



Communique 13
December 2020

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Message from the Chair

Victoria is certainly looking to move forward as we continue with no new coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and all of the known cases recovering. Well done to our amazing CEOs and staff for their ongoing efforts.



While there have been challenges our CMAs have kept our people safe whilst delivering on the ground. This was made easier with the support from the Victorian Government through the Working for Victoria employment program. We been able to use the crews to achieve work that was unable to be done by volunteers because of COVID restrictions.

It is almost a year since we experienced the devastating bushfires particularly in the east of the state. COVID-19 may have distracted some of us from the fact that these communities are still recovering from the fires. The relevant CMAs are continuing to roll out on-ground recovery efforts with the community and other government agencies. We hope that this summer is milder and a time for family and friends to gather safely again.

Vic Catchments met on November 27. Despite the restrictions we are continuing to form relationships and progress our strategic planning. This edition includes some key outcomes of our meeting and other recent activities. All going well, we hope to meet face-to-face at our February 2021 meeting in regional Victoria.

In closing I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy festive season and thank all the CMAs and partners for their hard work throughout a most challenging period.

Stay safe and have fun.

Sharyon Peart

Vic Catchments meeting November 27

A highlight of our meeting was signing off on our new strategic plan. The Strategic Plan has three themes:

- partnerships and collaborations;
- marketing and promotion; and
- a stronger industry.

Each theme includes outcomes and focus areas. Our Executive Officer and CEOs will now work on a revised action plan aligned to the Strategic Plan.

We are continually grateful for the honest and timely updates from the DELWP Executive. We received an update on the upcoming Board appointment process. CMAs are encouraged to start approaching people in their community to submit expressions of interest. EOIs are likely to be open between February and April 2021.

DELWP also provided a brief on the Environmental Contribution Tranche 5 funding. There is still work to be done before we fully understand what funding CMAs will receive and what our priorities will be.

Peter Jennings, Chair of West Gippsland CMA, provided an update on an informal Board observer program he is co-ordinating. Board members will be provided opportunities to sit in on other CMA Board meetings where appropriate to observe how other Boards operate. The aim of this is the continual improvement of our Boards and their Directors, particularly those that are relatively new to the business.

As always, we received a report from each CMA. It was very pleasing to hear about all the great work and outcomes that are being achieved despite a challenging year - see some examples below. There was a general feeling that Victorians were getting out and about in the regions to enjoy our natural environment now that restrictions are lifting.

We also heard that all the CMAs are pushing on with the development of their Regional Catchment Strategies and that there is lots of consultation and engagement going on. We are grateful to the Victorian Catchment Management Council for the extension they have provided for developing the RCSs, recognising that until recently we have been hampered by COVID-19 restrictions.

Examples of how #CMAsGetItDone



Glenelg Hopkins CMA
27 November at 10:00 · 🌐



How is this for an achievement - 50,000 trees!

Glenelg Hopkins CMA has partnered with the Victorian State Government to help deliver the Working for Victoria employment initiative: an employment program designed to help people that have lost their jobs due to COVID-19.

Our CMA has employed 20 new crew members split into two crews of 10, with one based in Hamilton and the other in Warrnambool.

This week was a significant milestone as our crew members have now planted 50,000 trees as part of a large tree planting program (riparian plantings, shelterbelt plantings and individual paddock trees) on farming properties and public land.

Now the planting activity is complete both crews will start a woody weed control spraying and removal program on a combination of private, public and urban areas.

[Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning](#) [Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions](#) [Agriculture Victoria](#) [Jaala Pulford MP](#) [Lisa Neville MP](#)



North Central CMA
21 October · 🌐



CHICKS IN STICKS SAY THANKS

"Connections that warmed the cockles" was the feedback from one lovely lady after Saturday's Chicks in the Sticks event.

Three passionate speakers, Rebecca Phillips, Anna Carille and Katrina Myers spoke about creating meaningful connections, finding personal and professional wellness, prioritising mental health, communicating ideas and showed off the power of storytelling.

The 40 guests got into the spirit of the event like Allison and Belinda, who frocked up and enjoyed socially distant morning tea in their very own 'Tiki Bar'.

Saturday's event helped the organisers feel a rejuvenated warmth that will take them well into this week and beyond.

Thank you all again for your participation, kind words and support of the 2020 Chicks in the Sticks event.

Tess and the North Central CMA Chicks in Sticks Crew.

[#CMAsgetitdone](#) [#CMAshavesomefun](#) [#landcare](#) [#chicksinthesticks](#)



Partnerships and collaborations

During this period our Chair and Executive Officer met with MOU partners Landcare Victoria (LVI) and Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH). There was also a meeting with the Trust for Nature (TFN). These meetings led to:



- Dave Buntine and the Executive Officer running a Regional Catchment Strategy briefing session for our partners including Vic Water, TFN, LVI and VEWH in collaboration with DELWP and the Victorian Catchment Management Council. We hope to run others for Ag Vic, DELWP and Parks Vic.
- A presentation by TFN at the CMA Regional Catchment Strategy Managers forum.

We continue to work with the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (CES). We held a meeting with the relevant CMA Chairs and CEOs with the CES to discuss the State of the Marine and Coastal Environment 2021 report. There is a joint desire to develop efficiencies in monitoring and reporting. CMAs have been providing case studies to feed into the report.

NRM Regions Australia have recently formed a legal entity and are now embarking on a strategic planning process. Alice Knight, Chair of Corangamite CMA and our Executive Officer are providing input into NRM Regions Australia's strategic planning process. CMA Chairs also participated online in the National Chairs conference which has a heavy focus on working through the priorities for NRM Regions Australia.

Our relationship with Vic Water continues to strengthen and they have sought support from Vic Catchments on improving engagement with Traditional Owners. We have provided them with our Aboriginal Participation Guidelines and offered them a briefing.

We have begun preliminary discussions with the Department of Health and Human Services in relation to delivering and monitoring 'Liveability' and how we might work together to deliver Integrated Catchment Management with Health and Wellbeing priorities.

We have also had discussions with Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions regarding economic stimulus through tourism associated with the environment.

A stronger industry

We have recently coordinated responses to several initiatives including:

- National Threatened Species Strategy review.
- Parliamentary inquiry into environmental infrastructure for growing populations.
- Strengthening Victoria's Biosecurity System.

Our people

With CMAs still waiting for confirmation of funding from the Victorian Government over the next three years the decision has been made to extend Tony Baker's acting arrangement for the Executive Officer position until the end of February 2021.

Contact us

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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the country we work on and pay our respects to them and their elders: past, present and future.