



**APRIL 2025**

# Board Communiqué

Our Board is committed to best practice governance and values open and accountable communication with the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority's (the Authority) stakeholders.

The Board held its meeting on 2 April 2025 in Torquay, on Wadawurrung Country. At least twice a year the Board meets for an extra day for a site visit, stakeholder engagement and/or strategy discussion. On the day prior, the Board visited the three Geelong City Deal sites at Point Grey, Kennett River and Apollo Bay Harbour. Details below.

## BOARD DECISIONS

### **Endorsed: Regional Trails Strategy 2025–2035**

The Authority has developed a Regional Trails Strategy 2025–2035 (Strategy) to guide state and local government agencies in the development, maintenance and promotion of trails in the Great Ocean Road region. The Strategy aims to build on previous investments to establish the Great Ocean Road regions as one of Australia's outstanding trail destinations.

A key action in the Strategy is the formation of the Great Ocean Road Regional Trails Forum to be chaired by the Authority and will assemble Rights Holders and key stakeholders involved with the development of the Strategy. The Forum will provide a coordinated response to implementation of the Strategy over the next ten years and will collectively advocate for resources to advance and maintain the regional trail network.

### **Endorsed: National Parks Transition Plan**

The Board endorsed the proposed National Park Transition Plan to be submitted for approval by the Minister for the Environment.

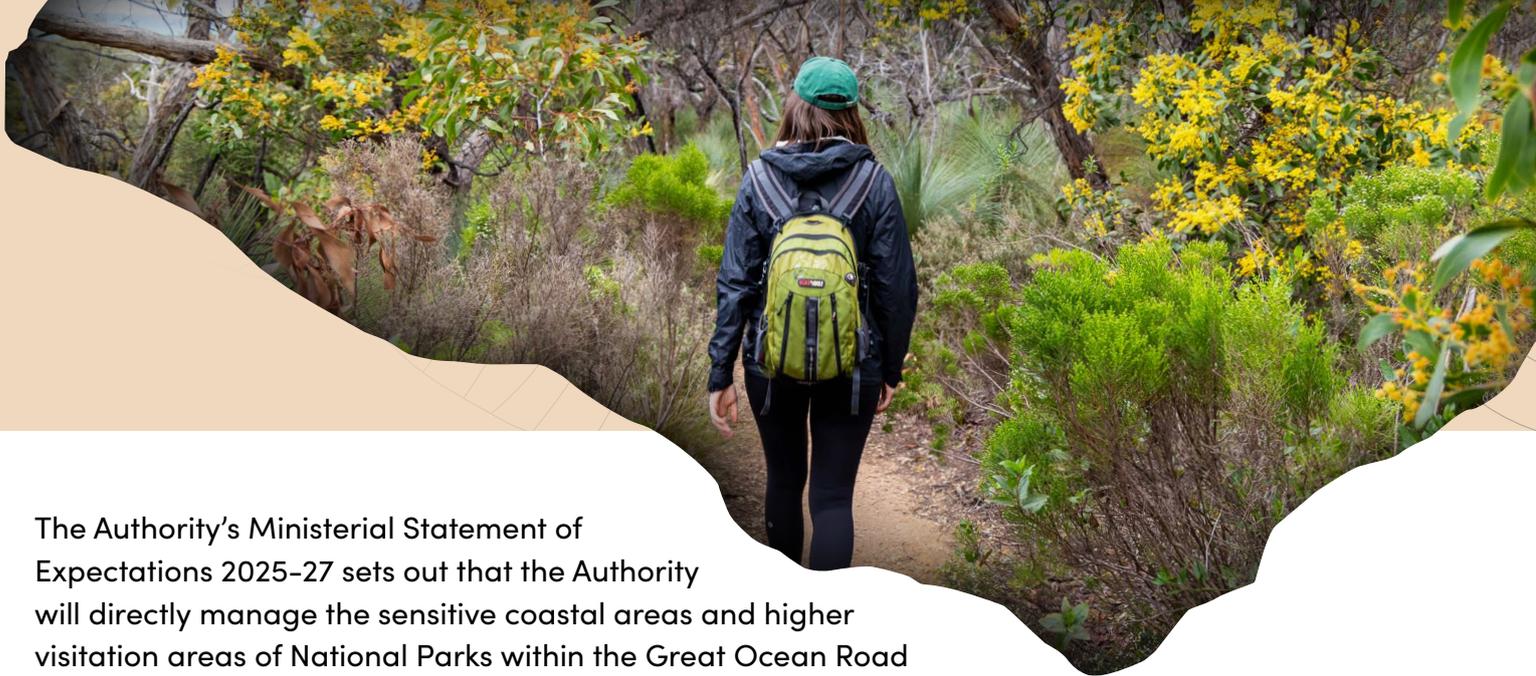
Under the Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020 (the GOREP Act), the Authority can be appointed as land manager for Crown land and National Parks land within the Great Ocean Road coast and parks. The Act sets out the areas where land management responsibility is to be transferred to the Authority by 1 November 2025.



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The Authority's Ministerial Statement of Expectations 2025-27 sets out that the Authority will directly manage the sensitive coastal areas and higher visitation areas of National Parks within the Great Ocean Road coast and parks (excluding broad-acre forested land in the Great Otway National Park) from July 2026. A transition plan has been developed to address the complexities and sensitivities associated with the Authority's upcoming role in direct land management of national parks, while acknowledging that some aspects of the transition remain uncertain at this stage.

**Endorsed: the release of the draft Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct Plan**

As part of the Geelong City Deal Grant agreement with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) the Authority is to deliver the \$10.193m Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment which involves:

- An extension of the Apollo Bay Fisherman's Cooperative building to accommodate an approved commercial offering in line with Marine and Coastal Act and Policy requirements
- Construction of the Port Operations Depot, to enable development of the Waterfront Promenade
- Improved cycling and pedestrian connections
- Improved vehicular access and parking around the Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct

Grant providers expect all works to be completed by June 2026.

All planning and development within the Apollo Bay Harbour must align with the GOREP Act protection principles to ensure the sustainable preservation of the area's environmental, cultural, social, and economic values.

The precinct plan will be presented for community consultation and following this the final plans will be presented to the Board for adoption in June 2025.

**Approved: the proposed changes to the Authority's enterprise risk management framework.**

In line with the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework (VGRMF), management completed an annual review of its risk management framework. The proposed changes were reviewed and endorsed by the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 14 March 2025.





## BOARD COMMITTEES

### People and Performance Committee (PPC)

The Board noted the minutes from the 20 February 2025 PPC meeting and approved the Board Integrity Framework / Code of Conduct Policy as reviewed and recommended by the PPC.

### Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee (FARMC)

The Board noted the minutes from the 14 March 2025 FARMC meeting and approved the following polices as reviewed and recommended by the FARMC:

- Annual & External Reporting
- Board Travel & Expense
- Delegations.

### Reform & Major Projects Committee (RAMP)

The Board noted the minutes from the 27 February 2025 RAMP meeting and approved the updated RAMP Charter as reviewed and recommended by the RAMP.

## STRATEGIC ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

- Management provided an update on the Kurrak Panyul/Point Impossible Improvement project being delivered in partnership with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.
- Management provided an update on the Dunes Precinct Project at the Torquay Foreshore Caravan Park.
- The Board noted that the Natural Capital Roadmap has been approved by the CEO for implementation.
- Management provided an update on progress of the FY2025-26 budget planning process advising that the final draft will be reviewed by the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee prior to final adoption by the Board in June 2025.





## OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST

- The Board noted the Financial Reports for period ending 28 February 2025.
- The Board noted the Wellbeing, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) & Emergency Management report for February - March 2025.
- Representatives from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), including the Deputy Secretary, attended the meeting to provide the Board with a general update including DEECA's role, the upcoming budget bid 2025-26 and Corporate Planning.

## OTHER STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES

On Tuesday 1 April Board Directors travelled together from Torquay to Apollo Bay to visit the three Geelong City Deal sites at Point Grey, Kennett River and Apollo Bay Harbour. Management conducted a 'walk and talk' at each site highlighting the constraints, opportunities and proposed changes. At Kennett River, management also provided an overview of the Regional Trails Strategy 2025-2035 and discussed the Great Ocean Road Coastal Trail project where construction of the Trail's first stage is likely to commence later this year.