



JUNE 2024

Board Communiqué

Our Board is committed to best practice governance and values open and accountable communication with the Authority's stakeholders.

The Board held its meeting on 18 June. At least twice a year, the Board meets for an extra day for a site visit, stakeholder engagement and/or strategy discussion. On 17 June, the Board met with the Board of Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, visited Point Grey and held a strategic discussion.

BOARD DECISIONS

APPROVED: AUTHORITY BUDGET FOR FY 2024-25

After being considered by the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee (FARMC), the draft budget was discussed by the Board at its April meeting and approved at the June meeting. The Board acknowledged the challenging fiscal environment within which the Authority is operating and thanked management in delivering this budget noting the initiatives and organisational redesign measures to respond to cost constraints.

APPROVED: FINANCE SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 APRIL 2024

STRATEGIC ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

USER FEES AND CHARGES

As a foundation of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority model, the Victorian Government endorsed a financially sustainable operating model for the Authority, which included the ability to establish new user charges.

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is leading the work to develop regulations that set visitor fees within the Crown land reserves that the Authority is responsible for.

DEECA, with support from the Authority, will lead public consultation and engagement on the proposed regulations with an emphasis on how to implement the model. A representative from DEECA provided the Board with an update on this process, and it was noted that public announcements on the consultation process will occur in July.



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LAND TRANSFERS PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The Board discussed the land transfers effective on 1 July 2024, which include Bells Beach (Djarrak) Surfing and Recreation Reserve, the Port of Apollo Bay and Port of Port Campbell. It was noted that whilst the transfer of these areas of high community value and prominence along the Great Ocean Road is a key milestone for the growth of the Authority's management estate, the cost and resourcing impacts are high and will need to be managed closely. Service level agreements between the Authority and Parks Victoria, who will continue to manage Crown land and National Parks after transfers to the Authority, are still to be finalised and a temporary agreement will remain in place.

OTHER BUSINESS OF INTEREST

The board noted updates on the following items:

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- Twelve Apostles Precinct Development
- Geelong City Deal projects (Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment, Point Grey Redevelopment and the Improvements to Tourism Infrastructure at Kennett River)
- Accommodation Services
- Occupational Health and Safety report for March – April 2024.

BOARD COMMITTEES

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (FARMC)

The Chair of FARMC provided a brief update on the 30 May 2024 meeting. The partner from external auditor Crowe Australia, attended the May FARMC meeting and provided a high-level overview of the upcoming audit process.

The Committee had approved Pitcher Partners (PP) as the new internal auditors. However, PP has since advised of a restructure, with the audit function now a separate legal entity with a new name, effective 1 July 2024. Management has conducted additional due diligence and the FARMC will be signing the contract with the new entity.

The Board noted the minutes from the 30 May FARMC meeting and approved the following policies as reviewed and recommended by the FARMC:

- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Delegations Policy
- Delegations Register
- Instrument of Delegation (Port and Marine Safety)
- Board Legislative Compliance Policy



PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE (PPC)

The Board noted the minutes from the 23 May 2024 PPC meeting and approved the updated Board Meetings and Decisions Policy, as reviewed and recommended by the PPC.

OTHER STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES

On Monday 17 June the Board met with the Board of the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism to discuss each organisation's current state, strategic priorities and how we work collaboratively to make the Great Ocean Road region the destination of choice.

Following this, the Authority Board members travelled to Point Grey in Lorne where management took them through the Point Grey Opportunities and Constraints presentation, followed by a 'walk and talk' on site.

That evening the Board and management were joined by Dr Gillian Sparkes, who recently stepped down as Victoria's independent Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability. Dr Sparkes facilitated a workshop on strategic opportunities for the Authority in its work to protect, enhance, rehabilitate and manage the natural environment of the Great Ocean Road coast and parks. This included discussion on options to improve environmental impacts and biodiversity, and actions and activities that will respect and value cultural heritage.

The CEO and Chair recently met with the Great Ocean Road Communities Network (GORCN) which represents 21 communities across the Great Ocean Road region. This is a quarterly meeting to discuss joint strategic issues.

The second Local Government Area (LGA) forum was held on 31 May, with Surf Coast Shire offering to convene the next meeting. The group discussed what it can do as a collective leadership group with a shared purpose. An outcome was agreement to complete a Charter to articulate ways of working which will support transitions to new councils following the elections in October.

