



**GOULBURN
BROKEN**
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY

Community engagement advisory groups in the Goulburn Broken Catchment - an overview

A message from the CEO

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is responsible for the management of critical land and water resources across 2.4 million hectares of northern Victoria. (11 percent of the State).

The Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) 2013-2019 has adopted a resilience approach to embed adaptive management in natural resource management around local 'systems'. These Social-Ecological Systems (SESs), whilst not having sharp boundaries, do have similar characteristics that create a unique identity.

Planning in SESs supports tailored decision making around activities at the local scale. Community engagement structures are evolving to integrate these SESs with CMA Programs, supporting implementation of the RCS and SES local plans.

Advisory groups across our catchment provide advice and feedback on the challenges and opportunities for natural resource management. I encourage you to contribute to an advisory group as a community representative.

Chris Norman
Chief Executive Officer

About community engagement advisory groups

A range of community engagement structures are adopted by CMA delivery programs to meet program and/or project needs.

Community engagement is a critical element of each program's implementation

Community members of all groups must adhere to the requirements detailed in a formal Charter for Community Engagement Groups.

Each community engagement group regulates its own proceedings subject to conditions established by the Board of the Goulburn Broken CMA and has certain key responsibilities which are outlined in the Charter.

Membership eligibility

To be eligible to be part of a community engagement group, members must have no convictions under the *Water Act 1989* or *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, no criminal convictions, must maintain satisfactory attendance record and should have skills in one or more of the following areas:

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Business Management
- ✓ Environmental Law
- ✓ Land Use Planning
- ✓ Statutory Planning
- ✓ Floodplain Management
- ✓ Waterway Management
- ✓ Environmental Protection / Biodiversity
- ✓ Sustainable Agriculture
- ✓ Natural Resource Management
- ✓ Demonstrated Community Linkages
- ✓ Land Management
- ✓ Vegetation Management
- ✓ Conservation
- ✓ Farming
- ✓ Salinity
- ✓ Landcare
- ✓ Forestry
- ✓ Indigenous Land
- ✓ State Government
- ✓ Local Government

Each Group may require a different emphasis dictated by the Regional Catchment Strategy.

The catchment at a glance

Situated in northern Victoria within the Murray Darling Basin, the Goulburn Broken Catchment comprises catchments of the Goulburn and Broken Rivers and part of the Murray River Valley.

The Catchment contains Victoria's main water storage, Eildon and the popular Mt Buller Alpine Resort. It includes the municipalities of Moira, Campaspe, Mitchell, Murrindindi, Mansfield and Strathbogie Shires, Benalla Rural City and the City of Greater Shepparton.

Approximately 200,000 residents call the Catchment home. The region has a large indigenous population (6000) as well as many people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

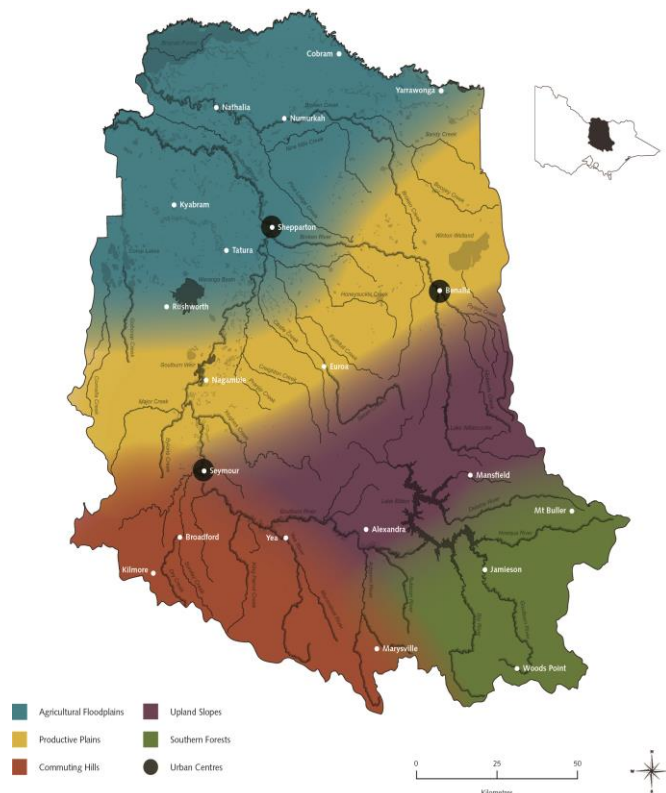
Land use in the Goulburn Broken Catchment comprises irrigated dairy, horticulture, viticulture, dryland grazing, cropping, timber production, thoroughbred horses and tourism.

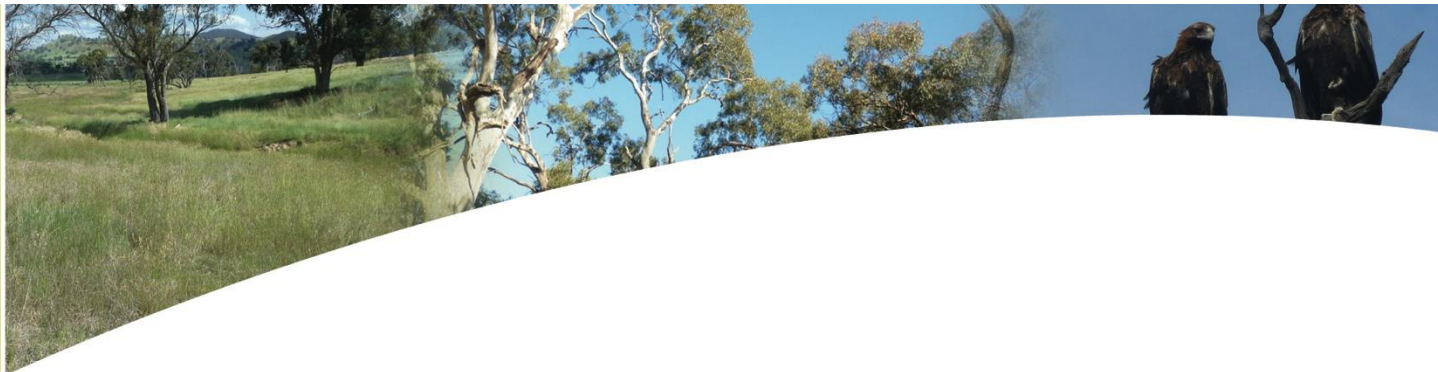
The Catchment faces a range of environmental problems including degraded rivers, loss of native vegetation and biodiversity, water quality, salinity and pest plants and animals.

Managing natural resources

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) was established as one of ten CMAs in 1997 under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* covering the State of Victoria to coordinate land, water and biodiversity management.

The CMA works across six social ecological systems in the Catchment:





Leadership

The Goulburn Broken CMA plays a lead role working with the community, Government and funding organisations to protect and enhance land, water and biodiversity resources.

Funding, drawn primarily from State and Federal Government, is targeted to achieve integrated works identified as the highest priorities for the Catchment SESs.

The onground works are underpinned by collaborative research which leads to multiple benefits by, for example, combining the best available science with the practical challenges of running a productive farm or maintaining a waterway for environmental and tourism benefits.

Vision

Healthy, resilient and increasingly productive landscapes supporting vibrant communities

Purpose

Through its leadership and partnerships the Goulburn Broken CMA will improve the resilience of the Catchment's people, land, biodiversity and water resources in a rapidly changing environment.

Values and behaviours

- Environmental Sustainability - we will passionately contribute to improving the environmental health of our catchment.
- Safety - we vigorously protect and look out for the safety and wellbeing of ourselves, our colleagues and our workers.
- Partnerships – we focus on teamwork and collaboration across our organisation to develop

strategic alliances with partners and the regional community.

- Leadership – we have courage to lead change and accept the responsibility to inspire and deliver positive change.
- Respect – we embrace diversity treating everyone with fairness, respect, openness & honesty.
- Achievement, excellence and accountability – we do what we say we will do, we do it well and we take responsibility and accountability for our actions.
- Continuous learning, innovation and improvement – we are an evidence and science-based organisation and we test and challenge the status quo. We learn from our successes and failures and we are continually adapting using internal and external feedback from stakeholders and the environment. We are an agile, flexible and responsive organisation.

What we deliver

In partnership with agencies and community, the Goulburn Broken delivers:

- River health management
- Environmental water management
- Strategic water quality co-ordination
- Floodplain management
- Works on waterways
- Sustainable agriculture & land management
- Water savings & water use efficiency
- Drainage
- Biodiversity
- Landcare support
- Pest plant & animal management
- Climate change adaptation



Delivery programs

Goulburn Broken CMA service delivery is organised through four CMA Programs:

Land and Biodiversity Program

This Program seeks to ensure that the catchment has healthy and resilient ecosystems through an actively involved and inspired community practicing sustainable land management.

River & Wetland Health and Floodplain Management Program

This program seeks to ensure that catchment has healthy rivers, streams, wetlands, floodplains and adjacent land that support a vibrant range and abundance of natural environments, provides water for human use, sustains our native flora and fauna and provides for our social, economic and cultural values.

Sustainable Irrigation Program

This program seeks to achieve the long term protection and prosperity of irrigated land and environmental features within the Catchment.

Corporate Program

This program seeks to enable the achievement of Catchment objectives by supporting CMA staff, partners, community groups and the broader catchment community to participate successfully and safely in natural resource activities facilitated through the CMA.

About the Board

Members of the Goulburn Broken CMA Board of Directors are drawn from within the Catchment and are appointed by the Victorian Government. Together they have extensive experience and

knowledge of primary industry, land protection, water resource management, waterway and floodplain management, environmental conservation, local government, business and financial management.

The Board of Directors of the Goulburn Broken CMA is responsible for setting strategic directions ensuring the effective management of natural resources in the Catchment. The Board discharges its overall responsibilities through a formalised process of Corporate Governance, and the preparation of an annual Corporate Plan.

The overarching RCS sets out priorities and goals for policy, funding, and programs onground works with partners.

This integrated approach to natural resource management ensures that issues are not looked at in isolation, but on a catchment-wide or localised SES scale with outcomes designed to achieve multiple benefits. All of the works undertaken within the catchment fit within State, Murray Darling Basin and National strategies.

The Goulburn Broken CMA Annual Report details the members, and the progress of the Board against the RCS targets and trends in catchment condition.

For further information please contact:

**Goulburn Broken Catchment
Management Authority**
Telephone: 5822 7700
PO Box 175 Shepparton 3632
www.gbcma.vic.gov.au



Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

CHARTER

Shepparton Irrigation Region People and Planning Integration Committee (Agricultural Floodplains)

Updated June 2015

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 Introduction

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GB CMA) is a statutory authority established by the Victorian Government to coordinate land, water and biodiversity management in the Region. The GB CMA was constituted on 1st July 1997 under the provisions of the Water Act 1989 and the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994. The GB CMA was established as the peak natural resource management body in the Catchment to develop and oversee the implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategy.

To assist it in this task, the Authority used the provisions of Section 19J of the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, to establish geographically based Implementation Committees. The Implementation Committee (IC) comprised community representatives appointed by the Authority and a non-voting representative from each of the Department of Primary Industries, Department of Sustainability & Environment and Goulburn-Murray Water.

The Implementation Committee structure was reviewed in 2010/11 in recognition of the changing environment that CMAs were now operating in. This included tighter funding priorities set by both State and Commonwealth Government investors with less discretion for regional input, and a greater focus on increased community engagement across the whole catchment that did not create a divide between irrigation and dryland (as both areas were going through enormous structural adjustment). From this review, a revitalized community engagement approach was adopted by the GB CMA Board in August 2011.

This renewed approach utilised existing and new community engagement structures to support the delivery of the three GB CMA Programs:

- I. Sustainable Irrigation,
- II. Land and Biodiversity, and
- III. River & Wetland Health and Floodplain Management.

With the development and establishment of the new Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy (2013-19), a resilience approach was adopted to embed an adaptive approach to natural resource management around localised 'systems'. The approach is based on seven Social-Ecological Systems (SESs) that, whilst not having sharp boundaries, do have similar characteristics and issues which creates a unique identity. Planning in these SESs supports the principle of subsidiarity and improves decision making around tailored activities and solutions at this scale. The SESs are the:

- Agricultural Floodplains (covering a large proportion of the Shepparton Irrigation Region (SIR))
- Productive Plains
- Upland Slopes
- Southern Forests
- Commuting Hills
- Urban Centres (Shepparton, Seymour & Benalla)
- Whole of Catchment

Community engagement structures are evolving to integrate these SES areas with GB CMA Programs and support the implementation of the RCS and SES Local Plans.

1.2 The Charter

The GB CMA Charter is underpinned by the following key principles for community engagement:

- Advice from community is to be provided both functionally (project issues) and geographically, based on agreed 'whole of catchment' Program structures *{with ongoing review to identify gaps}*.
- Advice and feedback is to come through CMA Management (ultimate responsibility sits with CEO).
- An emotional connection and ownership of CMA directions/activities is built through current and new community engagement by realigning language (and a consistent Charter).
- Different community perspectives on issues are recognised and used to test our assumptions, and the principle of subsidiarity is supported.
- Partnerships formed and fostered through our community engagement structures are critical to the performance of the GB CMA.
- Will underpin our strategic planning framework and Authority's directions as described in the Regional Catchment Strategy and Corporate Plans.
- Will meet the CMA's obligations under the Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994).

2.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Role and Function of community engagement groups

For the purpose of this document, from this point forward any reference to the Shepparton Irrigation Region People and Planning Integration Committee (SIRPPIC) shall be made as the Group.

The Group regulates its own proceedings in line with protocols established by the GB CMA Board and has the following roles and functions:

- Make recommendations to the GB CMA Board through the Sustainable Irrigation Program Manager
- Provide advice to the GB CMA Board about new and emerging challenges and opportunities on behalf of the community
- Advocate for Sustainable Irrigation Program initiatives in the Shepparton Irrigation Region
- Comment on SIR-relevant natural resource management strategies
- Share and celebrate successes with the community, including preparation of an SIR Achievement Summary
- Oversee development of the Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan
- Monitor implementation performance of the Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan Works Programs
- Assess risks to Shepparton Irrigation Region natural resources and recommend management responses
- Direct feasibility investigations of new ideas that deliver on the Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan
- Feedback community, industry and agency comments that improve the efficiency & effectiveness of Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan delivery

GB CMA community engagement groups have no role or responsibility in matters pertaining to statutory planning.

3.0 GOVERNANCE & STRUCTURE

The structure of the GB CMA comprises:

3.1 Board

The Board is responsible to its Ministers for GB CMA's strategic direction, governance and performance of GB CMA. Key functions of the Board include:

- Formulating strategic direction in conjunction with the CEO and senior Management
- Approving the appointment and termination of the CEO
- Establishing objectives for and monitoring the performance of the CEO
- Ensuring that a risk management framework is in place
- Ensuring that GB CMA complies with the law and conforms to the highest standards of corporate governance practice and ethical conduct
- Approving GB CMA's policies
- Ensuring that GB CMA otherwise performs its functions in a proper, effective and efficient way

3.2 Community engagement structures

A range of community engagement structures will be adopted by GB CMA Programs to meet responsibilities for the programs and/or projects they deliver. These will be broadly based on the following types of structures:

1. High-level coordination/reference groups
2. Program advisory groups
3. Project steering groups (including working groups)
4. Other (including Landcare groups/catchment management networks (CMNs))

To maximise the engagement of the communities within the Catchment the groups may form, with input from GB CMA Management, working groups to assist in the development of sub-catchment strategies and/or local action plans identifying priorities and program directions.

Members of all formal groups established by the GB CMA are to adhere to the directions provided in this Charter.

3.3 Community engagement Group Convener

A Convener and appropriate resources will be allocated to provide support to the Group.

The Convener will report to the CEO or delegated position. The Convener is required to assist the Group to achieve its tasks by ensuring information flow, administrative support and policy advice. The Convener is usually also a member of the GB CMA Partnership/Management Team and is accountable to the CEO for performance, employment and disciplinary matters.

3.4 GB CMA Staff

Staff operate through the CEO and are responsible for the delivery of programs and projects consistent with the strategic directions set by the Board.

3.5 GB CMA Principles

Respect of the community – implementing natural resource management actions cannot occur without the support, guidance and active participation of the community.

Quality – the management actions and works actions promoted by the RCS will be delivered to a high standard dictated by community expectations.

Learning and adapting – we must strive for excellence in our monitoring and evaluation processes. They must be transparent and invite community scrutiny, and we must achieve best practice in reviewing and adjusting our efforts to accommodate new research findings and revised community expectations.

3.6 GB CMA values and behaviour

- **Environmental Sustainability** we will passionately contribute to improving the environmental health of our catchment.
- **Safety** we vigorously protect and look out for the safety and wellbeing of ourselves, our colleagues and our workers.
- **Partnerships** we focus on teamwork and collaboration across our organisation to develop strategic alliances with partners and the regional community.
- **Leadership** we have the courage to lead change and accept the responsibility to inspire and deliver positive change.
- **Respect** we embrace diversity and treat everyone with fairness, respect, openness and honesty.
- **Achievement, Excellence and Accountability** we do what we say we will do, we do it well and we take responsibility and accountability for our actions.
- **Continuous learning, innovation and improvement** we are an evidence and science-based organisation and we test and challenge the status quo. We learn from our successes and failures and we are continually adapting using internal and external feedback from stakeholders and the environment. We are an agile, flexible and responsive organisation.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Representation

Each Community Engagement Group should comprise a chairperson, and not less than five and not more than twelve community representatives appointed through a transparent process, and will also include representation from key Agency partners (such as the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Training and Resources, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, and Goulburn Murray Water).

4.2 Membership eligibility

4.2.1 Membership eligibility criteria

- No convictions under the Water Act 1989 or Catchment & Land Protection Act 1994.
- No criminal convictions.
- Must maintain satisfactory attendance record
- Should have skills in one or more of the following areas:

Leadership	Land Management
Business Management	Vegetation Management
Environmental Law	Conservation
Land Use Planning	Farming
Statutory Planning	Salinity
Floodplain Management	Landcare
Waterway Management	Forestry
Environmental Protection / Biodiversity	Indigenous Land
Sustainable Agriculture	State Government
Natural Resource Management	Local Government
Demonstrated Community Linkages	Agricultural and/or industry Linkages

Each Group may require a different emphasis dictated by the Regional Catchment Strategy and the relevant Program or SES area. The skills coloured in blue are highly desirable to contribute to the implementation of the Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan.

4.2.2 Term of appointment

Membership should be based on the tenure of the Group, but always seeking renewal of members after four years with any member having a maximum of two rotations (i.e. can remain on the Group for a maximum of 8 years).

4.2.3 Appointment processes

Depending on the status of the Group (as defined under Section 3.2), the following appointment processes is recommended;

- Nominations for vacant positions shall be called for by advertisement in local newspapers. The advertising process will be coordinated by the relevant GB CMA Program Manager/SES Coordinator.
- A Selection Panel will be formed comprising (at least) the relevant GB CMA Program Manager/SES Manager, a relevant community member and (potentially but not necessarily) a member from the GB CMA Board. The selection panel will advise the GB CMA Board of its recommended appointment(s).

4.2.4 Termination of appointment

The Authority (CEO and Board) reserves the right to terminate membership of any member of the Group at any time as a result of a significant breach of protocol or standard (see Section 11.0).

4.2.5 Appointment of chair

The Chair of the Group is to be appointed by the CEO, upon recommendation of the Convenor/Program Manager/SES Manager.

The Board is to be advised of (and introduced to) the nominated Chair by the CEO and/or Convenor/Program Manager/SES Coordinator.

4.2.6 Casual vacancy

Any Group replacements are to be coordinated by the Convener via discussion with the CEO and either recommending a replacement or advertisement. The Board is to be notified by Management of any significant changes to membership.

4.2.7 Induction

To ensure the high quality and timeliness of advice and input are maintained, all new Group members should receive of briefing of the roles and functions and relevant activities of the Group by the Convener. This induction process will normally be completed prior to any new member attending a meeting.

4.2.8 Responsibility when representing the GB CMA

Where Management appoints a Group member to represent the GB CMA on an external committee or representative group, the member will represent the views of the GB CMA. The member should report to the Board through the relevant Program Manager, Group and/or CEO. Consultation with the Program Manager is to occur before any formal correspondence is entered into by either party. Group member costs (sitting fees/travelling costs/accommodation costs and expenses) will be met from the appropriately defined budget.

5.0 EXPENSES & REMUNERATION

Members of the Group may be entitled to be paid a session fee, travelling and other (if any) allowances in accordance with Government Guidelines.

6.0 MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Meeting frequency

The Groups should meet on a regular basis as defined by the Convener and members, and in line with the requirements of the work program.

Extraordinary meetings can be called when required.

6.2 Meeting support

The Group is supported with a Convener and other resources, as required.

6.3 Meeting minutes

Minutes of meetings must be treated as confidential by members until they are confirmed. In general, minutes of meetings will only be circulated to the members (including corresponding members).

6.4 Attendance requirements

Members are required to maintain a minimum attendance level, as set by the Group. As an absolute minimum, 80% meeting attendance is expected. Non-attendance without apology or leave of absence may constitute unsatisfactory attendance and may lead to a review of membership.

6.5 Quorum

If required, a quorum is reached by a simple majority of voting members, that is 50% or greater of total voting members.

7.0 COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

7.1 Correspondence

All correspondence is to be cleared by the Convener/GB CMA Program Manager.

7.2 Conflict resolution

Where Groups are seeking to initiate changes to Board policy, or are critical of Board processes or performance, or the matters at hand are controversial or have the potential to affect the Community Engagement / Board relationship, then the Chair of the Group and GB CMA Convener needs to follow the steps set out below:

1. Telephone the CEO of the Authority to discuss and endeavour to resolve the matter.
2. If needed, write to the CEO of the Authority to confirm the matter in writing (who is required to bring the matter to the attention of the Board).

7.3 Public Communication

With regard to communications protocol, the Convener (in conjunction with the Group Chair) are authorised to conduct public communications on behalf of their Group, in line with existing CMA general communication processes. This includes media releases initiated by the Group with any policy ramifications requiring endorsement by the GB CMA CEO.

Nevertheless, members are encouraged to maintain close contact with their constituency. This includes farmers, Landcare, Local Government, natural resource based industries and primary industry associations. Members should take the opportunity to communicate natural resource management issues and canvass opinions from the community, including groups outside the description above.

7.4 Communication with the GB CMA

The CEO Board Report (in the form of a newsletter) will be made available to the Group Conveners within 2 weeks following a Board meeting to be tabled and discussed at upcoming meetings. There may be times where this information will be verbally communicated, but the GB CMA request that hard copies are not circulated further.

The Group Chair (or a designated group member) will be included in the quarterly report presentations to the Board in collaboration with the appropriate Program Manager/SES Co-ordinator.

GB CMA Board members may be invited to Group meetings to discuss particular issues as identified by the Group or the Board.

7.5 Communication with the Board

As a minimum requirement GB CMA Program Managers will report to the Board quarterly on their program delivery and overall performance. These reports are to contain feedback on the community issues and discussions arising from the Group.

The Group Chair (or a designated group member) may be included in the quarterly report presentations to the Board in collaboration with the appropriate Program Manager/SES Co-ordinator.

GB CMA Board members may be welcomed to Group meetings to discuss particular issues as identified by the Group or the Board.

8.0 PECUNIARY INTERESTS

A Group member must make a declaration of interest before consideration of any relevant matter at any meeting. Section 92 of the Water Act “Effect of Pecuniary Interests” should be used as a guide. Any breaches of Corporate Governance will be reported to the CEO. Counselling will be adopted in the first instance, but repeated breaches will result in a recommendation to the CEO (and advice to the Board) to terminate the offender’s appointment.

9.0 LIABILITY

Members of the Group created by the GB CMA shall be covered by the GB CMA Group Personal Accident Insurance Policy. Details of the Policy and the level of cover can be obtained upon request by any member the Group.

10.0 CONFLICT/DISPUTE RESOLUTION

All conflict is to be resolved in accordance with the appropriate GB CMA policies and procedures.

11.0 DISCIPLINARY PROCESSES

In the event that a Group member has failed to act in accordance with the Charter, or the prescribed values and/or behaviours of the GB CMA, or have failed to act in the best interest of the GB CMA (example: inappropriate public statements, leaking of documents/information etc.) then the matter will be referred to the CEO for action. Inappropriate actions or behaviour may result in the termination of membership.

12.0 REVIEW

This Charter will be reviewed periodically, as determined by the Group.

The Group should review its performance annually using the following checklist as a guide (only):

- ✓ Community Engagement Groups should be an **integral part** of organisation’s structure and business.
- ✓ Clear **roles and responsibilities**: A clear purpose, Charter and/or Terms of Reference clearly understood by the Group members, the Board, senior management, and the broader organisation.
- ✓ Clear guidelines for **selection** of members that can serve the purpose of the Group.
- ✓ A **culture of respect** within the Group that values different perspectives, and is able to hear the different views expressed and modify decisions and/or approach to an issue. Open minded participation and goodwill.
- ✓ Strong **leadership** from the Group Chair, Convenor/Program Manager, CEO and Board.
- ✓ The Groups need to be **part of a whole of community engagement process**.
- ✓ The Groups should be **adequately supported** with executive resources, training and budget to meet the purpose and charter. This support extends to the support of the senior management (and Board).
- ✓ There needs to be an **investment** in building knowledge, capacity and relationships of members.
- ✓ The Groups should only meet when there is a **reason to meet**.
- ✓ The Groups should be part of **two way communication** with the Board and organisation.
- ✓ The Groups should be formally monitored and **evaluated for effectiveness** against the purpose and Charter.
- ✓ The Groups and their achievements should be **acknowledged** and celebrated.
- ✓ **Defined timeframes** for Groups and member terms to ensure renewal, flexibility and responsiveness.

Sustainable Irrigation Program

For the Sustainable Irrigation Region People and Planning Integration Committee recruitment process 2015

About the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Situated in Northern Victoria and part of the Murray Darling Basin, the Goulburn Broken Catchment covers over 2.4 million hectares and comprises the catchments of the Goulburn and Broken rivers and part of the River Murray valley.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is a statutory authority established by the Victorian Government to coordinate land, water and biodiversity management. Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 the Goulburn Broken CMA was established as the peak natural resource management body in the Goulburn Broken catchment to develop and oversee the implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategy.

To assist in this task, the Goulburn Broken CMA has established four program work areas in which to deliver catchment wide priority works.

Program Work Areas

- Sustainable Irrigation
- Land and Biodiversity
- Waterway and Floodplain Management
- Corporate Program

Sustainable Irrigation Program Overview

The Sustainable Irrigation Program seeks to:

- Achieve the long term protection and prosperity of irrigated land and environmental features within the Goulburn Broken Catchment from the return of high watertables and salinisation.
- Increase prosperity of irrigated agriculture through sustainable management.
- Champion the need for significant investment in critical regional infrastructure such as surface and sub-surface water management activities as a key component of a high quality “modernised” irrigation system.
- Increase the value of triple bottom line outcomes through the rollout of the Farm Water Program by maximising the gains (water and productivity) through connections to a modernised irrigation system.
- Minimise the on farm impacts from irrigation practices on waterways and High Value Environmental Assets.

Sustainable Irrigation Program Delivery

The Sustainable Irrigation Program oversees the delivery of onground works relating to sustainable irrigation in the Goulburn Broken Catchment. These onground works align with overarching strategies for the health of both the Goulburn Broken Catchment and the Murray Darling Basin.

The Shepparton Irrigation Region Catchment Implementation Strategy and the Mid Goulburn Broken and Upper Goulburn Sustainable Irrigation Action Plan direct the strategic priorities for investment across the irrigated landscape of the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Environment Program Goal:

To protect and enhance the natural assets and their ecosystem processes and functions in a way that provides benefits for native biodiversity, social and economic aspects.

- Protection of environmental features:
 - Wetland protection from salinisation
 - Remnant vegetation protection and enhancement

Farm Program Goal:

To reduce groundwater accessions, soil salinisation and waterlogging on farms.

- Property management planning:
 - Alignment with irrigation modernisation
 - Farm Water Program
 - Improved farm practices

Surface Water Management Program Goal:

By 2020, improve the health of natural resources and reduce the risk to investment in the Shepparton Irrigation Region, by providing an appropriate surface water management service in areas where the total benefits, including economic, social and environmental benefits exceeds the costs.

- Provision of surface drainage:
 - Primary
 - Community

(Note: The surface water management program is currently unfunded)

Groundwater and Salt Management Program Goal:

To work with and unite community and government agency stakeholders to provide adaptive groundwater and salt management services which support sustainable agricultural practices, foster viable communities and improve key environmental assets across the Shepparton Irrigation Region.

- Groundwater and salinity control:
 - Provision of groundwater pumping to protect assets
 - Reporting under the Basin Salinity Management Plan
 - Research and development

Waterway Program Goals:

Protection and enhancement of the environmental, economic, recreational and aesthetic values of the rivers and waterways (stream health). Protection of public and private assets from stream-related impacts.

For further information please contact:

Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
PO Box 1752 (168 Welsford St) Shepparton VIC 3632

Telephone: (03) 5822 7700

Website: www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

Water on, water off

Managing salinity in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

The challenge

- ◆ More than \$2 billion is being invested in the region to modernise the irrigation network delivery system and improve on-farm water use.
- ◆ **BUT this massive investment in infrastructure and innovative practice could be jeopardised by rising water tables.**
- ◆ The area of land where the water table is within two meters of the surface has increased from zero hectares in 2009 to 34,000 ha between 2009 and 2013.
- ◆ Productivity losses related to the resulting salinisation of productive land are estimated at \$100 million a year.

Our solution

- ◆ 123,379 ha within 2km of the GMW Connections Backbone needs to be adequately drained and protected.
- ◆ To ensure the \$2 billion-plus investment in irrigated agriculture does not go to waste we're asking for \$6 million/year over 20 years to improve sub-surface and surface drainage across the GMID.
- ◆ We already work closely with the relevant stakeholders (G-MW, DEPI, irrigators and industry) to deliver other programs in the region (eg Farm Water, Fruit Industry Employment Program) so we can build on a terrific track record of working collaboratively and efficiently to deliver this project on time and on budget.
- ◆ Plans are already in place to respond now.
- ◆ This investment supports the Victorian Government's Growing Food and Fibre initiative that aims to increase the productivity and profitability of Victoria's key food and fibre sectors so producers can continue to capture global opportunities.

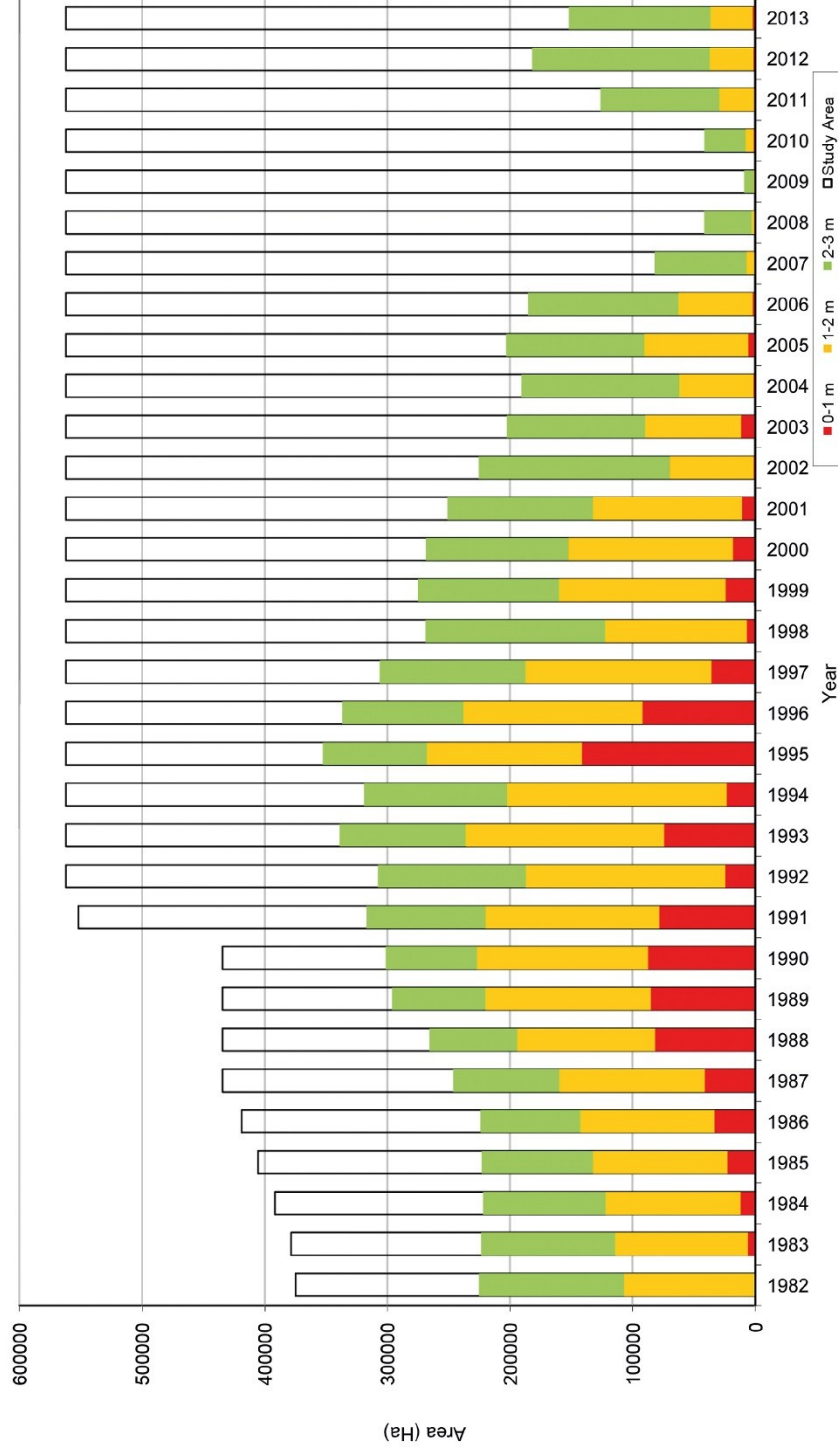
What's at stake

- ◆ The Goulburn Broken Catchment covers only two per cent of the Murray Darling Basin's land area but generates 26 per cent of Victoria's rural export earnings
- ◆ Irrigation is the key to this productivity - irrigated agriculture represents about 38 per cent of Victoria's agricultural output, produced on less than three per cent of the State's land area.
- ◆ More than 2.176 billion litres of milk - 23% of Australia's milk production - is produced in the Murray Dairy region with 90% of this milk is produced on farms located in the GMID.
- ◆ The region is the major producer of the national nashi, deciduous processed fruit, pear and peach crop.
- ◆ Salinity is therefore a very real and major threat to the region's producers.
- ◆ If not addressed it also puts the state's ability to capture the opportunities detailed in the Victorian Food to Asia Action Plan at risk.

For more information, contact Carl Walters carlw@gbcma.vic.gov.au

Shepparton Irrigation Region

August Depth to Watertable Areas: 1982-2013



The Shepparton Irrigation Region Watertable Contours map (on reverse page) was produced using information from 1,700 groundwater level monitoring bores. The graph shows the total study area and a comparison of the areas of watertable at various depths from 1982 to 2013. High watertables (less than two metres below surface) and their associated salinity issues will remain a significant risk except in times of extended drought.

For further information please contact GMW on 1300 013 357.

