



VIC CATCHMENTS

A Collaboration of CMAs

Vic Catchments Forum Charter

INTRODUCTION

The Victorian CMA chairs and boards are appointed by the government under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act) as community leaders of the 10 regional CMA's.

The regional boards report to the Minister for Water and have very strong connections to multiple portfolios including environment, agricultural, climate change, planning. The boards have agreed to form the Vic Catchments forum (the forum).

Vic Catchments is based on collegiate agreement between the 10 regional CMA's to represent Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) at the state level.

Each CMA Chair is a representative at the forum.

The Charter describes:

- The background, purpose and role of the forum.
- The roles and responsibilities of the chairperson, forum members, executive, and sub committees.

PURPOSE

Consistent with the letter of expectations issued by the Minister to each CMA the purpose of Vic Catchments is to work collectively to strengthen collaboration and performance in the catchment management sector in Victoria.

FORUM REVIEW

The forum will be reviewed every three years.

FORUM ROLE

The forum is accountable to the 10 Victorian CMAs for its performance at a state-wide level. It is not a hierarchical structure, but a collegiate body designed to demonstrate and provide representation of ICM principles at a high level.

The forum's responsibilities include:

- Setting the strategic goals by completing a Strategic Plan which is to be reviewed on an as needs basis or at least every four years.
- Building relationships with Ministers, departments and partner bodies.
- Showcasing ICM.
- Supporting NRM Regions Australia from a Victorian perspective.
- Appointing the Executive Officer (EO), setting EO remuneration, assessing EO performance annually and providing for EO succession.
- Ensuring resources are available to achieve these goals.
- Reviewing the performance of the forum tri-ennially.

FORUM STRATEGIC AIMS

The forum seeks to increase the level of state-wide influence and confidence in the principles of ICM. In doing so the forum will prepare, implement and review a strategic plan.

The forum will present the CMA's as a collegiate body of statutory agencies that operates in a manner that reflects government policy.

The forum messaging will also highlight that the local scale of CMAs is critical for coordination of environmental programs and working with local communities.

THE ROLES OF THE FORUM CHAIRPERSON, FORUM MEMBERS AND EXECUTIVE

ROLE OF CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson is appointed by the forum members through a majority vote for a term of no more than two years, based on the skills required to complete the chairperson role. A Deputy Chairperson will also be appointed. The chairperson's and deputy's authority extends only to those matters that are agreed prior by the forum members.

The Chair's time requirements and tasks are as follows:

- Up to 12 days of additional work per year.
- Chair meetings of the forum and set agendas in a consultative manner with the executive committee.
- Foster and maintain good relationships with the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Minister for Water and with other key stakeholders
- Assist individual members to understand their role, responsibilities and accountabilities and assist with their involvement in the forum.
- Provide induction/ guidance to new members and the Deputy Chair when required.

Sitting fees and travel re-imbusement as per government policy will be provided to the Chair.

ROLE OF FORUM MEMBERS

Forum members are comprised of the Chairs of each of the ten CMA's. The Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC) Chair, Vic Catchments Executive Officer, CMA CEO's and DELWP representatives are ex-officio forum members without voting rights, but are expected to fully participate in meeting discussions.

Each member assumes responsibility for:

- Ensuring the highest principles and standards are demonstrated in showcasing ICM.
- Ensuring each CMA contributes to the objectives and performance targets reporting and evaluation of the forum.
- Contributing to development and implementation of the forum's strategic aims

FORUM SUB COMMITTEES

The forum may establish sub committees for specific purposes. The use of sub committees will provide opportunity for broader involvement by members on specific matters. Sub committees will be formed from forum members or delegates with specific expertise and must have written terms of reference approved by the forum. Formal minutes of each committee meeting will be prepared and circulated to each of the forum members together with a list of recommendations and/or other matters and issues for the

consideration of the full forum meeting.

Executive

The Forum will appoint an executive subcommittee with representation comprising a minimum of the forum Chair, Deputy Chair, the Executive Officer, the Chair of the CEOs group, the VCMC chair and DELWP Executive Director Catchments, Waterways, Cities and Towns. The Executive will prepare the forum agenda and maintain relationships as appropriate outside forum meetings.

CHAIRS AND CEOS MEETINGS

The Chairs and CEOs may run separate meetings. These meetings may inform Vic Catchment. Separate terms of reference will apply.

ROLE OF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (EO)

The EO is responsible for the day-to-day management of the affairs of the forum in accordance with this charter and direction from the forum. A Position Description will be developed to outline the roles and responsibilities of the EO.

ANNUAL FORUM CALENDAR

The forum will adopt a rolling twelve-month calendar. The calendar will include all regular forum meetings and major activities scheduled. Unless otherwise agreed, the forum will meet quarterly.

FORUM MEETINGS

The forum meetings are the main opportunity for members to:

- Obtain and exchange information with the executive team.
- Obtain and exchange information with each other.
- Make decisions.

Meeting Quorum

Half of the forum members are required to be present to constitute a quorum.

Setting the Agenda

The Chairperson sets forum agendas in conjunction with the Executive and members. An agenda will be prepared for each forum and subcommittee meeting and forwarded to members one week in advance. The EO is responsible for the preparation and circulation of agendas and forum papers.

Conduct of Meeting

The Chairperson will determine the degree of formality required at each meeting. As such, the Chairperson will:

- Ensure that all members are heard
- Retain sufficient control to ensure that the authority of the Chairperson is recognised (This may require a degree of formality to be reintroduced when it is required to make progress)
- Take care that the decisions are properly understood
- Ensure that an agreed, minuted resolution records the conclusion of the decisions and debate.

Meeting Minutes and Records

Minutes will record all decisions made. The forum maintains a record of minutes, submissions and papers and of other material presented. This material is accessible to non-forum members only with the agreement of the Chairperson. It is the responsibility of CMA Chairs to provide their Boards with briefings of meetings.

Handling conflicts of interest

Forum members must take all reasonable steps to avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest with the forum.

The forum is structured to represent CMA's at a state-wide level. At times state-wide level decisions could present a conflict with a regional CMA position. Forum members will be required to declare conflicts of this nature where they occur. The forum will discuss and decide how conflicts will be managed and document the decision in meeting minutes.

FORUM PERFORMANCE

The forum reviews and evaluates its own performance and the performance of its committees on a tri-ennial basis.

FORUM MEMBER INDUCTIONS

On appointment, forum members are given an induction covering what is expected of them as regards to committing time to forum activities, being a member of committees and participating in their activities.

FORUM BUDGET

The CEO's forum will manage the forum budget. The CEO's forum will provide a report on the forum budget at each forum meeting.

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