

OFFICIAL



Game Management Authority Annual Business Plan

2024 - 25



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Message from the Chairperson and CEO

On behalf of the Board, Executive, and staff, we are pleased to present the 2024-25 Business Plan for the Victorian Game Management Authority (GMA).

Our goals and activities are guided by our obligations under the *Game Management Authority Act 2014* and our core values. They are also shaped by our continued delivery of the Victorian Government's Sustainable Hunting Action Plan 2021-24 (SHAP) and the Victorian Government's response to the *Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Victoria's Recreational Native Bird Hunting Arrangements*.

The Victorian Government has confirmed that recreational duck and quail hunting will continue in Victoria, with some important reforms that are designed to ensure safe, sustainable and responsible hunting. Key changes include the introduction of Victoria's first Waterfowl Wounding Reduction Action Plan, the implementation of Adaptive Harvest Management for setting duck season arrangements, mandatory education and training for gamebird hunters, and banning lead shot in Stubble Quail hunting starting in 2025.

This business plan details how the GMA will support the Victorian Government's reform agenda and deliver on its Vision to ensure Game hunting in Victoria meets community expectations as a sustainable and well-regulated activity, based on science and conducted in a responsible manner.

We have refreshed our business goals to articulate our approach to innovative and effective game hunting regulation. We have emphasised that our enforcement program is supported by research and education and targeted to minimize the greatest harms to the community. Additionally, we have incorporated a greater focus on stakeholder engagement.

Our commitment to research remains unwavering. Research into game species, game bird populations and the impact of hunting will inform our decision-making and evidence-based advice to the government. The implementation of Adaptive Harvest Management will guide the recommendations to Government on the annual game duck seasons, ensuring they are based on robust scientific data. Research will also assist in measuring the success of efforts to improve animal welfare outcomes.

Our education programs are informed by research and best practices, with hunter education at the centre of our regulatory approach. In the coming year, we plan to make further enhancements to our online game licensing system, MyGL, to facilitate new education and training requirements.

As part of the Waterfowl Wounding Reduction Action Plan, we will focus on educating hunters on the methods and techniques to reduce the wounding of gamebirds and to foster a culture within the hunting community to improve animal welfare outcomes.

We will develop education material to support a ban on the use of lead shot in Stubble Quail hunting and continue to promote the use of lead-free ammunition for all game hunting. Additionally, we aim to raise Traditional Owners cultural awareness among Game Licence holders and enhance our on-ground presence to preserve and protect cultural heritage sites during the 2025 hunting seasons.

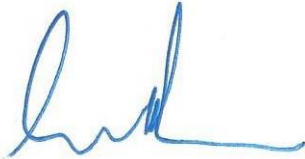
Our visible presence in the field can act as a deterrent to potential offenders while also reminding communities of our commitment to enforce game hunting and public safety laws. Our enforcement program relies on officers exercising the full range of legal powers, collecting and analysing intelligence, investing in enforcement tools, regular community engagement, and transparent reporting.

We have set minimum targets for conducting enforcement operations targeting illegal spotlighting and proactive patrols based on intelligence. We will continue promoting the dangers associated with illegal hunting and work with communities to ensure suspected illegal behaviour is reported and addressed.

Maintaining effective relationships with communities, our government partner departments and agencies, animal welfare and hunting organisations, and Traditional Owners is critical to achieving safe, responsible and sustainable game hunting in Victoria. In the coming year, we will review our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to increase engagement with Game Licence holders and communities impacted by hunting. As part of our updated engagement approach, we will conduct focus groups, community forums and deliver more education sessions to strengthen community connections and cultivate productive relationships with our stakeholders. We will also encourage greater participation in our research activities, including our harvest surveys, wing collection programs, and new research to evaluate the contribution of hunting to deer control.

Through stakeholder engagement, research, education and enforcement outlined in this plan, we aim to regulate game hunting in line with government policy, minimise adverse environmental outcomes, keep communities safe and advance sustainable and responsible management of game hunting in Victoria.

Sincerely,



Chris Rose
Chairperson
Victorian Game Management Authority



Graeme Ford
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Game Management Authority

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Through engagement with stakeholders and targeted research, the Game Management Authority (GMA) understands the potential harms associated with game hunting. We regulate through education and enforcement to reduce the incidence and impacts of high-risk harms and provide authoritative advice on game hunting.

1.2 Vision

Game hunting in Victoria is a well-regulated, evidence-based and sustainable activity that is informed by science and conducted responsibly.

1.3 Values

Our work is made stronger by the values that guide it.

Safety: We take responsibility for our own safety and wellbeing and that of our colleagues.

Integrity: We act with respect, impartiality, and transparency.

Accountability: We are accountable for our own work, performance, decisions, and actions.

Excellence: We pursue professional excellence, always.

Teamwork: We value diversity, we are inclusive, and we collaborate to achieve positive outcomes.

1.4 Role

The GMA is an independent statutory authority responsible for the regulation of game hunting in Victoria. It undertakes activities to promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting in Victoria.

Under the *Game Management Authority Act 2014*, the GMA is responsible for:

- issuing Game Licences, authorities and permits
- managing open and closed seasons for game species
- enforcing game hunting laws and taking action against those who do not hunt legally
- educating and informing hunters on how to hunt legally in Victoria.

The GMA also has an important advisory role in the management of natural resources across Victoria including:

- the sustainable harvest of game species
- the humane treatment of animals that are hunted and used in game hunting
- minimising any negative impacts on non-game wildlife, including protected and threatened species
- the conservation of wildlife habitats
- the environmental, social and economic impacts of game hunting and management.

1.5 Board

The GMA is accountable to the Minister for Outdoor Recreation and is governed by a Board. The Board's primary role is to ensure that the GMA fulfils its legislated functions effectively and complies with its governance obligations.

The Board sets the strategic direction and business objectives of the GMA and ensures that these are consistent with the GMA's legislative and regulatory framework. This includes:

- setting and approving the strategic and annual business plans
- approving the GMA's annual report
- regularly reviewing major risks
- ensuring adequate risk management of all strategic business and operational risks
- providing recommendations to relevant Ministers
- reviewing internal financial and operational controls
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) selection, appointment, succession planning and performance assessment
- oversight of the management of the GMA by the CEO to ensure effective operation and a culture of compliance and best practice business performance in all areas of operational, financial, human resources, risk management and asset management.

The Board has three committees: the Audit and Risk Management Committee, the Ethics, Welfare and Science Committee and the People and Partnerships Committee. Each year the board reviews the GMA's strategic direction including the Board's performance and committee structures.

The CEO manages the day-to-day operations of the GMA under the direction of the Board and is responsible for implementing the GMA's vision and delivering against the annual business plan.

1.6 People

The GMA recognises the importance of diversity, inclusion and respect in the workplace. Staff safety and wellbeing is a top priority.

The GMA is organised into four main business functions to deliver the projects and programs identified in this plan.

Stakeholder and Hunting Programs

The Stakeholder and Hunting Programs Division is focused on developing hunting stakeholder relationships and providing advice, education, licensing and training to hunters to increase voluntary compliance. This team maintains working relationships with industry and supports other GMA functions to manage open and closed seasons for game species, conduct field research and enforce game hunting laws.

Compliance and Intelligence

The Compliance and Intelligence Division's operational context incorporates a range of government policy and community drivers. This includes departmental compliance, policies and systems; legislation and regulations; Victorian community expectations; other government agencies and regulators; political; social; economic; resource protection and values.

The GMA is a risk-based, intelligence-led and harms-focused regulator with a strong emphasis on improved outcomes for the Victorian community.

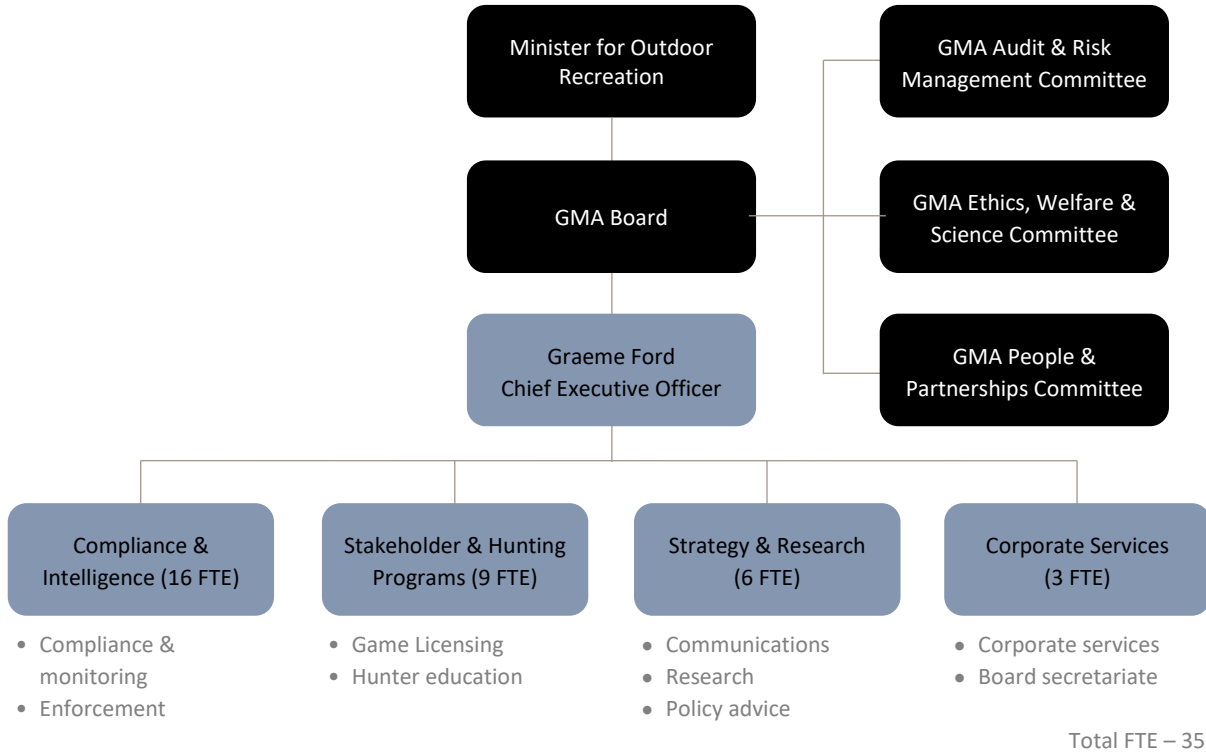
Strategy and Research

The Strategy and Research Division is responsible for developing advice for the Board and to government, providing communications and media services on behalf of the GMA, conducting and coordinating research, and monitoring the needs and performance of hunters, game harvesting and the impacts of hunting on game species.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Division supports the CEO in managing the day-to-day operations of the GMA, including finances, risk management, procurement, information technology, human resources, audits, assets and other corporate service functions. This team also assists in the operation of the Board and its committees by providing secretariat services.

Organisation structure



1.7 Stakeholders

Game hunting has broad social, economic, environmental and cultural impacts on the Victorian community.

The GMA has diverse stakeholder relationships and is often required to develop workable solutions with stakeholders that sit at opposite ends of the debate of supporting or opposing the hunting of native and non-native game species. The GMA understands the importance of listening to the views of stakeholders to ensure that game hunting is managed sustainably and responsibly. Building trusted, engaged and respectful relationships is essential.

The primary stakeholder is the Minister for Outdoor Recreation. The GMA also works with a broad range of stakeholders including state and federal government agencies and other public-sector entities, Game License holders, hunting, environment, and animal welfare interest groups, Traditional Owners and the Victorian community.

Engagement with stakeholders is through face-to-face meetings and workshops, attendance at shows, expos and demonstration days, interactions in the field, through digital communication channels and written consultation.

1.8 Partner agencies

The GMA works with partner agencies, including Parks Victoria (PV), the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA), Victoria Police, and the community to ensure that game hunting is sustainable, safe and humane.

2 Summary plan

The following table is a summary of the goals, outcomes and enablers for 2024-25.

<p>Goal 1: Our advice and decisions are based on the best available science and information</p>	<p>Goal 2: Our engagement, education and testing programs ensure game hunters have the knowledge and proficiency to hunt ethically and responsibly</p>	<p>Goal 3: Our enforcement compliance program is informed by intelligence, supported by research and education programs, and is targeted to minimise the greatest harms to the community.</p>	<p>Goal 4: Our workplace is inclusive, safe supportive and innovative to attract and retain the best people for the best results.</p>
<p><i>The outcome of achieving this goal is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a trusted regulatory authority • Stakeholders have confidence in our work • Game hunting does not threaten the sustainability of native species. <p><i>Success will be enabled by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive relationships with stakeholders and research organisations • Research focussed on reducing wounding and environmental impacts and building knowledge of game animal population dynamics and the impacts of hunting • Expert staff capability and organisational capacity. 	<p><i>The outcome of achieving this goal is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education programs raise the understanding of laws and responsible hunting practices • Animal welfare outcomes are improved as wounding in game hunting is reduced • Environmental outcomes are improved • Cultural heritage sites are protected and respected • Hunters understand that they are accountable for hunting ethically and responsibly. <p><i>Success will be enabled by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education programs are informed by research and global best practice • Investing in learning management systems and contemporary education platforms • Productive relationships with Traditional Owners, delivery partners and training providers • Measuring change in practice and knowledge. 	<p><i>The outcome of achieving this goal is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement and compliance activities are targeted and risk-based • We have a constructive relationship with hunters and community stakeholders • The incidence of high-risk harm is reduced • Communities impacted by inappropriate or illegal hunting have confidence in our enforcement effectiveness • Cooperation with other agencies. <p><i>Success will be enabled by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercising the full range of powers provided by law • Intelligence collection and analysis capability • Investment in innovative enforcement tools • Support and cooperation with partner agencies • Regular community engagement • Transparent reporting of outcomes • Influence regulatory setting to ensure appropriate powers are available to address harms of concern. 	<p><i>The outcome of achieving this goal is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A safety culture exists • Staff are trusted, capable and respected • Staff are engaged and satisfied • Our workforce supports diversity, representation, and equity. <p><i>Success will be enabled by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our OneGMA approach • Staff participating in establishing and maintaining a positive culture • Encouraging staff to be creative and trial innovative ways of working • Using contemporary tools, technology, systems, and equipment • Effective evaluation and quality assurance.

3 Regulatory functions

Pursuant to Section 6 of the *Game Management Authority Act 2014*, the functions of the GMA are to:

- a) perform the regulatory, investigative and disciplinary functions conferred on the GMA by or under this Act or any relevant law
- b) administer the scheme for issuing game licences under the *Wildlife Act 1975* in relation to hunting, taking or destroying game
- c) promote and monitor compliance with this Act or any relevant law in relation to game hunting
- d) investigate compliance with this Act and any relevant law in relation to game hunting
- e) develop operational plans and procedures addressing:
 - (i) the sustainable hunting of game animals
 - (ii) the humane treatment of animals that are hunted or used in hunting
 - (iii) strategies to minimise any negative impact on non-game wildlife, including protected and threatened wildlife
 - (iv) the conservation of wildlife habitats
- f) work with public land managers to improve the management of public land and facilities on public land where hunting is permitted
- g) promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting
- h) monitor, conduct research and analyse the environmental, social and economic impacts of game hunting and game management
- i) make recommendations to relevant Ministers in relation to:
 - (i) game hunting and game management
 - (ii) the control of pest animals
 - (iii) declaring public land open or closed to game hunting, open and closed seasons and bag limits
 - (iv) the management of public and private land as it relates to game and their habitat.

The GMA has the powers necessary to exercise and perform its functions under its governing Act or any other relevant Act. The GMA is also subject to written directions provided by the Minister for Outdoor Recreation.

3.1 Regulatory approach

The GMA's regulatory approach is to work across the compliance spectrum from education and the provision of information to enforcement action. Where people wish to be compliant, the GMA will endeavour to assist them to achieve compliance; where deliberate non-compliance is a problem, the GMA will actively enforce the law.

The approach taken in these activities is risk-based targeting those areas of greatest risk for non-compliance and harm to the community. The GMA delivers its regulatory obligations by considering:

- legislative requirements as provided for under the *Game Management Authority Act (2014)*, *Public Administration Act (Vic) 2004*, the *Wildlife Act 1975* and relevant regulations
- the GMA's Strategic Charter outlines the work and activities that will be performed by the GMA to meet its legislative obligations
- GMA Policy Frameworks, which includes a range of policies and procedures that outline core governance, actions and responsibilities.

4 Major Projects

4.1 Hunting Reform

On 29 January 2024, the Victorian Government announced its response the *Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Victoria's Recreational Native Bird Hunting Arrangements*. The Government accepted seven of the Select Committee's eight recommendations in full or in principle, noting that recreational duck and quail hunting will continue in Victoria. A series of actions are required to deliver the reform program, including important changes to ensure that bird hunting remains safe, sustainable and responsible. Those requiring the GMA's participation include:

- Use of the science-based Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) to guide annual game duck seasons.
- Improved animal welfare outcomes through implementing the Waterfowl Wounding Reduction Action Plan (WWRAP).
- Banning the use of lead shot in quail hunting.
- Improved hunter knowledge and skill through mandatory education and training for hunters, including cultural awareness training.
- Continuation of investment in the implementation of the Traditional Owner Game Management Strategy (TOGMS).
- Investigation of appropriate enforcement and penalties for non-compliance with cultural heritage protections, and damage and destruction of cultural heritage. This extends to additional Authorised Officers and Aboriginal Heritage Officers to deliver stronger on ground presence to enhance protection of cultural heritage sites for the 2025 season.

These actions will be implemented by the GMA or by the GMA providing support to other Government Departments and Agencies. The actions required to deliver against these commitments are captured in *Section 8 Work program* and will be delivered in consultation with hunting groups, animal welfare groups and Traditional Owners.

The Government has made a commitment to deliver the full reform package. The budget and forward estimates have been developed based on the GMA delivering this commitment.

5 Managing risks

The GMA identifies, prioritises and mitigates risk through its Risk Management Framework, aligned to the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework. Embedded into the risk management process is an ongoing focus on key areas of strategic risk identified by the GMA Board, including:

- People and safety – ensuring that the GMA provides a workplace that promotes the physical and psychological health and safety of its staff.
- Governance – ensuring that the GMA meets its legislative and regulatory responsibilities and operates in a way that meets the standards of diligence and probity expected of a government body.
- Reputation – ensuring that the GMA is effective, fair, consistent, transparent, meets community expectations and treats all private data with the strictest confidence and highest security.
- Financial – ensuring that the GMA manages its finances diligently and sustainably.
- Regulatory – ensuring that the GMA's compliance and enforcement activities cover the breadth of the compliance spectrum from education for voluntary compliance, through to enforcement action. Enforcement is guided by intelligence and targeted at the activities posing the highest risk of harm. This approach will ensure compliance activities are conducted efficiently, consistently and effectively to reduce the likelihood and consequence of non-compliance.
- Stakeholder relationships – ensuring the GMA maintains effective relationships across government, stakeholders and the community.

Key areas identified above form the categories of the Strategic Risk Register, which includes controls/ mitigation strategies and a responsible person for managing each risk.

The Board considers the Strategic Risk Register at each meeting, approves amendments to the risk management

framework and monitors the effectiveness of the risk management.

On an annual basis the Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) and the Strategic Risk Register is reviewed by the Board to ensure it remains current and enhanced, as required to comply with requirements under the Standing Directions 2018.

5.1 Risk in the operating environment

There are two significant macro level risks in the operating environment for game hunting:

- Social – the focus on hunting and the activism of those opposed to hunting will continue to challenge the community’s acceptance of hunting as a recreational and commercial activity.
- Environment – a changing climate is creating a set of challenges that, over time, are likely to impact on game species and game hunting practices. Reducing negative impacts on the environment and on human health caused by hunting is also important.

From the social perspective, there are some sections of the community that actively oppose game hunting. For game hunting to maintain a social licence, a well-regulated hunting community needs to demonstrate that hunting meets the broader Victorian community’s expectations of acceptable practice. The community expects that adverse animal welfare impacts are minimised and that hunters have the education and skill required to achieve this. The GMA is undertaking research and education to improve animal welfare outcomes and provide advice to government on areas of necessary regulatory reform. As the regulator, the GMA applies a compliance approach that aims to maximise voluntary compliance through educating and informing hunters of their legal obligations and good hunting practice. We also apply targeted enforcement action to effectively address breaches to hunting laws and regulations.

From the environment perspective, a drying climate and changes in land management practices are impacting on the range and abundance of game species. For native waterfowl and Stubble Quail, these changes appear to be negatively impacting populations. Managing the sustainability of native game duck and Stubble Quail hunting will require dedicated research to strengthen the scientific understanding of population dynamics and the direct relationship between populations and the environment. This will include gathering science-based evidence about the fluctuations of game duck and Stubble Quail populations in response to climatic conditions and the impact hunting has on populations. Minimising the risks associated with game hunting on non-game native species, particularly those that are threatened or vulnerable, requires active management.

The challenge with deer is the possible risk of populations increasing to the point of causing increased environmental and economic damage. In this case, well-regulated hunting may be one valuable tool that could contribute to controlling deer populations.

Some materials used in hunting equipment can be a source of environmental pollution and impact on human health if not managed effectively. Plastics associated with gamebird hunting shotgun cartridges can pollute wetlands and waterways and pose a risk to other wildlife and act as a source of microplastics. Lead shot used in shotgun cartridges for Stubble Quail and non-indigenous gamebirds and lead in bullets used in deer hunting can be a source of environmental pollution, poison non-target species that consume lead from carcass remains or pose a threat to human health if ingested in game meat. The GMA will conduct research into some of these impacts, raise awareness among the hunting community and promote the use of more environmentally sensitive alternatives and provide advice to government on the need for regulatory reform where required.

6 Performance framework

Government commitments contained in key strategic documents, such as the Sustainable Hunting Action Plan (SHAP) the government’s response to the *Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Victoria’s Recreational Native Bird Hunting Arrangements*.

These documents, together with the GMA’s Charter, set the priorities to be addressed in this annual business plan. The GMA reports on its progress in its annual reports, which are tabled in Parliament and published on the website.

7 Business plan

The GMA delivers its statutory responsibilities through four strategic goals. These strategic goals are underpinned by the GMA's vision and values and guide the investment of resources into areas of priority.

Each goal is supported by enablers, outcomes, and time-bound performance indicators.

The next section documents the GMA's work program for the 2024/25 financial year through to 2026/27.

8 Work program: 2024 to 2027

Goal 1 Our advice and decisions are based on the best available science and information.			
Enablers			
Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
We are a trusted regulatory authority	<p>Stakeholder engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder information sessions on relevant work programs (compliance, research, education) • Quarterly information published / latest news items • Identify opportunities with key stakeholders to put in place information sharing / MOU agreements <p>Best science / information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three technical reports or peer-reviewed papers are published • Two focus group meetings are held with communities affected by illegal spotlighting and duck hunters to understand needs and perceptions • Evaluation of the value delivered by the focus groups <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Compliance Plan is developed and published • Compliance-related statistics are updated and published quarterly • Review of field-day attendance • Stakeholder debrief after the duck season • Participate in the broader regulatory environment through membership with ALERT 	<p>Best science / information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three technical reports or peer-reviewed papers are published • A stakeholder sentiment survey to determine attitudinal changes in trust in the GMA is conducted • Review the suitability of existing online communication channels <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Compliance Plan is developed and published • Compliance-related statistics are updated and published quarterly • Review appropriateness and relevance of all existing MOU's with partner agencies/ stakeholders • Four major hunting and industry field-days/expos are attended • Implementing changes as identified in the field day evaluation 	<p>Stakeholder engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Engagement Plan revised as a result of sentiment survey <p>Best science / information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three technical reports or peer-reviewed papers are published <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance-related statistics are updated and published quarterly • Annual Compliance Plan is developed and published • Four major hunting and industry field-days/expos are attended

Goal 1	Our advice and decisions are based on the best available science and information.		
Enablers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive relationships with stakeholders and research organisations • Research focused on reducing wounding and environmental impacts and building knowledge of game animal population dynamics and the impacts of hunting • Communications to inform stakeholders of relevant information • Expert staff capability and organisational capacity 		

Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Stakeholders have confidence in our work.	<p>Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders are involved in harvest surveys and wing collection programs • Develop and trial a phone app to collect data on demographics of the duck harvest • Research to understand the communications and engagement preferences of licence holders <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research results are made available publicly • Communicate “why” research is conducted • Communicate with licence holders (Summary of the business plan and research in which they could become involved) • Hold an information session for key stakeholders to outline that year’s research program activities <p>Reforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging stakeholders to contribute to implementation of government’s hunting reform package 	<p>Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders are involved in harvest surveys and wing collection programs • Research to understand the communications and engagement preferences of communities impacted by hunting <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research results are made available publicly • Hold an information session for key stakeholders to outline that year’s research program activities • Communicate with licence holders - Summary of the business plan and research they could become involved in. Letter from the Chairperson (October) 	<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research results are made available publicly • Hold an information session for key stakeholders to outline that year’s research program activities

Goal 1 Our advice and decisions are based on the best available science and information.

- Enablers**
- Productive relationships with stakeholders and research organisations
 - Research focused on reducing wounding and environmental impacts and building knowledge of game animal population dynamics and the impacts of hunting
 - Communications to inform stakeholders of relevant information
 - Expert staff capability and organisational capacity

Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
<p>Game hunting does not threaten the sustainability of native species.</p>	<p>Harvest monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest and hunter effort surveys are conducted and reports are prepared for deer and game birds <p>AHM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aerial and ground surveys of Victoria’s game duck abundance and distribution are conducted and a report on the findings is published • AHM models provide advice on how to achieve government harvest objectives • Waterfowl mortality and movement research commences (3-year project) • An expert panel is established to provide advice to the GMA on the operation of the AHM modelling and monitoring program <p>Stubble Quail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stubble Quail abundance and distribution surveys are conducted and a report on the findings is published • Develop and trial a phone app to record demographics of the quail harvest <p>Deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research to evaluate the contribution of hunting to deer control continues <p>Research priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the research strategy 	<p>Harvest monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest and hunter effort surveys are conducted and reports are prepared for deer and game birds <p>AHM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AHM model provides advice on how to achieve government harvest objectives • Aerial and ground surveys of Victoria’s game duck abundance and distribution are conducted and a report on the findings is published • Waterfowl mortality and movement research continues <p>Stubble Quail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stubble Quail abundance and distribution surveys are conducted and a report on the findings is published <p>Deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research to evaluate the contribution of hunting to deer control continues 	<p>Harvest monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest and hunter effort surveys are conducted and reports are prepared for deer and game birds <p>AHM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AHM model provides advice on how to achieve government harvest objectives • Aerial and ground surveys of Victoria’s game duck abundance and distribution are conducted and a report on the findings is published • Waterfowl mortality and movement research continues <p>Stubble Quail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stubble Quail abundance and distribution surveys are conducted and a report on the findings is published <p>Deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research to evaluate the contribution of hunting to deer control concludes and report published

Goal 2 Our engagement, education and testing programs ensure game hunters have the knowledge and proficiency to hunt ethically and responsibly

- Enablers**
- Education programs are informed by research and global best practice.
 - Investing in learning management systems and contemporary education platforms.
 - Productive relationships with Traditional Owners, delivery partners and training providers.
 - Measuring change in practice and knowledge.

Performance Measures

Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Education programs raise the understanding of laws and responsible hunting practices.	<p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement MyGL system changes to facilitate mandatory education and training • All new Game Licence applicants complete online education and testing • Remote testing for all modules, including Waterfowl Identification Tests and Hound Hunting Tests is implemented • Education module for balloted Hog Deer hunters, to replace current face-to-face engagement, is developed. 	<p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game Licence holders, upon renewal are required to undertake online education and training • Accreditation for online modules with the International Hunting Education Association obtained <p>Research hunter behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake research into the behaviours and actions of duck hunters in contributing to wounding 	<p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game Licence holders, upon renewal are required to undertake online education and training
Animal welfare outcomes are improved as wounding in game hunting is reduced.	<p>Hunter Proficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program trial to deliver proficiency model for gamebird hunting <p>Waterfowl Wounding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce and publish a report on the waterfowl wounding monitoring program • Relevant actions under the waterfowl wounding reduction action plans are implemented, including determining the estimated wounding rate in waterfowl hunting <p>Stubble Quail Wounding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Stubble Quail wounding reduction action plan is developed 	<p>Waterfowl Wounding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce and publish a report on the waterfowl wounding monitoring program • Conclude waterfowl wounding rate research and commence report and manuscript preparation <p>Stubble Quail Wounding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Stubble Quail wounding reduction action plan <p>Deer Wounding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence development of the deer wounding reduction action plan 	<p>Waterfowl Wounding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a technical report on wounding rate research and submit a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal • A manuscript on the frequency of embedded pellets in game ducks is submitted to a peer-reviewed journal

Goal 2	Our engagement, education and testing programs ensure game hunters have the knowledge and proficiency to hunt ethically and responsibly
Enablers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education programs are informed by research and global best practice. • Investing in learning management systems and contemporary education platforms. • Productive relationships with Traditional Owners, delivery partners and training providers. • Measuring change in practice and knowledge.

Performance Measures			
Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Environmental outcomes are improved.	<p>Lead shot ban for quail hunting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead shot ban for quail hunting introduced • Education material produced supporting lead shot ban <p>Deer Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research to evaluate the contribution of hunting to deer control continues • Manuscript on the efficacy of lead vs non-lead bullets in Fallow Deer hunting submitted to a peer-reviewed publication 	<p>Lead and plastics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce educational material on the impacts of lead and plastic ammunition used for game hunting. <p>Deer Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research to evaluate the contribution of hunting to deer control continues 	<p>Deer</p> <p>Research to evaluate the contribution of hunting to deer control concludes and report prepared</p>
Cultural heritage sites are protected and respected.	<p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with DPC in development of education module on identifying and respecting cultural heritage sites. • Cultural heritage module is included in mandatory education program for Game Licence holders <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMA continues to support the Traditional Owners Game Management Strategy through involvement on governments PCB <p>Staff training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field staff undergo one on-country traditional owner cultural education session 	<p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game Licence holders upon renewal undertake cultural heritage education modules <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMA continues to support the Traditional Owners Game Management Strategy through involvement on governments PCB <p>Staff training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field staff undergo one on-country education session 	<p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game Licence holders upon renewal undertake cultural heritage education modules
Hunters understand that they are accountable for hunting ethically and	<p>In field engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six targeted education events/patrols held >300 hunters engaged in-field 	<p>Face to face training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 face-to-face Introduction to game hunting sessions are held for new Game Licence holders 	<p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education modules are revised following outcomes of review

Goal 2 Our engagement, education and testing programs ensure game hunters have the knowledge and proficiency to hunt ethically and responsibly

- Enablers**
- Education programs are informed by research and global best practice.
 - Investing in learning management systems and contemporary education platforms.
 - Productive relationships with Traditional Owners, delivery partners and training providers.
 - Measuring change in practice and knowledge.

Performance Measures			
Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
responsibly.	<p>Face to face training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six face-to-face Introduction to game hunting sessions are held for new Game Licence holders 	<p>Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with Victoria Police, GMA delivers a safety awareness campaign <p>Online education and testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game Licence holders who undertook education modules and testing are surveyed to understand their comprehension and recall of material. 	

Goal 3			
Our enforcement compliance program is informed by intelligence, supported by research and education programs, and is targeted to minimise the greatest harms to the community.			
Enablers			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercising the full range of powers provided by law • Intelligence collection and analysis capability • Investment in innovative enforcement tools • Support and cooperation with partner agencies • Regular community engagement • Transparent reporting of outcomes • Influence regulatory setting to ensure appropriate powers are available to address harms of concern. 			
Performance Measures			
Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Enforcement and compliance activities are targeted and risk-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 operations targeting the highest level of risk (i.e., illegal spotlighting) are undertaken • >125 proactive patrols are undertaken (based on intelligence) • A Patrol Reporting App. is developed to support our operations being intelligence-led, risk-based and harms focussed • Establish a Strategic Education and Enforcement Panel and report on initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 operations targeting the highest level of risk (i.e., illegal spotlighting) are undertaken • >150 proactive patrols are undertaken (based on intelligence) • Enhanced intelligence analysis and mapping of themes • A mature surveillance program established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 operations targeting the highest level of risk (i.e., illegal spotlighting) are undertaken • >150 proactive patrols are undertaken (based on intelligence)
We have a constructive relationship with hunters and community stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report illegal hunting campaign is continued • Focus groups – targeting communities that are impacted by illegal hunting is conducted • Outcomes and debrief for large compliance operations are published / shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder sentiment survey to determine attitudinal changes in trust in the GMA is conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community sentiment survey to determine attitudinal changes in trust in the GMA is conducted.
The incidence of high-risk harm is reduced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% increase in spotlighting operations as a result of Information Reports submitted • Offences for animal welfare reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no increase in the incidence of illegal spotlighting detected • Offences for animal welfare reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a decrease in illegal deer spotlighting being responded to by Victoria Police
Communities impacted by inappropriate or illegal hunting have confidence in our enforcement effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 community forums are held based on intelligence • 2 targeted education sessions with regional councils are conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 community forums are held based on intelligence • 2 targeted education sessions with regional councils are conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 community forums are held based on intelligence • 2 targeted education sessions with regional councils are conducted

Goal 3	Our enforcement compliance program is informed by intelligence, supported by research and education programs, and is targeted to minimise the greatest harms to the community.		
Enablers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercising the full range of powers provided by law • Intelligence collection and analysis capability • Investment in innovative enforcement tools • Support and cooperation with partner agencies • Regular community engagement • Transparent reporting of outcomes • Influence regulatory setting to ensure appropriate powers are available to address harms of concern. 		
	Performance Measures		
Outcomes	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Cooperation with other agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 12 multi agency operations are conducted • Support work placements with other jurisdictional regulatory bodies (NSW and SA) • Participate in Victorian NRM Compliance forum • Facilitate a cross-border education and enforcement forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 12 multi agency operations are conducted • Support work placements with other jurisdictional regulatory bodies (NSW and SA) • Participate in Victorian NRM Compliance forum • Facilitate a cross-border education and enforcement forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 12 multi agency operations are conducted • Support work placements with other jurisdictional regulatory bodies (NSW and SA) • Participate in Victorian NRM Compliance forum • Facilitate a cross-border education and enforcement forum

Goal 4 Our workplace is inclusive, safe, supportive and innovative to attract and retain the best people for the best results

- Enablers**
- Our OneGMA approach
 - Staff participating in establishing and maintaining a positive culture.
 - Encouraging staff to be creative and trial innovative ways of working
 - Using contemporary tools, technology, systems, and equipment
 - Effective evaluation and quality assurance.

Outcomes	Performance Measures		
	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
A safety culture exists	<p>Safety Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost time due to injury (including wellbeing issues) less than 5 days per annum • No substantiated reports of bullying or harassment • All near miss incidents are reported in SIMS • Defibs in all vehicles <p>OHS Audit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Audit with a focus on staff mental health <p>Traditional Owners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Cultural Safety audit will be completed to measure organisational change regarding cultural safety and awareness 	<p>Safety Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost time due to injury (including wellbeing issues) less than 5 days per annum • No substantiated reports of bullying or harassment • All near miss incidents are reported in SIMS <p>Traditional Owners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One on Country cultural learning program is delivered to staff • One partnership program between GMA and a Traditional Owner group is established 	<p>Safety Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost time due to injury (including wellbeing issues) less than 5 days per annum • No substantiated reports of bullying or harassment • All near miss incidents are reported in SIMS <p>Traditional Owners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One partnership program between GMA and a Traditional Owner group is established
Staff are trusted, capable and respected	<p>Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of staff undertake professional development • All staff mandatory training is complete and current • Professional membership opportunities that connect staff to broader regulatory, research, engagement or licensing networks are explored 	<p>Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of staff undertake professional development • All staff mandatory training is complete and current <p>Cyber Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit of persons accessing MyGL • Behavioural testing for staff on Cyber Security 	<p>Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of staff undertake professional development • All staff mandatory training is complete and current
Staff are engaged and satisfied	<p>People Matters Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Matter Survey results show 90% staff satisfaction <p>Turn over</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 10% annual turnover 	<p>People Matters Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Matter Survey results show 90% staff satisfaction <p>Turn over</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 10% annual turnover 	<p>People Matters Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Matter Survey results show 90% staff satisfaction <p>Turn over</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 10% annual turnover

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 - Effective evaluation and quality assurance.

Outcomes	Performance Measures		
	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Our workforce supports diversity, representation, and equity.	<p>Identify barriers to diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey analysed to identify barrier to increased diversity • Exit interviews process developed to identify impact (if any) of negative behaviours on staff satisfaction and diversity <p>Recruitment processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice sought from DJSIR HR to ensure recruitment processes support increasing diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan to address identified barriers to diversity implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey to assess progress on ensuring a diverse workforce • Action plan revised and implemented as needed

9 2024-25 Budget

The GMA has prepared its forecast budget for 2024-25 based on delivering the actions, projects and programs identified in *Section 8 Work program* and to support its operation as an independent statutory authority.

The GMA is not reliant on funding through the revenue collected on game licences and therefore would not anticipate any financial risks in relation to revenue from licencing

9.1 Financial risks and implications of financial projections

The majority of the GMA's operating expenses relate to staff salaries and associated staff cost as well as meeting its statutory responsibility to conduct research and analysis of the environmental, social and economic impacts of game hunting.

The GMA implemented an online Game License System (MyGL) in 2021. Since its launch, the GMA continues to enhance MyGL with eLearning modules and regular application and security updates to ensure the system is robust. Further significant investment in MyGL will be required for the GMA to deliver on the Government's commitment to improving hunter education and training.

The budget will provide for the following:

- Transparent best practice governance and delivery of the GMA's functions as described in the *Game Management Authority Act 2014*
- Compliance with all requirements of the *Public Administration Act 2004* and the *Financial Management Act 1994* (the FMA Act) and the Department of Treasury and Finance's Standing Directions 2018 (updated March 2021)
- External audits under the direction of the Victorian Auditor General's Office and the appointment of internal auditors as required under the *FMA Act*
- Meeting legal obligations in relation to the health and safety of staff and community safety
- Advice to Ministers on game hunting and game management matters
- Mitigating all risks identified by the GMA against the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework
- Ongoing maintenance and regular updates to the online Game Licence system
- Research to develop greater understanding of environmental impacts from game hunting, data analysis and stock assessments
- Compliance activities, including surveillance, intelligence, inspections, audits and education
- Game Licence education modules and practical testing framework
- Providing staff with the necessary equipment and training to undertake their duties, including ongoing investment in new technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of staff operating in the field.

9.2 Mitigation strategies to manage the budget

The GMA has established a financial reserves policy, which ensures the GMA holds financial reserves at a level so as to ensure the fiscal responsibility of Directors is met and the GMA is able to pass a 'going concern' test.

Based on current approved funding over the forward estimates and existing cash reserves, the GMA can meet the provisions of its financial reserves policy over the forward estimates period. The GMA will continue to draw from cash reserves to fund committed research programs. The GMA will continually review revenue from government sources and operating expenditure to meet expected deliverables across the forward estimates within its financial reserves policy.

The GMA has an Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) to assist the Board in its governance, risk management and financial reporting responsibilities. The ARMC provides oversight and review, and makes recommendations to the Board in relation to:

- overall policy direction of the audit compliance and risk management function
- effective management of financial and non-financial risks as directed by the board
- compliance with relevant laws, regulations and codes
- compliance with the Authority's policies
- timely, accurate and reliable financial reporting
- reviewing the external auditors annual report and management letter; and
- reviewing and monitoring the internal control framework.

The ARMC meets a minimum of five times a year and reviews the CFO's financial report prior to Board approval. Questions raised by members of the ARMC are addressed and resolved if required, prior to the Board approving financial reports.

In addition, regular management reports are provided to the GMA executives and the Senior Management Team. Any identified budget risks are highlighted in consultation with the CEO and ARMC to enable appropriate planning. Mitigation strategies are also developed to prevent further escalation of budget risks.

9.3 Three-year budget forecast

The forecast revenue considers core funding allocations from Government, funding from Government Departments under service level agreements, and funding announced as part of new Government initiatives.

In 2019-20, the GMA received \$6 million over four years from Government to increase the workforce by 30% to expand the footprint and serve the community across Victoria. In 2023/24 this funding was extended by providing \$1.8 million to the GMA in 2023-24 for one year only.

The 2024-25 State Budget has provided \$6.9 million over three years for '*Safe and sustainable recreational game hunting*'. This funding allows the GMA to continue to maintain local enforcement, compliance with hunting regulation and stakeholder engagement through maintaining existing authorised officer capacity.

The budget includes \$1.1 million in 2024-25 for the Kangaroo Harvest Management Program (KHMP). The GMA and DJSIR are in regular negotiations on the delivery and funding of the program via a service level agreement over the forward estimates period.

The three-year budget forecast includes an expected allocation of \$7.2 million for the GMA to deliver on the Victorian Government response to the *Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Victoria's Recreational Native Bird Hunting Arrangements*. This funding is currently retained in DTF central contingency and is expected to be released to the GMA on submission of project plans. A series of actions are required to deliver the reform program, including important changes to ensure that native bird hunting remains safe, sustainable and responsible. Those associated with continuation of native bird hunting include:

- Use of the science-based Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) to guide annual game duck seasons.
- Improved animal welfare outcomes through implementing the Waterfowl Wounding Reduction Action Plan (WWRAP).
- Improved hunter knowledge through education and training, including cultural awareness training.
- Strengthened compliance, including further penalties for hunters doing the wrong thing.

The proposed expenses in the 2024-25 budget and the forward estimates include maintaining current workforce

levels and delivering on committed research programs.

The following tables provide the three-year budget projection, financial position and cash position based on the GMA's current expected funding allocation. Deficit budgets based on expected revenue and committed expenditure have been prepared for the next three years as reserves are drawn down. Current forecasts suggest that over the three-year forward estimates, the GMA will continue to operate within its financial reserves policy.

Operating Statement	2023-24 Actuals	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget
Revenue				
Grants	7,671,815	11,216,690	9,482,315	8,197,315
Interest / Other	470,983	350,000	180,000	180,000
Total Revenue	8,142,798	11,566,690	9,662,315	8,377,315
Expenditure				
Employee Related Expenses	4,854,964	5,468,044	5,653,826	5,846,109
Professional Services / Agency Hire	13,097	85,000	87,125	89,303
IT Expenses	704,205	679,080	696,057	713,458
Purchases of Services from Govt	393,122	355,000	363,875	372,972
Occupancy and Property Holding	255,568	219,500	224,988	230,612
General Expenses (inc. VAGO, audit and legal)	250,157	252,000	258,300	264,758
Vehicle and Equipment Expenses	223,236	250,000	256,250	262,656
Staff Related Expenses (uniforms, training, etc)	165,358	143,000	146,575	150,239
Personal & Travel Costs	176,915	102,000	104,550	107,164
Communications	1,515	100,000	172,500	175,063
Office Expenses	218,825	170,000	174,250	178,606
Telecommunications	27,904	37,610	38,550	39,514
Vehicle Registrations / State Taxes	10,205	15,000	15,375	15,759
Interest Expense	35,140	35,000	33,375	28,759
Other Expenses	17,545	10,000	10,250	10,506
Total Operating Expenses	7,347,754	7,921,234	8,235,845	8,485,480
Research Projects	837,159	3,810,000	2,805,000	1,420,000
Total Expenditure	8,184,913	11,731,234	11,040,845	9,905,480
Operating Result	(42,115)	(164,544)	(1,378,530)	(1,528,165)
Depreciation and Amortisation	467,050	436,959	445,943	455,344
Nett Result	(509,165)	(601,503)	(1,824,473)	(1,983,509)

REVENUE

Budget Paper No.3 (BP3) approved 2024-25 funding of \$6.9 million over three years for 'Safe and sustainable recreational game hunting'. Funding has been provided to the GMA to maintain local enforcement, compliance with hunting regulation and stakeholder engagement.

The budget and forward estimates include an expected allocation of \$7.2 million to implement various components of the Government Response to the *Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Victoria's Recreational Native Bird Hunting Arrangements*. This funding has been phased in line with expected delivery of the program.

The budget includes \$1.1 million in 2024-25 for the Kangaroo Harvest Management Program (KHMP). The GMA and DJSIR are in regular negotiations on the delivery and funding of the program via a service level agreement over the forward estimates period. The GMA operating result in the forward estimate years is significantly

impacted if this SLA is not renewed as the impact on operating costs is minimal if the program is not continued.

The GMA is estimating interest revenue of \$0.4 million in 2024-25 based on the current Central Banking System (CBS) interest rate of 4.8% p.a. A more conservative outlook across the forward estimates is based on \$6.0 million cash balance at 3% p.a. interest rate.

OPERATING EXPENDITURE

Employee Related Expenses: The 2024-25 budget and forward estimates are based on expected staffing requirements as per the GMA organisation structure of 35 full time equivalent (FTE) staff. The forward estimates are in line with the staff funded from approved grants and aligned to delivering on the 2024-25 to 2026-27 work program. The employee related expenditure forecasts include provision for 3% p.a. increases as per the latest Employee Bargaining Agreement (EBA).

Other Operating Expenses: The 2024-25 budget and forward estimates are in line with expected spending to deliver on the works program and, where applicable include an escalation rate of 2.5% across the forward estimates. The escalation rate considers current forecasts from the RBA and internal efficiency strategies to reduce future year spending such as contract negotiations.

Research Projects (Hunting Reform Package)

	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget	2027-28 Budget
Revenue				
Hunting Reform Package	2,640,000	1,965,000	680,000	515,000
Expenditure				
Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM)	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Education and training	1,200,000	800,000	-	-
Waterfowl Wounding Reduction Action Plan (WWRAP)	940,000	665,000	180,000	15,000
Total New Government Initiatives	2,640,000	1,965,000	680,000	515,000

Research Projects (Existing)

	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget	2027-28 Budget
Revenue				
SHAP2 / Other	-	-	-	-
Expenditure				
Sustainable Hunting Adaption Plan (SHAP)				
Quail abundance monitoring	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Recreational deer hunting's contribution to deer control	300,000	225,000	125,000	-
Develop and implement wounding reduction action plans	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total SHAP Expenditure	515,000	440,000	340,000	215,000
Other Research Programs				
Harvest monitoring and estimation (gamebirds, deer)	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000
Eastern Australian Waterbird Survey (EAWS)	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Spatial ecology and survivorship of game birds	400,000	225,000	225,000	-
Digital Channels assessments	30,000	-	-	-
Hunter Communications Preferences Surveys	50,000	-	-	-
Total Other Research	655,000	400,000	400,000	175,000
Total Research Expenditure	3,810,000	2,805,000	1,420,000	905,000
Research Programs impact on Reserves	(1,170,000)	(840,000)	(740,000)	(390,000)

Research expenditure in 2024-25 requires a \$1.17 million drawdown from cash reserves to continue important research to support an evidence-based approach to the regulation of game hunting in Victoria and to underpin advice it provides to the relevant Ministers on game management issues.

These cash reserves will also fund research programs committed under SHAP and other government priorities. The cash reserves have been created from internal savings, reprioritisations and rephasing of project delivery timeframes.

To implement various components of the Government response to the *Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Victoria's Recreational Native Bird Hunting Arrangements* various initiatives including Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) to guide annual game duck seasons, hunter education and training, and the Waterfowl Wounding Reduction Action Plan (WWRAP) are expected to be fully funded from the allocation of \$7.2 million.

Balance Sheet	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget
Assets				
Financial Assets				
Cash and deposits	8,211,929	7,745,841	6,058,228	4,213,253
Receivables	1,083,041	500,000	500,000	500,000
Total financial assets	9,294,970	8,245,841	6,558,228	4,713,253
Non-financial assets				
Right of use - office lease	677,455	520,268	363,082	205,896
Office Fit out	234,936	171,936	108,936	45,936
Plant and equipment (incl. MV)	443,042	277,872	112,872	255,000
Game Licensing System	68,300	43,463	18,626	-
Total non-financial assets	1,423,733	1,013,539	603,516	506,832
Total assets	10,718,703	9,259,380	7,161,744	5,220,086
Liabilities				
Right of use - office lease	775,391	607,792	429,309	239,405
Payables	2,013,079	1,342,859	1,544,350	1,736,106
Right of use - vehicles	424,988	264,988	104,988	144,988
Provisions	1,496,172	1,636,172	1,500,000	1,500,000
Total Liabilities	4,709,630	3,851,811	3,578,647	3,620,499
Net Assets	6,009,073	5,407,569	3,583,097	1,599,587
Equity				
Accumulated surplus	6,009,073	5,407,569	3,583,097	1,599,587
Net Worth	6,009,073	5,407,569	3,583,097	1,599,587

The GMA is not expecting any investment in capital programs over the forward estimate. Movements in balance sheet accounts primarily relate to the change in cash reserves through operating activities and the amortisation of right of use assets.

OFFICIAL

Cashflow Statement	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget
Cashflows from operating activities				
Receipts received from Government	9,379,546	11,216,690	9,482,315	8,197,315
Interest Received	426,270	350,000	180,000	180,000
Payments to suppliers and employees	(9,296,121)	(11,731,234)	(11,040,845)	(9,905,480)
Net Cash inflows / (used in) operating activities	509,695	(164,544)	(1,378,530)	(1,528,165)
Cashflows from investing activities				
Purchase of non-financial assets	-	-	-	-
Net Cash inflows / (used in) investing activities	-	-	-	-
Cashflows from financing activities				
Repayment of financial and accommodation. leases	(230,047)	(301,544)	(309,083)	(316,810)
Net Cash inflows / (used in) financing activities	(230,047)	(301,544)	(309,083)	(316,810)
Net increase /(decrease) in cash held	279,648	(466,088)	(1,687,613)	(1,844,974)
Cash at beginning of financial year	7,932,281	8,211,929	7,745,841	6,058,228
Cash at end of financial year	8,211,929	7,745,841	6,058,228	4,213,253

The reduction in cash reserves primarily reflects the expected investment in committed research programs over the forward estimates period. The GMA regularly review cash requirements to deliver on the strategic objectives within the parameters of the financial reserves policy.

