



DECEMBER 2023

Board Communiqué

On behalf of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (the Authority) Board, I'm pleased to share our December 2023 Communiqué to inform stakeholders about the work of the Board.

We held our Board Meeting in Anglesea on Wadawurrung Country and hosted a community forum with regional stakeholders the night before, in recognition of the contributions made by all in the ongoing management of the Great Ocean Road coast and parks.

BOARD HOSTS COMMUNITY FORUM

As a thank you for the continued collaboration, the community forum was held at the Fairhaven Surf Lifesaving club on 4 December 2023.

Members of the Great Ocean Road Community Network and other relevant organisations, including Surf Coast Shire, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, joined the Directors and executive to hear from Professor David Kennedy, Professor in Physical Geography, a coastal geomorphologist, and an environmental sustainability specialist. In conversation with Board Director Associate Professor Dr Danile Ierodionou, they discussed how climate change, storms, tsunamis and sea level rise impacts coastal environments.

The Board meeting was held the next day at the Anglesea Family Caravan Park. Several directors stayed at the Caravan Park and engaged with staff as they prepared for the busy summer ahead.

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT ENGAGEMENT WITH TRADITIONAL OWNERS

In November, the Authority hosted two workshops relating to the State of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Environment Report - one with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and another with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

The workshop involved dialogue between the Rights Holders and the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability in relation to Rights Holder involvement in the development of the State of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Environment Report.

Both groups agreed to participate, albeit in different capacities. The Commissioner and the Authority will reengage with Rights Holders in February 2024 to progress the Report.



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WADAWURRUNG TRADITIONAL OWNERS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

The Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) Signage Guidelines are being co-developed with appointed consultant, Arterial Design. The project was initiated through discussions with WTOAC and the Authority, identifying the need for consistent and appropriate direction for signage across the entire Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) area.

The Guidelines will provide style direction (including colour schemes, materials, templates, and themes) for signage used across the entire Registered Aboriginal Party area. When developing signage for Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, it is essential to prioritise sustainability and Cultural appropriateness in material selection. The representation of Country in signage should be informed by principles of storytelling and interpretation, ensuring a meaningful connection to Cultural values.

Additionally, guidance on the thoughtful implementation of acknowledgments, considering when, where, and how they should be incorporated, will contribute to a consistent and respectful approach to signage across Wadawurrung Country.

HISTORIC AGREEMENT SIGNING WITH PARKS VICTORIA

The Authority achieved a significant milestone in November, with Board Chair Libby Mears, and Chief Executive Officer, Jodie Sizer hosting the Minister for Environment, Steve Dimopoulos, Parks Victoria Board Chair John Pandazopoulos and CEO Matthew Jackson for the signing of a pivotal agreement at its Torquay headquarters.

Minister Dimopoulos' inaugural visit with us signals a united effort toward realising our shared vision for a healthy, thriving Great Ocean Road region. Together

with Minister Dimopoulos and Parks Victoria, we're laying the foundation for a more sustainable and vibrant future for this special part of Victoria.

The agreement establishes a service partnership between the Authority and Parks Victoria, focusing on conservation science and environmental initiatives within National Park lands under the Authority's management. Through this collaboration with Parks Victoria, we're fortifying our pledge to safeguard and enhance the natural wonders that define the spectacular stretch of Victorian coastline.

LIFESAVING VICTORIA SUMMER BRIEFING

The Authority, in collaboration with Lifesaving Victoria, organised the third annual Summer Season Briefing on October 26. The event included around 70 participants from various organizations, including Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority, local lifesaving clubs, Parks Victoria, Forest Fire Management Victoria, Victoria Police, Ambulance Victoria, the Bureau of Meteorology, and local councils.

The sessions focused on expert presentations regarding the seasonal outlook and emergency preparedness and response strategies for the Great Ocean Road region. The objectives were to foster closer collaboration among emergency response agencies along the coast, provide insights into expected summer conditions and safety issues, offer an overview of emergency preparedness planning, and identify any existing gaps or opportunities.



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2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROUNDTABLE

In early 2024, the Authority will host a roundtable with the five Great Ocean Road regional municipalities. The main goal of the roundtable is to enhance relationships and collaboration among regional leaders.

The initiative will explore effective partnership models, collaboration on projects and funding opportunities and the establishment of regular biannual briefings between the Authority and each of the five Local Governments.

ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Board considered and approved the Authority's inaugural Asset Management Strategy (AMS). The AMS is a requirement of the Standing Directions of the Minister of Finance under the Financial Management Act 1994.

The Authority has a broad range of functions for the management of public land along the Great Ocean Road including the care and management of assets valued at approximately \$135.5 million.

These assets include buildings, roads, marine structures, carparks, playgrounds and park furniture. Commercial assets such as caravan parks along with their associated cabins and camp infrastructure are also captured within our asset portfolio.

The AMS is pivotal for guiding the organisation's development and asset management practices. Its primary objectives include establishing a service-centric and sustainable approach to asset management, integrating these practices with strategic goals, complying with the Victorian Government's Asset Management Accountability Framework (AMAF), and

addressing long-term financial needs, encompassing capital and operating expenditures as well as revenue generation from commercial assets.

Asset Management Plans detailing our responsibilities will now be developed as they relate to our asset classes, these include - Buildings and structures; Car Parks and Roads; Marine Infrastructure and Open Space.

EARTHQUAKE IMPACTS CAPE OTWAY LIGHT STATION

The Board noted that an earthquake in November resulted in a spill of mercury at the Cape Otway Light Station. The Board congratulated staff on the professional handling of the incident, particularly that no injuries had resulted from this event. The spill has been isolated and will remain closed until appropriate cleaning has occurred and confirmation that the lighthouse is again safe for staff and visitors to enter, most likely in February 2024.

DRAFT COMMUNICATIONS & CORPORATE AFFAIRS STRATEGY

The Board were presented with and discussed the draft 2024-29 Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy for the Authority. The strategy aims to bring the Authority's vision, purpose, values, and principles to life through engaging storytelling, focusing on environmental management and sustainable tourism along the Great Ocean Road and beyond.

The Authority is leading a significant transformation in partnership with government, our Rights Holders, communities and broader stakeholders.



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The Authority is leading a significant transformation in partnership with government, our Rights Holders, communities and broader stakeholders. Through delivery of this strategy, we can create significant momentum with shared narratives that help us advocate for positive and long-lasting change, inviting a common expression of our united roles that are contributing to a distinctive approach and region thriving as one, integrated living entity.

The Strategy aligns closely with the 2024-2029 Five Year Business Strategy and the Community Engagement Strategy and was informed by, and supersedes, the 2022-2023 Public Relations Strategy.

The Authority is committed to providing communications that are welcoming, safe and inclusive for all segments of our community, including Rights Holders, members of the LGBTQI+ community, and people of all ages and abilities.

PETERBOROUGH AND PORT CAMPBELL LAND MANAGEMENT TRANSFERS

The Authority is excited to begin managing, protecting and fostering resilience of land and sea along the western stretch of the Great Ocean Road, following land management transfers in Peterborough and Port Campbell.

As of 1 November 2023, we took on management responsibility for close to 830 hectares of land and sea previously managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Corangamite Shire Council, Moyne Shire Council and Parks Victoria.

This includes the Curdies Inlet foreshore, Irvine Reserve and Peterborough beach foreshore in Peterborough, and bush areas along the headland and a roadside

reserve in Port Campbell. It also includes landlord responsibility for the Port Campbell Caravan Park and Peterborough Caravan Park.

This transfer signifies our first step into the western end of the Great Ocean Road, having previously held land management responsibility for land and sea spanning from Torquay to Cape Otway.

In the short to medium term, DEECA, the Councils and Parks Victoria will continue to provide maintenance services across the transferred areas of land on our behalf to ensure consistency.

During that time, we will be engaging with the Peterborough and Port Campbell communities and stakeholders to best understand the areas and shape our future management plans. We're also working with Traditional Owners to respect the cultural values and aspirations of the land and waters.

To stay up to date with our land management transfer updates, please visit [Land Management Transfers | Your Great Ocean Road](#)

I look forward to updating you further on our progress as we work towards our shared vision of a Great Ocean Road region thriving as one, integrated, living entity.

Sincerely,



Libby Mears

Board Chair, Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority.



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