



Victorian Coastal Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2002/2003





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Chairman's Report



On behalf of the Victorian Coastal Council, I have much pleasure in submitting the seventh annual report of the Victorian Coastal Council to the Minister for the Environment.

This year has seen some exciting developments in marine and coastal management – in particular the introduction of a representative system of Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries on 16 November 2002. Council has been an advocate for a comprehensive and representative system of marine parks and sanctuaries throughout the investigation and development of legislation. Government's commitment to the introduction of Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries has renewed Council's enthusiasm to facilitate sustainable and integrated management from Victoria's catchments to coastal and marine environments.

Council, in association with Coast Action/Coastcare, hosted the Fourth Annual Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence recognising outstanding contributions to the management, protection and restoration of the coast. All nominations and projects were of high quality and covered many aspects of coastal management. It is pleasing to see the Awards are now recognised by the Minister, stakeholders, managers and the general community as a significant opportunity to recognise and acknowledge achievements made in integrated coastal management.

Council was invited to present Victoria's experiences with interactions between State and National coastal programs at the Partnerships in Environmental Management in the Seas of East Asia conference on 'Sharing Lessons learned in Sustainable Coastal Development' held in Xiamen, China. This was an opportunity to share Victoria's experiences in implementing Integrated Coastal Management. I was also pleased to be invited to facilitate a regional forum of environment ministers held in parallel with this conference. It is encouraging to note that some thirteen countries in the region are close to endorsing a regional coastal strategy modelled on the Victorian Coastal Strategy.

I have had the opportunity to contribute to State and national coastal management issues through the Intergovernmental Coastal Advisory Group, membership on the Independent Advisory Panel of the Natural Heritage Trust 2 and involvement with the implementation of Australia's Oceans Policy in the South East Region.

Regional coastal management has continued to develop with the endorsement of a further five coastal action plans, with more in the development stages. Further developments in regional planning have seen the broadening of regional catchment strategies to include coastal and marine issues. This is a significant and positive move forward in integrating management from the catchment to the coast and oceans. Council has made a significant contribution to ensuring that coastal and marine issues are incorporated into regional catchment strategies. As a member of the NHT2 Independent Advisory Panel, I have been closely involved in the accreditation process for regional catchment strategies and have been able to provide strategic advice on the inclusion of coastal and marine issues.

Regional Coastal Boards will provide ongoing contribution to the development of Regional Catchment Strategies, which will only serve to enhance the sustainability of Victoria's coast. At a local management level, there has been significant progress with the development of contemporary management plans for coastal reserves, and with the implementation of improved processes for appointment of coastal committees of management, using a skills based expression of interest model.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank outgoing Council member John Swan and all outgoing regional coastal board members for their contributions over the past three years. Boards have an important role in facilitating integrated coastal management at a regional level, and without the commitment of their members, would not be the driving force that they are.

We look forward to continuing our role as coastal advocate and meeting the challenges associated with integrating catchment, coastal and marine management.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diane James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Diane James



2 Mission Statement

The Victorian Coastal Council is the peak body responsible for ensuring on-going improvement of the Victorian coast and its management on behalf of the people of Victoria.



3 Highlights

- Council played a significant role in the declaration of 13 Marine National Parks and 11 Marine Sanctuaries together covering nearly 54,000ha or 3.5% of Victoria's marine waters on 16 November 2002. Both the VCC and Diane James received a Recognition Award from the Deputy Premier for their contribution during the process to establish a system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries.
- The following Coastal Action Plans, developed by the relevant Regional Coastal Board, were endorsed by the Minister in accordance with the requirements of the *Coastal Management Act 1995*:
 - South West Estuaries Coastal Action Plan
 - South West Regional Coastal Action Plan
 - Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan
 - Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland Coastal Action Plan
 - Central West Regional Coastal Action Plan
- The Victorian Coastal Council, in conjunction with Coast Action/Coastcare, awarded the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence 2003 presented by Diane James and Deputy Premier and Minister for the Environment, The Hon. John Thwaites, at a presentation ceremony held at New Quay, Docklands in March 2003. Awards were presented to:
 - Bob Whiteway for Life Time Achievement
 - Assoc. Professor Geoff Wescott for Outstanding Individual Achievement
 - Gippsland Ports Committee of Management for Innovation
 - Williamstown High School for Education
 - Friends of the Hooded Plover for Species Protection
 - Moyne Shire Council and Framlingham Aboriginal Trust for Cultural Achievement
 - City of Greater Geelong and McGlashen Everist Pty Ltd for Building and Design
 - Inverloch Coast Action Umbrella Group for Coastal Conservation and Protection by a Community Group
 - Hobsons Bay City Council for Coastal Conservation and Management by an Appointed Manager

Certificates of High Commendation were also presented to:

- Helen Tregear for Life Time Achievement
- SeaNet Victoria for Species Protection
- Apollo Bay-Kennett River Foreshore Committee of Management and Kennett River Coast Action, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and Colac-Otway Shire Council for Water Quality
- Wye River Surf Life Saving Club for Building and Design
- Fishcare Volunteer Program for Education
- Warrnambool City Council for Innovation

Encouragement Commendation

- Inner Western Region Migrant Resource Centre Project and Parks Victoria for Cultural Achievement

- Council has been represented by the Chairman, Diane James on the Natural Heritage Trust 2 and National Action Plan – Water Quality and Salinity Independent Advisory Panel that is responsible for assessing overall funding priorities and accrediting regional catchment strategies.

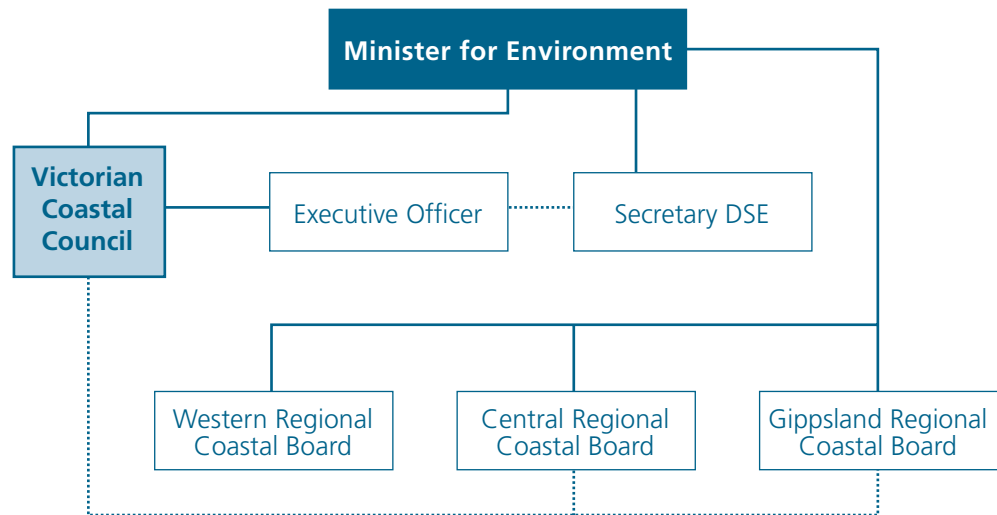
- Council continued to provide support to the annual Banksia Environmental Foundation Awards and was encouraged to note that the Gold Banksia Award was made to the Marine and Coastal Community Network from the Marine and Coastal Category. This category was introduced into the Awards as an initiation of the VCC.
- The Chairman, Diane James, was invited to present an update on the status of coastal planning and management in Victoria at the National Coastal Conference Coast to Coast 2002, in Tweed Heads.
- Government declared Victoria's Marine Faunal Emblem the 'Weedy Seadragon' (*Phyllopteryx taeniolatus*) on 31 October 2002. Declared 'Protected Aquatic Biota' under the *Victorian Fisheries Act 1995*, the Weedy Seadragon was selected after a public nomination process that was assessed by an Independent Panel of which Diane James was a member.
- Council hosted a Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils workshop in November 2002 and this was followed by the Department of Primary Industries' release of a strategic risk assessment, maps and guidelines for Acid Sulphate Soil Hazard in Victoria that was commissioned by Council.
- Council and the Victorian Catchment Management Council hosted a workshop on Regional Catchment Strategies and Coastal Issues in April 2003. The workshop was designed to identify key coastal and marine issues that should be addressed in the development of regional catchment strategies for accreditation with new national Natural Resource Management arrangements.
- Advice was provided to the Minister on a range of matters including coastal developments and planning initiatives.
- Diane James was invited to present on Victoria's coastal management and planning arrangements at the Partnerships in Environmental Management of South East Asia (PEMSEA) Conference in September 2002. PEMSEA promotes regional integrated coastal management in East Asia and actively facilitates integrated coastal management outcomes in the region. Diane James was also invited to facilitate a regional forum of environment ministers that ran in parallel with the conference.
- In November 2002, Council hosted a seminar on Coastal Climate Change Adaptation for stakeholders, coastal managers and interested persons to provide information on policy frameworks and the latest science relating to climate change impacts on the Victorian coast.
- A range of articles were published on coastal issues and Council made presentations at a number of key forums and conferences. Council and the Regional Coastal Boards also continued to provide current updates and information on their respective internet sites.
- Council has developed and commenced a framework for reporting on the implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002.
- Council's Chair and Executive Officer met with the Minister for Planning, the Hon. Mary Delahunty, to discuss coastal management and planning issues.



4 Vision for the Coast

“A biologically rich and diverse coastal and marine environment for our use and enjoyment today and for our children tomorrow.”

Reporting Relationship and Objectives



The Victorian Coastal Council is established under the *Coastal Management Act 1995* as the peak advisory body on coastal issues in Victoria. It is accountable to the Minister for the Environment.

Its role is to provide strategic direction and improve coordination of coastal planning and management.

As an independent body accountable to the Minister for the Environment, the Council is provided with a budget and secretariat support through the Sustainability and Environment Portfolio.

The Council's Objectives are:

- To create community ownership of a coastal strategy that ensures ongoing improvement of the Victorian coast and its management
- To be recognised as the peak advisory and advocacy body for coastal matters
- To maintain the currency and relevance of the Victorian Coastal Strategy and legislation
- To encourage best management practices in coastal management and excellence in design in coastal use and development.

The Functions of the Council are:

- To undertake statewide strategic coastal planning
- To prepare and submit to the Minister a draft Victorian Coastal Strategy
- To provide advice to the Minister
- To facilitate the operation of Regional Coastal Boards
- To monitor the development of Coastal Action Plans
- To coordinate the implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy and Coastal Action Plans
- To prepare and publish guidelines
- To liaise with and encourage the cooperation of Government departments, public authorities, municipal councils, industry, community groups and persons and bodies involved in the planning, management and use of the coast in furthering the objectives of the Act
- To provide opportunities for the public and interested groups to be informed of and involved in the work of the Council
- To encourage the work of volunteers in using and conserving coastal resources
- To give consideration to the needs of Aborigines and other interested groups in relation to the coast.

6 Council Activities

6.1 Council Meetings

Five Council business meetings were held during 2002/2003. In addition to this, a number of regional visits and a significant number of sub-committee meetings took place.

Business

18 July 2002
14 November 2002
12 December 2002
20 February 2003
15 May 2003

Attendance at Council business meetings

<i>Member</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
Diane James	5
Duncan Malcolm	5
Liz Johnstone	5
Lynn Murrell	5
Rob Gell	4
John Swan	3
Michonne van Rees	1
Paul Jerome	5
Kate Brown	4
Neil McCarthy	5

6.2 Sub-committees

Council operated three standing sub-committees. In addition, special purpose sub-committees have been established from time to time to deal with specific issues. Council also has a Scientific Panel, which is chaired by Emeritus Professor John Swan.

Standing sub-committees and their purpose are:

Marketing and Communications Sub-committee – to manage marketing, media and communications issues including design of Council's corporate image and printed products.

- Rob Gell (Chair)
- Duncan Malcolm
- Liz Johnstone
- Lynn Murrell

Planning and Coordination Sub-committee – to ensure coordination for the Victorian planning reform process as it affects the coast, advise on coastal development and approval arrangements for the coast and oversee the preparation of coastal guidelines.

- Paul Jerome (Chair)
- Kate Brown
- Michonne van Rees
- Neil McCarthy

Science Sub-committee – to provide strategic advice to Council on scientific issues relevant to coastal and marine environments.

- John Swan (Chair)
- Rob Gell
- Duncan Malcolm

Membership

Members of the Victorian Coastal Council are:

Chairman

Diane James

Diane James was appointed an inaugural member of the Victorian Coastal Council in 1995. She has been Chairman since 1997 and has been involved in every aspect of the development of the Victorian Coastal Strategy, the State Government's policy for the planning and management of Victoria's entire 2000 km coastline.

Throughout the past decade, Diane has played a role on a number of State and Commonwealth Government boards and committees and has made a significant contribution to Victoria's position as a national and international leader in coastal planning and management. She has presented papers in China, France and the USA, as well as throughout Australia.

Diane chaired a number of committees, for the National Oceans Office, involved in implementation of Australia's Oceans Policy in the South East marine region.

She has been an active campaigner for the introduction of marine protected areas in this State and received a Recognition Award from the Deputy Premier in March 2003 for her "significant contribution to the development of a system of Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries."

Members

Duncan Malcolm

Mr Malcolm lives on a farm at Boisdale in Gippsland. He has a strong interest in natural resource management developed through various positions he has held and has worked hard to develop strategic linkages between resource managers and participants at regional, State and federal levels. Mr Malcolm's current positions include member of the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, Chairman of the Gippsland Coastal Board, Watermark Inc, National Irrigation Science Network, the RMIT Geospatial Science Initiative Industry Advisory Board and recently retired Chairman of the Lakes and Wilderness Tourism Association Inc. He is the immediate past chair of Irrigation Association Australia and a member of a number of other committees and bodies.

Lynn Murrell

Mr Murrell is a former Secondary School Teacher and a Councillor for the City of Portland for over 18 years. Mr Murrell owns a primary production property at Cape Nelson. Mr Murrell has been extensively involved representing his community at a local, regional, State and federal level and is a current member of the Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Victorian Economic, Environment and Social Advisory Council, Greater Green Triangle Area Consultative Committee Good Governance Panel and the Natural Resources Conservation League. Mr Murrell is also Chair of the Western Coastal Board.

Liz Johnstone

Cr Johnstone trained as an accountant and has a background in small business, being a partner in a family owned business, Company Secretary (Drawplan Pty Ltd) and a board member of Elwood Financial Services Pty Ltd. She has extensive experience with local government and community associations including the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Association of Bayside Municipalities and the Australian Local Government Women's Association. She is currently Mayor of the City of Port Phillip, with a particular interest in the planning and environmental area. Cr Johnstone is also Chair of the Central Coastal Board.

Rob Gell

Mr Gell is well known to Victorians as the National Nine News weather presenter; he is also a coastal geomorphologist, environmental consultant and advocate of ecologically sustainable business. Rob runs his own environmental consultancy. He taught Environmental Science and Physical Geography, is a published author and photographer, has been a local government councillor and was a councillor of the Australian Conservation Foundation for almost a decade. He is currently President of Greening Australia Victoria, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and an inaugural Fellow of the Environment Institute of Australia.

John Swan

Emeritus Professor Swan AO is a former Dean of the Faculty of Science and Pro-Vice-Chancellor at Monash University. He was foundation Professor of Organic Chemistry at Monash University, and is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering and the Royal Australian Chemical Institute. Professor Swan has a long-standing interest in nature conservation and marine sciences. He has served as Chairman of the Crown-of-Thorns Starfish Research Committee and Chairman of the Australian Marine Sciences and Technologies Advisory Committee of the Federal Government. Professor Swan is also currently affiliated with many organisations including the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Western Port Seagrass Partnership, and the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at Melbourne University.

Paul Jerome

Paul Jerome is the General Manager, Planning, Land and Environmental Regulation with the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

He was previously the Director of City Development with the City of Yarra for 18 months, where he gained first hand experience in local government and in particular, the difficulties associated with medium-density housing. Prior to that he was a full-time Panel Member for 2 years and a member of the Local Government Board during the local government amalgamations. During this period he was also seconded to the Melbourne City Link Authority for six months and was fortunate enough to work on an AusAid project in Hanoi for six months. Before that he was in the Department of Planning under its various names.

Michonne van Rees

Ms van Rees was an active member of Council, during her appointment as Executive Director of Parks, Flora and Fauna with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and brought knowledge and expertise in the management of Victoria's parks and reserves, alpine resorts and coastal areas as well as biodiversity conservation to Council. Ms van Rees is currently the General Manager – Regional Management with Parks Victoria.

Kate Brown

Ms Brown holds the position as Corporate Counsel at Rio Tinto Limited based in Melbourne. Until 2002 she was the Legal Counsel and Board Secretary of Parks Victoria and a member of its executive team. She previously practised as a solicitor with a major Australian legal firm and in the resource sector. Ms Brown has worked in several Australian states in the area of environmental and business risk assessment. She has written and published in areas of environmental and land management law and holds a Master of Laws in natural resources law. Her professional interests include conservation and risk management. Ms Brown serves on the Board of the Victorian Homeless Fund and is a past-Chair of the Environment Committee of the Law Institute of Victoria and past-Treasurer of the Australian Compliance Professionals Association.

Neil McCarthy

Neil McCarthy is General Manager, Corporate Strategy and Services, at Parks Victoria. Neil has nearly 20 years experience in the field of natural resource management in Victoria and Japan and has experience in commercial forestry, business management, park management and endangered species conservation. Neil played a lead role in establishing Melbourne Parks and Waterways. He has been responsible for introducing and establishing a strategic management approach to the Parks Industry in Australia. This includes the introduction of prudent business management practices as well as innovative improvements in conservation management. Neil's qualifications include a Bachelor of Forest Science and a Masters Degree in Business Administration. He has been a Board Member of Phillip Island Nature Park Board and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Board. Neil is presently Chair of Leadership Victoria's Fellows Group and a member of the Gould League Board.



8 Implementation of the *Coastal Management Act 1995*

Objectives of the *Coastal Management Act*

- a) To plan for and manage the use of Victoria's coastal resources on a sustainable basis for recreation, conservation, tourism, commerce and similar uses in appropriate areas;
- b) To protect and maintain areas of environmental significance on the coast including its ecological, geomorphological, geological, cultural and landscape features;
- c) To facilitate the development of a range of facilities for improved recreation and tourism;
- d) To maintain and improve coastal water quality;
- e) To improve public awareness and understanding of the coast and to involve the public in coastal planning and management.

8.1 Strategic Coastal Planning

This year has seen significant developments in strategic coastal planning at both a State and regional level. Council has developed a framework to report on the implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy and *Coastal Management Act 1995*. The aim of this reporting is to establish and record advances in integrated coastal management throughout the State and identify issues where further effort is required, and to assess the implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy.

Regionally there has been significant effort in strategic coastal planning. A major focus for both Council and Regional Coastal Boards this year has been participation in the review and development of Regional Catchment Strategies (RCSs) by Catchment Management Authorities. The scope of RCSs has been broadened to be inclusive of coastal and marine issues and management. This has been further reinforced with the new Commonwealth Natural Heritage Trust 2 (NHT) and National Action Plan – Water Quality and Salinity guidelines, linking Commonwealth funding for coastal management to RCSs. The outcome has been considerable effort by all stakeholders and Catchment Management Authorities to begin to develop an understanding of catchment to coastal to ocean management issues to ensure their inclusion in the RCSs. In particular the Western Coastal Board worked closely with the Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority in the development of the Glenelg-Hopkins Regional Catchment Strategy, which was the first RCS endorsed and released in Australia in accordance with NHT guidelines.

Integral to the development of the RCSs has been the associated Regional Catchment Investment Planning process. The Regional Coastal Boards have contributed to the development of regional coastal priorities and projects, and provided support to Catchment Management Authorities. The Boards will have significant input to the future development of the process. Council has been represented on the NHT and National Action Plan Independent Assessment Panel which facilitates statewide strategic development and assessment of the Regional Catchment Investment Planning process.

Regional Coastal Boards have continued to lead the development of Coastal Action Plans in accordance with the Act. The Minister endorsed the South West Regional and South West Estuaries Coastal Action Plans and the Gippsland Boating, Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland and Central West Regional Coastal Action Plans. There is also a number of Coastal Action Plans in the development stages.

Coastal Action Plan development status is outlined in the table below.

Coastal Action Plan	Endorsed	5 yr Review scheduled
Anglesea Coastal Action Plan	September 1999	September 2004
Bells Beach to Red Rock Coastal Action Plan	In preparation	
Central West Victoria Estuaries Coastal Action Plan	In preparation	
Central West Regional Coastal Action Plan	August 2002	August 2007
Corio Bay Coastal Action Plan	In preparation	
Geelong Waterfront Coastal Action Plan	September 1998	September 2003
Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan	October 2002	October 2007
Gippsland Lakes Coastal Action Plan	April 1999	April 2004
Gippsland Water Quality Coastal Action Plan	In preparation	
Glenelg Coastal Action Plan	In preparation	
Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland Coastal Action Plan	October 2002	October 2007
Lorne Coastal Action Plan	May 1998	May 2003
Mornington – Pt Nepean Coastal Action Plan	In preparation	
Moyne Coastal Action Plan	July 2001	July 2006
Skenes Creek to Marengo Coastal Action Plan	May 2001	May 2006
South West Estuaries Coastal Action Plan	June 2002	June 2007
South West Victoria Regional Coastal Action Plan	August 2002	August 2007
Warrnambool Coastal Action Plan	August 1999	August 2004

The Boards have continued to facilitate strategic coastal planning in the regions and have been involved in a number of other strategic planning projects. The Western Coastal Board has continued to implement the findings of the Central West Planning Scheme Review. Recommendations in the review focussed on providing greater integration, consistency and a regional context to land use and development in the coastal planning provisions, including the development of a set of regional objectives. Special reference was also made to the option of extending planning schemes offshore, and improving the knowledge and capacity of local planners and Councillors to effectively implement regional coastal and marine objectives.

The Central Coastal Board completed the 'Coastal Priorities for the Central Region – A Framework for Implementing the Victorian Coastal Strategy', a strategic coastal planning document which seeks to establish a process to accelerate the implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy in the region. The document identifies seven priority areas to be progressed through cooperation with Government agencies, local government and stakeholders and was developed with input from key partner agencies in the region.

The Gippsland Coastal Board has been extensively involved in facilitating the implementation of the Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland and Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plans, as well as working with the West and East Gippsland Catchment Management Authorities to implement the Gippsland Lakes Future Directions and Actions Plan.

At a State level, Government has released two significant policies, the Melbourne 2030 – Planning for a Sustainable Growth and the Greenhouse Strategy 2002. While both have broader implications for sustainable development in Victoria, they also have direct implications for coastal management and planning. Melbourne 2030 outlines the directions for sustainable growth of the Melbourne metropolitan region. Population growth and development will have a significant impact on both Port Phillip Bay and Western Port and Melbourne 2030 will guide the sustainable growth of the region. Melbourne 2030 reinforces a number of key elements of the Victorian Coastal Strategy, particularly in relation to access and recreation nodes.

The release of the Greenhouse Strategy is a pro-active step in positioning Victoria to be able to adapt to changing conditions and to reduce overall energy demand. This is particularly relevant to the coast; where the implications of climate change (eg. increased storm events) and sea level rise have the potential to effect coastal management and planning in both the short and long term. The Gippsland Coastal Board has been successful in gaining NHT 2 funding to undertake an investigation into the 'Impact of Climate Change on the Gippsland Coast'.

Council notes that work continued through the Department of Sustainability (formerly the Department of Infrastructure) on the development of a proposed Great Ocean Road Region Strategy. The Strategy will facilitate implementation of a number of aspects of the Victorian Coastal Strategy in the context of an overall regional sustainability framework.

8.2 Protecting the Environment

Significantly, this year saw the declaration of a comprehensive and representative system of Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries on 16 November 2002. A world first, the Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries will protect a representative sample of Victoria's marine plants and animals and their habitats for future generations.

The Victorian Environment Assessment Council commenced the Angahook–Lorne Investigation. The investigation is looking at potential boundaries for a single national park in the Otway Ranges including public land extending from Anglesea to Cape Otway; and any other public land, which would be suitable for addition to existing State Parks or nature conservation reserves. While the investigation is in the initial stages, it covers a significant area of coastal land, popular tourism and recreation destinations and includes a section of the Great Ocean Road and will lead to improved outcomes for protecting the coastal environment.

All three regional coastal boards have progressed projects that result in improvement of the coastal environment.

The Western Coastal Board:

- Has had a major role in developing an estuary classification project. This project carefully analysed each of the 26 estuaries within the western part of the State and will lead to improved management and environmental outcomes for estuaries in the region; and
- Is a foundation member of the South West Sustainability Partnership which participates in projects to develop sustainable industries and lifestyles in South West Victoria.

The Central Coastal Board:

- in conjunction with NHT Coasts and Clean Seas funding, provided capital funding for installation of boat sewage waste management facilities, including sewage pump-outs and a hopper, at four sites in Port Phillip Bay; and
- Co-chaired the Western Port Policy Coordination Groups, which developed a conceptual ecosystem model for Western Port and provided an assessment of research needs.

The Gippsland Coastal Board has:

- Shared coordination responsibility with the West and the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authorities for the Gippsland Lakes Future Directions and Actions Plan that is targeted at 40% nutrient reduction in the Gippsland Lakes.
- Completed the Natural Heritage Trust funded local government 'Bush Partnership' Native Vegetation Incentives Program.

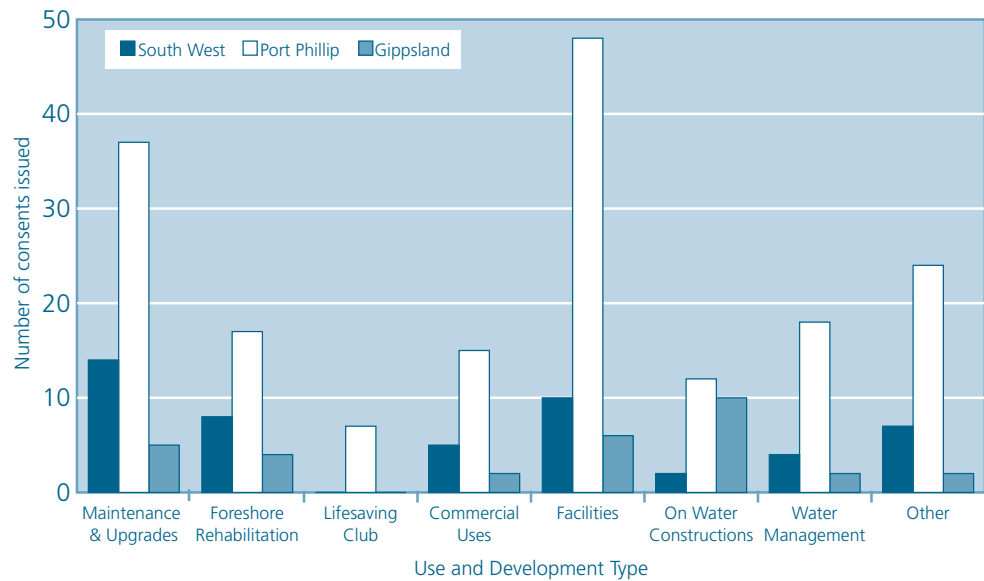
8.3 Improved Recreation and Tourism

The demand for, and popularity of Victoria's coastline is continually increasing, and it is an ongoing challenge to plan and manage for the changing demands on resources and infrastructure. The Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan, developed by the Gippsland Coastal Board and endorsed by the Minister, seeks to address recreation and tourism needs for boating activities in the Gippsland Lakes. Implementation of the Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan will enable managers to plan for and facilitate sustainable recreational boating and tourism into the future.

In the Central region, the Central Coastal Board funded the \$1 million extension and upgrade of Gem Pier at Williamstown, and in partnership with the City of Port Phillip funded improvements to the Marina Reserve, St Kilda.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment provided funding to land managers through the Coastal Risk Management Program. The program pro-actively seeks to manage coastal risk along the Victorian by providing funding to coastal managers at a local level. Works includes assessment, repair and restoration of coastal infrastructure, installation of water safety signs, coastal cliff top safety fences and warning signs and replacement of unsafe structures.

Figure 1: Coastal Management Act Consents 2002–03



In 2002/2003, 273 applications for use and development of coastal Crown land pursuant to the *Coastal Management Act 1995* were received and assessed by delegates of the Minister. 252 applications were consented to. 14 were unsuccessful with a further 7 applications requested to provide further information. Successful applications have an estimated value in excess of \$620 million (note the BassLink project comprises approximately \$500 million of this total) and were predominantly for recreational infrastructure and coastal protection and rehabilitation works (see Figure One).

8.4 Maintaining and Improving Coastal Water Quality

Water and its quantity and quality are acknowledged as a key environmental and sustainability issue for Victoria's future. The establishment of a Water Portfolio and announcement of a 10-year plan, 'Water for the Future', has set the agenda for water management. The Plan aims to guide a progressive and environmentally sustainable water sector and sets targets to change the way we use water. A significant outcome of the Plan has been the establishment of the Victorian Water Trust. The purpose of the Trust is to enhance the health and sustainability of Victoria's water resources, including rivers; provide greater security for meeting Victoria's future water needs; encourage the increased re-use and recycling of water; improve efficiencies in the use of water across the State; provide measured investment to meet Victoria's future water needs; and generate additional investment from sources other than the State Government.

Considerable effort by a range of stakeholders and tiers of governments has occurred during the year to maintain and improve coastal water quality. Ongoing facilitation of partnerships between stakeholders is essential in achieving improved coastal water quality. The Gippsland Regional Water Monitoring Partnership (GRWMP), the first of its kind in Victoria, is progressing well. Eighteen organisations have agreed to be involved, including new signatories Parks Victoria. These include agencies, authorities, local government and industry across the entire Gippsland Region. The Monitoring Partnership, incorporating 107 sites, has been competitively tendered, with the contract (managed by DSE) running since 1 December 2002. The inclusion of two wetland monitoring sites within the Gippsland Lakes Hinterland has been a recent success, and demonstrates the flexibility of the monitoring contract with regard to future additions. All water quality and quantity monitoring data collected under the GRWMP is freely available on the Data Warehouse (www.vicwaterdata.net).

The Gippsland Lakes and Catchment Taskforce was established in mid 2001 to determine and oversee implementation of actions to improve the health of the Gippsland Lakes. Chaired by Secretary – Department of Sustainability and Environment, and including representatives from key stakeholder organisations and agencies, the Taskforce oversaw thirty-three projects during 2002/03. These projects, totalling \$2.7 million, included on-ground works, studies to determine appropriate water exchanges and balances and further research to refine future priority actions. The Taskforce also reinforced its commitment to the use of high quality modelling and monitoring technology to assist in reaching the aim of reducing 40% of nutrients entering the Gippsland Lakes by 2020.

The Environment Protection Authority has continued to administer the Victorian Stormwater Action Program. A key component of this program is a three year grant program to assist local government with the development and implementation of Stormwater Management Plans. \$1,438,225 was allocated for coastal municipalities in the 2002–2003 round of grants for various works including implementation of stormwater management plans, stormwater litter reduction, wetland establishment and enhancement and community education.

The Victorian Catchment Management Council released their 5-year report, *The Health of Our Catchments – A Victorian Report Card* in October 2002. A statutory responsibility, the report provides a snapshot of the health of Victoria's ten catchments, including the five coastal catchments (Glenelg-Hopkins, Corangamite, Port Phillip and Western Port, West Gippsland and East Gippsland), and their ability to continue to provide life sustaining services to a growing and increasingly urbanised population. In addition to catchment reporting, the State Water Quality Monitoring Assessment Committee is developing a structure for an overarching statewide framework for monitoring assessment of the health and condition of the State's rivers and streams, wetlands, estuaries and marine environment.

The Central Coastal Board (CCB) commenced an interim review on the progress of implementation of the Port Phillip Bay Environmental Management Plan (EMP) in conjunction with the Department of Sustainability and Environment. The EMP focuses on delivering outcomes in water quality and marine pests, with this interim review preceding a full review scheduled for 2006. The completion of the CCB's NHT Coasts and Clean Seas Grant for the provision of waste management facilities in Port Phillip Bay and will have direct impact on the water quality of the Bay.

8.5 Increasing Awareness and Understanding of Coastal Issues

Promoting awareness and understanding of coastal issues continues to be a priority for Council. Throughout the year, Council has undertaken a range of communication activities including:

- publication of articles in relevant journals on strategic emerging coastal issues;
- giving presentations at international, national and State forums;
- issue of press releases and statements via print media and newsletters;
- interviews with radio media;
- facilitating specialist forums including workshops on the Integration of Coastal and Marine Issues into Regional Catchment Strategies, Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils and Coastal Climate Change Adaptation;
- recognising excellence and achievement through the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence; and
- reviewing the use and functionality of Council's website.

Diane James was invited to present on the status of integrated coastal management in Victoria at the 2002 National Coastal Conference and at the Partnerships in Environmental Management in the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) conference on 'Sharing Lessons learned in Sustainable Coastal Development'. Both forums provided an excellent opportunity not only to present Victoria's integrated coastal management achievements, but also share Victoria's experiences and lessons learnt with other State's and countries in the East Asian region.

Council hosted three successful workshops during the year to disseminate current information to stakeholders and land managers. The first presented the latest research on Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils (CASS) in Victoria. Council commissioned the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to undertake a strategic risk assessment of CASS as an action of the Victorian Coastal Strategy. In conjunction with the workshop, the DPI released the strategic risk assessment, maps and guidelines which Council has forwarded to local government, Catchment Management Authorities and the Department of Sustainability and Environment. This information is also available on Council's internet site (www.vcc.vic.gov.au).

The Coastal Climate Change Adaptation workshop, hosted by Council, presented the latest research from CSIRO in relation to predicted impacts of climate change. In particular, a key issue that emerged, and which will influence future decisions regarding property rights, was the future limitations in relation to approvals for use and development in areas that may be affected by climate change impacts.

Council co-hosted with the Victorian Catchment Management Council a workshop on Regional Catchment Strategies and Coastal Issues in April 2003. The workshop was designed to identify key coastal and marine issues that should be addressed in the development of regional catchment strategies for accreditation with new national Natural Resource Management arrangements. Issues included water quality and quantity, coastal and marine biodiversity, climate change, coastal acid sulfate soils, public risk, Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries, community awareness, integrated planning and the protection of significant sites and features.



Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence 2003 recipients with the Minister for Environment, The Hon. John Thwaites and Diane James Chairman of the Victorian Coastal Council

The Coast Action / Coastcare program continues to deliver significant results in terms of community engagement and involvement in coastal protection and enhancement, education and information and in capacity building. Under the Commonwealth Natural Heritage Trust 2 program, Coast Action/Coastcare grants were replaced this year by Envirofund Grants. In 2002/2003 some 75 coastal projects were successful in gaining \$975,203 in funding support.

Council in conjunction with the Coast Action / Coastcare program presented the fourth annual Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence. These awards recognise and acknowledge the achievement of individuals, groups and organisations who have played an outstanding role in the protection and restoration of significant sites, areas and features of the Victorian coast.

The Regional Coastal Boards also undertook a range of activities to increase awareness and understanding of coastal issues.

- The Western Coastal Board convened a Regional Coastal Congress in February 2003. Leaders and decision makers in State, local and community organisations were invited to share and learn about opportunities and challenges in working collaboratively to implement coastal plans and strategies. The Congress was highly successful and developed action plans and projects for holistic catchment management, environmental flows needs of estuaries, estuary watch, coastal wetland health, effective partnership creation, sustainable coastal development and coastal governance.
- The Central Coastal Board, in partnership with local government, convenes Coastal Planner Forums in the region biannually to provide an opportunity for coastal planners and managers to exchange information and discuss current issues. The Board also produces a monthly newsletter, 'About the Bays'.
- The Gippsland Coastal Board completed a review of their two Information Sheet Series, *Learn about the Gippsland Lakes* and *Learn about the Coast*. Copies of the Information Sheets are available from the Board and on their internet site.

Regional Coastal Boards

Regional Coastal Boards continue to play a very significant role in coastal planning and management in their regions by facilitating outcomes and participating in a wide range of initiatives led by partner agencies and stakeholders. Key areas of involvement include:

- the development, implementation and review of coastal action plans;
- facilitating regional coordination and priority setting; and
- encouraging implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy and facilitating regional input to the development of a revised VCS.

A summary of some of the activities that Boards have been actively pursuing has been noted in preceding sections. Activities of Boards are described in more detail in the individual reports of each Board produced in accordance with the requirements of the *Coastal Management Act 1995*, and are available at the Boards' Internet sites, which are:

www.westerncoastalboard.vic.gov.au

www.ccb.vic.gov.au

www.gcb.vic.gov.au

Council Operations

10.1 Administration

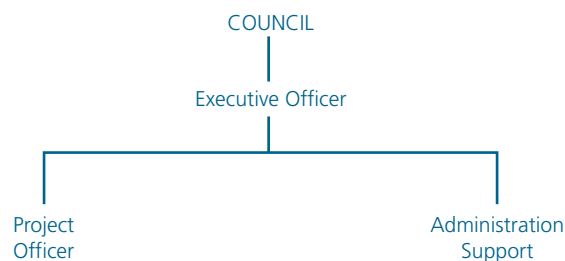
Council's office is located on the 4th Floor, 240 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, 3002.
Telephone 03 9412 4690 Fax 03 9412 4392 Email vcc@dse.vic.gov.au

Chairman	Diane James
Executive Officer	John Ginivan

The Executive Officer is responsible for managing the office and staff.

Persons employed	3 (see Appendix 1)
Website	www.vcc.vic.gov.au

VCC Operational Chart



Operations are managed in accordance with DSE procedures and guidelines for expenditure, purchasing, reporting, occupational health and safety and industrial relations and related issues.

10.2 Statement of Pecuniary Interests

All members of Council have completed declarations of pecuniary interests for the current reporting period including details of shares held by members. The Portfolio Management Division of the Department of Sustainability and Environment holds declarations that have been made by members on behalf of the Minister. All declarations are confidential.

Declarations of pecuniary interest in relation to agenda items are sought at the commencement of any business meeting and noted in the minutes of the meeting.

10.3 Consultancies

During 2002–2003 Council did not engage any consultants as defined by Department of Treasury and Finance guidelines.

10.4 Publications

Council produced the following publications during the year.

- Annual report – available from the Victorian Coastal Council
- Press releases – available via Internet
- Coastal Acid Sulfate Soil Workshop Proceedings – available via Internet
- Coastal Climate Change Adaptation Workshop Proceedings – available via Internet

10.5 National Competition Policy

The Council adheres to the principles of the National Competition Policy (NCP) to ensure that any business competition with private entities takes place in an environment where the Council has no competitive advantages. Obligations under the NCP are the responsibility of the Portfolio Management Division of the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

10.6 Freedom of Information (FOI)

The Council operates in accordance with FOI procedures established through Department of Sustainability and Environment. No FOI requests were made to Council in this business year.

10.7 Merit and Equity

Victorian Public Service merit and equity principles are applied in the appointment and management of staff. The VCC follows the merit and equity principles used by the Department of Sustainability and Environment in accordance with Government directives.

10.8 A Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Society

Council ensured that the final version of the Victorian Coastal Strategy released in January 2002 included published material in agreed priority multi-lingual text advising on where to obtain further information on the Victorian Coastal Strategy. Council's business plan includes an action to consider multicultural and linguistically diverse communication requirements associated with major Council activities.

10.9 Women, Youth and Indigenous Affairs

Council is committed to involving Victoria's community, including women, youth and indigenous Victorians in the management and enjoyment of the coast. The Victorian Coastal Strategy identifies actions to implement indigenous cultural outcomes, while Council's business plan includes actions to promote community connectedness and access to education and training opportunities. In addition, Council operates in an environment ensuring equity in Council's processes and participation with stakeholders.

10.10 Whistleblowers Protection Act

The *Whistleblowers Protection Act* 2001 came into effect on 1 January 2002. The Act is designed to protect people who disclose information about serious wrongdoing within the Victorian Public Sector and to provide a framework for the investigation of these matters.

The protected disclosure coordinator for the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) acts as an agent for the Council to receive disclosures under the Act, and applies DSE procedures in managing disclosures.

Disclosures of improper conduct by the Council or its employees may be made to the following:

Deidre Egan, Protected Disclosure Coordinator
DSE, PO Box 500, East Melbourne Vic 3002.
Telephone: 9637 8575 Facsimile: 9637 8129 Email: Deidre.Egan@dse.vic.gov.au

The Ombudsman Victoria
Level 22, 459 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000.
Telephone: 9613 6222 Toll free: 1800 806 314

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Budget and Expenditure

	2002–2003	2002–2003	2001–2002	2001–2002	2000–2001	2000–2001	1999–2000	1999–2000
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure
Council Operation (includes all sitting fees and reimbursements and items such as annual report). General project operating expenses are included against key result areas.	\$116,000	\$110,000	\$116,000	\$120,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$97,000
Scientific Panel Support	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$4,000	\$18,000	\$9,000
Regional Coastal Boards support	\$5,000	\$12,000	\$5,000	\$9,000	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
Business Plan – Implementation								
Key Result Area 1 – Strategic Planning, Victorian Coastal Strategy review program	\$60,000	\$55,000	\$70,000	\$80,000	\$90,000	\$115,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Key Result Area 2 – Coordination, project funding, management and training	\$30,000	\$28,000	\$24,000	\$25,000	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$13,000
Key Result Area 3 – Community Awareness and Involvement, Awards for Excellence, updates on activities	\$40,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$25,000	\$21,000	\$35,000	\$42,000
Key Result Area 4 – Leadership and Advocacy, provision of advice	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$10,000	\$16,000	\$19,000	\$13,000	\$45,000	\$40,000
TOTAL:	\$270,000	\$270,000	\$280,000	\$310,000	\$285,000	\$291,000	\$285,000	\$243,000

Compliance Index

Clause	Disclosure	Page
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<i>Management and Structure</i>		
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9.1.3(ii)(a)	Summary of financial results with previous four year comparatives	19
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9.1.3(ii)(i)	Statement of information listed in Part 9.1.3(iv) is available on request	*
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9.8.2(i)	A statement of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) matters	17
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* The information is held for the Executive Officer and can be made available to Minister, Members of Parliament and the public on request. Details of other compliance matters can be found in the Annual Report of the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

See Department of Sustainability and Environment Annual Report

Appendix One

Staff Profile

Staff: Number by employment status

Employment Type	2002–2003			2001–2002		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Ongoing	1	1	2	1	1	2
Fixed Term	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary Employees	1	0	1	1	0	1
Total	2	1	3	2	1	3

Notes

- Staff employed through employment agencies are included under temporary employees.
- VCC ongoing staff are also included in employment statistics for the Department of Sustainability and Environment.



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