

# Victorian recreational boating strategy

## Draft for consultation

2021 – 2030







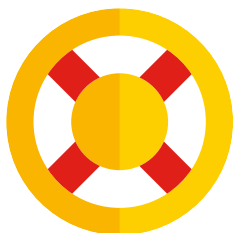


# Executive summary

Over 417,000 Victorians hold recreational vessel licences, and nearly 10,000 new licences are issued every year. More than one-in-10 Victorians regularly participates in recreational boating.

The growth in the number of boaters and the variety of activities they undertake present challenges and opportunities. Most of the challenges are the direct result of competition for assets like boat ramps and car parking. Some of this competition also extends to waterways, particularly between personal watercraft and other users.





The strategy identifies and describes these challenges. They include:

- An inconsistent approach to funding priorities and resource allocation
- A lack of confidence in the funding model
- The poor condition of some boating facilities
- A lack of access to water
- A shortage of boating facilities for those Victorians requiring all-abilities access
- A shortage of car trailer parking
- Under-resourced waterway management and a subsequent lack of oversight over assets such as moorings, berths, channels, navigation aids and safety signage as well as compliance with local safety rules such as exclusion zones and speed limits
- Resourcing of Marine Search and Rescue (MSAR) bodies
- A lack of coordination and proper data sharing between marine agencies
- The threat to the environment and marine life posed by damaged or abandoned vessels



The strategy sets out a number of objectives aimed at meeting these challenges.

They include:

- Improving the maintenance of public facilities and renewing and building new boating facilities
- Improving access and navigation
- Investing in destination locations
- Investing in MSAR and boating safety and education
- Promoting boating across Victoria
- Improving the quality of data and information available to boaters

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# 01

## Why we need a recreational boating strategy

**Boating is one of Victoria's most popular recreational pursuits.**

# 417,000

Over 417,000 Victorians hold recreational vessel licenses

# 10,000

Nearly 10,000 new licenses are issued every year

# 1 in 10

More than one-in-10 Victorians regularly participates in recreational boating



Boating is also a key economic driver, generating nearly \$8 billion in economic activity and employing thousands of Victorians. It's also a key component of the visitor economy.

Boating is popular in Victoria primarily because of the abundance of natural waterways. Victoria has some of Australia's best coastline and inland rivers and lakes, drawing locals and visitors alike to the natural beauty.



Boating is critical to many fishing activities, with coastal fishing expanding to an all-year round activity, attracting increased offshore boating, whilst our inland waters will be stocked with over 10 million fish by 2022.





Recreational boating is also entertaining and provides a range of enriching opportunities, whether that's enjoying watersports, sailing learning how to ski or simply enjoying an evening sunset. A sense of freedom and sense of adventure are common experiences cited by regular boaters.

Research suggests that people experience emotional, behavioural and psychological benefits by being near water, and that boating helps restore a connection with nature.

Just the sight and sound of water can lower cortisol levels, increase serotonin and induce relaxation, and boating is one of the easiest and safest ways to enjoy these benefits.

Community satisfaction, pride, reduced social isolation and volunteering are also enhanced by having functional waterways.

A healthy environment also plays an important role in supporting the boating experience and all users play a role in supporting healthy waterways.

However, as participation in boating increases, some of the benefits are being diluted.



The boating experience across Victoria is underpinned by the ability to access good boating facilities, ensuring that the overall boating experience is safe and continues to be accessible. There is a need for a long term strategy for a sustainable network of boating access facilities.

## **The Victorian Government has a role to play in ensuring that all boaters continue to enjoy one of the best activities this state has to offer.**

The aim of the Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy is to provide a better boating experience through the provision of boating facilities that perform to a high standard, have adequate capacity, are well maintained, are safe and provide improved accessibility for all.

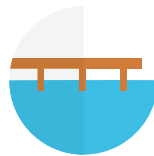
# Victorian recreational boating in numbers

## Waterways

Victoria has more than

**120**

bays, inlets and estuaries



**2500km**  
of coastline



**13,000**  
natural wetlands

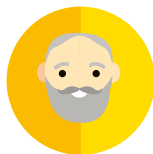
**85,000km**  
of rivers

## Recreational vessel registration



Around  
**197,000**  
registered vessels

**2.5%**  
Average registration  
growth per annum



**417,000**  
recreational boating  
licence holders

**256,000**  
licence endorsements  
for personal watercrafts



**Open Cabin**  
131,000

**Half Cabin**  
28,500

**Personal Watercraft**  
24,400



**87%**  
of registered  
vessels are <6m

Data as of 2020/2021

## Participation in boating

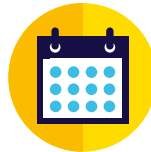


# 696,000

Approximately 696,000 people go recreational boating across Victoria



**64%**  
of these people are also  
recreationally fishing



**84%**  
use their boat during peak season  
(October–April)

**35%**  
also use their boat during off peak  
season (May–September)

## Participation activities

- Recreational fishing
- Tow sports
- Personal watercraft
- Sailing
- Pleasure touring
- Kayaking
- Hovercraft
- Houseboats

## Did you know there are over:



**450**  
boat ramps in Victoria

**2000**  
navigation aids



**3900**  
public berths and moorings

## Value to the economy



# \$7.91b

direct and indirect output

**\$2.92b**  
direct and indirect  
value added

**22,055**  
direct and indirect jobs  
(FTE) to Vic in 2018–19

## Marine incidents



# 3400

call outs per year

**1200**  
vessel disablements (eg  
battery and fuel issues)

**200**  
serious incidents



# 02

## A snapshot of recreational boating in Victoria

Although Victoria has over 400 boating facilities, most boating activity is concentrated at 20 key locations. As Figure 1 shows, Port Phillip and Western Port are the most heavily used, followed by the Gippsland Lakes, Murray River and Lake Eildon.



**Figure 4**  
Key boating centres



**Locations by popularity**

- |                                 |                                    |                   |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Port Phillip and Western Port | 5 Corner Inlet                     | 11 Blue Rock Lake | 18 Rocklands Reservoir |
| 2 Gippsland Lakes               | 6 Anderson Inlet                   | 12 Torquay        | 19 Mallacoota          |
| 3 Murray River                  | 7 Portland                         | 13 Barwon River   | 20 Lake Hume           |
| 4 Lake Eildon                   | 8 Goulburn River and Lake Nagambie | 14 Cairn Curran   |                        |
|                                 | 9 Lake Eppalock                    | 15 Waranga Basin  |                        |
|                                 | 10 Apollo Bay                      | 16 Glenelg River  |                        |
|                                 |                                    | 17 Warnambool     |                        |

Usage has been based on data available from Boating Vic, as well as former surveys undertaken by Ipsos (2014) and Ernst & Young (2020)

## What is a boating facility?

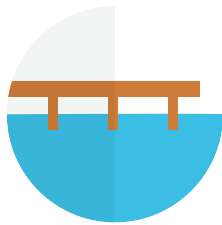
Based on engagement with boating facility users and asset managers, the following assets are considered to comprise a boating facility. It should be noted that not all facilities require all the assets identified below (e.g. toilets and fish cleaning tables may only be located at selected facilities).

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### Management and maintenance of facilities



Boat ramps



Pontoons and jetties



Carparks



Lighting



Navigation aids



Toilets

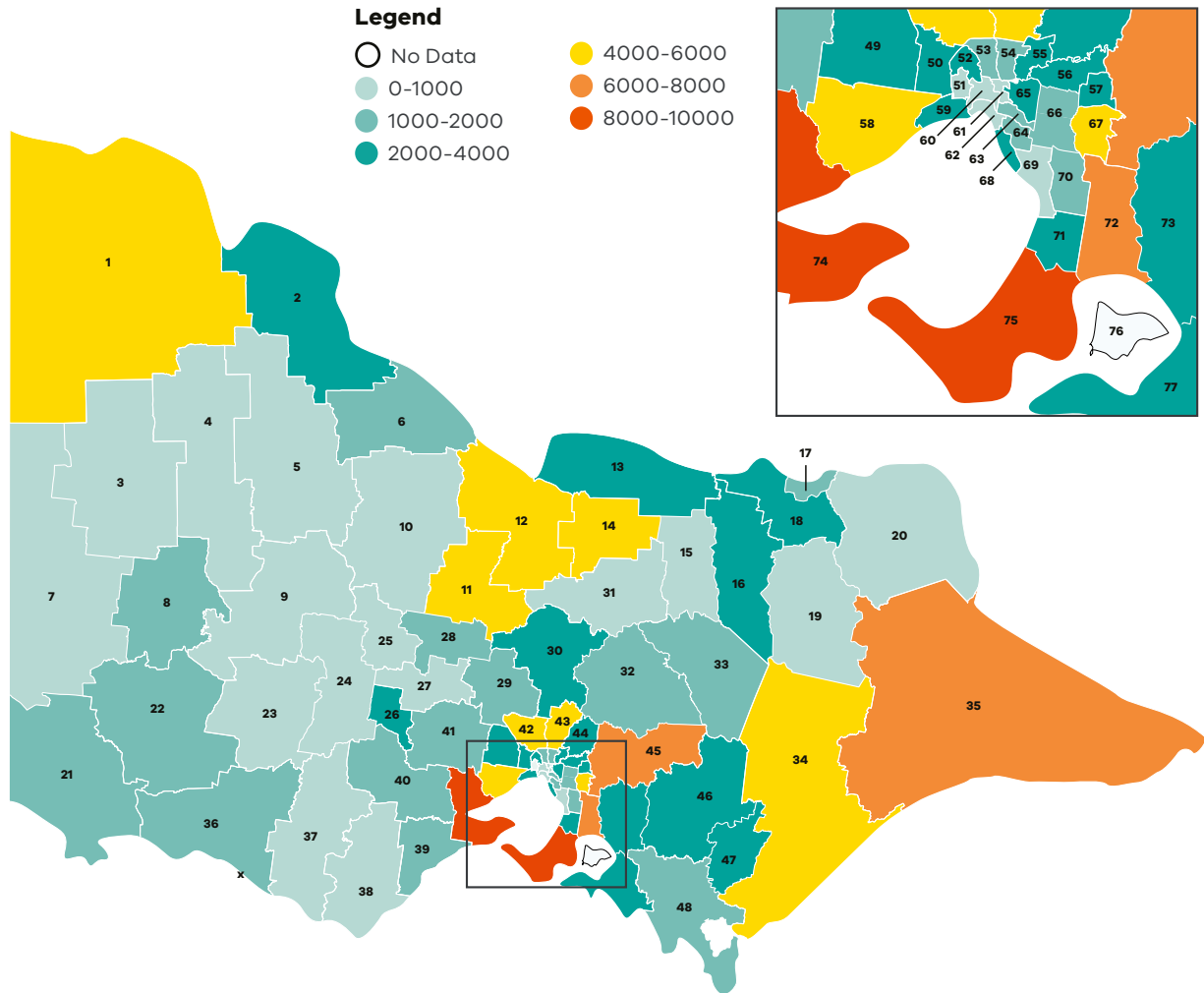


Marinas and drystacks



As Figure 2 shows, vessel registration is concentrated around Port Phillip, Western Port, Gippsland and along the Murray.

**Figure 2**  
Location of registered vessels



- |                       |                       |                    |                    |                         |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Mildura             | 17 Wodonga            | 33 Mansfield       | 49 Melton          | 65 Boroondara           |
| 2 Swan Hill           | 18 Indigo             | 34 Wellington      | 50 Brimbank        | 66 Monash               |
| 3 Hindmarsh           | 19 Alpine             | 35 East Gippsland  | 51 Maribyrnong     | 67 Knox                 |
| 4 Yarriambiack        | 20 Towong             | 36 Moyne           | 52 Moonee Valley   | 68 Bayside              |
| 5 Buloke              | 21 Glenelg            | 37 Corangamite     | 53 Moreland        | 69 Kingston             |
| 6 Gannawarra          | 22 Southern Grampians | 38 Colac Otway     | 54 Darebin         | 70 Greater Dandinong    |
| 7 West Wimmera        | 23 Ararat             | 39 Surf Coast      | 55 Banyule         | 71 Frankston            |
| 8 Horsham             | 24 Pyrenees           | 40 Golden Plains   | 56 Manningham      | 72 Casey                |
| 9 Northern Grampians  | 25 Central Goldfields | 41 Moorabool       | 57 Maroondah       | 73 Cardinia             |
| 10 Loddon             | 26 Ballarat           | 42 Hume            | 58 City of Wyndham | 74 Greater Geelong      |
| 11 Greater Bendigo    | 27 Hepburn            | 43 Whittlesea      | 59 Hobsons         | 75 Mornington Peninsula |
| 12 Campaspe           | 28 Mount Alexander    | 44 Nilumbik        | 60 Melbourne       | 76 French Island        |
| 13 Moira              | 29 Macedon Ranges     | 45 Yarra Ranges    | 61 Yarra           | 77 Bass Coast           |
| 14 Greater Shepparton | 30 Mitchell           | 46 Baw Baw         | 62 Port Phillip    |                         |
| 15 Benalla            | 31 Strathbogie        | 47 Latrobe         | 63 Stonningham     |                         |
| 16 Wangaratta         | 32 Murrindindi        | 48 South Gippsland | 64 Glen Eira       |                         |



## Regulatory and planning framework

Boating is regulated by a number of acts and planning frameworks.

**The Marine Safety Act 2010** provides for safe marine operations in Victoria which includes providing for the safe operation of vessels and for the safety of marine safety infrastructure and operations involving its use. The Act provides for safety by (among other things):

- Imposing a range of safety duties
- Providing for the registration of vessels
- Providing for the licensing of masters of recreational vessels and hire and drive vessels
- Providing for the regulation and management of the use of, and navigation of vessels on, state waters

Coastal boating facilities must be constructed and maintained in accordance with the **Marine and Coastal Act 2018** and the associated **Marine and Coastal Policy 2020**. The Act also:

- Enables protection of the coastline and the ability to address the long-term challenges of climate change, population growth and aging coastal structures
- Ensures that partners work together to achieve the best outcomes for Victoria's marine and coastal environment

**The Planning and Environment Act 1987** sets out procedures for preparing and amending the Victoria Planning Provisions and planning schemes. It also sets out the process for obtaining permits for upgrades and maintenance, settling disputes, enforcing compliance with planning schemes and permits, and other administrative procedures.

**The Transport Integration Act 2010** is Victoria's principal transport Act. The six legislated objectives are include social and economic inclusion; economic prosperity; environmental sustainability, integration of transport and land use, efficiency, coordination and reliability; safety, health and wellbeing.

**Aboriginal Heritage Regulation 2018**  
As managers of Country, Traditional Owners should be involved on a partnership basis from the outset of development of boating projects. Land within 200 metres of a waterway and coastal land are all areas of cultural heritage sensitivity under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulation 2018, which have statutory requirements.



### Funding to support recreational boating: The Better Boating Fund

The recreational boating system is funded through revenue collected from marine licences and vessel registration. In 2020-21, over \$33 million was collected from these sources and deposited directly into the Better Boating Fund, a dedicated trust fund established in 2021.

The fund can be used for:

- Provision and maintenance of boating facilities and related services
- Boating safety, boating education and boating promotion programs
- Safe use of recreational vessels
- Safe use of state waters







# 03

## Challenges and opportunities

### Challenges

#### More boaters

The number of participants in boating is growing at around 2.5 per cent per annum. In addition, the number of personal watercraft (PWCs) is increasing faster than other vessel classes.

Significantly, the number of participants from culturally and linguistically diverse communities is growing at a faster rate.

As the Victorian population ages, so too is the average age of participants.

#### Reduced access and increased congestion

Over 90 per cent of boaters keep their vessels at a residential address, increasing the demand for boat ramps. Land-side congestion and lack of parking areas are particularly pressing issues, especially across Port Phillip and Western Port. A 2014 review identified that of 47 facilities investigated, capacity was constrained at 38, with a further eight limited by the number of boat ramps and supporting facilities.

Seasonal demand on the Bellarine and Mornington peninsulas and Gippsland Lakes is increasing, placing pressure on destination jetties and swing moorings in these locations.

In addition to an increase in the number of registered vessels, there has also been a shift towards vessels over 4m in length, putting additional strain on facilities not designed to accommodate such sizes.

There are only three accessible boating facilities for those Victorians requiring all-abilities access. Access when boaters are in the water is also critical, which means having all-tide access where possible, and access to dredged channels.



**The number of participants in boating is growing at around 2.5% per annum**

## **The condition and location of boating facilities**

Some boating facilities are too small, poorly maintained or no longer fit for purpose. Demand for boating facilities has not been matched by investment in maintenance and new facilities. Some facilities have restricted use due to lack of dredging. In some instances, the location of a boat ramp may need to be relocated to a new site to better accommodate access into the future.

## **Boating Safety**

As a recreational activity boating is becoming increasingly popular and the safety risk is increasing comparatively. In recent years there has been an increasing trend in fatalities and serious injuries on Victorian waters.

## **Absence of a consistent direction**

The fragmented management of Victoria's boating assets and a lack of common policy goals mean there is no consistent approach to facility maintenance. Funding is not delivered to agreed priorities and there is often a failure to capitalise on assets that could provide significant economic benefit to the boating industry as well as tourism.

In addition, fragmented and uncoordinated facility management means stakeholders are left without assurances that investment will respond to the boating community's needs.

## **Changing Climate**

Coastal hazards and climate change (storms, erosion and inundation) will pose ongoing infrastructure challenges to our boating facilities along the coast. The changing climate is also likely to pose infrastructure challenges on our inland waterways, particularly during times of flood and drought.



## **A lack of confidence in the funding model**

Boaters lack confidence in the funding model. They express concern that it lacks transparency and does not provide assurances to recreational boating and fishing interests that any future increases in fees will be spent on agreed priorities.

## **The need for ongoing support for waterway management**

Navigation aids and signage keep boaters and other waterway users safe. Waterway managers are responsible for the safe operation of vessels in waters under their control using infrastructure such as moorings, berths, channels, navigation aids and safety signage. They are also responsible for formulating and compliance with local safety rules such as exclusion zones and speed limits.



## The need for ongoing support for Marine Search and Rescue

In Victoria there are 30 volunteer MSAR providers, comprising 19 Australian Volunteer Coast Guard flotillas, seven independent providers and four affiliated with Life Saving Victoria. Collectively there are approximately 800 volunteers across the state responding to distress calls. Nearly all the MSARs will require additional resourcing to meet the expected increase in demand for assistance from boaters.

## Improvements to data sharing and needs

Victoria Police, Maritime Safety Victoria, the Victorian Fisheries Authority and Parks Victoria collect and share data to monitor marine incidents and compliance, but each does so differently. Data is crucial to how the state manages boating safety, MSAR and asset investment. Data is also crucial to understand boating behaviour and experience, and to support future investment decisions.

## Disposal of vessels

The use of more durable boat materials such as fibreglass and the volume of boats purchased have made disposal more challenging. Abandoned and derelict vessels can become hazards to navigation, as well as posing threats to the environment, wildlife and public health through leakage of fuel and oil and release of hazardous substances.

## Opportunities

This strategy presents a number of opportunities:

- Improving the boating experience by identifying and subsequently improving the condition of infrastructure
- Providing for improved coordination, prioritisation and allocation of funding for upgrades, renewals and new facilities, many of which can be realised through partnership arrangements
- Providing visibility of prioritisation of projects and programs to Victorian boating stakeholders
- Facilitating stronger engagement with boating stakeholders to identify priorities during development of the strategy
- Economic growth in the industries directly associated with vessels, vessel safety and associated sports like angling and water sports, as well as tourism
- Using technology to capture information to enhance data collection
- Recreational boating facilities responsive to demand, user and safety consideration, and siting and environmental considerations





# 04

## Strategy framework

### Vision

**Victorian boaters will be provided with a better boating experience through the provision of boating facilities that perform to a high standard, have adequate capacity, are well maintained, are safe and provide improved accessibility for all.**

The vision is supported by the following objectives:

1. To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by **supporting and improving the maintenance** of our public facilities
2. To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by continuing to **invest in renewing and building new boating facilities**
3. To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by continuing to **invest in destination locations**
4. To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by providing for **improved access and navigation**
5. To **improve waterway and boating safety** by investing in marine search & rescue and boating safety & education
6. To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by **promoting boating** across Victoria
7. To **improve the quality of the data** and **implement other reforms** that will improve the boating experience

This Strategy identifies a series of priorities which will be implemented to deliver the objectives until 2030.

### Action Plan

Whilst this strategy identifies the priorities to be progressed to 2030, an annual action plan will be prepared and published to advise of which projects and actions will be undertaken in the forthcoming year. Several factors will influence each action plan, including maintenance needs, asset condition, facility demand, project readiness, safety concerns and emerging issues.

### Partnerships and Collaboration

Delivery of this strategy will require collaborating and working in partnership with land managers, the community, boating stakeholders and our Traditional Owners to identify opportunities and support outcomes. Working in partnership with Government agencies and facility managers presents opportunities to navigate planning and approvals needs, integrate plans, and to identify other funding sources. In some instances, working with private landholders or private industries may be required to deliver boating outcomes.

## Our Vision

Victorian boaters will be provided with a better boating experience through the provision of boating facilities that perform to a high standard, have adequate capacity, are well maintained, are safe and provide improved accessibility for all.

## Recreational Boating Strategy (to 2030)

### Strategy Objectives

1. To enhance the Victorian boating experience by supporting and improving the maintenance of our public facilities
2. To enhance the Victorian boating experience by continuing to invest in renewing and building new boating facilities
3. To enhance the Victorian boating experience by providing for improved access and navigation
4. To improve waterway & boating safety by investing in marine search & rescue and boating safety & education
5. To enhance the Victorian boating experience by promoting boating across Victoria
6. To improve the quality of the data and implement other reforms that will improve the boating experience
7. To enhance the Victorian boating experience by continuing to invest in destination locations

### Prioritisation

- Asset condition and maintenance needs
- Waterway risks
- Improved navigational accessibility
- Facility demand (current or potential)
- Improved all abilities access
- Equity and distribution of funds
- Boating safety (facilities and on water response)
- Ability to reduce congestion/ increase capacity
- Co-contribution
- Project readiness
- Emerging issues

## Annual Action Plans

### Enabled by

- Boaters
- Our Stakeholders (Industry, Facility, Waterway Managers)
- Analytics and Data
- Partnerships
- Better Boating Fund
- Consultation
- Transparency/Public reportin

Allocation of resources will be determined also be influenced by the following six principles:

- 1.** All elements of the boating system should receive funding, including infrastructure, safety, education and promotion
- 2.** Upgrading and maintaining existing public facilities should be prioritised over new facilities
- 3.** The Port Phillip and Western Port catchment, where the largest concentration of boaters resides, should be given significant priority
- 4.** Boat ramps should be prioritised over other facilities
- 5.** Co-contributions should be sought
- 6.** Environmental, social, cultural and economic consideration

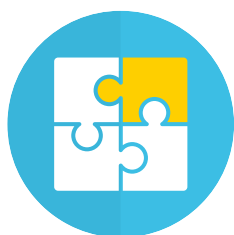




## Objective 1

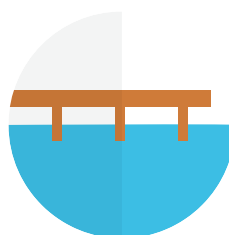
# Enhance the Victorian boating experience by supporting and improving the maintenance of our public facilities

A 2020 review of the management of boating facilities, primarily across Port Phillip and Western Port, identified fragmented and inconsistent management arrangements. Management of public boating facilities is influenced by key factors including skills and capability, available funding, differing priorities by asset managers and a lack of maintenance standards. This reflects in the condition of boating facilities and impacts the boating experience. Whilst this review focused on Port Phillip and Western Port, the review identified that these issues also exist across regional Victoria.



### Asset Management Framework

Boating facilities are public assets. Asset management involves planning, acquiring assets, operating and maintain them and disposal they have reached the end of their life or no longer serving their original purpose. An asset management framework will be developed to better manage our public boating facilities.



### Maintenance

To improve the maintenance of boating facilities, a maintenance support program will be developed that will include:

- Development of maintenance guidelines for public boating facilities
- Establishment of a maintenance program for asset managers to receive funding assistance, particularly for structural maintenance
- Investigating options for improved management and maintenance

## Objective 2

# Enhance the Victorian boating experience by renewing existing facilities and building new ones



### Design guidelines for new facilities

While there are design guidelines in place for the construction of maritime facilities, there is a need to develop Victorian-specific guidelines to cater for variations. New guidelines will define the features of facilities that should be standardised, such as ramp gradient, ramp width, ramp access and car park numbers. The guidelines will also define fit-for purpose facilities, which — for example — might negate the need for a sealed car park.





## Boat ramp renewal program

An assessment of the condition of facilities has been undertaken in order to prioritise renewal.

Across Port Phillip and Western Port, the prioritisation has been based on visual asset condition combined with ranking against the Central Coastal Board Recreational Boating Facilities Framework. Across Regional Victoria, the prioritisation was based on asset condition, discussions with asset managers and demand.

**Figure 3**

### Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals

Port Phillip and Western Port



**Figure 4**  
**Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals**  
 East Gippsland

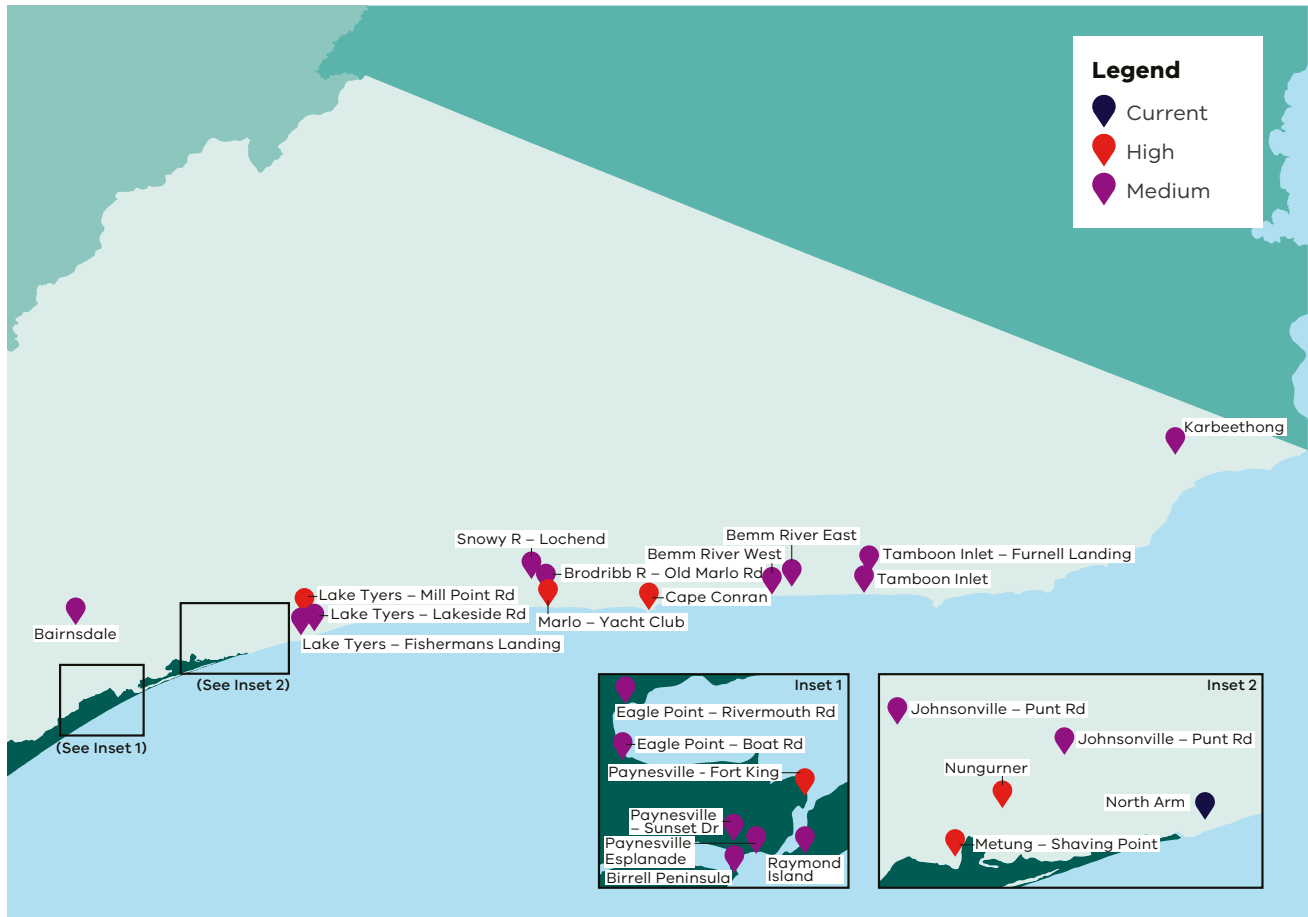
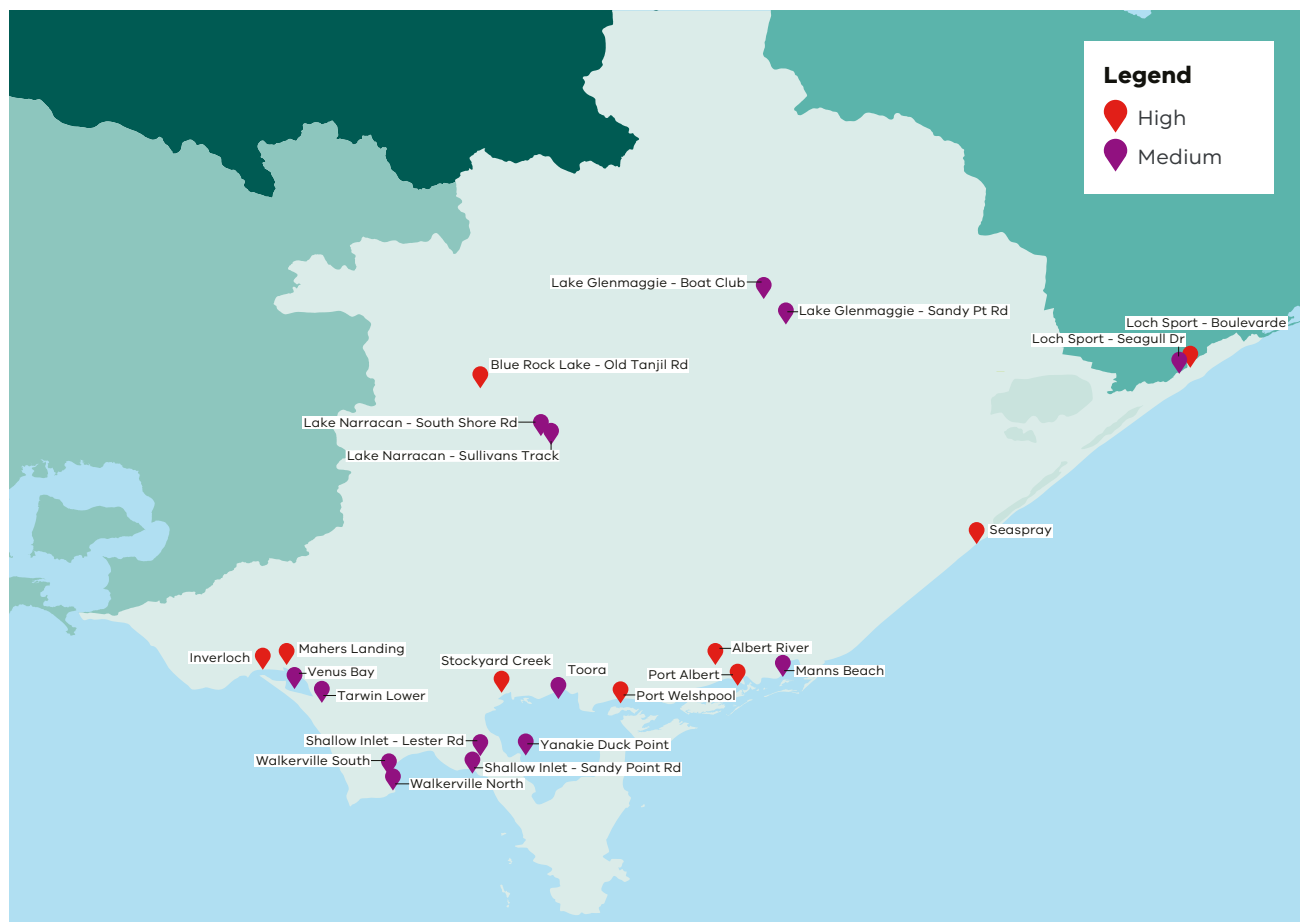




Figure 5

**Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals**

South and Central Gippsland



**Figure 6**  
**Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals**  
North East

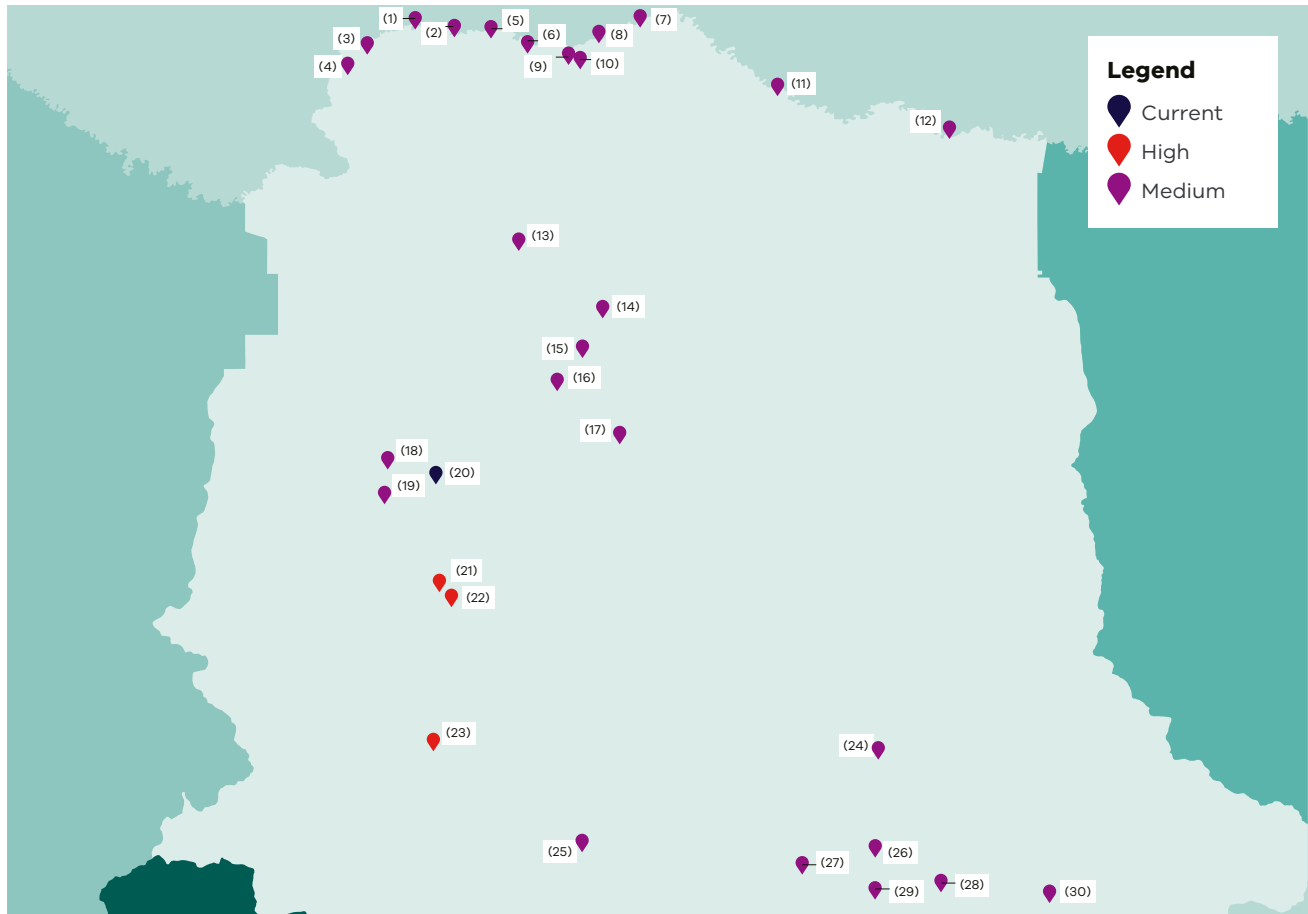


**Figure 7**

**Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals**  
South West



**Figure 8**  
**Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals**  
 Goulburn Broken



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ● Murray R - Mill Log Landing</li> <li>2 ● Murray R - Frenchmans</li> <li>3 ● Murray R - Thistle Bed</li> <li>4 ● Murray R - Double Holes</li> <li>5 ● Murray R - Tongalong</li> <li>6 ● Murray R - Crawfords</li> <li>7 ● Murray R - Dr Beach</li> <li>8 ● Murray R - Crawfords</li> <li>9 ● Murray R - The Steps</li> <li>10 ● Murray R - Morgans Mill</li> <li>11 ● Murray R - Horseshoe Bend</li> <li>12 ● Murray R - Greenbank</li> <li>13 ● Goulburn R - Yambuna Bride</li> <li>14 ● Goulburn R - Loch Garry</li> <li>15 ● Goulburn R - Shepparton</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 ● Goulburn R - Rafertys Bend</li> <li>17 ● Goulburn R - Arcadia Main</li> <li>18 ● Waranga Basin - Lake Waranga CP</li> <li>19 ● Waranga Basin - Western Channel</li> <li>20 ● Waranga Basin - Harrimans Point</li> <li>21 ● L. Nagambie - Loddings Lane</li> <li>22 ● L. Nagambie - Buckley Park</li> <li>23 ● Goulburn R - Seymour Manners St</li> <li>24 ● L. Eildon - Bonnie Doon Maintongoon Rd</li> <li>25 ● Goulburn R - Ghin Ghin</li> <li>26 ● L. Eildon - Burgen Point</li> <li>27 ● Goulburn R - Acheron</li> <li>28 ● L. Eildon - Jerusalem Creek</li> <li>29 ● Goulburn R - Thorton Point Hill Res</li> <li>30 ● L. Eildon - Jamieson Boat</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

Figure 9

Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals

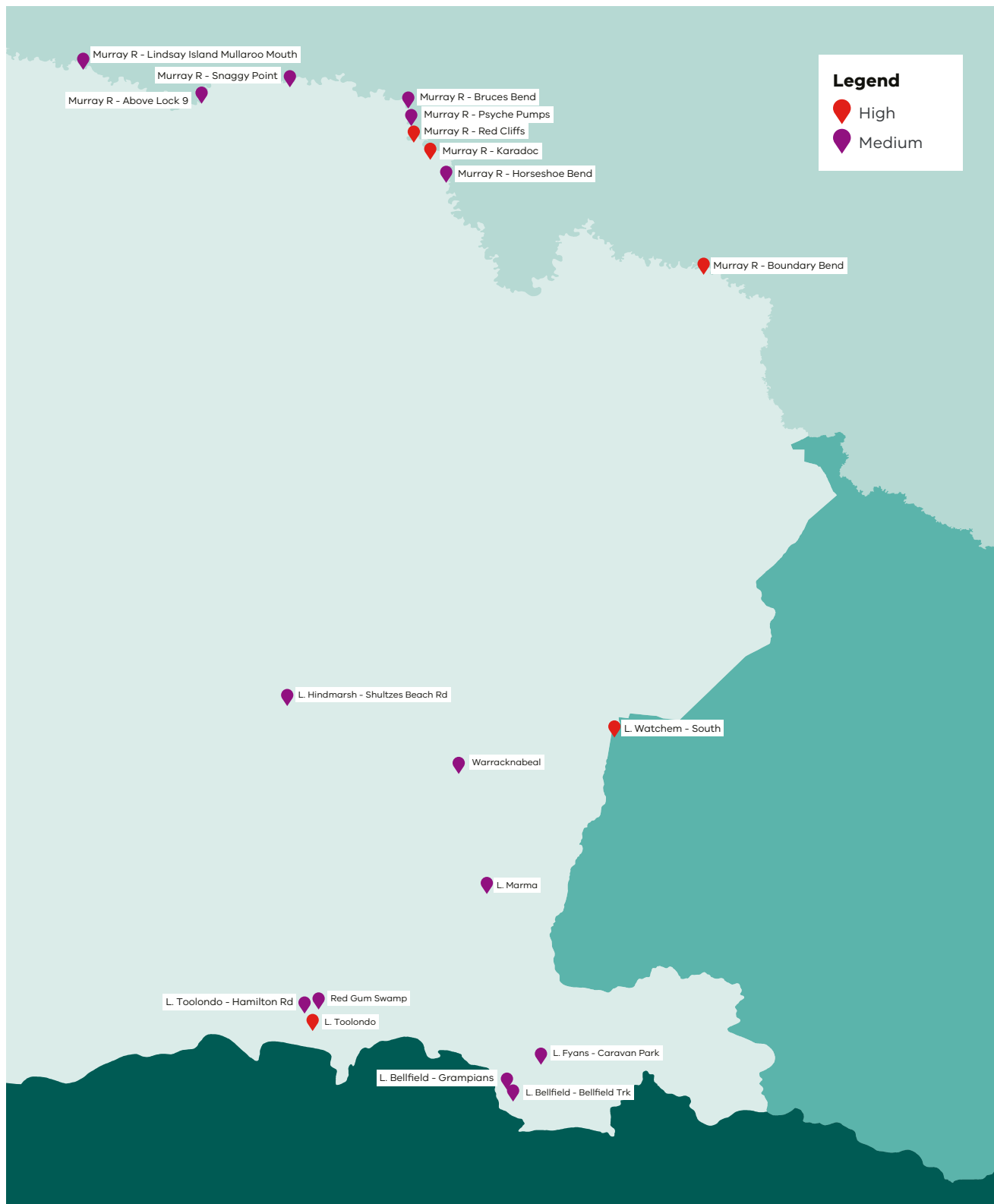
North Central





**Figure 10**

**Prioritisation of boat ramp renewals**  
Wimmera and Mallee



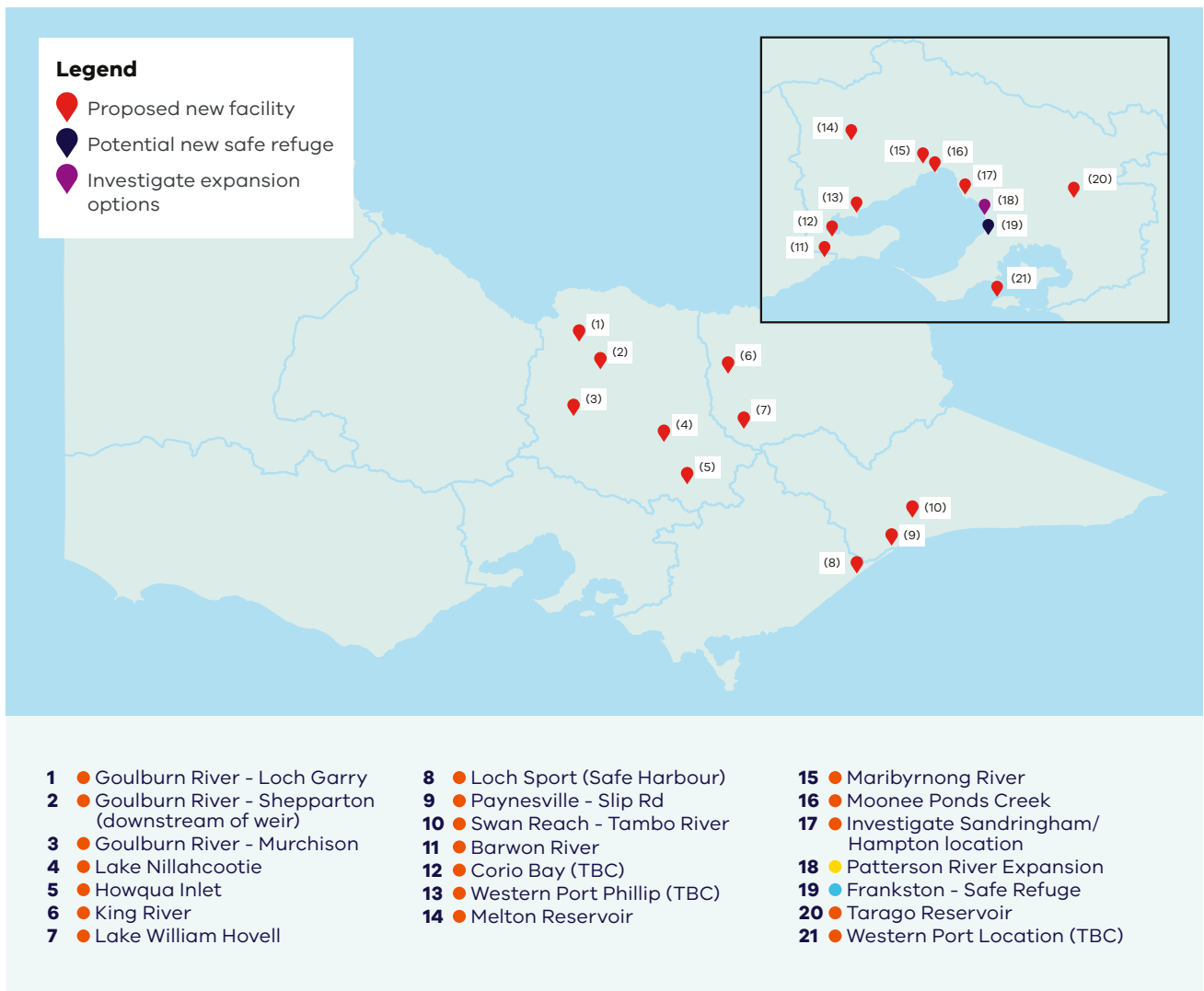


## New boating facilities

Potential locations for new boating facilities have been identified. These have been based on feedback from boating facility users or asset managers.

**Figure 11**

**Potential new facilities**





## Expanded facilities

To reduce congestion and improve access, upgrades will be progressed at a number of locations based on capacity for expansion and future growth.

**Figure 12**

### Potential facility upgrades Port Phillip and Western Port



**Figure 13**

**Potential facility upgrades**

Gippsland





**Figure 14**

**Potential facility upgrades**

Goulburn Broken and North East



- 1 🟡 Waranga Basin - Western Channel
- 2 🟡🟣 Waranga Basin - Harrimans Point
- 3 🟡 Lake Nillahcootie
- 4 🟡 Lake Eildon - Bonnie Doon
- 5 🟡🟣 Lake Eildon - Kennedy Point
- 6 🟡 Lake Eildon - Jerusalem Creek
- 7 🟡 Lake Eildon - Jamieson
- 8 🟡 Ovens River - Cameron Trk

- 9 🟡 Lake Moodemere
- 10 🟡 Wodonga Creek - Diamond Park
- 11 🟡🟣 Lake Hume - Kookaburra Point
- 12 🟡 Lake Hume - Ebden Reserve
- 13 🟡 Lake Hume - Ludlow Reserve
- 14 🟡🟣 Lake Hume - Kurrajong
- 15 🟡 Mitta Mitta River - Pigs Point
- 16 🟡🟣 Lake Buffalo

**Figure 15**

**Potential facility upgrades**

North Central, Wimmera Mallee and South West





## Reducing Congestion

In addition to expanding facilities where possible, other opportunities will be investigated to reduce congestion at boating facilities.



## Partnership Opportunities

Opportunities to partner with local government and private facilities to alleviate demand and congestion should be considered.

### **Availability of private facilities**

Seek out opportunities to enter into arrangements during specified peak period with private facilities to make them available to the public.

### **Overflow car parking**

Seek out opportunities to identify other overflow car parking opportunities with local governments.

### **Trial shuttle services**

Seek out opportunities to shuttle boaters from vehicles to boat ramps with cooperative councils.

### **Dry stacking**

Seek out opportunities to support dry stacking ventures, to alleviate the demand on our launch facilities.





## Objective 3

# Enhance the Victorian boating experience by continuing to invest in destination locations

### Berths, moorings and destination jetties

Priorities for provision of additional berths, moorings and tourist destination jetties to accommodate future growth have been identified. A program will be developed to increase the number of public berthings in marinas across Victoria.

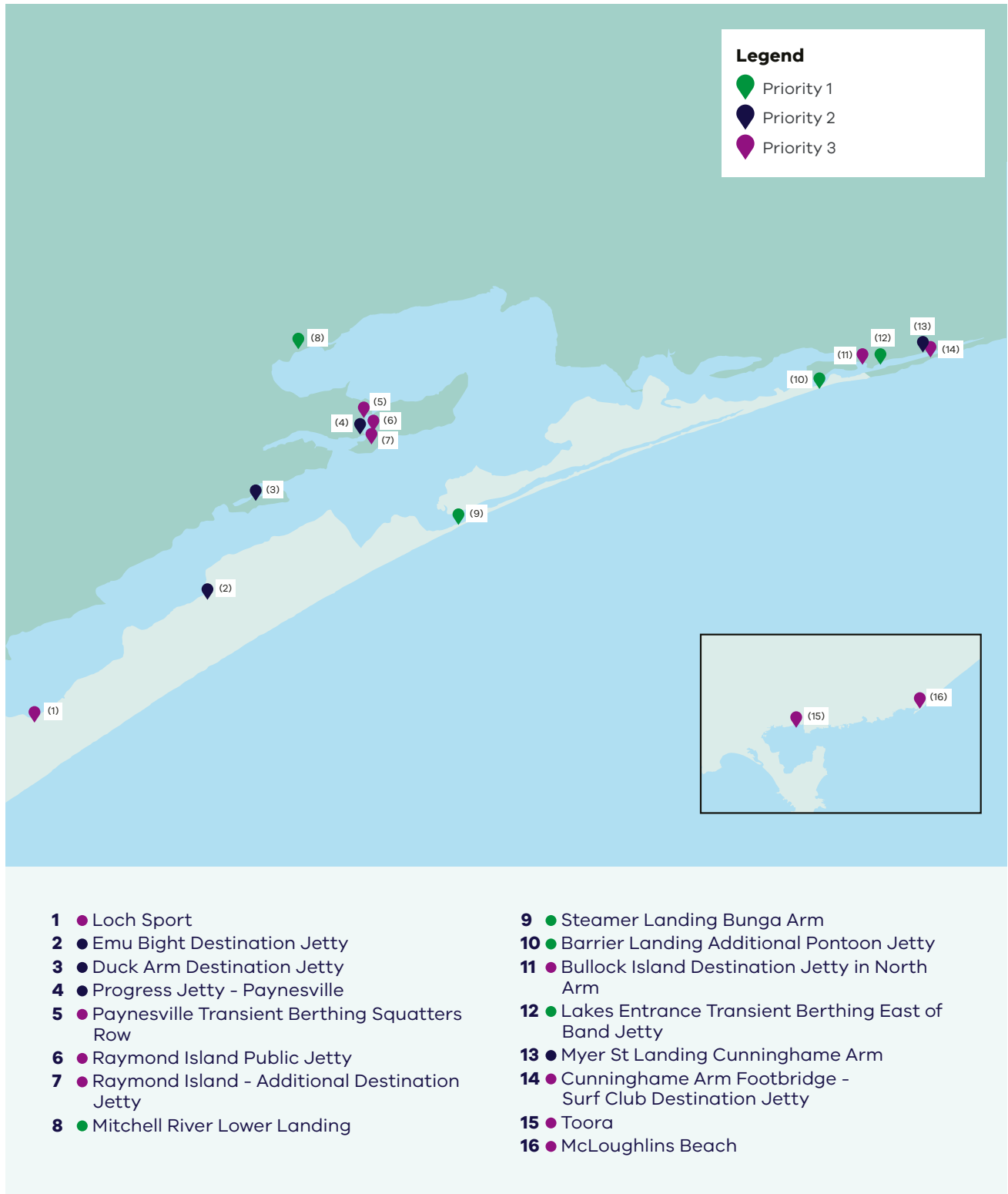
**Figure 16**

#### Potential additional berths, moorings and destination jetties

Port Phillip Bay and Western Port



**Figure 17**  
**Potential additional berths, moorings and destination jetties**  
 Gippsland



## Objective 4

# Enhance the Victorian boating experience by improving access and navigation

Improving the boating experience includes better access (for example, dredged channels), separation of activity types (for example, swimming and powered vessels), appropriate rules, aids to navigation, visible and useful signage, and a balanced compliance, enforcement and education approach.

It also includes providing accessibility for all Victorians, particularly those who require assistance in using boating facilities.



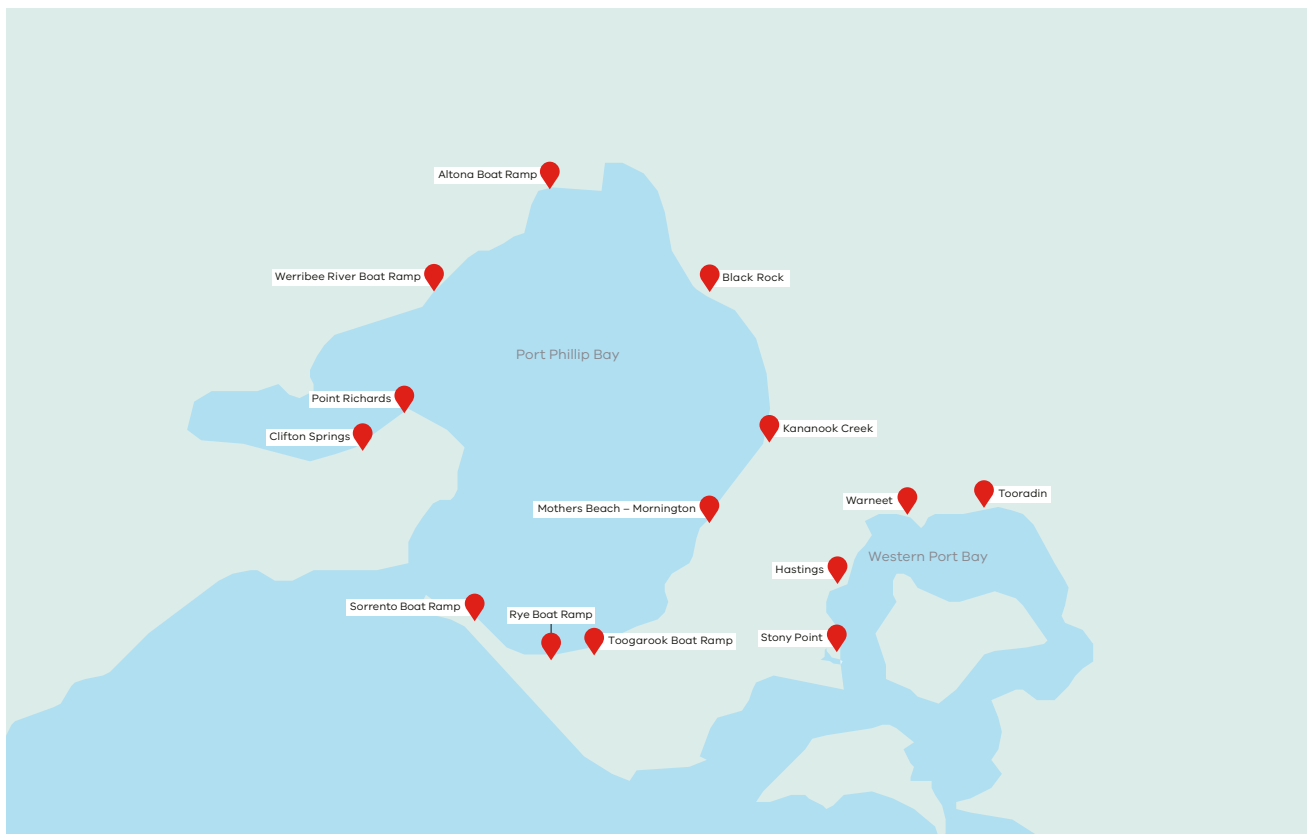
## Dredging coordination

To proactively improve access a coordinated dredging program will be developed and centrally managed for public boat ramps across Port Phillip and Western Port, particularly for those facilities requiring routine maintenance dredging.

**Figure 18**

### Dredging locations

Port Phillip Bay and Western Port





## Accessible boating facility network

Victoria has only three public boating facilities with equipment to help people with limited mobility access our waterways. To ensure more people have access to waterways at our public boating facilities, we're looking to expand our accessible network.



## Waterway Management

A program will be developed to review and implement waterway management requirements, including regular waterway surveys and the periodic review of rules, aids to navigation, signage, compliance, education and use of operating zones.



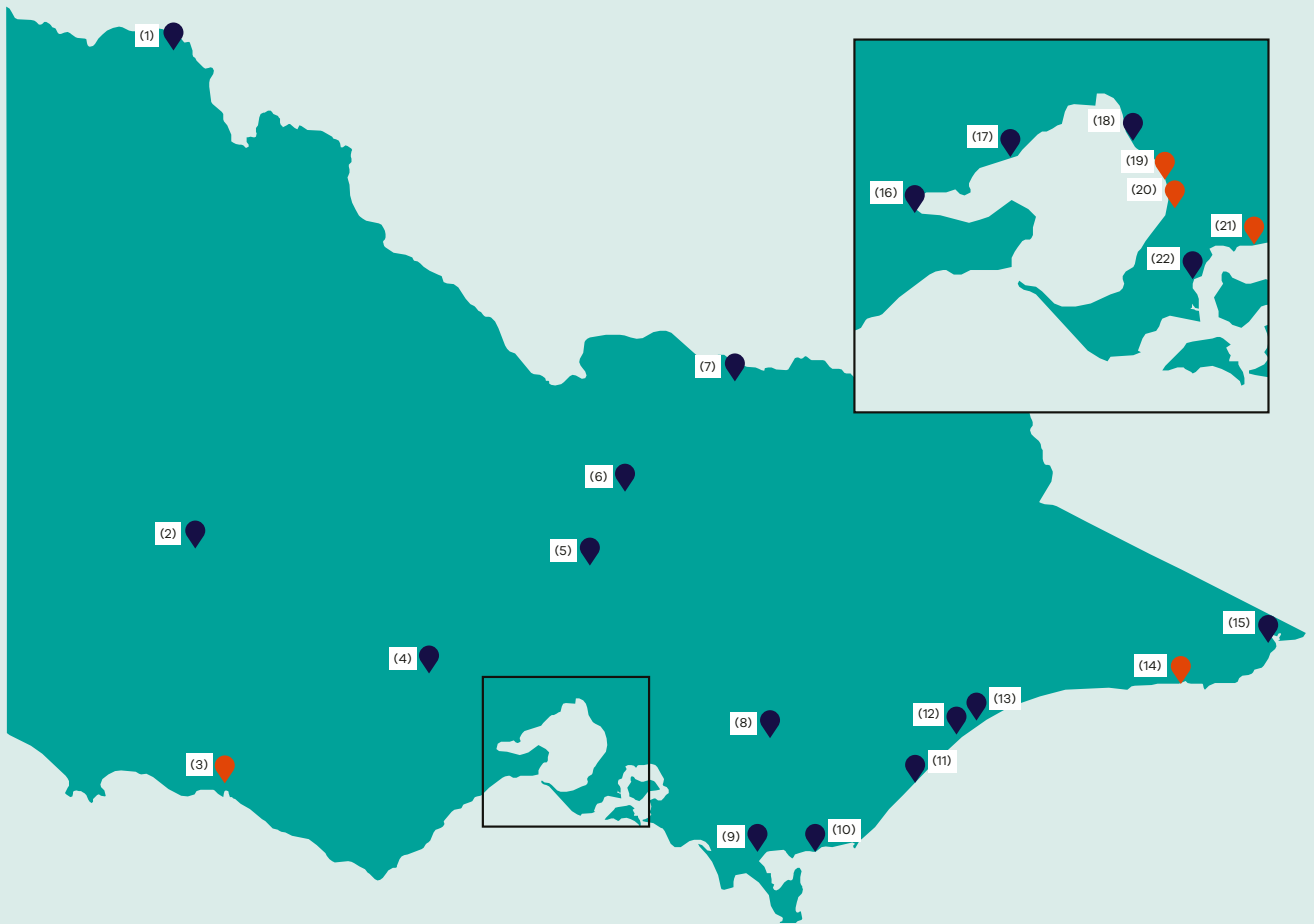


**Figure 19**

Potential New locations for all-access boating facilities

**Legend**

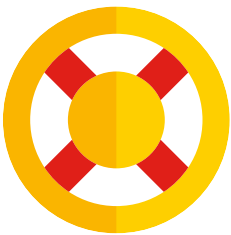
- Existing
- Proposed



- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 ● Murray River - Mildura      | 12 ● Metung                          |
| 2 ● Wimmera River - Horsham     | 13 ● Gippsland Lakes - Lake Entrance |
| 3 ● Hopkins River - Horsham     | 14 ● Bemm River                      |
| 4 ● Lake Wendouree - Ballarat   | 15 ● Mallacoota                      |
| 5 ● Lake Nagambie               | 16 ● St Helens                       |
| 6 ● Goulburn River              | 17 ● Werribee South                  |
| 7 ● Murray River - Lake Mulwala | 18 ● St Kilda Marina                 |
| 8 ● Blue Rock Lake              | 19 ● Mordialloc                      |
| 9 ● Port Welshpool              | 20 ● Patterson River                 |
| 10 ● Port Albert                | 21 ● Tooradin                        |
| 11 ● Seacombe                   | 22 ● Hastings                        |

## Objective 5

# Improve waterway and boating safety by investing in marine search and rescue and boating safety and education



### Boating safety education

Growth in the number of people enjoying the water increases congestion and can present a greater safety risk. Recreational users are competing to use the same limited waterway spaces for often incompatible activities. Ongoing education regarding boating safety and vessel operation is critical to reducing injuries and fatalities.

Boating safety courses are available via accredited training providers including private industry and Marine Search and Rescue Organisations. There are opportunities to expand and reinforce boating safety education through refresher or practical training course and during search-and-rescue call outs.

A revised boating education program will include campaigns, face-to-face boating safety education, and translation into other languages to assist the culturally and linguistically diverse boating community.



### Boating Vic network

Boat ramp and carpark cameras have been installed or upgraded at several locations across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria, creating the Boating Vic network. The Boating Vic app can be used to assess parking availability and weather conditions. To ensure more boaters can make informed decisions, the camera network will be expanded across Victoria.

Figure 20

Current and planned camera locations

Port Phillip Bay and Western Port



**Figure 21**  
**New camera locations**  
 Regional Victoria





## Australian Builders Plate and Hull Identification Number (HIN) Scheme

To improve vessel safety, improving and implementing Australian Builders Plate Standard and promotion of the desirable vessel safety features, such as level floatation will be undertaken in consultation with boating industry and the Australian Recreational Boating Safety Committee.

Concurrent with this process will be an examination of the implementation of a national HIN scheme, linked to the registration of the vessel and the associated vessel standard.



## MSAR priorities

Victorian boaters rely on MSAR units to respond to marine emergencies. The majority of MSAR functions is provided by volunteers.

Support for MSAR will be provided by:

- Providing funding for recruitment, training, equipment, Utilities, fuel and maintenance
- Developing MSAR capabilities through state-wide programs
- Reducing the administration, governance and logistics burden on volunteers
- Ensure volunteers have access to modern, safe rescue equipment

In addition to supporting MSAR, the Government has delivered the provision of Marine Radio Victoria, which provides recreational vessels with a 24/7 emergency radio monitoring service on VHF and HF channels across the Victorian coastline. A review will be undertaken to assess the effectiveness and ongoing cost of the service.



## Review and revise waterway zoning

The concentration of mixed water activities is giving rise to community concern for the safety of all water users. Existing waterway zoning may no longer be adequate to cater for increased extreme congestion. The Marine Safety Regulator will continue to review waterway zones in collaboration with key stakeholders.



## Objective 6

# Enhance the Victorian boating experience by promoting boating across Victoria

Boating makes an important social and economic contribution to Victoria. It plays a particularly important role in tourism. Boating and tourism are the economic lifeblood of regional centres such as Portland and Lakes Entrance.

A boating tourism plan will be developed to actively promote boating destinations in metropolitan and regional areas. The boating experience will also be promoted to encourage participation.

To enhance the boating experience, a series of boating destination trails will be developed, supported by improved infrastructure, signage and tourism benefits.



**Figure 22**

Proposed boating destination trails



## Objective 7

# Improve the quality of the data and implement other reforms that will improve the boating experience.



### Improved data

There are opportunities to improve data sharing between marine agencies. To underpin future investments or to obtain an increased understanding of the boating experience, it is proposed that the regular boater experience and behaviour surveys and boating facility usage counts be undertaken.

Data collected by the Boating Vic cameras will be collected to test and understand Victorian recreational boaters' behaviour and attitudes toward safety, waterways and boating infrastructure. The data collected will inform the action plan priorities.



### PWC Management

The growth in personal watercraft (PWC) necessitates a review of existing regulation, licensing and compliance frameworks, as well as education, engagement and enforcement activities. Significant intervention is now required to ensure improve PWC operator behaviour and reduce incidents on Victoria's waterways.

A holistic program will be developed to generate positive behaviour change among PWC operators through better education, engagement, enforcement and co-regulation.



## Improved Licensing

Licensing reform program will be considered to strengthen the current training and assessment procedures with an aim to increase the level of understanding of operating requirements. This would consider:

- Licence testing changes which would require strengthened PWC endorsement needs
- A new licensing scheme making use of the accredited training providers
- Introducing practical licence testing including hands-on training and assessment



## Improved support for enforcement

The delivery of on-water inspections are carried out by multiple agencies including Victoria Police, Maritime Safety Victoria, Victorian Fisheries Authority and Parks Victoria as well as port and waterway management bodies and local government.

Opportunities for improvements in the training and authorisation of Transport Safety Officers, data sharing and options for using surveillance and speed detection technology will be investigated.



## Speed and distance rules

Collisions are the most common cause of serious injury and damage on Victorian waterways. Investigations will be undertaken to determine the potential extension of the Irregular Riding Rule to other waterways.



## Abandoned and derelict vessels and responsible boat maintenance

There is growing interest in the concept of end-of-life for vessels around the world. Initiatives to date have focused on social responsibility, waste management, materials recovery and boat recycling. Providing a pathway for accessible boat maintenance facilities where owners can appropriately dispose of derelict vessels may help resolve the situation and would also unlock berth capacity for new vessels. Any such facilities must be within proximity of boat owners wishing to dispose of their boat.

Opportunities to investigate options for boat recycling and disposal services across Victoria will be identified. Guidelines for responsible boat maintenance practices will also be developed.

# 05

## Monitoring and performance criteria

Strategic Objective	Monitoring/Performance Criteria
<p><b>1.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by supporting and improving the maintenance of our public facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition assessments of boating facilities improved year on year</li> <li>• Improved boater satisfaction (surveys) - Improvement in public's positive sentiment of boating facilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by continuing to invest in renewing and building new boating facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the total number of facilities renewed</li> <li>• Increase in car-trailer parks year-on-year growth</li> <li>• Year-on-year comparison of revenue, amount of money into the fund and amount that was spent</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by continuing to invest in destination locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of destination facilities provided</li> <li>• Improved boater satisfaction (surveys) - Increase visitation to regional boating locations</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by providing for improved access and navigation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to waterways by more dredging resulting in reduced Notice to Mariners across Port Phillip and Western Port alerting boaters to reduced water depth</li> <li>• Increase in the number of universal access locations</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.</b> To improve waterway &amp; boating safety by investing in marine search and rescue &amp; boating safety &amp; education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in boater's safety awareness (surveys)</li> <li>• Increased investment in marine search and rescue &amp; boating safety and education</li> <li>• Reduced marine incidents - percentage incidents per 10,000 registered vessels as base</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by promoting boating across Victoria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in boating registration year-on-year growth</li> <li>• Increase in facility-specific data counts of vessel launch and retrievals</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.</b> To improve the quality of the data and implement other reforms that will improve the boating experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased Boating Vic usage (year-on-year growth)</li> <li>• Increase in digital users and repeat users</li> <li>• Delivery of reform programs</li> </ul>



# 06

## Action plans and reporting

Each year, an annual action plan will be developed to put into effect each of the objectives in this strategy.

In addition, the Marine Safety Act requires public reporting in relation to the Better Boating Fund. The Department of Transport will publish a report by 1 October each year on:

- Revenue generated in marine licence and vessel registration fees
- Amount of money deposited into the Better Boating Fund
- Amount of money paid from the fund in the preceding financial year
- The projects and programs that have been funded
- A year-on-year comparison of revenue, amount of money into the fund and amount that was spent

# Annexure

## Actions Summary

Strategic Objective	Actions
<p><b>1.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by supporting and improving the maintenance of our public facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> Develop an asset management framework</li> <li><b>b.</b> Develop a maintenance support program</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by continuing to invest in renewing and building new boating facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> Develop design guidelines for boating facilities</li> <li><b>b.</b> Deliver boat ramp renewal program in accordance with priorities</li> <li><b>c.</b> Deliver new facilities</li> <li><b>d.</b> Deliver upgraded facilities</li> <li><b>e.</b> Investigate options to reduce congestion at boating facilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by continuing to invest in destination locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> Develop a program to increase the number of public berths in marinas across Victoria.</li> <li><b>b.</b> Provide for additional berths, moorings, and destination jetties in accordance with priorities</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by providing for improved access and navigation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> Develop a coordinated dredging program</li> <li><b>b.</b> Expand the network for accessible boat ramps at public facilities</li> <li><b>c.</b> Develop a program to review and implement waterway management requirements</li> </ul>

Strategic Objective	Actions
<p><b>5.</b> To improve waterway &amp; boating safety by investing in marine search &amp; rescue and boating safety &amp; education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> Develop a revised boating education program</li> <li><b>b.</b> Expand the Boating Vic camera network</li> <li><b>c.</b> Improve and implement Australian Builders Plate Standard and promotion of the desirable vessel safety features</li> <li><b>d.</b> Examine the implementation of a national HIN scheme</li> <li><b>e.</b> Undertake reviews of waterway zones</li> <li><b>f.</b> Continue to support marine search and rescue units</li> <li><b>g.</b> Review Marine Radio Victoria to assess the effectiveness and ongoing cost of the service</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.</b> To enhance the Victorian boating experience by promoting boating across Victoria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> Develop a program to promote the boating experience</li> <li><b>b.</b> Develop a boating tourism plan</li> <li><b>c.</b> Develop boating destination trails</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.</b> To improve the quality of the data and implement other reforms that will improve the boating experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> Undertake regular boater experience and behaviour surveys and boating facility usage counts</li> <li><b>b.</b> Develop a program to generate positive behaviour change among personal watercraft operators</li> <li><b>c.</b> Consider strengthening licensing reform program</li> <li><b>d.</b> Investigate improvements in data sharing and options for using surveillance and speed detection technology</li> <li><b>e.</b> Investigations potential extension of the Irregular Riding Rule</li> <li><b>f.</b> Investigate options for boat recycling and disposal services across Victoria</li> </ul>

