

# Western Coastal Board Annual Report 2016-17



Environment,  
Land, Water  
and Planning

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## The western coastal region

Victoria's western coastal region extends for 476 kilometres from Breamlea to the South Australian border and includes the municipalities of Surf Coast, Colac Otway, Corangamite, Moyne, Glenelg, and the City of Warrnambool. The west coast features iconic attractions such as the Great Ocean Road, the Twelve Apostles and Bells Beach. Major coastal centres include Portland, Warrnambool and Torquay, and smaller villages and settlements include Port Fairy, Apollo Bay, Lorne and Port Campbell. The increasing popularity of the Victorian coast has seen significant increases in both residential and holiday populations of towns, with many people becoming aware of the special values of the western coastal region.

## Operation of the Board

The following members were appointed to the Western Coastal Board (WCB) on 22 September 2015 until 30 June 2018:

- Cr. Jill Parker – Chair
- Mark Edmonds
- Kim Irons
- Oliver Moles
- Raymond Page
- Alex Rankin
- Carole Reid
- Glenn Wallace

The Board held six meetings over the year.

The Board expended \$31,581 of its \$35,000 operating budget. This was in addition to its staff resources – a Program Manager, Project Officer, and a shared Partnership Manager for the Victorian Coastal Council and Regional Coastal Boards (RCBs). The trust account balance is \$66,910.

Visit [wcb.vic.gov.au](http://wcb.vic.gov.au) to view Board member profiles and a map of the western coastal region.

## Key projects

### WCB business plan progression

The Board's three-year business plan outlines activities that will be undertaken throughout the term of the Board to implement the Western Regional Coastal Plan (WRCP), key legislative responsibilities, and actions allocated to the Board in the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014 (VCS). The business plan identifies six priorities, key actions and outcomes with timeframes until 30 June 2018.

### The priorities

#### 1. A regional approach to coastal planning and management

A key action for the Board under this priority is to ensure there are current coastal management plans (CMPs) in place throughout the region. The Board has actively promoted the benefits of CMPs and the use of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (DELWP) *Draft Guidelines for the preparation of Coastal Management Plans*, for example, in encouraging community contribution to the development of the Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan.

In its role to support the incorporation of cultural heritage and traditional owner input into coastal and catchment planning tools and management agreements, and efforts to work with Traditional Owners in preparing multi park plans that include coastal areas, the Board has continued to actively engage with Traditional Owners. The Board worked with DELWP's Aboriginal Inclusion Coordinator (Barwon South West region) to ensure Aboriginal groups in the region are correctly represented in the WCB Communications Plan. Aboriginal Corporations were invited to participate in the WRCP implementation plan workshop. Furthermore, the Board was lucky enough to have Gunditjmara elder Aunty Eileen Alberts take them on a tour of the Tyrendarra Indigenous Protected Area as part of its March meeting held in Port Fairy, and to have Eastern Maar citizen Brett Clarke perform a Welcome to Country and give an overview of local Aboriginal cultural heritage at its May meeting held in Lorne.



*The WCB and Aunty Eileen Alberts at Tyrendarra Indigenous Protected Area, March 2017*

## 2. Managing and protecting coastal values

The Board has worked with partners to share information and participate in events to build regional capacity, collaboration and resourcing. The Board has regularly represented at the Glenelg Hopkins Coastal and Marine Working Group, which meets quarterly to share information and collaborate with relevant land managers and other partners regarding coastal and marine planning. In October, the Board assisted with the Marine and Coastal Act (MACA) practitioner and public workshops held in Portland, Warrnambool and Torquay, and in February, it hosted DELWP's *Coastal protection assets program* information sessions held in Warrnambool and Torquay which was attended by many of the Board's key stakeholders as well as members of the public.

## 3. Communities supported to care for the coast

The Board has promoted, acknowledged and supported the work done by local coastal and marine community groups. For example, the Summer by the Sea program was promoted in the December and March issues of the WCB stakeholder newsletter. The Board also uses its [@WCBVictoria](#) Twitter account to rapidly promote items of interest to its stakeholders, for example, retweeting the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee's thank you to the thousands of students who volunteer on the coast each year.

## 4. Managing regional population and tourism pressures

The Victorian Coastal Strategy recognises the need for strategic planning to address how increasing tourism and visitor use will be experienced and managed along the coast. The Western, Central and Gippsland regional coastal plans similarly include actions to develop a visitation levels of service framework. The three coastal boards are currently investigating options to develop such a framework

that can be applied across Victoria's coastal and marine areas. The purpose of this framework is likely to be to: identify where visitation on the coast can be encouraged and where access may need to be managed or even reduced to protect fragile coastal and marine areas.

Some background research and a report have been prepared by GeoDimensions to inform the scope for this project. The report suggests it is important to rank and map priorities for conservation, risk and recreation supply and demand. Statewide mapping of coastal and marine assets and a second pass coastal risk (impact) assessment are currently being undertaken through DELWP's Iconic Beaches Monitoring Program. This information will be made available via the DELWP website in late 2017.

The current major gap in information relates to recreation supply and demand. Hence, the focus over the next 12 months is likely to be bringing together data on the visitor experience and developing a levels of service approach, mapping visitor sites, areas, journeys and waterway destinations. Many lessons can be learned from Parks Victoria's Visitor Experience Framework which applies to all Parks Victoria managed areas.

## 5. Adapting to climate change and increased coastal hazards

The Board has supported local adaptation initiatives and promoted best practice responses to coastal climate change impacts. The Board's Chair attended the [CoastAdapt](#) Tool Launch Workshop in Warrnambool in October, and promoted this information delivery and decision support tool via its website, stakeholder newsletter and Twitter account. The Board also promoted Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020 on the WCB website.

## 6. Policy and operations

The Board has developed an implementation plan for the WRCP, using the feedback provided by partner agencies in a facilitated workshop held at Camperdown in August 2016. Building on the success of this workshop, another is scheduled for July 2017 as an opportunity for partner agencies to report on progress against each action.

The Board has also provided and facilitated input to key legislation, with its submission to the MACA Consultation Paper, involvement in the MACA practitioner and public workshops in Portland, Warrnambool and Torquay, and participation in a Ministerial Roundtable with the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change in March. Other Board submissions included:

- Glenelg Shire Council, Amendment C86 to the Glenelg Planning Scheme (use of land for

livestock assembly depot at Cape Nelson Road, Portland), 11 July 2016

- Glenelg Shire Council, Planning permit application P16005 (use and development of land for a clay target shooting range at Plantation Road, Nelson), 14 July 2016
- Corangamite Shire Council, Planning permit application PP2016/126 (integrated eco-tourism facility at Old Coach Road Princetown), 25 November 2016
- Parks Victoria, Strengthening Parks Victoria, October 2016
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, Safe and Accessible Victorian Waterways Discussion Paper, 14 December 2016.

A statutory five-year review of the Western Victorian Boating Coastal Action Plan (BCAP) is a priority to be addressed by the Board in the next financial year, with a working group to be established. The review will address how the BCAP has been implemented, what the outcomes were, the successes and failures of the BCAP, and what unforeseen issues or impacts have arisen over the life of the BCAP. The Board will also progress the sun-setting of outdated Coastal Action Plans (CAPs) in the next financial year.

The Board has consistently updated the Victorian Coastal Council (VCC) on its activities at VCC meetings. The Board has also completed an internal Communications Plan and all members have adopted the DELWP model policies and guidelines for good governance, including completion of an annual performance assessment survey.

## Implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014

The WRCP addresses the actions assigned to the Regional Coastal Boards (RCBs) in the VCS 2014. In the VCS Implementation Plan, it is noted that the RCB action to incorporate information about wetlands and estuaries, including significant environmental, social, cultural and economic values, is addressed in *The Victorian Waterway Management Strategy*. It also clarifies that water quality hotspots have been identified in RCPs and will be further identified through State Environment Protection Policies (SEPP).

## Implementation of Regional Coastal Plans/Coastal Action Plans

In August 2016, the Board hosted an implementation plan workshop in Camperdown which was well attended by partner agencies. Actions in the WRCP were prioritised, and strategies to achieve each action were developed. Feedback was given on actions already underway. From this, an implementation plan was developed, with another partner workshop scheduled for July 2017. Progress in implementing the WRCP has been considered in the Key Projects section, under [WCB business plan progression](#).

**Table: Coastal Action Plans current during 2016-17**

CAP	CAP status
Western Regional Coastal Plan 2015-2020	Released 2015, mid-term review due 2018
Western Victoria Boating CAP (2010)	Interim review 2013. Full review required.
Central West Victoria Estuaries CAP (2005)	
South West Victoria Estuaries CAP (2002)	
Glenelg Shire CAP (2004)	Statutory five-year review of all CAPs undertaken in June 2012
Skenes Creek to Marengo CAP (2002)	
Moyne Shire CAP (2001)	
Warrnambool CAP (1999)	
Anglesea CAP (1999)	
Lorne CAP (1998)	

## Working with stakeholders

The Board assisted with the Marine and Coastal Act (MACA) Consultation Paper practitioner and public workshops held in Portland, Warrnambool and Torquay, and hosted the Warrnambool and Torquay information sessions on DELWP's new *Statewide Protection of Victoria's Iconic Beaches and Coastline Program*. These workshops were well attended by the Board's stakeholders from local government, committees of management, Parks Victoria, as well as members of the community.

The Board has regularly communicated to its stakeholders via its quarterly stakeholder newsletter, its website, and its Twitter account. It has continued membership of the Glenelg Hopkins Coastal and Marine Working Group.

Presentations received by the Board include:

- Scott Crabtree, Statewide Leader Visitor Experiences, Parks Victoria – *Visitor Experience Framework* (Geelong, 18 November 2016)
- Darren James, Statewide Coastal and Maritime Leader, DELWP - the new *Statewide Protection of Victoria's Iconic Beaches and Coastline Program* (Geelong, 18 November 2016)
- Aunty Eileen Alberts, Gunditjmara Elder, Budj Bim Tours – guided tour of Tyrendarra Indigenous Protected Area (as part of Port Fairy board meeting, 17 March 2017).

As part of its joint meeting with the Victorian Coastal Council on 18 May in Lorne, the Board also received presentations from:

- Lisa Dundas, Shipwreck Coast Program Manager, Parks Victoria – *Shipwreck Coast Master Plan*
- Brett Clarke, Eastern Maar citizen, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation – Welcome to Country and presentation on local Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Christopher Patterson, Aboriginal Inclusion Coordinator, DELWP – *Aboriginal Inclusion Plan*
- Wayne Perrett, Senior Project Engineer Great Ocean Road Update Project, VicRoads and Bob Osborne, Communications and Stakeholder Relations Officer, VicRoads - Great Ocean Road Update Project (presented at field trip to Separation Creek and Wye River).



*The WCB, Victorian Coastal Council and VicRoads at Separation Creek, May 2017*

Board attendance at conferences and seminars include:

- Coast to Coast Conference 2016, Melbourne, featuring a presentation by WCB member Oliver Moles in his capacity as Director Sustainable Development at Moyne Shire Council, entitled *Coastal Hazard and Sea Level Rise – The Clock is Ticking*
- NCCARF CoastAdapt Tool Launch Workshop, Warrnambool
- Southern Rural Water Board meeting
- Victorian Aboriginal Heritage meeting
- Ministerial Roundtable with the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change (MACA discussion).

DELWP provided briefings on key issues at all Board meetings and regular updates on regional coastal activities. This included details on the new *Statewide Protection of Victoria's Iconic Beaches and Coastline Program*, as well as updates from the Land Planning and Approvals team on coastal management and environmental protection, cultural heritage, capacity building and community engagement, Coastcare, committees of management and coastal management act consents.

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