

VICTORIAN CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2000 - 2001

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1. INTRODUCTION

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The Victorian Catchment Management Council reports annually to the Parliament of Victoria on the operation of the Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994). Victoria's catchment management framework has faced significant challenges and taken advantage of a number of important opportunities in the year in review.

A number of key initiatives have been developed and/or launched during this period. They include the Farm Dams (Irrigation) Review, Victoria's Draft Native Vegetation Management Framework, the Draft Victorian Pest Management Framework, the Draft Victorian River Health Strategy and the Draft Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare. Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) and the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment and Land Protection Board have contributed significantly to these statewide initiatives while continuing to attend to their core business of protecting and enhancing the natural resource values of their catchments.

Victoria's catchment management framework has achieved national recognition in that the regional model has been adopted by the Joint State and Federal National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. As a result the state will be well placed in respect of resourcing community based regional catchment strategies to address these issues in the six targeted regions. Non-targeted regions (North East, East and West Gippsland and Port Phillip and Westernport) also have well developed regional catchment strategies and a major challenge for the coming year will be to ensure that sufficient resources are invested to address the priorities in these regions.

Following on from the Healthy Rivers Vision for Victoria's rivers in 2050, this year VCMC invested effort and resources in researching the issues surrounding a vision for healthy landscapes. Outcomes of the National Land and Water Resources Audit were published this year and the theme reports on Salinity and Water reinforced the need to make substantial changes to land use and land management in Victoria. Innovative concepts and tools to make these changes were explored at workshops and at the Biennial Victorian Catchment Management Conference in November 2000.

The conference also explored the important links between the catchment management framework and local government required to ensure sustainable land use. With the Municipal Association of Victoria and Victorian Local Governance Association, VCMC worked to develop these links, especially in respect of integrating catchment and local planning.

The Council commenced a project to develop protocols for the involvement of indigenous people in land and water resources management in the catchment framework. The cultural values of 17 Aboriginal Nations in Victoria are tied intrinsically to our landscapes and the landscapes reflect the history of these nations. Monica Morgan, a Yorta Yorta women and member of VCMC, is actively working to develop these protocols.

This report has been compiled by Suzanne Shoemark, thanks to the cooperation of a large number of people from CMAs, the Port Phillip CALP Board and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Thanks also to Jane Tovey, who acted as Executive Officer to the Council for part of the year and to Cullen Gunn, who took up this role part way through the year.

Christine Forster.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council consists of up to 10 members appointed by Governor in Council on the basis of their skills, experience and knowledge of land protection, water resource management, primary industries, environment protection, conservation and local government.

MS CHRISTINE FORSTER – CHAIRPERSON

- Sessional Member of Victorian Planning Panels.
- Former Director, National Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation.
- Former Director, Rural Water Corporation.
- Woolgrower in Western Victoria.

MR ALEX ARBUTHNOT, AM

- Director, Landcare Australia Limited.
- Director, Gippsland Development Limited.
- Gippsland dairy farmer.
- Past President, Victorian Farmers Federation.
- Member, VFF Land Management Committee.
- Member VFF Landcare Sub-committee.
- Member, Lake Wellington Salinity Implementation Group.

DR SARAH EWING

- Geographer, Research Fellow, University of Melbourne.
- Churchill Fellow.
- Member, former State Landcare Committee.
- Former Member, Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council Community Advisory Committee.

PROFESSOR BARRY HART

- Director Water Studies Centre, Monash University.
- Professor of Environmental Chemistry, Monash University.
- Director of Research, Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology.
- Member, Board of Environment Protection Authority, Victoria.
- Extensive experience in water quality research and management.
- Expertise in river health, water quality management and ecological risk assessment.

MS MONICA MORGAN

- Yorta Yorta Nation
- Indigenous person with an active interest in furthering indigenous land management issues.

MR DOUG NEWTON (EPA OBSERVER)

- EPA Assistant Director Operations – Catchments
- Major focus on catchment management and agriculture.
- Key programs - Victorian Stormwater Action Program, SEPP WoV Implementation, Western Port Action+ Program, Dairy & Irrigation Improvement.
- 16 years with EPA in senior management positions covering policy, operations and special projects.
- Expertise in recycling, waste management, strategy development, catchment management, project management, community engagement and partnership development.

MS DIANA PATTERSON

- Chief Executive Officer, Surf Coast Shire.
- Former Director of Flora and Fauna Statewide Programs, Department of Natural Resources and Environment.
- Former Manager, Land Protection Branch, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
- Adjunct Professor, Graduate School of Business Management, Swinburne University of Technology.

DR JOHN RUSSELL

- Lecturer, Civil and Environmental Management Engineering, La Trobe University, Bendigo.
- Charter Professional Engineer.
- Former Technical Manager, Melbourne Water.
- Former Director of Mid-Goulburn Regional Water Authority.
- NHT 1998 Technical Assessment Panelist Water/Soils.
- Member, School Board, La Trobe University, Bendigo.
- Expertise in catchments, water/wastewater, soil fertility and farming practices.

MR PETER SUTHERLAND – NRE REPRESENTATIVE

- Executive Director, Catchment and Water, Department of Natural Resources and Environment. 25 years of experience in natural resources policy and planning.
- Victorian representative on the Murray-Darling Basin Commission and the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG) committee on Natural Resource Management.

MS ALISON TEESE

- State Assessment Panel Member.
- Member of NHT Advisory Bodies - Australian Landcare Council and Council for Sustainable Vegetation Management. Member of International Landcare Conference 2000 Steering Committee.

- Chair, Victorian State Bushcare Reference Group.
- Member of the Victorian Native Vegetation Management Framework Reference Group & Landcare Taskforce.

BILL SHARROCK

- Farming for 35 years near Portland, Western Victoria.
- Currently developing soft and hardwood plantations for milling, value adding timber and housing construction.
- Family farming experience includes irrigation of citrus and vines on the Murray River
- Former member of regional economic development committees, including the Green Triangle Member of the Business Development Advisory Committee for the Shire of Glenelg.

COUNCIL STAFF 2000-2001

JANE TOVEY

Executive Officer June 2000 to April 2001

CULLEN GUNN

Executive Officer from April 2001.

SUZANNE SHOEMARK

Project Officer (Part-time) October 2000 to present.

VCMC ROLE

The VCMC is the State Government's peak advisory body on catchment management. Catchment management involves the sustainable use and management of land and water resources at a catchment level.

The VCMC was established in 1997 by the Victorian Government under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*. The Council is uniquely placed, independent of government agencies, regional catchment authorities and non-government organisations, to take a long term view and influence change in working towards its vision for catchment management –

'Victoria will have healthy rivers flowing through ecologically sustainable and productive catchments.'

Council takes a statewide view on land and water issues and priorities related to catchment management. It facilitates integrated and coordinated catchment management through Victoria's catchment management framework.

The VCMC works closely with the Department of Natural Resources and the EPA. Council is also working to strengthen strategic catchment management planning by increasing collaboration with Local Government and the Department of Infrastructure.

The VCMC also encourages cooperation of bodies such as Non-Government Organisations involved in the management of land and water resources.

STATUTORY ROLES

The major statutory roles of the VCMC include:

- providing advice to the Minister for Environment and Conservation (and any other Minister) on matters relating to catchment management in Victoria;
- developing an Annual Report to the Minister and State Parliament on the operation of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*;
- provision of five-yearly reports on the environmental condition and management of land and water resources in Victoria. The next VCMC Condition Report is due in 2002.

VCMC BUSINESS PLAN

Council has developed a Business Plan for operation over the period 2000-2003. Major activities identified for action over the past year include:

- establishing key indicators and data management systems to refine reporting on the condition of catchments;
- coordinating and developing advice on weed management and policy;
- fostering and developing a whole of government approach to catchment management;
- promoting integration of local government and catchment management authority efforts in natural resources management planning and implementation.

VCMC SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

The past year has seen the VCMC take an active role through a number of internal sub-committees and working groups. Members of Council are also involved individually in a range of other external committees. External Committees involving significant council member input are described in Section 2 under Operations of the VCMC. A list of all relevant Committees appears in Appendix 1.

The nature and function of internal VCMC sub-committees are as follows:

INDIGENOUS LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS COMMITTEE.

Constituted by Monica Morgan, Sarah Ewing, Christine Forster and Doug Newton, this committee has worked to develop protocols for indigenous participation in decision making associated with land and water management planning.

WEED POLICY COMMITTEE

Chaired by Alex Arbuthnot and including Bill Sharrock, Alison Teese and Christine Forster. Provides advice on weed issues and management to the Minister for Environment and Conservation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Constituted by Christine Forster, Diana Patterson, Bill Sharrock and Monica Morgan working to foster cooperation between local government and CMAs.

REGIONAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING

This working group was established to assess the capacity of the CMAs to undertake proper planning and consultation in the preparation of Regional Management Plans (RMPs) and Regional Catchment Strategies (RSCs). Members include; Barry Hart, (Chair), Christine Forster, Diana Patterson, John Russell and Bill Sharrock.

HEALTHY LANDSCAPE VISION

Christine Forster, Sarah Ewing and John Russell have been working to develop a vision for healthy landscapes that might inform the development of a State Catchment Strategy and priorities.

FLORA AND FAUNA REFERRALS GROUP

Group convened to provide comments on flora and fauna action statements and species listing under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. Group includes Bill Sharrock, Alison Teese and Felicity Farris (Threatened Species Network, Vic).

2. OPERATION OF THE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

COMMENT ON THE FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

The Catchment Management Framework has faced significant change this past year. Changes at the end of 1999 and beginning of 2000 to the way regional funding is generated introduced a period of uncertainty in many regions.

The Catchment Management Framework was derived from the Landcare notion of regional group management underpinned by efforts of individual landholders. It is worth remembering that over 70 percent of the State is privately owned. The participation at a regional level of private landowners is imperative to achieving sustainable use of our natural resources.

The value of the Catchment Management Framework lies in its autonomy and ability to engender community participation and support efficiently and effectively at a local level.

This notion of regional community management and delivery is now being duplicated across the nation. In late 2000, the release of the Commonwealth National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality provided new impetus and potential access to investment for six of the ten CMA regions.

The focus of the National Action Plan is on investment at a regional level against accredited and accountable strategies, plans, outcomes and targets. This was most welcome and has alleviated some of the pressures faced by the regions with access to NAP.

It is important that Victoria build on the gains already offered by the framework and address current and future issues impeding the ability of CMAs to service expectations of regional stakeholders.

RESOURCING

The removal of the catchment tariff and its replacement by State Government funding has provided stability for operations but has reduced flexibility and regional autonomy. Issues of governance are currently being addressed.

Six of the ten regions now have access to additional funding through the NAP. This very positive initiative will substantially help further CMA activities in participating regions.

Unfortunately, there remain four regions without access to the NAP initiative investment. Although much positive discussion has been held regarding the future of the Non-NAP CMAs, as of June 2001 no resolution had been reached.

Now that the Catchment Management Framework is established there is an increasing expectation from government agencies and the community that it will deliver an expanding range of services.

Increasing workloads could affect the ability to meet statutory responsibilities. This is an important factor in assessing and managing risk associated with the Catchment Management Framework.

The issue of catchment planning resources has been brought to Council's attention through discussion at Chair's meetings, attendance at Council meetings and informally.

Victoria's Catchment Management Framework has the potential to deliver positive outcomes, not only in respect of natural resources management but also in the development of regional community capacity and economic sustainability.

STATE CATCHMENT STRATEGY

As part of its statutory obligations under the *CaLP Act* the VCMC is to advise on priorities for catchment management and catchment management research.

Through the CMA framework regions continue to work at developing sound, justifiable priorities with clear outcomes, targets and standards. It is becoming increasingly clear that similar effort is required at a statewide level.

The VCMC helped stimulate the development of the Victorian River Health Strategy, which will support regions and the state in prioritising waterway management issues. The VCMC considers that State Catchment or Natural Resource Management Strategy is required to help further foster coordinated and justifiable investment decisions across the state.

CURRENT TRENDS

The major on-ground operational business of CMAs links to waterway management as defined by the Water Act. While holding true to this focus, additional responsibilities and the growing understanding of the interrelated nature of land, water and biodiversity issues are driving CMAs to

encompass a broader scope of activities including their responsibilities under the *CaLP Act*.

Over the past year there has been growth in the size of CMAs staffing to address the increase in activities. All CMAs have managers and staff across land and water programs and this is expanding to include biodiversity.

The welcome initiative of the National Action Plan brings increased opportunities for regional activity but also new responsibilities. Accountability for delivery and administration of the program at a regional level will rest with CMAs. This has necessitated an increase in CMA administrative skills and resources to appropriately address accountability and probity issues.

It will be important to the future of the framework to develop a clearer picture of long-term employment trends and impacts and to support this with appropriate training and development programs.

OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Catchment Management Authorities are investigating and instigating a number of innovative approaches to redress land degradation issues. Many of these projects are at the forefront of resource management innovation.

CMAs have continued to provide courageous leadership on resource management issues, underlining the value of the regionally autonomous management framework.

It is widely acknowledged that the landscape change required to redress growing problems of water quality decline, salinity and biodiversity decline are of a scale that requires involvement of whole communities and catchments. The CMA's are taking a national lead in developing and trialing innovative measures to engender landscape change at a scale much larger than ever previously attempted.

Two examples include:

- The Goulburn Broken CMA Lower Goulburn Floodplain Sanctuary. This proposal is seeking to return 10,000 hectares of land in the Deep Creek area back to its original and best purpose – as an active floodway.

Levees constructed along both sides of the river at the turn of the century prevent the natural flow of water to the Murray. A ten-year flood event does not fit between the levees. The result is levee failure and dramatic economic loss - \$20 million in 1993.

The Goulburn Broken CMA, recognising the limitations of the current system, propose to stop fighting nature and reinstate the floodplain that acts as the heart, lungs and kidneys of the Goulburn. The

project has an estimated cost of \$22 million, with a benefit cost ratio of 1.78:1. This is an important project environmentally and a flagship of the type of thinking required to address landscape issues and reinvigorate ecological services.

- The North East CMA Rural Land Stewardship program is an innovative approach aimed at bringing about sustainable agricultural productivity, increasing environmental outcomes and invigorating rural communities. It is a land investment program that will achieve long-term land use change in the Pilot Area within five years. It has been designed as a pilot to be evaluated, modelled, and adapted for use across rural Australia.

Its aim is to catalyse a geographic community to achieve sustainable, long-term development by matching land use with land capability. The positive impacts will include sustainable agricultural production, improved environmental outcomes and improved water quality for the region and downstream communities.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN FRAMEWORK

The Catchment Management Framework has continued to work on increasing regional community participation in catchment management activities and decision-making across the State. There have been some notable efforts and issues requiring community consultation by CMAs and the VCMC including:

- Farm Dams review – (over 40 public meetings were convened by the CMAs and attended by over 1000 people);
- Native Vegetation Strategies;
- Governance Framework Review;
- preparatory discussion regarding the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality;
- Draft Pest Management Framework.

The onus of much of the consultation activity on these issues has been shared between the CMAs and NRE at a regional level.

NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST

CMAs continued to provide a point of coordination, information exchange and project management for the Natural Heritage Trust. Each CMA presented its regional package to the State Assessment Panel and Commonwealth observers. It is important to appreciate the work of the CMAs in pulling this community effort together. Across the State 550 individual bids were submitted.

CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

VCMC, together with the Corangamite, Glenelg Hopkins and North Central Catchment Management Authorities, sponsored the Biennial Catchment Management Conference at Ballarat in November 2000. The theme of this conference was *Healthy Landscapes, Restoring our Catchments*.

The VCMC would like to thank the sponsors of the conference:

- NRE;
- CDS Technologies Pty Ltd;
- Central Highlands Water;
- The City of Ballarat;
- The Corangamite CMA.

200 people from around the state attended. Each CMA was represented by between five and 15 delegates. Other delegates attended from NRE, the Environment Protection Authority, non-government organisations including Greening Australia and other groups.

Keynote speakers included:

- Professor Peter Cullen of the CRC for Freshwater Ecology who opened the conference with his speech: "From Knowledge to Action: Reducing the Footprint of Agriculture".
- Dr Carl Binning of CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology who kicked off the second day's proceedings with an inspiring summary of his work on "The Nature and Value of Australia's Ecosystem Services: The benefits from Nature to Australians and Australian industry".
- Professor David Yencken who led the final plenary session with his presentation: "The pillars of sustainability: the political, economic and social context".

Conference participants contributed to a number of workshops. Many of these workshops have initiated further activities. Of note, the conference stimulated discussion and further subsequent activity on:

- Integration of Local Government and CMA planning activities;
- Concepts of Land Stewardship;
- The development of protocols for the involvement of indigenous people in land and water management.

The conference formed the basis for VCMC's Business Plan for the remainder of its term; the majority of participants agreeing that substantial landscape change needed to occur if we were to reduce the footprint of agriculture and ensure sustainable resource use.

VCMC CATCHMENT STAKEHOLDER FORUM

VCMC's Catchment Stakeholder Forum changed its name in 2000-2001 from the Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) Forum, in order to cater for local government organisations.

The forum was set up to provide stakeholders with a forum in which to hear presentations about relevant activities in catchment management across the State.

Forums are held each quarter. In 2000-2001 the following issues were covered:

- Draft Victorian Pest Management Framework;
- Victoria's Draft Native Vegetation Management Framework;
- Indigenous Land Management Protocols;
- Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare;
- Landcare Support Strategy;
- Review of Regional Catchment Strategies;
- National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality;
- VCMC Business Plan;
- Bush Practice Alliance.

A list of participating Forum members is attached in Appendix 2.

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEES

At a regional level CMAs continue to develop local relationships through various mechanisms. A clear initiative for involvement is provided by the CMA Implementation Committees (ICs). Constituted by representatives from the local community, there are now XXX ICs across the state. These groups are predominantly responsible for supporting the development of implementation plans that provide detail and priorities for activity underpinning the Regional Catchment Strategies.

OPERATIONS OF THE VCMC

ADVICE TO MINISTERS

As the peak body for advice on issues relating to catchment management the VCMC has extensive experience across many natural resource issues. It offers an independent view of the framework and the activities of CMAs, NRE and other organisations involved in catchment management.

Over the 2000-2001 year the newly appointed VCMC members held one group meeting with the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Individually the Chairperson and other members held two meetings with the Minister for Environment and Conservation and two meetings with Ministerial advisers to discuss catchment management issues.

As the VCMC is not an operational body much of the value it adds to the catchment framework depends on strong relationships with relevant portfolios, particularly the Minister for Environment and Conservation.

Over the next year the VCMC intends to work at strengthening its relationship with all Ministers whose portfolios impact on integrated catchment management and the capacity of regional communities.

ROADSIDE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Victorian Roadside Conservation Committee was established in 1975. It pursued a role of advising relevant Ministers on roadside management issues and encouraging local government, utility companies and the community to recognise the conservation and landscape values of Victoria's linear reserves. The status of the committee has undergone several reviews and iterations.

The Committee's membership expired on June 30 2000, and the Committee has not formally met since that time. In July 2000 an outsourcing agreement with Greening Australia Victoria terminated. Since this time the Committee's support has been provided by the VCMC Secretariat.

The VCMC commissioned a review and report to assist the Council in advising the Minister for Environment and Conservation of appropriate coordination arrangements for roadside management in Victoria.

The terms of reference set by the Council were to:

- establish the need for a committee of key stakeholders involved in the management of natural resources located on roadsides reserves, and determine its ongoing purpose and role.
- If it is established that there is an ongoing need and role for a committee-type structure to identify options for:

- the composition of such a committee;
- its reporting arrangements, accountability and funding arrangements;
- secretariat and program support arrangements;
- where the Committee might best be located administratively.

The final report was based on extensive consultation with stakeholders and other parties interested in roadside conservation. Over 20 interviews sought to identify the challenges facing roadside conservation in Victoria and to canvass views on different options for coordinating the State's effort.

Feedback on a July 2001 draft report was sought from a meeting of former Roadside Conservation Advisory Committee members and later from the VCMC.

Summary Recommendations

Through the report the VCMC made the following recommendations to the Minister for Environment and Conservation.

- The review established an ongoing need for statewide roadside conservation.
- Its recommended approach proposed the establishment of a committee of stakeholders under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by those stakeholders.

This will ensure that the needs of the stakeholders are clearly articulated and the work of the committee is directed toward meeting those needs. This approach will also ensure the development of an alliance between the stakeholders, and give the committee a greater degree of independence from any single interest.
- The Parks, Flora and Fauna division of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment was identified as the most appropriate agency to provide the technical and executive support for the committee. This agency offers a strong technical base with links to a regional service delivery network.

Issues to be resolved include the level of resources for technical and executive support and the sharing of this cost among stakeholders.

The VCMC is due to submit its recommendations to the Minister in July-August 2001.

FFG SUBMISSIONS

The VCMC Flora and Fauna Referrals Group has commented on 36 different items under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.

In general Council responses have been compliant with suggestions offered through NRE PF&F. Council particularly acknowledges the informative comments and support offered by Felicity Farris to this group.

WEED POLICY COMMITTEE

Following a recommendation from the Parliament of Victoria ENRC (Environment and Natural Resources Committee) report, *Weeds in Victoria*; a Weeds Policy Committee was established to oversee the implementation of the Victorian Weeds Strategy (VWS). At the March meeting of VCMC it was resolved to broaden the role of the WPC and invite representatives from the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Victorian Farmers' Federation (VFF), and Environment Victoria (EV) as observers.

Terms of Reference for the WPC were as follows:

1. to implement activities as detailed in the existing VWS;
2. to implement recommendations and activities that relate to VCMC business;
3. to invite stakeholders to brief Council by prior agreement;
4. to report activities to the VCMC.

The WPC met four times during the year 2000-2001 and had three sub-committee meetings to organise the 'Local Government and Weed Management' forum.

At the WPC meeting in October 2000 a Plan was agreed outlining the key tasks and actions in the VWS for which VCMC had responsibility. At the November meeting a budget and workplan for the committee was adopted.

Under the work plan the following Victorian Weeds Strategy actions were acted upon in 2000-2001:

1. Liaison with Keith Turnbull Research Institute (KTRI) to ensure progress under their Pest Plant Distribution Prevention Strategy in the following areas:
 - controlling movement of livestock, produce and equipment;
 - controlling movement of livestock, fodder and farm produce;
 - reducing spread of weeds by machinery and equipment;
 - consultation with industry.
2. Involvement of Local Government:

- A forum was held on local government and weed management in association with the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian Farmers' Federation, and with the sponsorship and in-kind support of NRE. Proceedings are available from MAV or VCMC.

- The forum was well-attended by over 60 representatives from local councils, VFF, NRE, VCMC, VicRoads and the CFA. Proceedings can be obtained from the VCMC office. Recommendations were arrived at which are to be implemented in the year 2001-2002.

3. Development of a five-year research plan:
 - VCMC was involved with the development of the 5-year research and development plan for Victorian weed management.
4. Development of assessment criteria:
 - VCMC received reports from KTRI on the incorporation of biological, environmental and economic information into assessment criteria.
5. Review of the Victorian Weeds Strategy:
 - VCMC was represented on the steering committee for the development of the Draft Victorian Pest Management Framework which will replace the Victorian Weeds Strategy.
6. National/State Weed Strategies:
 - WPC's chair, Alex Arbuthnot AM, chaired the Victorian Blackberry Taskforce which oversaw the development of the Victorian Blackberry Strategy. This was launched by the Minister for Environment and conservation, Sherryl Garbutt, in February 2001.

INDIGENOUS PROTOCOLS COMMITTEE

The Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC) accepted the task of developing protocols for indigenous involvement in land and water management decisions. Monica Morgan, a member of the Yorta Yorta Nation is also a member of the Council. While Monica can only speak for her own people, a meeting of Nations has empowered Monica to pursue the goal of developing statewide protocols.

The Government of New South Wales and the Murray Darling Basin Commission signed an MOU with indigenous groups to develop local protocols.

VCMC sponsored a meeting of Aboriginal Nations in Victoria in October 2000. This meeting addressed a number of issues relating to land and water management issues and agreed that a set of protocols should be

developed by the 17 nations, working in conjunction with Catchment Management Authorities and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE). This proposal was discussed and endorsed at the Catchment Management Conference in Ballarat.

Council received a number of presentations, on initiatives of the State Government which relate to this project. In particular, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) and the Department of Justice have complementary programs. DNRE are in the process of appointing Indigenous Land Management Facilitators in each region and undertaking comprehensive cross-cultural training.

Council was invited to Yorta Yorta country and visited Echuca and Barmah Forest in March 2001. Yorta Yorta elders showed the Council through their country and highlighted land and water management issues which impact significantly on cultural values.

Individual CMAs have developed various mechanisms to incorporate indigenous values in their programs. This particular project will seek to ensure that representatives of traditional owners, in addition to established cooperatives and cultural heritage organisations are included in land and water management processes. AAV, EPA and VCMC have contributed to the development of the project and VCMC has sought funding from the Natural Heritage Trust to support the final stage - a series of discussions in each region on the best way to establish protocols.

Council has adopted the objective of finalising a Memorandum of Understanding similar and complementary to that signed in New South Wales, and is committed to learning to recognise the cultural and landscape values of the 17 Aboriginal nations.

SAP AND NHT

The VCMC again played a significant role in delivery of the Natural Heritage Trust program in Victoria for the 2000-2001 funding round. Four members of the Council, headed by Christine Forster as Chair, participated as members on the State Assessment Panel.

Presentations from all CMA regions were received by SAP. The regional CMA effort to justify projects against regional priorities, plans and outcomes was again very impressive. Although all regions show different levels of sophistication in material presented there has, over the five years of the NHT program, been a marked and continual improvement. This improvement has once again placed Victoria in a very good position to maximise investment in natural resources management outcomes.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

The Local Government Committee has been extremely active over the last year. The VCMC Business Plan and

discussion raised at the November 2000 Catchment Management Conference identified relationships between local government and the CMAs as an area of strong focus.

The Committee has been working at a series of levels to establish a more integrated approach to catchment management. An area of particular focus has been the integration of catchment planning (through the RCS) and local government (through MSS and planning schemes).

At the time of writing the VCMC is seeking to convene a Forum in early July, inviting major local government and CMA stakeholder groups. The Forum will explore opportunities for integrating efforts of CMAs and Local Government regionally. Representatives from the following organisations will be invited:

- Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE);
- Department of Infrastructure (DOI);
- Representatives from CMAs;
- The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV);
- Royal Australian Planning Institute (RAPI);
- Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA);
- Environs Australia;
- Representatives from local government.

The Forum will endeavour to discuss and reach agreement on methods of achieving the following objectives:

- develop whole of government approach to the revision of Municipal Strategic Statements and RCS.
- obtaining agreement of participants to actively integrate the development of the planning processes of local government and catchment management authorities.

CATCHMENT INDICATORS (RAM) COMMITTEE

The VCMC is overseeing the development of the Catchment Indicators Project. Completion of the project is due in October 2000. Implementation of the indicators developed will foster a coordinated basis for monitoring and evaluating catchment condition across the State.

The project Steering Committee is chaired by Diana Patterson and includes Chris Forster; both from the VCMC.

Progress on Indicators Project has required consistent effort from those involved. The VCMC have played a pivotal role in ensuring the project moves toward completion.

At various stages the difficult nature of the task and competing pressures on those involved have threatened the timely completion of tasks. The VCMC will continue to pursue the completion of this project and work to

ensure that funding is allocated to implement evaluation against indicators over the long-term.

Developing consistent evaluation and monitoring techniques is fundamental to assessing and reporting against desired outcomes for catchment management.

Recent audits by the State Attorney General's Office of the Victorian Salinity Program highlighted deficiencies in the evaluation and monitoring of activities and outcomes. Similar issues have been raised for the NHT program. The Indicators Project and future evaluation and reporting will be important for regional investment programs such as the NAP and NHT2.

For more information regarding this project please refer to Section 3, Reporting on Catchment Condition.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE.

Council Member Barry Hart continued to lead this committee, offering significant expertise and guidance in promoting the further integration of the monitoring and evaluation efforts across the state.

At the time of writing the VCMC had advised the Minister to extend the membership and scope of this committee to include estuarine, marine and wetland monitoring (Please refer to Section 3.2, 'Water Quality Monitoring' for further details).

The information developed by this committee will underpin reporting against water quality indicators as outlined in the Catchment Indicators Project.

HEALTHY LANDSCAPES: A VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

During the year under review the Victorian Catchment Management Council commenced a project to develop a vision and goals for ecologically sustainable land and water resources use. The objectives of this project were to:

-
- articulate the key natural resources issues and essential change mechanisms underpinning sustainability at the regional catchment level;
- identify research and investigation needs;
- gain stakeholder support for the vision.

The proposed outcome of this project is to shape a State Catchment Management Strategy that will serve as a basis for investment in natural resources management.

Clare Mintern, of the Centre for Land Protection Research, prepared a comprehensive discussion paper on the issues and innovations in landscape change

management. This paper formed the basis for discussion at a workshop held in Bendigo in August 2000.

VCMC engaged Terry White and Associates to lead it through the development of a vision for Healthy Landscapes in Victoria. Terry carried out an intensive literature search and developed a set of principles for the creation of Healthy Landscapes. Vigorous debate ensued and Council continues to develop the vision which might underpin a future State Catchment Management Strategy.

Such a strategy will help ensure that in future land use will match land capability; that off site impacts of land use will be minimised and that the management of the landscape and dependent vegetation will mimic and reflect its pre-European condition.

The vision is a work in progress.

REGIONAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING

In its business plan for 2001 the VCMC identified the issue of adequate resourcing for the catchment management framework as a topic it would pursue.

The VCMC wished to clearly establish the resourcing capabilities of the CMA framework to develop RMPs, review and renew the RCS.

The Working Group met twice and collated information on resources available for catchment planning. Council advised the Minister a further review of the resourcing requirements for the RMP and RCS processes should take place.

LANDCARE

Landcare Support Strategy

The VCMC adopted the task of developing a draft State Landcare Support Strategy (LSS) for the Landcare Taskforce. Completion of the LSS was a requirement of the 2000-2001 NHT Package to Canberra and a prerequisite for funding, particularly of NLP projects.

Due to its commitment to developing the Landcare Action Plan the Landcare Taskforce required support from the VCMC to complete the LSS by June 2001. The VCMC performed this task and submitted the LSS to the Commonwealth with the Victorian NHT Package.

The LSS was developed primarily as a snapshot review and issues document to be used to inform the further development of the Second Generation Landcare Action Plan.

Landcare Awards

The VCMC have assisted in coordinating the Victorian section of the national Landcare awards and managing the Victorian Farm Management Awards. These are biennial

awards and the next Victorian event is in late 2001 with the national final in March 2002.

The Victorian Farm Management Awards were re-activated by the VCMC from the Trust Accounts of the Hanslow, Gilmore and J.F. Hughes Awards that had gone into recess in the 1980s. The VCMC have recommended that the Victorian Farm Management Awards be reviewed to take into consideration changes in regional land management.

In the current round of Landcare awards the Awards Steering Committee, chaired by Council Member Alex Arbuthnot, adopted a trial merger of the Hanslow, Gilmore and Hughes Awards to create a Victorian Landcare Award for the outstanding Landcare property in each of Victoria's Catchment Management Authority regions. Hi-Fert Pty Ltd will provide prize money and funds for a field day on each of the winners' properties.

Landcare Foundation Victoria

LFV has had a successful year in securing and sustaining partnerships between Landcare and the corporate world. LFV continues to run a small office in Farrer House, Collins Street with two consultants, Lindy Moffat and Rob Youl, and volunteer Alex Arbuthnot. The office is funded by a grant from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and from Landcare Australia Limited (LAL).

For the June 30 2001 financial year, Landcare Foundation Victoria had achieved \$523,000 for Victorian Landcare projects, bringing the office total over four and half years to over \$5.5 million.

LFV continues to advance regional projects focusing on catchment management. These include the Grow West at Bacchus Marsh and Scarps Project at Keilor. Other major projects are Amcor's Corridors of Green, Rio Tinto's Project Platypus, Warrnambool's 444,000 trees, Hindmarsh Biolinks and the Powlett Project. All are financed by a combination of state and federal government funding and corporate and local business support. Other major sponsors include Alcoa, Edison Mission Energy, BHP, SPI Powernet, Ace Radio, Duke Energy and TXU.

Australian Landcare Council

The Australian Landcare Council (ALC) is the Federal Government's key advisory body on Landcare and natural resource management (NRM) policy. The VCMC has two links with the ALC. One through Christine Forster, who attends Peak Chairs meetings of natural resource management organisations and the other through Alison Teese who is the Victorian member on the Australian Landcare Council.

Significant strategic policy matters considered by the ALC in 2000-2001 included delivery of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the extension of the Natural Heritage Trust. Other key issues for which advice to Federal Ministers was formulated included:

- coordinators and facilitators;
- building regional capacity;
- property management planning;
- Greenhouse/climate change;
- the international promotion of Landcare;
- environmental management systems;
- Weeds;
- insurance for Landcare groups;
- management of non-commercial lands.

The Council formed two working groups on related topics; The Future of Landcare Working Group and Coordinators and Facilitators Working Group, both chaired by Alison Teese. Related discussion papers released in early 2001 were the Future of Landcare and the Importance of Coordinators and Facilitators to Community Participation in Natural Resource Management.

Landcare Australia Limited

Landcare Australia Limited (LAL) continues to move from success to success. VCMC member Alex Arbuthnot represents Victoria on the Board of Landcare Australia. There are 2 other Victorians; the Chairman, John Claringbould and Ian Wood from BHP-Billiton who represents industry. LAL's mission is to work towards the sustainable use and conservation of Australia's natural resources and to encourage all Australians to adopt a Landcare ethic. LAL is the custodian of the Landcare brand and the Landcare logo.

LAL's 12 th Annual Report states that three independent surveys now confirm 40% of practicing farmers are in a Landcare group. An ABARE survey showed that Landcare group members were on average 50% more likely to adopt sustainable practices than non-members.

An exciting year for LAL and its business partners saw the completion of a major national Olympic Landcare Project and new partnerships with Australia Posters, Transenergie, Brite Solutions, Sigma Pharmaceuticals and Land Rover (Coast care). Landcare Australia's total level of sponsorship (cash, in-kind and media value) reached a new high of \$15.54 million although the cash component was down.

In partnership with the Victorian Government through NRE, LAL will upgrade the Victorian office for the 2001-2002 year. With the worlds greatest bowler, Glenn McGrath, as its media icon, Victoria can continue to expect maximum corporate dollars to support Victorian Landcare projects.

VCMC FINANCE REPORT

The Finance Services sector of Catchment and Water (CaW) within the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) provide financial and accounting support to the VCMC. As a result the VCMC use the NRE MIS system for Budget Reporting. At the VCMC level MIS permits budget monitoring and reporting on a cash basis. Accrual accounts for the VCMC are covered within the larger budgetary process conducted by CaW and NRE using the 7291 Business Centre number.

The following table outlines budget expenditure at June 30 2001.

TABLE 1.1

VCMC Operating Revenue 2000 - 2001	
NRE allocation	250,001.00
RCAC services fee	50,000.00
AAV Sponsorship	2000.00
NRE Weeds fee	16,300.00
NRE Conference Sponsorship	10,245.00
TOTAL Revenue	328,546.00 ¹

TABLE 1.2

VCMC Expenditure 2000 - 2001	
Council Operations	158,216.70
Council Administration	43,991.37
Community Awareness	68451.33
Conferences	18,163.95
RCAC	40,722.27
TOTAL Expenditure	329,545.62

BALANCE	-999.62
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Trust funds carried forward to 2001-2002	41,187.04 ²
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NOTES

¹ Represents total available revenue

² Trust funds displayed here are dedicated to specific tasks due for completion early in 2001-2002. Therefore not represented as available revenue in 2000-2001.

RESULTS

On a cash accounting basis the VCMC have exceeded budget expectations for the 2000-2001 financial year by \$999.00. This is an improvement on the previous two years where previous annual reports show expenditure exceeding budget by; \$19,000 in 1999-2000 and between \$35 – \$45,000 in 1998-1999.

Overall the VCMC has spent approximately \$330,000 to the end of June 2001. An additional \$79,000 has been reimbursed to various project lines as a result of the VCMC providing additional services to:

1. NRE through the VCMC Weeds Committee;
2. the Roadside Conservation Advisory Committee (RCAC) for administrative support;
3. sponsorship of various other VCMC projects.

The trust funds carried forward constitute payment to the VCMC for completion of specific tasks such as development of the Landcare Support Strategy and the RCAC review. Trust funds have not been included as available revenue as expenditure for completing these tasks will not occur until 2001-2002.

FURTHER DETAIL

Appendix 3 provides a detailed breakdown of expenditure by project for 2000-2001. Project expenditure totals in Appendix 3 vary from those displayed in Table 1.2 as revenue to project lines has been “credited” (*reducing* overall expenditure for that project by the credited amount).

MAJOR STATE ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SALINITY AND WATER QUALITY

The arrangements for implementation of the first year funding of the NAP process began in November 2000; starting on a small scale with support provided by select staff at NRE.

At the end of the year in review, the Inter-Governmental Agreement had been signed but the Bilateral Agreement was still being negotiated.

A cross-divisional team in NRE is developing guidelines, processes and an investment case for distribution of funding for year one of the NAP only. Other technical groups and advisory roles are anticipated for members and staff of the VCMC.

REGIONAL CATCHMENT STRATEGIES

The Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) project started in March 2001, with a scoping workshop. The RCS is the overarching strategic planning instrument for natural resource planning and management at the regional level, prepared, approved and reviewed in accordance with the *CaLP Act 1994*. The original RCSs were prepared by the CaLP Boards in 1997 and must be reviewed by 30 June 2002. Following consultation with the VCMC, draft guidelines for review, reflection and renewal of the RCS were distributed for comment in June 2001.

- Final guidelines must be endorsed by the VCMC, while the project Steering Committee will include a VCMC representative. The new RCSs, and their accompanying action plans and strategies, will comprise the accredited plans for the National Action Plan on Salinity and Water Quality (NAP). It is expected that this will also be the case for other funding programs, such as NHT2. The development of the RCSs will be co-ordinated by the CMAs.

RABBIT BUSTER PROGRAM – 2000/01

The concept of Rabbit Buster has been continued in 2000/01 to maintain emphasis and build on the outcomes of the release and establishment of the rabbit haemorrhagic disease (RHD). Rabbit Buster has identified the need to continue funding research into the epidemiology of RHD and to continue utilising RHD even as its virulence diminishes.

The focus for Rabbit Buster during 2000/01 has been on preventing the re-establishment of rabbit populations. The increasing level of resistance to RHD has provided populations with a relatively high immunity and the capability to re-establish very quickly. To prevent this the approach promoted through Rabbit Buster emphasises

the destruction/modification/removal of harbour and the promotion of the concept of 'Rabbit Free!'

Funding provided to the Catchment and Agricultural Services (CAS) section of NRE is intended to provide regional emphasis on the concepts of Rabbit Buster. Staff have assisted public land managers to develop projects using Rabbit Buster funds. CAS has played a major role in the development of Regional Rabbit Action Plans with Rabbit Buster providing the funds to drive this process.

Funding has also been used to set up regional Rabbit Catchment Indicators to assist with the RHD program, conducting of 'Rabbit Free!' assessments and advertising, and to survey community attitudes to rabbit management. These activities have played a major role in maintaining rabbits at their current low levels across all land tenures, and resulted in works being conducted across nearly 133,000 hectares.

NRE public land managers have received funding through Rabbit Buster to conduct works that add value to recurrent programs. Rabbit Buster funding has enabled works to be carried out across nearly 90,000 hectares of NRE managed public reserves.

An extensive program has been established to monitor the epidemiology of RHD and investigate effective approaches to integrated rabbit control. This aims to determine the best ways to integrate existing control methods and strategies with RHD to minimise economic, environmental and social impacts of rabbits.

Rabbit Compliance Program

No. of property inspections - 3332, covering 606,272 hectares

No. of contacts - 6916

No. of enforcement actions (issuing of Land Management Notices, Penalty Infringement Notices, Warning letters and works agreements) 1062

Total Compliance Rate 93%

NRE WEED MANAGEMENT

Major developments in weed management at a state level have included:

- development of the VPMF and Weeds Strategy;
- launch of Victorian Blackberry Strategy;
- completion of National Management Plans for Blackberry and Chilean Needle Grass;
- Second Generation Landcare Grants of over \$500,000 for implementation of community-driven plans for the management of Serrated Tussock, Ragwort and Gorse;
- Weeds Forum and workshop for Local Government;
- release of final Regional Weed Action Plans for Mallee and Wimmera;

- continuing action to eradicate infestations of Alligator Weed;
- rapid action to prevent the establishment of new weeds Mexican Feather Grass, Salvinia, Senegal Tea and Branched Broomrape.

Weeds Compliance Program - 2000/01

No. of property inspections - 13,449, hectares 1,258,908
 No. of contacts - 16757
 No. of enforcement actions (issuing of Land Management Notices, Penalty Infringement Notices, Warning letters and works agreements) 3490
 No. of successful prosecutions - 7 (out of 7)
 The prosecutions were on Serrated Tussock, Ragwort, and Blackberry.

Total Compliance rate 95%

VICTORIA'S NATIVE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Minister launched the Draft Native Vegetation Management Framework and ten Draft Native Vegetation Management Plans for public consultation in August 2000. These documents represent a significant step in the public consultation process designed to improve management of native vegetation in Victoria. Over 90 submissions on the draft Framework were received and over 260 on the draft Plans as a whole. The Victorian Catchment Management Council provided a submission on the draft Framework which placed particular emphasis on the broad strategic approach, the need to protect existing remnant vegetation, facilitation of community involvement, utilisation of the triple bottom line, and the need for sound monitoring and reporting.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the Catchment Management Authorities are currently considering all submissions before finalisation of the documents. Guidelines for assessment of vegetation quality (based on Habitat Hectare evaluation) are being prepared and will be field-tested for incorporation into the Frameworks approach.

Ten Native Vegetation Officers have been recently recruited by the Department (one in each CMA Region) to facilitate implementation of the Framework and Plans.

LIVING SYSTEMS PROJECT 2000-2001

'Biodiversity and Agriculture: looking for a natural synergy'
 The Living Systems Project aims to help farmers and agribusiness benefit from the contribution biodiversity can make towards the sustainability of their farm business and their lifestyle. Significant progress has been made over the year in three program areas.

Firstly, a new biodiversity extension framework for agriculture has been developed and a wide range of materials and activities collated for use in agriculture industry extension programs. This 'kit' will be published in the new financial year and will be a source of material for all extension staff working in the area of sustainability.

An associated project is the development of native biodiversity 'best practice' guidelines for grazing enterprises. This project offers the potential for Victorian farmers to substantiate claims of 'clean and green' and thereby take advantage of their biodiversity credentials in a global marketplace increasingly demanding proof of environmental performance.

Secondly, the Living Systems project has identified the range of agriculture industry extension programs that offer opportunities for the inclusion of biodiversity and is working with training providers to ensure that agricultural training meets sustainability criteria.

Thirdly, a pilot project exploring ways to involve the community in landscape biodiversity planning has been established in north-west Victoria. This project will help to inform catchment authorities on engaging community members in biodiversity projects at a landscape level.

The project is also connecting with landholders and providing them with guidance on how they can plan to include biodiversity in their local landscapes within the context of regional catchment strategies. It is conducted in association with the Goldfields Bioregional Biodiversity Planning project. The Living Systems project is a project funded under the Natural Heritage Trust.

GOVERNANCE PROJECT

While Victoria has established a strong catchment management system, the VCMC is examining various options for strengthening and consolidating the system. One such project initiated with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment is a Governance Improvement Project.

Consultants KPMG have been contracted to report on the catchment management framework in Victoria from a governance point of view. The report will review governance practices, compare current practice with leading practice and provide guidance on future arrangements to strengthen the governance system. The Chair of VCMC, with representatives from NRE and CMAs, is part of the Project Reference Group for the Governance Improvement Project. KPMG are expected to report on their findings in October 2001.

NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST

The Natural Heritage Trust (the Trust) is the major initiative of the Commonwealth's natural resource and environmental management program.

With funding from the partial sale of Telstra, the Commonwealth allocated \$1.25 billion to the Trust from 1996/97 – 2001/02.

Drawn together under the Trust's One Stop Shop Program (OSS), the Commonwealth called on Landcare and other community groups and organisations to submit project applications for funding under Bushcare, National Landcare, Murray Darling 2001, Farm Forestry, National Rivercare Initiative, National Wetlands, Fisheries Action Plan, Endangered Species and Waterwatch Programs. These applications are assessed by one of ten Regional Assessment Panels (RAP) and the State Assessment Panel. Victoria's State Assessment Panel (SAP) is comprised of a number of Council members together with other Ministerial appointees. The SAP is also chaired by the VCMC Chair.

The SAP oversees the operation of the State's ten RAPs and draws all the recommended applications together into a proposed submission for consideration by the Minister for the Environment and Conservation prior to submission for Commonwealth assessment.

In the last allocation period (2000/01), the SAP received over 550 applications of which close to 437 received funding totalling over \$39.5 million.

Victoria's ten RAPs are based on catchment management regions. Panels are chaired by a community member and comprise a majority of community members with skills covering environment protection, sustainable agriculture, natural resource management and, where appropriate, land, water, marine, vegetation, conservation, farming, indigenous land management and state and local government.

Funding priority is given to projects that involve community groups. Successful projects usually help to implement Regional Catchment Strategies administered by the Catchment Management Authorities. Individual projects are often initiated by Landcare groups, other community groups, CMA implementation committees and relevant government and semi-government organisations.

Community group applicants are required to match Commonwealth funding on an in-kind basis, while the State Government also matches many projects on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Allocations to Victoria for 2000/01 were as follows:

Bushcare	\$10.3 million
National Landcare program	\$10.6 million
Murray Darling 2001	\$13.7 million
National Wetlands	\$340,000
Farm Forestry	\$1.4 million
Fisheries Action Plan	\$212,000
Waterwatch	\$421,000
National Rivercare Initiative	\$1.5 million
Endangered Species Program	\$800,000

Since the NHT commenced Victoria has received over \$165 million (1996/7 to 2000/01) for the implementation of projects under the Trust.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Victorian Nutrient Management Program was developed in response to concern about an increased number of reported blue-green algal blooms across the State and the awareness of the role that nutrients, especially phosphorus and nitrogen, play in causing these blooms.

The Program assists local communities and the State Government to manage nutrient levels in waterbodies in order to minimise the potential for the development of algal blooms, particularly blue-green algae.

Blue-green algal blooms are a major threat to Victorian waterbodies. They can cause serious social, economic and environmental problems. Long-term management action is required to prevent, at the outset, degradation to Victoria's natural resources.

An annual allocation of \$1.5m through the Nutrient Management Program was provided by the State Government for some 79 nutrient management and water quality projects. A variety of projects were funded including urban stormwater management communication projects and irrigation and drainage management projects. Considerable extra investment in nutrient management is provided through many other government programs, such as waterway management, improving agricultural and forestry management practices, construction and upgrading of sewerage treatment plants, the Victorian Stormwater Action Program and water reform funding.

Significant progress continues to be made on nutrient management activities and initiatives around the State. Highlights for 2000/01 include:

- endorsement of the third nutrient management plan by State Government: the Upper North East Water Quality Management Strategy in February 2001;

- release of the draft Wimmera, Avoca and Avon-Richardson plans for public comment, as well as the revised amalgamated draft Glenelg Hopkins plan;
- development of a methodology for determining problem road areas/stream crossings. This project, while developed in the north east has applicability to the rest of the state and has led to a statewide assessment of the impacts of unsealed roads on water quality;
- release of a rapid appraisal methodology to determine the economic benefits and costs of nutrient management (Read Sturgess and Associates 2000, *Rapid Appraisal of the Economic Benefits and Costs of Nutrient Management*, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Melbourne). This methodology will assist in determining priority nutrient management actions in the catchment-based nutrient management plans;
- organisation of a nutrient management workshop to be held in October 2001. The aim of the workshop is to facilitate communication and understanding of how the different agencies, programs, and plans work together to reduce nutrients entering waterways across Victoria. The key audience is agency staff, CMA and local government;
- a workshop on the relationship between nutrients and algae, held in August 2000, to assist in understanding recent research on the links between changes in nutrient levels and the response of blue-green algae to these changed nutrient levels. The outcomes of the workshop have been published by the Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology (Technical Report no 8/2000);
- further work on the development of best management practice guidelines for fish farms, broiler chickens, piggeries and many other activities contributing nutrients to Victorian waterways.

More information about nutrient management activities undertaken in 2000/01 can be found in the sixth Annual Report of the Victorian Nutrient Management Program. The annual report describes the statewide nutrient management activities and progress with each of the catchment-based nutrient management plans being developed and implemented across Victoria.

VICTORIAN FARM DAMS REVIEW

The Victorian Farm Dams (Irrigation) Review Committee was established by the Minister for Environment and Conservation following the release of a discussion paper in April 2000 entitled *Sustainable Water Resources and Farm Dams*.

A substantial effort went into consulting with the community on the farm dams issue. Victoria's Catchment Management Authorities played a vital role in ensuring the community was made fully aware of the issues being dealt with under the Review. The CMAs were asked to conduct a series of public meetings around the State, the purpose of which was to explore these issues with the community and to stimulate debate about water management issues.

The public meetings provided opportunities for the community to become more informed about the issues and gave CMAs an opportunity to receive feedback from the community. Over 40 public meetings were convened by the CMAs with attendance of over 1000 people.

This work by the CMAs helped to ensure that members of the community were better equipped to make informed submissions to the Review Committee.

In addition the Review Committee provided important feedback to the Review Committee about community attitudes to water management issues. Each CMA also made a written submission to the Review Committee.

The main thrust of the Committee's report was that all of the water resources in the catchment should be within the management regime. The CMAs unanimously supported this position.

Legislation amending the Water Act to require the licensing of all water used for irrigation and commercial use in the catchment will be put before Parliament in the Spring Session.

SECOND GENERATION LANDCARE TASKFORCE

The Taskforce was appointed by the Minister for Environment and Conservation, following recognition that steps needed to be taken to support Landcare into the future.

VCMC Member Alison Teese was appointed to the Taskforce, chaired by Geoff Howard, Parliamentary Secretary for Environment and Conservation. Taskforce members were appointed on the basis of their experience, in on-ground community and Landcare activity.

Landcare and the broader community were engaged in the development of the draft Action Plan. This draft, *The Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare - Healthy Landscapes - Sustainable Communities* was made available in late June 2001 for a public comment period of three months.

The Plan offers the Victorian Government a framework with a complementary set of actions to provide strong support to Landcare at all levels. The Taskforce

developed a range of proposed actions under the following action areas:

1. strengthening investment;
2. reinvigorating support;
3. communication, education and awareness;
4. enhancing Landcare's ability to contribute to natural resource management.

ENVIRONMENTAL WATER QUALITY MONITORING COMMITTEE

The effective management of our State's scarce and precious water resources is dependent on the availability of reliable information on the quality and quantity of these resources. The Victorian government is committed to a high level of environmental reporting and accountability and has promised the development of initiatives which provide the public with direct access to information on the state of the environment.

The VCMC in partnership with NRE, the EPA, Melbourne Water and Waterwatch has been working towards the provision of better and more reliable water resources information, and has initiated a number of processes aimed at improving access to such information.

These initiatives include:

- **Partnerships for Water Resources Monitoring**
Water resource monitoring programs have been conducted by a number of different agencies, departments and authorities in the past. These programs have often been developed in isolation using different methodologies and with duplication of sites a common occurrence. The collection of water resources information will be better controlled in future with the formation of regional partnerships for water resources monitoring in which all regional authorities will contribute to a single water resource monitoring program in each region of the state.

This process will ensure a high level of regional control over priorities while making sure that important monitoring sites are continued to provide information on both condition and trend.

- **Annual Report**
The Victorian Water Quality Monitoring Annual Report, also produced by the Environmental Water Quality Monitoring Committee, has undergone a significant face-lift with the report incorporating information on both condition and trends in water quality around the state. The high level of interpretive information available in these annual reports demonstrates the Government's commitment to environmental reporting and represents a landmark in the history of water quality reporting in Victoria.
- **Victorian Water Resources Data Warehouse**

The Victorian Water Resources Data Warehouse is an important initiative that allows public access to current and historic water quality, quantity and river health information for sites throughout the state. The data is accessible through the interactive medium of the world wide web and includes direct querying and browsing of both raw data and summary water resource statistics. The Victorian Water Resources Data Warehouse has had over 18,000 data requests since its launch in June 2000 and is viewed throughout Australia as an excellent example of the cutting edge of water resources data management. The world wide web address for this site is <http://www.vicwaterdata.net>

VICTORIAN RIVER HEALTH STRATEGY

Victorians depend on their rivers and floodplains for a range of economic, social, cultural and environmental purposes. A Victorian River Health Strategy (VRHS) is being developed to ensure healthy rivers, streams and floodplains that will meet the multi-functional needs of the community for current and future generations.

The strategy is a key component of the Government's River and Catchment Restoration Program. It is being developed by the Catchment and Water Division of NRE, with advice from a Reference Committee of all major statewide stakeholder groups including the VFF, ACF and Environment Victoria. The Committee is chaired by the VCMC Chair, Ms Christine Forster.

A Scientific Panel has also been established to ensure that the scientific basis of the Strategy is sound and that it meet its ecological objectives. The Panel is chaired by VCMC member, Professor Barry Hart.

In addition, the VRHS is being developed in close consultation with the EPA, which is undertaking the review of the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters of Victoria), to ensure complementarity of these policy instruments.

A starting point for the development of the Strategy was the vision for Victorian rivers developed by the VCMC, with the assistance of NRE in December 1999 and outlined in the document:

- *Rivers - 2050: The future of rivers in Victoria.*

The Victorian River Health Strategy (VRHS) will set the direction for all management functions related to the health of rivers and their associated floodplains and wetlands. It will provide direction and set targets on the provision of environmental flows, restoration of stressed rivers, river water quality, managing water frontages, instream biota and habitat, managing our Heritage Rivers and, finally, on linking with broader catchment management programs in an integrated way.

This strategy will provide the framework for the integrated management and restoration of Victoria's rivers and their associated floodplains and wetlands. It will outline the Government's policy approach on a number of specific management issues including over-allocated or flow stressed rivers, water quality and river frontages.

In addition, the VRHS will provide guidance on priority setting for the use of Government funds on river management and restoration, with the aim of generating the maximum environmental and community benefits.

While focussing on improving river health, the VRHS will pursue this aim within the context of sustainable regional development and the balancing of 'triple bottom line' considerations. It will focus on the protection and restoration of high value community assets associated with a river whether they are:

- environmental (e.g. threatened species, Ramsar wetlands);
- economic (e.g. provision of high quality town water supply, focus for regional tourism);
- social (e.g. site of indigenous significance) assets.

It will also outline how to ensure community ownership and involvement. A draft Strategy for public comment is anticipated early in 2002.

WATERS OF VICTORIA

The Environment Protection Authority is currently reviewing the State-wide policy to protect Victoria's water environments. This is *The State environment protection policy Waters of Victoria*, commonly known as WoV.

In 1988, WoV provided an important first effort in setting goals and actions to improve the health of Victoria's water environments. Since this time, use of Victoria's natural resources has increased, awareness and understanding of environmental issues has improved and new bodies have been established for coastal and catchment management. As a result, the current framework to protect Victoria's water environment is no longer adequate.

The revised WoV will provide a legal framework to guide the protection and rehabilitation of Victoria's rivers, lakes, wetlands, estuaries, bays and oceans, so that current and future generations can safely use and enjoy them. Its key purpose is to help achieve sustainable water environments by establishing the uses and values of water that Victorians want, and the environmental quality required to protect them. It will form part of Victoria's environment protection system and will support catchment, coastal and marine management arrangements.

WoV is being developed in conjunction with a Reference Committee with representatives from government agencies, industry bodies and environment and conservation groups. These representatives will contribute to the development of the Victorian River Health Strategy. The views of this Committee and those of other key stakeholders will be used to shape WoV.

A background paper outlining the key issues that WoV will need to address and ways in which it might do so, and an outline of the draft WoV have been available for comment. EPA has also met with many key partners across Victoria to help shape the draft. It is anticipated that a further draft will be released for public comment in late 2001.

VICTORIAN STORMWATER ACTION PROGRAM (VSAP)

EPA Victoria's urban stormwater program – VSAP - is part of the Victorian government's "Greener Cities" policy, and was launched by the Victorian Government in June 2000. The Victorian Government allocated \$22.5 million over three years to improve the environmental management of urban stormwater in Victoria.

The Victorian Stormwater Advisory Committee (VSAC) was appointed to provide advice to EPA Victoria on delivery of the program. This committee is chaired by EPA Victoria and consists of 4 local government representatives (two metropolitan and two regional), NRE, Melbourne Water, DOI, CMA's, two Community representatives (one metropolitan and one regional) and Environment Victoria. EPA Victoria has established a Stormwater Team to undertake the administration of this program.

A key component of VSAP is a three-year grant program to assist local government with the development and implementation of their Stormwater Management Plans. Funding assistance for priority projects in Stormwater Management Plans is to be matched by local governments largely on a dollar for dollar basis. There is also a strategic program to facilitate capacity building and assist the widespread adoption of best practice environmental management of urban stormwater.

VSAP Goal

To improve the quality of Victoria's water environments through better environmental management of urban stormwater.

In the first year of the program over 90 applications were received with more than 71 being successful. Funding from VSAP of over \$4.5 million was allocated to these successful projects. Including Council and partnership commitments more than \$10 million has been allocated to improve urban stormwater management.

Development Grants

Development grants are available for 'regional councils' (those outside Melbourne Water's drainage jurisdiction) to develop a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP). Up to 50% of the costs for developing a plan (approximately \$40 000) are available through VSAP. Local Government and their partners, ie Catchment Management Authorities (CMA's) or Coastal Boards, are required to provide the remaining funds and commit to developing the plan in accordance with best practice methodology which complements the Best Practice Environmental Management Guidelines (published by CSIRO).

Currently over 35 (from a possible 47) regional councils are preparing SWMP's. In the metropolitan area over 20 councils have or are currently developing SWMP's.

Implementation Grants

The majority of the grant program funding will be distributed to local governments to assist with the implementation of priority projects in council SWMPs. Partnerships and collaborative ventures are encouraged to ensure maximum environmental benefit is achieved from the funding distributed.

Only councils who are developing a SWMP or who have a finalised SWMP are able to submit applications, although VSAP encourages collaborative ventures with other key stakeholders. Up to 50% of the costs of a successful project may be provided through VSAP.

The closing date for the 2001 Implementation Grants is 9 November 2001.

Strategic Program

Strategic projects will be instigated by VSAP to expedite and encourage widespread improvements on the ground during the three years of the program – for example, improving the State Planning Policy Framework, regional demonstration projects or coordinated pilots. Some critical needs and gaps have already been identified in many council SWMPs and may need to be addressed strategically through VSAP.

Measures and projects may also be very similar from council to council, providing opportunities for State Government agencies and departments to coordinate or lead cost-effective implementation across the board.

More information about VSAP including lists of VSAC, TAG, SWWG and implementation projects can be found on EPA Victoria's Website: www.epa.vic.gov.au.

VICTORIAN GREENHOUSE STRATEGY

The VCMC contributed to the development of the Victorian Greenhouse Strategy with member Alison Teese participating in the Agricultural and Sinks

Stakeholder Reference Group. The VCMC also made a submission in response to the *Greenhouse Strategy Discussion Paper*.

The Reference Group undertook a number of tasks. Of particular relevance to the VCMC activities were discussions on linking management activities for carbon sinks with other issues such as salinity control and reversing biodiversity decline. Rural and regional communities face a huge challenge in tackling such broadscale issues. There are clear possible efficiencies in linking implementation activities to collaboratively address climate change, salinity, water quality and biodiversity decline.

OPERATION OF THE CMAs

GLENELG-HOPKINS CMA

Progress

The roles and responsibilities of the GHCMA continued to expand, resulting in a revised staff structure to meet current requirements. This investment provided substantial returns.

Premises

Glenelg Hopkins CMA welcomed the opportunity to transfer its operations to a modern building at 79 French Street, Hamilton. The official opening was performed by The Hon. Sherryl Garbutt MP, Minister for Conservation and Environment, during her visit in January 2001.

Plans

To assist in the integrated and strategic management of the region's natural resources, several new plans have been prepared. These include the *Draft Regional Vegetation Plan*, the *Glenelg Hopkins Nutrient Management Plan*, and the *Rabbit and Weeds Action Plan*.

Partnerships

Glenelg Hopkins CMA continued to seek opportunities to develop partnerships with organisations and community groups. These community partnerships involved sponsorship, education and Waterwatch programs. Details of community projects and activities both completed and planned are outlined in the recently published *Celebration of Community Partnerships* produced by Glenelg Hopkins CMA. Notable partners included community, Local Government, the South West Sustainability Partnership, water authorities, Landcare and NRE.

Committees

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is an independent advisory committee to the Glenelg Hopkins CMA which carried out:

- a comprehensive review and redrafting of the Audit Committee Charter, Contracts Management System and Risk Management;
- an audit process for community grants;
- a reassessment and upgrade of policies and procedures.

Finance Advisory Committee

The Finance Advisory Committee provided advice to the Board in relation to the financial management of the Authority.

Communications and Sponsorship Committee

The Communications and Sponsorship Committee was responsible for implementing a communication strategy aimed at ensuring the Glenelg Hopkins CMA's

stakeholders were informed about its activities and operations.

Waterways Implementation Committee (WIC)

WIC approved 183 community partnership projects in the Glenelg Hopkins CMA regional priority focus areas, totaling approximately \$815,000. This strategic allocation of funding for on-ground works is a significant investment towards improving the health of the catchment's waterways. Among the results 280 km of protective fencing was erected, 202 km of direct seeding and the planting of 235,310 seedlings.

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Land and Biodiversity Implementation Committee (LABIC)

LABIC advised the Board on matters relating to all aspects of land and biodiversity issues affecting the region. This included information relating to:

- *Landcare Task Force Health Landscapes – Sustainable Communities* Draft document;
- the *Draft Victorian Pest Management Framework*; and
- the *Review of the Private Forestry Strategy*.

Committee Members represented the Board on external subcommittees such as the Gorse Task Force, Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee and NRE Steering Committee. They also managed the development of the Effects of Prosecution on Changing Landholder Behaviour Program.

LABIC also played an important role in a partnership with the Natural Resources Environment Catchment and Water Unit to develop the *Glenelg Hopkins Regional Vegetation Plan*.

NAP Steering Committee

Planning started early in anticipation of this significant program with the establishment of a Steering Committee consisting of ten members. The committee includes four community members, two NRE Managers, three Glenelg Hopkins CMA Managers and was chaired by a Glenelg Hopkins CMA Board Member.

Strategic Programs

Corporate Business Management

The Glenelg Hopkins CMA continues to make significant progress towards program goals via:

- management of Glenelg Hopkins CMA finances (doubled over the past two years);
- substantial staff changes (increased by six during the past year);
- partnership development with NAP, being a particular highlight.

Waterways and Water Resource Management

The program balanced essential strategic planning with achievement of on-ground outputs. Priority was given to

forming stronger partnerships with the community and other organisations. Other major tasks were:

- the development and finalisation of the Glenelg Hopkins Nutrient Management Plan;
- streambank stability and reestablishing riparian vegetation
- installation of three fish ladders;
- developed a stronger role to obtain greater environmental flows in the Glenelg River;
- implemented stressed rivers project on the Glenelg River;
- implemented floodplain management responsibilities;
- carried out two research projects: impact of blue gums on groundwater supplies, and the KiaOra Biosolids project;
- planning and investigation that resulted in three river restoration plans being developed for the Surrey, Merri and Eumeralla Rivers;
- management of sand in the Glenelg River;
- increased involvement of schools and groups in Waterwatch programs;
- review and updating Partnership Project Guidelines.
-

Land and Biodiversity

LABIC is responsible for managing a number of NHT funded projects (budget total for 2001/2002: \$310,000).

- Fiery Creek Integrated Catchment Management and Restoration Project;
- Preserving our Wetlands;
- Replanting the Wannon.

Regional Sustainability

Community Partnerships

Details of projects and activities both completed and underway can be found in the publication *A Celebration of Community Partnerships*. Activities and projects include:

- Bob McKenzie's Walk Down the Hopkins River;
- construction of two rock chute grade control structures south of Ararat;
- restoring Denicull Creek;
- Waterwatch;
- rabbit control program;
- tree-planting and water quality testing by school students;
- Watershed 2000;
- platypus count;
- Framlingham welcome corroboree;
- control of woody weeds (gorse);
- stormwater litter traps;
- drain stenciling;
- South West Sustainability Partnership;
- sponsorship of Hopkins One Mile Swim.

Waterwatch

The Waterwatch Program focused on environmental education, with 900 participants in the Glenelg Basin, over 1,000 participants in the Portland Basin and 900 in Hopkins Basin.

Achievements to date:

- A total of over 180 stormwater drainage pits have been stenciled;
- Over 600 students participated in National Water Week activities at Hamilton and Portland;
- Over 600 posters were submitted for National Water Week Competition and Mortlake College won the State Division of "Race Around the Catchment";
- Stronger links development with Landcare Groups;
- Finalisation and implementation of the Glenelg Hopkins CMA Resource Kit.

Community Education activities have included the development of information brochures on stormwater and riparian vegetation (expected distribution 16,000 and 4,000 respectively), and a well attended interactive information day at Warrnambool Civic Green to acknowledge World Environment Day.

The South West Sustainability Partnership is another program supported by the Glenelg Hopkins CMA. It aims to identify and implement processes of sustainable development through collective initiatives as defined in the Partnerships Blue print.

Communications

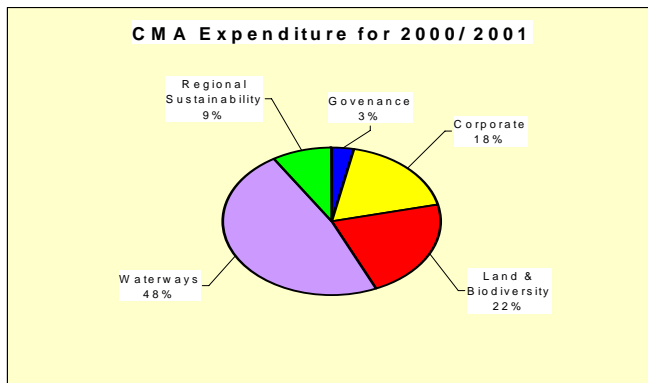
Glenelg Hopkins CMA has a responsibility to inform the community of Natural Resource Management issues and to encourage all stakeholders to consider the health of the catchment, whether participating in work or recreation - based activities. Other important communications activities undertaken during the year include:

- Market Research shows that support for the Glenelg Hopkins CMA has risen from 29% to 70% amongst those who have an understanding of the Glenelg Hopkins CMA and its activities;
- full time communications officer appointed;
- the opening of the new Glenelg Hopkins CMA premises by the Minister for Conservation and Environment, the Hon. Sherryl Garbutt MP;
- field Day at the property of the Hanslow Cup winners: Bill and Sandra Day;
- sponsorship of the Eastern Barred Bandicoot newsletter;
- sponsorship of Cape to Cape walk;
- adoption of new logo and corporate image;
- National Wetland Forum held in November;

- ‘Working Together’ summit held to highlight the benefits of a coordinated approach to Natural Resources Management;
- representation at the two major industry field days for the region, the ‘ACME Field Day’, in Warrnambool and ‘Sheepvention’ in Hamilton;
- support for the Regional Environmental Employment Program, in which participants carried out an index of stream conditions.

Finance & Investment Activities

Glenselg Hopkins CMA financial investment (\$4.2 million) in its activities is presented in the pie chart below:



Future Directions

The future promises to be challenging and exciting. The Board’s recent empowering of LABIC and WIC creates a greater sense of ownership of the Partnership Projects Program, but carries with it a greater call for commitment to the efficient and effective delivery of programs. This will include monitoring and reporting requirements.

The Glenselg Hopkins CMA has also taken great strides in ensuring community education and awareness of the Glenselg Hopkins CMA role in helping our regional environment. The encouraging feedback from the community indicates growing support for the integrated catchment initiatives undertaken by the Glenselg Hopkins CMA. These programs must continue.

The need to conserve and enhance our natural resources, to build capacity and increase our competitive advantages are essential for the future.

CORANGAMITE CMA

The year 2000/01 has been one of continual expansion for the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority. The organisation has broadened its responsibilities whilst continuing to manage the growth in service expectations of its clients and stakeholders.

One highlight of the year was the attendance of the Board, Implementation Committee members and staff at a Strategic Planning workshop in Geelong. This

workshop was most useful in ensuring that the Authority maintained a focus on addressing community and regional needs.

The staff complement increased from 12 to 21 during the year. This reflects the strengthening of the Authority’s responsibilities across a broadening range of issues.

The development of the Authority website, www.ccma.vic.gov.au, was undertaken during 2001.

Highlights - Milestones and Achievements

There have been many achievements throughout the year. Highlights from each Program include:

Waterway Program

- the Authority’s Healthy Waterway Incentive Program funded a total of 178 projects to a total value of \$1.833 million;
- CCMA *Draft Waterway Health Strategy* was released in June 2001;
- the Authority was directed by the State government to manage the 2.5 kilometre Moorabool River deviation following the closure of Geelong Cement at Fyansford;
- all nine of the region’s municipalities with urban areas were committed to, or commenced stormwater management plans for all urban townships in their respective areas under the Corangamite Nutrient Program’s Urban Program by end June 2001.

Sustainable Agriculture and Land Management Program

- coordination of the Federal Government’s Natural Heritage Trust Program for the Corangamite region, with a value of \$2 million;
- commencement of the *Corangamite Salinity Strategy Review* commenced;
- the Corangamite *Weed and Rabbit Action Plans* were endorsed by the Minister and finalised in preparation for printing;
- a joint project between NRE and the CCMA was launched to develop project teams between the two agencies. The initiative aims to achieve better coordination of on-ground work within the region.

Biodiversity Program

- *Draft Native Vegetation Plan* developed and launched;
- Establishment of the CCMA Biodiversity Pilot Program;
- bioregional networks established to monitor and report on threatened species;
- biodiversity maps completed for Surf Coast, Colac Otway, Corangamite and Moyne Shires. *Draft Biodiversity Management Plan* for the City of Greater Geelong.

Floodplain Management Program

- a GIS referral management system commenced in March 2001. Over 350 properties from referrals over the last three years are already held in its database;
- implementation of a flood warning system. Timely flood forecasts and flood alerting systems performed well for the April flood on the Barwon River. The flood has an average recurrence interval of approximately five years in Geelong;
- a review of design flood estimates of the Canadian Creek catchment was undertaken in partnership with the City of Ballarat as part of their Flood Management Plan;
- five kilometres of the Lough Calvert main channel was de-silted;

Business Management Program

- implementation of a new computer system and financial software;
- in conjunction with its internal auditors, conducting of a Risk Management Strategy review and redevelopment of the risk profile for the Authority;
- creation of the Regional Management Plan with input from relevant managers and assistance in its monitoring;
- development and implementation of relevant policies and procedures for controlled functions which include creditors, payroll, purchasing, occupational health and safety and asset registers.

Future Directions

The year 2001/02 promises to bring new responsibilities, challenges and opportunities and will result in further growth for the Authority. A number of challenges will include:

- review of the Regional Catchment Strategy;
- development and implementation of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality projects with the aim of improving the region's capacity to implement priority works to address salinity and water quality;
- completion of the Waterway Health Strategy;
- raising community awareness and understanding of biodiversity;
- completion of the Floodplain Management Strategy;
- continued expansion of the delivery of services from the Waterway Program with a greater focus on stream bed and bank stabilisation and other erosion than previously;
- integration of biodiversity conservation across all forms of land and water management and all sectors of the community, government agencies and agri-industry;

- continued work to build partnerships with key agencies in the region involved in natural resource management
- commencement of a major review study of the Drainage Schemes;
- increased commitment to longer term incentives for biodiversity conservation;
- completion of the de-silting of the last five kilometres of the Lough Calvert main channel.

NORTH EAST CMA

In its fourth year of operation the CMA has made significant inroads to improving water quality and reversing land degradation. The CMA completed the final year of flood recovery works on the Ovens, Kiewa and King Rivers. The \$4M program was subjected to an independent audit commissioned by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. The audit highlighted the CMA's efficient, professional conduct in carrying out the flood recovery program.

Another audit for OH&S purposes was also carried out during the year with improved practices for field and office staff, rapidly implemented, a part of the CMA's continuous improvement program.

In terms of works on the ground it was an exciting year with a large commitment from farmers in high priority salinity areas to plant 330 hectares as part of the Greenhouse Action Program. There was a rapid increase in the take up of vegetation, waterway, water quality and salinity program grants, much of the implementation being undertaken in an integrated manner to maximise multiple environmental benefits.

As part of the implementation of the Regional Floodplain Strategy, three flood studies were commenced; the Ovens rural floodplain between Myrtleford and Wangaratta, the Harrierville flood study and the Huon Creek flood study in Wodonga. These important studies will further clarify appropriate development opportunities and strategies for the protection of natural assets on the floodplain.

The CMA also completed organisational reviews of its operating structure and partnership arrangements with DNRE, leading to improved efficiencies, clearer accountability and closer relationships. Following a successful regional forum on research and development, the CMA also increased its alliances with peak national research and development bodies. These alliances will lead to better information with which to guide management decisions.

Finally, the CMA has given a strong commitment to initially benchmark and measure performance of the CMA with the use of the Index of Stream Condition. Major programs are monitored using the ISC method of

measuring river health and catchment performance. In addition, 180 ISC sites have been established in a stratified random selection process across the region. This commitment was recognised by the State Government, which presented the inaugural ISC award to the North East CMA.

WEST GIPPSLAND CMA

General Highlights

One of the first tasks of the new Board, appointed on 1 July 2000, was to appoint Angus Hume as Chief Executive Officer. The Board then undertook a review of Senior Management units in the Authority. After much research and discussion, including a Board and Management Workshop held at Clearview Farm over two days, the Board endorsed the CEO's proposal, creating four units from the previous six. The new unit structure will enable the Authority to meet all its needs for an effective and efficient natural resource management team.

The development of the draft *Native Vegetation Plan* saw the Authority embark on an extensive community consultation process, delivering a valuable resource on the abundance and location of a wide range of vegetation types. Community consultations continue reviewing the draft and the panel's expertise and commitment is appreciated.

Another highlight of the year was the Authority's ability to deliver the State Government's 'Gippsland Lakes Rescue Package' initiative. This will see nutrient reduction and improved water use efficiency in irrigated and high rainfall grazing systems. The Authority has also invested resources in taking a multi-benefit approach to addressing salinity, nutrient transfer and water savings in the region, specifically the Macalister Irrigation District.

The continuing willow reduction program across the region has played a significant role in meeting targets in river health, water quality and enhanced channel stability in riparian habitats. Significant landholder input and co-operation has been an important success factor in this program.

The Farm Dams (Irrigation) review process saw the Authority conduct seven public meetings across the region in an attempt to understand and appreciate the needs and concerns of landholders.

The completion of the *Regional Floodplain and Drainage Plans* provides a major tool for future planning and sustainability across the region. The completion of the Moe Drain consultative process has demonstrated the value and power of the Authority's commitment to involving the community in achieving the best outcomes in natural resource management.

The Authority acknowledges the significance of its partnerships with all stakeholders, the commitment of Board members, management and staff, the excellent support of its community and thanks them for their dedication over the past year.

Implementation Committee Reports

The Authority has five Management Groups (IC's) that provide a bottom-up approach to natural resource management across the region.

A valuable role of the Management Groups is the interaction with staff to influence the field works program and to determine the priorities of projects to be undertaken to meet the overall goal of the Regional Catchment Strategy. The vigorous positive partnership provided by the Management Groups gives essential local input to the Authority.

Some of the significant outcomes achieved during the year were:

- major input into the planning to improve the Moe Drain;
- establishment of the Trafalgar Depot;
- re-establishment works on the Thompson River;
- improvement to river health at Bellbird Corner;
- mediation on Floodplain issues and control of pest plants in riparian zones;
- implementation of activities for the MID Nutrient Reduction Plan and the Lake Wellington Catchment Salinity Management Plan;
- the launch of an Incentives Scheme for irrigators to improve water use efficiency.

Finance Activities

This past year has been one of refocus and consolidation of services, which has led to a restructured team comprising Internal Operations and Financial Operations to ensure that the Unit provides genuine value-adding through delivery of best standard service to a wide range of internal and external clients.

The key drivers for the Unit remain the need to deliver worthwhile and effective information to the Authority's decision makers and to maintain systems and processes to keep up with the ever-increasing demand for legislative compliance.

The Business Unit has also placed a major emphasis on strategic planning, encouraging holistic consideration of processes and systems leading to improved integration and operational synergy across all units of the Authority. Consistent and transparent processes were initiated to ensure that all actions remain open to scrutiny and accountability.

Future Directions

The Regional Catchment Strategy is to be reviewed in the year ahead. The aim of the review is to bring together key stakeholders from across the regional community to develop a set of natural resource priorities to take us forward over the next five years. Key players will include members of our Management Groups, local government councillors and officers, Landcare Networks and groups, State and Federal agencies and a range of industry groups from across the region. The success of this review will depend upon the ongoing regional commitment to an integrated, sustainable future.

Internally the Authority is committed to the development and establishment of a new Corporate Plan to enhance its position as an umbrella organisation in partnership with the community in sustainable natural resource management. This will bring a new set of funding/resourcing opportunities with State and Federal bodies.

At a regional level the Authority particularly keen to enhance its relationship with the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority to bring greater synergies to Gippsland regional natural resource management priorities, and with the Port Phillip Catchment & Land Protection Board in the Bass Catchment.

NORTH CENTRAL CMA

The appointment of the new Board was awaited with anticipation. This event saw the departure of a wealth of experience through long serving Board members, but this was offset by the appointment of an impressive variety of talented and enthusiastic new members to the Board. The NCCMA Board have continued in the manner set during the first three years and aim to maintain a strategic focus on the business of good natural resource management in the region.

Implementation Committees

The Avon-Richardson, Avoca, Loddon and Campaspe ICs each developed, finalised and launched a Whole of Catchment Plan early in the year. Each IC also developed and implemented a quarterly reporting process for work carried out in the relevant catchment. The four ICs were also active at meetings during the year passing a number of resolutions for consideration by the Board.

These groups are the engine room the Authority's engagement with the wider community and must be congratulated for their commitment and dedication to making the work of the NCCMA relevant to the regional community. The input of these people and their networks is critical and will be instrumental in the development of the next generation of our Regional Catchment Strategy in the next year.

Regional Partnerships

While much effort was directed towards the continuous improvement of internal operations, the year was characterised by a strong focus on external relationships.

The North Central Partnership Forum was strengthened by the addition of representation from Local Government. Members of the Forum are generally committed to the partnership and to finding ways of working more effectively towards achieving common goals.

Communication

A Communications Unit was established within the NCCMA's structure to be responsible for all internal and external communications. Recognising the ICs as the primary mechanism for community consultation and engagement, the Communications Unit was given responsibility for supporting these and ensuring that they are more fully integrated with the rest of the NCCMA.

During the preceding year the NCCMA continued to provide chairmanship and secretariat functions to the State-wide CMA Chairs and CEOs Forum. This was onerous but rewarding in terms of guiding the Forum to more fully realising its potential. Other CMAs were supportive and mostly committed to a strong Statewide organisation able to deal with issues of common concern and provide collective representation on such issues.

Irrigation Salinity

In the Campaspe and Loddon irrigation areas a significant level of community implementation and involvement was achieved. A highlight of the year was the celebrations marking ten years of implementation of the Tragowel Plans Salinity Management Plan. There were many other achievements in the irrigation region covered by the Boort West of Loddon, Torrumbarry East of Loddon, Kerang to Swan Hill, Tragowell Plains and Campaspe Salinity Management plans.

Dryland Salinity

The North Central Technical Support Group in conjunction with the NCCMA has identified priority sub-catchments for investment in dryland salinity management within the North Central region. Priority areas were determined on the basis of saline discharge, salt load export, groundwater risk, recharge risk and run-off risk of each sub-catchment. Each of the 150 sub-catchments within the region was given an overall ranking in order of priority for some form of salinity intervention. A total of 22 priority areas were identified in the North Central region.

Biodiversity

The essential need for ongoing sustainable use of our resources means that management for biodiversity is integral to the catchment's health in terms of key Landcare issues such as soil erosion, drought management, dryland salinity, water quality, flooding and drainage, and agricultural production.

The NCCMA's responsibility for Native Vegetation Management includes:

- implementation of the North Central Native Vegetation Plan;
- ensuring protection of high priority remnant vegetation through appropriate direction of State and Commonwealth funding.

The Minister for the Environment and Conservation, Sherryl Garbutt, released the draft North Central Native Vegetation Plan for public consultation in August 2000.

Waterways

Works and activities in the period ending June 30 2001, focused on consolidation of high priority projects undertaken over the previous two years. Following on from past achievements, the NCCMA Waterways Unit continued to develop its strategic approach to Integrated River Health works and activities on a subcatchment and stream reach basis. Programs, which involve the community and assist the NCCMA in obtaining greater knowledge of waterway management and restoration issues, continue to be a high priority.

Floodplain Management

Specific management and planning activities continue in each of the four catchment basins. A total of 519 planning and flood level referrals and 320 personal inquiries were processed by the NCCMA during the 2000/2001 financial year. The number of referrals represented an increase of 35% on the previous year.

Investment Initiatives

The Regional Assessment Panel has again given much time and effort to the funding processes involved in natural resource management. The Panel was successful in attracting funding to the region from the various sources which make much of its work possible. The quality of their work has again been recognised at the State level with a request to make a special presentation to the federal departments which provide funding to the organisation. Initiative funding results are as follows:

NHT Total: \$4,809,600
2nd Generation Landcare: \$469,500

Pest Plants and Animals

A major activity this year was a survey of client attitudes towards NRE's Pest Plant and Rabbit extension services. NRE commissioned a telephone survey of 350

landholders in the priority areas of the region, including both irrigation and dryland areas.

The "North Central Region Weed Action Plan" was completed and launched. The overall goal for weed management in the North Central region is "to minimise the economic and environmental impact of weeds to increase the wealth of the North Central region."

Other program highlights include:

- Second Generation grants totalling \$134,541 for community weed control projects;
- employment of an Enforcement Officer to the Gorse Task Force resulting in 126 Work Plan Agreements being developed with landholders in target areas;
- the Good Neighbour Program funded \$152,217 for weed control projects on public land to complement community projects on adjoining private land;
- the Chilean Needle Grass program continued. To date 342 infestations have been recorded;
- a total of eight Serrated Tussock sites have been identified and treated on private and public land.

Publications:

The NCCMA, its Implementation Committees and Agencies produced the following publications relating to the North Central Region during 1999/2000:

- Avon-Richardson Draft Floodplain Management Plan;
- North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy;
- Regional Rural Drainage Strategy;
- Floodplain Management in Australia, Best Practice Principles and Guidelines;
- Rapid Appraisal Method (RAM) for Floodplain Management, May 2000;
- Flood Warning Station Information Manual;
- CMA Flood Response Action Plan, February 2000;
- North Central Victoria Rabbit Action Plan;
- North Central Region Weed Action Plan;
- Avoca Whole of Catchment Plan;
- Avon-Richardson Whole of Catchment Plan;
- Campaspe Whole of Catchment Plan;
- Loddon Whole of Catchment Plan;
- North Central Draft Native Vegetation Plan;

Future Activities

The upcoming year will focus clearly be on the review of the Regional Catchment Strategy. It is critical that we get total ownership by all of our partners of the revised strategy and the NCCMA is fully committed to involving all partners in the review process.

Review of the Regional Catchment Strategy coincides with the first year of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. This should give the NCCMA impetus

to run a thorough review process. Relative to our current Regional Catchment Strategy, the new strategy shall set a much clearer direction for dealing with the broad range of natural resource management issues, including biodiversity in its broadest definition, land stewardship and greenhouse gas abatement.

MALLEE CMA

The Mallee CMA has maintained a focus on strategic long-term planning, sound financial management and community involvement over the past 12 months.

Throughout the 2000/2001 financial year, the Mallee CMA has placed an emphasis on developing stronger partnerships, as the foundation to achieving measurable environmental outcomes. A concerted organisational drive towards business excellence to achieve high levels of customer and partnership satisfaction has seen the Authority initiate a number of corporate projects.

The Mallee CMA has completed an extensive satisfaction survey, to serve as a baseline for comparing performance in coming years.

To better achieve our vision and environmental outcomes, the organisation has been through a substantial review. The new structure places a higher emphasis on the management of corporate projects and the management of biodiversity.

The Mallee CMA's financial statement continues to portray a healthy financial position. With a project-based budget, long-term sustainability continues to be an issue, with a financial sustainability strategy to be developed over the next 12 months.

The Mallee CMA has received delegations from the Minister for sections of the *Water Act 1989*. Through this, the Mallee CMA has become a referral authority for proposed works on the floodplain, and a licensing authority for works on waterways, allowing the authority to provide valuable direction in development on floodplains and waterways.

The effective management and utilisation of the Mallee CMA's human resources continues to be a high priority. Staff developed the organisation's first Values and Behaviours statement, which clearly outlines the values that underpin the organisation. Negotiations commenced for the first enterprise agreement to provide further workplace flexibility and productivity enhancements.

Considerable effort has been devoted to recruitment, with the creation of new positions and a number of staff moving on to further their careers.

All staff, Board members and Implementation Committee's must be acknowledged for their efforts and continued contribution to building an organisation that prides itself on being a high quality organisation in all activities and pursuits.

The key objectives for the Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy (Mallee RCS) programs for 2000/2001 were:

1. *Implement High Priority Actions of the Mallee RCS*
Mallee RCS was the basis for priorities and objectives for both the Regional Management Plan and Natural Heritage Trust.
2. *Implement the Regional Waterway and Floodplain Management Strategies*
The Mallee Waterway and Floodplain Management Strategies were approved by Government in March 2001, and implementation has commenced.
3. *Implement the Mallee Regional Native Vegetation Plan*
The draft Regional Native Vegetation Plan provides the basis for seven large regional projects and is driving a technical network and the Mallee Lands Committee in implementing actions for the Plan.
4. *Complete the implementation of the Mallee Water Quality Management Plan*
The Water Quality Management Plan was not completed. The Steering Committee recommended that the Strategy be integrated with the Second Generation SMPs.
5. *Implement the outcomes of the Strategic Review of Crown Water Frontages*
Three Crown Water Frontage Action Plans are under development and on-ground works have commenced along the Murray River.
6. *Implement the outcomes of the Simultaneous Review of Salinity Management Plans*
Planning of both the dryland and irrigation components of the Second Generation SMP has accelerated.
7. *Implement the Mallee Rabbit Action and Weed Action Plans*
Weed Action Plan and Rabbit Action Plan were approved by Government in March 2001. The Mallee Lands Committee is overseeing implementation.
8. *Continue effective coordination of salinity management throughout the region*
The two Implementation Committees, with appropriate technical support, are overseeing implementation of SMPs.
9. *Increase the area of land protected by sub-surface drainage by 600 ha*

The area protected by sub-surface drainage was 400ha.

10. *Finalise construction of Stage 5 of the Northern Mallee Pipeline*
Stages 5 and 6 of the Northern Mallee Pipeline were completed. Funding for Stage 7 was approved.
11. *Increase the conversion of furrow irrigation to pressurised irrigation systems by 200 ha*
Area converted to pressurised systems of irrigation was 160 ha.
12. *Protect a further 100 ha of remnant vegetation*
The area of remnant vegetation protected as 1,500 ha.
13. *Increase the number of landholders complying with the CaLP Act in terms of rabbit management to 85%*
The compliance level for rabbit management by landholders under the CaLP Act was 100%.
14. *Increase the area of land inspected for pest animal infestation to 5,000 ha*
Area of land inspected for pest animal infestations exceeded targets.
15. *Continue to foster community involvement in decision-making*
Community involvement demonstrated through function of two Implementation Committees, the Mallee Landcare Network and public consultation, when appropriate.
16. *Develop business administration policy and procedures relevant to Corporate objectives*
Development of policies and procedures was accelerated, with eight internal procedures being formalised in the 2000/2001 financial year.

PORT PHILLIP AND WESTERNPORT CALP BOARD

This 2000-2001 Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Board Annual Report delivers a new approach to reporting on the condition and management of natural resources in the Port Phillip and Westernport Region. It is an improvement on previous Annual Reports because it delivers greater quality and quantity of catchment condition information. It therefore better meets the CALP Board's statutory responsibility to report on the condition of the natural resources in the region.

The report provides information on a number of components of natural resource management as important indicators of overall catchment condition. The components reported on individually in this report are:

- Waterways;
- Water Quality;
- Native Vegetation and Habitat;

- Weed Infestations;
- Rabbit Infestations;
- Agriculture;
- Salinity;
- Urban Growth and Planning; and
- Community Participation.

Priority Work of the CALP Board

The Board is primarily involved in provision of advice to Government on natural resource management matters and in regional planning and priority setting relevant to natural resource management including development of the following strategic documents:

- Regional Catchment Strategy that provides a blueprint for achieving effective integration and delivery of land and water management programs in the region.
- regional Native Vegetation Plan;
- regional Weed Action Plan;
- regional Rabbit Action Plan;
- regional Salinity Management Plan;
- regional Landcare and Community Group Support Plan; and
- Waterway Management Plan for the Werribee and upper Maribyrnong catchments.

While the Board itself is chiefly an advisory body, it has very strong relationships with the various agencies and authorities that manage land and implement major works across the region. The key stakeholder organisations include the 38 local government councils in the region, Melbourne Water and the retail water authorities, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE), the Environment Protection Authority and Parks Victoria. The Board appreciates the assistance given by these organisations and their representatives to the Board in carrying out its functions including the provision of information for this Annual Report.

The Board has also established five Catchment Committees, one in each of the Westernport, Dandenong, Yarra, Maribyrnong and Werribee catchments. These committees are an important link for the Board with the communities of each catchment and they play a vital role in achieving cooperation and coordination of actions in each catchment.

CALP Board highlights over the year

Waterway Management

The Board has focussed on improving waterway management in the Werribee and upper Maribyrnong catchments due to the absence of a designated waterway management authority in that area. A costed and prioritised works program has been developed as the basis for a Waterway Management Plan for these catchments. In 2000-2001, using funds from the Government's

Healthy Waterways Initiative, the Board has been a partner in several priority waterway projects with Landcare groups, State government agencies and councils together valued in excess of \$180,000. This approach has been strengthened with the submission of an NHT bid worth \$432,000 for works in the 2001-2002 year.

Water Quality

The CALP Board has identified the need for an integrated water quality monitoring network for the region. AWT Victoria has prepared a report for the Board overviewing the current status of water quality monitoring across the region. The report details the current programs, hotspots and shortfalls in the system. It also provides recommendations on future programs, monitoring targets, sampling locations and options for storage and management of data, to be considered in an integrated approach to monitoring and reporting arrangements.

Native Vegetation and Habitat

The CALP Board has been the lead agency in the development of and consultation on the draft regional Native Vegetation Plan. The plan draws together an extensive range of data collected over many years on the flora and fauna of the region and sets targets and priorities for the protection, management and restoration of native vegetation. The draft plan is being revised into a final document including addition and amendment of the native vegetation in the region.

To guide applications and assessment in the various grant programs for 2000-2001, the Board also developed and distributed a "Summary of Regional Priorities" outlining the areas and activities that will be the highest priorities in grants schemes.

Weed and Rabbit Infestations

In conjunction with NRE, the Port Phillip and Westernport CALP Board has drafted a regional Weed Action Plan and a Regional Rabbit Action Plan to provide a strategic approach to weed and rabbit management across the region.

The plans aim to clearly identify roles and responsibilities for all land managers in the control and management of pest plant and animals on their land, and provides a framework for investment by Government to assist the management of rabbits and priority weed species on private and public land for public benefit.

The Weed Action Plan recognises that particular weed species have a greater actual or potential impact on the resources and production of this region and the State, and therefore that Government investment should be targeted to where the greatest public benefit will be achieved. In addition to defining a base level of service to assist the management of weeds, the plan defines three categories the most serious weed species for this region that will be

focussed upon for extra service. The categories are (i) medium priority weeds, (ii) high priority weeds and (iii) new and emerging weeds.

The Rabbit Action Plan recognises that rabbits have a higher impact in certain areas of the region and therefore that Government investment should be targeted to areas of greatest impact and where greatest public benefit will be achieved. High, medium and low impact zones have been identified in the plan as the geographical priorities for provision of Government services in the region. The zones have been defined from an analysis of (i) soil type and rainfall data indicating the inherent rabbit proneness, (ii) the presence of native vegetation indicating environmental importance and (iii) land use indicating potential economic value.

Salinity

Planning for salinity control in this region is incomplete and there is inconsistent analysis across the region. Some planning has been undertaken in particular parts of the region, and is recorded in separate documents including the Corangamite Salinity Management Plan (for parts of the Werribee and upper Maribyrnong catchments), the draft Westernport Salinity Management Plan (including Phillip Island) and a preliminary study in part of the Yarra catchment.

However, prior to this year there has been a lack of cohesive information in this region. The Port Phillip and Westernport CALP Board, in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, has responded to this situation by engaging the Centre for Land Protection Research to review the knowledge of salinity issues in the region. This work is being undertaken as a first step to developing a regional Salinity Management Plan

Data collected so far draws on information from 754 bores, water gauges and monitoring stations across the region. Depth to water table data and salinity discharge information has also been collated for the first time into a regional assessment.

Urban Growth and Planning

Local government uses many different tools, including planning scheme overlays, to promote and regulate for improved natural resource management. Several planning scheme overlays are used in this region. Overlays for Environmental Significance, Land Subject to Inundation and Vegetation Protection are the most commonly used in planning schemes at present.

The CALP Board's essential role in assisting the development and implementation of planning schemes is to provide strategic guidance to planning authorities. With the development of several strategic regional plans, such as the Native Vegetation Plan, Salinity Management Plan

and Rabbit Action Plan, local government will have strategic information to better use overlays such as those for Vegetation Protection, Salinity Management and Erosion Management.

Around two-thirds of the 38 councils in the region currently use between one and three overlay types whilst the other third use between four and seven overlays to control development and protect natural resources.

Community Participation

In recognition of the important role that community groups play in natural resource management, the CALP Board has played a lead role in initiating development of a regional plan for the support and coordination of Landcare and community groups. McGuinness & Associates Pty Ltd are preparing the plan on behalf of the Board.

To increase community awareness of strategic planning for catchment management, the Board has also played a lead role in the preparation and distribution of various other regional natural resource management plans for comment by stakeholders and to maintain and enhance community knowledge on these matters.

To ensure a level of regular contact with community members on important issues, the Board has also established a catchment Committee in each of the Westernport, Dandenong, Yarra, Maribyrnong and Werribee catchments. These committees are the Board's main link to the communities and implementation organisations in each catchment. These committees are comprised of representatives of community groups, councils, government agencies and non-government organisations. The committees meet regularly to exchange views and information, communicate details of actions planned or under way, identify catchment management needs and priorities, develop integrated and cooperative projects, and raise issues of shared interest.

GOULBURN-BROKEN CMA

Highlights

The Goulburn Broken CMA is recognised and acknowledged as a leader in natural resource management both within Australia and Internationally.

This has only been achieved through the enormous support and commitment made by our Catchment community and partner agencies.

This success was acknowledged when the Goulburn Broken Catchment was shortlisted for the International Riverprize 2000 for waterway management and nominated for the National Riverprize 2001.

Another highlight was the visit to the Catchment of Minister Garbutt in July 2000 when she inducted new

Board members to Victoria's nine CMAs, opened the Nathalia Town Weir and fish ladder and commissioned the Dowdles Swamp Project.

In October Goulburn Broken was again in the news when it organised the Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities Water Week 2000 event. Schools from Mt Buller to Mansfield were in the project. A helicopter was used to transport water samples and pledges to Adelaide with assurances that our Catchment community is working hard restore water quality for downstream users.

Close to 400 people attended a Goulburn Broken CMA dinner in Shepparton held in June to recognise 10 years of salinity action in the Catchment and acknowledge the contribution of community members in recognising the problem and developing world best practice programs in response. Jeremy Gaylard and John Dainton who were instrumental in the establishment and ongoing success of the program were singled out for special praise.

Biodiversity

The *Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy* was published as a final document and implementation is well underway.

Additional funds are seeing increased support staff and financial incentives for landholders and this coupled with seasonal and economic factors is translating into increased works in high priority areas, particularly in the dryland.

Our revamped environmental management and waterway grants have been enormously successful in achieving high levels of works in priority areas

Across the Catchment our officers are working with landowners to fence remnant vegetation, fence and revegetate waterways and restore wetlands on private land.

Biodiversity is a major beneficiary of the bringing together of land and water under the one umbrella of the CMA.

Research is showing community groups across the Catchment have undertaken Natural Heritage Trust's (NHT) Bushcare Program projects at more than 1000 sites over the past four years.

This year Goulburn Broken submitted a single Catchment bid for NHT funding. We believe the prioritisation of funding applications at a Catchment level is critical in our targeted and strategic approach to natural resources management.

Exciting research projects

In Mid Goulburn the Honeysuckle Catchment has been targeted under the Heartlands Project that aims to

support landowners to undertake environmental works and develop sustainable land use management systems.

The Honeysuckle Catchment is one of only two sites in the Murray Darling Basin that are the focus of the Heartlands Project that includes intensive research by CSIRO. The landholder response has been phenomenal highlighting the success of a targeted approach.

Another CSIRO led project, Ecosystems Services, provided a highlight of the year when Victoria's Governor, John Landy, visited the Catchment to launch an Inventory Report of Ecosystem Services that currently exist in the Catchment.

The Ecosystems Services Project brings together a team of eminent scientists intent on determining the true value of ecosystem services. This research should assist the entire community to understand the extent to which we are dependent on a healthy environment.

Floodplain

Endorsement of the Lower Goulburn Floodplain Rehabilitation Scheme by Minister Garbutt and the ACF was welcomed and efforts are now focused on achieving Federal Government support for the project.

The innovative scheme will see detailed design works occur in the first half of next financial year.

Funding has been received for a further four floodplain management studies while some 1000 referrals including requests for advice were processed this financial year.

The Draft Regional Floodplain Management Strategy is completed and will form the basis of how the Goulburn Broken CMA will carry out its floodplain management activities over the next five to 10 years.

Strategic

The Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee (UGIC) completed its Recreational Waterway Strategy for the Upper Goulburn Catchment. The strategy promotes sustainable recreation use of the region's waterways and sets agreed guidelines for their development.

There has been a growing focus on Murray River works and a number of successful programs were undertaken along stretches of the river that form the northern boundary of the Catchment.

A Catchment Stormwater Strategy was completed prioritising actions and Goulburn Broken catchment shires were successful in attracting 25% of the Victorian Stormwater Action Program's (VSAP) funds allocated to regional Victoria. These funds will be used to develop shire stormwater plans. On-ground works will include a number of storm water wetlands.

These and many other achievements have been made possible through the initiatives and financial support of both State and Federal Government.

Future Activities

Next year will see the five-year review of the Regional Catchment Strategy undertaken and our intention is to engage in a broad consultative process involving all stakeholders.

This provides an important opportunity for us all to ensure the issues, actions and strategies to achieve the triple bottom line of *social, economic and environmental sustainability* are included.

The revised Regional Catchment Strategy will be accredited by Government and be the key instrument for attracting funding through the National Action Plan.

The strength of environmental programs in the Goulburn Broken Catchment has been firmly built on the shared vision and commitment that exists between the CMA, agencies and the community.

EAST GIPPSLAND CMA

Milestones 2000-01

The Authority was involved in a wide range of projects throughout the region that delivered positive results for the management of natural resources in East Gippsland.

Significant milestones during 2000-2001 included:

- Significant progress towards improving the environmental health of the Snowy River through commitments to an increased flow of water by the Commonwealth, Victorian and New South Wales governments.
- Extensive involvement of the community in a range of consultation projects associated with major projects such as the Waterway Management Strategy and Floodplain Management Strategy.

Delivery of the works program throughout the four sub-catchments, resulting in over \$1.8 million of on-ground works.

Ongoing development of partnerships with a range of agencies and community organisations to maximise the opportunity to achieve positive environmental outcomes from the resources available.

Close liaison with State and Federal Government agencies to maximise grant income to the East Gippsland region. Continued promotion of natural resource management issues through the implementation of the Authority's Communication Strategy.

Completion of the Genoa Expert Panel Investigation into sediment sources and management of the Genoa River.

Implementation of staff restructure to provide an improved service for the Board's Management Groups, community and other key stakeholders.

A 95% success rate for the Natural Heritage Trust fund applications.

Implementation of the second of the three-year Natural Disaster Funded program. This included expenditure of over \$600,000 in the Upper Mitchell Catchment.

Commencement of the Snowy/Brodribb Drainage Study to investigate and determine the costs and benefits of operating the drainage scheme.

Commencement of the \$1.7 million State Government funded Snowy River Rehabilitation Trial Project.

WIMMERA CMA

2000/2001 has proven to be a year of consolidation for Wimmera Catchment Management Authority. Since the establishment of the Authority in 1997, the Wimmera has benefited greatly from detailed strategic planning for the sustainable management of the Wimmera environment.

Significant on ground works have been achieved, in partnership with Landcare groups and networks, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, local government, water authorities, land owners and communities

These works have achieved positive results for biodiversity values, waterways restoration and land management systems.

Community input into the works priorities and planning processes has been outstanding due to the commitment of the community members of the Functional Committees.

We are very fortunate in the Wimmera, to have access to quality scientific, technical and information services to support our work. It is critical that the Wimmera continues to be promoted as a 'can do' region with a vision based on sustainable development, nurturing employment and training, research and development and expertise in natural resource management.

The achievements of the Board during 2000/2001 provide a solid foundation to further address the natural resources and management needs for the future. Darryl Argall, Jan Boynton, Barry Clugston, Lyle Driscoll, Merryn Eagle, Jo Gardner, Barry Hall, Peter Kennedy and Jim Kilpatrick have each contributed to the continuing

improvement of the Wimmera environment, by strategically identifying and prioritising issues and planning for the future.

Wimmera Catchment Management Authority is committed to two functions in addressing the future natural resource management needs of the Wimmera:

1. Advisory role to the Minister for Environment and Conservation, ensuring that Wimmera issues are recognised in the development and implementation of State government policies.
2. Community consultation and awareness raising – working in partnership with the Wimmera community to achieve our common vision.

Looking to the future, just as the current channel system enabled settlement of the region last century, the Wimmera Mallee Piping proposal will set the scene for development for the next one hundred years. The proposal has the potential to change the economic, environmental and social capacity of the Wimmera Mallee.

Sustainable Regional Development

Wimmera 2020 is the sustainable regional development forum for Wimmera Catchment Management Authority. The group, formed in 1997, promotes business development and sustainable natural resource management in the region. The forum recognises the need to improve the Wimmera's agribusiness prospects by drawing together local players and promoting sustainable economic development.

2000 Young Agribusiness Achiever Awards

Young Wimmera achievers revealed new initiatives in agriculture and tourism in front of a capacity crowd of more than 120 at a gala dinner in Horsham on November 30. Wimmera 2020 presented awards to achievers from the five shires at the fourth annual Young Agribusiness Achiever Awards.

Victorian Agribusiness Forum Summit

Wimmera 2020 provided a focus on removing barriers to agribusiness and retaining superannuation money in regional areas at a state agribusiness forum at Healesville in March 2001. The forum showcased its achievements to agribusiness groups from across the state at the second annual Agribusiness Summit.

Wimmera Strategic Planning Initiative

Federal Regional Services Minister, Ian Macdonald launched the Wimmera Strategic Planning Initiative during a whistle stop visit to the region in June. More than 70 municipal and business leaders attended the launch at the Victorian Institute for Dryland Agriculture.

Healthy Waterways

The Wimmera CMA and in particular the Water Program team can look at 2000/2001 with a sense of pride and achievement. The program took a giant leap forward in turning planning into action delivering to the Board, Functional Committees and the Wimmera community, actions that directly improved the health of the region's waterways.

For its sheer size and logistics the waterway repair and maintenance program delivered over \$200,000 of on ground actions. Instream works stretched throughout the Wimmera river system from Glenpatrick to Antwerp and work in the Millicent Coast basin is planned for 2001/2002.

Healthy Catchments

It has been a year of consolidation and looking forward to enable the Land program to take best advantage of the funding opportunities on the horizon. There have been a number of highlights this year:

- *Wimmera Catchment Salinity Plan review* was commenced in May 2001.
- Strategic thinking on *Land Stewardship* by the Land Issues committee and Wimmera CMA has helped put the issue of alternative land use practices on the state agenda.
- *Landcare 21st Century Project* provides support and training to Landcare coordinators in the Wimmera through the development of a local Landcare community leadership training program and a Wimmera Landcare Website.
- *Geographic information* is now available to Wimmera CMA including base data such as town locations; roads; waterways; and contours through to more complex information such as geology; remnant vegetation; land parcels; and flood data.
- This year has seen the range of *engineering projects for salinity control* gather further momentum in the Wimmera.
- The *salinity plan in the West Wimmera* is nearing completion. This project has been undertaken by NRE staff from Edenhope and Bendigo highlighting over 6000 hectares visibly affected by salinity in the West Wimmera.
- The Land Program and partner organisations have welcomed the *Murray Darling Tools Project* team into the Wimmera with a series of workshops this year.
- Committee members have been involved in the community consultation meetings for the **Wimmera pipeline feasibility study**. The committee fully supports this project for the environmental, economic and social benefits that will accrue when the project is implemented.

Biodiversity

The Biodiversity Functional Committee is pleased to announce the following achievements in the Wimmera community for 2000-2001 including:

- Biological Control of Pest Plants seminar;
- Improved applications of Native Vegetation Retention Controls;
- Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan projects;
- Direction for Bridal Creeper Control Program;
- Emphasis on greater involvement with local government;
- Ongoing involvement with vegetation plan, roadside management strategy, implementation projects and ensuring biodiversity is included as an integral part of the boards other activities.

Development and implementation of the Wimmera Native Vegetation Plan continued throughout the year.

The wider biodiversity program has also made significant achievements. The Native Vegetation group had a hand in protecting 1100 hectares of remnant vegetation and revegetation of 450 hectares. They also carried out many extension and community education activities including:

- The Third Annual Biodiversity Seminar – 'Wildflowers, Woodlands and Witchetties' in September, 2000, with 120 attendees;
- Technical advice provided to over 600 landholders, and;
- Activities for World Environment Day, school presentations, including Longerenong College and the Wimmera Agroforestry Network.

The Pest Plant and Animal team completed and released the Wimmera Weed Action Plan and the Wimmera Rabbit Management Action Plan focusing on high priority activities. Key achievements include:

- Control programs for high priority areas including 16 community weed projects and 14 community rabbit projects and rapid response plans for new and emerging weeds;
- Control of targeted infestations of weeds and rabbits in high priority areas;
- Completion of draft Priority Weed Action Statements and;
- Landholders baiting of foxes and wild dogs on 45,000 hectares.

A further highlight was the release of the document 'Protecting Biodiversity and Cultural Values During Rabbit Control Operations'. Also a client survey was conducted on NRE Pest Plant & Rabbit Extension Services finding that 80% landholders surveyed were satisfied with the extension service but that NRE needs to better promote their services and programs.

These achievements are a result of a partnership effort between all stakeholders in the Wimmera under the strategic direction of the committee.

3. REPORTING ON CATCHMENT CONDITION

There are a range of initiatives working to develop information on the condition of Victoria’s land and water resources. The VCMC is due to provide its next extensive report on the environmental, social and economic condition of Victoria’s catchments in 2002.

To provide this report requires the co-ordination and collation of a range of activities and processes established to monitor and evaluate catchment condition. A description of the major initiatives follows.

CATCHMENT CONDITION INDICATORS PROJECT

Through the 2000/01 year, Council has brought closure to the effort to develop indicators of catchment condition through the efforts of the Resource Assessment and Monitoring Steering Group.

The Resource Assessment and Monitoring Steering Group is chaired by Ms Diana Patterson and includes Council members Ms Christine Forster, and Council observer Mr Doug Newton (EPA), as well as Ms Janine Haddow (NRE), Mr Bob Carrail (Chair, Corangamite CMA) and Mr Mick Lumb (Chair, Port Phillip CALP Council).

The indicators that have been developed are designed to fulfil two roles: to enable reporting of land and water condition and management, and to enable program evaluation. The first role is a legislative requirement, whereas the second fulfils the business needs of both the CMAs and NRE's Catchment and Water Division (CAW).

To ensure the indicators are as useful as possible to as many stakeholders as possible, comment has been sought and almost 300 people have made an active contribution to the project.

Work on the project had been funded by CAW and the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT).

The table below lists the indicators that have been developed. For each of these indicators a methodology paper has been prepared that outlines how information is to be provided, and who is responsible for making this happen.

Catchment Communities
1. Agricultural use of the landscape
2. Agriculture in the Regional Workforce
3. Gross value of production
4. Net farm worth
5. Farm family income
6. Farm demographics
Biodiversity
7. Conservation Status of species
8. Conservation Status of native vegetation types
To be finalised - Vegetation Condition
Inland waters
9. Water quality – stream pH
10. Water quality – stream phosphorus
11. Water quality – stream EC
12. Water quality – stream nitrogen
13. Water quality - median stream turbidity
14. Index of Stream Condition (ISC)
15. Environmental flows
16. Compliance with Bulk Water Entitlements
17. Urban water consumption
19. Irrigation induced drainage flows (Irrigation WUE)
20. Irrigation area protected by drainage
21. Groundwater allocation and use
22. Groundwater condition – representative hydrographs
Land
23. Land Use Impact Index
24. Extent and severity of dryland salinity
25. Rabbit activity
26. Extent and severity of state prohibited weed species

CATCHMENT INDICATOR WEBSITE

From November information pertaining to each of these indicators will be found through the NRE external website.

The Catchment Indicator web site, unlike a hardcopy report, is designed to be kept current through time. To maintain currency requires long term commitment to funding and resources to conduct data collection, report production and interpretation. The long-term commitment required for each indicator is being recorded in a companion document containing the 26 indicator "methodologies".

The web site provides information in a flexible way. Visitors will be able to get results on the basis of Local Government Area, as well as by Catchment Management Authority. Searches for particular issues will be possible, and links will be provided to other relevant sources of information.

Seeking an October 2001 launch of the Catchment Indicators Web Site there is a pressing need to ensure all relevant stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities and future commitments to resourcing. The VCMC and CAW are preparing a report outlining the following:

- Context of the indicator processes;
- Endorsement for current and future commitments of resources, including the timelines for this commitment;
- Need for integration with parallel activities (eg NAP, VCMC 2002 catchment report, Victoria's SoE report);
- Possible resourcing opportunities (eg NAP, NHT2, Victoria's SoE report).

TRACKING OF ON-GROUND ACTIVITIES

Keeping track of on-ground activities like tree planting or fencing was an important component of the monitoring originally proposed by the Catchment Indicators project. Our ability to report on on-ground activities has been greatly enhanced with the introduction of the Catchment Activities Management System (CAMS) this year.

CAMS is a data management and reporting system, developed for regional CMA and NRE staff, to assist with the management of Catchment Activities. It is web based and contains tools to:

- record details on activities (ie: tree planting or waterway restoration works);
- record spatially where the activity is; and
- report on activities, outputs, issues and budget lines using maps, standard reports and letters.

CAMS will streamline the grant management processes for field staff and project managers, with data forming a state coverage of catchment activities.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Statewide water quality monitoring and evaluation is coordinated by the Environmental Water Quality Monitoring Committee (EWQMC). Currently, the EWQMC is chaired by Barry Hart (VCMC) and includes members derived from NRE, the EPA, Waterwatch and the Melbourne Water Corporation.

The present Committee objectives are to:

- Coordinate the statewide monitoring and assessment of water quality, with particular focus on the quality

control/assurance aspects and cost sharing arrangements;

- Report annually to the VCMC as part of the Council's requirement to report to the Minister on the "management and condition of Victoria's land and water resources;
- Develop and update the water quality section of the State Water Data Warehouse;
- Coordinate and report on the State AUSRIVAS bio-assessment program reports.

This committee with the support of NRE CaW has been performing an increasingly important role in the evaluation of outcomes sought by various state and regional strategies and plans. The Committee through the VCMC has however identified areas where there is little coordinated activity or where greater efficiencies in water quality monitoring and reporting can be attained.

The VCMC has advised the Minister that the committee change its name to the **State Water Quality Monitoring & Assessment Committee** and expand its role to coordinate:

- review, interpretation and advice regarding Index of Stream Condition (ISC) assessments;
- environmental flow indicators;
- estuarine health assessment; and
- possibly wetland health assessment.

Other initiatives that will broaden the potential monitoring and planning base for water quality are in progress. These include the Victorian River Health Strategy, a range of streamflow management plans and an improved program to monitor estuarine health, wetlands and freshwater lakes.

These initiatives will generate significant change that would be more appropriately reflected in the activities of the new **State Water Quality Monitoring & Assessment Committee**.

Such rationalisation of activities will strengthen the State ability to report on water quality health. In addition to State reporting requirements, such information clearly serves a range of federal reporting and assessment programs. These include the National State of Environment Report, the Land and Water Audit, the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the recently announced new NHT initiative program.

A new **State Water Quality Monitoring & Assessment Committee** would adopt the following objectives:

- To develop, implement and coordinate a Statewide monitoring and assessment program to strategically report on the condition or health of the State's rivers and streams, wetlands and estuaries;

- To provide an annual report card to the Minister (via the VCMC annual report);
- To facilitate a range of organisations who might be involved in the monitoring and assessment program;
- To facilitate R&D that will result in new and improved monitoring techniques.

As the organisation responsible for reporting on the condition of land and water resources across the State, the VCMC has suggested it Chair, oversee and co-ordinate this new Committee with secretarial support provided from Catchment and Water Division of NRE.

VICTORIAN RESOURCES ONLINE

The *Victorian Resources Online* website (www.nre.vic.gov.au/vro) provides a wide range of statewide maps and information about Victoria's natural resources (soil, landform, climate, water, vegetation, investing in land and water, land and water management).

A major focus of the site has been the development of information about Victoria's soil and water resources. The water section, in particular, provides a wide range of maps and information about surface and groundwater resources and their management; access to water, and monthly updates of the status of these water resources (<http://www.nre.vic.gov.au/web/root/Domino/vro/vro.site.nsf/pages/water-streports>).

Work is now also underway to develop maps and information about the natural resources of Victoria's ten Catchment Management Regions. The initial Wimmera site is now external (www.nre.vic.gov.au/vro/wimmera) and will be followed in 2001 by the North Central, Goulburn Broken and Glenelg sites. Other regional sites will come on-line during 2002.

The regional websites are now being demonstrated to regional NRE and CMA staff. It is hoped that regional staff will assist in the further development of content for these sites.

For further information contact Mark Imhof (9742 8781) (mark.imhof@nre.vic.gov.au).

4. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

VCMC MEETINGS

VCMC meets eleven times a year, on the third Thursday of each month except January. Council members also participate on the various sub-committees mentioned in Section 1. The Sub-committees meet as required.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

During 2000 - 2001, no requests were received for access to documents under the Freedom of Information Act 1992.

CONSULTANCIES

The VCMC used five different consultants for various tasks over the 2000-2001. These include:

- Terry White – for preliminary work in the development of a vision for Healthy Landscapes. Overall cost of \$5,667.
- Research Planning Design Group – for facilitating a workshop and for facilitating the Catchment Management Conference in November 2000. Overall cost of \$4100 for both activities.
- Beyond the Edge – for work on the Catchment Management Conference. Cost \$150.

- CM Communications – for support in editing and layout of the 1999-2000 annual report. Cost \$368.

NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY

National Competition Policy requirements have been taken into account when reporting to the Minister.

MULTI-CULTURAL STATEMENT

The Victorian Catchment Management Council is committed to policies, programs and strategies aimed at delivering culturally appropriate services to all Victorians. No special initiatives were needed by the Council to meet its statutory obligations.

PECUNIARY INTEREST

Declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant members and officers.

PUBLICATIONS

During the period 2000 - 2001, the following publication was produced by VCMC. Copies are available through VCMC:

- Annual Report 1999 – 2000.

APPENDIX 1

COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS INCLUDING A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VCMC

Group Name	VCMC representative	Purpose	Term
Catchment Indicators Committee	Diana Patterson, Christine Forster	Development of indicators	
CMA CEOs	Jane Tovey		ongoing
CMA Chairs and CEOs	Christine Forster, Jane Tovey		Ongoing
Greenhouse Sources and Sinks Working Group	Alison Teese	Management of State Greenhouse Strategy	
Indigenous Inter-agency Coordination Committee	Monica Morgan	MAV organised group to promote cooperation on indigenous issues	December 2000 -
Victorian Blackberry Task Force	Alex Arbuthnot	Development of a State Strategy	
State Assessment Panel	Christine Forster, Alison Teese, Alex Arbuthnot, John Russell		
Land Stewardship Committee	Alison Teese (chair), Christine Forster		
Victorian Pest Management Strategy Steering Committee	Christine Forster	Development of pest management strategy	August 2000 -
Victorian River Health Strategy Steering Committee	Christine Forster	Development of the Victorian River Health Strategy	
VRHS Technical Advisory Committee	Barry Hart		
Sustainable Irrigation Development Review Committee	Christine Forster		
Australian Landcare Council	Alison Teese		
Bushcare Reference Group	Alison Teese		
Committee for Sustainable Vegetation Management	Alison Teese		
EPA Board	Barry Hart		
Environmental Water Monitoring Committee	Barry Hart		
Infrastructure Planning Group	Christine Forster		
Landcare Australia Limited	Alex Arbuthnot		
Landcare Foundation Victoria (LFV)	Alex Arbuthnot		
Landcare Taskforce	Alison Teese		

APPENDIX 2

CATCHMENT STAKEHOLDER FORUM MEMBERS

Members of the forum in 2000-2001 were:

Australian Conservation Foundation
Australian Water Association
Conservation Volunteers
Environment Victoria
Friends of the Earth
Greening Australia Victoria
Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association
Landcare Foundation Victoria
Marine and Coastal Community Network
Mirimbiak Nations Aboriginal Corporation
Municipal Association of Victoria
Natural Resources Conservation League
River Basin Management Society
Threatened Species Network
Trust for Nature (Victoria)
Victorian Association of Forest Industries
Victorian Farmers' Federation
Victorian Minerals and Energy Council (formerly Victorian Chamber of Mines)
Victorian National Parks Association
Victorian Water Industry Association
Victorian Wine Industry Association
VR Fish (Victorian Recreational Fishers' Peak Body)

APPENDIX 3

EXPENDITURE DETAILS BY VCMC PROJECT

PROJECT NO. 10411 - VCMC OPERATIONS

Expense Code No.	Title	Exp. June 01	NOTES
6131	Payroll Tax	77.48	
6171	Super	871.92	
6191	WorkCover	11.54	
6211	Courses	309.10	
6518	Parking	74.59	
6551	Telephone	1.91	
6552	Postal	758.68	
6555	Couriers	3.57	
6571	Printing	2,241.05	
6575	Periodicals	220.00	
6582	Incidentals	3,507.15	
6634	Vehicle hire	2,149.08	
6691	Audit fees	44.19	
6702	Contract Services	5,666.37	
6706	Professional services	5,479.04	
6707	Sitting fees	65,258.00	
6741	Airfares	1,271.13	
6742	Personal Exp	18,910.60	
6745	Travel other	379.96	
6746	Meals reimbursement	1,087.12	
6747	Accomm reimburse	2,853.49	
6748	Incid O/night	22.10	
6750	Vehicle pkm	37,786.14	
6884	Meals entertainment	232.49	
8006	Operating and recoup	(12,387.92)	1
Total Project Expenses		136,828.78	

Notes

1. 8006 - Includes \$21,387.92 for RCAC reimbursement (or credit so reducing overall expenditure by 21,387.92).

PROJECT NO. 10421 - VCMC ADMINISTRATION

Expense Code No.	Title	Exp June 2001	Notes
6132	Payroll tax-contractors	286.57	
6211	Course fees	448.19	
6552	Postal exp	7.96	
6571	Printing	886.00	
6572	Other office exp	391.03	
6574	texts/ref books	36.37	
6575	Periodicals	-201.26	
6582	Incidentals	85.61	
6691	Audit fees	122.36	
6694	Contract services admin	6,361.81	
6706	Profess. Services	31,756.16	
6741	Airfares	260.57	
8006	Recoup and office exp	-12,750.00	1
Total Project Expenses		27,691.37	

NOTES

1. 8006 - Includes \$16,350.00 reimbursement for weeds support (or credit so reducing overall expenditure by 16,350).

PROJECT NO. 10431 - COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Expense Code No.	Title	Exp June 2001	Notes
6111	Salaries	51,083.64	
6131	Payroll tax	3,504.00	
6151	Rec Leave	5,112.83	
6161	Long Service	1,190.94	
6171	Super	1,841.60	
6191	WorkCover	563.35	
6518	Parking	2.78	
6582	Incidentals	945.74	
6747	Accom Reimburse	4,206.45	
8006	Recoup and office exp	-2,000.00	1
Total Project Expenses		66,451.33	

NOTES

1. Includes \$2000.00 in AAV money for Protocols project (or credit so reducing overall expenditure by 2,0000).

PROJECT NO. 10441 - VCMC CONFERENCES

Expense Code No.	Title	Exp June 2001
6211	Course fees	36.37
6551	Telephone	67.45
6572	Office Exp	248.50
6575	Periodicals	22.00
6582	Incidentals	2,138.31
6607	Maintenance	327.5
6611	Office equip (PC Lease)	4,215.65
6634	Vehicle non NRE	320.34
6706	Professional Services	4,250.00
6707	Comm Sitting Fees	588
6741	Airfares	117.5
6742	Pers Expenses	62.1
6746	Meals Reimburse	51.19
6747	Accom Reimburse	143.64
6750	Vehicle per km	295.4
7911	T'fer to another fund?	80
8024	IT Licences - SOE	5,200.00
Total Project Expenses		18,163.95

PROJECT NO. 10451 - RCAC

Expense Code No.	Title	Exp June 2001	Notes
6132	Payroll tax -contractors	277.96	
6211	Course fees	100.00	
6551	Telephone	302.96	
6582	Incidentals	260.88	
6602	EDP Consumerbles	246.7	
6634	Vehicle hire	2,108.60	
6694	Cotract admin support	3,043.80	
6706	Profess. Services	33,181.37	
8006	Recoup and office exp	-27,412.08	1
Total Project Expenses		12,110.19	

NOTES

1. 8006 - Includes \$28,612.08 reimbursement from RCAC Trust (a credit so reducing overall expenditure by 28,612.08).

