2022 Dec 2021 30 Jun 2021 	

Victorian Fisheries Authority Annual Business Plan 2020-2021

Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
	Continue to implement the <i>Freshwater Fishery Management Plan 2018-2028</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VAGO actions implemented as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun 	1: Sustainable and healthy fisheries
	Continue to deliver priority actions and measures in the <i>Victorian Wild Trout Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 3 of the Wild Trout Management Program implemented, which delivers on nine priority actions under the Victorian Wild Trout Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 30 Jun 2022 	
	Develop a <i>Native Fish Stocking Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Native Fish Stocking Strategy</i> drafted for consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun 2021 	
	Develop an <i>RFL Strategic Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft RFL Strategic Plan that guides RFL investment to ensure alignment with stakeholder expectations finalised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By early 2021 	
	Develop a recreational snapper fishery harvest strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational Snapper Fishery Harvest Strategy Pilot commenced <i>Recreational Snapper Fishery Harvest Strategy</i> delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Dec 2020 30 Sept 2021 	
	Deliver a recovery plan for the Gippsland Lakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Gippsland Lakes Recreational Fishery Recovery Plan</i> delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Dec 2020 	
Increase transparency around how the VFA administers, and where appropriate, enforces regulation	Continue to enhance public understanding of fisheries compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance information published on the VFA website on a quarterly basis – e.g. levels of compliance in rec and commercial sectors Explanatory details of relevant enforcement outcomes published on our education-specific social media platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Ongoing, report annually, 30 Jun 	3: Effective and innovative authority
Continue the growth of the VFA as a mature statutory authority by demonstrating that government priorities are addressed, and regulatory performance is efficient and effective	Reporting requirements described in legislation are adhered to by the VFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report published Performance against the SOE, Victorian Government's <i>Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery</i> and the Victorian Government's election commitments published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report annually, 30 Jun Report annually, 30 Jun 	
	Continue to build the VFA as an effective and innovative organisation, where processes and systems are modern, cost efficient, fit for purpose, accessible, secure and enable collaboration and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies and plans developed in accordance with the <i>Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2019 – 2024</i> Compliance testing of procurement, contract management, recruitment and IT undertaken in accordance with the <i>Corporate Services Strategic Plan 2020-2021</i>: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jun 2022 Dec 2021 	
	Continue the ongoing transition to a mature stand-alone organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Risk Management Framework</i> developed/updated and implemented in line with Victorian Government <i>Risk Management Framework's</i> changed requirements. <i>Workforce Strategy</i> to support the effective and efficient delivery of our strategic objectives developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Jun 2021 30 Jun 2022 	

Victorian Fisheries Authority Annual Business Plan 2020-2021

Ministerial Expectation	Improvement strategy	VFA performance target	Timeframe	VFA Strategy Focus Area
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Asset Management Strategy</i> revised and <i>Asset Management Plans</i> for major assets developed • <i>Fraud and Corruption Control Policy</i> fully implemented to ensure consistency with Victorian Government requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 Jun 2021 • 30 Jun 2021 	3: Effective and innovative authority
	Continue to implement the <i>VFA Governance Framework</i> to achieve maturity in all governance principles in the framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in the development and implementation of the mechanisms used to drive and support good governance reviewed and assessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually, 30 Jun 	
As part of good governance, review the efficiency and effectiveness of the cost recovery model to determine best practice	Review current cost recovery arrangements and investigate alternative models in consultation with the commercial fishing and aquaculture sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion paper for consultation that considers options to reform the way in which commercial fishing and aquaculture licence levies are collected developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 Jun 2021 	2. Social and economic prosperity 
8. Clear and concise regulatory activities				
Ensure that regulatory practices are efficient and do not impose an unnecessary burden on regulated parties and the community	Continue to deliver an annual <i>Education and Enforcement Action Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Education and Enforcement Action Plan</i> delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jun, annually 	3: Effective and innovative authority 
	Deliver changes to Crown land access to enable camping accessibility on licensed Crown land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Land Act 1958</i> amended to remove the prohibition on camping on Crown Land River Frontage and 50 new access points created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By December 2021 	
Explore opportunities to support innovation in Victoria's commercial fishing and aquaculture sectors	Investigate opportunities to increase consumer access to local markets, improve consumers' understanding of local products, and support seafood supply chain value-adding and diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small sales permit trial evaluated and options for extension into the future considered • Central and Western Zone Octopus Exploratory Permits evaluated and options for the future considered • Review of supply chain project finalised • In consultation with industry/ASAG, options to support seafood supply chain value-adding, diversification, and improving domestic market opportunities to increase consumer access to local markets explored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 Jun 2022 • 30 Jun 2022 • 1 Oct 2020 • 30 June 2022 	2. Social and economic prosperity 

5. Budget

Three-year indicative financial projection

	Three-year projection		
	2020-21 (\$'000)	2021-22 (\$'000)	2022-23 (\$'000)
REVENUE BUDGET – FUNDING ALLOCATION			
Recurrent			
<i>Recurrent</i>	17 452	17 509	17 532
<i>Fisheries Catch & Effort</i>	737	737	737
<i>Fisheries Reform</i>	515	515	515
<i>Marine Parks Compensation</i>	5 768	5 768	5 768
<i>Improving Recreational Fishing Operations</i>	824	824	824
<i>Target One Million Phase 2 ¹</i>	7 416	5 300	4 400
Industry and Research (\$29)	4 226	4 308	4 391
Trusts			
<i>Agriculture project trust account</i>	100	100	100
<i>Fisheries plant and equipment</i>	60	60	60
<i>Recreational Fishing Licence</i>	11 250	10 081	8 595
TOTAL REVENUE	48 348	45 202	42 921
Additional funding ²	1 900	2 000	2 100
TOTAL REVENUE (INC ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOUGHT)	50 248	47 202	45 021
EXPENDITURE BUDGET – BY COST TYPE			
Employee related expenses	20 850	21 371	21 906
Grants	2 700	2 835	2 977
Supplies & Consumables	26 698	22 995	20 139
TOTAL EXPENSES (INC ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOUGHT) ³	50 248	47 202	45 021
Total capital investment budget	7 554	121	121

¹ Funding provided over the next three years primarily relates to the commitment of stocking Victoria's waterways with 10 million fish by 2021-22, and the construction of fishing infrastructure and reefs. Fish stocking will occur each year, whereas the infrastructure and reef construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2021-22.

² This reflects expected budget shortfall for 2020-21 to 2022-23. The VFA will look to identify savings measures and will work with DoT Finance to identify strategies, including alternative funding sources, to address the cost pressures.

³ Excludes depreciation expenses.

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



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 Deputy Board Chair

Audit and Risk Committee Member

People and Safety 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 Director

Strategy and Engagement Advisory Committee Chair



Sophie Harris

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

VFA Director

People and Safety Committee Member

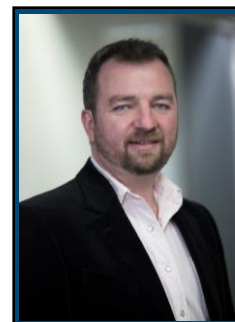


Yorick Piper

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



Chris Rose

Mr Rose brings 36 years' experience managing public land and recreational activities with a significant career with Parks Victoria, including as Acting CEO. He has a good working knowledge of fisheries and natural resource management with an understanding of government and extensive stakeholder engagement experience.

VFA Director

People and Safety Committee Chair



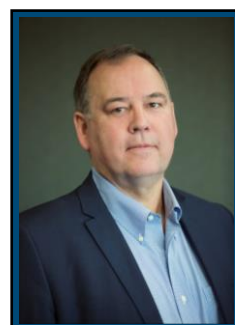
David Shirer

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 Chair

Strategy and Engagement Advisory 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 Member



