

Annual Report

2011-2012



NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People



Acknowledgement Of Country

The North Central Catchment Management Authority acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners within the region, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country. We also recognise and acknowledge the contribution and interest of Aboriginal people and organisations in land and natural resource management.

Images – courtesy of the North Central CMA:

Front cover: Clockwise; (main image) Biodiversity planting and canola crop at Kamarooka; Fencing; 25th Anniversary of Landcare; 'Catch-a-Carp' fishing competition – Cohuna

Inside back cover: 3D image of the North Central CMA region's natural features and a selection of agricultural produce

Back cover: Clockwise; Students from Gunbower Primary School planting at the Gunbower Recreation Reserve; Rock well; Egrets at Lake Meran

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Foreword

Joint report from the Chairman and CEO

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) strives to be a benchmark organisation working in partnership with our community.

Effective partnerships are critical to achieving our purpose of enhancing the integrity of our catchments. We have delivered \$24 million of environmental investment in 2011-12, resulting in enduring environmental outcomes for the North Central CMA region.

Following the biggest floods in living memory the North Central CMA received \$9.04 million in September 2011 from the Australian Government's Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) through the Department of Treasury and Finance to implement the Flood Recovery Program. The program continues to be a core focus for our business.

Our flood recovery efforts have realised works on 194 levee breaches on the Loddon floodplain and the first 24 of 144 erosion control repairs.

The \$3.46 million erosion control program is scheduled to be finished by September 2013.

In addition \$400,000 has been received from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative to undertake environmental flood recovery works.

We are also very proud of our community engagement to gather local community knowledge and expertise to develop practical, positive and achievable flood mitigation options in flood-affected communities. We have now finalised the Creswick Flood Mitigation and Urban Drainage Management Plan, and will complete a further six plans in the second half of 2012. These plans are funded by the Victorian and Australian governments.

We have completed a review of our 2003-2007 Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). This was a major undertaking involving the regional community in an intensive period of engagement around the region's most valuable natural assets.

With the final 2012-18 Regional Catchment Strategy due to Government in September 2012, we are excited to be embarking on the implementation of this renewed strategy which sets a visible foundation for our work over the coming years to strengthen the links between rivers, landscapes and people in our region.

We will continue to work in partnership with many people and organisations to deliver our schedule of programs for the coming year, including investment in:

- › The Gunbower Forest
- › The Campaspe River
- › The Loddon River
- › Protecting and Enhancing Priority Wetlands
- › Waterwatch
- › Landcare
- › Sustainable Agriculture
- › Numerous other project areas.

We acknowledge the important role played by our partners - including the Australian and Victorian Governments and their agencies, local government, rural and urban water corporations, local communities, landholders and Landcare groups.

Our people remain a key asset, not only through their skills and knowledge but also their extensive networks and - most importantly - their passion and commitment to delivering enduring environmental change.

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, we are pleased to present the North Central Catchment Management Authority's annual report for the year ending 30 June 2012.



Mr David Clark
North Central CMA
Chairman



Mr Damian Wells
North Central CMA
Chief Executive Officer

Table of contents

Foreword	1	Other Disclosures	22
Joint report from the Chairman and CEO	1	<i>Victorian Industry Participation Policy Act 2003</i>	22
Year In Review	3	Application and operation of the <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>	23
About the North Central Catchment Management Authority	3	Making a request	23
Objectives, functions, powers and duties	4	Compliance with <i>Building Act 1993</i>	23
Manner of establishment and responsible Ministers	4	National Competition Policy	23
The year at a glance	4	<i>Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001</i>	23
Management and catchment overview	5	Compliance with establishing enabling legislation	23
Management summary	5	Office-based environmental impacts	24
Biodiversity	5	Information kept	28
Inland Aquatic Ecosystems	6	Risk management attestation	28
Land Health	6	Financial Statements	29
Community Capacity	7	Declaration	29
Catchment condition statement 2011-12	9	Auditor-General's report	30
Operational and budgetary objectives	14	Financial statements	32
Summary of financial results	16	Notes to the financial report	35
Governance And Organisational Structure	17	Appendices	52
Organisational Structure	17	Appendix 1: North Central CMA Whistleblowers Policy	52
North Central CMA Board	17	Appendix 2: Disclosure index	61
Audit Committee	18		
Natural Resource Management Committee	19		
Occupational Health and Safety	19		
Staff Consultative Committee	20		
Workforce Data	21		
<i>Multicultural Victoria Act 2004</i>	21		
Community Inclusiveness	21		
Statement of Workforce Data (two years)	21		
Executive officer disclosures	21		

Year in review

About the North Central Catchment Management Authority

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) works to achieve a healthy natural environment in North Central Victoria, an area that covers 13 per cent of the state. This involves:

- › undertaking projects to restore river health
- › funding on-ground works to protect and improve the environment
- › overseeing the use of environmental water to improve the region's rivers and wetlands
- › using the best available science in all projects
- › investing in biodiversity improvement along rivers and other sites with high environmental value
- › monitoring the effectiveness of activities to achieve the best results for investment.

Our purpose

We will protect and enhance the integrity of our catchments.

Our vision

We will be a benchmark organisation working in partnership with our community to deliver enduring natural resource management outcomes.

Our values

- › Leadership: actively implementing, promoting and supporting the values
- › Accountability: accepting responsibility for decisions and actions
- › Respect: treating others fairly and objectively
- › Human rights: respecting, promoting and supporting human rights
- › Responsiveness: providing best standards of service and advice
- › Impartiality: acting objectively
- › Integrity: earning and sustaining public trust.

The North Central CMA is committed to high levels of performance that are underpinned by agreed values and behaviours.

Our trademark in business

Innovative, knowledgeable and reliable

Staff have committed to organisational expectations relating to our behaviour in business. Through this process, staff adopted a team trademark of innovative, knowledgeable and reliable. The trademark articulates how we would like to be described by others and guides the actions we take in business.

The trademark is underpinned by the following behaviours to which staff have committed:

- › seek to understand – embrace challenges and seek solutions
- › be honest and take responsibility – do what you say you will do
- › see something, do something
- › show respect
- › actively engage.

Objectives, functions, powers and duties

The principal statutory obligations of the North Central CMA are prescribed in the Victorian *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act)* and *Water Act 1989*. These Acts constitute the major enabling legislation for CMAs.

The core business of the North Central CMA delivers on *CaLP Act* and *Water Act* accountabilities, which primarily include:

- › coordinating the management of land, biodiversity and water resources through the development of the Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS)
- › enabling the regional community to provide local input to the planning and implementation of the RCS
- › formulating and delivering targeted interventions to protect the region's land, biodiversity and water assets.

The caretaker of river health function includes:

- › waterway management
- › water quality management
- › floodplain and regional drainage management
- › reporting on catchment condition
- › compliance monitoring and reporting to government relating to the organisation's obligations.

The North Central CMA business strategy is to protect the region's highest-value environmental assets while also supporting the community in their local natural resource management goals. We coordinate the capacity of the region to ensure that environmental investment achieves the best possible results. This is accomplished through developing high-performing partnerships with other agencies, landholders, non-government organisations and researchers. Our balanced project portfolio includes investment in iconic rivers, grasslands and forests as well as investment in projects that assist landholders in moving towards more sustainable land management practices.

The North Central CMA has two types of business:

a) Direct service delivery, involving:

- › waterway management (river health)
- › water quality and biodiversity coordination
- › floodplain management
- › catchment planning (corporate functions).

b) Partnerships, involving:

- › sustainable agriculture and land management (particularly with reference to irrigation and dryland salinity)
- › water savings and water-use efficiency
- › biodiversity protection (including vegetation management and private forestry)
- › Landcare support
- › invasive plant and animal management.

Manner of establishment and responsible Ministers

The North Central CMA is established under Victoria's *CaLP Act*. The responsible Ministers during 2011-12 were the Hon. Ryan Smith MP, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and Peter Walsh MLA, Minister for Water.

The year at a glance

Flood Recovery Program

The rains that saturated north central Victoria in 2010-11 were of a scale and magnitude not seen for over a century, causing extensive and prolonged flooding. Extensive flood damage assessments of North Central CMA assets attracted \$9.04 million (M) of NDRRA funding through the Department of Treasury and Finance in September 2011. The two-year Flood Recovery Program which involves the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Parks Victoria (PV), local governments, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) and landholders will conclude in September 2013.

Repairing over 200 kilometres (km) of flood damaged riparian fencing as part of the NDRRA project involves revisiting 232 landholders with whom the North Central CMA has not made direct contact with for up to ten years. This has provided an excellent opportunity to re-establish relationships, provide extension advice and reiterate the ongoing management responsibilities of the land manager, such as stock and weed management within the fenced frontage.

Fence type and alignment were often renegotiated in light of the witnessed floodwater behaviour and Crown land licences adjusted to reflect the current conservation use of frontages. Given advancements in remote mapping technology, all fences provided by the North Central CMA have been re-mapped accurately and photopoint monitoring is complete.

Actions completed in 2011-12 include:

- repair of previously CMA-funded riparian fencing at 159 of 232 properties
- repair of previously CMA-funded erosion control structures at 27 of 164 sites
- 197 levee breaches repaired on the lower Loddon floodplain
- 75 flood debris blockages removed from regional waterways
- all 11 water quality monitoring sites repaired
- planning for the replacement of the flood damaged Quambatook Weir in 2012-13
- planning for realignment of 3.3 km of the Pental Island levee in 2012-13.

Flood Recovery Employment Program

In response to the 2010-11 floods the Victorian Coalition Government established a \$6.15 M program to assist in flood recovery across six flood-affected regions of the state. The North Central CMA region received \$2.74 M to establish its' regional Flood Recovery Employment Program which was delivered in the 2011-12 financial year.

An important component of the program was to provide employment opportunities to people directly impacted by floods. In the North Central CMA region, the program employed up to 64 people (10 crews across the region) either on a full or part-time basis and provided them with

training and skills which could be transferred to other future employment opportunities.

The program achieved significant environmental outcomes in areas/sites directly impacted by floods and added value to previous and current investment sites, including:

- 1,483 hectares (ha) of weed control
- 31,000 tubestock used for revegetation
- 123 km of fencing erected, removed or repaired

In implementing the regional Flood Recovery Employment Program the North Central CMA worked with other agencies including local government, PV, DSE, DPI, Trust for Nature (TfN), Landcare and Rural Water Authorities.

Environmental Water Delivery

The North Central CMA continues to foster good relationships with existing and new stakeholders to facilitate the delivery of environmental water to our region's rivers and wetlands from a variety of environmental water sources.

The Living Murray project delivered 16 gigalitres (GL) to Gunbower Creek and 1GL to the Little Gunbower Wetland complex within Gunbower Forest over the past 12 months. Environmental water delivered to Gunbower Forest over the summer of 2011-12 allowed for a colony of approximately 200 waterbirds, including Great Egrets, ibis and cormorants, to successfully complete their breeding.

July 2011

- Commenced construction of protective ring levees to help protect the most vulnerable dwellings in the Lower Loddon Floodplain (ongoing).

September 2011

- Loddon Shire Council coordinated a Loddon Nature Tourism Festival, in partnership with the regional community and agencies, including the North Central CMA.
- Following on from drought and flood conditions, a managed spring fresh was delivered to the Loddon River below Loddon Weir. The flow continued the recovery of the Loddon River that started with a managed winter low flow during 2011. No water was delivered to the Boort District wetlands during 2011-12. These wetlands are currently undergoing a drying phase as part of their filling and drying sequences.
- The Living Murray project Condition Monitoring – Successfully delivered a \$300,000 ecological monitoring program for Gunbower Forest that assessed waterbird and fish populations, wetland vegetation, groundwater and tree health between September 2011 and June 2012. Results of the tree health monitoring indicate that the forest is regenerating, however the forest is still in the very early stages of recovery post the prolonged dry period prior to 2010.

October 2011

- Development of the 'Weeds Identification guide' – North Central Victoria'.
- North Central CMA 'Frogs Field guide' launch in Smeaton.
- Renewal of the Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan.

November 2011

- › 200 Landcare community representatives celebrated 25 years of Landcare in North Central Victoria.

February 2012

- › Community input into 2011–12 project development was obtained through the Natural Resource Management Committee (NRM), which provides advice to the Board.
- › The Living Murray project Indigenous Partnerships Project - Approval of two Cultural Heritage Management Plans for the Hipwell Road Channel Package of Works in February and May 2012 was achieved through a working relationship with Aboriginal stakeholder groups Yorta Yorta and Barapa Barapa.

March 2012

- › Hosted the 2012 National Soils Forum in Bendigo – More than 280 key landholders, local farmers, scientists and policy makers met to discuss how we secure the productive and environmental values of our soils in North Central Victoria. The Forum was an initiative of the North Central CMA's Farming for Sustainable Soils project.
- › Applications opened for the 2012-13 Victorian Landcare Grants.

April 2012

- › 92 people participated in the 2012 North Central Annual Water Science forum - A Focus on Frogs.

May 2012

- › Commencement of a six-week community consultation period to renew the 2012-18 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS).
- › Hosted the first of four Indigenous engagement events for the Campaspe Grassy Woodlands Project. The event was run in conjunction with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation on the banks of the Campaspe River at Barnadown. Sixty-five people participated in the event which focussed on the teaching and practising of traditional ecological knowledge.
- › Over 110 people participated in celebrating the Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands project community engagement event at Happy Jacks Natural Features Reserve, supporting the Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative in a Bush Culture Day.
- › Environmental water delivered to the Bullarook Creek system for the first time under the environmental entitlement. The autumn fresh of 15 megalitres (ML/day) aimed to improve water quality in pools, support blackfish and platypus populations, and provide water for fringe vegetation. A total of 49 ML was delivered from an entitlement held in Newlyn Reservoir.
- › The Investment Framework for Environmental Resources (INFFER) team visited China to explore interest in developing a collaborative research project to assess the usefulness of INFFER in assisting the Chinese Government in making cost-effective decisions about environmental protection.

June 2012

- › The Living Murray Environmental Works and Measures project - completion of the detailed designs and statutory approvals phase of the

Hipwell Road Channel Package of Works project. This allowed for the submission of the Construction Proposal to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority seeking \$13.5 M for construction.

Management and catchment overview

To fulfill the statutory requirements of section 19B of *CaLP Act*, the following information is taken from the North Central CMA's Natural Resource Management (NRM) Report 2011-12 under the following headline themes:

- › *NRM biodiversity*
- › *Marine ecosystems*
- › *Inland aquatic ecosystems*
- › *Land health*
- › *Environmental stewardship*
- › *Community capacity.*

Management summary

The 2011-12 reporting period presented a number of challenges and opportunities for natural resource management activities across the North Central CMA region. The ongoing flood recovery programs were the focus of the region's natural resource management activities. More favourable seasonal conditions post-drought have enabled natural resource managers to work in healthier, more responsive catchments with the management focus moving from maintaining to enhancing priority natural resource management assets.

The North Central CMA has coordinated the development of the 2012-2018 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy.

A total of 49 projects were undertaken across the region to support ongoing flood recovery requirements, environmental water delivery, waterway and wetland restoration and protection, community participation in natural resource management, endangered species protection, floodplain management, sustainable land management practices and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity values. Funding for projects was received from the Victorian Investment Framework, the Caring for our Country Initiative, The Living Murray Program, Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme, NDRRA and other sources.

The North Central CMA has continued our commitment to developing and maintaining regional partnership to achieve enduring environmental change for the region's highest priority natural resource assets. Key project implementation partners were the Department of Primary Industries, DSE, Goulburn-Murray Water, Parks Victoria, Goulburn Broken and North East Catchment Management Authorities, Trust for Nature, Connecting Country, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, Conservation Management Networks, Landcare groups, local government and local landholders.

Biodiversity

What were the main activities and what was achieved?

Over the reporting period 3,592 ha of additional area of terrestrial habitat was improved for biodiversity values. All activities have reduced the risk of extinction for priority populations of threatened species.

The North Central CMA and partners implemented nine projects contributing to outcomes reported against the Biodiversity headline theme. These projects were **Northern Plains Conservation, Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands, Goldfield Threatened Species, Connecting Country, Campaspe Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands, Kooyoora Connections, Victorian Landcare Grants, Enhancing Values of Kerang Ramsar Sites, Flood Recovery Employment Program** and **NDRRA** projects.

The **Northern Plains Conservation** project, delivered by the DSE and Northern Plains Conservation Management Network, continues to make significant progress towards the protection and enhancement of remnant grassland (especially in the Avoca Plains area). Work over the reporting period has focused on revegetation and understorey enhancement for 124 ha of Buloke Woodlands, monitoring and protection of the Hooded Scaly-foot and Plains Wanderer habitat, and coordinated invasive animal management targeting rabbits and foxes.

The **Goldfields Threatened Species** project, delivered by the DSE, has continued to implement priority activities from the Actions for Biodiversity Conservation database to assist in the recovery of 12 endangered orchid, ten threatened flora and two threatened fauna species. This has included the discovery of new populations, successful germination and translocation programs, and an ongoing monitoring program.

The **Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands** and **Campaspe Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands** projects, delivered by the North Central CMA, have focused on the protection of critically endangered White Box, Yellow Box, and Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and derived native grasslands. A total of 323 ha of Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands has been improved for biodiversity values through activities such as revegetation, invasive plant management and stock exclusion.

Key Challenges

The **Enhancing the Values of Kerang Ramsar Sites** project, delivered in partnership by the North Central CMA and DSE, faced changes in the project's ability to support a new population of Murray Hardyhead located in Lake Kelly and the Tutchewop Main Drain. Due to rapidly changing water quality at these sites, the ability to maintain or translocate this population is unknown.

Many projects focusing on the protection or recovery of endangered and/or threatened species have worked closely with Fire Management Plan coordinators to ensure the regimes implemented do not adversely impact on works undertaken by any of the regionally delivered projects.

Inland Aquatic Ecosystems

Activities and achievements

The North Central CMA region has implemented 222 ha of riparian habitat improvement for biodiversity along 189 km of riparian frontage and improved flow regimes for four river reaches.

The North Central CMA and partners implemented ten projects contributing to outcomes reported against the Inland Aquatic Ecosystems headline theme. The projects were **Enhancing Values of Gunbower Ramsar Site, Connecting Country, Enhancing Upper Catchment Waterways, Environmental Reserve Manager, York Plains, Improving the Health of Avoca River Reach 7, Loddon Stressed River, River Health Maintenance, NDRRA** and the **Gunbower Island Living Murray** project.

The **Environmental Reserve Manager** project, delivered by the North Central CMA, has overseen the regional environmental watering programs for priority rivers and wetlands. Environmental water was delivered to the Campaspe River, Birches Creek, Loddon River and Coliban River. Environmental water was also delivered to Round Lake to support a Murray Hardyhead population.

The **Improving the Health of Avoca River Reach 7** project, delivered by the North Central CMA, completed 92 ha of riparian revegetation and enhancements. By partnering with the Flood Recovery Employment Program, the project was able to generate cost savings enabling 40 additional hectares of riparian enhancement work to be completed.

The **Enhancing the Value of Gunbower Ramsar Site** project has focused on the enhancement of riparian and in-stream values of the Gunbower Creek to support the protection of the Gunbower Island Ramsar site and the Living Murray program. Achievements in the reporting period include protecting 60 ha of remnant vegetation protection and 70 ha of revegetation. This work has been further complemented by over 2,054 ha of terrestrial weed treatment and 161 km of aquatic weed management.

Key Challenges

The North Central CMA has delivered a large flood recovery program during 2011-12, which has delayed the implementation of multiple river health projects including the **Loddon Stressed River, Enhancing Upper Catchment Waterways** and **River Health Maintenance** projects. The largest impact has been on the the **River Health Maintenance** project utilised to support the implementation of priority river health works outside the scope of priority asset based projects. Following the 2010-11 floods the North Central CMA has been extremely diligent to ensure maintenance works required as a direct result of the flooding is paid from NDRRA funding and works not attributed to the flood are allocated to the **River Health Maintenance** project.

Land Health

Activities and achievements

Under the Land Health headline theme, 8,499 ha has been treated to contain high risk established invasive plants and animals, 664 ha has been treated for erosion and over 30,000 ha has been treated to reduce the impacts of invasive plants and animals on key biodiversity and other natural resource assets.

The North Central CMA and partners implemented 14 projects contributing to outcomes reported against the Land Health headline theme. The projects were **Enhancing Values of Gunbower Ramsar Site, Enhancing Values of Kerang Ramsar Sites, Connecting Country, Enhancing Upper Catchment Waterways, Farm Plan 21, Farming for Sustainable Soils, Healthy Productive Irrigated Landscapes, Improving the Health of Avoca River Reach 7, Loddon Stressed River, Northern Plains Conservation, River Health Maintenance, Victorian Landcare Grants** and **NDRRA**.

The **Enhancing Values of Gunbower Ramsar Site** and **Enhancing Values of Kerang Ramsar Sites** projects have undertaken targeted invasive plant and animal management to protect the region's internationally recognized wetlands. This has involved treating 4,269 ha of terrestrial weed treatment and 35,182 ha managed for regionally controlled weeds, 71 ha treated for willows, 161 km of aquatic weed management, 1,932 ha managed for foxes and 2,099 ha managed for rabbits.

The **Farming for Sustainable Soils** project has supported eight community groups to recognize and manage the links between soils and

land health. The project focuses on supporting local farmers to mitigate soil erosion and degradation through community-based learning. In 2011-12, the project area expanded to include the communities of Charlton and Lockington. Each group has reviewed or developed local soil protection plans, which are currently being implemented. A total of 650 landholders have improved land management practices across 18,020 ha.

The **Healthy Productive Irrigated Landscapes** projects, delivered by North Central CMA and the DPI, have continued to support irrigators to participate in irrigation modernisation and the on-farm irrigation efficiency program through the development of whole farm plans covering 5,569 ha. Extension support to the irrigation community has also remained a key objective of the project resulting in the delivery of 417 projects/activities/events to increase human capital to sustainably manage natural resources.

Challenges

The **Healthy Productive Irrigated Landscapes** project encountered some delays in the delivery of the whole farm planning incentive. This largely followed the announcement and delivery of the 'Lower Loddon Flood Recovery project whole farm planning incentives.' Both projects have worked closely to enable the delivery of an integrated regional approach to whole farm planning and sustainable land management.

Community Capacity

Activities and achievements

The North Central CMA and partners continue to recognise and value the contribution of local community groups and members to support the implementation of regional natural resource management strategies and the delivery of on-ground works.

The North Central CMA has delivered approximately \$24 M of environmental investment throughout 2011-12, resulting in significant positive environmental outcomes. This level of achievement would not have been possible without the assistance of our major agency and community partners. The capacity to deliver this volume of projects has been built over the past six years through investments in our people and our systems, and remains a key regional asset.

Under the community capacity to support NRM headline theme there have been plans developed or implemented to support community groups across 5,000 ha of the region. In the reporting period, corporate and philanthropic funding of \$32,500 has been secured to support NRM community groups. Furthermore, an additional \$539,997 of community in-kind support has contributed to NRM works across the North Central CMA region.

The North Central CMA has supported 444 community NRM groups with 311 project/activities/events held to increase community capacity and to contribute to cultural heritage outcomes.

Land managers participating in projects/events/activities across the North Central CMA region received funding to undertake on-ground works across 72,978 ha. Over 1,138 projects/activities/events have been held to increase land managers' capacity to manage natural resources sustainably. Over 1,325 activities have been held to increase or maintain institutional capacity of regional agencies to implement the Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS).

The North Central CMA and partners implemented 27 projects contributing to outcomes reported against the Community Capacity headline theme. The projects were Regional Landcare Facilitator; Enhancing Values of Gunbower Ramsar Site; Administration of Statutory Functions; Connecting Country; Enhancing Upper Catchment Waterways; Environmental Reserve Manager; Farm Plan 21; Farming for Sustainable Soils; Goldfields Threatened Species; Healthy Productive Irrigated Landscapes; Improving the Health of Avoca River Reach 7; Loddon Stressed River; North Central Regional Catchment Strategy; North Central Waterwatch Program; Northern Plains Conservation; Permanent Protection and Stewardship; Regional Landcare Coordination; Reporting and Accounting for Salinity; River and Wetland Strategic Planning; River Health Maintenance; Kooyoora Connections; Assessment of Flood Affected Sites; Flood Recovery Employment Program; Adopting Sustainable Farming Practices; FarmWater; and Innovative Farming Implementation Plan projects.

The North Central CMA has prepared the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy on behalf of the regional community. This involved the community and stakeholders identifying over 400 natural resource assets, ten formal community consultation meetings, and the receipt of over 40 submissions from the regional community on the draft Regional Catchment Strategy. With the final 2012-18 Regional Catchment Strategy due to Government in September 2012 we are excited to be embarking on the implementation of this renewed strategy which sets a foundation for our work over the coming years to strengthen the links between rivers, landscapes and people in our region. The vision for the Regional Catchment Strategy is "A community active in protecting and enhancing the integrity of its catchments."

During 2011-12, the **North Central Waterwatch Program** has facilitated the participation of over 3,700 community members in waterway monitoring, the River Detectives Program, frog and macroinvertebrate monitoring, and other river health themed events and activities across the region. Highlights for the Waterwatch Program included receiving the 2011 Poster Plate Award at the 14th International River Symposium; hosting 92 community members at the 'Annual Water Science Form – A Focus on Frogs'; developing new educational material and supporting post-flood macroinvertebrate studies on the Loddon River.

The **Adopting Sustainable Farming Practices** project has supported farmers in the lower Loddon and Campaspe catchments to increase their knowledge and skills to sustainably manage soil and land to protect and enhance the agricultural and ecosystem values of land. The project has engaged with 270 landholders through workshops, farm walks and other extension activities. Seventy four per cent of landholders engaged have indicated they will change their management practices based on new information and knowledge obtained through their interactions with the project.

The **Regional Landcare Facilitator** project has engaged with 388 landholders via eight community events to increase the capacity of individuals and land managers to identify native species and weeds, understand carbon farming, sustainable farming practices and other land management issues. The project continues to respond to the information needs of the regional community and facilitate connections between individuals and industry experts.

The **Flood Recovery Employment Program** has provided employment opportunities to 64 individuals following the 2010-11 floods. Participants in this program developed natural resource management skills and knowledge that enabled them to complete 114 km of fencing, 853 ha of weed control, 138 ha of rabbit control, plant over 31,000 indigenous plants, undertake flood debris removal and complete minor infrastructure construction.

Key Challenges

The regional community has faced numerous challenges over the past few years and signs of fatigue have been noted in some local communities. Projects have found it difficult to engage with communities still recovering from the floods and have revised community engagement and communication activities for groups and individuals in recognition of this.

With many new natural resource management initiatives and programs being rolled out by government and regional agencies (e.g. Carbon Farming Initiative) the community has increased demand for information and is increasingly dependent on local and regional networks to make sense of and disseminate information through to the community.

Environmental Stewardship

Activities and achievements

Under the headline theme of Environmental Stewardship, the region has achieved 1,021 ha of riparian habitat and 1,264 ha of terrestrial habitat has been protected under management agreements. A further 636 ha has been protected under permanent conservation agreements.

The North Central CMA and partners implemented three projects contributing to outcomes reported against the Environmental Stewardship headline theme. The projects are Connecting Country, Permanent Protection and Stewardship, and Kooyoora Connections.

The **Connecting Country** project, delivered by Connecting Country, has worked with the Mt Alexander community to promote and implement activities to achieve enduring environmental outcomes. The project success can be seen through the 1,259 ha of management agreement adopted by local landholders to support the protection of Yellow Box vegetation communities. This is further complemented by 1,760 ha treated for invasive plants and animals, removing grazing from 226 ha for at least five years and over \$155,000 of in-kind contributions from the community.

The **Permanent Protection and Stewardship** project, delivered by Trust for Nature, has made the most significant regional gains in the permanent protection of priority environmental assets through permanent covenant on titles. An additional 547 ha is now protected under legal conservation covenants on six property titles.

The **Kooyoora Connections** project, delivered by the DSE and the Wedderburn CMN, has had a successful year of project delivery and continues to make significant progress towards the protection of Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands in the Wedderburn area. As a result, the project has achieved 2,620 ha of invasive plant and animal treatment, 20,000 ha of pest inspections, 234 ha of indigenous vegetation protection and enhancement, and held 21 community group events.

Key Challenges

There is a fear among some sectors of the community that entering a conservation covenant represents a loss of control of land in private ownership by disallowing production and development activities. The region will continue to work with community groups and landholders to better understand the opportunities available through participating in covenanting projects.

Catchment condition statement 2011-12

Biodiversity	<p>Overall condition: Poor to moderate</p> <p>Trend: Declining</p> <p>2011-12 resulted in a reprieve for an otherwise declining biodiversity condition. Substantial flooding over spring and summer (discussed further under 'inland aquatic ecosystems') led to a range of observed biodiversity improvements. Many species bred in the post-flooding conditions including aquatic plants, native fish (e.g. Murray Hardyhead) and native birds (e.g. Great Egrets and Magpie Geese).</p> <p>Improvements were also observed in native vegetation communities. Flood-dependent vegetation re-established in areas where it had been displaced during the drought. New canopy growth is evident on River Red Gum and Box communities in flooded areas. However land management practices have, in many instances, reduced the gains through grazing and other pressures. Areas under reserve status, or not directly impacted by pressures, have responded positively to the drought-ending floods. An equally positive response from pest plant and animal populations has, in some ways, reduced the potential gains from the flood events. The increase in fuel reduction burning regimes enabled by the wetter conditions is likely to have had mixed outcomes for biodiversity condition.</p> <p>Also, an additional 1,850 ha of habitat improved for biodiversity and 671 ha of habitat protected by agreements for biodiversity in the 2011-12 period, have contributed to a localised increase in condition. We continue to monitor the biodiversity benefits of our activities. In excess of 3,700 ha across the region have had invasive pest and plants impacts reduced, through weed, fox and rabbit control activities during 2011-12.</p> <p>While 2011-12 has been positive for biodiversity, there is a larger underlying trend that continues to be the focus of our future management efforts. A large proportion of the native vegetation and habitat remaining in the North Central CMA region remains degraded and fragmented. The region's bioregional landscapes contain predominantly 'fragmented' native vegetation with very little, if any, 'largely-intact'. Consequently, a large number of the region's species are threatened. Of the (approximate) 130 threatened flora species, 52 are nationally threatened and 41 are listed under the <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act 1988</i>. There are also many threatened fauna species. Of the (approximately) 101 species, 13 are nationally threatened and 48 are listed under the <i>FFG Act</i>.</p> <p>While significant, targeted works have been undertaken to protect and enhance various types of native vegetation and threatened species habitat to improve condition, the overall regional trend in native vegetation is still declining. The scale and investment needed to affect landscape-scale change is far beyond current levels of government resourcing.</p> <p>While there is detailed information on the state and condition of specific species and communities, overall there is insufficient information throughout the region to make an assessment of condition to a high confidence rating.</p> <p>The principle of needing at least 30 per cent cover has long been recognised; and modelling suggests that without this, there will be an ongoing decline in biodiversity (i.e. loss of habitat, ecosystem function and species). Without a shift in the current resourcing paradigm of State and Federal governments, we can only realistically expect to achieve short-term, localised gains while the remaining assets and areas continue to decline.</p>
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Inland Aquatic Ecosystems

Overall condition: Poor to moderate

Trend: Stable

With rainfall levels stabilising over 2011-12, regular (higher than drought level) flows across the region have been maintained. The floodplain and riparian vegetation has responded positively to this. Unfortunately so have aquatic systems weeds and pests, meaning condition has generally remained stable or had a small increase in the shorter term. Riverbank and bed erosion disturbance from the flooding has generally been no more than naturally expected during this sort of event. Restoration works through a variety of projects have assisted in improving localised disturbances.

During the dry period, in-stream vegetation had begun to dominate some riverine ecosystems. The flooding has reduced the extent and impact of this native vegetation, by scouring (removing) these higher levels of vegetation. The continued higher flows have assisted to maintain the rivers in a more natural balance, by reducing the opportunity for in-stream vegetation to dominate the river systems. The flooding has also improved the immediate condition of fish species. Unfortunately carp recruitment increased considerably across the region due to the good flows and food availability. However, redfin recruitment increased below Lake Eppalock in the Campaspe River and along the Loddon River.

Environmental flows across the region continued to be delivered using environmental water from a variety of sources. Environmental flows in the Loddon and Campaspe rivers focussed on winter flows, to continue the recovery post-flood. Also, following the major flooding in 2010-11 forest wetlands received top up flows from minor rises in the River Murray during August and September 2011. This allowed the forest to continue to provide ideal habitat for waterbirds to breed. A colony of approximately 200 waterbirds, including the threatened Great Egret, established within the lower part of Gunbower Forest. Results of tree health monitoring in Gunbower Forest indicated that the forest is regenerating, however is still in the very early stages of recovery post the prolonged dry period prior to 2010.

Activities under a number of programs have contributed to maintaining or improving the condition of inland aquatic ecosystems and assisting communities and the environment to recover from the floods. The NDRRA program has made significant progress. The high priority actions of replacing damaged riparian fencing and re-establishing vegetation to protect the region's waterways will be complete just 12 months on from the funding announcement. To date, 159 of the 232 landholders have had their fencing previously funded by the North Central CMA repaired or replaced and the extensive erosion control repair program is underway with 27 of the 164 sites repaired. Site preparation is underway for the large-scale winter/spring 2012 revegetation program on properties where previous flood damaged revegetation is being replaced.

Invasive pest and animal treatment around Gunbower has continued. In excess of 1,000 ha of treatment activities have been undertaken for weeds, rabbits and foxes.

While the condition of waterways in the region remains poor to moderate (based on available Index of Stream Condition data), it is expected that over the longer-term, changes in condition will be detected in the post-flooding environment. In addition, the existence of well developed plans, strategies and ongoing management, will aim to maximise any positive condition changes and address any new issues arising from the floods.

Land Health

Overall condition: Poor to moderate

Trend: Stable

The significant flooding in 2010-11 has generally helped stabilise the condition of soils in the region. Groundwater tables have dropped back to drought levels which has reduced the short-term salinity impact and improved soil health. More water in the soil profile is assisting the growth of vegetation. Improved groundcover has benefits for soil health.

Post flooding, the salt loads in the soil have been reduced, as they were washed out by the floodwaters. In the irrigation districts floodwaters receded quickly, due to good drainage. This minimised the potential threats of water logging and salinisation.

While soils within the North Central CMA region have moderate to high susceptibility to wind erosion, the likelihood under current management practices is largely low to moderate, with a few localised high risk areas. Much of the soils in the region have a very high susceptibility to soil structure decline with a high likelihood of occurrence under current land management practices.

To help address these (and other) land management problems, the Farming for Sustainable Soils project helps over five hundred landholders, who manage over 320,000 ha, to implement sustainable practices. Baseline soil information is collected so farmers can see the difference their changed practices are making.

Flooding did damage some land through water erosion, particularly at several existing erosion control structures, which are now being repaired. Multiple periods of inundation destroyed crops, killed perennial pastures and stock and tore down fences. This had a financial and emotional impact on farmers. More detail on these activities and others to improve the agricultural sectors capacity are discussed further in the community capacity section.

Despite the extreme climatic changes (drought followed by flooding) experienced across the region, the overall condition of land in the North Central CMA region remains stable.

Environmental Stewardship

Overall condition: Moderate

Trend: Improving

Approximately 13 per cent of the North Central CMA region is public land - a substantial proportion of which has been set aside for nature conservation. The major reserves include the Terrick Terrick, Greater Bendigo, Castlemaine Diggings Heritage, St Arnaud Range, Gunbower and Heathcote-Graytown National Parks. Together with State and Regional Parks and other types of reserves, around 100,000 ha of public land has been set aside for nature conservation and compatible land practices.

In addition to environmental stewardship on public land, there is an upward trend continuing in the extent of private land being actively managed for environmental outcomes in the North Central CMA region.

For example, Trust for Nature registered an additional six covenants in the North Central CMA region, increasing the area protected to in excess of 8,000 ha. The covenants provide permanent protection for threatened vegetation communities and reduce the risk of extinction for threatened species. They work towards improving connectivity within the fragmented Goldfields Bioregion. Other projects included Connecting Country which worked with the Mt Alexander community to improve the management of Yellow Box communities; and the DSE and Wedderburn CMN who worked cooperatively to protect 2,620 ha of Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands.

Activities in the York Plains wetlands have progressed significantly during 2011-12. Over half the landholders owning and managing land on the Yorks Plains have signed contracts to undertake protection and enhancement works over the coming five years. These works include: establishing covenants on 415 ha of the most significant remnant areas to provide permanent protection; protecting another 98 ha of vegetation through stock control fencing and revegetation; and establishing 1,100 ha of perennial pasture to help manage groundwater recharge and salinity impacts on the wetlands.

Landcare is an important mechanism for environmental stewardship in the region. It is discussed further under community capacity.

Community Capacity

Overall condition: Moderate

Trend: Stable

The North Central CMA region continues to undergo significant transformation, which has implications for the capacity of local community members to participate in natural resource management. Sections of the regional community have spent time this year recovering from the substantial flooding in 2010-11, with some areas not clear of floodwater until April 2011. The impacts of the floods will extend well beyond the receding of the water; with those communities affected suffering financially and emotionally. A suite of activities was undertaken in 2011-12 to assist in flood recovery for both the environment and community.

The Flood Recovery Employment Program (FREP) employed 64 local flood-affected people to undertake environmental works and improve their skills in natural resource management through training. Across the region over 186 projects were undertaken, consisting of: 1,483 ha of weed control, 138 ha of rabbit control, 123 km of fencing removal, repair or replacement, 31,000 native tubestock planted and approximately 50,000 tyres removed from gullies to reduce the impacts of future flooding and remove hazardous material. The works were undertaken across both public and private land and involved landholders and community groups. Overall, the FREP has had a positive impact on those affected by the flooding.

The National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements project has engaged 92 landholders so that flood repair activities could be undertaken, as well as initiating or completing repair or restoration of erosion and levee damage.

Activities in sustainable agriculture, such as the Farming for Sustainable Soils project, the Innovative Farming Program and Landcare programs are assisting landholders to improve their skills, knowledge and practices. Delivery mechanisms have included workshops, field days and forums, as well as supporting farming groups and the general farming community.

Work has continued on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's Basin Plan, which will provide a framework to manage the water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin. Consultation has identified that most of the irrigation communities to the north of the region are at risk from reduced water availability under the Plan, as they are both small in scale and highly dependent on agriculture.

However, environmental pressures remain in the region through significant urban growth in the south and demographic changes in the north. The community helps respond to these pressures through more than 160 Landcare and community NRM groups in the North Central CMA region, providing about 80 per cent coverage of the region. In addition there are six Landcare Networks supporting these groups to work collaboratively at a landscape-scale. By way of example, the Loddon Plains Landcare Network is developing a blueprint to direct landscape-scale investment and works. Additionally the Victorian Government has funded 11 part-time community based Landcare Facilitators to directly support local Landcare groups and networks.

The Indigenous community in North Central Victoria continues to play an important role in linking natural resource management with cultural heritage management. Ongoing activities are continuing to improve Landcare group's understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage and the Traditional Owner's connection to Country. A direct outcome of this engagement has been the building of the Aboriginal capacity to undertake cross cultural awareness activities. Work has also continued with the broader Indigenous community to build and improve relationships around natural resource management.

Waterwatch remains an active and important part of community-based NRM in North Central Victoria. During 2011-12 around 3,700 community members, primary school students and Waterwatch monitors participated in the program. The community water quality monitors enable data collection across the region and provide a better understanding of waterway condition and trends in water quality.

The North Central CMA supported 444 community groups to help maintain or improve their capacity to contribute to NRM and cultural heritage outcomes.

Operational and budgetary objectives

Delivering on state-wide key performance indicators and targets

The North Central CMA reports against the state-wide key performance indicators and targets as prescribed by the Victorian Government for all Victorian CMAs as follows:

Performance Area	Performance Indicators	Targets	Notes / Actions
Governance			
Board performance	Complete and submit an annual Board performance assessment report, according to any ministerial guidelines issued	By 31st August annually	Submitted 30 Aug 2011. Next review underway.
	Participation by Board members in development activities	All Board members participate in development activities Induction by 31 August 2011	All Board members have participated in governance training and regional works inspection tours. All Board members were inducted by 31 August 2011.
Board Charter	Develop and implement a Board Charter that, as a minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Includes a requirement to regularly review the Board's effectiveness ➤ Establishes appropriate Board committees, including a risk and compliance committee ➤ features a provision that the Board will comply with Ministerial guidelines ➤ requires the Board to monitor the NCCMA's financial, social and environmental performance 	Establish a Board Charter with these features by 31 August 2011	The Board's Charter and operating protocols were reviewed and endorsed on 6 December 2011.
Risk and financial management	Compliance to risk management plans for each program	All programs have risk management plans in place Nil non-compliances with risk management plan	100% compliant. All governance policies reviewed.
	Annual review process of governance policies and procedures	Review all governance policies and procedures by 30 June annually	Executive to lead review prior to 30 June each year.
Efficiency and organisational performance			
Expenditure vs budget	Variation of actual to budgeted expenditure for the NCCMA	Total actual expenditure is less than or equal to budgeted expenditure For each program, actual expenditure is within +/- 10% of the budgeted expenditure	Overall expenditure 6% below budget. All projects monitored by management on a monthly basis with any variation rectified or timing variation agreed with investor.
Grant management	Minimise administration costs of grants	10% or less of grant funds is spent on administration	Compliant. Nil
	Minimise time taken to determine grant applications	Grant applications are determined within one month of being received	Advised by DSE that this would be a guide for all grant processes. "Determined" is the outcome of a Grant Review panel, processing including budget approval of the Board (as required for governance) may be beyond one month.

Performance Area	Performance Indicators	Targets	Notes / Actions
Regulatory waterway/ water functions	Number of days to process works on waterways permits	Not more than 20 days	Average =17.8 calendar days. Nil
	Number of days to process referrals for any works on or in relation to a dam	Not more than 20 days	Nil referrals received. Nil referrals received.
	Number of days to process local government referrals regarding flooding and controls on planning scheme amendments and planning and building approvals	Not more than 20 days	Average =16.8 calendar days. Two (2) referrals outside the 20 day objective recorded in Q1. The number of planning referrals and requests for advice has risen significantly since the 2010-11 flood events which hindered ability to fully achieve statutory timeframes. Exec to develop effective resourcing model to future demand No additional referrals outside 20 day objective were recorded in Q2, Q3 or Q4.
	Number of days to process flooding enquiries from local government and community	Not more than 20 days	Average =17.1 calendar days. Define 'enquiry' as basis for measurement 77 referrals outside the 20 day objective. First priority of resources is given to achieving the Statutory obligation of A1-18 above.
	Number of days to process Water Use Licence referrals that don't meet the standard water-use conditions	Not more than 20 days	Nil referrals received. Nil
	Number of days to process enquiries from Rural Water Corporations on irrigation and drainage plans, and seasonal adjustments to annual use limits	Not more than 20 days	Nil referrals received.
	Number of days to process enquiries from Rural Water Corporations issuing Take and Use licences	Not more than 20 days	Average = 18 calendar days. Nil
Effectiveness and Environmental outcomes			
Integrated river health management	Revise North Central River Health Strategy (RSHRW) for waterways in relation to their economic, social and environmental values	North Central River Health Strategy revised every six years	Pending development of the Victorian Strategy which is due for completion in 2012. The North Central RSHRW will be completed by 2013.
	Develop and revise Environmental Operating Strategies and Annual Watering Plans to manage the environmental water reserve in accordance with objectives	Environmental Operating Strategies (EOSs) developed or revised every 5 years Annual Watering Plans approved for all environmental entitlements	The EOSs are to be superseded by the new RSHRWs. Seasonal watering proposals for the Loddon, Campaspe and northern wetlands have been completed and submitted to Victorian Environmental Water Holder.
RCS implementation	% of RCS annual actions implemented	All RCS annual actions implemented	The RCS has been completed including a six week public consultation period. RCS to be endorsed by the North Central CMA Board in August 2012.
Regional Native Vegetation Plan (RNVP) implementation	% RNVP annual actions implemented	All RNVP annual actions implemented	Actioned in conjunction with asset program.

Invasive plants and animals management	Regional Invasive Plants and Animals Strategies incorporating related priorities in all land tenures in the region	Invasive Plants and Animals Strategies revised by 30 June every five years	Actioned in conjunction with asset program.
Regional and Statutory Planning	Provide advice on dryland salinity, irrigation management, soil erosion, or any other land management issue identified in the local Municipal Strategic Statement as the referral body	10% of referral responses provided for each issue	Nil referrals received.
Salinity management	Implementation and periodic review of Regional Salinity Management Plans (RSMP) and Land and Water Management Plans (LWMP)	RSMP and LWMP completed RSMP and LWMP periodically reviewed RSMP and LWMP include annual actions to be implemented	Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region LWMP reviewed and updated in July 2011. Currently being implemented. LCIRLWMP reviewed and updated in July 2011. Currently being implemented. LCIRLWMP reviewed and updated in July 2011. Currently being implemented.
Regional Landcare groups, networks and other community groups	Deliver the Regional Landcare Support Strategy, including regional coordination of Landcare	Evaluate and revise strategy every five years Last revised January 2010	No action required as plan in second year of five years.

Summary of financial results

Five Year Financial Summary

	2011/2012	2010/2011	2009/2010	2008/2009	2007/2008
State Government	10,251,747	15,304,551	12,488,153	11,764,317	14,270,468
Commonwealth Government	5,741,309	4,018,000	3,556,689	5,039,410	5,940,040
Other revenue	3,900,665	3,137,767	3,758,889	3,283,239	3,063,111
Total revenue	19,893,721	22,460,318	19,803,731	20,086,966	23,273,619
Administration expenditure	2,765,005	2,403,317	2,221,583	2,605,611	1,859,985
Corporate expenditure	1,318,664	1,138,366	1,025,231	841,041	848,435
Project expenditure	19,892,428	14,800,741	16,623,117	21,568,957	18,900,042
Total expenditure	23,976,098	18,342,423	19,869,931	25,015,609	21,608,462
Total surplus/deficit	-4,082,377	4,117,895	-66,200	-4,928,643	1,665,157
Current assets	9,764,605	12,720,635	9,629,823	10,846,306	13,637,514
Non-current assets	3,054,414	3,105,234	2,294,297	2,205,310	1,826,126
Total assets	12,819,019	15,825,869	11,924,120	13,051,616	15,463,640
Current liabilities	3,745,525	2,692,357	3,537,461	5,625,642	3,252,275
Non-current liabilities	144,286	121,927	118,976	83,769	62,764
Total liabilities	3,889,811	2,814,284	3,656,437	5,709,411	3,315,039

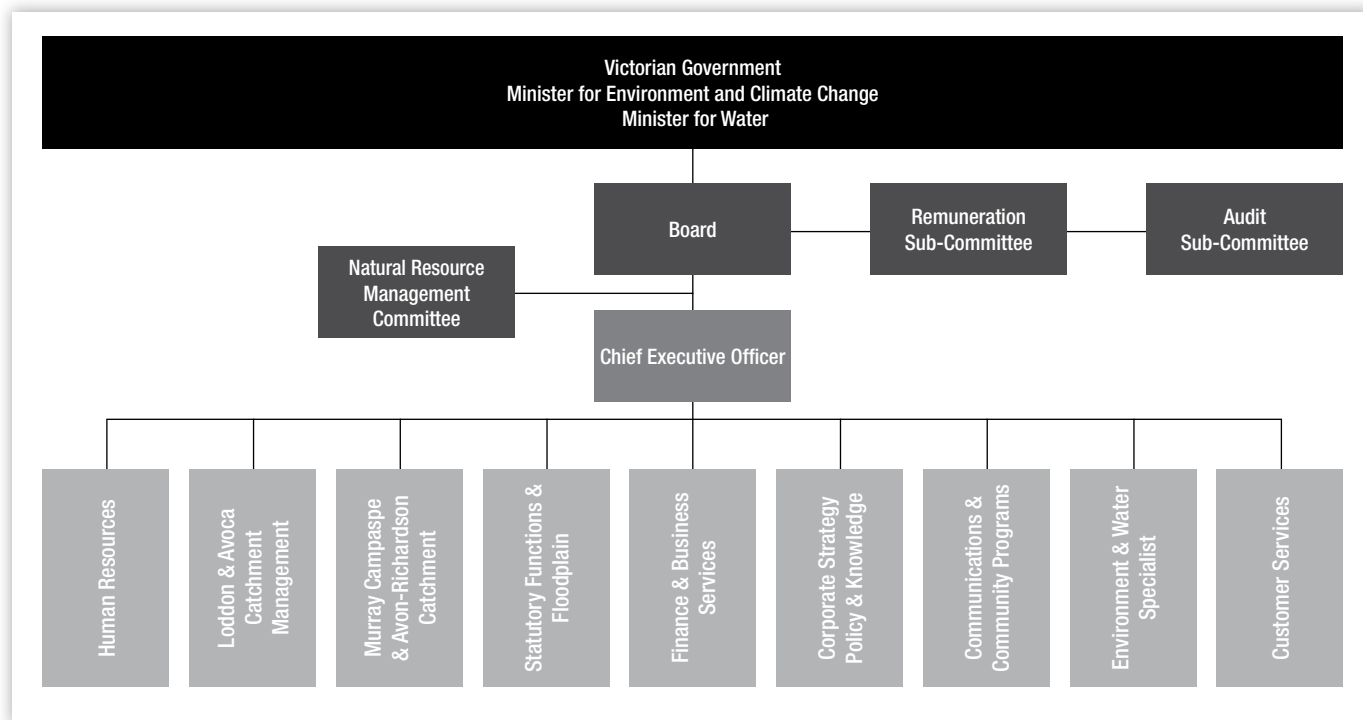
During the financial year ending 30 June 2012, the North Central CMA recorded a \$4,082,377 deficit from operating activities. The financial result was attributed to the following:

The deficit reflects advance receipt of funding for 2011-12 in the 2010-11 financial year when a \$4,173,673 surplus was recorded.

It should be noted that levels of funding for the 2012-13 year will be less than previous years. North Central CMA has prepared its budget in line with advised funding in order to both maintain essential services and remain financially viable.

Governance and organisational structure

Organisational Structure



North Central CMA Board

The North Central CMA is led by a Board appointed by the Victorian Government Minister for Environment and Climate Change and Minister for Water. It sets priorities for environmental protection, in partnership with local communities and other agencies, and promotes sustainable land and water management practices for the benefit of river health and local communities.

The Board's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- setting the strategic direction of the organisation
- establishing vision and direction for integrated natural resource management
- setting priorities and evaluating results
- approving and monitoring the organisation's financial performance.

David Clark, Chair

Appointed to the Board as Chair on 1 July 2011.

David has qualifications in agriculture and rural development. David is a self-employed owner/manager of a 500 ha farm in central Victoria and project manager for several Landcare groups. Currently Pyrenees Shire Councillor and Board member of Conservation Volunteers Australia. An inaugural member of the North Central CMA Board and the Victorian Catchment Management Council.

Jenny Williams, Deputy Chair (Echuca)

Term of appointment expired at the end of term, 30 September 2011.

Jenny holds qualifications in secondary teaching and is employed part-time as a school teacher. She is also a Director/Bookseller at Echuca's Tangled Garden Bookshop. Jenny has been a Board member since 2006.

Jane Holt (St Arnaud)

Term of appointment expired at the end of term, 30 September 2011.

Jane holds qualifications in Applied Science (including winemaking) and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Jane is employed part-time as a viticulturalist, winemaker and manager at Berrys Bridge Vineyard & Winery and is a self-employed bookkeeper. She has been a Board member since 2006.

Jock Leishman (Ullina)

Term of appointment expired at the end of term, 30 September 2011.

Jock has been a self-employed owner/operator of his family farm for 35 years, consisting of large-scale wool production, meat production, agro forestry, seed and cereal grain production. Jock has extensive experience in land and natural resource management, and primary industry. Jock has been a Board member since 2006.

Melanie McCarthy (Bendigo)

Melanie holds qualifications in engineering and arts. She also manages land near Bendigo where she is committed to sustainable practices and environmental improvement. She has 15 years experience in the primary resources industry and business management. Melanie was appointed to the Board in 2009.

Stuart McLean (Wycheproof)

Stuart has been a farmer in this region for more than 40 years and is a Buloke Shire Councillor. Stuart has experience in land, waterway and natural resources management, primary industry, business planning and financial management. He is currently involved in state and national organisations relating to primary production and regional development. Stuart has been a Board member since 2000.

Don Naunton (Bendigo)

Don holds qualifications in agricultural science and is an agricultural consultant. Don has extensive experience in land and water resources management, water industry and primary industry. Don was appointed to the Board in 2009.

Christine Brooke (Pyramid Hill)

Appointed Deputy Chair October 2011

Christine has extensive experience in land and water management and primary industry. She is self-employed, running her own irrigation farming enterprise, is a Loddon Shire Councillor and Chair of the Goldfields Library Corporation. Christine was appointed to the Board in 2009 and has a particular interest in improving communication with the community and partner agencies.

James Williams (Rochester)

James has a range of experience in natural resource management in such fields as farming, local council and Landcare networks. He has a strong interest in the environment and the well being of the north central Victoria region. James was appointed to the Board in 2011 and hopes to provide leadership in the issues of farm forestry, water and bio diversity. James' term of appointment commenced on 1 October 2011.

Julie Slater (Corack East)

Julie operates a consultancy business from her family farming enterprise at Corack East which encompasses a variety of roles including public relations and marketing, event and project management, strategic and community planning, and community engagement. She is also the part-time Executive Officer of Community Leadership Loddon Murray Inc, a Company Director, and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course. Julie was appointed to the Board in 2011 and is interested in sharing the voice of local landholders and parents who wish to ensure a sustainable environment for future generations. Julie's term of appointment commenced on 1 October 2011.

Prue Addlem (Serpentine)

Prue holds qualifications in business and agriculture and in 2012/13 will be undertaking the Australian Rural Leadership Program. She is involved in the Serpentine Recreation Reserve Committee of Management as well as Victorian Farmers Federation Young Agribusiness Professionals. Prue was appointed to the Board in 2011 and has a particular interest in representing the community from a young and passionate sustainable agriculture perspective. Prue's term of appointment commenced on 1 October 2011.

Laurie Maxted (Durham Ox)

Laurie has spent two terms with the Natural Resource Management Committee (NRMC) and now joins the Board to further progress his involvement with the North Central CMA. He is involved in many community groups such as CFA, Loddon Plains Landcare Network and Durham Ox Hall. Laurie was appointed to the Board in 2011 and has a strong interest in community consultation, and achieving the best environmental outcomes possible. Laurie's term of appointment commenced on 1 October 2011.

Board members	Meeting attendance
Christine Brooke, Deputy Chair from October 2011 (Pyramid Hill)	10 of 11
*Jane Holt (St Arnaud)	3 of 3
*Jock Leishman (Ullina)	3 of 3
Melanie McCarthy (Bendigo)	11 of 11
Stuart McLean (Wycheproof)	11 of 11
Don Naunton (Bendigo)	11 of 11
*Jenny Williams, Deputy Chair until September 2011 (Echuca)	3 of 3
**Prue Adlem	8 of 8
David Clark, Chair	11 of 11
**Laurie Maxted	8 of 8
**Julie Slater	8 of 8
**James Williams	8 of 8

*Term of appointment expired on 30 September 2011

**Term of appointed commenced on 1 October 2011

Note: All Board member absences were approved by the Board.

Audit Committee

An active and effective Audit Committee serves the Board in its governance responsibilities.

The Audit Committee consists of three Board members. Using an enterprise-wide, risk-based approach, the Committee focuses on corporate risks and business and financial performance.

Independent internal audit services, rigorous project management monitoring, and the development of corporate risk management are key tasks of the Committee.

The Audit committee met 11 times during the reporting year.

Board members	Meeting attendance
*Jane Holt (Chair to September 2011)	3 of 3
*Jock Leishman	1 of 3
**Melanie McCarthy (Chair from October 2011)	9 of 11
**Don Naunton	11 of 11
David Clark	10 of 11
*Jenny Williams	0 of 3

* Resigned from Audit Committee in September 2011

** Denotes independent Audit Committee members as required under the *Financial Management Act 1994*

Natural Resource Management Committee

The Natural Resource Management Committee (NRMC) is a community advisory group to the North Central CMA Board. The committee provides a local community perspective to the North Central CMA on its planning, community engagement activities and works.

Membership on the committee is for a two or four year term. In October 2011 nominations were sought to replace members whose term had expired. Following a public process, and endorsement by the North Central CMA Board in December 2011, six new members were appointed to the committee resulting in fourteen current members.

The NRMC advises on:

- appropriate engagement mechanisms for projects
- direction and focus for the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy
- identifying annual priorities for investment
- reviewing the community engagement aspects of projects
- developing and implementing a Community Engagement Strategy.

NRMC members reflect a broad geographic spread from across North Central Victoria, incorporating a wide range of skills and experience. The current membership provides the North Central CMA with strong links into community networks including farming groups, small businesses, environmental and sustainability groups, local government, water services committees, recreational fishing, as well as Landcare and Waterwatch networks.

The NRMC meets monthly, with the committee visiting project areas to gain a better understanding of projects and site-specific issues. An investment meeting is held each year for the committee to provide input to projects developed through the investment process.

Many North Central CMA projects and issues require a more specific level of community input. NRMC members are nominated to sub-committees and provide advice and participate in focused community engagement activities.

In 2011–12 the NRMC met 10 times and participated in three project site visits.

NRMC member	Meeting attendance
Charlie Gillingham, Chairman (Lake Charm)	8 of 10
Di Bunnett (Derby)	10 of 10
Ken Coates (Natte Yallock)	9 of 10
Ron Cosgrave (Smeaton)	10 of 10
David Jones (Sedgwick)	8 of 10
Rob Loats (Donald)	9 of 10
Ron Murray (Castlemaine)	4 of 10
Shane O'Loughlin (Laanecoorie)	10 of 10
*Brien Nelson (Summerfield)	3 of 5
*Marie Jones (Castlemaine)	5 of 5
*John Knight (Quambatook)	4 of 5
*Ian Whatley (Echuca)	5 of 5
**Colin Smith (Junortoun)	5 of 5
**Richard Carter (Newlyn)	5 of 5
**Sebastian Klein (Trentham)	3 of 5
**Dianne Bowles (Meade)	4 of 5
**Allison Long (Carlsruhe)	4 of 5
**Denis Watts (Yeungroon)	5 of 5

*End of term - December 2011

**New members – from January 2012

Occupational Health and Safety

The North Central CMA is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of our employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors. We do this by adhering to strict safe work practices and by providing a workplace that is safe and healthy. People engaged at our worksites and premises are inducted to ensure they are familiar with our health and safety policies and emergency procedures.

Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) training is provided to employees. During the past year, staff have received first aid training, driver training and OH&S training for supervisors and managers. Work crews have received additional training in basic OH&S, chainsaw operation and the use of agricultural chemicals.

Worksites and premises are randomly assessed for OH&S compliance and key performance measures are reported to the Board each month.

WorkCover incidents are reported under the *Accident Compensation Act 1985*. The North Central CMA had four *WorkCover* claims during the reporting period, including one ongoing from 2010-11.

Annual OH&S Key Performance Report 2011–12

Key performance indicator	Annual target	Actuals
Audits of worksites	34	52
Audits of premises	8	9
Audits of field days/events	4	23
Injury – no time lost	0	15
Injury – time lost	0	4
Incidents reported	20	33
WorkCover claims submitted	0	3
All compulsory OH&S training completed	in accordance with staff training calendar	8
Staff OH&S induction completed for all new staff	within 5 days of commencing	Compliant
OH&S Committee meetings held	4	7
OH&S meetings with field staff	4	4
Emergency evacuations conducted	2	5
Meetings held with emergency response team	2	4
Incident/near-miss investigations completed	All completed within one month	Compliant

Our people

The North Central CMA is very proud of its greatest asset – our people. We are committed to building a workplace culture that emphasises teamwork, continuous learning, efficiency, integrity and individual leadership.

At the North Central CMA, it is our aim to be an employer of choice. To achieve this, we are focused on providing our current and prospective employees with competitive terms and conditions of employment, and a positive and friendly work culture that promotes the following behaviours:

- › seek to understand – embrace challenges and seek solutions
- › be honest and take responsibility – do what you say you will do
- › see something do something
- › show respect
- › actively engage.

Our people are the organisation's key strength and, to demonstrate the continued focus on our people, we are pleased to report a number of standards we work by and initiatives that have been realised over the past year.

Employment Principles

North Central CMA staff are appointed following a comprehensive selection and recruitment process. Our processes are in accordance with the *Public Administration Act 2004* whereby appointments are made on the basis of merit, and a commitment is maintained to the principles of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1985*.

Managing Workplace Diversity

The North Central CMA promotes diversity within the workplace. Our commitment is evidenced by the balance of genders within the workplace, where 48 per cent of staff are female and 52 per cent male. Furthermore, the organisation has structured the workplace to enable over 20 per cent of the workforce to work part-time. Coupled with our policies surrounding equal employment opportunity and the flexible work arrangements contained in the Collective Agreement, the North Central CMA is committed to maintaining and improving its workplace diversity.

The North Central CMA continues to employ an Indigenous Facilitator to assist in educating staff and engaging the community on Indigenous matters. The partnership program project between the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Enterprise Pty Ltd and the North Central CMA continued through to March 2012, whereby six Indigenous employees employed by the North Central CMA successfully transitioned to Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Enterprise Pty Ltd. Furthermore, in 2011-12 North Central CMA continued the Kerang Wetlands project involving the employment of four Indigenous employees to undertake a range of wetland protection and enhancement activities.

Learning and Development

The North Central CMA promotes the personal and professional development of its people in order to achieve ongoing improvements in service delivery and to create satisfying career paths for staff members.

This year, the North Central CMA supported employees to increase their knowledge and experience in a range of areas by attending training programs, conferences and seminars throughout the year. Professional development undertaken included completion of leadership development programs, and technical and safety-based programs such as emergency management, first aid and driver training. A number of staff continued undergraduate studies in Certificate III Land Management and Conservation, whilst others undertook postgraduate studies including the Graduate Certificate in River Health Management and Masters of Business Administration. Employees have also developed their skills and knowledge through attendance at training and educational seminars covering a range of areas including Indigenous cultural awareness, carbon farming and trading, social media, irrigation and cultural heritage management.

Staff Wellbeing

The North Central CMA understands the importance of a healthy workforce and is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of staff. During 2011-12, the organisation encouraged staff to participate in a Wellbeing program that involved a range of work-sponsored activities focusing on health promotion and wellbeing. Activities included health checks, flu vaccinations and a personal leadership development program.

In addition to the Wellbeing program, the North Central CMA continues to offer the services of an employee assistance program. The program provides employees and their immediate family members with access to professional and confidential counselling services for both work-related and non-work-related matters.

Staff Consultative Committee

The function of the Staff Consultative Committee is to assist with the implementation of the Collective Agreement, to plan and manage the Wellbeing program, and to seek opportunities to improve communication between staff and management.

Workforce data

Multicultural Victoria Act 2004

The North Central CMA is committed to workplace diversity. During 2011–12, the North Central CMA did not receive any requests for the use of language services for communication in languages other than English.

During 2011–12, the North Central CMA employed an Indigenous Facilitator to meet identified Indigenous engagement needs and employed five Indigenous employees through a partnership project with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. The NRMCA also included two Indigenous representatives this year.

Community inclusiveness

More than 44 per cent of North Central CMA's employees are women, reflecting the organisation's continued commitment to equal opportunity principles.

The Regional Waterwatch program continued during the reporting period, providing education and training opportunities for the region's youth. The program engages young people in meaningful environmental issues by developing their ability to be actively involved in natural resource management.

The North Central CMA is committed to working closely with local Indigenous groups and continues to employ an Indigenous Facilitator. There are also two Indigenous NRMCA members.

The North Central CMA employed five Indigenous people in 2011–12 when it commenced a partnership project with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. One position is a Works Crew Supervisor and the other four are Works Crew Trainees. The partnership program is the first of its kind in Victoria between a CMA and an Aboriginal Corporation. It aims to equip traditional land owners with the necessary skills and tools to build upon their inherent knowledge of the region and establish a successful natural resource management business.

The North Central CMA also continues to work with the Barapa Barapa Nation as part of the Enhancing Kerang Wetlands project. This project employs and trains an Indigenous Works crew currently comprising five Indigenous people. The project enables the crew to gain technical skills through the delivery of a broad range of natural resource management activities and to work towards TAFE qualifications. The crew has played an important role in assisting other government agencies and natural resource management contractors to better understand and appreciate Indigenous cultural heritage.

Statement of workforce data (two years)

The North Central CMA employed the full-time equivalent of 78 people in 2011-12 compared to 72 people in 2010-11. The breakdown of staff is as follows.

	2011-12 (full-time equivalent)	2010-11 (full-time equivalent)
Executive officers	1	1
Management officers	9	6
Project officers	59	56
Administration staff	9	9
Total	78	72
Male	42	40
Female	36	32
Total	78	72

All employees defined as 'Executive officers and other personnel' in Note 16(b) of the Financial Statements (see Page 49 of the annual report) were annualised full-time equivalents.

Executive officer disclosures

Executive officers are those persons employed as a public service body head or other executive under Part 3, Division 5 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

During the reporting period, the North Central CMA had one employee classified as an executive officer. This was the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is male.

There were no vacancies or special project executives employed during the reporting period.

In the previous reporting period one person met the definition of executive officer. This person was the CEO who is male.

Other disclosures

Victorian Industry Participation Policy Act 2003

The North Central CMA was involved with 99 consultancy firms during the 2011-12 financial year. The total cost of consultants was \$2,075,787 (GST exclusive).

The total number of consultants valued at less than \$10,000 was 66, with a total of \$432,839. There were no major contracts over \$10 M.

The consultancies engaged that exceeded \$10,000 are detailed in the following schedule:

Consultants Engaged over \$10,000	Summary of Projects	Total Cost \$ (ex GST)	Expenditure \$ for reporting Period	Future Commitments
Active Seeds	Facilitation of Lower Avon Richardson Groups	10,685	10,685	-
AFS & Associates	Internal Auditing	13,997	13,997	-
Alluvium Consulting	Tyntynder Flats - Pentel Island Agreement	12,000	12,000	-
	Engineer consultant	106,152	106,152	-
AP Earthmoving	12 Mile Creek / Lower Loddon Consultancy	51,116	51,116	3,932
	Facilitation of Charlton Soil Group	10,220	10,220	-
Australian Ecosystems Pty Ltd	Wetland and Terrestrial Vegetation Monitoring	79,390	39,935	39,455
	Sentinel Wetland & Understorey surveys in Gunbower Koondrook Perricoota	20,000	20,000	-
Australian Workplace Strategies	Flora Survey, Report and advice for Moolort Plains Wetlands Projects	11,920	11,920	-
	Industrial Relations Consultants	15,600	15,600	-
BA & J.L. McClymont	Facilitation of Salisbury West Soil Group	11,495	11,495	-
Beck Legal	Professional Legal Advice	20,100	20,100	-
Billington Prideaux	Design, Layout and printing for project management	23,130	23,130	-
Biosis Research	Completion of NRM Audit: External Partners	18,562	18,562	-
CPG Australia Pty Ltd	Consultants - Bendigo Urban Flood Study	15,000	15,000	-
CPS Environment	Gunbower Island Annual Fish Monitoring Project 2012	114,932	99,572	15,360
	Investigations of fish assemblages in Kow Swamp/Box Creek/Pyramid Creek Systems	37,468	37,468	-
DSE	Pyramid Creek Fish Movement Study	53,468	30,000	23,468
	Arthur Rylah Institute - Undertake instream habitat survey & mapping in the North Central region	15,000	15,000	-
	Kerang Weir PIT Reader Installation - completion and handover of operating system	12,029	12,029	-
	Waterbird Monitoring - Lake Boort Report	11,136	11,136	-
Department of Primary Industries	Blackfish survey of Tullaroop Creek rehabilitation sites and Report	12,760	12,760	-
	GIS Analysis and Production of Strategic Connection Project	20,000	20,000	-
Ecoedge Environmental Pty Ltd	Development and Assistance INFFER project assessments for Regional Catchment Strategy	20,120	20,120	-
Fire, Flood & Flora	Background Review and data collection for Tree and Stand Condition	45,560	38,400	7,160
	Background Review and preparation for Sentinel Wetland and Understorey Surveys	82,410	60,000	22,410
GHD Pty Ltd	Works and Measures project - Final Report	80,800	35,900	-
Goulburn Broken CMA	One third share of costs for Local Government EWR Coordinator	42,750	42,720	-
Goulburn-Murray Water	Pale Yellow Water Lily Report	20,000	20,000	-
Jen Brownscome	Project development, Project and Management planning	46,273	46,273	-
Kellogg Brown & Root	Modelling for Hogans Dam	22,615	19,780	2,835
Kingfisher Research	Gunbower Island - Kow Swamp - Lower Loddon River Native Fish Reconnection Project	13,548	13,548	-
	Monitoring and Assessment of the efficiency of the Gunbower & Thompson Weir Fishways	36,300	18,150	-
Latrobe University	Social Research & Analysis for SBC New Dryland Project	130,000	60,000	70,000
Price Merrett Consulting P/L	Erosion control	14,475	14,475	-
	Survey work as part of Charlton Flood Study	15,000	15,000	-
Propel Business Services	Professional business services	22,750	22,750	-
RecordPoint	Scoping of works for Electronic Record Document Management system	12,669	12,669	-
RM Consulting Group	Lower Loddon Flood Plain Discussion and Technical Paper	29,333	29,333	-
	New Dryland Land Use Economic Analysis	49,818	49,818	-
	Community Consultation	12,890	12,809	-
	Murray-Darling Basin Authority Works and Measures Consultation	34,883	34,882	-
Russell Kennedy Pty Ltd	Statutory Function - VCAT Representation	10,339	10,339	-
Sinclair Knight Mertz Pty Ltd	Review Tragowel Plains 5-Year BSMS	11,912	11,912	-
	Avoca Deep Pools project	39,852	39,852	-
	Draft report costs	2,242	2,242	-
	VEFMAP Fish Monitoring project	89,000	89,000	-
	Accounting for Salinity project	50,363	28,790	21,573
South East Water Limited	VEFMAP Cross Sectional survey of Loddon and Campaspe Rivers	14,617	14,617	-
	Writing the 2012 Water Industry Retention Schedule	15,448	15,448	-
Wall: AW & PA	Facilitation of Loddon Plains Soil Group	11,220	11,220	-
The Regional Development Company Pty Ltd	Development of the Innovative Farming Implementation Plan	70,000	20,901	49,099
Water Technology	Creswick Flood Study	146,632	122,094	24,538
	Rural Levee Assessment	274,000	27,400	246,600
	Flood Recovery Program Scoping/Evaluation, Feature Survey/Hydrologic & Hydraulic Analysis	38,456	17,680	20,776
	Gunbower Forest Hydraulic Model - Upper Forest Channel Scenario Investigations	60,929	18,000	42,929
	Completion of Erosion Control	28,950	28,950	-

Application and operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

The North Central CMA is considered to be a 'Government Agency' under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and is required to comply with the procedures that have been prescribed under which members of the public may gain access to information held by agencies. A decision to release information is made by an Authorised Officer. The North CMA has determined that its Authorised Officer is Joanne McLachlan, (03) 5448 7124.

An application fee of \$25.10 applies from 1 July 2012.

In 2011-2012 there was one request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. The request was from a private individual.

As of 1 July 2012 the request is still being processed. The request has not gone to internal review or appeal hearing.

Making a request

Access to documents may be obtained through written request to the Authorised Officer, and as detailed in s17 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. In summary, the requirements for making a request are:

- › it should be in writing;
- › it should identify as clearly as possible which document is being requested; and
- › it should be accompanied by the appropriate application fee (the fee may be waived in certain circumstances).

Requests for documents in the possession of the North Central CMA should be addressed to the Authorised Officer:

Ms Joanne McLachlan
PO Box 18
Huntly Vic 3551

Requests can also be lodged online at www.foi.vic.gov.au

Access charges may also apply once documents have been processed and a decision on access is made; for example photocopying and search and retrieval charges.

Further information regarding Freedom of Information can be found at www.foi.vic.gov.au

Compliance with *Building Act 1993*

The Authority has met its obligations under the *Building Act 1993*. No building approvals were applicable to the Authority during the reporting period.

National Competition Policy

Competitive neutrality seeks to enable fair competition between government and private sector businesses. Any advantages or disadvantages that government businesses may experience, simply as a result of government ownership, should be neutralised. The North Central CMA continues to implement and apply this principle in its business undertakings.

Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001

The *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* came into effect on 1 January 2002. The Act is designed to protect people who disclose information about serious wrongdoings within the Victorian Public Sector. Equally it provides a framework for the investigation of these matters.

In support of the Act, the North Central CMA maintains a system of reporting disclosures of any improper conduct of detrimental action by the North Central CMA or its employees. No disclosures were made to the North Central CMA and no disclosures were referred to the Ombudsman in 2011-2012.

Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by the North Central CMA or its employees may be made to the following officers:

The protected disclosure coordinator: (03) 5448 7124

A protected disclosure officer: (03) 5448 7124

All correspondence, phone calls and emails from internal or external whistleblowers will be referred to the protected disclosure coordinator. Where a person is contemplating making a disclosure and is concerned about approaching the protected disclosure coordinator or a protected disclosure officer in the workplace, they can call the relevant officer and request a meeting in a discreet location away from the workplace.

For a full copy of the North Central CMA Whistleblower Policy, refer to Appendix 1.

Compliance with establishing enabling legislation

Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Act 1994

The responsibilities of the North Central CMA as they relate to the *CaLP Act* are as follows:

- › prepare, coordinate, monitor and review the Regional Catchment Strategy
- › prepare and submit an annual report on the condition and management of land and water resources in the region
- › prepare and submit a corporate plan to the Minister by 30 April each year
- › comply with the Statement of Obligations.

In performing its functions and providing its services an authority shall, in a manner consistent with relevant government policies, frameworks, strategies, plans and guidelines:

- a) facilitate and coordinate the management of catchments in an integrated and sustainable manner, including as it relates to land, biodiversity and water resources
- b) take a sustainable approach by balancing social, economic and environmental outcomes
- c) plan and make decisions within an integrated catchment management context:
 - › recognising the integral relationship between rivers, their catchments, coastal systems, and estuary and marine environments
 - › recognising the integral relationship between the land – its soil, water, vegetation and fauna – and associated natural ecosystems
 - › recognising the need to foster the resilience of natural assets, including land, biodiversity and water resources, to climate change

- using the best available scientific information
- targeting investment to address priorities and deliver maximum improvement in resource condition of catchments, land, biodiversity and water resources.
- e) provide opportunities for community engagement in the integrated management of catchments and natural assets, including land, biodiversity and water resources
- f) develop strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders including public authorities and government agencies
- g) promote and apply a risk management approach that seeks to protect, enhance and restore natural assets and reduce the impact of climate change
- h) promote and adopt an adaptive approach to integrated catchment management, including continuous review, innovation and improvement
- i) manage business operations in a prudent, efficient and responsible manner.

Water Act 1989

Under the *Water Act 1989*, the North Central CMA aims to reduce the impact of flood damage to new buildings, help conserve and preserve flora, fauna and habitat in designated waterways, and to reduce water quality decline. This is done by providing:

- permits to construct and operate works on a waterway, compliance and community education
- resources to planning permit referrals for developments within a flood-prone area
- responses to applications for flood levels, flood risk reports and flood information before development
- flood planning information and advice to councils, state emergency services, developers and others
- flood response action plans, including collection of flood information during and after a flood, and assistance with emergency planning and flood warning
- flood data management.

2011-12 actual results

Unit	Target	Actual
No. of permits exempted	12	48
No. of permits issued	54	126
No. of permits rejected	0	0
Enforcement action for illegal works	0	0
Planning referrals	804	1324

The North Central CMA achieved its statutory obligations under the Water Act.

Office-based environmental impacts

The North Central CMA is committed to reducing environmental impacts through adopting an environmental policy, setting key objectives and targets, developing an environmental management strategy to achieve its goals and monitoring and reporting achievements.

Key objectives of the North Central CMA 2010-12 ResourceSmart Strategy for business operations include:

Aspect	Objectives
Electricity consumption	To remain carbon neutral, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2015 (based on 2007/08 audit levels).
Waste generation (general and office operations) biodegradable and non-biodegradable	To minimise North Central CMA landfill waste generated
Work related Travel (car, rail and air)	Greenhouse gas emissions associated with North Central CMA's vehicle fleet to be reduced by 5% of the 2006/07 consumption by June 2015.
Water Consumption	With the water saving initiatives already implemented the objective is to keep water consumption at current levels.

Due to the Flood Recovery Employment Program, additional vehicles were purchased. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) fluctuated throughout 2011/12 with FTE at times being as high as 85.09. All data is worked on FTE as at 30/06/2012 being 77.41. Staff on secondment, or employment through agencies, do not appear as a result of parameters regarding data collection.

Energy

The data represented below for 2011/12 was collected through energy retailer billing information and represents three North Central CMA office sites.

Indicator	2011-12		2010-11*	
	Electricity	Green Power	Electricity	Green Power
Total energy usage segmented by primary source (MJ)	413,476	137,825	337,392	112,464
Greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use, segmented by primary source and offsets (t CO ₂ e)	150	0	123	0
Percentage of electricity purchased as Green Power	25% (Wind)		25% (Wind)	
Units of energy used per FTE (MJ/FTE)	7,189		6,520	
Units of energy used per unit of office space (MJ/m ²)	391		430	

Actions undertaken

No actions were undertaken during the reporting period.

*Average daily consumption for May and June 2011 at the Bendigo site.

Targets

The following targets for electricity consumption are set in the North Central CMA 2010-12 ResourceSmart Strategy:

- annual reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 3%.
- offset remaining greenhouse gas emissions with 25% GreenPower.

Paper

The data represented below for 2011/12 was collected through retail billing information and represents three North Central CMA office sites.

Indicator	2011-12	2010-11
Total units of A4 equivalent copy paper used (reams)	752	667
Units of A4 equivalent copy paper used per FTE (reams/FTE)	10	10
Percentage of 75-100% recycled content copy paper purchased (%)	81%	75%
Percentage of 50-75% recycled content copy paper purchased (%)	13%	14%
Percentage of 0-50% recycled content copy paper purchased (%)	8%	10%

Actions undertaken

No actions were undertaken during the reporting period.

Targets

No targets have been set for the procurement or consumption of paper. This will be addressed in the 2012-13 financial year.

Water

The data in the table below is based on water meter readings at three North Central CMA sites.

Indicator	2011-12	2010-11*
Total units of metered water consumption by water source (Kilolitres)	271	204
Units of metered water consumed in offices per FTE (Litres/FTE)	3,515	2,954
Units of metered water consumed in offices per unit of office space (Litres/m ²)	192	195
Actions undertaken		
Waterless urinals	Waterless urinals in operation at sites with greater than 50 FTEs	

› Average daily consumption for the month of June 2012 at Bendigo site.

Targets

The following target for water consumption is set in the North Central CMA 2010-12 ResourceSmart Strategy:

› keep water consumption at current levels following the implementation of water saving initiatives

Transport

The North Central CMA fleet comprises 49 vehicles, 84 per cent are diesel and 16 per cent unleaded.

Operational vehicles	2011-12*		2010-11	
	Diesel	Unleaded	Diesel	Unleaded
Total energy consumption by operational vehicles (MJ)	4,474,374	546,160	2,547,233	284,478
Total vehicle travel associated with entity operations (km)	1,193,959	174,478	688,342	92,243
Total greenhouse gas emissions associated with operational vehicle fleet (t CO ₂ e)	8,091	1,069	4,606	557
Greenhouse gas emissions from operational vehicle fleet per 1,000 km travelled (t CO ₂ e/1,000 km)	6.77	6.13	6.69	6.04
Total distance travelled by aeroplane (km)	77,636 kms		Unable to access this data at time of publication	

*Increase in km attributed to Flood Recovery Employment Program - contracted through employment agency therefore not included in North Central CMA FTE. Vehicles purchased for this project are currently being sold as the project comes to an end. Three vehicles used by Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation are also included in the above data. These vehicles are now the responsibility of Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Enterprise Pty Ltd.

	2011-12		
	CBD	Metro	Regional
Percentage of employees regularly (>75 per cent of work attendance days) using public transport, cycling, walking or car pooling to and from work or working from home, by locality type.	N/A	N/A	10.2%

Targets

The following target for work related travel is set in the North Central CMA 2010-12 ResourceSmart Strategy:

› reduce fuel consumption per full-time employee by 5% by June 2015.

Greenhouse gas emissions

The emissions disclosed in the section below are taken from the previous sections and brought together here to show the North Central CMA footprint.

Indicator	2011-12	2010-11
Total greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use (t CO ₂ e)	150	123
Total greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle fleet (t CO ₂ e)	9,213	5,163
Total greenhouse gas emissions from air travel (t CO ₂ e)	11.93	Unable to access this data at time of publication
Total greenhouse gas emissions associated with waste disposal (t CO ₂ e)	Unable to access this data at time of publication	Unable to access this data at time of publication
Greenhouse gas emissions offsets purchased (t CO ₂ e)	Unable to access this data at time of publication	Unable to access this data at time of publication

Actions undertaken

Actions undertaken in the energy, water and transport sectors will help to reduce the North Central CMA's impacts.

Information kept

The North Central CMA has prepared and made available to the relevant Minister, Members of Parliament and public on request the following documents as specified in the *Financial Management Act 1994*:

- › declarations of pecuniary interest duly completed by relevant officers
- › Board members' indemnity declarations
- › inwards and outwards correspondence
- › publications produced by the Authority and places where the publications can be obtained
- › Occupational Health and Safety guidelines.

Statement of availability of other information

Information relating to the requirements of the Financial Reporting Direction 22B of the *Financial Management Act 1994* is held at the North Central CMA's main office and, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, is available on request.

- › A statement that declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant officers.
- › Details of shares held by a senior officer as nominee, or held beneficially in a statutory authority or subsidiary.
- › Details of publications produced by the agency about itself, and how these can be obtained.
- › Details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged by the agency.
- › Details of any major external reviews carried out on the agency.
- › Details of major research and development activities undertaken by the agency.
- › Details of overseas visits undertaken, including a summary of the objectives and outcomes of each visit.
- › Details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by the agency to develop community awareness of the entity and its services.
- › Details of assessments and measures undertaken to improve the occupational health and safety of employees.
- › A general statement on industrial relations within the agency, and details of time lost through industrial accidents and disputes.
- › A list of the agency's major committees; the purposes of each committee; and the extent to which the purposes have been achieved.

Risk management attestation

I, David Clark certify that the North Central Catchment Management Authority has risk management processes in place consistent with the Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard and that an internal control system is in place that enables the Executive to understand, manage and satisfactorily control risk exposure.

The Audit Committee verifies this assurance and that the risk profile of the North Central Catchment Management Authority has been critically reviewed within the reporting period of July 2011 - June 2012.



Mr David Clark
Chair
North Central Catchment Management Authority
August 2012

Financial statements

NORTH CENTRAL CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For The Reporting Period Ended 30 June 2012

STATUTORY CERTIFICATION

In accordance with a resolution of the North Central Catchment Management Authority, we the undersigned

- (a) certify that in our opinion the accompanying financial report comprising Operating Statement, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement and Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements of the North Central Catchment Management Authority presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2012 and financial position as at 30 June 2012;
- (b) are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate; and
- (c) state that, in our opinion, the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Standing Direction 4.2 of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Australian Accounting Standards, Interpretations and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Signed at Huntly on the 21st Day of August 2012 on behalf of the Board.



Mr David Clark
Board Chair
North Central Catchment Management Authority



Mr Damian Wells
Chief Executive Officer
North Central Catchment Management Authority



Mr Chris Phillips
Finance and Business Support Manager
North Central Catchment Management Authority

Auditor-General's Report

VAGO

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Level 24, 35 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Telephone 61 3 8601 7000
Facsimile 61 3 8601 7010
Email comments@audit.vic.gov.au
Website www.audit.vic.gov.au

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board Members, North Central Catchment Management Authority

The Financial Report

The accompanying financial report for the year ended 30 June 2012 of the North Central Catchment Management Authority which comprises the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statutory certification has been audited.

The Board Members' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Board Members of the North Central Catchment Management Authority are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, and the financial reporting requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, and for such internal control as the Board Members determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit, which has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require compliance with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and that the audit be planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The audit procedures selected depend on judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, consideration is given to the internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board Members, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Auditing in the Public Interest

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

Independence

The Auditor-General's independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. The Auditor-General is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which his powers and responsibilities are to be exercised. In conducting the audit, the Auditor-General, his staff and delegates complied with all applicable independence requirements of the Australian accounting profession.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the North Central Catchment Management Authority as at 30 June 2012 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with applicable Australian Accounting Standards, and the financial reporting requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994*.

Matters Relating to the Electronic Publication of the Audited Financial Report

This auditor's report relates to the financial report of the North Central Catchment Management Authority for the year ended 30 June 2012 included both in the North Central Catchment Management Authority's annual report and on the website. The Board Members of the North Central Catchment Management Authority are responsible for the integrity of the North Central Catchment Management Authority's website. I have not been engaged to report on the integrity of the North Central Catchment Management Authority's website. The auditor's report refers only to the subject matter described above. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from these statements. If users of the financial report are concerned with the inherent risks arising from publication on a website, they are advised to refer to the hard copy of the audited financial report to confirm the information contained in the website version of the financial report.

MELBOURNE
28 August 2012

for T. D. H.
D D R Pearson
Auditor-General

NORTH CENTRAL CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

OPERATING STATEMENT

For the reporting period ended 30 June 2012

	Notes	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Revenue from operating activities			
Government contributions			
State Government	1(d) 3(a)	10,251,747	15,304,551
Commonwealth Government	1(d) 3(b)	5,741,309	4,018,000
Regional contributions	1(d) 3(c)	1,594,706	339,666
Other Income	1(d) 3(d)	857,804	599,771
		<u>18,445,566</u>	<u>20,261,987</u>
Revenue from non-operating activities			
Interest		517,276	384,962
Regional contributions		103,895	597,343
Other Income		826,984	1,216,025
		<u>1,448,155</u>	<u>2,198,331</u>
Total revenue		<u>19,893,721</u>	<u>22,460,318</u>
Expenses from operating activities			
Works expenditure	4(a)	19,892,428	14,800,741
Administration expenditure	4(b)	2,639,072	2,399,847
Corporate expenditure	4(c)	1,318,664	1,138,366
Net loss on disposal of non-financial assets	4(d)	125,934	3,470
Total expenses		<u>23,976,098</u>	<u>18,342,423</u>
Net result for the period		<u>(4,082,377)</u>	<u>4,117,895</u>

NORTH CENTRAL CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the reporting period ended 30 June 2012

	Notes	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Net result for the period		(4,082,377)	4,117,895
Other comprehensive income			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment		-	626,006
Other comprehensive income for the period		-	626,006
Total comprehensive income for the period		<u>(4,082,377)</u>	<u>4,743,901</u>

The above statement of comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

NORTH CENTRAL CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

BALANCE SHEET

As at 30 June 2012

	Notes	2012 \$	2011 \$
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	1(h) 5	9,147,603	11,306,956
Receivables	1(i) 6	617,002	1,364,591
Other non-financial assets		-	49,088
Total current assets		<u>9,764,605</u>	<u>12,720,635</u>
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	1(e) 7	2,923,362	2,932,893
Intangible assets	1(j) 8	131,052	172,341
Total non-current assets		<u>3,054,414</u>	<u>3,105,234</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>12,819,019</u>	<u>15,825,869</u>
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Payables	1(k) 9	2,643,774	1,830,686
Employee benefits	1(m) 10	1,101,751	861,671
Total current liabilities		<u>3,745,525</u>	<u>2,692,357</u>
Non-current liabilities			
Employee benefits	1(m) 10	144,286	121,927
Total non-current liabilities		<u>144,286</u>	<u>121,927</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>3,889,811</u>	<u>2,814,284</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>8,929,208</u>	<u>13,011,585</u>
EQUITY			
Contributed capital	11	8,755,693	8,755,693
Reserves	12	754,549	848,854
Accumulated funds	13	(581,034)	3,407,038
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>8,929,208</u>	<u>13,011,585</u>

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

NORTH CENTRAL CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the reporting period ended 30 June 2012

	Notes	Contributions by owners \$	Reserves \$	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2010		8,755,693	222,848	(710,857)	8,267,684
Net result for the period		-	-	4,117,895	4,117,895
Other comprehensive income for the period		-	626,006	-	626,006
Balance at 30 June 2011		8,755,693	848,854	3,407,038	13,011,585
Balance at 1 July 2011		8,755,693	848,854	3,407,038	13,011,585
Net result for the period		-	-	(4,082,377)	(4,082,377)
Other comprehensive income for the period		-	-	-	-
Transfer on asset disposal		-	(94,305)	94,305	-
Balance at 30 June 2012		8,755,693	754,549	(581,034)	8,929,208

NORTH CENTRAL CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

For the reporting period ended 30 June 2012

	Notes	2012 \$	2011 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts from government grants		16,365,696	20,322,478
Receipts from other sources		3,723,179	2,966,296
Interest received		552,434	326,574
Payments to suppliers and employees		(23,231,047)	(20,130,249)
GST received from/(paid to) the ATO		958,604	1,121,275
Net cash (outflow) / inflow from operating activities	17	(1,631,134)	4,606,374
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for the purchase of property, plant and equipment	7(b)	(917,355)	(768,157)
Proceeds on disposal of property, plant and equipment	4(d)	389,136	212,947
Net cash (outflow) / inflow from investing activities		(528,219)	(555,210)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(2,159,353)	4,051,164
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		11,306,956	7,255,792
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5(a)	9,147,603	11,306,956

The above cash flow statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the financial report

For the reporting period ended 30 June 2012

NOTE 1: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of Accounting

General

The financial report includes separate financial statements for North Central Catchment Management Authority as an individual reporting entity. This financial report is a general purpose financial report that consists of an Operating Statement, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement and Notes accompanying these statements. The general purpose financial report complies with Australian Accounting Standards, Interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, and the requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994* and applicable Ministerial Directions.

This financial report has been prepared on an accrual and going concern basis.

The annual financial statements were authorised for issue by the Board of North Central Catchment Management Authority on 21 August 2012.

Accounting Policies

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies applied are consistent with those of the prior year.

Functional and Presentation Currency

Items included in this financial report are measured using the currency of the primary economic environment in which North Central Catchment Management Authority operates ('the functional currency'). The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is North Central Catchment Management Authority's functional and presentation currency.

Classification between current and non-current

In the determination of whether an asset or liability is current or non-current, consideration is given to the time when each asset or liability is expected to be realised or paid. The asset or liability is classified as current if it is expected to be turned over within the next twelve months, being the Authority's operational cycle - see note 1(m) for a variation in relation to employee benefits.

Rounding

Unless otherwise stated, amounts in the report have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

Historical cost convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of financial assets and certain classes of property, plant and equipment.

Critical accounting estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with AAS's requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. Actual results may differ from these estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the entity's accounting policies.

(b) Changes in Accounting Policy

The accounting policies are consistent with those of the previous year, unless stated otherwise.

(c) Comparative Amounts

Where necessary, figures for the previous year have been reclassified to facilitate comparison.

(d) Revenue Recognition

Government contributions

Government grants and contributions are recognised as operating revenue on receipt or when the entity obtains control of the contribution and meets certain other criteria as outlined by AASB 1004, whichever is the sooner, and disclosed in the operating statement as government contributions. However, grants and contributions received from the Victorian State Government, which were originally appropriated by the Parliament as additions to net assets or where the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Water have indicated are in the nature of owners' contributions, are accounted for as Equity - Contributions by Owners.

Interest

Interest is recognised as revenue when earned.

NOTE 1: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(e) Recognition and Measurement of Assets

Property, plant and equipment represent non-current physical assets comprising land, buildings, plant, equipment and motor vehicles, used by the Authority in its operations. Items with a cost value in excess of \$1,000 and a useful life of more than one year are recognised as an asset. All other assets acquired are expensed.

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets. Cost is measured as the fair value of the assets given at the date of acquisition plus costs directly attributable to the acquisition.

Repairs and maintenance

Routine maintenance, repair costs and minor renewal costs are expensed as incurred. Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold, the cost is capitalised and depreciated.

Measurement of non-current physical assets

All non-current physical assets are recognised initially at cost and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment in accordance with the requirements of Financial Reporting Direction (FRD) 103D. Revaluations are conducted in accordance with FRD 103D. Scheduled revaluation is undertaken every five years with an annual assessment of fair value to determine if it is materially different to carrying value. If the difference to carrying value is greater than 10 per cent, a management revaluation is undertaken while a movement greater than 40 per cent will normally involve an Approved Valuer (usually the Valuer General of Victoria) perform detailed assessment of the fair value. If the movement in fair value since the last revaluation is less than or equal to 10 per cent, then no change is made to carrying amounts.

Plant, equipment and motor vehicles are measured at fair value.

For the plant, equipment and vehicles asset class, where the Authority is able to demonstrate that there is no evidence that a reliable market-based fair value (or other fair value indicators) exist for these assets, depreciated replacement cost is used to represent a reasonable approximation of fair value.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with carrying amount. These are included in the operating statement.

Revaluation of non-current physical assets

Revaluation increments are credited directly to equity in the revaluation reserve, except that, to the extent that an increment reverses a revaluation decrement in respect of that class of asset previously recognised as an expense in determining the net result, the increment is recognised as revenue in determining the net result.

Revaluation decrements are recognised immediately as an expense in the net result, except that, to the extent that a credit balance exists in the revaluation reserve in respect of the same class of assets, they are debited to the revaluation reserve.

Revaluation increases and revaluation decreases relating to individual assets within a class of property, plant and equipment are offset against one another within that class but are not offset in respect of assets in different classes.

When revalued assets are sold, it is the Authority's policy to transfer the amounts included in the asset revaluation reserve in respect of those assets to accumulated funds.

Impairment of assets

All assets are assessed annually for indicators of impairment.

If there is an indication of impairment, the assets concerned are tested as to whether their carrying value exceeds their recoverable amount. Where an asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount, the difference is written-off by a charge to the operating statement except to the extent that the write-down can be debited to an asset revaluation reserve amount applicable to that class of asset.

The recoverable amount for most assets is measured at the higher of depreciated replacement cost and fair value less costs to sell. Recoverable amount for assets held primarily to generate net cash inflows is measured at the higher of the present value of future cash flows expected to be obtained from the asset and fair value less costs to sell. It is deemed that in the event of the loss of an asset, the future economic benefits arising from the use of the asset will be replaced unless a specific decision to the contrary has been made.

A reversal of an impairment loss on a revalued asset is credited directly to equity under the heading revaluation reserve. However, to the extent that an impairment loss on the same class of asset was previously recognised in the operating statement, a reversal of that impairment loss is also recognised in the operating statement.

NOTE 1: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(f) Depreciation and Amortisation of Non-current Assets

All non-current physical assets that have a limited useful life are depreciated. Where assets have separate identifiable components that have distinct useful lives and/or residual values, a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Land is not depreciated. Depreciation on other assets is calculated using the diminishing balance method to allocate their costs or revalued amounts, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives, commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. The assets residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

Intangible assets with finite useful lives are amortised as an expense on a systematic basis (typically diminishing value) commencing from the time the asset is available for use. The amortisation periods are reviewed and adjusted if appropriate at each balance date. Intangible assets with indefinite useful lives are not amortised. However, all intangible assets are assessed for impairment annually as outlined in Note 1(e).

Major depreciation rates used are listed below and are consistent with the prior year, unless otherwise stated:

Asset	Rates
Buildings	2.50%
Plant & equipment	8% to 40%
Motor vehicles	20%
Intangible assets	20%

(g) Leased assets

Finance leases

The Authority has no finance leases.

Operating leases

Leasing in which a significant proportion of the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases (net of any incentives received from the lessor) are charged to the operating statement on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease, in the periods in which they are incurred, as this represents the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

(h) Cash and Cash Equivalent Assets

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with financial institutions, other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

(i) Receivables

Trade receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost, less an allowance for impaired receivables. Trade receivables are due for settlement no more than 30 days from the date of recognition for debtors.

Collectability of trade receivables is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Debts which are known to be uncollectible are written off. An allowance for impaired receivables is established when there is objective evidence that the Authority will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of receivables. The amount of the allowance is the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows, discounted at the original effective interest rate. The amounts credited to the allowance are recognised as an expense in the operating statement.

(j) Intangibles

Intangible assets represent identifiable non-monetary assets without physical substance. Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. Subsequently, intangible assets with finite useful lives are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Costs incurred subsequent to initial acquisition are capitalised when it is expected that additional future economic benefits will flow to the Authority.

A summary of the policies applied to the Authority's intangible assets is as follows:

	Patents and Licences	Development Costs
Useful lives	Indefinite	Finite
Amortisation method used	Not amortised or revalued	Diminishing balance
Internally generated / acquired	Acquired	Internally generated
Impairment test / Recoverable amount testing	Annually and where an indicator of impairment exists	Amortisation method reviewed at each financial year end; Reviewed annually for indicators of impairment.

NOTE 1: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(k) Trade and Other Payables

Payables consist predominantly of trade and sundry creditors. These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Authority prior to the end of the financial year, which are unpaid at financial year end. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Payables are initially recognised at fair value, being the cost of the goods and services, and subsequently measured at amortised cost.

(l) Financial Instruments

Recognition

Financial instruments are initially measured at fair value, plus in the case of a financial asset or financial liability not at fair value through profit and loss, transaction costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition or the issue of the financial asset or liability. Subsequent to initial recognition, the financial instruments are measured as set out below:

Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. They are included in current assets, except for those with maturities greater than 12 months after the reporting date which are classified as non-current assets. Loans and receivables are included in trade and other receivables and other receivables in the balance sheet. Loans and receivables are recorded at amortised cost less impairment.

Held-to-maturity investments

Held-to-maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets with fixed maturities and it is the Authority's intention to hold these investments to maturity. Held-to-maturity financial assets are included in non-current assets, except for those with maturities less than 12 months from the reporting date, which are classified as current assets. Any held-to-maturity investments held by the Authority are stated at cost.

Impairment of financial assets

At each reporting date, the Authority assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. Impairment losses are recognised in the operating statement.

(m) Employee Benefits

Wages and salaries and annual leave

Liabilities for wages and salaries and annual leave to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in employee benefit liabilities in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled, at their nominal values. Employee benefits which are not expected to be settled within 12 months are measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made by the entity, in respect of services rendered by employees up to the reporting date. Regardless of the expected timing of settlements, liabilities in respect of employee benefits are classified as a current liability, unless there is an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting date, in which case it would be classified as a non-current liability.

Long service leave (LSL)

Current liability - unconditional LSL (representing 7 or more years of continuous service) is disclosed as a current liability even where the Authority does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months because it does not have the unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement should an employee take leave within 12 months.

The components of this current LSL liability are measured at:

- > Present value - component that the Authority does not expect to settle within 12 months; and
- > Nominal value - component that the Authority expects to settle within 12 months.

Non-Current liability - conditional LSL (representing less than 7 years of continuous service) is disclosed as a non-current liability. There is an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement until the employee has completed the requisite years of service. Conditional LSL is required to be measured at present value.

In calculating present value, consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

Superannuation

The amount charged to the operating statement in respect of superannuation represents the contributions made by the Authority to the superannuation plan in respect to the current services of entity staff. Superannuation contributions are made to the plans based on the relevant rules of each plan.

Employee Benefit On-Costs

Employee benefit on-costs, including payroll tax and worker's compensation, are recognised and included in employee benefit liabilities and costs when the employee benefits to which they relate are recognised as liabilities.

Performance payments

Performance payments for the Authority's Executive Officers are based on a percentage of the annual salary package provided under their contract(s) of employment. No liability is recognised at balance date due to the amounts being paid prior to year end.

(n) Goods and Services Tax

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of expense.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of GST. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as a current asset or liability in the Balance Sheet. Cash flows arising from operating activities are disclosed in the Cash Flow Statement on a gross basis - i.e., inclusive of GST. The GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable or payable to the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

NOTE 1: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(o) New Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued that are not yet effective

Certain new accounting standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2012 reporting period. As at 30 June 2012, the following standards and interpretations had been issued but were not mandatory for financial year ending 30 June 2012. The Authority has not and does not intend to adopt these standards early.

Standard / Interpretation	Summary	Applicable for annual reporting periods beginning on or after	Impact on financial statements
AASB 9 Financial Instruments, AASB 2010-7 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (December 2010)	AASB 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i> addresses the classification, measurement and derecognition of financial assets and financial liabilities. The standard is not applicable until 1 January 2013 but is available for early adoption. The derecognition rules have been transferred from AASB 139 <i>Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement</i> and have not been changed. The authority has not yet decided when to adopt AASB 9.	1 January 2013	The authority is yet to assess its full impact. However, initial indications are that it may affect the authority's accounting for its available-for-sale financial assets, since AASB 9 only permits the recognition of fair value gains and losses in other comprehensive income if they relate to equity investments that are not held for trading. Fair value gains and losses on available-for-sale debt investments, for example, will therefore have to be recognised directly in profit and loss.
AASB 13 <i>Fair Value Measurement</i> , AASB 2011-8 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 13 and AASB 2012-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement – Reduced Disclosure Requirements</i>	The standard explains how to measure fair value and aims to enhance fair value disclosures.	1 January 2013 / 1 July 2013	The authority is yet to assess its full impact. The authority will apply amended standard from 1 January 2013.
AASB 2011-3 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Orderly Adoption of Changes to the ABS GFS Manual and Related Amendments</i>	The amendments clarify the definition of the ABS GFS Manual, facilitate the orderly adoption of changes to the Manual and improve related disclosures. Applicable only to not-for-profit entities and/or public sector entities.	1 July 2012	The authority will apply the amended standard from 1 July 2012. When the amendments are applied, the authority will need to disclose (in the note containing the summary of accounting policies) a statement of compliance to this standard, a reference to the version of the ABS GFS Manual used or that the last version has not been used and the impact of this.
AASB 2011-4 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards to remove Individual Key Management Personnel Disclosure Requirements</i>	Removes the individual key management personnel disclosure requirements from AASB 124 <i>Related Party Disclosures</i> , to achieve consistency with the international equivalent standard and remove a duplication of the requirements with the Corporation Act 2001. The amendments cannot be adopted early.	1 July 2013	This amendment is expected to have a limited impact.
AASB 2011-9 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Presentation of Items of Other Comprehensive Income</i>	Requirement for entities to group items presented in other comprehensive income on the basis of whether they may be recycled to profit or loss in the future.	1 July 2012	The authority will apply this amendment from 1 July 2012. This will only have an impact on disclosure and presentation.
AASB 2011-13 <i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Improvements to AASB 1049</i>	The amendments clarify some of the requirements in AASB 1049 <i>Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting</i> and will improve the harmonisation of the financial reporting requirements of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments. Applicable only to not-for-profit entities and/or public sector entities.	1 July 2012	This amendment is expected to have a limited impact.

NOTE 1: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(p) Treatment of Commitments

Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and inclusive of the goods and services tax (GST) payable.

NOTE 2: FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The Authority's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks: market risk, credit risk and liquidity risk. This note presents information about the Authority's exposure to each of these risks, and the objectives, policies and processes for measuring and managing risk.

The Authority's Board has the overall responsibility for the establishment and oversight of the Authority's risk management framework. The Authority's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Authority. The Authority uses sensitivity analysis in the case of interest rate risks.

Risk management is carried out by management under policies approved by the Board of Directors. The Finance department identifies, evaluates and hedges financial risks in close co-operation with the Authority's operating units. The Board provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as policies covering specific areas, such as interest rate risk, credit risk and investment of excess liquidity.

2.1 Risk Exposures

The main risks the Authority is exposed to through its financial instruments are as follows:

(a) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that changes in market prices will affect the fair value or future cash flows of the Authority's financial instruments. Market risk comprises of foreign exchange risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Authority's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk, there is no exposure to foreign exchange risk and insignificant exposure to other price risks.

Objectives, policies and processes used for these risks are disclosed in the paragraphs below:

(i) Interest Rate Risk

The Authority has minimal exposure to interest rate risk through its holding of cash assets and other financial assets. The Authority manages its interest rate risk by maintaining a diversified investment portfolio.

(ii) Foreign Exchange Risk

The Authority has no exposure to foreign exchange risk.

(iii) Other Price Risk

The Authority has no significant exposure to other price risk.

NOTE 2: FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (continued)**Market Risk Sensitivity Analysis**

The following table summarises the sensitivity of the Authority's financial assets and financial liabilities to interest rate risk:

30 June 2012	Carrying amount \$	Interest rate risk			
		-0.5%		0.5%	
		Result \$	Equity \$	Result \$	Equity \$
<i>Financial Assets</i>					
Cash	9,147,603	(45,738)	(45,738)	45,738	45,738
Receivables	560,911	-	-	-	-
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>					
Payables	(2,403,431)	-	-	-	-
<i>Total increase / (decrease)</i>	7,305,083	(45,738)	(45,738)	45,738	45,738

30 June 2011	Carrying amount \$	Interest rate risk			
		-0.5%		0.5%	
		Result \$	Equity \$	Result \$	Equity \$
<i>Financial Assets</i>					
Cash	11,306,956	(56,535)	(56,535)	56,535	56,535
Receivables	1,240,537	-	-	-	-
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>					
Payables	(1,664,260)	-	-	-	-
<i>Total increase / (decrease)</i>	10,883,234	(56,535)	(56,535)	56,535	56,535

(b) Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss to the Authority as a result of a customer or counterparty to a financial instrument failing to meet its contractual obligations. Credit risk arises principally from the Authority's receivables.

The Authority's exposure to credit risk is influenced by the individual characteristics of each customer. The receivable balance consists of business customers which are spread across a diverse range of industries. Receivable balances are monitored on an on-going basis to ensure that exposure to bad debts is not significant. The Authority has in place a policy and procedure for the collection of overdue receivables.

An analysis of the ageing of the Authority's receivables at reporting date has been provided in Note 6.

(c) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity Risk is the risk that the Authority will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The Authority's policy is to settle financial obligations within 30 days and in the event of dispute make payments within 30 days from the date of resolution.

The Authority manages liquidity risk by maintaining adequate reserves and banking facilities by continuously monitoring forecasts and actual cash flows and matching the maturity profiles of financial assets and financial liabilities.

2.2 Fair Value Measurements

The carrying amounts of trade receivables and payables are assumed to approximate their fair value due to their short-term nature. The fair value of financial liabilities for disclosure purposes is estimated by discounting the future contractual cash flows at the current market interest rate that is available to the Authority for similar financial assets.

The carrying amounts and aggregate net fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities at balance date have been provided in Note 19.

NOTE 3: OPERATING STATEMENT - DISCLOSURES OF INCOME

Revenue from Operating Activities

(a) State Government

<i>Catchment Planning</i>		
Landcare	645,000	492,546
Governance	520,615	1,536,448
<i>Sustainable Landscapes</i>		
Sustainable land management	210,000	-
<i>Sustainable Irrigation</i>		
Water Smart Farms - Our Water Our Future	-	421,000
Salinity infrastructure	523,613	1,301,930
Sustainable irrigated agriculture and land management	555,000	535,900
<i>River Health</i>		
Healthy waterways	1,025,000	1,017,000
Weeds management	20,000	20,000
Environmental flows and stressed rivers	130,000	-
Large scale river restoration - Our Water Our Future	1,299,010	1,245,993
Water statutory function	474,500	353,000
Environmental water reserve officers	211,000	205,000
<i>National Resource Investment Program</i>		
Natural Resource Investment Program [NRIP]	2,016,000	3,432,000
<i>Other State Revenue</i>		
Bushfire recovery funding	-	62,000
Bush Tender	47,970	-
Water for growth	58,637	-
Natural disaster funding	1,035,402	3,676,734
Flood employment	1,480,000	720,000
Urban levies assessment	-	285,000
	<u>10,251,747</u>	<u>15,304,551</u>

(b) Commonwealth Government

<i>Caring for Our Country - core and transitional</i>	3,591,700	3,514,000
<i>Caring for Our Country - competitive</i>	562,800	444,000
<i>Other Commonwealth</i>	1,429,209	-
<i>National Landcare Program</i>	157,600	60,000
	<u>5,741,309</u>	<u>4,018,000</u>

(c) Regional Income

<i>Murray Darling Basin / The Living Murray</i>	1,594,706	339,666
	<u>1,594,706</u>	<u>339,666</u>

(d) Other Income

<i>Flood Studies</i>	857,804	599,771
	<u>857,804</u>	<u>599,771</u>

Total Government Contributions

	<u>18,445,566</u>	<u>20,261,987</u>
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NOTE 4: OPERATING STATEMENT - DISCLOSURES OF EXPENDITURE**(a) Works Expenditure**

Works programs salaries and oncosts	5,548,566	4,287,302
Consultancy costs	1,938,756	2,349,463
Contractors	9,117,383	5,442,890
Materials	1,200,661	200,560
Incentives paid	1,301,251	772,144
Other Expenses	785,811	1,748,382
	<u>19,892,428</u>	<u>14,800,741</u>

(b) Administration Expenditure

Administration salaries and oncosts	1,301,105	1,253,904
Contract employment	15,393	22,279
Office supplies and stationery	42,192	27,539
Computer and office equipment	450,429	343,452
Photocopiers and printing	57,479	47,971
Building costs	192,447	159,586
Telephone and facsimile	188,935	133,417
Meetings	44,144	44,952
Advertising	14,682	21,990
Consultancy costs	139,831	158,605
Travel expenses	16,885	30,610
Memberships and subscriptions	9,889	9,617
Motor Vehicle	156,147	145,925
Other Expenses	9,514	-
	<u>2,639,072</u>	<u>2,399,847</u>

(c) Corporate Expenditure

Corporate governance costs		
Board members remuneration	146,634	104,709
Board operational costs	27,954	25,351
Natural Resource Committees remuneration	97,296	95,227
Natural Resource Committees operational costs	75,712	21,850
Depreciation and amortisation expense	453,105	366,808
Bank charges	1,788	1,676
Insurance	86,401	76,567
Audit fees internal	23,439	54,693
Auditor-General external audit	22,500	10,250
Payroll tax	304,425	245,220
Fringe benefits tax	1,691	1,069
Corporate training	77,719	134,946
	<u>1,318,664</u>	<u>1,138,366</u>

(d) Profit/Loss on Sale of Assets

Proceeds on sale of assets	(389,136)	(212,947)
Written down value of assets sold (1)	515,070	216,417
	<u>125,934</u>	<u>3,470</u>
(1) Made up of:		
Property, plant and equipment	7(b) 515,070	216,417
Intangibles	8 -	-
	<u>515,070</u>	<u>216,417</u>

NOTE 5: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash on hand	500	500
Cash at bank	132,606	546,970
Deposits at call	9,014,497	10,759,486
Total cash and cash equivalents	9,147,603	11,306,956

(a) Reconciliation to cash at the end of year

The above figures are reconciled to cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the Cash Flow Statement, as follows:

Balance as above	9,147,603	11,306,956
Balance as per Cash Flow Statement	9,147,603	11,306,956

(b) Cash at bank and on hand

These are non-interest bearing 500 500

(c) Deposits at call

Deposits at call bear interest rates of	4.75%	397,103	259,486
Total Term Deposits @ average rate of	3.93%	8,750,000	10,500,000

\$6,780,354 of \$9,147,603 cash and cash equivalents held at balance date are committed to specific projects for which funding has been provided to the Authority. Refer Note 20 for details of programs with funds committed at balance date.

NOTE 6: RECEIVABLES*Current Receivables*

Trade receivables	574,910	1,287,341
Other receivables	42,092	77,250
Total receivables	617,002	1,364,591

The ageing of trade receivables is as follows:

0 to 3 months	574,910	1,287,341
3 to 6 months	-	-
Over 6 months	-	-
	574,910	1,287,341

(a) Provision for impaired receivables

As at 30 June 2012, current receivables of the Authority with a nominal value of \$nil (2011: \$nil) were impaired.

(b) Past due not impaired receivables

As at 30 June 2012, trade receivables of \$nil (2011: \$nil) were past due but not impaired.

The other amounts within receivables do not contain impaired assets and are not past due. Based on credit history, it is expected that these amounts will be received when due.

NOTE 7: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT**(a) Classes of Property, Plant and Equipment***Land*

At fair value	202,000	219,000
	202,000	219,000

Buildings

At fair value	1,164,912	1,268,000
Less: accumulated depreciation	(30,987)	-
	1,133,925	1,268,000

Motor Vehicles

At Cost	1,416,516	1,280,866
Less: accumulated depreciation	(289,309)	(274,773)
	1,127,207	1,006,093

Plant and Equipment

At Cost	1,267,823	1,144,285
Less: accumulated depreciation	(807,593)	(704,485)
	460,230	439,800

Total Property, Plant and Equipment	2,923,362	2,932,893
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NOTE 7: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (continued)

(b) Movements During the Reporting Period

2011-2012	Opening WDV \$	Additions \$	Disposals \$	Revaluations \$	Impairment \$	Depreciation \$	Closing WDV \$
Land	219,000	-	(17,000)	-	-	-	202,000
Buildings	1,268,000	-	(103,088)	-	-	(30,987)	1,133,925
Motor vehicles	1,006,093	769,211	(390,419)	-	-	(257,678)	1,127,207
Plant & Equipment	439,800	148,144	(4,563)	-	-	(123,151)	460,230
Totals	2,932,893	917,355	(515,070)	-	-	(411,816)	2,923,362

2010-2011	Opening WDV \$	Additions \$	Disposals \$	Revaluations \$	Impairment \$	Depreciation \$	Closing WDV \$
Land	169,599	-	-	49,401	-	-	219,000
Buildings	709,184	-	-	576,605	-	(17,789)	1,268,000
Motor vehicles	698,358	690,631	(215,589)	-	-	(167,307)	1,006,093
Plant & Equipment	487,518	77,526	(828)	-	-	(124,416)	439,800
Totals	2,064,659	768,157	(216,417)	626,006	-	(309,512)	2,932,893

NOTE 8: INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Intangible Assets at cost	392,587	392,587
Accumulated amortisation	(261,535)	(220,246)
Total intangible assets	131,052	172,341

	Development		Total \$
	Costs \$	Software & Licences \$	
Year ended 30 June 2012			
At 1 July 2011, net of accumulated amortisation	84,763	87,578	172,341
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
Impairment	-	-	-
Amortisation	(16,953)	(24,336)	(41,289)
At 30 June 2012, net of accumulated amortisation	67,810	63,242	131,052

	Development		Total \$
	Costs \$	Software & Licences \$	
Year ended 30 June 2011			
At 1 July 2010, net of accumulated amortisation	105,954	123,682	229,636
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
Impairment	-	-	-
Amortisation	(21,191)	(36,104)	(57,295)
At 30 June 2011, net of accumulated amortisation	84,763	87,578	172,341

NOTE 9: PAYABLES

Current Payables

Trade payables	1,513,787	988,932
Accrued expenses	1,129,987	841,754
Total Payables	2,643,774	1,830,686

NOTE 10: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS*Current*

Annual leave and unconditional long service leave entitlements, representing 7 years of continuous service:

- employee benefits expected to be settled within 12 months, measured at nominal value.	456,089	390,713
- employee benefits expected to be settled within 12 months, measured at present value.	592,775	470,958
provisions for redundancies	52,887	-
Total Current	1,101,751	861,671

Non Current

Conditional long service leave, measured at present value	144,286	121,927
Total Non-Current	144,286	121,927

Total Employee Benefits	1,246,037	983,598
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The following assumptions were adopted in measuring the present value of long service leave entitlements:

Weighted average increase in employee costs	4.31%	4.60%
Weighted average discount rates	2.94%	5.28%
Weighted average settlement period	7 years	7 years

The Authority made no ex-gratia payments during the financial year.

NOTE 11: CONTRIBUTED CAPITAL

Opening balance at 1 July	8,755,693	8,755,693
Capital contributions in the year	-	-
Closing balance at 30 June	8,755,693	8,755,693

NOTE 12: RESERVES*Composition of reserves*

Asset revaluation reserve	754,549	848,854
Total Reserves	754,549	848,854

Movements in reserves

Asset revaluation reserve		
Balance 1 July	848,854	222,848
Revaluation increment/(decrement) on non-current assets	-	626,006
Transfer to accumulated funds on asset disposal	(94,305)	-
Balance 30 June	754,549	848,854

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record asset revaluation increments and decrements in the value of non-current physical assets.

NOTE 13: ACCUMULATED FUNDS

Opening balance at 1 July	3,407,038	(710,858)
Net result for the period	(4,082,377)	4,117,896
Transfer from asset revaluation reserve on asset disposal	94,305	-
Closing balance at 30 June	(581,034)	3,407,038

NOTE 14: COMMITMENTS**Operating lease commitments**

At 30 June 2012, the Authority had the following operating lease commitments:

Lease of photocopiers and rental of commercial premises at 51 Bull St and 28 Bridge St, Bendigo.

Outstanding lease commitments are to be paid as follows:

within one year	79,204	4,670
one to five years	54,662	-
over five years	-	-
	133,866	4,670

NOTE 15: SUPERANNUATION

The Authority makes employer superannuation contributions in respect of most employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). The Fund has two categories of membership, each of which is funded differently.

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision Super, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (9% required under Superannuation Guarantee Legislation). No further liability accrues to the employer as the superannuation benefits accruing to the employees are represented by their share of the net assets of the Fund.

The Authority does not make employer contributions to the defined benefit category of the Fund.

The Authority contributes in respect of its employees to the following superannuation schemes:

Superannuation Name	Type of Scheme	Rate		
AMP Life	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	17,135	11,631
AMP Flexible Lifetime Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	5,096	3,236
ANZ Super Advantage	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	6,695	9,206
Australian Catholic Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	7,699	7,611
Australian Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	52,337	37,289
Care Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	7,287	6,284
Colonial First State	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	1,662	-
ESS Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	11,564	5,094
First Choice Employer Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	-	6,381
First State Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	4,097	-
IIML ACF Life Track Applicatio	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	6,101	6,063
ING Corporate Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	2,957	-
ING Masterfund	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	8,398	-
IOOF Superannuation Fund	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	10,395	10,433
iPAC iAccess	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	10,960	10,867
Local Govt Super Scheme	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	1,360	-
LUCRF Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	1,349	-
Mercantile Mutual Life Insuran	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	10,012	10,011
Mercer Wealth Solutions Super Trust	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	12,993	9,212
MLC Masterkey Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	2,284	5,437
National Mutual Retirement Fund	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	9,187	-
PLUM Superannuation Fund	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	1,030	-
Prime Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	6,708	6,235
Recruitment Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	11,888	7,447
REST Superannuation	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	1,964	-
Sandhurst Trustees Ltd	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	3,717	2,616
SuperWRAP	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	9,090	5,893
Uni Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	3,574	-
Victorian Superannuation Board	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	74,147	76,569
Vision Super	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	232,506	201,275
Other Superannuation Funds	Accumulated Contribution	9.0%	12,780	14,238
			<u>546,972</u>	<u>453,028</u>

As at the reporting date, there was \$ nil (2011: \$nil) of outstanding contributions payable to the above funds.

As at the reporting date, there were no loans to or from the Authority to any of the above funds.

NOTE 16: RESPONSIBLE PERSONS RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

(a) Responsible persons

The names of persons who were responsible persons at any time during the financial year were:

Persons Name	Position	Period		
Hon Peter Walsh, MP	Minister for Water and Agriculture	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Hon Ryan Smith, MP	Minister for Environment and Climate Change	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
David Clark	Board Chair	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Christine Brooke	Board Member	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Prue Addlem	Board Member	1 Oct 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Jane Holt	Board Member	1 Jul 2011	to	30 Sep 2011
John Leishman	Board Member	1 Jul 2011	to	30 Sep 2011
Julie Slater	Board Member	1 Oct 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Stuart McLean	Board Member	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
James Williams	Board Member	1 Oct 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Jenette Williams	Board Member	1 Jul 2011	to	30 Sep 2011
Melanie McCarthy	Board Member	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Laurie Maxted	Board Member	1 Oct 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Donald Naunton	Board Member	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Damian Wells	Chief Executive Officer	01 Jul 2011	to	30 Jun 2012
Brad Drust	Acting Chief Executive Officer	30 Nov 2011	to	19 Dec 2011
Emer Campbell	Acting Chief Executive Officer	11 May 2012	to	29 May 2012

Remuneration of responsible persons

Remuneration paid to Ministers is reported in the Annual Report of the Department of Premier and Cabinet. Other relevant interests are declared in the Register of Members' Interests which each Member of the Parliament completes.

Remuneration received, or due and receivable from the Authority in connection with the management of the Authority (includes termination payments and bonuses paid at the end of contracts).

324,849 283,567

The number of responsible persons whose remuneration from the Authority was within the specified bands were as follows:

Income band (\$)	No.	No.
0 - 9,999	6	2
10,000 - 19,999	5	7
20,000 - 29,999	1	-
170,000 - 179,999	-	1
200,000 - 209,999	1	-

Retirement benefits of responsible persons

The were no retirement benefits paid by the Authority in connection with the retirement of responsible persons.

Other related party transactions

The partner of the CEO is a Director and Shareholder of a Company which is the preferred supplier of recruitment services and temporary staff. All delegations relating to procurement of Human Resource related services has been delegated to the Human Resource Manager. The Human Resource Manager reports directly to the Chairman for these accountabilities.

Name of Related Parties	Responsible Person		
ESE Consulting	Damian Wells	50,149	62,104
Amounts payable to related parties at 30 June			
ESE Consulting		498	-

Transactions between related parties were based on established objective criteria and were on no more favourable terms than those available to other parties unless otherwise stated.

There were no other transactions between the Authority and responsible persons and their related parties during the financial year.

NOTE 16: RESPONSIBLE PERSONS RELATED DISCLOSURES (continued)**(b) Executive officers' and other personnel remuneration**

The number of executive officers and other personnel, other than responsible persons, whose total remuneration falls within the specified bands above \$100,000 are as follows:

Income band (\$)	Total Remuneration		Base Remuneration	
	2012 No.	2011 No.	2012 No.	2011 No.
100,000 - 109,999	3	1	4	5
110,000 - 119,999	5	4	2	2
120,000 - 129,999	2	4	1	-
130,000 - 139,999	1	2	-	-
140,000 - 149,999	1	1	-	-
Total Numbers	12	12	7	7
Total Amount	\$1,418,102	\$1,477,694	\$767,438	\$762,867

Total remuneration includes bonuses paid to executive officers. Bonuses are excluded from base remuneration resulting in fewer executive officers with base remuneration greater than \$100,000.

NOTE 17: RECONCILIATION OF NET RESULT FOR THE PERIOD TO NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Net result for the period	(4,082,377)	4,117,895
Add /(less) non-cash flows in net result		
(Profit)/loss on disposal of non-current assets	125,934	3,470
Depreciation and amortisation	453,105	366,810
	(3,503,338)	4,488,175
Changes in assets and liabilities		
Decrease / (increase) in trade receivables	747,589	960,352
Decrease / (increase) in other assets	49,088	
(Decrease) / increase in payables	813,088	(998,459)
(Decrease) / increase in provisions	262,439	156,306
Net cash flows from operating activities	(1,631,134)	4,606,374

NOTE 18: EVENTS OCCURRING AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

It should be noted that levels of funding for the 2012/13 year will be less than previous years. NCCMA has prepared its budget in line with advised funding in order to both maintain essential services and remain financially viable

NOTE 19: FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Interest rate risk exposures

The following table sets out the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk, including the contractual repricing dates and the effective weighted average interest rate by maturity periods. Exposures arise predominately from liabilities bearing variable interest rates as the Authority intends to hold fixed rate liabilities to maturity.

2011-12	Weighted Av	Floating	Fixed Interest Rate Maturing			Non-interest
	Interest Rate	Interest Rate	1 year or less	1 to 5 years	Over 5 years	Bearing
	%	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<i>Financial Assets</i>						
Cash	3.93%	529,709	8,617,394	-	-	500
Receivables	n/a	-	-	-	-	560,911
Total Financial Assets		529,709	8,617,394	-	-	561,411
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>						
Payables	n/a	-	-	-	-	2,403,431
Total Financial Liabilities		-	-	-	-	2,403,431
Net financial liabilities		529,709	8,617,394	-	-	(1,842,020)
2010-11	Weighted Av	Floating	Fixed Interest Rate Maturing			Non-interest
	Interest Rate	Interest Rate	1 year or less	1 to 5 years	Over 5 years	Bearing
	%	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<i>Financial Assets</i>						
Cash	5.09	806,456	10,500,000	-	-	500
Receivables	n/a	-	-	-	-	1,364,591
Total Financial Assets		806,456	10,500,000	-	-	1,365,091
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>						
Payables	n/a	-	-	-	-	1,830,686
Total Financial Liabilities		-	-	-	-	1,830,686
Net financial liabilities		806,456	10,500,000	-	-	(465,595)

Fair value

The carrying amounts and fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities at balance date are:

	2012		2011	
	Carrying Amount	Fair Value	Carrying Amount	Fair Value
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<i>Financial Assets</i>				
Cash	9,147,603	9,147,603	11,306,956	11,306,956
Receivables	560,911	560,911	1,364,591	1,364,591
Total Financial Assets	9,708,514	9,708,514	12,671,547	12,671,547
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>				
Payables	2,403,431	2,403,431	1,830,686	1,830,686
Total Financial Liabilities	2,403,431	2,403,431	1,830,686	1,830,686

Cash, cash equivalents and non-interest bearing financial assets and financial liabilities are carried at cost which approximates their fair value. The fair value of other financial assets and financial liabilities is based upon market prices, where a market exists or by discounting the expected future cash flows at current interest rates. All deposits are held at call with Australian authorised deposit-taking institutions.

NOTE 20: CONTRIBUTIONS SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS

The Authority receives funding for specific projects. Such funding is allocated to, and must be expended on those projects. The following table displays monies held and committed at the end of the year in respect to projects currently in progress.

Funding Categories - 2011/12	Balance	Contributions	Year to Date	Balance	Committed	Uncommitted
Category	1 July 2011	Received	Expenditure	30 June 2012	Funds	Funds
Biodiversity	125,248	2,644,834	2,264,647	505,435	505,435	-
Community	90,221	1,089,095	964,807	214,509	214,509	-
Dryland	47,157	1,414,564	1,517,689	(55,968)	(55,968)	-
Infrastructure	167,824	-	-	167,824	167,824	-
Irrigated land	1,412,414	1,445,022	1,709,969	1,147,467	1,147,467	-
Waterways & wetlands	6,640,154	11,824,789	14,880,470	3,584,473	3,584,473	-
Corporate services	3,679,713	1,475,417	2,638,516	2,516,614	1,216,614	1,300,000
Total	12,162,731	19,893,721	23,976,098	8,080,354	6,780,354	1,300,000

Funding Categories - 2010/11	Balance	Contributions	Year to Date	Balance	Committed	Uncommitted
Category	1 July 2010	Received	Expenditure	30 June 2011	Funds	Funds
Biodiversity	62,864	1,827,427	1,765,043	125,248	125,248	-
Climate	15,263	-	15,263	-	-	-
Community	77,284	770,546	757,609	90,221	90,221	-
Dryland	650,473	891,112	1,494,428	47,157	47,157	-
Infrastructure	-	-	(167,824)	167,824	167,824	-
Irrigated land	525,332	2,563,000	1,675,918	1,412,414	1,412,414	-
Waterways & wetlands	5,105,822	11,897,322	10,362,990	6,640,154	6,640,154	-
Corporate services	1,607,797	4,510,911	2,438,995	3,679,713	2,699,713	980,000
Total	8,044,835	22,460,318	18,342,422	12,162,731	11,182,731	980,000

Funds committed as at 30 June 2012 are anticipated to be expended as follows:

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Within one year	5,880,354	8,692,993
Later than one year but within five years	900,000	2,489,738
Later than five years	-	-
Total	6,780,354	11,182,731

Committed funds for the financial year ending 30 June are funds committed to specific projects reportable to investors.

NOTE 21: ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

The Authority's role in implementing the goals contained in the Regional Catchment Strategy remains dependent upon future funding by the State and Commonwealth governments.

NOTE 22: CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

At the time of preparing the accounts there are no unresolved claims. No other matters have arisen since the end of the reporting period which significantly affect or may significantly affect the operations of the Authority, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Authority in future financial years.

Appendices

Appendix 1: North Central CMA Whistleblowers Policy

Policy Number:	HR009
Effective Date:	October 2007
Purpose:	<p>These procedures establish a system for reporting disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by the North Central CMA or its employees. The system enables such disclosures to be made to the protected disclosure coordinator or to one of the nominated protected disclosure officers. Disclosures may be made by employees or by members of the public.</p> <p>These procedures are designed to complement normal communication channels between supervisors and employees.</p> <p>Employees are encouraged to continue to raise appropriate matters at any time with their supervisors. As an alternative, employees may make a disclosure of improper conduct or detrimental action under the Act in accordance with these procedures.</p>
Scope:	All staff, Board members, Natural Resource Management Committee members, employment providers and members of other committees and practitioner bodies of the North Central CMA.
Training Assumptions:	
Legislative Context (if relevant):	<i>Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001</i>
References:	
Approved by:	
Next Review Date:	
Documents superseded by this document	
Relevant forms:	
Key Words:	<i>Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001</i>

Policy Contents

Introduction and objectives	54	Occurrence of detrimental action	59
Statement of support to whistleblowers	54	Whistleblowers implicated in improper conduct	59
Definitions of key terms	54	Management of the person against whom a disclosure has been made	60
Public bodies include:	54	Criminal offences	60
Public officers include:	54	Review	60
Improper conduct	54	<i>Annexure A – North Central CMA reporting structures</i>	60
Corrupt conduct	54	<i>Annexure B – Model register</i>	60
Detrimental action	54		
The reporting system:	55		
Contact persons within the North Central CMA	55		
Alternative contact persons	55		
Roles and responsibilities: Employees	55		
Protected disclosure officers	55		
Protected disclosure coordinator	55		
Investigator	56		
Welfare manager	56		
Confidentiality	56		
Collating and publishing statistics	56		
Receiving and assessing disclosures:	56		
Has the disclosure been made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act?	56		
Has the disclosure been made to the appropriate person?	56		
Does the disclosure contain the essential elements of a protected disclosure?	57		
Is the disclosure a public interest disclosure?	57		
Investigations	57		
Terms of reference	57		
Investigation plan	57		
Natural justice	58		
Conduct of the investigation	58		
Referral of an investigation to the Ombudsman	58		
Reporting requirements	58		
Action taken after an investigator's final report	58		
Action to be taken	58		
Managing the welfare of the whistleblower:	59		
Commitment to protecting whistleblowers	59		
Keeping the whistleblower informed	59		

Introduction and objectives

The *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* (the Act) commenced operation on 1 January 2002. The main objective of the Act is to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by public officers and public bodies. The Act provides protection to whistleblowers that make disclosures in accordance with the Act, and establishes a system for the matters disclosed to be investigated and for rectifying action to be taken.

Statement of support to whistleblowers

The North Central CMA is committed to the aims and objectives of the Act. It does not tolerate improper conduct by its employees, officers or members, nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

The North Central CMA recognises the value of transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices, and supports the making of disclosures that reveal corrupt conduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health and safety or the environment.

The Authority will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action or reprisal for making the disclosure. It will also take all necessary measures to afford natural justice to the person who is the subject of the disclosure.

Definitions of key terms

Three key concepts in the reporting system are: improper conduct, corrupt conduct and detrimental action. Definitions of these terms are as follows.

Public bodies include:

All Government Departments and administrative offices; Statutory Authorities; Municipal Councils; Government-appointed Boards and Committees; Government-owned companies; Universities; TAFE Colleges; Public Hospitals; State-funded Residential Care Services; Health Services contractors; and Correctional Services contractors.

Public officers include:

Members of Parliament; Councillors; Council employees; Public Servants; University employees; Police Officers; Protective Services Officers; Administrative Staff of the Chief Commissioner of Police; Teachers; and Office holders appointed by Governor in Council or a Minister.

Improper conduct

A disclosure may be made about improper conduct by a public body or public official.

Improper conduct means conduct that is corrupt, a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving substantial risk to public health or safety, or to the environment. The conduct must be serious enough to constitute, if proved, a criminal offence or reasonable grounds for dismissal.

Examples:

- › to avoid closure of a town's only industry, an environmental health officer ignores or conceals evidence of illegal dumping of waste

- › an agricultural officer delays or declines imposing quarantine to allow a financially distressed farmer to sell diseased stock
- › a building inspector tolerates poor practices and structural defects in the work of a leading local builder.

Corrupt conduct

Corrupt conduct means:

- › conduct of any person (whether or not a public official) that adversely affects the honest performance of a public officer's or public body's functions
- › the performance of a public officer's functions dishonestly or with inappropriate partiality
- › conduct of a public officer, former public officer or a public body that amounts to a breach of public trust
- › conduct by a public officer, former public officer or a public body that amounts to the misuse of information or material acquired in the course of the performance of their official functions
- › a conspiracy or attempt to engage in the above conduct.

Examples:

- › a public officer takes a bribe or receives a payment other than his or her wages or salary in exchange for the discharge of a public duty
- › a public officer favours unmeritorious applications for jobs or permits by friends and relatives
- › a public officer sells confidential information.

Detrimental action

The Act makes it an offence for a person to take detrimental action against a person in reprisal for a protected disclosure. Detrimental action includes:

- › action causing injury, loss or damage
- › intimidation or harassment
- › discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to a person's employment, career, profession, trade or business, including the taking of disciplinary action.

Examples:

- › a public body refuses a deserved promotion of a person who makes a disclosure
- › a public body demotes, transfers, isolates in the workplace, or changes the duties of a whistleblower due to the making of a disclosure
- › a person threatens abuses or carries out other forms of harassment directly or indirectly against the whistleblower, his or her family or friends
- › a public body discriminates against the whistleblower or his or her family and associates in subsequent applications for jobs, permits or tenders.

The reporting system: Contact persons within the North Central CMA

Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by the North Central CMA, or its employees, may be made to the following officers:

The protected disclosure coordinator:

Ms Joanne McLachlan
03 5440 1895

A protected disclosure officer:

Ms Joanne McLachlan
03 5440 1895

- All correspondence, phone calls and emails from internal or external whistleblowers will be referred to the protected disclosure coordinator.
- Where a person is contemplating making a disclosure and is concerned about approaching the protected disclosure coordinator or a protected disclosure officer in the workplace, he or she can call the relevant officer and request a meeting in a discreet location away from the workplace.

Alternative contact persons

A disclosure about improper conduct or detrimental action by the North Central CMA, or its employees, may also be made directly to the Ombudsman:

The Ombudsman Victoria
Level 9, 459 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000 (DX 210174)
Internet: www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au; email: ombudvic@ombudsman.vic.gov.au; tel: (03) 9613 6222
Toll Free: 1800 806 314

The following table sets out where disclosures about persons other than employees of North Central CMA should be made.

Person who is the subject of the disclosure	Person/body to whom the disclosure must be made
Employee of a public body	That public body or the Ombudsman
Member of Parliament (Legislative Assembly)	Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Member of Parliament (Legislative Council)	President of the Legislative Council
Councillor	The Ombudsman
Chief Commissioner of Police	The Ombudsman or Deputy Ombudsman
Member of the police force	The Ombudsman, Deputy Ombudsman or Chief Commissioner of Police

Roles and responsibilities: Employees

Employees are encouraged to report known or suspected incidences of improper conduct or detrimental action in accordance with these procedures.

All North Central CMA employees have an important role to play in supporting those who have made a legitimate disclosure. They must refrain from any activity that is, or could be perceived to be, victimisation or harassment of a person who makes a disclosure.

Furthermore, they should protect and maintain the confidentiality of a person they know or suspect to have made a disclosure.

Protected disclosure officers

Protected disclosure officers will:

- be a contact point for general advice about the operation of the Act for any person wishing to make a disclosure about improper conduct or detrimental action
- make arrangements for a disclosure to be made privately and discreetly and, if necessary, away from the workplace
- receive any disclosure made orally or in writing (from internal and external whistleblowers).
- Commit to writing any disclosure made orally
- impartially assess the allegation and determine whether it is a disclosure made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act (that is, a protected disclosure)
- take all necessary steps to ensure the identity of the whistleblower and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure are kept confidential
- forward all disclosures and supporting evidence to the protected disclosure coordinator.

Protected disclosure coordinator

The protected disclosure coordinator has a central clearinghouse role in the internal reporting system. He or she will:

- receive all disclosures forwarded from the protected disclosure officers
- receive all phone calls, emails and letters from members of the public or employees seeking to make a disclosure
- impartially assess each disclosure to determine whether it is a public interest disclosure
- refer all public interest disclosures to the Ombudsman
- be responsible for carrying out, or appointing an investigator to carry out, an investigation referred to the public body by the Ombudsman
- be responsible for overseeing and coordinating an investigation where an investigator has been appointed
- appoint a welfare manager to support the whistleblower and to protect him or her from any reprisals
- advise the whistleblower of the progress of an investigation into the disclosed matter
- establish and manage a confidential filing system
- collate and publish statistics on disclosures made
- take all necessary steps to ensure the identity of the whistleblower and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure are kept confidential
- liaise with the Chief Executive Officer of the public body.

Investigator

The investigator will be responsible for carrying out an internal investigation into a disclosure where the Ombudsman has referred a matter to the public body. An investigator may be a person from within an organisation or a consultant engaged for that purpose.

Welfare manager

The welfare manager is responsible for looking after the general welfare of the whistleblower. The welfare manager will:

- › examine the immediate welfare and protection needs of a whistleblower who has made a disclosure and seek to foster a supportive work environment
- › advise the whistleblower of the legislative and administrative protections available to him or her
- › listen and respond to any concerns of harassment, intimidation or victimisation in reprisal for making disclosure
- › ensure the expectations of the whistleblower are realistic.

Confidentiality

The North Central CMA will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the whistleblower. Maintaining confidentiality is crucial in ensuring reprisals are not made against a whistleblower.

The Act requires any person who receives information due to the handling or investigation of a protected disclosure not to disclose that information except in certain limited circumstances. Disclosure of information in breach of section 22 of the Act constitutes an offence that is punishable by a maximum fine of 60 penalty units (\$6,000) or six months imprisonment, or both.

The circumstances in which a person may disclose information obtained about a protected disclosure include:

- › where exercising the functions of the public body under the Act
- › when making a report or recommendation under the Act
- › when publishing statistics in the annual report of a public body
- › in criminal proceedings for certain offences in the Act.

However, the Act prohibits the inclusion of particulars in any report or recommendation that is likely to lead to the identification of the whistleblower. The Act also prohibits the identification of the person who is the subject of the disclosure in any particulars including in an annual report.

The Authority will ensure all files, whether paper or electronic, are kept in a secure room and can only be accessed by the protected disclosure coordinator, protected disclosure officer, the investigator or welfare manager (in relation to welfare matters). All printed material will be kept in files that are clearly marked as a Whistleblower Protection Act matter, and warn of the criminal penalties that apply to any unauthorised divulging of information concerning a protected disclosure. All electronic files will be produced and stored on a stand-alone computer and be given password protection. Backup files will be kept on floppy disc or CDR. All materials relevant to an investigation, such as tapes from interviews, will also be stored securely with the whistleblower files.

The North Central CMA will not email documents relevant to a whistleblower matter and will ensure all phone calls and meetings are conducted in private.

Collating and publishing statistics

The protected disclosure coordinator will establish a secure register to record the information required to be published in the annual report, and to generally keep account of the status of whistleblower disclosures. The register will be confidential and will not record any information that may identify the whistleblower.

The register will contain the following information:

- › The number and types of disclosures made to public bodies during the year.
- › The number of disclosures referred to the Ombudsman to determine whether they are public interest disclosures.
- › The number and types of disclosed matters referred to the public body by the Ombudsman for investigation.
- › The number and types of disclosures referred by the public body to the Ombudsman for investigation.
- › The number and types of investigations taken over from the public body by the Ombudsman.
- › The number of requests made by a whistleblower to the Ombudsman to take over an investigation by the public body.
- › The number and types of disclosed matters that the public body has declined to investigate.
- › The number and types of disclosed matters that were substantiated upon investigation and the action taken on completion of the investigation.
- › Any recommendations made by the Ombudsman that relate to the public body.

Receiving and assessing disclosures:

Has the disclosure been made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act?

Where a disclosure has been received by the protected disclosure officer or by the protected disclosure coordinator, he or she will assess whether the disclosure has been made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act and is, therefore, a protected disclosure.

Has the disclosure been made to the appropriate person?

For the disclosure to be responded to by the North Central CMA, it must concern an employee, member or officer of the North Central CMA. If the disclosure concerns an employee, officer or member of another public body, the person who has made the disclosure must be advised of the correct person or body to whom the disclosure should be directed (see the table in 5.2). If the disclosure has been made anonymously, it should be referred to the Ombudsman.

Does the disclosure contain the essential elements of a protected disclosure?

To be a protected disclosure, a disclosure must satisfy the following criteria.

- › Did a natural person (that is, an individual person rather than a corporation) make the disclosure?
- › Does the disclosure relate to conduct of a public body or public officer acting in their official capacity?
- › Is the alleged conduct either improper conduct or detrimental action taken against a person in reprisal for making a protected disclosure?
- › Does the person making a disclosure have reasonable grounds for believing the alleged conduct has occurred?

Where a disclosure is assessed to be a protected disclosure, it is referred to the protected disclosure coordinator. The protected disclosure coordinator will determine whether the disclosure is a public interest disclosure.

Where a disclosure is assessed not to be a protected disclosure, the matter does not need to be dealt with under the Act. The protected disclosure officer will decide how the matter should be responded to in consultation with the protected disclosure coordinator.

Is the disclosure a public interest disclosure?

Where the protected disclosure officer or coordinator has received a disclosure that has been assessed to be a protected disclosure, the protected disclosure coordinator will determine whether the disclosure amounts to a public interest disclosure. This assessment will be made within 45 days of the receipt of the disclosure.

In reaching a conclusion as to whether a protected disclosure is a public interest disclosure, the protected disclosure coordinator will consider whether the disclosure shows, or tends to show, that the public officer to whom the disclosure relates.

- › Has engaged, is engaging or proposes to engage in improper conduct in his or her capacity as a public officer?
- › Has taken, is taking or proposes to take detrimental action in reprisal for the making of the protected disclosure?
- › Where the protected disclosure coordinator concludes that the disclosure amounts to a public interest disclosure, he or she will
- › Notify the person who made the disclosure of that conclusion
- › Refer the disclosure to the Ombudsman for formal determination as to whether it is indeed a public interest disclosure.

Where the protected disclosure coordinator concludes that the disclosure is not a public interest disclosure, he or she will:

- › notify the person who made the disclosure of that conclusion
- › advise that person that he or she may request the public body to refer the disclosure to the Ombudsman for a formal determination as to whether the disclosure is a public interest disclosure, and that this request must be made within 28 days of the notification.

In either case, the protected disclosure coordinator will make the notification and the referral within 14 days of the conclusion being reached by the public body. Notification to the whistleblower is not necessary where the disclosure has been made anonymously.

Investigations

Where the Ombudsman refers a protected disclosure to the North Central CMA for investigation, the protected disclosure coordinator will appoint an investigator to carry out the investigation.

The objectives of an investigation will be to:

- › collate information relating to the allegation as quickly as possible. This may involve taking steps to protect or preserve documents, materials and equipment
- › consider the information collected and draw conclusions objectively and impartially
- › maintain procedural fairness in the treatment of witnesses and the person who is the subject of the disclosure
- › make recommendations arising from the conclusions drawn concerning remedial or other appropriate action.

Terms of reference

Before commencing an investigation, the protected disclosure coordinator will draw up terms of reference and obtain authorisation for those terms from the Chief Executive Officer. The terms of reference will set a date by which the investigation report is to be concluded, and will describe the resources available to the investigator to complete the investigation within the time set. The protected disclosure coordinator may approve, if reasonable, an extension of time requested by the investigator. The terms of reference will require the investigator to make regular reports to the protected disclosure coordinator who, in turn, is to keep the Ombudsman informed of general progress.

Investigation plan

The investigator will prepare an investigation plan for approval by the protected disclosure coordinator. The plan will list the issues to be substantiated and describe the avenue of inquiry. It will address the following issues:

- › What is being alleged?
- › What are the possible findings or offences?
- › What are the facts in issue?
- › How is the inquiry to be conducted?
- › What resources are required?

At the commencement of the investigation, the whistleblower should be:

- › notified by the investigator that he or she has been appointed to conduct the investigation
- › asked to clarify any matters
- › provide any additional material he or she might have.

The investigator will be sensitive to the whistleblower's possible fear of reprisals and will be aware of the statutory protections provided to the whistleblower.

Natural justice

The principles of natural justice will be followed in any investigation of a public interest disclosure. The principles of natural justice concern procedural fairness and ensure a fair decision is reached by an objective decision maker. Maintaining procedural fairness protects the rights of individuals and enhances public confidence in the process.

The North Central CMA will have regard to the following issues in ensuring procedural fairness:

The person who is the subject of the disclosure is entitled to know the allegations made against him or her and must be given the right to respond. (This does not mean the person must be advised of the allegation as soon as the disclosure is received or the investigation has commenced):

- › if the investigator is contemplating making a report adverse to the interests of any person, that person should be given the opportunity to put forward further material that may influence the outcome of the report and that person's defence should be fairly set out in the report
- › all relevant parties to a matter should be heard and all submissions should be considered
- › a decision should not be made until all reasonable inquiries have been made
- › the investigator or any decision-maker should not have a personal or direct interest in the matter being investigated
- › all proceedings must be carried out fairly and without bias. Care should be taken to exclude perceived bias from the process
- › the investigator must be impartial in assessing the credibility of the whistleblowers and any witnesses. Where appropriate, conclusions as to credibility should be included in the investigation report.

Conduct of the investigation

The investigator will make contemporaneous notes of all discussions and phone calls, and all interviews with witnesses will be taped. All information gathered in an investigation will be stored securely. Interviews will be conducted in private and the investigator will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the whistleblower.

Where disclosure of the identity of the whistleblower cannot be avoided due to the nature of the allegations, the investigator will warn the whistleblower and his or her welfare manager of this probability.

It is in the discretion of the investigator to allow any witness to have legal or other representation or support during an interview. If a witness has a special need for legal representation or support, permission should be granted.

Referral of an investigation to the Ombudsman

The protected disclosure coordinator will make a decision regarding the referral of an investigation to the Ombudsman where, on the advice of the investigator:

- › the investigation is being obstructed by, for example, the non-cooperation of key witnesses
- › the investigation has revealed conduct that may constitute a criminal offence.

Reporting requirements

The protected disclosure coordinator will ensure the whistleblower is kept regularly informed concerning the handling of a protected disclosure and an investigation.

The protected disclosure coordinator will report to the Ombudsman about the progress of an investigation.

Where the Ombudsman or the whistleblower requests information about the progress of an investigation, that information will be provided within 28 days of the date of the request.

Action taken after an investigator's final report

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will submit a written report of his or her findings to the protected disclosure coordinator. The report will contain:

- › the allegation/s
- › an account of all relevant information received and, if the investigator has rejected evidence as being unreliable, the reasons for this opinion being formed
- › the conclusions reached and the basis for them
- › any recommendations arising from the conclusions.

Where the investigator has found that the conduct disclosed by the whistleblower has occurred, recommendations made by the investigator will include:

- › the steps that need to be taken by the North Central CMA to prevent the conduct from continuing or occurring in the future
- › any action that should be taken by the North Central CMA to remedy any harm or loss arising from the conduct. This action may include bringing disciplinary proceedings against the person responsible for the conduct, and referring the matter to an appropriate authority for further consideration.

The report will be accompanied by:

- › the transcript or other record of any oral evidence taken, including tape recordings
- › all documents, statements or other exhibits received by the officer and accepted as evidence during the course of the investigation.

Where the investigator's report is to include an adverse comment against any person, that person will be given the opportunity to respond and his or her defence will be fairly included in the report. The report will not disclose particulars likely to lead to the identification of the whistleblower.

Action to be taken

If the protected disclosure coordinator is satisfied that the investigation has found that the disclosed conduct has occurred, he or she will recommend to the Chief Executive Officer the action that must be taken to prevent the conduct from continuing or occurring in the future. The protected disclosure coordinator may also recommend that action be taken to remedy any harm or loss arising from the conduct.

The protected disclosure coordinator will provide a written report to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, the Ombudsman and the whistleblower setting out the investigation findings and any remedial steps taken.

Where the investigation concludes that the disclosed conduct did not occur, the protected disclosure coordinator will report these findings to the Ombudsman and to the whistleblower.

Managing the welfare of the whistleblower:

Commitment to protecting whistleblowers

The North Central CMA is committed to the protection of genuine whistleblowers against detrimental action taken in reprisal for the making of protected disclosures.

The protected disclosure coordinator is responsible for ensuring whistleblowers are protected from direct and indirect detrimental action, and that the culture of the workplace is supportive of protected disclosures being made.

The protected disclosure coordinator will appoint a welfare manager to all whistleblowers who have made a protected disclosure. The welfare manager will:

- examine the immediate welfare and protection needs of a whistleblower who has made a disclosure and, where the whistleblower is an employee, seek to foster a supportive work environment
- advise the whistleblower of the legislative and administrative protections available to him or her
- listen and respond to any concerns of harassment, intimidation or victimisation in reprisal for making disclosure
- keep an updated record of all aspects of the case management of the whistleblower, including all contact and follow-up action
- ensure the expectations of the whistleblower are realistic.

All employees will be advised that it is an offence for a person to take detrimental action in reprisal for a protected disclosure. The maximum penalty is a fine of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment, or both. The taking of detrimental action in breach of this provision can also be grounds for making a disclosure under the Act and can result in an investigation.

Detrimental action includes:

- causing injury, loss or damage
- intimidation or harassment
- discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to a person's employment, career, profession, trade or business (including the taking of disciplinary action).

Keeping the whistleblower informed

The protected disclosure coordinator will ensure the whistleblower is kept informed of action taken in relation to his or her disclosure, and the timeframes that apply. The whistleblower will be informed of the objectives of an investigation, the findings of an investigation, and the steps taken by the North Central CMA to address any improper conduct that has been found to have occurred. The whistleblower will be given reasons for decisions made by the North Central CMA in relation to a protected disclosure. All communication with the whistleblower will be in plain English.

Occurrence of detrimental action

If a whistleblower reports an incident of harassment, discrimination or adverse treatment that would amount to detrimental action taken in reprisal for the making of the disclosure, the welfare manager will:

- record details of the incident
- advise the whistleblower of his or her rights under the Act
- advise the protected disclosure coordinator or Chief Executive Officer of the detrimental action.

The taking of detrimental action in reprisal for the making of a disclosure can be an offence against the Act as well as grounds for making a further disclosure. Where such detrimental action is reported, the protected disclosure coordinator will assess the report as a new disclosure under the Act. Where the protected disclosure coordinator is satisfied that the disclosure is a public interest disclosure, he or she will refer it to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman subsequently determines the matter to be a public interest disclosure, the Ombudsman may investigate the matter or refer it to another body for investigation as outlined in the Act.

Whistleblowers implicated in improper conduct

Where a person who makes a disclosure is implicated in misconduct, the North Central CMA will handle the disclosure and protect the whistleblower from reprisals in accordance with the Act, the Ombudsman's guidelines and these procedures. The Authority acknowledges that the act of whistleblowing should not shield whistleblowers from the reasonable consequences flowing from any involvement in improper conduct.

Section 17 of the Act specifically provides that a person's liability for his or her own conduct is not affected by the person's disclosure of that conduct under the Act. However, in some circumstances, an admission may be a mitigating factor when considering disciplinary or other action

The Chief Executive Officer will make the final decision on the advice of the protected disclosure coordinator as to whether disciplinary or other action will be taken against a whistleblower. Where disciplinary or other action relates to conduct that is the subject of the whistleblower's disclosure, the disciplinary or other action will only be taken after the disclosed matter has been appropriately dealt with.

In all cases where disciplinary or other action is being contemplated, the Chief Executive Officer must be satisfied that it has been clearly demonstrated that:

- the intention to proceed with disciplinary action is not causally connected to the making of the disclosure (as opposed to the content of the disclosure or other available information)
- there are good and sufficient grounds that would fully justify action against any non-whistleblower in the same circumstances
- there are good and sufficient grounds that justify exercising any discretion to institute disciplinary or other action.

The protected disclosure coordinator will thoroughly document the process including recording the reasons why the disciplinary or other action is being taken, and the reasons why the action is not in retribution for the making of the disclosure. The protected disclosure coordinator will clearly advise the whistleblower of the proposed action to be taken, and of any mitigating factors that have been taken into account.

Management of the person against whom a disclosure has been made

The North Central CMA recognises that employees against whom disclosures are made must also be supported during the handling and investigation of disclosures.

The North Central CMA will take all reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the person who is the subject of the disclosure during the assessment and investigation process. Where investigations do not substantiate disclosures, the fact that the investigation has been carried out, the results of the investigation, and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure will remain confidential.

The protected disclosure coordinator will ensure the person who is the subject of any disclosure investigated by or on behalf of a public body is:

- › informed as to the substance of the allegations
- › given the opportunity to answer the allegations before a final decision is made
- › informed as to the substance of any adverse comment that may be included in any report arising from the investigation
- › his or her defence set out fairly in any report.

Where the allegations in a disclosure have been investigated, and the person who is the subject of the disclosure is aware of the allegations or the fact of the investigation, the protected disclosure coordinator will formally advise the person who is the subject of the disclosure of the outcome of the investigation.

The North Central CMA will give its full support to a person who is the subject of a disclosure where the allegations contained in a disclosure are clearly wrong or unsubstantiated. If the matter has been publicly disclosed, the Chief Executive Officer will consider any request by that person to issue a statement of support setting out that the allegations were clearly wrong or unsubstantiated.

Criminal offences

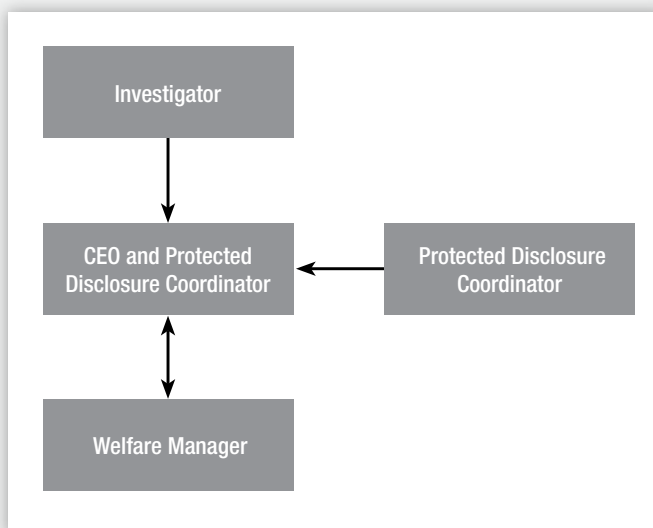
The North Central CMA will ensure officers appointed to handle protected disclosures and all other employees are aware of the following offences created by the Act.

- › It is an offence for a person to take detrimental action against a person in reprisal for a protected disclosure being made. The Act provides a maximum penalty of a fine of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment, or both.
- › It is an offence for a person to divulge information obtained as a result of the handling or investigation of a protected disclosure without legislative authority. The Act provides a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units (\$6,000) or six months imprisonment, or both.
- › It is an offence for a person to obstruct the Ombudsman in performing his/her responsibilities under the Act. The Act provides a maximum penalty of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment, or both.
- › It is an offence for a person to knowingly provide false information under the Act with the intention that it be acted on as a disclosed matter. The Act provides a maximum penalty of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment, or both.

Review

These procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure they meet the objectives of the Act and accord with the Ombudsman's guidelines.

Annexure A – North Central CMA reporting structures



Annexure B – Model register

Date disclosure received
 Type of disclosure
 Is disclosure a public interest disclosure?
 Date above determination made
 Date WB* informed of determination
 Date disclosure referred to the Ombudsman
 Determination made by Ombudsman
 Was the investigation referred back to the Ombudsman?
 Did the Ombudsman take over the investigation?
 Did the WB request the Ombudsman to take over the investigation?
 Findings of the public body
 Recommendations made by the Ombudsman
 Date reporting requirements satisfied.

* WB refers to Whistleblower

Appendix 2: Disclosure index

The North Central CMA 2011-12 Annual Report is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislation and pronouncements. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of the Department's compliance with statutory disclosure requirements.

Legislation	Requirement	Page reference
Ministerial Directions		
Report of Operations – FRD Guidance		
<i>Charter and Purpose</i>		
FRD 22C	Manner of establishment and the relevant Ministers	4
FRD 22C	Objectives, functions, powers and duties	3
FRD 22C	Nature and range of services provided	3
Management and Structure		
FRD 22C	Organisational structure	17
Financial and Other Information		
FRD 10	Disclosure index	61
FRD 12A	Disclosure of major contracts	22
FRD 15B	Executive officer disclosures	21
FRD 22C, SD 4.2(k)	Operational and budgetary objectives, and performance against objectives	14-16
FRD 22C	Employment and conduct principles	20
FRD 22C	Occupational health and safety policy	19
FRD 22C	Summary of the financial results for the year	16
FRD 22C	Significant changes in financial position during the year	16
FRD 22C	Major changes or factors affecting performance	16
FRD 22C	Subsequent events	49
FRD 22C	Application and operation of <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>	23
FRD 22C	Compliance with building and maintenance provisions of the <i>Building Act 1993</i>	23
FRD 22C	Statement on National Competition Policy	23
FRD 22C	Application and operation of the <i>Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001</i>	23
FRD 22C	Details of consultancies over \$10 000	22
FRD 22C	Details of consultancies under \$10 000	22
FRD 22C	Statement of availability of other information	28
FRD 24C	Reporting of office based environmental impacts	24
FRD 25	Victorian Industry Participation Policy disclosures	22
SD 4.5.5	Risk management compliance attestation	28
SD 4.2(g)	General information requirements	29
SD 4.2(j)	Sign-off requirements	1, 28, 29
Financial statements required under Part 7 of the FMA		
SD4.2(a)	Statement of changes in equity	34
SD4.2(b)	Operating statement	32
SD4.2(b)	Balance sheet	33
SD4.2(b)	Cash flow statement	34
SD4.2(b)	Notes to the financial statements	35-51

Legislation	Requirement	Page reference
Other requirements under Standing Directions 4.2		
SD4.2(c) & FRD 120F	Compliance with Australian accounting standards and other authoritative pronouncements	29
SD4.2(c)	Compliance with Ministerial directions	29
SD4.2(d)	Rounding of amounts	35
SD4.2(c)	Accountable officer's declaration	29
SD4.2(f)	Compliance with Model Financial Report	29
Other disclosures as required by FRDs in notes to the financial statements		
FRD 9A	Departmental disclosure of administered assets and liabilities	N/A
FRD 11	Disclosure of ex-gratia payments	N/A
FRD 13	Disclosure of parliamentary appropriations	N/A
FRD 21B	Disclosures of Responsible Person, Executive Officers and other Personnel (Contractors with Significant Management Responsibilities)	48
FRD 102	Inventories	N/A
FRD 103D	Non-current physical assets	33
FRD 104	Foreign currency	N/A
FRD 106	Impairment of assets	36
FRD 109	Intangible assets	45
FRD 107	Investment properties	N/A
FRD 110	Cash flow statements	34
FRD 112B	Defined benefit superannuation obligations	47
FRD 113	Investments in subsidiaries, jointly controlled entities and associates	N/A
FRD 114A	Financial Instruments – General Government Entities and public non-financial corporations	N/A
FRD 119	Contributions by owners	34



NORTH CENTRAL
 Catchment Management Authority
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- Dairy Beef
- Poultry Eggs
- Lamb Wool, Pigs
- Dryland Cropping
- Irrigation Area
- Canola oil Mineral Water
- Rivers & Catchments
- Box Inhabark Forest
- Wine Making
- Lucerne Hay
- Cereal Crops
- Fruit & Walnut
- Growth Areas
- Olives Olive oil



Contact Us

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Our Staff

The following staff were employed by the North Central CMA for all or part of the 2011-12 reporting period:

Darren	Bain	David	Howie	Sonia	Robinson
Gregory	Barber	Allison	Hughes	Louissa	Rogers
Jai	Jackson	Stephen	Jackson	Amy	Russell
Adrian	Bathgate	John	James	Timothy	Shanahan
Julie	Bennett	Andrea	Joyce	Bree	Bisset
Melanie	Addinsall	Boadan	Kerr	James	Shaddick
Ashley	Beven	Jason	Kerr	Philip	Slessar
Gretel	Bowman-Farr	John	Kerr	Anthony	Sloan
Nicole	Bullen	Leonard	Kerr	Phoebe	Smith
Emer	Campbell	Samuel	Kerr	Joel	Spry
Anna	Chatfield	Heidi	Kleinert	Kathryn	Stanislawski
Laura	Chant	Nicholas	Layne	Sarah	Stanaway
Craig	Cossar	Jon	Leevers	Matthew	Boxell
Mark	Costello	Rhonda	Leed	Melanie	Tranter
April	Curatolo	Bambi	Lees	Melissa	Tylee
Daniel	Arnold	Darren	Bain	Malcolm	Brown
Cassandra	Davis	Navec	Lorkin	Bridie	Velik-Lord
Raychell	Dess	Michelle	Maher	Sandra	Volk
Emma	Devlin	Adrian	Martins	Louisa	Clarkson
Lang	Dowdell	James	Marshall	Damian	Wells
Bradley	Drust	Trevor	Marshall	Breanna	Whittingstall
Harley	Dunolly-Lee	Richard	Mazurek	Camille	White
Philip	Dyson	Catherine	McInerney	Darren	White
Kane	Ellis	Robyn	McKay	Janelle	Williams
Colin	Francis	Maree	McKinley	Emma	Wolters
Howard	Galway	Joanne	McLachlan		
Trent	Gibson	Kylie	McLennan		
Angela	Gladman	Peter	McRostie		
Benjamin	Goonan	Glenn	Merrick		
Richard	Goonan	Shaun	Morgan		
Carl	Gray	Daniel	Mudford		
Britt	Gregory	Vanessa	Murray		
Tess	Grieves	Jemma	Nesbit-Sackville		
Graham	Hall	Paul	Nelson		
John	Hammat	Jodie	Odgers		
Sharnie	Hamilton	Geoffrey	Park		
Barry	Hancock	Mark	Pietsch		
Tanya	Hardiman	Christopher	Phillips		
Ian	Higgins	Ross	Pittaway		
Rohan	Hogan	Sally	Pitson		
Rebecca	Horsburgh	Mathew	Priest		



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