

Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy **Action Plan 2025-2026**



betterboating.vic.gov.au

**better
boating**
VICTORIA

 **Victorian Fisheries**
AUTHORITY

VICTORIA
State
Government

Contents

Overview	01
2024–25 boating revenue	02
Boating priorities for 2025–26	04
Victoria’s biggest ever boat ramp construction program	06
1.0 Management and maintenance of boating facilities	08
2.0 Enhanced facilities	09
3.0 Improved access and navigation	10
4.0 Safer waterways	11
5.0 Boating promotion	12
Public reporting	13

Overview

In 2021, the Victorian Government established the Better Boating Fund. The fund supports Victorians to have a great day out on the water with family and friends.

The amount going into the Better Boating Fund is the equivalent of all revenue generated from marine licences and vessel registration.

Throughout 2024–25, the Victorian Government collected **\$33,036,653** in revenue from recreational vessel registration as well as marine licences. This revenue will be used to deliver the activities in the Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy 2025–26 Action Plan. The revenue supports recreational boating by funding boat ramp construction, planning and upgrades, boating safety and education initiatives, compliance and enforcement activities and marine search and rescue operations.



2024–25 boating revenue

Throughout 2024–25, the Victorian Government collected **\$33,036,653** in revenue from vessel registration and marine licences. This was collected from the registration of **200,253** vessels as well as issuing **162,954** marine licences.

The Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy (2021–2030) identified opportunities to improve the boating experience across Victoria, following consultation with the boating community, industry and facility asset managers across Victoria. The priorities in the strategy were developed to help deliver the shared vision for recreational boating in Victoria:

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 strategy is being delivered through a series of annual action plans. This is the fifth action plan that has been prepared since the inception of the Better Boating Fund in 2021.

Through the Better Boating Fund and previous action plans, a number of major boat ramp upgrades have been completed, with many more underway. These plans have also supported dredging and structural maintenance of ramp facilities across Victoria, and a range of other projects aimed at enhancing the boating experience for all Victorians.

The fifth action plan for 2025–26 will fund the final stages of projects already underway to help deliver the priorities identified in the Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy. The action plan will also maintain funding for important boating safety initiatives and programs, continue grant programs for boating facility managers and support initiatives to encourage more Victorians to get involved in boating.

In addition to the projects listed in this action plan, work is continuing on many other exciting boat ramp upgrades, funded through previous action plans and the Better Boating Fund.



\$33.03m

Throughout 2024–25, the Victorian Government collected **\$33,036,653** in revenue from vessel registration and marine licences. This was collected from the registration of **200,253** vessels as well as issuing **162,954** marine licences.

Things are really ramping up!

What's been funded so far through previous action plans and the Better Boating Fund

Cheaper



Fees removed at **40 ramp locations** around Victoria. This means that boat launching and parking at all public boat ramps remains **FREE** of charge for all boaters.

Easier



40 major upgrades to boat ramps completed across Victoria



28 more major upgrades in the pipeline



45 projects completed for boat ramp structural maintenance – **8 more** on the go

More accessible



11 ramps with improved all abilities access – **3 more** on the go



35 projects completed to improve waterway navigation and safety – **5 more** on the go



28 dredging projects completed to improve boat access – **4 more** on the go



Over 340 boaters have attended clinics to improve their skills in boat handling and trailer reversing

Boating priorities for 2025–26

This is the fifth action plan which has been developed to support the delivery of the Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy (2021–2030). Key priorities for the allocation of funding will include:

- Previous government commitments: Continued funding for Emergency Management Victoria and Safe Transport Victoria for emergency services and recreational boating functions; as well as continued provision of free launching and parking at Victorian boat ramps.
- Existing contracts: Support for the provision of a State-sponsored emergency maritime distress radio provided to boaters across the Victorian coastline.
- Election commitments: Projects identified from the Victorian Government's 'More Piers, Jetties and Opportunities for Little Anglers' election promise.

In addition, projects have also been identified from the Strategy, which was developed in consultation with boaters, asset managers, waterway managers, local councils, the boating industry and the wider community.

Through funding from this action plan, major boating facility upgrades will occur at Tullaroop Reservoir, Mildura's Karadoc boat ramp, Lake Colac and Newhaven Pier, a new ramp will be built at Tarago Reservoir, while dredging will be undertaken at Kirk Point to reinstate navigable depth for boaters out onto Port Phillip Bay.

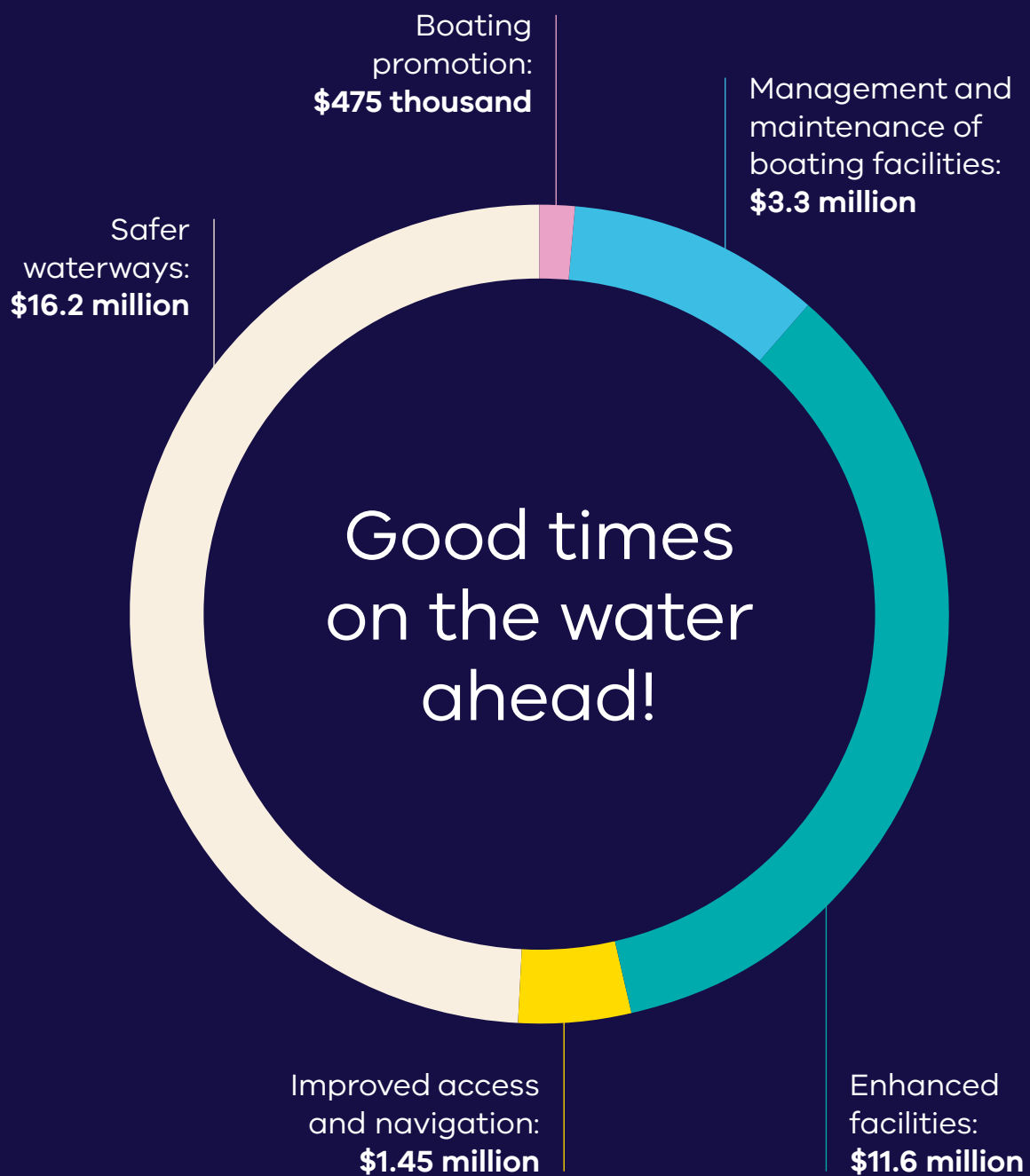
The allocation of resources in the 2025–26 Boating Action Plan was influenced by the following principles:

- All elements of the boating system should receive funding, including infrastructure, dredging, safety, education and promotion;
- Upgrading and maintaining existing public facilities should be given a greater priority over new facilities, noting that new facilities will still need to be constructed;
- A focus on projects identified as 'high priority' in the strategy;
- Waterways where key boating activity occurs should be prioritised;
- Funding of boat ramp facilities should be prioritised given majority of vessels are trailerable;
- Co-contributions should be sought where possible, including funding and/or staffing resources to the project;
- Supporting environmental, social, economic and cultural values, including Traditional Owner rights and objectives, and shared spaces between users;
- Emerging or urgent needs as identified by boating stakeholders.

The plan also includes funding for promotional activities and boating-related actions identified in the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating Strategic Plan 2024–2030.

Funding allocation for 2025–26

Funding allocation for 2025–26 has been distributed across the following areas:



Victoria's biggest ever boat ramp construction program

Location of facility upgrades for boat ramps and jetties, funded through this action plan and previous action plans.



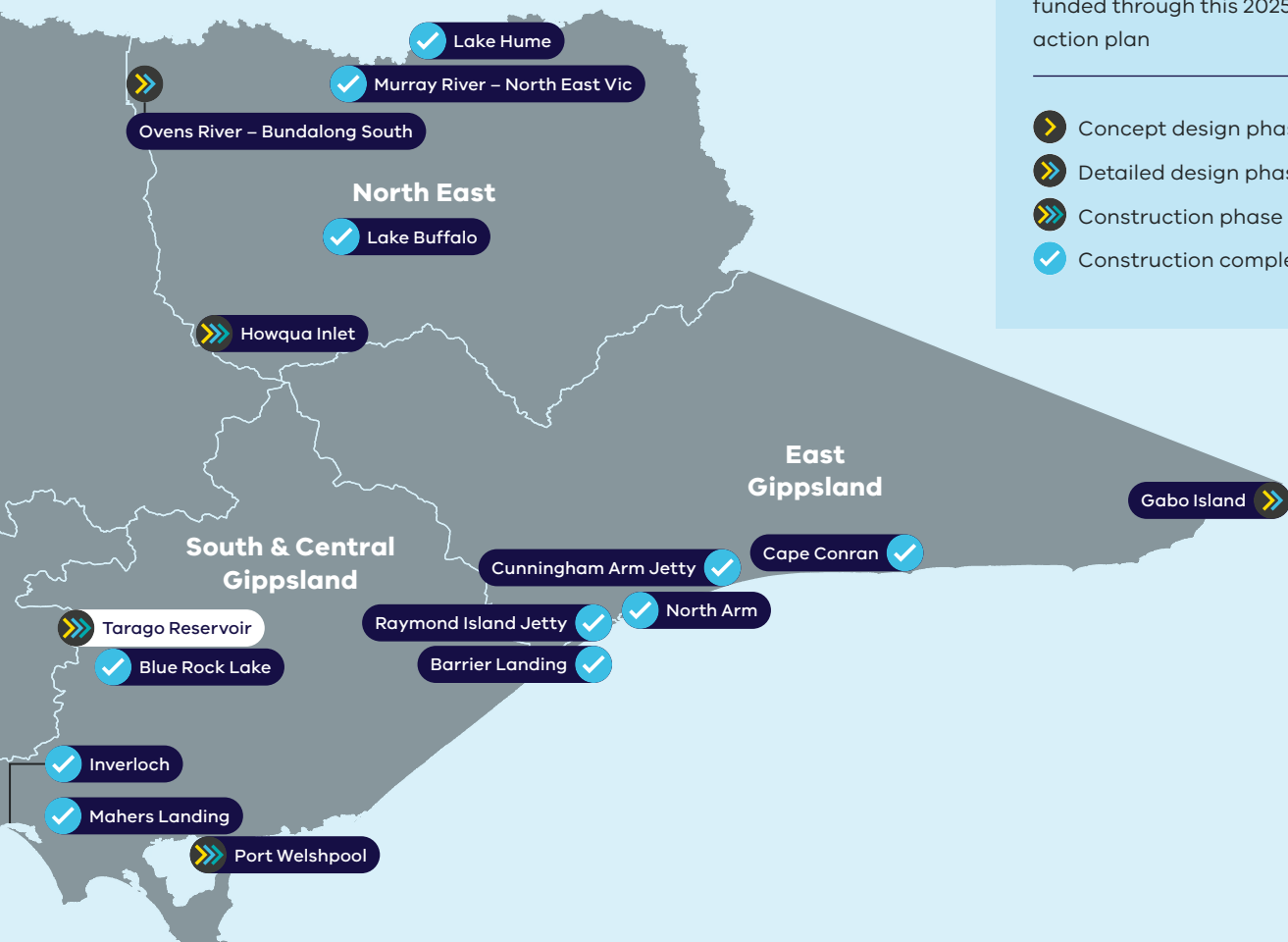


Legend

Completed/Existing Projects
funded through past action plans

New Projects
funded through this 2025–26
action plan

- Concept design phase
- Detailed design phase
- Construction phase
- Construction complete



1.0

Management and maintenance of boating facilities

To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by **supporting and improving the maintenance** of our public facilities.



Removal of fees at public boat ramps



Structural maintenance grants



Asset Managers Forums

No.	Action	Action description
1.1	Removal of fees at public boat ramps	Provide funding for removal of fees at public boat ramps that previously charged launching and parking fees.
1.2	Recreational Boating Structural Maintenance Program	Provide funding for the Recreational Boating Structural Maintenance Program to support asset managers at public boat ramps with maintenance of their facilities.
1.3	Asset Manager Forums	Convene regular asset manager forums to facilitate and support asset managers to maintain boating facilities across Victoria.



2.0

Enhanced facilities

To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by continuing to **invest in renewing and building new boating facilities**.



Renew existing facilities and build new ones



Construction

No.	Action	Action description
2.1	Construction of facility upgrades across Victoria	Commence construction of new ramps or renewal of existing facilities at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarago Reservoir • Newhaven Pier • Tullaroop Reservoir • Mildura – Karadoc • Lake Colac
2.2	Construction contingencies and project management	Construction contingencies and project management.

3.0

Improved access and navigation

To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by providing for **improved access** at public boating facilities.



Dredging grants and programs



Restoring navigable access

No.	Action	Action description
3.1	Recreational Boating Access and Dredging Program	Provide dredging grants to support asset managers at public boat ramps to facilitate dredging works and deliver projects that provide better access to boat ramps.
3.2	Improve boater access at Kirk Point	Complete dredging at the Kirk Point boat ramp to improve navigable access for boaters at a better range of tides out onto Port Phillip Bay.



4.0

Safer waterways

To **improve waterway and boating safety** by investing in marine search and rescue and boating safety and education.



Marine search and rescue



Boating safety and education



Marine Radio Victoria

No.	Action	Action description
4.1	Supporting our Marine Search and Rescue teams	Provide funding to Emergency Management Victoria to support Marine Search and Rescue teams by funding recruitment, training, equipment, utilities, fuel, and maintenance.
4.2	Providing for continued boating safety and boating education	Fund Safe Transport Victoria-Maritime for the regulation and administration of recreational marine activities including high-risk vessel inspections, recreational vessel compliance, boating safety education, waterway management, approval of waterway rules and boating activity. The funding will also provide for the administration of recreational marine licencing and vessel registration.
4.3	Providing continued funding to support the Marine Radio Victoria emergency response network	Ongoing funding of the Marine Radio Victoria emergency response network across Victoria to respond to emergency distress calls.

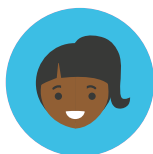
5.0

Boating promotion

To **enhance** the Victorian boating experience by promoting boating across Victoria.



Boating promotion



Support women in boating

No.	Action	Action description
5.1	Delivery of initiatives to promote the boating experience across Victoria	Sponsorship of the Boating Industry Association of Victoria to deliver the 2025 Melbourne Boat Show and a regional Victorian boat show in 2025–26, and sponsorship of the 2026 Yarrowonga Powerboat Spectacular.
5.2	Encourage more women in recreational boating	Delivery of boating programs as identified in the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating Strategic Plan 2024–2030 to encourage and support more women in recreational boating.



Public reporting



In accordance with the *Marine Safety Act 2010 (Vic)*, there are public reporting requirements that provide for accountability in relation to the Better Boating Fund.

The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industries and Regions will publish a report by 1st October each year on the following:

- a. revenue generated in marine licence and vessel registration fees
- b. amount of money that was deposited into the Better Boating Fund
- c. amount of money that was paid from the fund in the preceding financial year
- d. high level description of the projects and programs that have been funded
- e. inclusion of the previous comparative year for revenue, amount of money into the fund and amount that was spent.

A public report will be produced by 1st October 2026 to address the requirements identified above.



