

EAST GIPPSLAND
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY



CORPORATE PLAN 2017/18 – 2021/22

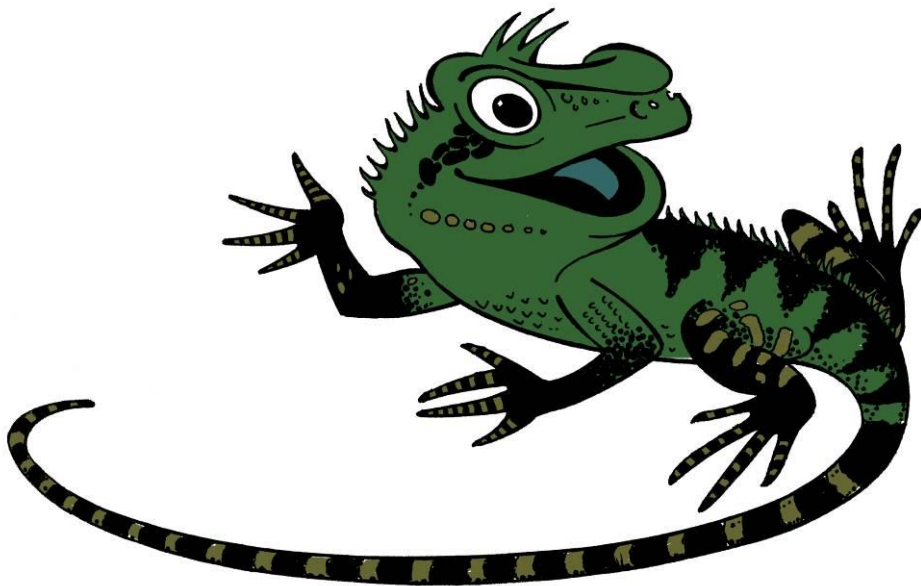


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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to submit the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's (the Authority) Corporate Plan for the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2022. The scope of the Plan extends to five years but concentrates on the next year's requirements to meet our strategic goals.

This Plan satisfies both the Corporate Plan requirements under the *Water Act 1989* (Water Act) and the Business Plan requirements under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act) and Ministerial Guidelines.

This Plan provides specific goals for the functions required by the Ministers. It is a strategic document: important externally to provide transparency to our community, the government and other stakeholders; and internally to provide clarity and focus for our management and staff. It should be read in conjunction with the *Statement of Obligations for Catchment Management Authorities* designed to clarify the Authority's obligations relating to the performance of its functions and exercise of its powers.

Importantly, the plan shows how the Authority is responding to the Victorian government strategic policy direction principally contained within the following:

1. Our Catchments, Our Communities,
2. Water Plan for Victoria,
3. Biodiversity 2037,
4. Climate Change Act 2017, and
5. Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy

As such the plan indicates a focus on strengthening and improving the following:

1. Improved accountability measures including responding to revised standing directions of the Minister for Finance 2016 and governance initiatives contained within the Our Catchments Our Communities strategy and Water plan for Victoria.
2. An increased focus on assisting traditional owner and aboriginal corporations to participate in our programs and planning.
3. Strengthening our engagement and participation processes through formal committees, stakeholder groups, partner agencies and individuals.
4. Taking an active role to reflect our diverse community through memberships on boards, committees, executives and staff.
5. Developing initiatives and partnerships taking due consideration to the impacts of climate change in East Gippsland.

The plan provides the framework for reporting on corporate performance in the Annual Report and describes how we will meet obligations outlined in the Statement of Obligations. The Corporate Plan is a public document and can be viewed on the Authority website.

1. OUR AUTHORITY

1.1. OUR REGION

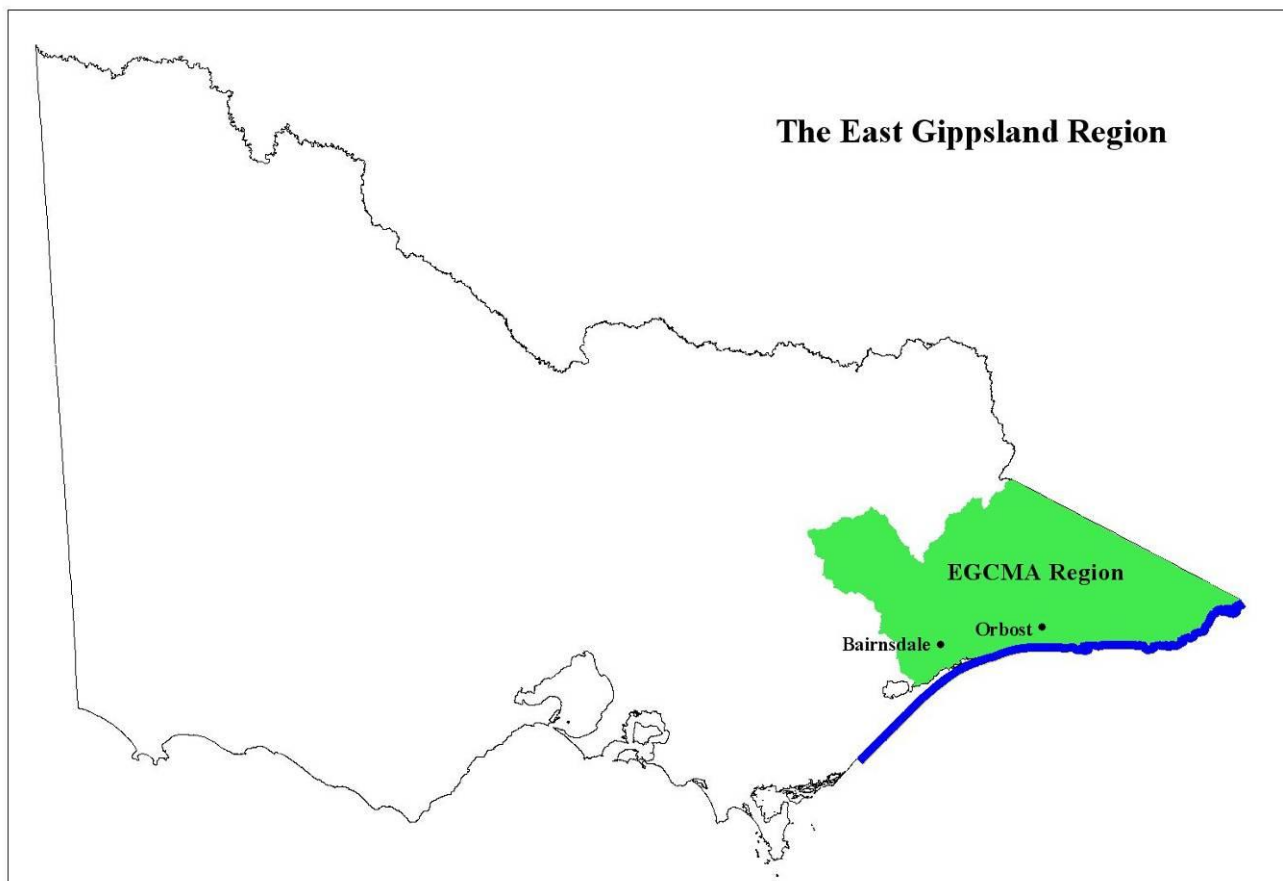


Figure 1. The East Gippsland Region

The East Gippsland Catchment Management Region (Figure 1) covers 2.2 million ha of land, lakes, and coastal waters out to 5.5 km, in the eastern-most part of Victoria. It is entirely south of the Great Dividing Range and includes the catchments of streams from the Mitchell River eastwards. The region covers about ten per cent of Victoria.

The region includes most of the East Gippsland Shire, the northern part of the Wellington Shire, and that part of the Alpine Shire south of the Great Dividing Range. It abuts the Wangaratta Shire and the New South Wales Shires of Snowy River, Bombala, and Eden Valley.

The Victorian Alps and mountains of the Great Dividing Range extend from the west to east across the northern boundary of the region. Foothills, lowland forests and coastal complexes to the south also extend from west to east, while rivers generally run north to south through the region, dissecting these landforms. Some catchments, such as the Mitchell, Tambo, Snowy and Cann River catchments include deep, mid-catchment, mountain basins, which have been extensively cleared for dryland agriculture.

Major land uses and industries include conservation, agriculture, tourism, native forestry, plantation forestry and fisheries. About 80% of the land of the region is in public ownership, mainly as State Forests and National Parks.

Most freehold land is used for farming, ranging from large commercial enterprises to small 'rural residential' properties. Cities and towns occupy a small proportion of land in the region.

Some of the important features of East Gippsland are:

- The Gippsland Lakes, which have significant environmental, social and economic value and are on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance
- Its array of streams, especially the wild rivers, including the iconic Snowy River and Victoria's biggest unregulated stream, the Mitchell River
- Its long coastal reach with undeveloped estuaries, ocean beaches and spectacular headlands
- Its mountains and forests, which provide great scenery, clean air, clean water, recreational opportunity and forestry products
- Its scenic and productive farming lands, especially in the river valleys; and
- Its living wealth in the form of native plants and animals, some of which occur only in this region.

The Mitchell, Tambo, Snowy, Cann and Genoa Rivers have substantial alluvial floodplains in their lower reaches. The alluvial floodplains are the sites of the region's highly productive irrigation areas, including the Lindenow flats (Mitchell River), Bruthen Flats (Tambo River) and the Snowy River flats. The flats are used intensively for horticulture, dairying, and cattle production.

The 'Red Gum Plains' are located in the south-west of the region, and extend from Bairnsdale to the Perry River in the west. The plains were originally covered by Red Gum and native grasses. The area is now used predominantly for dryland agriculture, but society now places an increased emphasis on the value of small remaining areas of Red Gum forest.

A complex of dunes and coastal vegetation extends along most of the coastline. The region includes the area of ocean out to three nautical miles from the coast.

1.2. OUR PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The Authority adopts the following State Government values documented in section 7 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

Responsiveness

- Providing frank, impartial and timely advice to the Government
- Providing high quality services to the Victorian Community
- Identifying and promoting best practice.

Integrity

- Being honest, open and transparent in our dealings
- Using powers responsibly
- Reporting improper conduct
- Avoiding real or apparent conflicts of interest
- Striving to earn and sustain public trust of a high level.

Impartiality

- Making decisions and providing advice on merit and without bias, caprice, favouritism or self-interest
- Acting fairly by objectively considering all relevant facts and fair criteria
- Implementing Government policies and programs equitably.

Accountability

- Working to clear objectives in a transparent manner
- Accepting responsibility for our decisions and actions
- Seeking to achieve best use of resources
- Submitting ourselves to appropriate scrutiny.

Respect

- Treating others fairly and objectively
- Ensuring freedom from discrimination, harassment and bullying
- Using our views to improve outcomes on an ongoing basis.

Leadership

- Actively implementing, promoting and supporting these values.

1.3. OUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Establishing Legislation

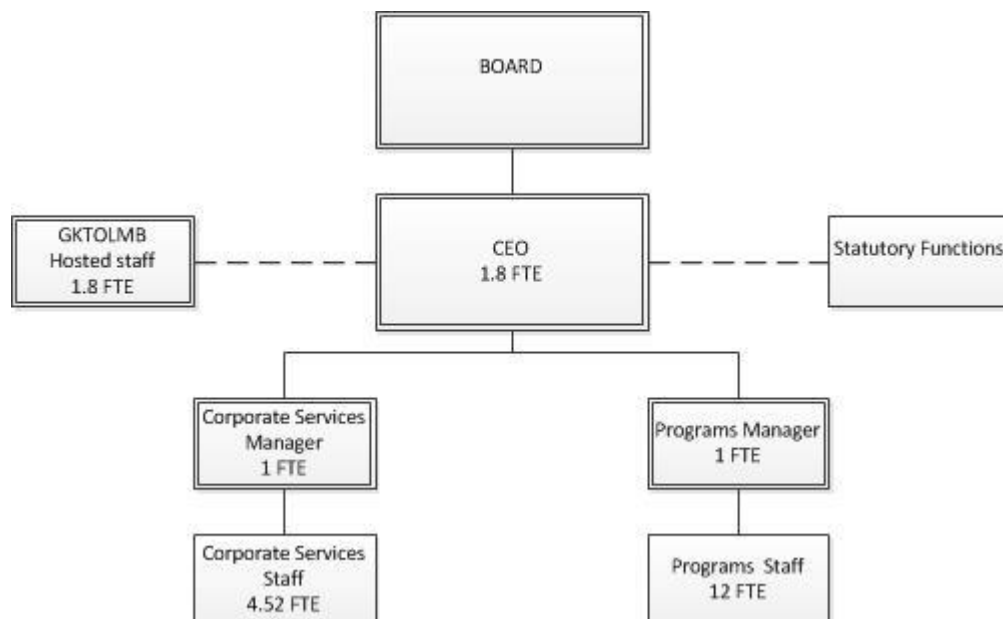
The Authority exists within the legislative framework below, with a degree of independence from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). Notwithstanding this independence, the Authority is a statutory entity and must meet its obligations written either in the form of legislation or as government policy. As such, the Authority must operate within the existing government policy frameworks at all times.

Obligations of the Authority are largely contained in the following Acts:

- *Water Act 1989*
- *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*
- *Financial Management Act 1994*
- *Audit Act 1994*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *The Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Protected Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Public Administration Act 2004.*

This Authority adopts the Governance Guidelines for DELWP Portfolio Statutory Authority Board Members, the Victorian Public Sector Commission Good Practice Guide on Governance for Victorian Public Sector Entities and abides by the Code of Conduct for the Victorian Public Service and the Victorian Public Sector Commission Directors' Code of Conduct.

Organisational Structure



The Board

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Board undertakes to serve the interests of government, employees, stakeholders and the broader community honestly, fairly, diligently and in accordance with applicable laws.

The Board sets strategic goals, objectives and performance targets of the Authority in conjunction with management and government and monitors the implementation of those plans.

The Board delegates to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) the responsibility for managing the day-to-day operations of the Authority.

Committees

The Board maintains committees with specific delegations documented in approved terms of reference reviewed annually.

Communications & Engagement Committee

Responsibilities include:

- Coordination and oversight of the implementation of board level communication and engagement activities
- Oversight of the annual review of the Board Engagement Plan and recommend the completed plan to the board for endorsement
- Oversight of the implementation of the Board Engagement Plan including performance against KPI's
- Oversight of the production of the Authority's Annual Report as required
- Review of reports on and oversight of the implementation of the Authority's program communication and engagement activities

- Review of relevant communications and engagement policies for board approval.

Audit and Risk Committee

Responsibilities include:

- Oversight of the Authority’s financial performance and the effectiveness of the financial reporting process, including performance against the annual budget, the annual financial statements and all other internal controls
- Oversight of the scope of work, performance and independence of the independent external internal audit function
- Recommend to the Board the appointment and dismissal of internal auditors.
- Oversight of the scope of work and performance of the external auditor
- Reviewing the operation and implementation of the risk management framework
- Reviewing and endorsement of finance, risk and related policies for board approval
- Reviewing the effectiveness of management information systems and other systems of internal control
- Reviewing the Authority’s process for monitoring compliance with legislation, regulations, ministerial directions and other compliance obligations

People and Remuneration Committee

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the Board has a strategic, sustainable long-term approach to issues relating to the people working for the Authority, including:
 - People resources, strategic policy and planning
 - Organisational culture
 - Organisational structure
 - Industrial relations matters
 - Development and training
 - Remuneration and contracting strategies
 - Succession planning for key management positions
 - Recruitment and retention.
- To approve and review the Chief Executive Officer’s (CEO) performance for the purpose of annual performance review and to recommend any annual increments in accordance with GSERP guidelines and current employment contract terms
- In conjunction with the CEO to review and to recommend to the Board, in line with organisational and government policy, remuneration levels for executive management.
- Provide facilitation and oversight for preparation of Board Performance Reviews/Board member self-assessments and recommend any actions to the board
- Provide advice to the board in respect of the recruitment of external members to board sub-committees.

Staffing levels

- Employment levels vary, dependent on funding and the workload of the Authority. The Authority employs some staff and utilises many partnerships to deliver on its responsibilities under the Water Act and the CaLP Act.
- Two staff are specifically employed under a support contract to the Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board.
- Breakdown of FTE’s is as follows:

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/2018
Executive Officers and Managers	7	7.6	6.8
Corporate Services & Engagement Staff	3	5	4.52
Operational Staff	9.6	9.1	10.8

TOTAL	19.6	21.7	22.12
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Training and Development

The Authority is committed to ongoing training and development of our people. The Authority sets aside more than 1% of our total labour cost for training and development, which is allocated based on the development needs identified in the Authority’s Performance Review and Development process.

1.4. BUSINESS RISKS AND MITIGATING CONTROLS

The following risks rated “High” have been extracted from the Authority’s Risk Register:

Risk	Current Causes and Controls
Lack of OH&S management and reporting leading to significant workplace incident or accident resulting in significant/permanent injury or death to employee or contractor.	<p>Causes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of suitable safety procedures and reporting and monitoring 2. Unsafe or risky behaviour by employee or contractor 3. Poor safety culture 4. Lack of training and awareness 5. Poor contractor and staff induction procedures 6. Faulty or poorly maintained procedures 7. Dangerous climatic/environmental conditions 8. Unsafe site or location conditions <p>Controls</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project site visits, audits, risk assessments, compliance testing 2. Contractor and employee induction process 3. Safety policies and procedures 4. Insurance 5. Critical Incident Response Plan 6. Plant assessments and maintenance programs
Poor engagement with the community leading to misunderstanding/execution of Authority’s goals and objectives resulting in reputational damage, loss of support with stakeholders and failure to meet strategic intent.	<p>Causes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board not actively promoting Authority’s goals and objectives 2. Poor data capturing or understanding of community needs 3. No Engagement Strategy 4. Lack of prioritisation around engagement required with stakeholders 5. Poor understanding of who to engage with 6. Insufficient resources available to engage as required 7. Lack of reporting/assessment against engagement protocols <p>Controls</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board subcommittee for communications and engagement 2. Reporting / KPI’s in place to assess engagement plans 3. Performance development plans address engagement 4. ACE database to record all stakeholder discussions and report on engagement activities

Risk	Current Causes and Controls
	5. CMA Engagement Plan aligned to strategy 6. Staff training in engagement

1.5. FUNDING OF THE CORPORATE PLAN

The activities outlined in the corporate plan are funded primarily through the Victorian Investment Framework and bids made under the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. A summary of major government investors for 2017/18 follows:

Victorian Government

Governance/Corporate Funding	\$0.9m
Water Statutory Functions	\$0.7m
Snowy River Rehabilitation	\$0.9m
On Ground Works	\$0.9m
Riparian Works	\$0.8m
Our Catchment Our Communities	\$0.5m
Gippsland Lakes	\$2.5m
Flood Recovery	\$1.0m
Floodplain Management	\$0.2m
Landcare	\$0.3m
Other State Programs	\$0.3m

Commonwealth Government

National Landcare Programme	\$1.8m
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Other

Interest Earned	\$0.2m
Other	\$0.6m
Total	\$11.6m

1.6. REPORTING AND REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE PLAN

The Board monitors progress against objectives of the Corporate Plan at each meeting. Shortly after completion of the planning year, the Board again reviews organisational performance against the Corporate Plan and reports the results in the Annual Report to the Minister.

In the event that the Board identifies the need for a significant change in direction and/or changes to key strategies, it will amend the Corporate Plan at any time during its life as required.

2. PART A: STATEMENT OF CORPORATE INTENT

2.1. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

The Authority's 2023 vision is:

“We are the leaders in integrated catchment management partnering with our communities to enhance East Gippsland's iconic landscapes and cultural heritage”

The vision and supporting strategic objectives align with the long term goals of the Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS).

2.2. MAIN BUSINESS UNDERTAKINGS

The main business undertakings of the Authority are set out in governing legislation. These are:

1. CALP Act 1994:

Coordinating the Regional Catchment Strategy and supporting plans

We complete the RCS and associated action plans and oversee implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Community Engagement

We help build government and community cooperation in maintaining our natural resources.

2. Water Act 1989 - Caretaker of River Health:

On-ground river health works

We oversee river health works guided by the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy through our own contractors, partner agencies and organisations.

Statutory Functions

We license works on waterways and assess planning referrals on floodplains.

Community Engagement

We help build government and community cooperation in maintaining and improving the health of our rivers.

2.3. NATURE AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

The key activities of the Authority are also split along the lines of the governing Acts listed.

CALP ACT 1994

The Our Catchments, Our Communities strategy for Victoria provides policy guidance for our CaLP Act activities including completion and implementation of the RCS. These responsibilities involve helping coordinate natural resource activities with our partner organisations, agencies and community groups and individuals. We coordinate integrated catchment management (ICM) planning and investment on behalf of the region. A range of national, state and regional planning frameworks are relevant.

Regional Catchment Strategy

Key in the ICM planning structure is the RCS, which provides a strategic framework for the management of natural resources in the region. It provides an integrated planning framework for managing land, water and biodiversity in the region. It also provides an important reference point for investment in NRM programs. The planning horizon for the RCS is six years. The East Gippsland RCS was accredited in May 2013.

East Gippsland Waterway Strategy

Following the release of the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy in 2013, the Authority has completed the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy. During the course of this year the strategy's implementation will continue in line with the waterway goals communicated to the community and monitored by the Board.

WATER ACT 1989

The Authority activities under the Water Act are largely about completing major works programs on our waterways consistent with the Water for Victoria plan, the Riparian Action plan, Victorian Waterway Management Strategy and the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy, fulfilling our floodplain statutory responsibilities consistent with Victorian floodplain strategy and regulatory frameworks, and implementing the recommendations of the Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy.

On-Ground Works

The Authority has the responsibility as Caretaker of River Health under the Water Act. Part of fulfilling this role is to complete remedial works on the region's waterways.

The Authority has priorities identified in the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy and seeks funding from government programs that align with these priorities.

Environmental Flows

The Authority is implementing the following actions this year:

1. Working with Southern Rural Water to review the local management rules for the Mitchell River.
2. Implementing the Snowy River Monitoring Plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Authority will continue to support monitoring and evaluation programs at a state wide level. A trial developing monitoring programs to report on outcomes through long term works programs articulated in the Water for Victoria plan will continue, using the Cann River as a case study.

Engagement Activities

The Authority participated in a state-wide joint project to complete the Community Engagement and Participation framework. The framework principles have been incorporated into the Authority's strategies, procedures and processes.

Engagement priorities for next year will revolve around the following areas:

1. Continuation of our focus on community engagement and partnership development to ensure maximum participation with our community.
2. Review the Engagement Plan 2016/17 (Engagement Plan) of the Authority aimed at improving access to Authority information and place further emphasis on building strategic alliances.
3. Further develop our formal and informal relationships with local Aboriginal groups to increase our cultural competence, build capability and embed cultural heritage priorities into all our programs.
4. Review the information needs of the Authority to better capture community perception of our key goals and any attitude changes over time.
5. Building on the digital media strategy aligned with the Authority's Engagement Plan.
6. Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan implementation and engagement through the GLCC. A priorities plan for the Gippsland lakes was completed in 2016/17. Prioritised projects are being undertaken through an integrated approach with partner agencies working collaboratively on share projects and outcomes for the community.

2.4. KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board

The Authority hosts the Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB) for provision of its Executive Officer and Project Officer and for supporting board members.

The Executive Officer position reports directly to the Authority's CEO and Chairman of the GKTOLMB.

This co-operative arrangement builds capability at officer level by sharing management skills, and builds cultural awareness and long term relationships among CMA staff and GKTOLMB members.

Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee

The Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee (GLCC) was established by the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water on 30th July 2015 appointing the Chairman of the East and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authorities as members and Co-chairs.

Key functions of the GLCC are:

- To deliver projects with a specific focus on improving the environmental condition of the Gippsland Lakes through on-ground management activities;
- Advising the Minister of environmental issues concerning the Gippsland Lakes; and
- Making recommendations on the allocation of funding.

The Authority manages the distribution of GLCC funding and provides management oversight via Service level Agreements with DELWP and partner agencies for the delivery of projects identified within the GLCC Priorities Plan.

Initiatives utilising the bulk of the remaining Gippsland Lakes funding will be recommended to the Minister for approval this year, including community level and agency level projects with multiple partners.

2.5. KEY BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Our ability to fulfil our CaLP and Water Act responsibilities referred to in sections 1.3 & 2.3 is entirely dependent on our success in developing community and agency co-operation in project planning and delivery.

Investment and Partnership Roundtables

The Authority continues to work productively with many project partners such as DELWP, Parks Victoria (PV), Landcare, East Gippsland Shire Council, Trust for Nature (TFN), Conservation Management Networks, and Greening Australia. Their links extend further into the broader East Gippsland community through individual project involvement.

The Authority has extended these links in a more formalised fashion through the development of Program Working Groups (PWGs). All programs within the RCS have a designated PWG made up from the appropriate areas of regional expertise regardless of agency links; therefore we have members from agencies and groups such as DELWP, PV, TFN, traditional owners and Landcare. Programs and projects have been developed collectively to ensure the greatest opportunity for collaboration.

Gippsland Environment Agencies (GEA)

In East Gippsland we continue to enjoy a cooperative environment where working together is a priority. This environment is strengthened by a Regional Operating Agreement between the Authority, DELWP and Parks Victoria. The Authority CEO is chairman of the Gippsland Environment Agency forum (GEA) comprising membership from leaders of all government environment agencies in Gippsland. GEA has five priority projects they wish to deliver together this year as follows:

1. Complete a GEA priority projects prospectus which will describe the major regional NRM priorities for the forum
2. Document the existing roundtable consultative and participation processes utilised by the GEA partners
3. Complete the GLaWAC partnership agreement
4. Support the GEA Women in Leadership forum and resource the priority actions
5. Complete and implement the new Catchment Partnership agreement between all GEA members, a key priority action in the Our Catchments, Our Community strategy for Victoria

Progress of these priorities is reported to the board regularly.

Landcare Networks Forum

Participation between Landcare network executives and the EGCMA is managed through a quarterly forum convened by the EGCMA CEO. The forum comprises members from Snowy River Interstate, Far East Victoria Landcare Network and East Gippsland Landcare networks. Discussions range from strategic ideas and programs to operational matters. We use the meetings to support each other and share knowledge and ideas.

The Landcare facilitators also have a similar forum with the Regional Landcare coordinator where they share ideas and issues together.

East Gippsland CEO's and MD's Forum

The EGCMA CEO is chairman of the East Gippsland CEO's and MD's forum which comprises executive members from East Gippsland agencies such as Southern Rural Water, Bairnsdale Regional Health, East Gippsland Shire Council, Gippsland Ports and East Gippsland Water.

The forum is designed to drive government coordination at a senior level in East Gippsland. Initiatives include shared service provision, staff and executive secondments, joint training and shared strategic planning.

Progress of these initiatives is reported to the board regularly.

Vic Catchments

The EGCMA Chairman is also the Chair of Vic Catchments. Newly formed in 2017, Vic Catchments is a collegiate body comprising each chair of the ten Victorian CMA's and the Victorian Catchment Management Council.

It is designed to improve the state-wide delivery of the Our Catchments, Our Communities strategy for Victoria through a clear, consistent and accountable principles framework. It is also designed to improve coordination and engagement with the state-wide partners involved in ICM in Victoria.

Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Corporation Partnerships

The Authority is committed to involving Aboriginal people in our NRM activities in the region. We value the relationships that have been established by the Authority with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC), Moogji Aboriginal Council and the GKTOLMB.

Shared Services contracts

Contractual arrangements are in place with West Gippsland CMA underpinning the joint statutory unit established in 2005. The unit ensures both CMA's have the capacity and resources to provide this important service to the community.

A 3 year contract is in place with Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board for provision of staff and administration support for the board.

There are no other contractual arrangements between agency partners except those related to projects documented in service level agreements underpinning investment in the region.

2.6. NEW ARRANGEMENTS AND SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation Partnership Agreement

The Authority is working with partner agencies from across Gippsland, including Parks Victoria, EPA, DELWP, West Gippsland CMA, Sustainability Victoria, East Gippsland Water, Gippsland Water, East Gippsland Shire Council, Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board and Southern Rural Water to develop a combined partnership agreement with GLaWAC. The agreement will identify common objectives; actions to achieve the objectives, and outline the arrangements to implement and report on progress together.

The GLaWAC board has endorsed proceeding with the agreement for completion this calendar year.

Regional Floodplain Management Strategy

The regional floodplain management strategy will be completed this year. It will provide a single, regional planning document for floodplain management and a high level regional work program to guide future floodplain investment priorities. The strategy, in conjunction with similar strategies being developed by Melbourne Water and all other CMAs, will apply the policies, actions and accountabilities of the Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy at the regional and local level.

State of the Gippsland Lakes

The Authority will complete a new State of the Gippsland Lakes report this year. The report will provide a summary of the available data representing key environmental indicators across the Gippsland Lakes System. The indicators selected will be consistent with those used in the State of the Bays Report (for Port Phillip and Westernport Bays); however indicators specific to the Gippsland Lakes may also be included.

Diversity Planning

The Authority will develop an East Gippsland CMA Diversity plan, as part of a CMA state-wide initiative responding to the Our Catchments Our Communities and Water for Victoria Plan.

Climate Change Pledge

The Authority will work closely with all state-wide CMA's and East Gippsland Water on a plan to achieve a long term nil emissions target in line with the Water Plan for Victoria.

2.7. LINKS TO KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND POLICIES

There are a number of state-wide policies and frameworks that determine our planning approach. The Authority has ensured that its strategic direction aligns with the state-wide strategies such as:

- Water for Victoria
- Our Catchments, Our Communities
- Biodiversity Plan 2037
- Regional Riparian Action Plan
- Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy
- Victorian Waterway Management Strategy
- Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy

3. PART B: BUSINESS PLAN

3.1. RIVER HEALTH PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The East Gippsland Waterway Strategy was endorsed by the Victorian Government in 2014 and establishes a framework for community, industry and government to work in partnership to restore and manage our rivers over the long term.

The Authority has developed a series of waterway goals that summarise the management actions for the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy. The goals are for the term of the strategy and are reported in the annual report each year.

By 2022 we will have achieved the following waterway goals:
The Mitchell River catchment, above the Glenaladale bridge, will have an additional 50km of fencing constructed to exclude grazing stock; and will be free of willows.
The Nicholson River, from the headwaters to the lake, will be free of willows and excluded from grazing stock.
The Tambo river, below Ramrod Creek, will have an additional 40km of fencing constructed to exclude grazing stock; and the Tambo catchment above the Bruthen Bridge will remain free of willows.
The estuaries of the Nicholson and Tambo, below the Princes Highway, will be free of willows and poplars. The Mitchell estuary below Picnic Point will be stabilised; free of willows and poplars and excluded from grazing stock.
The Snowy catchment will remain free of willows and the freehold sections of the Buchan and Brodribb rivers will be excluded from grazing stock.
All rivers in the Far East Gippsland catchment (Bemm, Cann, Thurra, Wingan and Genoa) will be free of willows and excluded from grazing stock.
Five priority wetlands fringing the Gippsland Lakes or Snowy River will be excluded from grazing stock.

The Authority will continue to advance baseline data, measures and indicators for progress against these goals. This is a major undertaking involving extensive field monitoring and analysis which will be a component of implementing our MER plan.

3.2. ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We have a philosophy of putting community at the heart of our activities. To articulate our engagement philosophy and methods we have an approved Engagement Plan reviewed annually. The Authority has engagement responsibilities listed under the CaLP and Water Acts which are far exceeded at all levels of the organisation.

The Authority has adopted the Community Engagement and Partnerships Framework for Victoria's Catchment Management Authorities and the Aboriginal Engagement and Participation guidelines for CMA's. These frameworks have been fully incorporated into our Authority processes and plans.

The following principles underpin our approach to community engagement and the establishment and management of our partnerships. They reflect our focus on integrated catchment management through effective facilitation and coordination. Our CMA strategies, initiatives, programs and projects will all evidence these principles at work.

Community Engagement and Partnerships Framework guiding principles.

The Authority will -

- Embed community engagement and build partnerships in all that we do.
- Our people will be actively supported to engage communities and to build partnerships.
- Our community engagement and partnership approaches will be well planned, tailored, targeted, and evaluated.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for our communities and partners to contribute to strategies and initiatives.
- Work transparently and respectfully with our communities and partners, and establish clear roles and expectations.

Similar to our waterway goals (see 3.1 above) the Authority helps drive our staff work planning through the establishment and monitoring of engagement goals consistent with the above principles as follows:

We will achieve the following engagement goals: The Authority will -

- Increase community awareness & satisfaction.
- Conduct effective engagement activities.
- Increase participation with stakeholders.
- Manage enquiries promptly and accurately.
- Stimulate knowledge and attitude change.
- Identify key NRM issues to inform strategies.

The framework also establishes principles for measurement and review of our engagement processes which will be adopted by the Authority.

In this planning period the Authority will complete the following:

We will achieve the following review and monitoring outcomes: The Authority will -

- Have a Community Engagement and Partnerships **Plan** in place to drive and guide our work.
- Review our **practice and approach** to community engagement and partnerships as part of regular monitoring and reporting frameworks. A key undertaking is the continuous review of our community engagement database with a view to improving and refining data collection to better capture community sentiment on local NRM issues.
- Assess the **value and effectiveness** of our community engagement and partnerships.

Community Engagement Performance Measures

Performance Area	Performance Indicators	Targets
Establish open and transparent processes to engage the community in development and implementation of the Regional Catchment	Engagement plan reviewed and implemented	By 30 th December annually

Performance Area	Performance Indicators	Targets
Strategy and supporting plans		
Maintain standing community engagement structures to develop and review implementation of strategies and action plans	Standing Engagement structures reviewed for effectiveness	By 30 th December annually

3.3. BOARD APPROVED PROJECTS

East Gippsland Priority Waterways

The Water plan for Victoria re-confirmed the major priority waterways for East Gippsland as lower Cann river, Lower Mitchell river and Gippsland Lakes and rivers.

The authority is assisting the state-wide trial of a new approach to setting, reporting and achieving river restoration targets. The trial is designed to help demonstrate to governments and community the tasks and cost behind successful river restoration work. The approach covers the “whole of life” cycle of river restoration works, from planning, implementation and long term maintenance and monitoring of river health improvement. The Authority will continue to work with the State this year in developing the trial on the Cann River along with communication and engagement tools such as the development of a website.

Regional Leaders Forum – Shared Services Project

This project is a collaborative exercise, sponsored by the East Gippsland CEOs and MD’s Group, to identify potential sharing of services across East Gippsland. Potential areas of opportunity include human resource management, procurement, communications and engagement and asset management. To date the Authority has actively participated in this project and is leading the communications and engagement working group.

Tambo River Options Analysis

This project will provide options for the future management of the Tambo River and adjoining floodplain and wetlands. The project will involve the community and other stakeholders in the development of the management options. The options will be presented as prioritised, and provide a clear direction on the management action, the related outcome and the rationale for the action.

Lower Mitchell River Rehabilitation Plan

The lower Mitchell river is one of the 36 priority waterway reaches in the Water for Victoria plan. The Authority is in the planning stage of this project. The rehabilitation plan for the Mitchell River will inform and guide the Authority’s management actions. The plan will identify actions that will assist landholders to minimise the impact of over bank flows on agricultural production. The plan will also identify management actions and the prioritised order to best improve river condition.

Board RCS planning

The board has reviewed the existing RCS and has begun preparations for the next RCS due in 2019. A process of determining priority areas and discussing priorities with stakeholders has begun. This will give the Authority a two year lead time necessary to ensure involvement of many people in our community.

3.4. STATE FUNDED PROGRAMS

Water Program

All works in the program will deliver targets in the Water for Victoria plan, the Regional Riparian Action plan, the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy and align with the Authority's Waterway Goals.

Rehabilitation of priority waterways (as outlined in the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy) is still one of the highest priorities for the Authority. Rehabilitation projects include working with the community to undertake onground works, including fencing, revegetation, woody weed and non woody weed control. The Authority is currently undertaking rehabilitation works on the Wonnangatta, Dargo, Lower Mitchell, Tambo, Buchan, Lower Snowy, Combienbar and Cann Rivers. The other high priority for the Authority is controlling willows in the upper sections of the Mitchell and Tambo catchments and across all of the Snowy and Far East catchments.

Landcare Program

State funding for 2017/18 supports Victorian Landcare Grants (VLG) and the Regional Landcare Coordinator. The Regional Landcare Coordinator will continue to focus on implementing the East Gippsland Regional Landcare Support Plan. VLG projects will be delivered by Landcare Groups and Networks and other eligible organisations. The Authority will complete the coordination and oversight role through the implementation and reporting phase of these projects.

Our Catchments, Our Communities

The two major projects the Authority is implementing through the Our Catchments, Our Communities funding is the Tambo Valley and the Red Gum Plains. These projects are part of the implementation of the East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy.

The Tambo Valley project will bring together community and partner agencies to improve the health of the Tambo River, agricultural productivity and social connections. This will be achieved by supporting landholders, community, traditional owners and partner agencies to work together to prioritise areas and undertake onground works, primarily weed control.

The Red Gum Plains is a major priority program area within the East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy. This project is concentrating effort in priority areas across multiple partner agencies, traditional owners, community groups and landholders to improve efficiencies and effort.

Gippsland Lakes

Sixteen Gippsland Lakes projects to the value of \$3.15M have to date been funded by the state government Water for Victoria plan. These projects will be delivered by partner agencies to improve the health of the Lakes. In addition, \$500,000 of Gippsland Lakes funding has been allocated to community grants. The funding is available for community groups to undertake onground works that align with the delivery of the Gippsland Lakes Priorities Plan.

Further recommendations for the remainder of the Gippsland Lakes funding will be put to the Minister for Water by the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee in this coming year.

East Gippsland Region Outputs for 2017/18

Output	Output type	Unit of Measure	No.
Approval and advice	Advice	No.	192
Approval and advice	Referral response	No.	150
Approval and advice	Permit	No.	20
Assessment	Ecological	No.	1
Assessment	Fauna	No.	15
Assessment	Invasive Species	No.	50
Assessment	Property	No.	14
Assessment	Social	No.	2
Assessment	Surface Water	No.	41
Earthworks	Armouring	Km	1.5
Engagement Event	Conference	No. of participants	150
Engagement Event	Field Day	No. of participants	57
Engagement Event	Meeting	No. of participants	530
Engagement Event	Presentation	No. of participants	280
Engagement Event	Training	No. of participants	1
Engagement Event	Workshop	No. of participants	85
Fencing	Fence	Km	19
Grazing	Riparian	Ha.	30
Information Mgt System	Database	No.	1
Management Agreement	Binding perpetual	No.	11
Monitoring Structure	Measuring Point	No.	4
Partnership	Agencies/Corporate	No.	96
Partnership	Community Groups	No.	43
Partnership	Mixed	No.	4
Partnership	Written	No.	2
Plan	Engagement	No.	1
Plan	Management	No.	6
Plan	Strategy	No.	1
Publication	Audio	No.	2
Publication	Visual	No.	5
Publication	Online / printed	No.	70
Vegetation	Native Indigenous	Ha	207
Water Storage	Tank	No.	1
Water Storage	Trough	No.	3
Weed control	Non Woody	Ha.	1557
Weed control	Woody	Ha.	600

3.5. COMMONWEALTH FUNDED PROGRAMS

Based on current project proposals, the deliverables for 2017/18 for all projects combined are expressed in the table below (in which NLP activities have been converted to their equivalent DELWP Outputs).

Output	Output Type	Unit of measure	No.
Assessment	Fauna	No. of assessments	4
Assessment	Flora	No. of assessments	27
Assessment	Invasive species	No. of assessments	19
Agricultural practice change	Management	No. of farmers	61
Engagement event	Various	No. of events	45
Engagement event	Training	No. of events	10
Engagement event	Meeting	No. of events	7
Fence	Fence	Length (km)	5
Fire regime	n/a	Area fire regime altered (ha)	2
Partnership	Community	No. of partnerships	8
Pest animal control	Terrestrial	Area treated (ha)	141415
Vegetation	Native indigenous	Area (ha)	48
Weed control	Woody and Non Woody	Area treated (ha)	888
Community group publicity materials	Indigenous community	No.	2
Management agreements	Binding non perpetual	No. establish	5
Management agreements	Binding perpetual	No. establish	6
Waterway structure	Flow regulator	No. modify	1

3.6. RISK ASSESSMENT – PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Program Risk	Risk Impact	Controls
Poor weather conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halts or prevents on ground works program • Halts or prevents partner's projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board reporting • Regular updating and reporting to investors • Capacity to vary the program and change deliverables or location.
Lack of landholder cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slows down program • Causes program to halt • Negative communication between landholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each project plan has a specific engagement plan • Regular communication with landholders during project • Arrangement is governed by a formal agreement.

Lack of capacity of agency partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slows down or halts program • Outputs may not be achieved • Value for money not achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in bid preparation • Relationship management and knowledge of partner activity levels • Monitoring of projects • Regular reporting by agency during the year.
Climatic events – fire, flood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to program (major & minor) • May cause program priorities to change • OH&S risks during events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular communication with investors around program impacts • Flood protocol is followed during the event • OH&S policy and procedures adhered to in all events.

3.7. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following tables reflect the performance measures set by the Minister from which we will account each year on our progress in meeting responsibilities set by the State Government.

Performance Area	Performance target	Achievement commentary
Business management and governance	Submit annually, a board performance assessment report according to any guidelines issued.	<p><i>State if the report complied with any guidelines issued</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>If the report did not comply to any guidelines issued, explain the reason/s.</i></p>
	A risk management strategy / plan approved by the Board and being implemented.	<p><i>State if the strategy /The risk management plan is approved by the board and being implemented</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>If the strategy / plan is not approved by the Board and being implemented, explain the reason/s.</i></p>
	One hundred per cent of the CMA's policies and procedures reviewed every three financial years.	<p><i>State the percentage of policies and procedures reviewed during the prior three financial years</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>If less than 100 per cent, state the percentage achieved and explain the reason/s why 100 per cent was not achieved.</i></p>
	Full compliance with all applicable Standing Directions under the Financial Management Compliance Framework Checklist.	<p><i>State if full compliance was achieved</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>If full compliance was not achieved, state which direction requirement/s were not complied with and explain the reason/s for non-compliance.</i></p>

Performance Area	Performance target	Achievement commentary
Regional planning and coordination	A regional catchment strategy (RCS) approved by the minister.	<i>Describe the status of the RCS at the end of the last financial year</i>
	A stakeholder and community engagement framework / plan approved by the Board.	<i>Describe the status of the framework / plan at the end of the last financial year.</i>
	A regional Landcare support plan approved by the Board.	<i>Describe the status of the plan at the end of the last financial year.</i>
	A regional waterways strategy approved by the minister.	<i>Describe the status of the strategy at the end of the last financial year.</i>
	A regional floodplain strategy approved by the Board.	<i>Describe the status of the strategy at the end of the last financial year.</i>
	Land and water management plans (LWMP) in designated irrigation areas (or equivalent) approved by the Board.	<i>Describe the status of the LWMP at the end of the last financial year.</i>
	The regional contribution to the annual report on salinity management activities and the allocation and update of salt disposal entitlements is submitted to the department by 31 July or as otherwise directed by the department.	<i>State the date when the regional contribution was submitted OR If the regional contribution was not submitted by 31 July or as otherwise directed, state the date when the regional contribution was submitted and explain the reason/s for late submission.</i>
Regional delivery	Progress with implementation of the RCS (and its major sub-strategies) is reviewed by the Board annually.	<i>State if progress on implementation was reviewed by the Board by the end of the last financial year OR If the progress on implementation was not reviewed by the Board, explain the reason/s.</i>
	Projects / activities to implement the RCS are delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.	<i>State if the projects / activities were delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements OR If the projects / activities were not delivered and reported according to the funding agreements, explain the reason/s.</i>
	Projects / activities to implement the regional waterways strategy and the regional floodplain management strategy delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.	<i>State if the projects / activities were implemented and reported according to associated funding agreements OR If the projects / activities were not delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements, explain the reason/s.</i>
	Projects / activities to implement the LWMP are delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.	<i>State if the projects / activities were implemented and reported according to associated funding agreements OR If the projects / activities were not delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements, explain the reason/s.</i>

Performance Area	Performance target	Achievement commentary
Statutory functions under Part 10 of the Water Act	Ninety per cent of statutory requirements (permits, referrals, advice and licences) associated with waterway and floodplain management are responded to within the prescribed period.	<p><i>State the percentage of responses that were within the prescribed period</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>If the percentage of responses within the prescribed period was less than 90 per cent, explain the reason/s</i></p> <p><i>AND</i></p> <p><i>Identify if waterways and / or floodplain related responses were affected.</i></p>
Statutory functions under Part 11 of the Water Act	Ninety per cent of statutory requirements (permits, referrals, advice and licences) associated irrigation management are responded to within the prescribed period.	<p><i>State the percentage of responses that were within the prescribed period</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>If the percentage of responses within the prescribed period was less than 90 per cent, explain the reason/s.</i></p>

4. PART C(1): FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ACCOMPANYING NOTES

All financial statements prepared for the Corporate Plan are from accounts kept on a basis consistent with the *Financial Management Act 1994* and comply with Australian Accounting Standards.

4.1. ASSUMPTIONS UNDERPINNING FINANCIALS

- State and federal government policy continues to support the funding of natural resource management projects. State and federal funding has been indexed at the rate of 2.5% per annum except in circumstances where details of forward funding amounts have been received by the Authority
- The State Government continues to provide adequate resources to enable the Authority to fulfil statutory obligations and corporate responsibilities
- Expenditure, including salaries and wages, has been increased year on year by a forecast CPI of 2.5%.

4.2. CORPORATE OVERHEADS ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS

The cost of operating and maintaining the plant, equipment and vehicles owned by the Authority is planned to be \$221k for the 2017/18 year.

The open door cost of operating the Authority is planned to be \$596k for the 2017/18 year. This cost includes occupancy, IT support, printing, telephones, training and depreciation of information technology and office equipment.

The key cost driver for incurring plant and vehicle overhead is the employment of people to manage the affairs of the Authority and deliver the projects we are funded for. Open door costs are variable but more stable in nature than project costs. The Authority works with key partners to control costs through areas such as shared occupancy arrangements and information management platforms and utilising partner capabilities in areas such as Water Act statutory functions and corporate communications.

The financial objectives of open door and plant cost recovery are twofold; to fully recover the Authority's actual costs against current projects, and, to ensure that the method of allocation fairly distributes costs to individual projects based on how they are incurred.

The most appropriate method is the allocation of overheads to projects based on a standard dollar amount per full time equivalent (FTE) employee. In the case of vehicles, a role based in the office using a pool car will be different to a role in the field with an allocated vehicle. As the Authority has a plan to employ 22.12 FTEs over 2017/18, on average each FTE will cost the organisation \$26,943 in open door costs and \$9,990 in vehicle and plant expenses.

By following this principle through, an FTE employed to deliver a single project will allocate all their time to, and thus incur open door and plant costs against that project. As a result this project will bear its appropriate share of the Authority's total costs. In the case of an employee who contributes to the delivery of multiple projects the varied allocation of their time will result in their total plant and open door cost being spread appropriately across these projects.

The Authority plans to utilise 5% of State funded water program projects to provide sufficient resources to fund our engagement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting obligations. The Authority is committed to the State-wide Reporting framework and our participation will require funding.

4.3. PROJECT COSTING PRINCIPLES

The Authority project costing principles include:

- Maintaining transparency within our costing model
- keeping overhead costs to a minimum
- nominating staff hours required by the project
- allocating specific staff to the project
- multiplying individual staff costs per hour including salaries and overheads (as described above)
- allocating contractors from the Authority's approved panel at agreed rates
- paying incentives to partners with agreed deliverables via service level agreements
- identifying and costing other direct project costs including MER.

4.4. CORPORATE ALLOCATION

The Authority will receive \$987k in the 2017/18 year for the following governance and management functions:

- The Board
- Sub Committees & Reference Groups
- The CEO and Support
- Corporate Services
- Corporate Communications.

The functions funded by the corporate allocation are essential to the sound governance, management, administration and financial control of the organisation. Many of the activities undertaken within these functions fulfil the expectations of the Authority under the Statement of Obligations.

4.5. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The Authority plans to spend \$50k on capital items in 2017/18.

5. PART C(2): FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2017/2018

Planned Authority Programs

\$'000

Corporate & Statutory Operations	Income				Proposed Expenditure
	State	Commonwealth	Other	Total	
Governance & Executive	937			937	937
Interest			162	162	
Other			0	0	439
Sub-total (1)	937	0	162	1,099	1,376
VIF/RCS Programs					
Far East Basin	281			281	281
Tambo Nicholson Basin	565			565	565
Mitchell basin	1,263			1,263	1,493
Snowy Basin	1,147			1,147	1,147
National Landcare Program		1,828		1,828	1,828
Gippsland Lakes	2,500			2,500	3,939
Gunaikurnai TOLMB			540	540	540
Region Wide	2,403			2,403	2,636
Sub-total (2)	8,159	1,828	540	10,528	12,430
Total	9,097	1,828	702	11,627	13,806

Operating Statement

\$'000

		2017/18 Forecast	2018/19 Forecast	2019/20 Forecast
Revenue				
Local				
	Interest	162	162	162
	Other	540	540	553
Grants				
	State	9,097	7,285	7,180
	Commonwealth	1,828	1,463	1,463
Total Revenue		11,627	9,449	9,358
Expenditure				
Labour		2,529	2,279	2,336
Overheads		776	790	810
Depreciation		123	116	110
Authority Projects		4,535	2,591	2,483
Partner Projects		5,843	4,038	4,038
Total Expenditure		13,806	9,814	9,778
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)		(2,179)	(365)	(420)

Cash Flow Statement

\$'000

		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
		Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Revenue				
Local				
	Interest	162	162	162
	Other	540	540	553
Grants				
	State	9,028	7,485	7,180
	Commonwealth	1,828	1,463	1,463
Total inflows		11,558	9,649	9,358
Expenditure				
Labour		2,529	2,279	2,336
Overheads		776	790	810
Authority Projects		4,535	2,591	2,483
Partner Projects		5,843	4,038	4,038
Net Capital Outflow		50	50	50
Total outflows		13,733	9,748	9,717
Net inflow (outflow)		(2,176)	(99)	(359)
Cash and cash equivalents and term deposits at the beginning of the financial		7,290	5,114	5,015
Cash and cash equivalents and term deposits at the end of the financial year		5,114	5,015	4,655

Balance Sheet

\$'000

Assets	2017/18 Forecast	2018/19 Forecast	2019/20 Forecast
Current			
Cash and cash equivalents	5,114	5,015	4,655
Receivables & Prepayments	751	619	686
Total Current	5,865	5,634	5,341
Non-Current			
Fixed Assets @ Fair Value	934	819	709
Total Non-Current	934	819	709
Total Assets	6,800	6,452	6,050
Liabilities			
Current			
Creditors & Accruals	144	144	144
Employee Provisions	515	531	547
Total-Current	660	675	691
Non-Current			
Provisions	32	34	35
Total Non Current	32	34	35
Total Liabilities	691	709	726
Net Assets	6,108	5,744	5,324
Equity			
Contributed Capital	6,987	6,987	6,987
Reserves	842	842	842
Accumulated Funds at beginning of Year	458	(1,722)	(2,086)
Net Result for the Period	(2,179)	(365)	(420)
Total Equity	6,108	5,744	5,324

6. PART C(3): COST RECOVERY

Nil

7. ACRONYMS

CaLP Act	Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFOC	Caring For Our Country
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning
EGWS	East Gippsland Waterway Strategy
Engagement Plan	Engagement Plan 2016/17
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
GLaWAC	Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
GLCC	Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee
GSERP	Government Sector on Executive Remuneration Panel
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting
NLP	National Landcare Program
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
PV	Parks Victoria
PWGs	Program Working Groups
PIRS	Project Information & Retrieval System
RCS	Regional Catchment Strategy
TFN	Trust for Nature