

APPENDIX A

Submissions and comments

We have consulted with DELWP, and we considered its views when reaching our review conclusions. As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, we gave a draft copy of this report to DELWP and asked for its submissions and comments.

Responsibility for the accuracy, fairness and balance of those comments rests solely with the agency head.

Responses were received as follows:

DELWP	13
-------------	----



Department of Environment,
Land, Water and Planning

PO Box 500, East Melbourne,
Victoria 8002 Australia
delwp.vic.gov.au

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Victorian Auditor-General's Office
Level 31, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Ref: SEC015696



Dear Mr Greaves

PROPOSED PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT - FOLLOW UP OF PROTECTING VICTORIA'S COASTAL ASSETS

Thank you for your letter of 4 August 2022, providing the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) with the opportunity to comment on the proposed final report for the *Protecting Victoria's Coastal Assets* follow-up audit.

The protection of Victoria's coastal assets is a responsibility shared across a number of government agencies, including Parks Victoria, local councils and Committees of Management (CoMs), with over 54 entities responsible for managing coastal protection assets and a selection of these were involved in the original audit in 2018. DELWP's role is to oversee the management of more than 1,500 of these assets, and as the lead agency for developing statewide policy for coastal planning and management.

DELWP welcomes the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) follow-up audit into the implementation of recommendations made in the review of *Protecting Victoria's Coastal Assets 2018*, and has been pleased to provide your office with evidence in support of the considerable progress made to implement and acquit all of the recommendations made.

Since the *Protecting Victoria's Coastal Assets 2018* audit, DELWP has greatly improved its understanding of coastal hazards in Victoria through monitoring, provided enhanced levels of support for coastal managers through the *Marine and Coastal Policy 2020*, and strengthened its implementation of asset management practices across the coastal protection asset portfolio informed by a statewide assessment of condition and risk.

I would like to clarify that while DELWP concurs with much of VAGO's commentary on progress made against the recommendations, it does not agree with VAGO's assessment of achievements made against Recommendation 3 which was rated as 'In Progress'.

DELWP believes it has satisfied the requirements of the recommendation as it has transitioned away from a 'fix-on-fail' approach to coastal asset management by developing a Strategic Asset Management Plan in 2022 to forecast investment and to identify priorities based on asset condition and risk. This has been integrated into DELWP's coastal asset planning processes, with multiple projects, including a study funded through an agreement with Warrnambool City Council, directly informed by this risk-based process. DELWP is also developing an engagement approach to share this condition and risk data with coastal managers before 30 June 2023, which will provide them with information from expert engineers about the risks at each site and a treatment plan to mitigate these risks.

I would also like to note that DELWP is well underway with implementing the agreed actions in response to Recommendation 2, which both DELWP and VAGO have assessed as 'In Progress'. The *Marine and Coastal Policy 2020* guides coastal managers to plan and manage marine and coastal

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be protected under the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. It will only be used or disclosed to appropriate Ministerial, Statutory Authority, or departmental staff in regard to the purpose for which it was provided, unless required or authorized by law. Enquiries about access to information about you held by the Department should be directed to foi.unit@delwp.vic.gov.au or FOI Unit, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, PO Box 500, East Melbourne, Victoria 8002.



OFFICIAL-Sensitive

areas, in accordance with the guiding principles and objectives of the Marine and Coastal Act 2018. It provides direction to coastal Crown land managers on how to integrate marine and coastal planning and management by using planning tools, such as Coastal and Marine Management Plans (CMMPs), enabling DELWP to evaluate how land managers implement their plans with consistency against the Policy. Notably, a priority activity (4.1) of the *Marine and Coastal Strategy 2022* is to support the preparation, review and implementation of CMMPs. Verification processes are currently underway to acquit this recommendation before December 2022, and in doing so close out all recommendations from the original 2018 audit.

If you would like more information about this matter, please call Colleen White, Regional Director Barwon South West, DELWP, on 0400 909 977 or email colleen.white@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Thank you again for your audit follow-up report.

Yours sincerely



John Bradley
Secretary

11 / 08 / 2022