1. **INTRODUCTION**

Victoria’s alpine resorts are a significant recreational and tourism destination, located in the nationally significant Australian alps landscape. The resorts (Mount Buller, Mount Stirling, Falls Creek, Lake Mountain, Mount Hotham and Mount Baw Baw) collectively generate substantial social and economic benefits to local, regional, Victorian and Australian communities. The Victoria’s Alpine Resorts are situated on public land and adjoin, are surrounded by or are near national parks or other public land, such as state forest. They also enjoy a close relationship with nearby towns and villages on private land within local government municipalities, to which they contribute large economic benefits.

Alpine Resorts are not within municipalities but are managed in accordance with the requirements of the *Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997*. That Act makes provision ‘...for the development, promotion, management and use of the resorts on a sustainable basis and in a manner that is compatible with the alpine environment having regard to –

- environmental and ecological considerations...
- economic considerations; and
- cultural heritage considerations...’

Alpine Resorts are managed by separate Alpine Resort Management Boards (‘Boards’). Appointed by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, the Boards manage the Alpine Resorts for, inter alia, alpine recreation and tourism. Each Board exercises all of the functions of a Crown land manager, as well as providing a range of urban and visitor services. Some Boards also undertake a range of commercial functions, including intra-village transport, utility services provision, food and beverage, ski hire and lessons, cross-country ski trails and ski lifting, and undertake development facilitation.

The Alpine Resorts Co-ordinating Council (‘Council’) is also a separate statutory body appointed by the Minister and undertakes an advocacy, co-ordinating, strategic planning and research role. It has no on-mountain operational role.

2. **COMMENTS**

Consistent with its strategic role, the Council has recently released for public consultation the draft Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012 (draft Plan 2012). That draft Plan 2012 contains a review of the previous 2004 strategy (*Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy*). The draft Plan 2012 sets the framework for the investment, promotion, management and use of the resorts to ensure that they continue to be vibrant, growing and sustainable places. The role of the resorts in economic development is well-demonstrated in the draft Plan 2012 and this role should be considered as part of the current inquiry. A copy of the draft Plan 2012 is available at: [http://www.arcc.vic.gov.au/draftPlan2012/draftARSP2012_ARCC.pdf](http://www.arcc.vic.gov.au/draftPlan2012/draftARSP2012_ARCC.pdf). A hard copy will also be posted.

Council conducts wide-ranging research projects to help inform its strategic planning. Recently, in conjunction with a range of Victorian and interstate private and public partners, it commissioned an economic significance study of the Australian Alpine Resorts. That study showed that Victoria’s alpine resorts, which are visited by more than 1.2 million people per year, in 2011 contributed over $600 million and 6,200 jobs to the Victorian economy in winter alone.
economic activity that would not occur if Alpine Resorts were never there. A copy of the summary results of that study forms Attachment 1.

In addition, the services currently available in the alpine resorts, in winter, are commensurate with those provided in similar sized settlements elsewhere in Victoria, other than at Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort.

3. CONCLUSION

Having regard to the demonstrated economic contribution of the alpine resorts, particularly in regional Victoria, it is concluded that their role should be considered as an integral part of the current inquiry.