

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee



# 2025–26 Budget Estimates questionnaire

**Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action**

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## Questionnaire information

The Committee's Inquiry into the 2025–26 Budget Estimates examines the Government's expenditure and revenue raising plan.

The Committee's Budget Estimates inquiry aims to benefit the Parliament and the community by:

- promoting the accountability, transparency and integrity of the executive and the public sector
- encouraging effective and efficient delivery of public services and assets
- enhancing understanding of the budget estimates and the wider economic environment
- assisting members of Parliament in their deliberation on the appropriation bills.

This questionnaire seeks information about how the budget affects each department, including how budget allocations are connected to service delivery, infrastructure projects and assets, and other key economic, financial management and emerging issues.

### Timeline and format

Responses to this questionnaire are due by **5.00pm on 23 May 2025**.

It is essential that the Committee receive responses by this date to allow sufficient time to consider them before the budget estimates hearings.

The completed questionnaire and Excel worksheet in response to Question 10 should be sent (in the format received) to: [paec@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:paec@parliament.vic.gov.au).

### Consistency with the budget papers

Wherever referring to an initiative (including output, asset and savings initiatives) that is also referred to in the budget papers, please use the name used in the budget papers. This ensures that the Committee can correlate the information provided by the department with the information in the budget papers.

Wherever providing details about the department (including amounts of funding, anticipated expenditure and revenue and savings targets) please provide figures for the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the budget papers, unless otherwise specified.

### Machinery of government changes

For initiatives (including output, asset and savings initiatives) that have been subject to any prior machinery of government changes, the department with responsibility for the initiative at the time of the 2025–26 Budget is the relevant reporting department for this inquiry.

### Specific guidance

Additional guidance is provided for particular questions in the questionnaire.

For any inquiries about this questionnaire, please contact the Committee secretariat:

[paec@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:paec@parliament.vic.gov.au) or 03 8682 2867.

Kathleen Hurley, Financial Analyst at [kathleen.hurley@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:kathleen.hurley@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Charlotte Lever, Lead Analyst at [charlotte.lever@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:charlotte.lever@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Rowen Germain, Research Assistant at [rowen.germain@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:rowen.germain@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Ryan Kennedy, Research Officer at [ryan.kennedy@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:ryan.kennedy@parliament.vic.gov.au)

## Major initiatives

### Question 1

What progress has been made in implementing the major initiatives/programs identified in the 2024–25 Budget for the department. Please identify a minimum of five initiatives/programs.

### Response

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
1.	Maintaining the health, resilience and enjoyment of Victoria's waterways, catchments and Country	<p>Funding was provided to protect and restore Victoria's waterways and catchments. This includes funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delivering regional on-ground works on high-value waterways including flagship waterways and Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance) through the Waterway Health program;</li> <li>the Environmental Watering program, including managing water to preserve the environmental values and health of water ecosystems;</li> <li>the Catchment Stewardship program, including supporting healthy catchments,</li> </ul>	Effective Water Management and Supply output.	<p>Activities undertaken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment management authorities (CMAs) funded to lead regional planning and delivery for statutory functions, on-ground works and environmental water management.</li> <li>18 Flagship Waterway projects continuing to deliver a range of on-ground works and engagement events, including incorporation of citizen science monitoring, for example Mallee</li> </ul>	<p>The performance measures relating to this initiative as at 31 December 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental watering actions achieved at planned sites. The 2024-25 target is 90 per cent. The VEWH reported that 91 per cent of the planned 184 sites have received environmental water, as at 23 May. The full year target has been met.</li> <li>Place-based plans and actions completed for healthier communities and environments that</li> </ul>	<p>The progress achieved against key Government outcomes includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New proposed urban waterway guidance, policies and actions have been developed to inform the renewed Victorian Waterway Management Strategy, ahead of public consultation later in 2025.</li> <li>Released the Ministerial Guidelines for development of Regional Waterway Strategies.</li> </ul>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
		<p>community resilience and Traditional Owner aspirations for Country;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Urban Waterways program, including implementing Victoria’s transformative urban waterway plans; and</li> <li>• the Recreational Values program, including improving planning, access and recreational facilities at Victoria’s waterways and lakes.</li> </ul>		<p>CMA has partnered with over 56 participants from local schools and community groups at the Merbein Common Flagship Waterway, using citizen science to monitor water bugs and frogs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMAs continuing to deliver priority Ramsar activities, including implementation of Ramsar site management plans and site level monitoring.</li> <li>• Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) funded to manage Water Holdings across the state, including costs to store, plan and deliver environmental water entitlements.</li> </ul>	<p>encompass multiple values (Aboriginal, social, environmental and economic). The 2024-25 target is 2. This measure is on track to meet the full year target.</p>	

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VEWH delivered priority environmental watering actions for 2024-25 carried out in line with the 2024-25 Seasonal Watering Plan.</li> <li>• Annual environmental water planning process for 2025-26 commenced and draft seasonal watering proposals submitted by CMAs to VEWH.</li> <li>• 18 Catchment Stewardship and partnership projects funded and underway with CMAs and Melbourne Water.</li> <li>• CMAs and Melbourne Water are coordinating the implementation of 10 statutory Regional Catchment Strategies (2021-</li> </ul>		

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
				<p>2027) across Victoria. They are funded to undertake a mid-term assessment of progress due later in 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding has been provided to secure pivotal governance for the Yarra River and to drive implementation of the Yarra Strategic Plan - Burndap Birrarung burndap umarkoo – including funding the lead agency, Melbourne Water, and the independent voice of the river, the Birrarung Council.</li> <li>Recreational Area Management Plans are currently being prepared by six Water Corporations for their recreation sites, and community</li> </ul>		

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
2.	Protecting Victoria from biosecurity threats	Funding was provided to prepare for biosecurity threats such as foot-and-mouth and lumpy skin disease entering Victoria. This includes increased technical capability and rapid response capability for surveillance and early detection. Funding was also provided to manage the risk of Red Imported Fire Ants being introduced into Victoria, including increased surveillance and risk mitigation activities, and funding for the State's contribution to a new national plan for eradication.	Agriculture output.	<p>engagement has commenced.</p> <p>DEECA, through Agriculture Victoria, has delivered a work program consisting of 16 projects, organised around four key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• policy and programs;</li> <li>• communications;</li> <li>• systems; and</li> <li>• workforce and skills.</li> </ul> <p>Agriculture Victoria has also developed and implemented a robust surveillance and risk management plan to manage the risk of Red Imported Fire Ants. Other work delivered under the program include establishing the National Plant Property Identification Governance Group and developing an Agriculture Victoria Regulatory Practice Improvement Roadmap.</p>	The performance measure relating to this initiative is <i>Preparedness activities implemented, in line with agreed plans, to ensure response readiness for emergency animal and plan pest, disease and natural disaster incidents</i> . The 2024-25 target is 90 per cent. The target for this measure is expected to be met.	The progress achieved against key Government outcomes includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to the <i>Animal, Plant, Marine and Environmental Biosecurity Sub-Plan of the State Emergency Management Plan</i>.</li> <li>• Development of communication packages including media releases, Frequently Asked Questions and stakeholder materials for use during emergency animal disease responses.</li> <li>• Development of a waste disposal strategy to increase Victoria's capacity to manage large volumes of biosecurity waste in a major event. This includes investigating</li> </ul>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
						<p>new ways of disposal such as composting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of H5 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza preparedness, including a 'Day 1 stand up plan' and associated communication materials, engaging stakeholders and building their preparedness, and identifying priority at-risk wildlife populations and species.</li> <li>• Development of a new waste management risk framework with the Department of Health to support safe disposal of H5 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza impacted wildlife.</li> <li>• Delivery of exercises to test DEECA's resource</li> </ul>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
						<p>management during significant, concurrent emergency incidents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased Red Imported Fire Ants surveillance to mitigate the risk of introduction to Victoria.</li> </ul>
3.	Supporting the resources sector to achieve Net Zero and the Big Build	Funding was provided to support Resources Victoria to deliver improved efficiency and reliability of licensing approval functions, regulate potential harms in earth resource operations, and support industry investment into critical minerals and extractive materials with reform and targeted programs.	Resources output.	<p>This initiative has enabled the delivery of core regulatory services. This has included (to March 2025):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11 new work authorities granted;</li> <li>233 mineral licences variation applications processed; and</li> <li>increased inspections as part of the compliance work program (including 117 rapid inspections conducted in March 2025).</li> </ul>	<p>The key performance measures relating to this initiative are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Extractive Industries Work Authority work plans processed within regulatory timeframes.</i> The 2024-25 target is 95 per cent. This measure is on track to reach the target of 95 per cent.</li> <li><i>Mineral licence applications processed within regulatory timeframes.</i> The 2024-25 target is 95 per cent. The 2024-25 expected</li> </ul>	<p>The progress achieved against key Government objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the State’s Big Build initiative, Resources Victoria achieved its target in April 2025 to approve at least 80 million tonnes of new quarry supplies for development in 2024-25.</li> <li>The <i>Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Act</i> permits the State’s gas storage capacity to be increased to help</li> </ul>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
				<p>Other achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <i>Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Act 2024</i> was assented to on 6 November 2024.</li> <li>• The Earth Resources Regulator is using high resolution aerial imagery to identify sites where over-extraction may have occurred and is following up with on-ground inspections.</li> <li>• The Earth Resources Regulator approved a mining licence for VHM Limited's Goschen Rare Earths and Mineral Sands Project on 11 April 2025.</li> </ul>	<p>outcome is 92 per cent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Regulatory audits completed within agreed timelines.</i> The 2024-25 target is 98 per cent. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 96 per cent.</li> </ul>	<p>maintain secure and reliable gas supply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Goschen project will involve mining mineral sands and rare earths over a 20-year period and supports the Government's Critical Minerals Roadmap, released on 9 December 2024, in attracting new investment into the State and growing jobs.</li> <li>• Improving regulatory functions across licensing, works approvals and compliance activities will minimise costs to industry and minimise risks to the environment.</li> </ul>
4.	Energy efficient hot water rebates	Funding was provided for Solar Victoria to release more rebates to eligible households to install energy efficient	Solar Victoria output.	The Solar Homes Hot Water program has installed a total of 51,421 systems to date.	The performance measure relating to this initiative is <i>Applications for hot water rebates</i>	The Solar Homes Hot Water Program is supporting the Gas Substitution roadmap

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
		electric heat pump and solar hot water systems in their homes.		This has contributed to a reduction in gas emissions for Victorian households and furthered household electrification. There was strong uptake for the program in 2024-25, similar to that achieved in 2023-24.	<i>approved.</i> The 2024-25 target is 27,000. As at 7 April 2025, 25,918 applications have been approved.	and has continued to reduce residential gas use and supported emission reductions.
5.	Securing the forest firefighting workforce	Funding is provided to transition 54 short-term Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) firefighter roles to ongoing roles, to prepare and respond to bushfires on public land.	Fire and Emergency Management output.	Recruitment of ongoing roles has been completed.	The key performance measures relating to this initiative are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires contained at first attack to suppress fires before they become established, minimising impact. The 2024-25 target is 80 per cent. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 87 per cent.</li> <li>Fires contained at less than five hectares to suppress fires before they become established, minimising impact.</li> </ul>	Increasing the full time forest firefighting workforce to better protect public land from the threat of bushfire has been achieved in line with the Government's commitment.

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
					<p>The 2024-25 target is 80 per cent. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 85 per cent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel with accreditation in a fire and emergency management role. The 2024-25 target is 2,450. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 2,673. The 2024-25 expected outcome is higher than the 2024-25 target due to recruitment to support additional Emergency Management capability.</li> <li>• Statewide bushfire risk is maintained at or below the target. The 2024-25 target is 70 per cent. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 64 per cent. The 2024-25 expected outcome is lower</li> </ul>	

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
					<p>than the 2024-25 target due to targeted bushfire risk reduction activities in areas with the highest residual bushfire risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridges or crossings on the strategic fire access road network replaced or upgraded. The 2024-25 target is 10. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 10.</li> <li>• State forests roads (Category 1) and bridges (on Category 1 roads) with documented inspections and/or maintenance programs to meet regulatory obligations. The 2024-5 target is 100 per cent. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 75 per cent. The 2024-25</li> </ul>	

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
					<p>expected outcome is lower than the 2024-25 target due to operational requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic fire access roads improved. The 2024-25 target is 2,000 kilometres. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 2,000 kilometres.</li> </ul>	
6.	Delivering the offshore wind program	Funding is provided to progress planning to meet the Government’s commitment to procure projects that will generate at least 2 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2032.	Energy output	Delivery of the State’s first offshore wind auction.	There are no performance measures specifically related to this initiative.	<p>The progress achieved against key Government objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release of the Registration of Interest to the market in March 2025.</li> <li>• Release of Offshore Wind Energy Implementation Statement 4 (IS4) 9 April 2025.</li> <li>• Commencement of the <i>Energy and Public Land Legislation Amendment</i></li> </ul>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2025	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
						<p><i>(Enabling Offshore Wind Energy) Act 2024.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and publication of the Victorian Offshore Wind Farm Feasibility Access Licence. This was for use by offshore wind proponents in the Gippsland declared area in December 2024.</li> </ul>

## Question 2

What initiatives or programs have been streamlined or eliminated from the 2024–25 Budget in line with the interim recommendations made as part of the Independent Review of the Victorian Public Service?<sup>1</sup>

### Response

Initiative/program	Reason for streamlining/elimination	Anticipated saving in 2025–26	Anticipated impact on department/agency	Anticipated impact on service delivery
DTF/DPC are providing a response on 2024-25 Budget initiatives affected by the interim recommendations of the Independent Review.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> Independent Review of the Victorian Public Service - Terms of Reference, <https://www.vic.gov.au/vps-review>

### Question 3

For each of the output initiatives detailed in the 2022–23 Budget, 2023–24 Budget, 2023–24 Budget Update, 2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update, 2024–25 Budget and the 2024–25 Budget Update that have allocated funding in 2024–25 and 2025–26, please detail (on the same basis of consolidation as the budget papers):

- the original funding allocation for 2024–25 and 2025–26
- the current expected funding allocation for 2024–25 and 2025–26
- an explanation for any variances between the current funding and what was originally published in the budget papers when the initiative was announced. If machinery of government changes affected the implementation of these initiatives, please detail how.

### Response

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Bendigo mine impacted groundwater long term management	3.4	3.4	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Decarbonising freight with hydrogen	3.7	6.4	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	0.8	4.4	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Improving Energy Safety and Skills	1.9	1.9	Not applicable.	1.9	1.9	Not applicable.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Bushfire prevention and protection	7.0	7.0	Not applicable.	7.0	7.0	Not applicable.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Great Ocean Road management reforms and	1.1	1.6	Funding of \$0.5 million was transferred from capital to output, in line with the expenditure profile of the	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
	erosion preparedness			program.			
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Keeping the public safe	1.7	1.7	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Strengthening the Victorian Forestry Plan	4.4	4.3	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	4.4	4.3	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Sustaining the EPA's strengthened regulatory functions	15.0	15.0	Not applicable.	15.0	15.0	Not applicable.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Animal Care and Protection	1.3	6.9	Funding for the Ballarat Animal Shelter program has been rephased to align to project deliverables in the signed funding agreement.	0.6	6.5	Funding for the Ballarat Animal Shelter program has been rephased to align to project deliverables in the signed funding agreement.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Collective biosecurity	0.2	0.2	Not applicable.	0.2	0.2	Not applicable.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Implementation of the Victorian Forestry Plan	14.8	0.0	On 23 May 2023, it was announced that the end of native timber harvesting would be brought forward to 1 January 2024. Funding was rephased into 2023-24 to better align the funding needs to the new end date.	12.6	0.0	On 23 May 2023, it was announced that the end of native timber harvesting would be brought forward to 1 January 2024. Funding was rephased into 2023-24 to better align the funding needs to the new end date.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Developing Victoria’s critical minerals	2.9	1.8	Rescheduling of the critical minerals work plan to align with the implementation of the Critical Minerals Roadmap released on 9 December 2024.	0.0	3.0	Rescheduling of the critical minerals work plan to align with the implementation of the Critical Minerals Roadmap released on 9 December 2024.
<b>2022–23 Budget</b>	Regulating safeguards for gas resources	2.6	2.6	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update</b>	Additional resources for energy projects	0.9	0.9	Not applicable.	0.4	0.4	Not applicable.
<b>2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update</b>	Unlocking offshore wind	16.1	16.1	Not applicable.	5.0	5.0	Not applicable.
<b>2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update</b>	Victorian Renewable Energy Target 2	2.8	2.8	Not applicable.	1.7	1.7	Not applicable.
<b>2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update</b>	Joint management arrangements	2.7	2.7	Not applicable.	2.9	2.9	Not applicable.
<b>2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update</b>	Emergency animal disease preparedness	4.1	0.5	\$3.6m was held in central contingency and released as part of the <i>Protecting Victoria from biosecurity threats</i> initiative in the 2023-24 Budget.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Backing Victoria’s world-class producers to grow	12.0	10.0	Distillery door program funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables and industry capacity.	8.5	10.5	Distillery door program funding has been rephased to better align to project

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
							deliverables and industry capacity.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Implementing animal welfare commitments	1.8	1.8	Not applicable.	1.8	1.8	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Protecting Victoria from biosecurity threats	3.6	4.0	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Timber Harvesting Transition Support <sup>2</sup>	50.0	44.5	On 23 May 2023, it was announced that the end of native timber harvesting would be brought forward to 1 January 2024. Funding has been rephased to better align the funding needs to the new end date, and to align to current grant programs providing support to businesses.	50.0	0.0	On 23 May 2023, it was announced that the end of native timber harvesting would be brought forward to 1 January 2024. Funding has been rephased to better align the funding needs to the new end date, and to align to current grant programs providing support to businesses.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Timber worker and industry support	7.5	5.0	Funding was rephased to reflect a longer service response for targeted timber industry and worker transition support services.	0.0	5.9	Funding was rephased to reflect a longer service response for targeted timber industry and worker transition support services.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Delivering climate action	5.0	5.0	Not applicable.	5.0	5.0	Not applicable.

<sup>2</sup> A component of the total funding approved sits with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Activating Tarago Reservoir for on water recreation	5.4	5.4	Not applicable.	0.4	1.0	Funding has been rephased from 2023-24 to enable further work on a finalised recreational design.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Protecting waterways so our wildlife can thrive	3.0	3.7	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	1.0	3.8	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	A safe and just community transition to renewable energy	3.9	4.2	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	4.1	4.8	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Clean Energy Worker Training Centres	6.5	0.9	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	7.0	13.1	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Driving down bills with 100 neighbourhood batteries	12.3	5.6	Most projects funded in 2024-25 are being delivered over 18 months with the majority of the funding linked to milestones in the second year (2025-26).	12.4	19.0	Most projects funded in 2024-25 are being delivered over 18 months with the majority of the funding linked to milestones in the second year (2025-26).
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Driving down gas bills for businesses and households	1.3	1.3	Not applicable.	1.3	1.3	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	SEC Centre of Training Excellence	6.5	6.5	Not applicable.	2.0	2.0	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	VicGrid functions and delivering the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework	2.7	2.7	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	CERES Environment Park – Community Enterprise Precinct Plan	0.7	0.7	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Protecting our Faunal Emblems	1.0	1.0	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Protecting our parks, pets and wildlife – animal welfare	1.4	1.4	Not applicable.	0.9	0.9	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Securing environmental protection	1.0	1.0	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Bolstering the forest firefighting workforce	7.1	7.1	Not applicable.	7.3	7.3	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Maintaining strategic fuel breaks	0.9	0.9	Not applicable.	1.0	1.0	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Delivering better parks and playgrounds	4.4	4.4	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Doing what matters for local communities – environment	0.3	0.07	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	0.0	0.2	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Implementing Great Ocean Road Management reforms	1.4	1.4	Not applicable.	1.1	1.1	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Protecting our parks, pets and wildlife – dog parks	6.7	6.5	The reduction is due to the impact of savings.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Enabling a more streamlined approach to resources decision making	2.6	3.3	Rescheduling cash flows to align the implementation of the work program with agreed legislative framework changes. The transition to the new Duties Model takes effect 1 July 2027.	0.9	1.7	Rescheduling cash flows to align the implementation of the work program with agreed legislative framework changes. The transition to the new Duties Model takes effect 1 July 2027.
<b>2023-24 Budget</b>	Sustaining the EPA's strengthened regulatory functions	23.7	23.7	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.

DEECA UPDATED

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2023-24 Budget Update</b>	Forestry Transition Program	62.5	27.3	Funding has been rephased to align to revised delivery timelines of worker, community and business support payments.	20.2	55.7	Funding has been rephased to align to revised delivery timelines of worker, community and business support payments.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Collaborative vertebrate pest animal management	2.0	2.0	Not applicable.	0.4	0.4	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Food safety of Victoria’s horticulture industry	1.2	1.2	Not applicable.	1.0	1.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Future Drought Fund	2.3	0.2	Funding has been rephased to align to updated Commonwealth funding arrangements and project deliverables.	4.0	2.8	Funding has been rephased to align to updated Commonwealth funding arrangements and project deliverables.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Native timber harvesting transition	11.1	20.2	Funding has been rephased to finalise delivery works related to the native timber harvesting transition, and to facilitate the successful wind up of VicForests and integration of systems into DEECA.	0.0	1.6	Funding has been rephased to finalise delivery works related to the native timber harvesting transition, and to facilitate the successful wind up of VicForests and integration of systems into DEECA.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Protecting Victoria from	24.6	24.6	Not applicable.	28.5	28.5	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
	biosecurity threats						
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Rural Financial Counselling Service	2.0	2.0	Not applicable.	2.1	2.1	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Supporting pets and animal welfare	5.6	4.4	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	5.2	6.2	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	ResourceSmart Schools	3.0	3.0	Not applicable.	3.0	3.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Bendigo mining rehabilitation treatment plant	To be confirmed <sup>3</sup>	0.0	Not applicable.	To be confirmed <sup>4</sup>	To be confirmed <sup>5</sup>	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Environmental watering infrastructure to restore Victorian high value sites in southern Murray Darling Basin floodplains and waterways	9.7	8.9	Funding has been rephased to align to agreed milestone payments to be made in the Mallee Catchment Region and the North Central Catchment Region.	0.0	0.8	Funding has been rephased to align to agreed milestone payments to be made in the Mallee Catchment Region and the North Central Catchment Region.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Improving Victoria’s water resources	34.5	29.6	Funding has been rephased into future years to align to revised program milestones.	34.5	37.6	Funding has been rephased to align to revised program milestones.

<sup>3</sup> “tbc” was published in the 2024-25 Budget papers. Funding was not reported when the 2024-25 Budget was released as commercial arrangements were still to be finalised

<sup>4</sup> “tbc” was published in the 2024-25 Budget papers. Funding was not reported when the 2024-25 Budget was released as commercial arrangements were still to be finalised

<sup>5</sup> Commercial in Confidence – commercial arrangements to be finalised.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
	knowledge and access						
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Maintaining the health, resilience and enjoyment of Victoria’s waterways, catchments and Country	56.8	56.2	Funding is held in central contingency pending negotiation with the Federal Government for funding for the Murray-Darling Basin Plan (MDBP).	77.2	76.6	Funding is held in central contingency pending negotiation with the Federal Government for funding for the Murray-Darling Basin Plan (MDBP).
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Maintaining water cycle climate action: Becoming net zero and disaster ready	2.9	1.9	Funding has been rephased to align to revised program milestones.	3.2	4.2	Funding has been rephased to align to revised program milestones.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Reducing the risks of floods in a changing climate	9.0	9.0	Not applicable.	9.5	9.5	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Water efficiency and diverse water supplies for water security, resilience and liveability	19.2	15.7	Funding has been rephased to align funding with the adjusted project timelines, allowing for a strategic approach to program design and delivery, ensuring robust agreements with grant recipients, maximising program impact.	31.2	33.0	Funding has been rephased to align funding with the adjusted project timelines, allowing for a strategic approach to program design and delivery, ensuring robust agreements with grant recipients, maximising program impact.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Water planning for a resilient and secure future	6.4	4.9	Funding has been rephased to align to revised program milestones.	6.6	7.9	Funding has been rephased to align to revised program milestones.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Water wise and resilient rural communities	14.7	14.7	Not applicable.	15.3	15.3	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Accelerating energy project delivery and mitigating biodiversity impacts	5.8	5.8	Not applicable.	0.5	0.5	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Delivering the offshore wind program	9.1	9.1	Not applicable.	9.2	9.2	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Energy affordability and protecting consumers	3.9	3.9	Not applicable.	3.9	3.9	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Establishing VicGrid	12.5	12.5	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Improving Victorian Energy Upgrades	2.9	1.8	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	3.0	4.1	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Small-scale back-up generators program	0.1	0.1	Not applicable.	0.1	0.1	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	State funding commitments to national energy market bodies	11.1	11.1	Not applicable.	11.1	11.1	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Land conservation covenants in Melbourne	2.0	0.0	\$2 million of Land Conservation Covenants is being held in trust for utilisation as appropriate sites become available.	0.0	2.0	\$2 million of Land Conservation Covenants is being held in trust for utilisation as appropriate sites become available.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Securing the forest firefighting workforce	9.8	9.8	Not applicable.	8.8	8.8	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Forestry contractor strategy	72.5	72.5	Not applicable.	72.5	37.1	Balance of funds are being held in central contingency.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Future Forests program	44.8	35.3	Funding has rephased to align seed collection with seed availability, and delivery of upgrades to seed management facilities and post timber harvesting forest regeneration projects.	41.4	44.4	Funding has rephased to align seed collection with seed availability, and delivery of upgrades to seed management facilities and post timber harvesting forest regeneration projects.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Improving amenities for regional tourism	0.9	0.9	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Managing contaminated public land	1.2	1.2	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Ninety Mile Beach – growing the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park	0.6	0.0	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.	1.0	0.6	Funding has been rephased to better align to project deliverables.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	VicCoasts volunteers	1.0	1.0	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Zoos Victoria Kids Free Policy	11.9	11.9	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Minimising risks from rehabilitation of former mines	3.4	2.6	Funding has been rephased due to delays with the Benambra Detailed Site Investigation phase because of new information from on-site sampling works. This delay has a flow on effect to the completion of the site Rehabilitation Plan.	0.0	0.8	Funding has been rephased due to delays with the Benambra Detailed Site Investigation phase because of new information from on-site sampling works. This delay has a flow on effect to the completion of the site Rehabilitation Plan.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Supporting the resources sector to achieve Net Zero and the Big Build	11.4	11.4	Not applicable.	11.1	11.1	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Energy efficient hot water rebates	29.7	35.7	There has been record demand for energy hot water rebates in 2024-25. To meet this demand	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
				and reduce any impact on industry, an additional \$6 million has been re-prioritised from Solar PV rebates.			
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Zero interest loans for solar home batteries	6.1	6.1	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Preventing waste crime	11.1	11.1	Not applicable.	11.1	11.1	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Charitable recycler grants	1.8	1.8	Not applicable.	1.9	1.9	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Supporting a circular economy	5.5	3.1	Funding of \$2.4 million was reprioritised to support Recycling Victoria initiatives.	3.1	3.1	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Increased Traditional Owner access to water and decision making in water management	9.7	8.5	Funding has been rephased to allow additional time to engage with Traditional Owners on the delivery of grants and other activities.	10.6	11.8	Funding has been rephased to allow additional time to engage with Traditional Owners on the delivery of grants and other activities.
<b>2024-25 Budget</b>	Enabling joint management of Barmah National Park	2.2	2.2	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget</b>	Network outage review – System response	0.7	0.7	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2024–25	Current expected funding allocation for 2024–25	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)
<b>2024–25 Budget Update</b>	Drought Package for south west Victoria	13.2	13.2	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget Update</b>	Deliver the Commonwealth’s Energy Bill Relief	4.3	2.0	Uptake for the embedded network and small business components was lower than projected, resulting in a reduction in resourcing and delivery costs.	0.0	1.8	The Commonwealth Government has extended the Energy Bill Relief program until December 2025, resulting in a need for funding to support delivery costs during this period.
<b>2024–25 Budget Update</b>	Delivering the offshore wind program	15.7	15.7	Not applicable.	11.2	11.2	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget Update</b>	Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission Project	12.5	12.5	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.
<b>2024–25 Budget Update</b>	Free Camping	9.0	9.0	Not applicable.	0.0	0.0	Not applicable.

## Strategic issues

### Question 4

In order of priority, please list the five most significant strategic issues that influenced the development of the department's estimates for the 2025–26 financial year. Please describe how the department will address these issues in 2025–26.

### Response

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
1.	Supporting Victoria's energy transition towards renewables	<p>In 2025-26, the Department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the 100 neighbourhood batteries program by enabling the storage of more cheap, local solar generation to help lower bills.</li> <li>• Support new energy generation and storage across Victoria by delivering on renewable energy projects.</li> <li>• Foster the growth of Victoria's offshore wind industry to create employment opportunities, attract investments, and expand the state's renewable energy capacity.</li> <li>• Upskill the workforce and bolster clean energy supply chains through worker training centres, the National Training Centre for New Energy Skills and the Victorian Energy Jobs Plan.</li> <li>• Assist consumers by providing energy affordability services to increase consumer awareness and engagement in the Victorian energy market.</li> <li>• Develop policies to deliver Victoria's new storage targets and enable regulatory reform work to support investment in energy storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects for 90 neighbourhood batteries have now been approved for funding and are in progress. Successful applicants in round 2 of the program were announced by the Minister for Energy and Resources on 10 March.</li> <li>• Offshore Wind Energy Victoria has made significant progress towards the first offshore Wind auction. The Registration of Interest process commenced in March 2025, with the Request for Proposal stage expected later in the year. On 9 April 2025, the Victorian Government published Offshore Wind Energy Implementation Statement 4, which outlined the progress to date and the next steps in Victoria's offshore wind journey.</li> <li>• The Victorian Energy Compare (VEC) website received more than one million visits in this financial year to March 2025. Last year users could typically save around \$240 per annum by switching to the best electricity offer in the market.</li> <li>• The Energy Bill Relief program for embedded network households and small businesses was launched in 2024. More than 34,000 applications have been received.</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the transition of homes to renewable energy through programs such as the Solar Homes Program.</li> <li>• Continue to support Victorian households and business to reduce their energy consumption through energy efficiency upgrades via the Victorian Energy Upgrades program.</li> <li>• Continue to ensure security of gas supply to Victoria promoting an orderly transition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Energy Assistance Program has provided one-on-one energy bill support to close to 12,000 participants since its launch in 2023.</li> <li>• The Victorian Government made contributions to the Australian Energy Market Commission in accordance with its funding obligations in relation to national energy market reform.</li> <li>• The Gas Substitution Roadmap Update 2024 was released in December 2024 which provides information about progress made since the release of the first roadmap in 2022, including releasing draft regulations in December 2024 for consultation to progressively electrify Victorian homes and many commercial buildings.</li> <li>• In August 2024, the Victorian Government publicly released Our Plan for Victoria’s Electricity Future, which outlines the critical role of Long Duration Storage (LDS) in Victoria’s future energy mix.</li> <li>• The Victorian Transmission Plan guidelines were released in September 2024 and this is a key step in the Victorian Transmission Plan, a long-term strategic plan for Victorian transmission and renewable energy zone (REZ) development.</li> <li>• Solar Victoria is continuing to deliver rebates for solar PV for households, as well as hot water rebates under the Solar Homes Program.</li> <li>• Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) incentives were provided to households and businesses. In the first half of 2024-25, more than 204,000 households and 11,000 businesses received discounted energy efficient products and services.</li> <li>• In April 2025, the Minister for Energy and Resources announced \$51.4 million in joint funding from the</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
			Commonwealth to support an additional 6,000 social housing homes to receive free upgrades under the Energy Efficiency in Social Housing Program.
2.	Climate change adaptation and sustainable water and land management	<p>In 2025-26, the Department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver funding programs that achieve biodiversity and carbon policy outcomes through the Bushbank program.</li> <li>• Protect threatened species and their habitat from the impacts of land management activities by conducting a survey program to improve data and knowledge of their environment.</li> <li>• Divert waste away from landfill and reduce the volume of waste that needs to be managed by supporting the Container Deposit Scheme.</li> <li>• Create new outdoor open space and upgrade parks for Victorians through the implementation of the Suburban Parks Program and the Better Parks and Playgrounds Program.</li> <li>• Contribute to the reduction of CO2 emissions from power generation through the Victorian Energy Upgrades Program.</li> <li>• Continue action by the agriculture sector to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change by delivering foundational actions to ensure the agriculture sector is well-positioned for a net-zero emissions economy by 2045.</li> <li>• Implement the Marine and Coastal Strategy to achieve a healthy, dynamic, biodiverse marine and coastal environment.</li> <li>• Continue to maintain the health of Victoria's waterways and catchments in the face of escalating impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEECA delivered Victoria's second Climate Science Report, which provides decision-makers with access to the latest climate science relevant to Victoria, which can be used to improve climate resilience by informing risk assessments, adaptation planning and research into the threats facing Victoria.</li> <li>• The BushBank program delivers funding programs to achieve biodiversity and carbon policy outcomes and will revegetate and restore native vegetation across more than 20,000 hectares of public and private land over a 16-year period. To date, 2,540 hectares has been planted, with a further 2,500 hectares planned for planting during 2025.</li> <li>• Since the Container Deposit Scheme was launched, Victorians have returned over 1.65 billion eligible drink cans, bottles and cartons for a 10-cent refund at over 640 refund collection points across Victoria. The scheme will reduce the state's litter by up to half, and turn used drink containers into new, recycled product.</li> <li>• DEECA continued its implementation of landscape-scale environmental management, focusing on predator and pest control, weed management, and targeted interventions for threatened species in alignment with Biodiversity 2037 objectives. Notable successes include increase Long-footed Potoroo sightings in the Barry Mountains, documented range expansion of the South-eastern Long-eared Bat, and the first Victorian sighting of the Giles Planigale since 2013.</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain Victoria’s water cycle climate action, to ensure Victoria’s water cycle system continues to support a healthy environment, prosperous economy and resilient community under a changing climate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Conservation Regulator’s Taskforce Ironbark has commenced and, in partnership with Parks Victoria, aims to disrupt the illegal commercial firewood trade and tackle the escalating issue of significant environmental harm to parks, forests and reserves caused by the illegal take of firewood on public land.</li> <li>All 19 projects under the first funding round for new and upgraded dog parks are progressing and successful applicants for round 2 have been announced.</li> <li>The Victorian Government has continued to support the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (GORCAPA) as land transfers have continued to progress, with the Port Campbell National Park, Bay of Islands Coastal Park, and seven Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries transferred to date.</li> <li>Progress on the Suburban Parks Program has continued and all 29 pocket parks under the Local Parks commitment have been completed.</li> <li>The department is developing a strategic direction for the management of forests on public land.</li> <li>DEECA has acquired the services of forest contractor businesses under 21 contracts. The contracts have secured 65,000 machine hours per year for 5-years of forest and fire management works, guaranteed bushfire suppression capacity for Forest Fire Management Victoria, and certainty for contracting businesses severely impacted by the early end to commercial native timber harvesting</li> <li>The Water Efficiency Program has provided vulnerable and hardship customers with rebates on water efficiency repairs and upgrades under the Community Rebate Program. It has also assisted Victorian schools</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
			<p>through the Schools Water Efficiency Program and councils, business and other organisations through WaterSmart. Since the Schools Water Efficiency Program launch over 1,500 schools have signed up. Over 1,380 customers in vulnerable and hardship situations received rebates from June 2024 to March 2025 and from July 2024 to by end March 2025, 638 organisations received water efficiency assistance through WaterSmart.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The department is preparing for the review of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in 2026 and has received key inputs from all jurisdictions for the 2025 Basin Plan Evaluation.</li> <li>• All Water Cycle Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan actions are either complete, embedded in ongoing work or have commenced.</li> <li>• Water corporations continue to make progress towards achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by no later than 2035. Water corporation 2023-24 annual reports released in October 2024 show the Victorian water sector has achieved its lowest reported annual emissions total since comprehensive reporting began in 2011, with emissions now 20.1 per cent lower than baseline and 9.1 per cent lower than in 2022-23.</li> <li>• A four-year program of investment into Catchment Management Authorities, which will administer investment in regional waterway programs.</li> <li>• Round 2 of the Green Links program was launched and has funding available for projects that help restore and rejuvenate areas alongside our urban creeks and rivers. This will help to protect more than 1,800</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
			<p>species of native plants and 600 species of native animals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEECA has continued delivery of climate action in the agriculture sector through the final year of the Agriculture Sector Emissions Reduction Pledge. Key achievements include: completing delivery of On-Farm Emissions Action Plans with a cohort of highly engaged farmers, many of whom are now eligible to apply for grants to take forward recommended actions; and conducting trials at the Ellinbank Smartfarm to demonstrate the emissions potential of technologies and products in the dairy sector. Development of policies and programs has been informed by insights from the Victorian Agriculture and Climate Change Council.</li> </ul>
3.	Driving Victoria’s economic growth sustainably	<p>In 2025-26, the department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver on commitments in the Government’s Economic Growth Statement including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste to energy cap increase.</li> <li>Implement Victoria’s Critical Minerals Roadmap.</li> <li>Release a renewable Gas Directions Paper.</li> <li>Enabling faster planning approvals for projects in Victoria’s renewable energy zones.</li> <li>Progress food safety regulator reforms, aligned with the initiative to halve the number of business regulators by 2030.</li> <li>Actions in support of the Agribusiness priority sector including the development of agricultural applications of RNA technology.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Continue to support Victoria’s producers by growing industry, developing a skilled workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The waste to energy cap was announced in the Economic Growth Statement.</li> <li>Recycling Victoria has recently completed the expression of interest process for cap licences.</li> <li>57 businesses and organisations have benefited from grants under the Timber Innovation Grants Program and the Forestry Transition Fund, leading to the creation of 124 new jobs and the retention of 435 jobs.</li> <li>DEECA continues to deliver the \$120 million Gippsland Plantations Investment Program as part of Victoria’s Plantation Strategy to support the expansion of Victoria’s plantation timber estate. This is part of the managed transition away from native timber harvesting.</li> <li>DEECA continues its work towards modernising and centralising regulatory functions to improve consumer access, engagement and experience via the</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
		<p>and expanding domestic and international markets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Victoria’s Great Outdoors to encourage more Victorians to get out into nature by creating accessible and affordable options of better campgrounds, walking trails, 4WD tracks and visitor facilities in Victoria’s parks and State forests.</li> <li>• Provide regional economic development opportunities and jobs through the development of renewable energy projects in the regions that enable greater resiliency against early coal closure and other grid disruptions.</li> <li>• Support the Forestry Transition plan through the Victorian Timber Innovation Fund, Community Development Fund and the Transition Fund.</li> <li>• Ensure Victoria's extractive resources sector supplies the raw materials to support Victoria’s growth including for Big Build projects and to meet housing targets.</li> <li>• Promote new resources development opportunities across the State through the release of new geoscience information.</li> <li>• Promote sustainable forestry practices by investing in the Gippsland Plantation Investment Program as part of the state's shift away from using native forest fibre.</li> <li>• Foster the growth of Victoria's offshore wind industry to create employment opportunities, attract investments, and expand the state's renewable energy capacity.</li> </ul>	<p>Agriculture Victoria Connect Portal, which allows businesses to track and maintain licenses or permits that are regulated by Agriculture Victoria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since implementation, the Victoria’s Great Outdoors program has delivered 58 upgraded and 31 new campgrounds, 30 kilometres of improved walking trails, and 125 kilometres of upgraded 4WD tracks, contributing to increased nature-based tourism and regional visitation.</li> <li>• In Greater Bendigo National Park, the Larni Yirrip Campground was completed in May 2025. The site was designed and delivered by Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA), supporting Traditional Owner-led tourism and cultural engagement</li> <li>• The <i>Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Act 2024</i>, which permits the state’s gas storage capacity to be increased to help maintain secure and reliable gas supply, was assented to in 2024.</li> <li>• The government announced a new Critical Minerals Roadmap for Victoria to improve the state’s competitive advantage, create new jobs and support manufacturing. Supporting new critical minerals projects will tap into Victoria’s critical minerals endowment and could support the creation of up to 7,000 jobs.</li> <li>• Funding to support the implementation of the Critical Minerals Roadmap, was allocated through the Economic Growth Statement.</li> <li>• The first new sand quarry close to Melbourne in more than 20 years was approved in 2024. Estimated to hold more than 13 million tonnes of sand, the site at</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reform the management of the Great Ocean Road to enhance the iconic coast and parks, improve the visitor experience and sustainably grow the visitor economy by investing in the environment and nature based tourism along the Great Ocean Road including the new Twelve Apostles Visitor Experience Centre.</li> <li>• Finalise and implement the state’s approach to managing by-products and Forest Produce Licences, providing economic benefits to local communities and businesses, and Traditional Owners.</li> <li>• Support and enhance Victoria's distillery industry in partnership with industry through the Distillery Door Program, including the launch of the Victorian Distilled Spirits Strategy.</li> <li>• Continue to deliver and demonstrate cutting edge research to industry at the five regional Agriculture Victoria Smart Farms.</li> <li>• Facilitate increased investment in the agriculture sector to grow productivity and competitiveness through supporting investors and local government navigate the Planning Scheme and approvals.</li> <li>• Support the economic recovery of Victorian communities and environment impacted by natural disasters in 2024-25, including storm surge impacts at popular coastal areas from August – September, severe weather events and Western Victorian bushfires.</li> </ul>	<p>Lang Lang will help ensure supply keeps up with the demand of the Big Build and residential construction across Victoria – keeping material prices low. 87 million tonnes of new extractive resources has been approved to date in the 2024-25 financial year. This will assist in keeping prices low for consumers as well as government in delivering the Big Build, in addition to assisting with domestic and commercial construction costs that affect cost of living pressures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a national first, Resources Victoria launched the Statewide Reserve Inventory in 2024. The inventory is a comprehensive assessment of quarry reserves that will help forecast the availability of raw materials more accurately than previously possible.</li> <li>• As per the Government’s Economic Growth Statement, DEECA is working on a Renewable Gas Directions Paper, to set out the state’s direction on renewable gas action, including biomethane and renewable hydrogen. This will help support the long-term needs of industrial gas users.</li> <li>• DEECA is working on faster planning approvals for projects in Victoria’s renewable energy zones by incorporating them in the State Planning Policy Framework.</li> <li>• The Great Outdoors Taskforce has concluded public consultation as of January 2025 and will be providing its recommendations to the government in mid-2025.</li> <li>• Development of a draft new Victorian Wine Strategy, in consultation with industry stakeholders, with a focus on profitability and sustainability through increasing exports, domestic consumption, innovation, addressing workforce issues, and improving wine tourism.</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for the distillery industry through two grant streams, and the launch of a third stream, under the Distillery Door program which provides support to distillers to upskill workers, support safety, upgrade equipment, and grow their export potential.</li> <li>• Delivery of the Regional Activation Grant Program to promote and increase local awareness and consumption of Victorian food and beverages and enable consumers to engage with local producers.</li> <li>• Facilitation of investment into the agriculture sector to boost sector productivity and competitiveness.</li> <li>• Coastal storm surge recovery has progressed including the recovery and rebuild of key community and tourism assets allowing community to safely access impacted areas.</li> <li>• Immediate recovery funding for the Western Victorian bushfires has supported ‘make safe’ works, biodiversity and wildlife programs, catchment and waterway recovery, and the reopening of key Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park recreational sites, supporting the Grampians local economy.</li> </ul>
4.	Advancing Aboriginal self-determination	<p>In 2025-26, the department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to deliver commitments in Pupangarli Marnmarnepu, DEECA’s Self-Determination Reform Strategy.</li> <li>• Facilitate and support the implementation of Traditional Owner Country Plans to restore and heal Country, which includes promoting cultural fire practices on public land and assisting with biosecurity management on privately managed land by Traditional Owners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEECA has continued to deliver commitments in Pupangarli Marnmarnepu, DEECA’s Self-Determination Reform Strategy, including the continued improvements to DEECA systems and processes to enable self-determination, as well as the transfer of power and resources, such as increased opportunities for Traditional Owners to access water.</li> <li>• DEECA continues to enhance Aboriginal cultural capability within the department.</li> <li>• DEECA has continued to conduct regular Statewide and Regional Caring for Country Partnership Forums</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support Traditional Owner Land Management Boards, in order to ensure the knowledge and culture of Traditional Owner groups is recognised in our land management.</li> <li>• Continue to assist Traditional Owners to improve the sustainable economic activity on privately owned land through best practice food and fibre production and contemporary land and biodiversity management.</li> <li>• Develop a benefits sharing model in partnership with Traditional Owners as part of the Critical Minerals Roadmap.</li> <li>• Continue to collaborate with Traditional Owners and the water sector to implement Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap.</li> <li>• Continue to advance employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within DEECA.</li> <li>• Continue to strategically prioritise procurement from Aboriginal controlled suppliers in accordance with DEECA’s Social Procurement Strategy.</li> <li>• Actively respond to the Yoorrook Justice Commission and advancement of Treaty.</li> <li>• Continue to enhance Aboriginal cultural capability within DEECA.</li> <li>• Continue to support the implementation of the Cultural Fire and Cultural Landscapes Strategies.</li> </ul>	<p>involving Traditional Owner bodies, DEECA, DPC and Parks Victoria leaders as a key initiative to advance Traditional Owner self-determination in DEECA’s and Parks Victoria’s operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEECA has provided support for appointments to Traditional Owner Land Management Boards and their joint management partners, to continue to ensure that Traditional Owner knowledge and culture are recognised in land management.</li> <li>• Employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have continued to be advanced within DEECA.</li> <li>• DEECA has strategically prioritised procurement spend with Traditional Owner Corporations.</li> <li>• DEECA has actively responded to the Yoorrook Justice Commission, as well as continued to support the advancement of Treaty.</li> <li>• Decision to allocate 1/3 of the Latrobe 3-4 Bench Bulk Water Entitlement to Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC).</li> <li>• The department has released guidance materials to offshore wind feasibility licence holders as a part of the Registration of Interest process (March-May 2025). This guidance sets expectations for licence holders as they engage with Traditional Owners and for sets expectations that licence holders should enter partnerships with Traditional Owners in a manner that those Traditional Owners have self-determined.</li> <li>• The department has worked with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) in relation to offshore wind development to support its self-determined aspirations for mutually beneficial agreements with feasibility licence holders, in line</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
			<p>with international best practice. One agreement between GLaWAC and industry has been struck, with more expected to follow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One new funding agreement was established under the BushBank Program with the Eastern Maar Corporation to deliver environmental planting for over 160 hectares of land and participate in carbon markets.</li> <li>• DEECA is improving how fire agencies support Traditional Owners to reintroduce cultural fire on Country for a range of land management objectives, including the reduction of fuels and bushfire risk.</li> <li>• So far in the 2024-25 financial year, 10 cultural burns have been completed.</li> </ul>
5.	Emergency preparedness and recovery from natural disasters	<p>In 2025-26, the department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigate the risk and effects of bushfires and other emergencies on communities, the environment, critical infrastructure, essential assets and local economies through the Joint Fuel Management Program and other bushfire risk reduction related programs.</li> <li>• Manage and execute maintenance works across DEECA’s strategic fire road network and Strategic Fuel Breaks network.</li> <li>• Protect Victoria from biosecurity threats by enhancing biosecurity systems and preparedness for biosecurity emergencies.</li> <li>• Reduce the risks of flood emergencies in a changing climate</li> <li>• Coordinate delivery of recovery services following emergencies, including capital works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the risks of floods in a changing climate initiative is a four-year program of work commencing in 2024-25. The Agreements allocate funding to each CMA to undertake coordination of their Regional Floodplain Management Strategies and relevant activities set out by the Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy.</li> <li>• DEECA continues to monitor and coordinate the delivery of flood recovery projects by partner agencies, which include targeted flood recovery grants, catchment and waterway remediation works, and make safe works on dam infrastructure.</li> <li>• A total of 54 new ongoing roles have been added to DEECA’s forest firefighting workforce as part of the 2024-25 State Budget under the “Securing the forest firefighting workforce” initiative.</li> <li>• The Safer Together program continues to create opportunities for the bushfire sector to work together and with communities to reduce bushfire risk on</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
		<p>repair, recovery grants, and environmental remediation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate abandoned mines to enable safe, stable, sustainable landforms to minimise the risks to the public and the environment.</li> <li>• Support Primary Producers’ recovery from natural disasters, including the 2024-25 Little Desert and Grampians National Park fires.</li> <li>• Respond effectively to emergencies across the state, including biosecurity outbreaks, bushfires, floods, and other disasters.</li> <li>• Continue to support preparedness and response to dry seasonal conditions and drought (noting that drought is not formally classified as an emergency, or a natural disaster).</li> </ul>	<p>public and private land across Victoria. This has included awarding funding to councils through the Safer Together Strengthening Local Government Partnerships program and expanding the fuel management program on private land and roadsides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the Integrated Roding program, 697.4 kilometres of roading works and eight crossings have been completed, and Thurra Bridge is on track to be replaced.</li> <li>• The fuel management program has continued to reduce bushfire risk through the delivery of planned burns and mechanical treatments of fuel breaks over more than 74,108 hectares. In addition, 372 kilometres of fuel breaks have been maintained.</li> <li>• Supported the recovery from bushfire for primary producers impacted by the Little Desert and Grampians National Park fires.</li> <li>• The Protecting Victoria from Biosecurity Threats program has had an increased focus on high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) strain H5N1, currently Victoria’s highest risk emergency animal disease. A key part of the works program has included preparing for impacts of wildlife, including identifying high risk species and areas, finalising policies and procedures as well as increasing Victoria’s surveillance and diagnostic capacity.</li> <li>• Agriculture Victoria Research uplifted diagnostic laboratory standard operating procedures and equipment and is now trialling a range of innovative ways to speed up on-farm surveillance to detect and control Avian Influenza.</li> <li>• The State Emergency Management Plan – Animal, Plant, Marine and Environmental Biosecurity Subplan</li> </ul>

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2025–26	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2025, if applicable
			<p>was updated and approved by the Security and Emergency Management Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Conservation Regulator has informed key stakeholders such as permit/authorisation holders about how they can help to prepare for and report suspected HPAI H5N1 cases.</li> <li>• Implementation of the 2024-25 Drought Support Package for south west Victoria and jointly funded Victorian Government-Commonwealth Government Future Drought Fund preparedness programs (Farm Business Resilience Program and Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program) totalling \$13.5 million. A further \$15.9 million extension to the Drought Support Package was announced in May 2025 by the Minister for Agriculture to help more farmers and rural communities manage ongoing drought conditions over winter.</li> <li>• This package brings the Government’s direct drought support to \$29.4 million since September 2024, totalling 24 Local Government Areas (and French Island) that can access support.</li> </ul>

## Revenue and expenditure – variances

### Question 5

*Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances* provides a comprehensive operating statement that details each department's revenue and expenses on an accrual basis reflecting the cost of providing its output.

For each line item of the comprehensive operating statement if there is a variance greater than 10 per cent (positive or negative) or greater than \$100 million (positive or negative) please explain the reason for the variance between the budget for 2024–25, the revised estimate for 2024–25 and the budget for 2025–26.

#### *Guidance*

Where the variance is in 'Other operating expenses', please supply the relevant expense category.

### Response

Line item	2024–25 Budget (\$ million)	2024–25 Revised estimate (\$ million)	Explanation for any variances greater than ±10% (or greater than \$100 million) 2024–25 Budget vs. 2024–25 Revised estimate
Output appropriations	1,899	2,360	The variance is primarily due to additional funding received in 2024-25 for the National Partnerships Pest and Disease Preparedness and Response Programs, Sustainable Rural Water Use And Infrastructure Program, Forestry Contractor Strategy Program, VicGrid initiatives, firefighting and bushfire response activities, biosecurity response activities, Native Timber Harvesting Transition, coastal severe weather event recovery, Drought Support Package for the South West Region, Free Camping Victoria and supplementary funding for energy initiatives.
Special appropriations	0	4	The variance is primarily due to the access of prior-year Commonwealth revenue in 2024-25 for the Food and Waste for Healthy Soils initiative.
Interest income	46	46	Not applicable.
Sales of goods and services	123	146	The variance is primarily due to an increase in revenue from tripartite contracts that are managed by the department on behalf of local councils. This is partially offset by revenue relating to the Melbourne Strategic Assessment fund which has been reclassified as 'other revenue and income'.
Grants	17	22	The variance is primarily due to an increase in grant funding received in 2024-25 for the Energy Bill Relief Fund Round 2.

Fair value of assets and services received free of charge or for nominal consideration	0	0	Not applicable.
Other revenue and income	590	702	The variance is primarily due to the reclassification of revenue for the Melbourne Strategic Assessment fund from 'sales of goods and services'; and an increase in forecast revenue for the Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy Trust.
Employee benefits	712	941	The variance is primarily due to workforce reduction separation costs, the COVID-19 Debt Levy and higher employee costs resulting from Enterprise Bargaining Agreement progression increments; as well as the impact of emergency management and response activities; and new funding for VicGrid and Future Forests Program.
Depreciation	126	126	Not applicable.
Interest expense	38	47	The variance is primarily due to an increase in interest expense for the Zero interest loans for solar home batteries initiative. Under AASB 9: Financial instruments for the recognition of discount interest, the interest expense relating to interest free loans is an accounting entry only.
Grants expense	908	1,108	The variance is primarily due to an increase in grant payments from the Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy Trust and Parks and Reverses Trust Account. Additionally, the variance is due to an increase in grant payments for various EC6 initiatives, the Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program, Timber Plantation Establishment and Plantation Development, Biosecurity Response activities, Native Timber Harvesting Transition, and Coastal Severe Weather Event Recovery initiatives. This is partially offset by a rephase of grant payments from 2024-25 across the forward estimates for initiatives such as the Cheaper Cleaner Energy to Drive Economic Recovery initiative.
Other operating expenses	649	878	The variance is primarily due to an increase in purchases for supplies and services relating to tripartite contracts that are managed by the department on behalf of local councils. Additionally, the variance is due to additional expenditure relating to Pest and Disease Preparedness and Response Programs, Forestry Contractor Strategy, Cheaper Cleaner Energy to Drive Economic Recovery, and VicGrid initiatives.

Line item	2024–25 Budget (\$ million)	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	Explanation for any variances greater than ±10% (or greater than \$100 million) 2024–25 Budget vs. 2025–26 Budget
Output appropriations	1,899	1,654	The variance is primarily due to a decrease in output appropriation to reflect the transfer of initiatives previously funded by appropriation to being funded by the Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy Trust or Sustainability Fund Trust Accounts. This is partially offset by increases for the Forestry Contractor Strategy, Timber Plantation Establishment and Plantation Development, Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program and various EC6 funded initiatives.
Special appropriations	0	0	Not applicable.
Interest income	46	49	Not applicable.
Sales of goods and services	123	131	Not applicable.
Grants	17	33	The variance is primarily due to additional grant funding to be received from the Department of Family Fairness and Housing for Energy Bill Relief Fund Round 2.
Fair value of assets and services received free of charge or for nominal consideration	0	20	The variance is a result of services received free of charge from the Department of Government Services relating to accommodation services. This is due to the centralisation of accommodation funding within the Department of Government Services.
Other revenue and income	590	822	The variance is primarily due to an increase in revenue from the Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy, and the reclassification of revenue for the Melbourne Strategic Assessment fund from 'sales of goods and services'.
Employee benefits	712	755	Not applicable.
Depreciation	126	126	Not applicable.
Interest expense	38	35	Not applicable.
Grants expense	908	1,056	The variance is predominantly due to an increase in grants expense for the Timber Plantation Establishment and Plantation Development, and various EC6 funded initiatives. This is partially offset by a reduction in payments for the energy efficient hot water rebates initiative.
Other operating expenses	649	679	Not applicable.

Line item	2024–25 Revised estimate (\$ million)	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	Explanation for any variances greater than ±10% (or greater than \$100 million) 2024–25 Revised estimate vs. 2025–26 Budget
Output appropriations	2,360	1,654	The variance is primarily due to additional funding received in 2024-25 for the Forestry Transition program, VicGrid initiatives, firefighting and bushfire response activities, biosecurity response activities, Native Timber Harvesting Transition, coastal severe weather event recovery, Drought Support Package for the South West Region, Free Camping Victoria, and supplementary funding for energy initiatives. Additionally, the variance is also due to a decrease in output appropriation as a result of the transfer of initiatives previously funded by appropriation which are now being funded by Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy Trust or Sustainability Fund Trust Accounts.
Special appropriations	4	0	The variance is primarily due to the access of prior-year Commonwealth revenue in 2024-25 for the Food and Waste for Healthy Soils initiative.
Interest income	46	49	Not applicable.
Sales of goods and services	146	131	The variance is predominantly due to a decrease in revenue from tripartite contracts that are managed by the department on behalf of local councils.
Grants	22	33	The variance is primarily due to additional grant funding to be received from the Department of Family Fairness and Housing for Energy Bill Relief Fund Round 2.
Fair value of assets and services received free of charge or for nominal consideration	0	20	The variance is a result of services received free of charge from the Department of Government Services relating to accommodation services. This is due to the centralisation of accommodation funding within the Department of Government Services.
Other revenue and income	702	822	The variance is primarily due to an increase in revenue from the Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy, and the reclassification of revenue for the Melbourne Strategic Assessment fund from 'sales of goods and services'.
Employee benefits	941	755	The variance is primarily due to the higher funding received in 2024-25 for emergency management and response activities, and the funding profile of various initiatives such as VicGrid establishment, the Cheaper Cleaner Energy to Drive Economic Recovery, and Establishing Recycling Victoria initiatives.
Depreciation	126	126	Not applicable.
Interest expense	47	35	The variance is primarily due to a decrease in interest expense relating to the funding profiles of the Zero interest loans for solar home batteries, and Cheaper Clean Energy for Small Business initiatives. Under AASB 9: Financial instruments for the recognition of discount interest, the interest expense relating to interest free loans is an accounting entry only.

Grants expense	1,108	1,056	Not applicable.
Other operating expenses	878	679	The variance is primarily due to a decrease in purchases of supplies and services relating to the National Partnerships Pest and Disease Preparedness and Response Programs, Cheaper Cleaner Energy to Drive Economic Recovery, Firefighting and Bushfire Response activities and VicGrid initiatives.

## Revenue initiatives – new and changed

### Question 6

For all new revenue initiatives in the 2025–26 budget papers and for all existing revenue initiatives that have changed in the 2025–26 budget papers as compared to the previous financial year, please provide the:

- name of the initiative in the 2025–26 budget papers
- objective/s of the initiative
- reason for the new initiative or change to the initiative
- expected outcome/benefit for the Victorian community of the new initiative/change to the initiative
- anticipated revenue in the financial year 2025–26 and over the forward estimates gained or foregone as a result of the new initiative/change to the initiative.

### Response

Name of the initiative in the 2025–26 budget papers	Not applicable
Objective/s of the initiative	
Reason for new initiative or change	
Expected outcome/benefit for the Victorian community of the new initiative/change to the initiative	
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2025–26 gained or foregone	
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2026–27 gained or foregone	
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2027–28 gained or foregone	
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2028–29 gained or foregone	

## Expenditure – new programs and initiatives (output and asset)

### Question 7

For all new programs and initiatives (output and asset) in the 2025–26 budget papers, please provide the:

- name of the program/initiative
- objective(s) of the program
- factors that have driven the creation of the initiative (including social, environmental or economic factors)
- budgeted expenditure in financial year 2025–26 on the program/initiative
- how it will be funded (i.e. through new output appropriation, Commonwealth funding, internal reprioritisation etc.)
- how the outcomes and impacts will be measured (such as relevant indicators, evaluations, routine monitoring).

### Response

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
A skilled and healthy farming workforce	Funding is provided for the National Centre for Farmer Health in Hamilton to maintain delivery of core services in the rural health sector and target farm safety, health and wellbeing in farming communities. Funding is also provided to continue the Rural Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Program to reduce structural	Addressing farm safety, health and wellbeing aligns with Victoria’s Economic Growth Statement by supporting the agriculture workforce to participate in an inclusive economy.  Additionally, investing in diversity in leadership is a proven strategy to drive inclusive economic growth. Delivering the	1.2	Community Support Fund	The outcomes and impacts will be measured through an evaluation plan to be developed at commencement of the initiative.

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
	barriers within industry, develop mentors and networks and lift overall diversity in agricultural leadership positions.	Rural Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Programs is also an action under Our Equal State: Victoria’s Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2023-27.			
Managing the Impacts of Livestock Predation - Fox Bounty	Funding is provided to extend the Fox Bounty program to help manage the impacts of livestock predation.	<p>To address social impacts on Australia’s agricultural sector due to livestock predation, with Victoria being particularly vulnerable due to the importance of its livestock sector.</p> <p>Additionally, European red foxes are a primary cause in the decline and extinction of many small and medium-sized mammal species in Australia.</p> <p>Foxes are present in all parts of Victoria, impacting across land boundaries in urban,</p>	2.1	Appropriation	The outcomes and impacts will be measured through an evaluation plan to be developed at commencement of the initiative.

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
		<p>regional and remote areas. Coordinated approaches involving all landholders in affected areas are central to successful fox control. Rural and regional communities rank pest management highly on their list of problems and consequently, demand for government support to assist pest management programs is high.</p>			
Delivering Agriculture Sector Emissions Reductions	<p>Funding is provided to continue research in partnership with industry in high-priority emissions reduction mechanisms for Victoria’s dairy sector. Funding will also assist in the commercialisation of emerging technologies to support future agriculture sector emissions reductions.</p>	<p>Protecting Victoria’s agriculture sector and improving its resilience to climate change is critical to maintain its productivity and longevity.</p> <p>Agriculture is the equal third-largest sector source of greenhouse gas emissions in the Victorian economy after</p>	3.1	Appropriation	<p>The outcomes and impacts will be measured through an evaluation plan to be developed at commencement of the initiative, with interim evaluations delivered after Year 2.</p>

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
		<p>electricity generation and transport. Export markets increasingly have commitments for net zero emissions, making action on climate change critical for the competitiveness of the agriculture sector.</p> <p>The Victorian Government has set ambitious five yearly targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reach net zero emissions by 2045.</p>			
Safeguarding the future of Victoria’s agricultural sector and supporting animal welfare	<p>Funding is provided to safeguard Victoria’s agriculture sector from biosecurity threats including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintaining biosecurity surveillance, specialist technical capability and rapid</li> </ul>	<p>Strong biosecurity is critical to the strength of Victoria’s agriculture sector, which employs over 154,000 people across agriculture production and food manufacturing.</p> <p>As biosecurity threats and risks increase in</p>	7.3	Appropriation	<p>The outcomes will be measured through the following Department Performance Statement measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal disease, welfare and product integrity control programs maintained to ensure Victorian agricultural produce complies with</li> </ul>

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
	<p>response diagnostic capability;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting the Varroa mite and avian influenza biosecurity response in Victoria and for the State’s contribution to national biosecurity and response agreements; and</li> <li>• supporting existing regional fruit fly governance groups in the Goulburn Murray Valley Sunraysia and the Yarra Valley.</li> </ul> <p>Funding is also provided to enable RSPCA Victoria to continue to deliver essential animal welfare regulatory services on behalf of the Victorian Government, including responding to cruelty and welfare</p>	<p>frequency, complexity and scale, our biosecurity system faces mounting pressures. Key trends like climate change, increasing trade and travel and changing land-use exacerbate these risks, potentially leading to far-reaching and profound consequences.</p> <p>Victoria faces threats from hundreds of high-priority pests and diseases. With each year, new plant, animal, and environmental incursions occur, the cumulative strain on our biosecurity system grows. Recent threats have included varroa mite, avian influenza, Japanese encephalitis virus, abalone ganglioneuritis, brown</p>			<p>food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity standards required to access markets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Known state prohibited weed sites monitored and treated in line with the relevant weed action plan.</li> <li>• Actions commenced within specified timeframes to respond to reported emergency animal and plant pest, disease and natural disaster incidents complies with national and state agreements and obligations.</li> <li>• Actions commenced within specified timeframes to respond to new or amended assurance or accreditation programs to meet interstate requirements and enable export of Victorian plant and plant products.</li> </ul>

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
	<p>complaints, caring and rehabilitating animals seized or surrendered and delivering community outreach activities. Funding is also provided to a number of volunteer animal welfare organisations delivering animal care and rehabilitation.</p>	<p>marmorated stink bug and khapra beetle. The Victorian community expects legislative requirements for animal welfare are enforced, which is critical to Victoria’s reputation and the maintenance of social licence and market access.</p> <p>Failure to implement this initiative exposes the Victorian Government to an unacceptably high risk of regulatory failure. The Victorian community and agricultural businesses have a very low tolerance for poor animal welfare outcomes.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant health certificates issued within specified timeframes at the Melbourne Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market to support domestic market access.</li> <li>• Animal health certificates issued within specified timeframes to support international market access.</li> <li>• Plant pest, disease and residue control programs maintained to ensure Victorian agricultural produce complies with food safety and biosecurity standards required to access markets.</li> <li>• Preparedness activities implemented, in line with agreed plans, to ensure response readiness for emergency animal and plant pest, disease and natural disaster incidents.</li> </ul>

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National biosecurity, agriculture/veterinary chemical use and animal welfare programs implemented in accordance with agreed plans.</li> <li>Properties inspected for invasive plant and animal priority species.</li> </ul> <p>Regulatory services to be delivered by RSPCA Victoria will be outlined in an updated Memorandum of Understanding between the State and RSPCA Victoria.</p>
Growing the industrial hemp sector	Funding is provided to commence development of standalone industrial hemp legislation to address regulatory barriers and support the growth of the emerging Victorian industrial hemp sector.	Industrial hemp has been identified as an industry with high growth potential that could support a diverse range of uses, including textiles, stockfeed, pet bedding, human food (seed) and building materials.	0.4	Appropriation	The outcomes and impacts will be measured through an evaluation plan to be developed at commencement of the initiative.

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		<p>Additionally, the Parliament of Victoria’s Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee initiated an inquiry into the industrial hemp industry in Victoria which recommended “the Victorian Government amends the <i>Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981</i> (DPCSA) to remove industrial hemp and create fit for purpose industrial hemp legislation that is consistent with other jurisdictions in Australia.”</p> <p>The Government response to the Inquiry supported this recommendation in principle, committing to the exploration of</p>			

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		options to make improvements to existing legislative frameworks, including the investigation of a standalone piece of legislation.			
Addressing recovery needs from the Western Victoria Bushfires	Funding is provided to address recovery needs from the Western Victoria Bushfires. Funding is also provided to support the Wildwood Wildlife Shelter.	<p>Supports critical recovery needs following significant fires across Western Victoria in 2024-25. Programs include biodiversity grants, terrestrial fauna genetic rescue and translocation, land and waterway protection activities, restoration of public assets and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.</p> <p>Recovery from the impacts of the Yarram Gap Road Grampians National Park Fire which began on 17 December 2024.</p>	27.7	Internal reprioritisation/ Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements / Natural Disaster Relief Trust / Appropriation	The outcomes and impacts will be measured through regular reporting against Funding Agreements with delivery agencies, including catchment management authorities, to track and confirm that infrastructure and assets are restored, and targets are fully met, as well as through the delivery of the scheduled work plan.

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Delivering Outdoor Recreation and Tourism	Funding is provided to improve local nature-based experiences across Victoria.	To improve various local nature-based experiences and ensure Victorians have increased opportunity to connect with nature.	0.4	Appropriation	Internal reporting systems and a detailed evaluation report will be used to track outcomes.
Maintaining critical assets essential for emergency response	Funding is provided to operationalise critical fire and emergency vehicle fleet to support Forest Fire Management Victoria’s preventative bushfire services and rapid response to emergency events.	Maintenance and renewal funding is required to ensure the safe and continued operation of critical firefighting assets.	10.0	Appropriation	The outcomes will be measured through the following Department Performance Statement measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic fire access roads improved.</li> </ul>
Offshore Wind Program	Funding is provided to progress planning and undertake activities to deliver the first 2 gigawatts of offshore wind energy capacity in Victoria.	Offshore wind energy presents a significant opportunity for Victoria to strengthen energy security, create thousands of jobs, drive economic growth, reduce emissions and bring lasting benefit to regional communities.	10.0	Appropriation	The initiative will be measured through its: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support of an increased number of renewable energy jobs.</li> <li>reduction in carbon emissions as measured by carbon intensity of all electricity generation facilities in Victoria.</li> </ul>
Enhancing core energy functions	Funding is provided to strengthen the department’s core	To help ensure safe, reliable and affordable energy is maintained	34.4	Appropriation and Sustainability Fund	The outcomes will be measured through the following Department

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	energy functions and help ensure safe, reliable and affordable energy is maintained throughout the energy transition.	throughout the energy transition.			<p>Performance Statement measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report they are likely to recommend the website to others.</li> <li>• Government-supported events that engage business and supply chains regarding the energy sector.</li> </ul> <p>The outcomes will also be measured by maintaining the average spot price of electricity as the lowest in Australia; and Victoria meeting the following targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• renewable energy targets of 65 per cent by 2030 and 95 per cent by 2035; and</li> <li>• energy storage targets of at least 2.6GW by 2030 and at least 6.3GW by 2035.</li> </ul>

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Continuing to meet Victoria's Mariner Link shareholder responsibilities	Funding is provided to support the State's interest in the new Mariner Link interconnector between the Victorian and Tasmanian electricity networks.	Funding to support Victoria's shareholding interests will expire in 2024-25. As a Shareholder in MLPL, Victoria has obligations (reporting, equity payments, Board appointments), decisions and monitoring requirements to support delivery of the Mariner Link project.	2.5	Internal reprioritisation	<p>The impact of this initiative will be monitored through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase energy affordability, consumer control and access to energy services (target to be measured: Victorian household bill savings as a result of Mariner Link)</li> <li>• Improve the reliability, security and stability of the energy system (target to be measured: Victoria's energy reliability with Mariner Link in place),</li> <li>• Reduce emissions from Victoria's energy system (target to be measured: Renewable energy generated in either Tasmania or Victoria is utilised in the national electricity grid)</li> </ul>
Industrial Renewable gas guarantee	Funding is provided to develop a renewable gas scheme to assist securing renewable gas	Victoria is transitioning to a net-zero economy by 2045. The lowest cost way to decarbonise	1.5	Internal reprioritisation	The design stage of the program will be evaluated through the delivery of milestones related to a Cost-

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	volumes for industrial and gas-powered electricity generation users that can't electrify over time, and to support Victoria's emission reduction targets.	is through electrification however a significant volume of current industrial fossil gas use cannot be electrified. Through comprehensive analysis, Victoria must establish a thriving renewable gas sector to meet the legislated target of net-zero by 2045.			Benefit Analysis, a Legislative Impact Assessment and a Regulatory Impact Statement. The implementation stage of the program will be evaluated through data collection of participation levels across the supply chain and uptake of certificates. This data will be reported annually. A scheme review will occur at year three of the program to inform changes to the scheme design.
Power Saving Bonus for vulnerable consumers	Funding is provided for a one-off \$100 Power Saving Bonus for eligible Victorian concession card households that use the Victorian Energy Compare website to search for the cheapest electricity deal. Funding is also provided to expand the services of the Energy Assistance Program in response to	The Power Saving Bonus program addresses cost-of-living challenges Victorian Concession Card households are facing, whilst also encouraging those households to find and switch to a better energy deal for further energy savings.	50.6	Appropriation	The impact of the initiative will be measured by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• applications received for Power Saving Bonus Program (Round 5); and</li> <li>• percentage of applicants paid within four weeks of submission.</li> </ul>

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	increasing demand, ensuring tailored assistance for vulnerable and hard-to-reach consumers is preserved.				
Protecting Public Land	Funding is provided to maintain safety and environmental health on Victoria's parks and public lands.	Government has obligations to address contaminated sites with Environment Protection Authority notices, including social, environmental, cultural, commercial and legal duty of care.	1.0	Sustainability Fund	The impact of the initiative will be measured by the percentage of contaminated public land sites fully compliant (historical internal measure).
Continue the establishment of Liwik Barring conservation area and protect Victoria's faunal emblems	Funding is provided for the Liwik Barring Landscape Conservation Area in Yellingbo. In addition, visitor facilities at Haining Farm will be improved and trail and signage works will be undertaken at Liwik Barring. The Faunal Emblems program will also be continued to protect the last remaining wild	This initiative addresses findings from the 2013 Victorian Environmental Assessment Council investigation into biodiversity and ecological values.	1.9	Sustainability Fund and/or Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy (MIWL)	The outcomes will be measured through the following Department Performance Statement measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area treated to minimise the impact of pest plants, pest animals and over abundant native animals in parks managed by Parks Victoria.</li> </ul>

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
	population of the critically endangered Helmeted Honeyeater and the only lowland population of the critically endangered Leadbeater’s Possum.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total area of estate managed by Parks Victoria.</li> <li>• Visits to national, state, urban and other terrestrial parks</li> <li>• Priority conservation actions for threatened species.</li> </ul>
Supporting Landcare and Coastcare volunteers	Funding is provided to continue the Landcare and Coastcare volunteer programs, enabling Victorian communities to engage in environmental conservation and help address biodiversity loss. Funding is also provided for tree planting in open spaces around Preston and Reservoir stations to address the low level of tree cover and improve existing green spaces.	Supporting environmental volunteering and addressing biodiversity loss builds community support for the environment, has positive social benefits and helps Victorians connect with nature.	8.7	Sustainability Fund	<p>The outcomes will be measured through the following Department Performance Statement measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants in Coastcare activities.</li> <li>• Environmental volunteer hours contributing to the health of the Victoria’s biodiversity.</li> </ul>
Supporting nature-based tourism and the environment along the Great Ocean Road	Funding is provided for the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks	The factors driving creation of the initiative include:	5.2	Appropriation	The impact of the initiative will be measured by:

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	<p>Authority (GORCAPA) to continue its operations as the dedicated land manager for the Great Ocean Road coast and parks. Funding is also provided for the new Twelve Apostles Visitor Experience Centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regional economic stimulus and direct jobs creation;</li> <li>• improved visitor experience and world-leading reputation of the Great Ocean Road coast and parks;</li> <li>• improved liveability, health and well-being of local communities and visitors; and</li> <li>• protected and enhanced cultural and environmental values; and</li> <li>• ensure service levels are maintained in-line with community expectations and deliver a world-class visitor experience at the Twelve Apostles.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased off-peak visitation.</li> <li>• Increased visitor nights.</li> <li>• Improved visitor ratings.</li> <li>• Community satisfaction and engagement in managing visitation.</li> <li>• Community engagement in providing visitor experience.</li> <li>• Improved condition and benefits of the environment.</li> <li>• Maintenance of scenic landscapes.</li> <li>• Increased cultural knowledge and involvement of Traditional Owners.</li> <li>• Capital works program implementation.</li> <li>• Revenue generation.</li> <li>• Partnership enhancement.</li> <li>• Service delivery improvement.</li> <li>• Environmental impact.</li> </ul>

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Efficient and timely environmental assessments	Funding is provided to maintain existing capacity for dedicated technical expertise and case management support for the environmental assessment processes associated with renewable energy projects.	The scale and siting of development of infrastructure to meet government economic priorities can result in significant biodiversity impacts, which require proactive management to meet Commonwealth environmental assessments and planning approval requirements.	1.9	Sustainability Fund	The impact of the initiative will be measured by the percentage completion of priority cases.
Joint Management of Barmah National Park	Funding is provided to continue joint land management of the Barmah National Park in partnership with the Yorta Yorta people.	To empower Yorta Yorta Traditional Owners to continue to lead the management of their ancestral Country with resourcing for two existing agreements fundamental to advancing Yorta Yorta self-determination.	2.1	Sustainability Fund and/or Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy (MIWL)	The outcomes will be measured through the following Department Performance Statement measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area treated to minimise the impact of pest plants, pest animals and over abundant native animals in parks managed by Parks Victoria.</li> <li>• Visits to national, state, urban and other terrestrial parks.</li> </ul>

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Zoos Victoria Kids Go Free	Funding is provided to continue to allow children under 16 years of age to enjoy free admission to Melbourne Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary, Kyabram Fauna Park and Werribee Open Range Zoo on weekends, public holidays and during school holidays.	Provides zoo access to more Victorians who otherwise would not be able to visit our world-class zoos, connect people with wildlife, and inspires them to take conservation actions that make a measurable and positive difference.	15.3	Parks and Reserves Trust Account	The outcomes will be measured through the following Department Performance Statement measure 'Annual visitation to Zoos Victoria'.
Half-price camping fees	Funding is provided to support half-price camping at all of Parks Victoria's 131 paid campgrounds from 1 July 2025 until 30 June 2027.	Creates opportunities for all Victorians, especially lower income families and individuals, and under-represented communities, to access and enjoy Victoria's parks and benefit from being in the great outdoors.	5.2	Appropriation	The impact of the initiative will be measured through performance reports relating to visitation and camping booking numbers.
Sustaining the EPA's strengthened regulatory functions	Funding is provided for the Environment Protection Authority to ensure it can continue to protect Victoria's environment from pollution and waste and	To enable EPA to provide regulatory services, permissions and approvals, while safeguarding Victorians and the environment from harm.	23.7	Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy	The outcomes will be measured through the following Department Performance Statement measures:

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	fulfil its obligations under the <i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i> .				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment condition notifications provided to Victorians.</li> <li>• Victorian community trust in EPA.</li> <li>• Applications for internal review of remedial notices completed within statutory timelines.</li> <li>• Applications for licences and permits completed within statutory timelines.</li> <li>• EPA advice on planning matters is provided within required timeframes.</li> <li>• EPA confirms duty holder compliance with remedial notice requirements, or escalates for further action, within 17 days of the compliance due date.</li> <li>• EPA provides technical advice to lead agencies within required timelines</li> </ul>

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					<p>during emergency incidents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPA responds to priority waste incidents within 15 hours of notification.</li> <li>Environmental audits and preliminary risk screening assessment reports are reviewed to ensure administrative compliance with legislation and guidelines within 14 days of submission.</li> <li>Pollution reporters requesting follow up by EPA receive contact within five working days.</li> </ul>
Pest animal management	Funding is provided for the Vertebrate Species Management Program to manage the increasing spread of foxes, feral pigs, goats and rabbits and reduce the negative impacts of pest animals on agricultural production,	Enables management of dingoes and invasive vertebrate species to minimise the impact of predation on farming enterprises and public land.	1.9	Appropriation	<p>The impact of the initiative will be measured by the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilisation of quantitative and qualitative measures and reporting; and</li> <li>implementation of a continuous improvement and adaptive management approach.</li> </ul>

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	biosecurity and biodiversity.				
Kangaroo Harvesting Program	Funding is provided to continue the Kangaroo Harvesting Program to support the management of kangaroos.	To ensure the sustainability of kangaroo populations through the provision of comprehensive and accurate data.	0.2	Internal reprioritisation	The impact of the initiative will be measured by the delivery of the scheduled work program.
Enabling collaborative wildlife management	Funding is provided for a package of initiatives that seek to protect Victorian wildlife including continuing the Wildlife Hotline to respond to reports of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife across the State. Funding is also provided for the Faraday Church Wildlife Shelter.	Ensure continued support towards the Wildlife Victoria hotline, on-ground koala management programs and wildlife carers.	1.1	Sustainability Fund	The impact of the initiative will be measured by the number of incidents addressed by the Wildlife Hotline over the funding period.
Safeguarding Victoria from former mines and quarries	Funding is provided to continue to manage abandoned and legacy mines and quarries on Crown land to address public safety and environmental risks.	Extend the current initiative by one-year to update the database of abandoned and legacy mines and quarries, and to improve the understanding of the scale and nature of the	1.7	Appropriation	The impact of the initiative will be measured by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the accuracy of the database through continued refinement, detection of new sites and verification of data already captured.</li> </ul>

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		risks posed by abandoned and legacy sites on Crown land.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the government's understanding of the risks and liabilities associated with high-risk sites and providing a platform to inform proactive and prioritised management.</li> </ul>
Efficient and strengthened earth resources regulation	Funding is provided to Resources Victoria to support a sustainable mining and quarrying sector through strong regulations and timely decision making.	<p>Key drivers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased activity in the Resources sector including critical minerals and extractives increasing regulatory activity e.g. licensing;</li> <li>increased level of complexity across regulatory activities e.g. Declared Mines;</li> <li>increased demand by local communities for information and engagement; and</li> <li>the opportunity to support new</li> </ul>	6.7	Appropriation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamlining regulatory approval processes through the <i>Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Amendment Act 2023</i>, replacing outdated work approvals framework with a duty-based regulatory system, aiming for commencement by 1 July 2027.</li> <li>Rehabilitation and rehabilitation bonds strategy to improve the quality of rehabilitation plans and set contemporary rehabilitation bonds</li> </ul>

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		economic growth and the transition to renewable energy.			<p>(reducing the State’s contingent rehabilitation liabilities).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful implementation of the Critical Minerals roadmap relies on efficient and effective underlying regulatory services within Resources Victoria being in place.</li> <li>• Ensure the supply of quarry material can continue to meet demand into the future (approve at least 80 million tonnes of new quarry supplies each year).</li> <li>• Regulating the sector for the benefit of all Victorians in such a way that harms to the economy, society and the environment are minimised.</li> </ul>

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This initiative will also support the delivery of the following existing performance measures:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exploration and mining licences which are active;</li> <li>○ Mineral licence applications processed within regulatory timeframes;</li> <li>○ Mineral work plans processed within regulatory timeframes;</li> <li>○ Extractive Industries Work Authority work plans processed within regulatory timeframes;</li> <li>○ Regulatory audits completed within agreed timelines;</li> <li>○ Community and stakeholder</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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					<p>engagement forums; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Site rehabilitation bonds processed within 90 days from issue of bond notice for work plans expanding access to resource.</li> </ul>
Solar Homes Program – Hot water rebates	Funding is provided to extend the Solar Victoria Hot water rebate program to enable more eligible households to install energy efficient electric heat pumps and solar hot water systems in their homes.	Hot water heating comprises approximately 20 per cent of household energy bills. There is opportunity to reduce these costs by installing an efficient heat pump or solar hot water system. The Solar Homes rebate reduces the upfront costs to support uptake of this lower cost, lower emissions and highly efficient systems.	29.7	Sustainability Fund	The outcomes will be measured through the Department Performance Statement measure, ‘Applications for hot water rebate applications approved’ by Solar Victoria throughout the year. In 2025-26, the target for applications for hot water rebates approved is 27,000.
Victorian Energy Upgrades Program – Insulation upgrades	Funding is provided to develop a safety and quality assurance framework as part of	An estimated 200,000 households are un-insulated and a further 1.4 million homes do	4.6	Appropriation	The outcome of the program will be measured through the number of households upgraded through the VEU

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	the reintroduction of insulation as an offering in the Victorian Energy Upgrades Program to improve energy efficiency.	not have adequate levels of ceiling insulation. Homes without insulation are less comfortable and cost more to heat and cool than well insulated homes. The introduction of insulation as an eligible activity will reduce installation costs and improve comfort and health outcomes.			<p>program and the number of insulation installers trained and certified.</p> <p>The program will include an insulation safety and quality assurance regime including audits and oversight requirements to ensure high-quality and safe installations.</p>
Protecting Victoria’s water security	Funding is provided to support the order for 50 gegalitres of desalinated water, to protect water security and reduce bill impacts for Melbourne, Geelong, South Gippsland and surrounding regions.	Minimising cost impacts to customers.	3.8	Trust funding	Reduce payments required from water corporations for 2025-26 water order.
Aviation firefighting resources	Funding is provided for additional firefighting aviation resources to support the State’s firefighting capability	Funding is provided to cover the urgent and unforeseen costs of aviation capability engaged for emergency response activities	0.0 (Funding is provided in 2024-25)	Appropriation	<p>The outcomes and impacts will be measured through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the number of incidents involving aviation services;</li> </ul>

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	during the 2024-25 bushfire season.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number of aircraft attending each incident;</li> <li>• the number of flying hours associated with each incident; and</li> <li>• the number of drops (i.e. water/retardant) for each incident.</li> </ul>
Bushfire prevention	Funding is provided to complete additional planned burns and other fuel management activities across autumn 2025. Locations will be guided by the Joint Fuel Management Program, which was developed in consultation with Traditional Owners and other key stakeholders including local councils, wineries, beekeepers, flora and fauna specialists and Victoria's tourism industry.	Locations will be guided by the Joint Fuel Management Program, which was developed in consultation with Traditional Owners and other key stakeholders including local councils, wineries, beekeepers, flora and fauna specialists and Victoria's tourism industry.	0.0 (Funding is provided in 2024-25)	Appropriation	The outcomes and impacts will be measured through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the delivery of all seasonally available burns and non-burn fuel treatments;</li> <li>• driving down statewide fuel-driven bushfire risk from a forecast 69 per cent to an estimated 65 per cent; and</li> <li>• reducing the number of districts above risk targets.</li> </ul>
Luna Park building works	Funding is provided for a contribution towards heritage repairs and	To enable continued heritage repairs and maintenance works to	0.0 (Funding is provided in 2024-25)	Appropriation	The outcomes and impacts will be measured through an evaluation plan to be

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	maintenance for Luna Park Melbourne’s Luna Palace building.	an iconic Melbourne building.			developed following the commencement of the initiative.
Severe weather event recovery	Funding is provided to support recovery efforts and address critical short-term public safety and access concerns following the August to September 2024 severe weather events.	To resolve short-term public safety concerns, and deliver greater access to some of Victoria’s most iconic beaches.	0.0 (Funding is provided in 2024-25)	Appropriation	The outcomes and impacts will be measured through an evaluation plan to be developed following the commencement of the initiative.
Broken reconfiguration project	Funding is provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment to fund a business case for the proposed Broken reconfiguration project that will support the region’s irrigators and communities’ long-term needs in response to climate change and Commonwealth water purchases.	The implementation of Murray Darling Basin Plan.	1.7	Commonwealth Government	The outcomes will be measured through regular reporting to the Commonwealth as required under the Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework.

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
Detailed Assessments of the Restoring Flows to the Mallee Floodplain project	Funding is provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment to deliver a detailed assessment of the Restoring Flows to the Mallee Floodplain project, which is a potential new water supply measure to maximise Murray-Darling Basin Plan environmental outcomes with available environmental water.	The implementation of Murray Darling Basin Plan.	0.0 (Funding is provided in 2024-25)	Commonwealth Government	The outcomes will be measured through regular reporting to the Commonwealth as required under the Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework.
Implementing Water Reform in the Murray-Darling Basin	Funding is provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment to continue the delivery of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and associated water reforms.	The implementation of Murray Darling Basin Plan.	5.7	Commonwealth Government	The outcomes will be measured through regular reporting to the Commonwealth as required under the Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework.

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
Improving compliance in the Murray-Darling Basin	Funding is provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment to increase the coverage of metering telemetry across the Murray Darling Basin that will provide regulators and water users with more timely information.	The implementation of Murray Darling Basin Plan.	0.7	Commonwealth Government	The outcomes will be measured through regular reporting to the Commonwealth as required under the Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework.
Victorian-led domestic and stock feasibility projects	Funding is provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment to support the delivery of Victorian-led domestic and stock feasibility projects under the Resilient Rivers Water Infrastructure Program to improve water security and achieve water savings.	The implementation of Murray Darling Basin Plan.	0.3	Commonwealth Government	The outcomes will be measured through regular reporting to the Commonwealth as required under the Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework.

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
Incorporating renewable energy zones to the State Planning Policy Framework	Funding is provided to enable faster planning approvals for renewable energy projects in Victoria by incorporating them in the State Planning Policy Framework.	<p>Factors driving creation of the initiative include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for greater alignment between the Victorian Transmission Plan and Planning Policy Framework to give greater certainty to industry and the community regarding the location of new onshore renewable generation and storage.</li> <li>• Validating the desktop data used in the strategic land use assessment that underpins the location of the draft proposed renewable energy zones will support initiatives to reduce regulatory burden and accelerate</li> </ul>	5.0	Appropriation	<p>The impact of this initiative will be monitored through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support more investment in renewable energy in Victoria (target to be measured: Development value of approved renewable energy projects within Victoria).</li> <li>• Shorter assessment and approval timeframes for projects within renewable energy zones (target to be measured: Timeframes from lodgement to approval under <i>Planning and Environment 1987</i>).</li> </ul>

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2025–26 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
		planning and environment approvals processes.			
Supporting investment in the resources sector	Funding is provided to extend the Resources Victoria Approval Coordinator until 2027, for actions to support new critical minerals projects (including developing maps that identify areas that have the highest likelihood of developing successful critical minerals operations), and to provide dedicated support to facilitate engagement with community and Traditional Owners.	On 9 December 2024, the government announced a new Critical Minerals Roadmap for Victoria to improve the State’s competitive advantage, create new jobs and support manufacturing. Supporting new critical minerals projects will tap into Victoria’s critical minerals endowment and could support the creation of up to 7,000 jobs.	3.6	Appropriation	The outcomes will be measured through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new critical minerals projects progressed in Victoria;</li> <li>• integrating land-use, environmental and community values into our long-term planning for the sector;</li> <li>• establish community benefit sharing arrangements for local communities and Traditional Owners;</li> <li>• establish new Critical Minerals Priority Development Zones; and</li> <li>• establish a Victorian Critical Minerals Coordination Office to reduce approvals timelines.</li> </ul>

## Expenditure – lapsing programs (output initiatives, including grants)

### Question 8

For all programs (output initiatives, including grants) with total funding of equal to or greater than \$5 million that were to lapse in the financial year 2024–25, where funding is to be extended in the 2025–26 Budget, please provide the:

- a) name of the program
- b) objective(s) of the program
- c) expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years)
- d) details of how the program will be funded (i.e. through new output appropriation, Commonwealth funding, internal reprioritisation etc.)
- e) confirmation that an evaluation of the program has been conducted as per *Section 6.1 Evaluating lapsing programs* of the Resource Management Framework.<sup>6</sup> Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation in the questionnaire response
- f) evidence of the continued need for the program, and Government’s role in delivering it
- g) evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes, including the alignment between the program, its output (as outlined in *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*), departmental objectives and any Government priorities
- h) evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices
- i) extent and level of efficiencies realised in the delivery of the program
- j) information about the nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts
- k) evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program.

#### *Guidance*

Lapsing program—the Committee uses the definition of lapsing program as set out in the Department of Treasury and Finance, *Resource Management Framework*: A lapsing program is a program to deliver services (output-related) that is funded for a specified time period only (and not ongoing in nature). Programs of a ‘one-off’ or a time-specific nature (e.g. funding provided for specific events) are considered ‘fixed-term’ and do not fall under the definition of a ‘lapsing program’.

<sup>6</sup> Department of Treasury and Finance, *The Resource Management Framework Part 1 of 2 – Main document*, Melbourne, 2024, p. 135

**Response**

Name of the program	Zoos Victoria Kids Free Policy	
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided to continue to allow children under 16 years of age to enjoy free admission to Melbourne Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary, Kyabram Fauna Park and Werribee Open Range Zoo on weekends, public holidays and during school holidays.	
Expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years) (\$ million)	2024–25	2025–26
	11.9	15.3
Details of how the program will be funded	Parks and Reserves Trust Account.	
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program was included as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2025-26 budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.	
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government's role in delivering it	The Policy has been consistently promoted as a key visitation driver throughout its advertising campaigns. When last surveyed, 52 per cent saw Kids Go Free as the most appealing element for visitation; and for parents with children aged 0-7, this increased to 67 per cent. The Policy has provided Zoos Victoria direct engagement with the community; a positive education outcome for children and their families; and improved environmental and conservation understanding and behavioural change throughout the community. Introduction of the policy has also coincided with increased uptake of Zoos Victoria memberships, while providing valuable cost of living relief to families and the broader community.	
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	Prior to the introduction of the Kids Go Free policy, Zoos Victoria was experiencing a declining visitation trend. The aim of the policy was to create a more equitable model for all Victorians to take advantage of the community assets across all Zoos and increase overall visitation. The policy operates on Victorian school holidays, weekends and Victorian public holidays and provides free entry to zoos operated by Zoos Victoria, for all children under the age of 16.	
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	Zoos Victoria has continued to allow children under 16 years of age to enjoy free admission to Melbourne Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary, Kyabram Fauna Park and Werribee Open Range Zoo on weekends, public holidays and during school holidays throughout the length of the program	

Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	Zoos Victoria would not be able to provide free access to families for recreational and educational activities, enabling valuable opportunities to enjoy community assets across all Zoos Victoria sites. Additional funding has been provided to continue the program.
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	The funding reflects the cost to deliver the program, being the foregone admission revenue from the implementation of the Kids Free policy.

Name of the program	Keeping the public safe	
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided to address public safety and environmental risks associated with abandoned and legacy mines and quarries on public land.	
Expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years) (\$ million)	2024–25	2025–26
	1.7	1.0
Details of how the program will be funded	Sustainability Fund	
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	Not applicable. Total funding approved for this initiative was less than \$20 million. As per Section 6.1 (evaluating lapsing programs) of the Resource Management Framework, a lapsing program evaluation is not required for initiatives with total funding of less than \$20 million.	
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government's role in delivering it	Contamination of public land generated by historic activities such as mining, shooting ranges and landfills represents a significant risk to public health, especially for sensitive receptors such as children and pregnant women, and the environment.	
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	Deliverables are focused on working towards environmental compliance in three main areas, 1) four contaminated sites with EPA notices (Mitchell Lasry Quarry, Altona landfill, Anderson Inlet, Clunes shooting range), 2) two critical sites with impacts on high population areas (Wangaratta showgrounds, Warrnambool harness racing track), and 3) two priority Traditional Owner sites (Alexandra depot, Wail nursery).	
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	The program is progressing on time and to budget from regular project progress summary reports, and the program's stated objectives and expected outcomes.	
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	There would be elevated regulatory compliance risks, severe reputational risks to government, significant risk to public health (especially sensitive receptors such as children), and continued loss of amenity and community benefits to the Victorian community.	

Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	This initiative has reviewed historical program costs and requirements aligned to the proposed scope of the program.
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Name of the program	Sustaining the EPA's strengthened regulatory functions	
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided for the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to ensure it can continue to protect Victoria's environment from pollution and waste and fulfil its obligations under the Environment Protection Act 2017.	
Expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years) (\$ million)	2024–25	2025–26
	23.7	23.7
Details of how the program will be funded	Municipal and Industrial Waste Levy	
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program was included as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2025-26 budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.	
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government's role in delivering it	The Victorian Government's role as a funding source is essential to EPA's ability to deliver high priority functions and core activities to ensure EPA can effectively deliver its functions under the <i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i> and prevent harm to human health and the environment from pollution and waste.	
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	EPA has demonstrated progress towards achieving its stated objectives and outcomes that includes outputs outlined in BP3 measures, improvements made in risk management practices within target industries, improved deterrence from high-risk behaviours, and the effective prevention of pollution and waste.	
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	EPA has demonstrated commitment to its statutory obligations and made significant progress towards the delivery of the program. Broadly, each function was able to deliver within scope. In some cases, the ability to deliver within budget and to timeframes has been impacted by increased in workload.	
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	Discontinuation of the lapsing funding would mean EPA cannot effectively deliver its statutory obligations, increasing the risk of harm to the environment and human health. Furthermore, EPA will not be able to realise the full benefits derived from previous investment nor achieve ongoing optimisations and efficiencies as they mature as a regulator.	
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	The funding reflects the cost for the EPA to be able to deliver on its	

	obligations under the <i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i> , meet community expectations or fully realise the benefits of the transformation and legislative reforms.
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Name of the program	Energy efficient hot water rebates	
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided for Solar Victoria to release more rebates to eligible households to install energy efficient heat pump or solar hot water systems in their homes.	
Expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years) (\$ million)	2024–25	2025–26
	29.7	29.7
Details of how the program will be funded	Sustainability Fund	
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program was included as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2025-26 budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.	
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	To support Victorians to electrify their homes, reduce their energy bills and their reliance on gas, and achieve the state’s emissions reductions targets. Incentives continue to be needed to support Victorians to replace their gas or inefficient hot water systems with more energy efficient alternatives. Government will support this through the continued provision of a rebate via Solar Victoria, ensuring that quality systems are installed by approved retailers and installers.	
Evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	There is a continued strong need and demand for hot water rebates, evidenced by an over 400 per cent increase in rebate uptake between 2022-23 and 2023-24 with demand remaining at a high level throughout 2024-25. The Victorian Government originally committed to approving 60,000 hot water rebates when the Solar Homes Program commenced in 2018. In 2024-25, this target will be achieved, continued support is required to support more households to take up energy efficient electric hot water systems.	
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	The hot water rebate program has been successfully delivered by Solar Victoria. In 2024-25, the target of 27,000 approved rebates will be exceeded, with more than 35,000 rebates expected to be approved by the end of financial year. This has been enabled by effective and timely assessments of applications, along with delivery of a targeted and risk-based audit program that has seen five per cent of all installations audited for compliance.	
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts		

Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	The significant majority of the additional funding provided, 91 per cent, will provide direct benefit to customers in the form of a rebate. The remaining 9 per cent will enable Solar Victoria to continue administering the program, including providing the assessment of applications, direct customer support, and ensuring installations are safe and compliant.
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Name of the program	Victorian Fruit Fly Strategy	
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided for Victoria’s Fruit Fly Strategy, which will focus on preparedness and prevention activities, strengthening shared responsibility in the management of the Queensland Fruit Fly.	
Expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years) (\$ million)	2024–25	2025–26
	1.3	7.3 <sup>7</sup>
Details of how the program will be funded	Appropriation	
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program was included as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2025-26 budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.	
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	The program focused on a funding activity that creates long term change by assisting the community to learn how to manage fruit fly and to support the transition to management by industry and the community. The degree to which the community and industry are prepared to take responsibility for ongoing community/areawide management varies across the Regional Governance Groups.	
Evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	The Fruit fly strategy grant program has been mostly delivered effectively, progressing industry and community capability and raising awareness of the need for community/areawide management of Queensland Fruit Fly. However, challenges have limited progress of industry identifying sustainable funding sources and progressing industry surveillance outcomes. The Fruit Fly Strategy Grants program has been delivered mostly within scope, budget and timelines with minor variations. The fruit fly strategy grants program	
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices		
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts		

<sup>7</sup> This lapsing program is being continued through the Safeguarding the future of Victoria’s agricultural sector and supporting animal welfare initiative. This is the 2025-26 funding allocation for the full initiative. The expenditure for this program in 2025-26 is still to be finalised.

<p>Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program</p>	<p>has demonstrated appropriate risk management protocols and governance structures at a department level.</p> <p>Agriculture Victoria has committed to continue communications to support awareness in the community and has extensive resources on the Agriculture Victoria website. This includes resources that are translated into 28 languages. The current grants have funded activities to address gaps and the transition to a community and industry led model, which will minimise the impact of ceasing the program. Resources are being handed over to relevant stakeholders, key websites have been updated providing ongoing access to material. In addition, resources have been created to provide ongoing guidance and education outcomes on managing fruit fly, including a booklet for commercial producers, e-learning to support ongoing training of nursery and agronomy staff, and workshops to reach community members not previously reached.</p>
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<p>Name of the program</p>	<p>Regulating Safeguards for Gas Resources</p>	
<p>Objective(s) of the program</p>	<p>Funding is provided towards Earth Resources Regulation to protect public safety, agriculture and the environment. This supports the Government’s commitment to regulate the restart of the onshore conventional gas sector and existing offshore gas activity.</p>	
<p>Expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years) (\$ million)</p>	<p>2024–25</p>	<p>2025–26</p>
	<p>2.6</p>	<p>2.6</p>
<p>Details of how the program will be funded</p>	<p>Appropriation</p>	
<p>Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation</p>	<p>Not applicable. Total funding approved for this initiative was less than \$20 million. As per Section 6.1 (evaluating lapsing programs) of the Resource Management Framework, a lapsing program evaluation is not required for initiatives with total funding of less than \$20 million.</p>	
<p>Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it</p>	<p>Gas plays an important role in the Victorian economy (two million gas consumers) and will continue to be part of Victoria’s long-term energy mix. New Petroleum Regulations commenced on 22 November 2021. This requires the regulator to continue to manage risks and regulate the petroleum (oil and gas) sector.</p>	
	<p>Regulation of the petroleum sector is required because:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an ongoing need to deliver basic regulatory services including licensing, compliance, and community engagement.</li> <li>• To support social licence to operate to avoid delays in or preventing new projects and project expansions from entering the market.</li> <li>• Manage the requirements of new legislation – the <i>Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Act 2024</i> was assented to on 6 November 2024. This Act permits the state’s gas storage capacity to be increased to help maintain secure and reliable gas supply.</li> </ul>
Evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	<p>Achievements of the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Earth Resources Regulator released a Code of Practice for the construction, operation and decommissioning of petroleum wells in Victoria. The code provides information to industry about minimising and managing risks associated with onshore petroleum wells during all stages of the petroleum well lifecycle.</li> <li>• Overhauled regulatory tools, such as procedures and other documentation, which has ensured consistent application of the updated regulatory requirements and certainty to industry in meeting expectations.</li> <li>• Delivery of the first increase in more than 10 years of petroleum fees from 1 July 2024, with a further increase on 1 July 2025 to achieve cost recovery of petroleum regulation functions.</li> </ul> <p>The program has operated within approved budget allocations. Further funding is based on staffing and operating costs from the current program.</p>
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	

Name of the program	Keeping the public safe (Former Mines and Quarries Framework)	
Objective(s) of the program	To develop a statewide management framework for abandoned and legacy mines on public land.	
Expenditure in the financial years 2024–25 and 2025–26 (and where relevant, future years) (\$ million)	2024–25	2025–26
	1.0	1.7
Details of how the program will be funded	Appropriation	
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program was included as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2025-26 budget process. As a component of a	

	<p>business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.</p>
<p>Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it</p>	<p>The continuation of the Former Mines and Quarries Framework program addresses a critical need to advance the understanding of the scale and nature of the risks posed by over an estimated 300,000 abandoned and legacy sites on Crown land with a focus on developing a long-term strategy to manage key risks. Initial evidence suggests the actual number of sites will be much higher than the current estimate, which is an advance on the understanding cited in the Rehabilitating Mines report of 70,000.</p> <p>After a two-year field-testing campaign, more than 4,000 sites have been verified and close to 900 risk assessments have been completed. The findings highlight that former mines and quarries pose several risks, making ongoing identification essential to ensure proper management.</p> <p>This work has identified 53 high-risk sites to date that require management intervention, including several with statutory obligations. These risks need to be recognised and prioritised at a statewide level to ensure they are managed systematically. This data-driven evidence-based approach ensures that when government is asked to support rehabilitation of the State’s former mines and quarries, resources are targeted where they are most needed, supporting a cost-effective and strategic management approach.</p> <p>The framework's continued operation is the most effective way to qualify and quantify risks from former mines and quarries. The existing centralised system will be used, incorporating modern technology, such as remote sensing, to refine and expand the database. The proposal would also engage with Crown land managers in relation to the management of these sites, as well as Traditional Owners to gauge their desire to manage abandoned and legacy mines and quarries on Country, and to what extent and what form that management/involvement would take.</p>
<p>Evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes</p>	<p>Key deliverables through this initiative include:</p>

<p>Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A former mines and quarries database consisting of approximately 110,000 records (with verification of 4,456 sites).</li> <li>• Developed a former mines and quarries risk assessment matrix.</li> </ul>
<p>Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed a common or shared abandoned and legacy mines and quarries risk register with 890 verified sites having been risk assessed. This allows site risks to be tracked and monitored, provides a centralised record of site risks and informs/prioritises future remediation works.</li> <li>• Provides a long-term management solution for abandoned and legacy mines and quarries on Crown land across the State.</li> </ul>
<p>Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program</p>	<p>Throughout the program, progress toward 35 milestones were reported to the Project Control Group at every meeting to ensure proper oversight and accountability for delivering the program on time.</p> <p>The program has been delivered efficiently, as key milestones have consistently been achieved as planned. If there has been any variance to scheduled dates, these were approved by program governance. Most importantly, the critical path milestone of delivering a consolidated framework proposal to government was achieved by December 2023, acquitting recommendation 9 from VAGO's Rehabilitating Mines report.</p> <p>The project has been managed within budget. Further funding is based on staffing and operating costs from the current program.</p>

**Question 9**

For all programs (output initiatives, including grants) with total funding of equal to or greater than \$5 million that are to lapse in 2024-25, please provide the:

- a) name of the program
- b) objective(s) of the program
- c) expenditure in the financial year 2024–25
- d) reasons why the program was established
- e) details of who (describe the type of users for example, health care providers, families, volunteers etc.) and how many used the program, and evidence of the outcomes achieved
- f) reasons why further funding is not being sought
- g) impact of ceasing the program
- h) strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts.

**Response**

Name of the program	Agricultural College Modernisation Program
Objective(s) of the program	<p>The Agricultural College Modernisation Program (ACMP) was designed to support the Victorian agriculture sector develop the skills required for the future, and to help more Victorians pursue careers in the sector. The ACMP comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Infrastructure Fund</u>: to build new, and upgrade existing, accommodation and teaching facilities at Victoria’s three agriculture colleges: Longerenong College (near Horsham), Marchus Oldham College (Geelong) and University of Melbourne’s Dookie campus (near Shepparton) to increase the colleges’ capacity to accommodate additional students.</li> <li>• <u>Future Agriculture Skills Capacity Fund (Skill Fund)</u>: to develop training required to meet the future skills needs of the agriculture sector with funding provided to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Victorian TAFEs and other agriculture education and training providers and secondary schools to update curriculum, programs, equipment and technology;</li> <li>○ farm businesses to develop improved business planning skills through training and information provision; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ First Nations’ focused initiatives to ensure agriculture training is culturally safe for First Nations people to attract and support their increased connection to agricultural careers.</li> </ul>
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	2.0
Reasons why the program was established	The agriculture sector needs people with the right skills to manage increased risks (e.g. extreme climatic events) and capture the benefits from opportunities (e.g. emergent technology). This required modernising the education, training and on-the-job learning offerings to meet this need and attract new entrants.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	<p>Farm businesses, Registered Aboriginal Parties, students and workers of organisations involved in the delivery of agriculture training and education (including traditional agricultural colleges, TAFEs, other public and private training providers) as well as Victorian secondary schools.</p> <p>Outcomes achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Infrastructure Fund</u>: the infrastructure projects increased the Victorian Agriculture Colleges’ capacity to accommodate students by providing an additional 160 beds, as well as other on-campus upgrades to support engagement and retention of students and the Colleges’ capacity to deliver world class training. The new facilities have also been used to provide accommodation for emergency response.</li> <li>● Skills Fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supported TAFEs and other training organisations to deliver high quality, modern and flexible training programs to ensure students can pursue careers in agriculture. The program engaged 2,400 TAFE and school students (undertaking vocational courses within their regular schooling) across the 13 projects funded for delivery. Outcomes included updated curriculum design and delivery, equipment and skills to support increased adoption of ag-tech.</li> <li>○ Supported 42 projects that delivered vocational and applied learning programs and experience for 11,000 students across 278 secondary schools.</li> <li>○ Delivered 2,639 participant engagements with farm businesses including 997 business planning sessions, 639 intensive learning sessions, 582 farm businesses developed a farm business plan and 1,003 attended one off events.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Reasons why further funding is not being sought	<p>ACMP provided a significant funding injection to upgrade facilities and initiate a range of programs to support training and career pathways into agriculture. The lapsing initiative has met the intended outcomes of the program.</p> <p>Many elements of the ACMP initiatives were designed to support curriculum, resources, equipment and infrastructure that can be used beyond the life of the Program. Agriculture Victoria continues to engage with skills policy colleagues in the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) on agriculture focused programs utilising qualifications from Victoria's Skills First offerings. Agriculture Victoria supports the continued inclusion of accredited agriculture qualifications as part of Victoria's Free TAFE initiative to ensure there is access to fee free agriculture training for eligible Victorians.</p> <p>There are opportunities for Agriculture Victoria to link into other Victorian Government programs and funding sources e.g. through the Victorian Skills Authority's Skills Solutions Partnerships, which brings industry together with TAFEs and dual sector universities to co-design and pilot new short courses and on-the-job training solutions to quickly address skills gaps in priority sectors. The priority sectors in focus for Victoria's recently released Economic Growth Statement includes agribusiness. Agriculture Victoria's investment into farm safety initiatives, including Farming Safe and Well continues to protect Victoria's farming workforce with strategies to prevent accidents and injury, which has linkages to skills development.</p>
Impact of ceasing the program	
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	

Name of the program	Delivering Victoria's Regional Forest Agreement commitments
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided for a program of investments to deliver on the obligations of the newly modernised Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) that establish the framework for the sustainable management and conservation of forests. This includes development of community-centred Forest Management Plans, completing the reviews of regulatory and governance instruments as mandated by the RFAs, and empowering Traditional Owners to partner with government and actively manage Country.
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	6.0
Reasons why the program was established	Implementation of the Victorian Regional Forest Agreements.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	Since the modernised RFAs were finalised in 2020, the Victorian Government has delivered:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• full compliance with Victorian commitments in the Victorian RFAs enabling exemption from Commonwealth legislation for Victorian timber harvesting operations;</li> <li>• listed species and communities risk assessment and implementation of protections and management actions;</li> <li>• a review of legislation to identify improvements to strengthen protections for listed species and communities;</li> <li>• a review of the system that protects biodiversity, old growth forests and wilderness areas across Victoria's five RFA regions; and</li> <li>• a Major Event Review, which assessed the impacts of the 2019-20 bushfires on forests.</li> </ul> <p>The following actions were commenced but not completed as the end of commercial native timber harvesting was announced before their completion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update of Forest Management Plans.</li> <li>• Review of the Code of Practice for Timber Production.</li> </ul>
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	Victorian RFAs were terminated on 31 December 2024 following the cessation of commercial native timber harvesting in State Forests.
Impact of ceasing the program	There is minimal impact of ceasing the program. Exemption from Commonwealth legislation for Victorian timber harvesting operations is no longer required due to the cessation of native timber harvesting. The development of broader forest management policy, regulation and science benefited from the commitments under the Victorian RFAs and related funding.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	The 2024-25 Budget provided funding to manage over 1.8 million hectares of state forest where timber harvesting will no longer occur due to the transition out of native timber harvesting that occurred on 1 January 2024.

Name of the program	Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission Project
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided to progress development of the Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission Project to support future offshore wind energy generation.
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	12.5
Reasons why the program was established	To plan and progress procurement of transmission infrastructure required to support legislated policy for 2GW offshore wind generation by 2032.

Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	The Environmental Effects Statement progressed with scoping requirements published by the Impact Assessment Unit, the delivery case was developed and approved, and the Study corridor refinement was published,
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	Funding will be provided by private sector equity in the commercial model established and approved in the delivery case.
Impact of ceasing the program	Nil.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	Procurement process is adequately consulting with the market whereby funds are being sought, and capacity to support this function are being addressed. Monthly review of cost expenditure and forecast costs are being addressed

Name of the program	Zero interest loans for solar home batteries
Objective(s) of the program	Funding was provided to support eligible households with interest-free loans of up to \$8,800 to install solar battery storage systems in their homes.
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	6.1
Reasons why the program was established	The program was established to reduce the upfront costs to Victorians of installing a solar battery. Households who install a battery and have a solar system can save approximately \$1,400 per year on their energy bills. This program reduces the upfront costs of installing a battery, enabling more households to realise the savings offered by a solar and battery system.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	The battery loans program commenced on 1 July 2023 with more than 2,000 applications approved in 2023-24 with an additional 3,800 expected to be approved by the end of 2024-25. The interest free loan of up to \$8,800 significantly reduces the up-front costs of a battery, which can be in excess of \$10,000. Households with a battery and solar panels save approximately \$1,400 per year, providing a significant return on investment while reducing household energy bills for the long term.
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	The Victorian Government committed to supporting the installation of 18,500 solar batteries in Victorian households. This was achieved in 2024-25 when the uptake of the battery rebate program (which ceased on 30 June 2023) is combined with the battery loan program (which commenced on 1 July 2023 and ends on 30 June 2025).
Impact of ceasing the program	Ceasing the program will reduce the support available to households to bring down the up-front costs of installing batteries. Battery prices however are

	expected to fall due to greater product innovation and availability across global markets, making batteries more accessible and cheaper in the coming years.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	Approximately 20 per cent of battery installations occurring in Victoria are supported by a battery loan from Solar Victoria. The removal of this loan will have a modest market impact. Early communications with industry and consumers ahead of the program closure will minimise any negative impacts.

Name of the program	Establishing VicGrid
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided to support VicGrid’s transmission planning reforms, including establishing VicGrid as the transmission planner for Victoria and to continue policy development and engagement to support implementing the new Victorian Transmission Investment Framework.
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	12.5
Reasons why the program was established	<p>Since its establishment in 2021, originally as a division of the Energy Group in the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), VicGrid has been funded from the State Budget. In 2024, VicGrid moved from being a division of the Energy Group to being an Administrative Office of DEECA.</p> <p>To further the important work commenced by VicGrid in 2021, the 2024-25 Budget provided funding in 2024-25 for the Establishing VicGrid program to support VicGrid’s transmission planning reforms. These functions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishment of VicGrid as the statutory transmission planner for Victoria; and</li> <li>• development of policies and engagement to support implementation of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework.</li> </ul>
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	<p>The <i>Establishing VicGrid program</i> is delivering a second stage of legislative reform to implement the balance of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing VicGrid as a State Business Corporation (SBC) to take on electricity transmission network planning and procurement functions, new responsibilities for network access arrangements and community benefits, and perform its commercial functions such as setting and recovering TUoS charges.</li> <li>• delivering a new Victorian Access regime which will encourage new renewable energy infrastructure to be developed in renewable energy zones. This will</li> </ul>

	<p>support the orderly siting of infrastructure and improve investment certainty for project proponents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing benefits for landholders, regional communities and Traditional Owners impacted by new transmission and renewable energy infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>The reforms enabled by the program will ultimately benefit all Victorians by reducing delays to the transmission infrastructure needed to connect new renewable generation and storage to meet Victoria's commitments to net zero emissions and address the impacts of coal generation closure. The reforms will improve investment certainty for project proponents, and deliver lasting benefits to Victorian Traditional Owners and communities.</p> <p>The legislation is scheduled to be introduced to the Victorian Parliament in 2025.</p>
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	<p>Following passage of the <i>National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid) Act 2024</i> in May, VicGrid is funded in part in 2024-25 through TUoS charges. TUoS charges recover the costs for providing shared prescribed transmission network services in Victoria and are ultimately paid by energy consumers.</p> <p>The 2024 Act established the cost recovery arrangements to enable VicGrid to transition to partial funding from TUoS charges from 1 July 2024. VicGrid's costs in relation to developing the Victorian Transmission Plan as well as project specific costs in facilitating and enabling high priority transmission projects are recoverable.</p> <p>Future funding would be required for VicGrid to deliver any Government priorities that do not constitute services to transmission customers, and therefore cannot be recovered from TUoS. For example, government programs or functions and powers conferred on VicGrid by a Ministerial Order under section 16Y of the <i>National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005</i>.</p>
Impact of ceasing the program	<p>VicGrid is expected to be fully established as an SBC in 2025 and will no longer require establishment funding once established. Policy development and engagement informed the development of the second and final stage of legislation to support implementation of the VTIF. The Victorian Parliament is due to consider the legislation in 2025.</p>
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular and ongoing engagement with internal and external stakeholders.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of VicGrid Finance function to support sound budget forecasting and prudent financial management.</li> <li>• Quality and timely briefings to support decision making, the transition to a SBC and the legislation program.</li> </ul>
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Name of the program	VicGrid functions and delivering the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided to VicGrid to coordinate transmission planning and investment in Victoria via a fit-for-purpose framework that incorporates community and stakeholder engagement.
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	2.7
Reasons why the program was established	<p>Since its establishment in 2021, originally as a division of the Energy Group in the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), VicGrid has been funded from the State Budget. In 2024, VicGrid moved from being a division of the Energy Group to being an Administrative Office of DEECA.</p> <p>To further the important work commenced by VicGrid in 2021, the 2023-24 Budget provided \$2.7 million funding in 2024-25 to support VicGrid’s transmission planning reforms.</p>
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	<p>The <i>VicGrid functions and delivering the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework program</i> provided funding over two years. This funded the delivery of the first stage of legislative reform to implement the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing VicGrid as an Administrative Office of DEECA as an interim step to prepare VicGrid to take on electricity transmission network planning and procurement functions, new responsibilities for network access arrangements and community benefits, and perform its commercial functions.</li> <li>• Delivering a new Victorian Transmission Planning Objective and new Victorian Transmission Plan. The Victorian Transmission Plan is a long-term strategic plan for transmission development in Victoria designed to make sure the right amount of energy infrastructure is built in the right places at the right time to keep Victorians connected to reliable, affordable power as coal retires.</li> </ul>

- Providing a framework to make payments to landholders hosting new transmission infrastructure.
- Enabling the CEO, VicGrid to support the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) on major electricity transmission projects such as VNI West, Marinus Link and Offshore Wind.

In 2024-25, the program, together with additional funding from the 2024-25 Budget *Establishing VicGrid program*, supported Stage 2 of the VTIF reforms. These reforms include:

- Establishing VicGrid as a State Business Corporation (SBC) to take on electricity transmission network planning and procurement functions, new responsibilities for network access arrangements and community benefits, and perform its commercial functions. Operating as a SBC will allow for appropriate governance while ensuring appropriate transparency
- Delivering a new Victorian Access regime which will encourage new renewable energy infrastructure to be developed in renewable energy zones. This will support the orderly siting of infrastructure and improve investment certainty for project proponents.
- Implementing benefits for landholders, regional communities and Traditional Owners impacted by new transmission and renewable energy infrastructure.

The reforms enabled by the program will ultimately benefit all Victorians by enabling anticipatory investment, reducing delays to the transmission infrastructure needed to connect new renewable generation and storage to meet Victoria's commitments to net zero emissions and address the impacts of coal generation closure. The reforms will improve investment certainty for project proponents and deliver lasting benefits to Victorian Traditional Owners and communities.

The first stage of VTIF legislation was passed by the Victorian Parliament in May 2024. The second stage is scheduled to be introduced to the Victorian Parliament in 2025.

Reasons why further funding is not being sought	The funded programs were an interim step to prepare VicGrid to take on electricity transmission network planning and procurement functions, new responsibilities for network access arrangements and community benefits, and perform its commercial functions.
Impact of ceasing the program	Nil. VicGrid is expected to be fully established as a SBC in 2025 and will no longer require establishment funding once established. Policy development and engagement has informed the development of the second and final stage of legislation to support implementation of the VTIF. The Victorian Parliament is due to consider the legislation in 2025.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular and ongoing engagement with internal and external stakeholders.</li> <li>• Establishment of VicGrid Finance function to support sound budget forecasting and prudent financial management.</li> <li>• Quality and timely briefings to support decision making, the transition to a SBC and the legislation program.</li> </ul>

Name of the program	Environmental watering infrastructure to restore Victorian high value sites in southern Murray Darling Basin floodplains and waterways
Objective(s) of the program	Funding is provided to ensure effective governance, management and monitoring requirements for water supply and efficiency projects that aim to improve water infrastructure and delivery systems and deliver against the Murray Darling Basin Plan.
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	9.7
Reasons why the program was established	To meet Victoria's obligations under the Basin Plan and to implement Water for Victoria Action 4.11 - Balance water recovery for the Murray-Darling Basin.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) plans for the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project (VMFRP) with North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and Mallee CMA.</li> <li>• Incorporation of outcomes of the environmental regulatory approvals processes for Environment Effects (EE) Act and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) Act requirements and completion of additional ecological baseline monitoring requirements and data captured within central database held by Arthur Rylah Institute</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriately skilled staff engaged within DEECA Statewide Infrastructure Projects to provide oversight and governance in a transparent and accountable manner</li> </ul>
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	Under the Basin Plan, the Commonwealth is responsible for funding initial project scoping and construction.
Impact of ceasing the program	Monitoring frameworks and baseline monitoring are largely completed. The impact of ceasing the program will be an inability to finalise baseline condition monitoring required for regulatory approvals.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	Commonwealth funding provided for construction scoping and delivery will ensure continued progress in delivering these projects.

Name of the program	Acceleration of Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Adoption Program
Objective(s) of the program	<p>Shared objectives included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contribute to meeting ZEV Roadmap target of half of all light vehicle sales in Victoria to be zero emissions vehicles by 2030;</li> <li>• create project supply chain and local jobs, i.e. skills, capabilities and services across each service area;</li> <li>• deliver community benefit - both economic and social; and</li> <li>• reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Victorian Government’s net-zero transition target and the local council’s own targets and strategies.</li> </ul> <p>Destination charging across Victoria objectives included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make electric vehicle (EV) fast-charging technology readily available at destination locations, including recreational community destinations and high-use locations; and</li> <li>• ensure even coverage of fast-charging infrastructure that is readily available for Victorians across the State.</li> </ul> <p>EV charging for council and business fleets objectives included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the transition of local council and business fleets to EVs;</li> <li>• implement EV charging technology at local council offices and depots; and</li> <li>• help stimulate a second-hand EV market at end-of-vehicle lease (if applicable).</li> </ul> <p>ZEV Emerging Technologies objectives included:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• build upon EV charging technologies to support the uptake of ZEVs where possible, support smart charging technology manufacturing, installation or maintenance opportunities within Victoria.</li> </ul>
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	4.1
Reasons why the program was established	To support delivery of the policy target of half of all light vehicle sales in Victoria to be zero emissions vehicles by 2030. Accessibility of public EV charging infrastructure is a key consideration to the purchase of an electric vehicle.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	<p>The program was delivered through four grant funding programs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Destination Charging Across Victoria – by program end, 133 chargers with a cumulative total of 241 charge points will be installed across 116 key tourist destination sites.</li> <li>2. EV Charging for Council Fleets – by program end, 25 councils will install 128 chargers (196 charge points) at 55 sites across Victoria.</li> <li>3. EV Charging for Business Fleets – by program end, 12 businesses and not-for-profits will install 47 chargers (70 charge points) at 20 sites across Victoria.</li> <li>4. Zero Emissions Vehicles Emerging Technologies – by program end three innovation projects will be completed, testing emerging EV charging technologies.</li> </ol>
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	Investment from government to support this program has delivered a significant number of public and fleet chargers across Victoria. The program was funded for a finite period of time and is concluding on 30 June 2025, in line with its scheduled timeframe for delivery. The program has delivered on its stated objectives. The market for electric vehicles and EV charging infrastructure has matured dramatically since the beginning of this program, and the private sector is increasingly stepping in to fill in the remaining gaps.
Impact of ceasing the program	
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	As the private market and electricity grid operators play a growing role in this space, continue to remove barriers to the rapidly maturing EV and charging infrastructure market filling remaining gaps themselves. Continue to work with the Commonwealth on policy settings and funding opportunities for EV charging infrastructure and emerging technologies like vehicle to grid.

Name of the program	Energy Resilience Solutions
Objective(s) of the program	Install 24 energy backup systems for towns heavily affected by prolonged power outages.

Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	1.0
Reasons why the program was established	To support vulnerable towns through outages caused by major weather events.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	Community energy hubs across Victoria are equipped with solar panels, batteries and generators that provide power back up during a severe storm event and help to keep essential services running during prolonged power outages. The energy hubs are located in high-risk areas for severe weather impacts like the Yarra Ranges, Gippsland, Dandenong Ranges and along the Great Ocean Road. The hubs have already had a positive impact with a number of systems kicking in – including in the neighbouring towns of Emerald and Gembrook – during the storms February last year.
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	The program was funded for a finite period of time and concludes in 2024-25, in line with its scheduled timeframe for delivery.
Impact of ceasing the program	
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	

Name of the program	Community Microgrids and Sustainable Energy Program
Objective(s) of the program	Support three towns in Eastern Victoria with energy backup systems that were heavily impacted by bushfires causing prolonged outages.
Expenditure in the financial year 2024–25 (\$ million)	0.7
Reasons why the program was established	The program was announced after the extreme 2019–20 fire season, which left towns across Gippsland and the state’s north-east disconnected from the electricity network.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	<p>The Community Microgrids and Sustainable Energy Program has supported the installation of a mix of solar, batteries and other distributed energy resources for a range of buildings. These include essential service buildings, commercial and industrial buildings and households. The energy back-up systems provide a reliable power supply and build energy-resilient rural communities.</p> <p>In Mallacoota, funding delivered an advanced microgrid using solar panels, batteries and generators on essential service and local business buildings. This was coupled with residents receiving hot water heat pumps to reduce energy use. An increase to the size of the town’s diesel generator also occurred to provide up to five days of back-up power when the town becomes isolated from the grid.</p>

	<p>In Omeo and Corryong, the funding provided energy back-up systems for essential services and local business buildings consisting of solar PV, batteries and generators. Residents also received solar PV and battery energy back-up systems.</p> <p>The microgrids and energy back-up systems will provide crucial back-up power in the event of a power outage caused by a bushfire.</p>
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	<p>The program was funded for a finite period of time and concludes in 2024-25, in line with its scheduled timeframe for delivery.</p>
Impact of ceasing the program	
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	

## Capital asset expenditure

### Question 10

*Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances* provides cash flow statements for departments.

*Budget Paper No. 4: State Capital Program* provides the capital projects undertaken by departments.

For the 'Payments for non-financial assets' line item in the 2025–26 budget cash flow statement, please provide a breakdown of these costs and indicate which capital project they relate to.

If any other line items in the cash flow statement comprises expenditure on Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), please list the PPP it relates to and the cost.

#### *Guidance*

Capital projects extracted from the cash flow statements are expected to correspond to capital projects listed in *Budget Paper No. 4: State Capital Program* as 'New projects', 'Existing projects', or 'Completed projects'.

### Response

Please see [Excel Worksheet](#) for response.

## Public Private Partnerships – expenditure

### Question 11

*Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances* provides a comprehensive operating statement that details each department's revenue and expenses on an accrual basis reflecting the cost of providing its output.

- a) In the 2025–26 comprehensive operating statement please identify all expenditure on Public Private Partnerships (PPP) by line item and provide a breakdown of these costs and indicate to which project they relate.

#### *Guidance*

If the line item 'Other operating expenses' in the comprehensive operating statement comprises expenditure on PPPs, please also list the PPP it relates to and the cost.

- b) Please also provide the estimated/forecast expenditure for all PPPs across forward estimates.

### Response

a)

Line item	2023–24 Actual (\$ million)	2024–25 revised Budget (\$ million)	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	Related project(s)
Employee benefits	0.2	0.1	0.1	Biosciences Research Centre Project
Interest Expense	20.8	20.4	19.8	Biosciences Research Centre Project
Other operating expenses	19.3	17.7	28.3	Biosciences Research Centre Project
<b>Total</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>48.2</b>	

Line item	2023–24 Actual (\$ million)	2024–25 revised Budget (\$ million)	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	Related project(s)
Employee benefits	0.0*	0.0	0.0	Showgrounds Redevelopment Project
Interest Expense	3.9	2.9	0.0	Showgrounds Redevelopment Project
Other operating expenses	2.1	1.7	0.0	Showgrounds Redevelopment Project
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	

\* Employee benefits expenditure is \$3,100 in 2023-24.

Line item	2023–24 Actual (\$ million)	2024–25 revised Budget (\$ million)	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	Related project(s)
Expenses on behalf of the State (Administered items statement)	162.7	169.0	289.3	Victorian Desalination Project
Interest and depreciation expense (Administered items statement)	354.2	348.3	341.5	Victorian Desalination Project
<b>Total</b>	<b>516.9</b>	<b>517.3</b>	<b>630.8</b>	

b)

PPPs	2023–24 Actual (\$ million)	2024–25 revised Budget (\$ million)	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	2025-26 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)	2026-27 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)	2027-28 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)
Biosciences Research Centre Project	40.3	38.1	48.2	48.2	40.0	36.4
Showgrounds Redevelopment Project	6.0	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Victorian Desalination Project	516.9	517.3	630.8	630.8	631.1	646.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>563.1</b>	<b>560.0</b>	<b>679.1</b>	<b>679.1</b>	<b>671.0</b>	<b>683.3</b>

## Public Private Partnerships – expected and actual benefits

### Question 12

For Public Private Partnerships (PPP) projects in operation and in procurement and delivery, please provide detail on:

- the expected benefits of the PPP project in the uncommissioned (planning and construction) stages
- the value of the expected benefits of the PPP project in the uncommissioned stages to the State
- the actual/existing benefits of the PPP projects in its commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage
- the value of the actual/existing benefits of the PPP projects in its commissioned stage per year
- how benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported.

## Response:

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
Biosciences Research Centre	<p>The PPP contracting model delivers the following benefits to the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduced operational exposure and obtaining increased certainty of outcome, due to the efficient allocation of risks;</li> <li>competition and performance-based contracts with measures for poor or non-delivery;</li> <li>sustainable infrastructure by focusing on asset value maintenance, ensuring long-term viability; and</li> <li>reduced financial commitments at the delivery stage of the project by leveraging private capital, reducing reliance on public funds.</li> </ul> <p>The PPP model has the flexibility to drive both competition as well as meeting affordability</p>	<p>The value of actual/existing benefits per year is difficult to determine given both the qualitative and quantitative benefits of the project, and would require detailed modelling. The department has not undertaken this modelling and does not have this information on hand.</p>	<p>The benefits of using the PPP Contracting Model for the Biosciences Research Centre Project to date have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a fully operational world class scientific research facility;</li> <li>an optimal risk allocation between the Joint Venture participants and the private sector based on the Partnerships Victoria principles;</li> <li>a facility that, through its state-of-the-art high design standard, has become a centre for internationally recognised primary industries orientated research, diagnostic capacity and educational activities;</li> <li>a facility that complies with all applicable national and international statutory</li> </ul>	<p>There are no measures in place to quantify in dollar terms the resultant benefits of the outputs and outcomes to the State of using the PPP contracting model for this Project. The value (\$m) resulting from agricultural research and innovation programs would require complex modelling to evaluate the quantitative benefits resulting from the investment over time. The department has not undertaken this modelling and does not have this information on hand.</p> <p>Qualitative economic benefits to date include:</p>	<p>There is currently no public reporting relating to this project, nor have benefit measures been established for this to occur.</p>

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
	<p>requirements using tools such as the Public Sector Comparator (PSC), financial liability impacts and a scope ladder. A scope ladder can be used where appropriate to add or remove scope from the project depending on the financial impact. As the State provides an output specification, it is up to the private sector to develop a design which not only meets the minimum requirements for the facility but also best achieves the other project requirements such as functionality and operational outcomes. A key benefit of the PPP model is that the private sector is incentivised to provide an optimised and innovative design within the affordability constraints, which often results in greater qualitative benefits than if only the scope under the PSC was delivered.</p>		<p>and regulatory requirements, including all applicable accreditation requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhancing the scientific research programs of the Joint Venture participants and their associates by enabling these parties to be better positioned to deliver on their strategic plans; and</li> <li>• attracting national and international scientists, improving research capability and promoting collaborative research resulting in better biosciences research and educational outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stimulating economic activity in Victoria through investment in biosciences and biotechnology;</li> <li>• growing Victoria’s agricultural biosciences and biotechnology profile as a place to do business;</li> <li>• minimising geographic separation of some of DEECA’s metropolitan research and development facilities replacing facilities that were approaching the end of their useful lives; and</li> <li>• enhancing commercial opportunities by encouraging the private sector to undertake scientific research that is</li> </ul>	

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
	<p><u>Biosciences Research Centre Project Vision</u></p> <p>The Project's vision is to generate reputational, economic, social and environmental benefits for Victoria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by focusing new-generation biosciences research on threats such as climate change and biosecurity preparedness;</li> <li>• by enhancing capacity for preparedness, rapid detection, response and management of plant and animal pest and disease outbreaks, to reassure trading partners and protect Victoria's agricultural sector;</li> <li>• by improving the efficiency of research and development programs and services;</li> <li>• by improving the</li> </ul>			<p>synergistic and complementary to the operating objectives of the Joint Venture participants.</p>	

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
	<p>returns to the community from research and development investment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by providing linkages to commercial partners to increase opportunities for research investment and commercialisation;</li> <li>• by improving Victoria's competitiveness by facilitating the development of new generation crops and animals focused on drought tolerance and bio-energy; and</li> <li>• by leveraging the co-location between DEECA and La Trobe University to access new research and development funding.</li> </ul>				
Showgrounds Redevelopment	<p>The PPP contracting model delivers the following benefits to the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduced operational exposure and obtaining increased certainty of outcome, due to the</li> </ul>	<p>The value of actual/existing benefits per year is difficult to determine given both the qualitative and quantitative benefits</p>	<p>The Showgrounds PPP has delivered a range of general benefits including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring continuity of the Melbourne Show at the Melbourne</li> </ul>	<p>We are unable to quantify in dollar terms the resultant benefits of the outputs and outcomes to the State of using the PPP</p>	<p>There is currently no public reporting relating to this project, nor have benefit measures been established for this to occur.</p>

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
	<p>efficient allocation of risks;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• competition and performance-based contracts with measures for poor or non-delivery;</li> <li>• sustainable infrastructure by focusing on asset value maintenance, ensuring long-term viability;</li> <li>• reduced financial commitments at the delivery stage of the project by leveraging private capital and reducing reliance on public funds.</li> </ul>	<p>of the project and would require detailed modelling. The department has not undertaken this modelling and does not have this information on hand.</p>	<p>Showgrounds site in Ascot Vale;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing facilities for the purpose of delivering the Melbourne Show and other events that have a design life of 40 years; and</li> <li>• maintaining the Showgrounds (including all improvements on the Showgrounds plant, machinery and equipment) in accordance with the asset management plan.</li> </ul>	<p>contracting model for this Project.</p>	
Victorian Desalination Plant	Desalination Plant commissioned in 2012.	<p>The Project is unique both in its scale and in the supply side issues it addresses. This uniqueness rendered any quantitative analysis of the associated costs and benefits highly unreliable. Consequently, a qualitative approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides water security to Melbourne, Geelong, parts of East Gippsland and surrounding regions.</li> <li>• 50 gigalitres of water has been ordered for the 2025-26 financial year, as storage levels particularly in Melbourne and Geelong have</li> </ul>	<p>The Victorian Desalination Plant provides the Melbourne system, including Geelong, parts of East Gippsland and surrounding regions, with long term water security and acts as an insurance mechanism to avoid the need for water</p>	<p>The annual volume of water required and the volume delivered is reported on the <a href="http://water.vic.gov.au">water.vic.gov.au</a> website. The Metropolitan Urban Water Strategies and the Central and Gippsland Region</p>

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
		<p>to assessing the associated costs and benefits was adopted. Analysis undertaken in 2007-08 identified the primary benefit from the Project was to avoid the risk of level 4 restrictions and the requirement to put in place emergency procedures. The costs associated with level 4 restrictions or any further restrictions resulting from emergency arrangements being put in place would be very large for the community and on commercial operations both in the short term and in the long run. Based on this qualitative analysis it is considered at the time highly likely that</p>	<p>experienced a significant decline over the past year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plant has contributed 455 gigalitres of water to the Melbourne supply since 2016-17.</li> </ul>	<p>restrictions which can have significant economic and social impacts. While annual production varies based on need, the plant has contributed 455 gigalitres of water to the Melbourne system, including Geelong, since 2016-17 (equating to approximately one year of Melbourne's water supply). These qualitative and quantitative benefits accrue over the life of the operation of the plant and therefore an annual value is not appropriate.</p>	<p>Sustainable Water Strategy (updated five-yearly) includes assessment of the need for the desalination plant in the overall water supply system.</p>

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
		the benefits associated with the Project outweighed its costs.			

## Major project contracting – DTP only

### Question 13

Not applicable – DTP only.

## Savings initiatives

### Question 14

For each of the savings initiatives detailed in the 2024–25 Budget,<sup>8</sup> please detail:

- the department's saving target for 2024–25 and 2025–26
- a breakdown of how the department will meet the savings targets in 2024–25 and 2025–26
- the impact that these actions will have on the delivery of services and assets/infrastructure during 2024–25 and 2025–26.

### Response

Initiative	2024–25			2025–26		
	Savings target (\$ million)	Breakdown of how the department met savings targets	Impact these actions had on the delivery of services and assets/infrastructure	Savings target (\$ million)	How the department will meet savings targets	Impact these actions will have on delivery of services and assets/infrastructure
Whole of Government savings and efficiencies	2.162	The target will be met by measures that do not materially impact frontline services, including reducing advertising spend.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or asset / infrastructure projects.	2.585	The Department will be providing further details to Government on implementation of the savings, however the target is expected to be met by measures that do not materially impact frontline services, including for example, reduced corporate and back office functions, and reduced advertising spend.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or asset / infrastructure projects.

<sup>8</sup> Department of Treasury and Finance, *Budget Paper No. 3: 2024–25 Service Delivery*, Melbourne, 2024, p. 92.

**Question 15**

For each of the savings initiatives detailed in the 2025–26 Budget, please detail (on the same basis of consolidation as the budget papers):

- the department's saving target for 2025–26
- how the department will meet the various savings targets in 2025–26
- the impact that these actions will have on the delivery of services and assets/infrastructure during 2025–26.

**Response**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Savings target for 2025–26 (\$ million)</b>	<b>Savings target for 2026–27 (\$ million)</b>	<b>Savings target for 2027–28 (\$ million)</b>	<b>Savings target for 2028–29 (\$ million)</b>	<b>How the department will meet various savings targets</b>	<b>Impact these actions will have on delivery of services and assets/infrastructure</b>
Savings and efficiencies and expenditure reduction measures in 2025–26 Budget	42.914	41.325	50.313	16.634	The Department will be providing further details to Government on implementation of the savings, however, the target is expected to be met through general savings and efficiencies measures across the department, including reduced spending on corporate and back-office functions, administrative efficiencies, such as streamlining processes, and realignment of priorities.	The Department will prioritise front line service delivery and infrastructure in implementing the savings.

## Use of funds saved from other programs or initiatives

### Question 16

In relation to any programs or initiatives that have been reprioritised, curtailed or reduced for 2025–26, please identify:

- the amount expected to be spent under the program or initiative during 2025–26 at the time of the 2024–25 Budget
- the amount currently to be spent under the program or initiative during 2025–26
- the use to which the funds realised by this reduction will be put. Please include the name(s) of any program or initiative that will be funded or partially funded.

### Response

Program/initiative that has been reprioritised, curtailed or reduced	The amount expected to be spent under the program or initiative during 2025–26 (\$ million)		The use to which the funds will be put
	At the time of the 2024–25 Budget	At the time of the 2025–26 Budget	
Driving down bills with 100 neighbourhood batteries	12.0	19.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The increase in budget in 2025-26 is as a result of rephasing the budget of this initiative in previous years.</li> <li>Some funding from this program has been reprioritised.</li> <li>\$2.5 million in 2025-26 will be used to fund the 2025-26 Budget initiative Continuing to meet Victoria’s Marinus Link shareholder responsibilities.</li> <li>\$1.5 million in 2025-26 will be used to fund the 2025-26 Budget initiative Industrial Renewable gas guarantee.</li> </ul>

## Service delivery

### Question 17

- a) Please provide the total estimated cost to the department (if any) of the machinery of government changes made since July 2024.

#### Response

Not applicable. The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) has had no Machinery of Government changes made since July 2024.

- b) Please complete the table below detailing the impacts of any machinery of government changes on the department since July 2024.

#### Response

Impact to the department	Not applicable.
Impact to departmental outputs	Not applicable.
Impact to departmental agencies	Not applicable.
Impact to portfolios	Not applicable.
Impact to statutory authorities	Not applicable.
Estimated cost and date changes are anticipated to be fully implemented	Not applicable.
New portfolio responsibilities and/or how responsibilities are shared, if relevant	Not applicable.
* Where the machinery of government change has no impact on the department, please type N/A where appropriate in the table above.	

## Question 18

*Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery* presents departmental performance statements that state the department's outputs by departmental objectives.

Please provide by ministerial portfolio, the relevant objective(s), objective indicator(s), output(s), and performance measure(s) as provided in the 2025–26 Budget. Where responsibility for outputs, initiatives or performance measures is shared, please clearly outline what is shared and how responsibility is divided between Ministers or portfolios.

Please use a separate table for each portfolio.

Please use one line per output and ensure that outputs align with the relevant objective and indicator/s.

### Response

Minister	Minister for Environment		
Portfolio	Environment		
Objective	Objective indicator/s	Output	Performance measures
Objective 4: Reduced impact of major bushfires and other emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of bushfires contained at first attack and/or under five hectares to suppress bushfires promptly, keep bushfires small and minimise loss</li> <li>Area treated through planned burning and other treatments to maintain the statewide bushfire risk at or below 70 per cent</li> <li>Percentage of agreed departmental fire emergency management obligations met on time and to standard</li> </ul>	Fire and Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100 per cent of burns identified in the current year of the Joint Fuel Management Program ready for on ground delivery</li> <li>Personnel with accreditation in a fire and emergency management role</li> <li>Stakeholder and community forums on bushfire management and planned burning held</li> <li>State forests roads (Category 1) and bridges (on Category 1 roads) with documented inspections and/or maintenance programs to meet regulatory obligations</li> <li>Statewide bushfire risk is maintained at or below the target</li> <li>Strategic fire access roads improved</li> <li>Strategic fuel breaks maintained</li> <li>Fires contained at less than five hectares to suppress fires before they become established, minimising impact</li> <li>Personnel accredited to serve in a senior capacity (level 2 or 3) in a fire and emergency management role</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of Standard of cover completed to assess resource requirements and availability</li> <li>• Fires contained at first attack to suppress fires before they become established, minimising impact</li> <li>• Readiness and response plans completed prior to the upcoming fire season</li> </ul>
<p>Objective 6: Healthy, resilient and biodiverse environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Victoria’s native species populations and their habitat through targeted management</li> <li>• Reduction in pollutants from priority hotspots</li> <li>• Environment Protection Authority prosecutions result in a finding of guilt or a clarification of the law</li> <li>• Reduction in waste generation per person</li> <li>• Increase in diversion of waste from landfill</li> </ul>	<p>Environment and Biodiversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity surveys completed on forest, fire management activities</li> <li>• Environmental volunteer hours contributing to the health of Victoria’s biodiversity</li> <li>• Habitat restored and enhanced to benefit biodiversity and store carbon</li> <li>• New permanently protected native vegetation on private land</li> <li>• On-ground action to support local environmental outcomes</li> <li>• Pest herbivore control in priority locations</li> <li>• Pest predator control in priority locations</li> <li>• Priority conservation actions for threatened species</li> <li>• Strategic compliance and enforcement operations completed by the Conservation Regulator</li> <li>• Weed control in priority locations</li> <li>• Annual Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI) Client Survey respondents rank the level of overall satisfaction with ARI’s research as good, very good or excellent</li> <li>• Proportion of weed and pest animal control targeted towards priority locations</li> <li>• Presentations made and scientific publications in peer reviewed journals</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional Owner groups whose Country plans, cultural values and practices are enabled by biodiversity policies and programs</li> <li>• Native Vegetation Credit Extracts processed within 10 days</li> <li>• Planning referrals relating to native vegetation processed within statutory timeframes</li> <li>• Wildlife Licence renewals processed by target dates</li> </ul>
		<p>Statutory Activities and Environment Protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment condition notifications provided to Victorians</li> <li>• Total inspections of business sites or premises conducted to prevent and respond to risks of harm to human health and the environment</li> <li>• Victorian community trust in EPA</li> <li>• Applications for internal review of remedial notices completed within statutory timeframes</li> <li>• Applications for licences and permits completed within statutory timelines</li> <li>• EPA advice on planning matters is provided within required timeframes</li> <li>• EPA confirms duty holder compliance with remedial notice requirements, or escalates for further action, within 17 days of the compliance due date</li> <li>• EPA provides technical advice to lead agencies within required timelines during emergency incidents</li> <li>• EPA responds to priority waste incidents within 15 hours of notification</li> <li>• Environmental audits and preliminary risk screening assessment reports are reviewed to ensure administrative compliance with legislation and guidelines within 14 days of submission</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pollution reporters requesting follow up by EPA receive contact within five working days</li> </ul>
		Circular Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of Victorian households with access to organic food and garden waste recycling services</li> <li>• Proportion of Victorian households with access to separated glass recycling services</li> <li>• Container Deposit Scheme refund collection points provided to Victorians</li> <li>• Cumulative increase in the capacity of Victoria’s resource recovery infrastructure</li> </ul>
Objective 7: Productive and effective land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of park visitor satisfaction across the Parks Victoria estate</li> <li>• Bay and park assets rated in average to excellent condition</li> <li>• Traditional Owner satisfaction with DEECA’s progress in enabling self-determination</li> </ul>	Management of Public Land and Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual visitation to Zoos Victoria</li> <li>• Local parks, playgrounds and dog parks completed</li> <li>• Participants in Coastcare activities</li> <li>• Specimens curated in the State Botanical Collection</li> <li>• Visitors to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne and Cranbourne</li> <li>• Publicly elected Committees of Management that have a current statutory appointment</li> <li>• Recreational facilities in state forests maintained to have a life expectancy greater than five years</li> <li>• Rent reviews of Department managed Crown land leases undertaken within specified time frames</li> </ul>
		Parks Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area treated to minimise the impact of pest plants, pest animals and over abundant native animals in parks managed by Parks Victoria</li> <li>• Total area of estate managed by Parks Victoria</li> <li>• Visits to national, state, urban and other terrestrial parks</li> <li>• Visits to piers and jetties</li> <li>• Significant built bay assets managed by Parks Victoria rated in average to excellent condition</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant built park assets managed by Parks Victoria rated in average to excellent condition</li> </ul>
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<b>Minister</b>	Minister for Climate Action		
<b>Portfolio</b>	Climate Action		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Objective indicator/s</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>
Objective 2: Net zero emission, climate ready economy and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions relative to 2005</li> <li>Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions for Victorian schools participating in the ResourceSmart Schools program</li> <li>Strengthen community and government resilience to climate change hazards</li> <li>Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from Victorian Government operations</li> </ul>	Climate Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual energy saved by Victorian schools participating in the ResourceSmart Schools program</li> <li>Victorian schools participating in the ResourceSmart Schools program</li> <li>Delivery of statutory outputs under the <i>Climate Action Act 2017</i> within statutory timeframes</li> </ul>

<b>Minister</b>	Minister for Energy and Resources		
<b>Portfolio</b>	Energy and Resources		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Objective indicator/s</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>
Objective 3: Sustainable development of Victoria's earth resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metres drilled for minerals exploration in Victoria</li> <li>Level of production of minerals and extractives</li> </ul>	Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community and stakeholder engagement information forums</li> <li>Extractive Industries Work Authority work plans processed within regulatory timeframes</li> <li>Delivery of agreed milestones for major resources initiatives and priority projects</li> <li>Geoscience data packages released to promote earth resource opportunities across the State</li> <li>Mineral licence applications processed within regulatory timeframes</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mineral work plans processed within regulatory timeframes</li> <li>• Site rehabilitation bonds processed within 90 days from issue of bond notice for work plans expanding access to resource</li> <li>• Earth resources regulatory audits completed in line with the agreed compliance work program</li> </ul>
Objective 5: Reliable, sustainable and affordable energy services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relative share of Victoria’s energy sourced from renewables</li> <li>• Percentage of surveyed users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report that they plan to switch offers after using the website</li> <li>• Electricity generating capacity installed under the Solar Homes program</li> <li>• Solar panel systems and energy efficient hot water systems installed under the Solar Homes program</li> </ul>	Solar Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificates (each representing one tonne of greenhouse gas emissions avoided) surrendered by energy retailers to meet their liabilities under the Victorian Energy Efficiency Target</li> <li>• Applications for Solar panel system rebates for households approved</li> <li>• Applications for hot water rebates approved</li> <li>• Rebated installations audited by the Solar Homes Audit Program within 6 months of installation</li> <li>• Solar Homes Program customers who rate the overall performance of Solar Victoria as ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’ in post-approval surveys</li> <li>• Average number of business days to process completed eligibility applications</li> <li>• Rebate payments for Solar retailers processed within five business days</li> </ul>
		Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government-supported events that engage business and supply chains regarding the energy sector</li> <li>• Neighbourhood batteries installed, including batteries specifically for Traditional Owners and First Peoples communities</li> <li>• Vulnerable Victorian energy consumers supported to navigate the energy market by the Energy Assistance Program</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report they are likely to recommend the website to others</li> </ul>
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<b>Minister</b>	Minister for Agriculture		
<b>Portfolio</b>	Agriculture		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Objective indicator/s</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>
Objective 1: Productive and sustainably used natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value of Victorian agriculture production</li> <li>Value of Victorian food and fibre exports.</li> </ul>	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmers and related small business operators supported by the Rural Financial Counselling Service to manage financial hardship</li> <li>Inspections or audits of scientific establishments undertaken to provide assurance of compliance with relevant industry standards for animal welfare</li> <li>Classroom presentations of the Responsible Pet Ownership program delivered to Victorian kindergartens and primary schools</li> <li>Young farmer Scholarships Awarded</li> <li>Grant recipients who met agreed milestones</li> <li>Performance and grant agreements acquitted within timeframes specified in the funding agreement</li> <li>Intellectual property protection disclosures accepted</li> <li>Agreements finalised with industry partners to commercialise intellectual property</li> <li>Postgraduate-level/PhD students in training</li> <li>Ratio of external funds co-invested in agriculture research and development projects</li> <li>Satisfaction rating of external co-investors in agriculture research and development</li> <li>Scientific and technical publications accepted for publication following independent peer review</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pest and disease diagnostic test results provided to industry and government within agreed timeframes</li> <li>• Research project milestones and reports completed on time</li> <li>• Animal disease, welfare and product integrity control programs maintained to ensure Victorian agricultural produce complies with food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity standards required to access markets</li> <li>• Client interactions with land health services</li> <li>• Clients engaged with agriculture productivity services</li> <li>• Known state prohibited weed sites monitored and treated in line with the relevant weed action plan</li> <li>• Plant pest, disease and residue control programs maintained to ensure Victorian agricultural produce complies with food safety and biosecurity standards required to access markets</li> <li>• Properties inspected for invasive plant and animal priority species</li> <li>• Client satisfaction rating of agricultural services</li> <li>• National biosecurity, agriculture/veterinary chemical use and animal welfare programs implemented in accordance with agreed plans</li> <li>• Preparedness activities implemented, in line with agreed plans, to ensure response readiness for emergency animal and plant pest, disease and natural disaster incidents</li> <li>• Actions commenced within specified timeframes to respond to new or amended assurance or accreditation programs to meet interstate requirements and enable export of Victorian plant and plant products</li> <li>• Actions commenced within specified timeframes to respond to reported emergency animal and plant pest,</li> </ul>
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			<p>disease and natural disaster incidents complies with national and state agreements and obligations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal health certificates issued within specified timeframes to support international market access</li> <li>• Plant health certificates issued within specified timeframes at the Melbourne Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market to support domestic market access</li> <li>• Number of worker support payments finalised under the Victorian Forestry Transition Program</li> <li>• Number of business and community development grants awarded</li> <li>• Number of training activities undertaken under the Victorian Forestry Transition Program</li> <li>• Number of trees planted under the Gippsland Plantation Investment Program</li> <li>• Value of co-investment from external (non-state) funding sources attracted to the Department’s programs that support the growth of Victoria’s plantation estate</li> </ul>
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<b>Minister</b>	Minister for Water		
<b>Portfolio</b>	Water		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Objective indicator/s</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>
Objective 8: Safe, sustainable and productive water resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of waterway sites with maintained or improved environmental condition as a result of active management</li> <li>• Cumulative water savings (permanent reduction in irrigation distribution system delivery losses) realised through water recovery projects</li> </ul>	Effective Water Management and Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area of active stewardship to improve catchment health and resilience through broadacre management</li> <li>• Area of waterway vegetation works undertaken to improve the health and resilience of waterways</li> <li>• Environmental watering actions achieved at planned sites</li> <li>• Households or community housing assisted in the Community Rebate and Housing Retrofit Program</li> <li>• Long-term water monitoring site parameters maintained</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New flood studies funded to ensure communities understand flood risk and to inform investment in flood warning and mitigation measures</li><li>• Number of Traditional Owner groups funded to undertake self-determined water projects</li><li>• Place-based plans and actions completed for healthier communities and environments that encompass multiple values (Aboriginal, social, environmental and economic)</li><li>• Schools signed up to Schools Water Efficiency Program (SWEP)</li><li>• Compliance with the salinity management actions agreed in the Murray Darling Basin Agreement</li><li>• Victorian Water Register system availability per annum</li><li>• Water market information products published annually to ensure water users can make informed decisions</li><li>• Waterway licenses and permits processed within statutory timeframes</li></ul>
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**Question 19**

Please provide by ministerial portfolio a list of the agencies/entities/bodies and their category (for example statutory/administrative office/authority) to which the information contained in this questionnaire relates.

**Response**

The financial information provided in this questionnaire relates to the following agencies/entities/bodies:

<b>Ministerial Portfolio</b>	<b>Name of agency/entity/body</b>	<b>Category of agency/entity/body</b>
Environment portfolio.	Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (CES)	The CES is a wholly owned and controlled entity of the State of Victoria.
Water portfolio.	Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH)	The VEWH is a wholly owned and controlled entity of the State of Victoria.

The questionnaire also includes additional information related to the following bodies:

<b>Ministerial Portfolio</b>	<b>Name of agency/entity/body</b>	<b>Category of agency/entity/body</b>
Environment portfolio.	Environment Protection Authority Victoria	Public entity
Environment portfolio.	Sustainability Victoria	Public entity
Environment portfolio.	Zoos Victoria	Public entity
Environment portfolio.	Parks Victoria	Public entity
Environment portfolio.	Royal Botanic Gardens	Public entity
Water portfolio	Catchment Management Authorities	Public entity
Water portfolio	Water Corporations	Public entity
Water portfolio	Victorian Environmental Water Holder	Public entity

## Departmental objectives

### Question 20 – new objectives

For all new departmental objectives in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- a) a description of the objective
- b) an explanation of why the objective was added
- c) related outputs
- d) related objective indicators
- e) how the departmental objective aligns with Government objectives and priorities.

### Response

Not applicable. There were no new departmental objectives in the 2025-26 Budget for the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

### Question 21 – modified objectives

For all modified departmental objectives in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- a) a description of changes made to the objective
- b) an explanation of why the objective was changed.

### Response

Not applicable. There were no modified departmental objectives in the 2025-26 Budget for the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

## Question 22 – discontinued objectives

For all discontinued departmental objectives in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- a description of the objective
- an explanation of why the objective was discontinued
- any objectives that will replace the discontinued objective in part or in full.

### Response

Not applicable. There were no discontinued departmental objectives in the 2025-26 Budget for the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

## Objective indicators

### Question 23 – new indicators

For all new objective indicators in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- the related objective
- a description of the indicator
- an explanation of why the indicator was added
- the assumptions and methodology underpinning the indicator
- the target (if applicable)
- how the target was set (if applicable)
- any shortcomings of the indicator, including data limitations, that limit the ability to assess performance against departmental objectives.

### Response

<b>Objective indicator</b>	<b>Strengthen community and government resilience to climate change hazards</b>
Related objective	Objective 2: Net zero emissions, climate ready economy and community
Description of the indicator	This objective indicator measures progress made and actions taken to implement DEECA-led Adaptation Action Plans (AAPs) and actions that DEECA is responsible for in AAPs led by other departments, addressed through a qualitative description of that progress. AAPs are a key deliverable under the <i>Climate Change Act 2017</i> .

DEECA UPDATED

Why the indicator was added	New objective indicator for 2025-26 to reflect progress towards delivery of Adaptation Action Plan actions and support achieving a net zero emission, climate ready economy and community.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the indicator	Assumptions: Not applicable. Methodology: DEECA staff/executives who are responsible for DEECA-led AAP actions will provide a qualitative report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the progress made and actions taken to implement AAPs; and</li> <li>the impact these actions had on addressing the impacts of climate change.</li> </ul> Overall progress will be summarised in DEECA Annual Reports each year.
Target	Not applicable.
How the target was set	Not applicable.
Any shortcomings of the indicator, including data limitations	Information used for this measure is collected in May/June and may not represent the final AAP and action implementation status as of the very end of the financial year (30 June).

<b>Objective indicator</b>	<b>Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from Victorian Government operations</b>
Related objective	Objective 2: Net zero emissions, climate ready economy and community
Description of the indicator	This objective indicator measures annual greenhouse gas emissions from Victorian Government operations reported by departments and public sector entities in their annual report of operations under <i>Financial Reporting Direction (FRD) 24: Reporting of environmental data by government entities</i> . The indicator results include scope 1 (direct) emissions and scope 2 (indirect) electricity emissions.
Why the indicator was added	New objective indicator for 2025-26 to reflect progress towards reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from Victorian Government operations and support achieving a net zero emission, climate ready economy and community.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the indicator	Assumptions: The objective indicator assumes emissions data included in Victorian Government annual reports is of reasonable quality and completeness. Methodology: Results for the objective indicator are calculated as the sum of all scope 1 and scope 2 emissions reported in department and public sector entity annual reports under FRD 24. A full list of departments and entities required to report under FRD 24 is available at <a href="https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/financial-reporting-policy/financial-reporting-directions-and-guidance">https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/financial-reporting-policy/financial-reporting-directions-and-guidance</a> within the document <i>Guidance on the application of reporting tiers under FRD 24</i> .

	Reported emissions may be supplemented from other sources where available, such as consumption data from central state purchase contracts for electricity and gas.
Target	Not applicable.
How the target was set	Not applicable.
Any shortcomings of the indicator, including data limitations	<p>Emissions data captured by entities and included in annual reports is of variable quality and completeness, which may limit the accuracy and completeness of any collated data on whole of government emissions. Not all entities use the available data collection tool, impacting data quality.</p> <p>Collated emissions data may show changes over time but may not be sufficient to identify trends or drivers for change.</p> <p>Accuracy of calculations for emissions change / emissions reduction over time will be affected by the quality and completeness of reported emissions in any given year.</p>

## Question 24 – modified indicators

For all modified objective indicators in the 2025–26 Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery, please provide:

- a description of changes made to the indicator
- an explanation of why the indicator was changed.

### Response

Objective indicator	Increase in diversion of waste from landfill
Description of changes made to the indicator	This objective indicator has been renamed to <i>'Increase in diversion of waste from landfill'</i> in 2025-26 to replace the 2024-25 objective indicator <i>'Increase in diversion of municipal and industrial waste from landfill'</i> .
Explanation of why the indicator was changed	The reference to 'municipal and industrial' has been removed for clarity, as this indicator reports on total waste diverted from landfill and does not distinguish between different categories of waste.

Objective indicator	Solar panel systems and energy efficient hot water systems installed under the Solar Homes program
Description of changes made to the indicator	This indicator revises the 2024-25 indicator <i>'Solar PV, battery, and energy efficient hot water systems installed under the Solar Homes program'</i> .

Explanation of why the indicator was changed	The revised indicator excludes battery installations as funding for this component of the program ends on 30 June 2025.
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### Question 25 – discontinued indicators

For all discontinued objective indicators in the 2025–26 Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery, please provide:

- a description of the indicator
- an explanation of why the indicator was discontinued
- any impacts on the ability to measure achievement of departmental objectives
- any indicators that will replace the discontinued indicator in part or in full.

#### Response

Objective indicator	Proportion of new light vehicle sales in Victoria that are zero emissions vehicles (ZEV)
Description of the indicator	This objective indicator measures the percentage of new light vehicle sales in Victoria that are ZEVs. The objective indicator reflected progress towards achieving 50 per cent of all light vehicle sales in Victoria being ZEVs by 2030 under Victoria's Climate Change Strategy and ZEV Roadmap.
Explanation of why the indicator was discontinued	Solar Victoria's zero emissions vehicles subsidy program closed on 30 June 2023. Although these figures are still anticipated to be publicly available, and government able to consider and track them, this will no longer be tracked as a metric for a program deliverable by Solar Victoria.
Any impacts on the ability to measure achievement of departmental objectives	There will be no impacts given that Solar Victoria's zero emissions vehicles subsidy program will no longer operate after 2024-25.
Any indicators that will replace the discontinued indicator	Not applicable.

Objective indicator	The economic impact of fire prevention and preparedness investment
Description of the indicator	DEECA's investment in bushfire prevention and preparedness activities addresses significant social, environmental and economic costs associated with response and recovery. This indicator has been reporting on DEECA's actions on fire prevention and preparedness in a qualitative format.

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Explanation of why the indicator was discontinued	The 2024-25 indicator 'The economic impact of fire prevention and preparedness investment' has been removed due to meaningful quantitative data being unavailable.
Any impacts on the ability to measure achievement of departmental objectives	There will be no impacts due to limitations with bushfire risk modelling and data, quantitative results have not been able to be reported for this indicator. The removal of this indicator will therefore not impact on the ability to assess performance of the objective overall. Qualitative performance will continue to be reported in the department's Annual Report, in the Departmental Objectives section.
Any indicators that will replace the discontinued indicator	Not applicable.

## Question 26 – information base for objectives and indicators

Across all departmental objectives and indicators in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please describe:

- any work planned or underway to improve the objective indicators
- the quality of the data or information base used to assess performance of departmental objectives
- any changes required to improve the quality of the information used to assess performance of departmental objectives.

### Response

Output	
Work planned or underway to improve objective indicators	The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) actively undertakes reviews of all Departmental Performance Statement content annually as part of each year’s budget paper development process. Additional reviews have been included in DEECA’s process since publication of the Victorian Auditor-General’s reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024). DEECA’s reviews of objective indicators include assessing compliance with the Resource Management Framework, alignment to relevant objectives and performance measures and confirmation of the availability of meaningful results.
Quality of data or information base used to assess performance	DEECA ensures that information reported for departmental objectives within annual reports is as robust and accurate as possible. DEECA maintains detailed data dictionaries for performance measures and objective indicators for each departmental objective. These data dictionaries document basic data characteristics and business rules, in addition to details on data quality, limitations/assumptions, data collection, validation processes and controls.
Any changes required to improve the quality of the information used to assess performance	DEECA manages Departmental Performance Statement information on a continual improvement basis. All content is thoroughly reviewed annually as part of each year’s budget paper development process against the Resource Management Framework, and in response to reports from the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office (VAGO) and the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee. Where issues of non-compliance with the Resource Management Framework are identified, reviews are undertaken on where and how to improve metrics. These changes are documented in footnotes in the 2025-26 Departmental Performance Statement. Non-compliant metrics may be retained in some cases, so as not to reduce public reporting on objectives and outputs and with the aim to replace these where possible with suitable metrics as they become available. To further ensure the quality of the information used to assess objectives, detailed data dictionaries are maintained for indicators and performance measures. In addition, internal testing to replicate performance measures is completed regularly. As issues are identified they are documented and reviewed to seek to improve the quality of information.

## Outputs

### Question 27 – new outputs

For all new outputs in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- a) a description of the output
- b) an explanation of why the output was added
- c) related performance measures
- d) how the output will contribute to outcomes in terms of departmental objectives.

#### Response

Not applicable. There were no new outputs in the 2025–26 Budget for the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

### Question 28– modified outputs

For all modified outputs in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- a) a description of changes made to the output
- b) an explanation of why the output was changed.

#### Response

Output	Circular Economy
Description of changes made to the output	The 2024-25 output ' <i>Waste and Recycling</i> ' has been renamed ' <i>Circular Economy</i> ' in 2025-26.
Explanation of why the output was changed	The output and output description have both been modified in 2025-26 to better reflect the deliverables of the portfolio.

### Question 29 – discontinued outputs

For all discontinued outputs in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- a description of the output
- an explanation of why the output was discontinued
- any impacts on the achievement of departmental objectives
- any outputs that will replace the discontinued output in part or in full.

#### Response

Not applicable. There were no discontinued outputs in the 2025–26 Budget for the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

## Performance measures

### Question 30 – new performance measures

For all new performance measures in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- the output the measure relates to
- a description of the measure
- the assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure (including how the supporting data is calculated or derived, source and frequency of data collection, as well as any other business rules and assumptions)
- how the target was set
- the shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations.

#### Response

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Delivery of statutory outputs under the <i>Climate Action Act 2017</i> within statutory timeframes</b>
Output the measure relates to	Climate Action
Description of the measure	This new performance measure replaces the 2024-25 performance measure 'Completion of Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report' to represent a broader range of activities and reflect timely delivery of climate action planning and reporting outputs under the <i>Climate Action Act 2017</i> that support achieving Victoria's target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	The result is a count of statutory outputs (under the <i>Climate Change Act 2017</i> ) that were delivered on or before time in a given financial year, divided by the number of statutory outputs (under the <i>Climate Change Act 2017</i> ) that were due to be delivered in that year, converted to a percentage.
How target was set	The target is set with the expectation that the department will adhere to statutory timeframes 100 per cent of the time.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Earth resources regulatory audits completed in line with the agreed compliance work program</b>
Output the measure relates to	Resources
Description of the measure	This new performance measure replaces the 2024-25 performance measure 'Regulatory audits completed within agreed timelines'. The new measure better reflects activity within the department's control and reflects the totality of field activity conducted to monitor and intercept at the earliest opportunity, potential non-compliance.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	The result is a count of earth resources regulatory audits completed over the reporting period.
How target was set	The target is set based on the planned audits and inspections set within the annual compliance work program. This is informed by previous target benchmarks, assessment of risks, and any targeted campaign audits.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report they are likely to recommend the website to others</b>
Output the measure relates to	Energy
Description of the measure	This new performance measure replaces the 2024-25 performance measure 'Users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report a better understanding of their usage costs after using the website'. The new measure provides better insight into the usefulness of the Victorian Energy Compare website and the likelihood that more Victorians will use and benefit from the website over time.

Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	The result is the number of surveyed users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report they are likely to recommend the website to others, divided by the total number of responses to the survey question, converted to a percentage.
How target was set	The target is based on historical data.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Ratio of external funds co-invested in agriculture research and development projects</b>
Output the measure relates to	Agriculture - Agriculture Research sub-output
Description of the measure	This new performance measure replaces the 2024-25 performance measure 'Value of co-investment from external (nonstate) funding sources attracted to the Department's research projects that support productive agriculture'. The ratio of state funding to external funds attracted is a clearer indication of Agriculture Victoria Research's performance of attracting external co-funding to deliver on government priorities.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	The result is a ratio of 2 figures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the actual value of co-investment as measured by the contracted amount payable to DEECA by external organisations for agriculture research and development projects in a financial year; and</li> <li>state appropriation for agriculture research and development projects in the same financial year.</li> </ul>
How target was set	Industry research and development corporations generally seek a co-investment ratio of 50:50.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Container Deposit Scheme refund collection points provided to Victorians</b>
Output the measure relates to	Circular Economy
Description of the measure	New performance measure reflecting the Victorian Government's commitment to reducing litter by providing accessible drink container collection points under the Container Deposit Scheme.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	The result is a count of Container Deposit Scheme refund collection points (depots, reverse vending machines and over-the-counter sites) available to Victorians over the reporting period.

How target was set	The target is based on the Victorian Government's commitment to deliver over 600 refund collection points.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Local parks, playgrounds and dog parks completed</b>
Output the measure relates to	Management of Public Land and Forests
Description of the measure	This new performance measure replaces the 2024-25 performance measure 'Local parks, playgrounds and dog parks under development' to reflect completion of projects under the 'Delivering better parks and playgrounds' and 'Protecting our parks, pets and wildlife – dog parks' initiatives.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	The result is a count of local parks, playgrounds and dog parks completed within the reported period, as measured by whether the 'construction completion' milestone contained within a project funding agreement between DEECA and the relevant delivery partner has been met.
How target was set	The target is based on the funding allocated and the program delivery schedule.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	The timing of project completion can be influenced by factors beyond the department's control including regulatory approvals and land contamination.

### Question 31 – modified performance measures

For all existing performance measures with an associated target that has been modified in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- a) the output the measure relates to
- b) a description of the measure
- c) the previous target
- d) the new target and how it was set
- e) the justification for changing the target
- f) an explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable and the 2024–25 expected outcome
- g) the methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget.

## Response

Performance measure	Environmental volunteer hours contributing to the health of Victoria's biodiversity
Output the measure relates to	Environment and Biodiversity
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies hours volunteered by environmental groups caring for landscapes, that receive support from DEECA's Biodiversity programs.
The previous target	440,000
The new target and how it was set	400,000 – The 2025-26 target is lower than the 2024-25 target reflecting research indicating that volunteers have less time to contribute <sup>910</sup> .
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 380,000
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on previous performance using data collected from delivery partners and projected volunteering activity to 30 June 2025.

Performance measure	Habitat restored and enhanced to benefit biodiversity and store carbon
Output the measure relates to	Environment and Biodiversity
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure tracks the hectares of habitat restored and enhanced to benefit biodiversity and store carbon. Restoration is defined for the measure as new shrubs and trees that will grow as a result of planting or changing on-ground management. Enhancement is defined for this measure as existing native vegetation that is not being managed and is not at benchmark condition being enhanced by changed land management actions, usually targeting threats and protecting the vegetation.
The previous target	1,800 hectares
The new target and how it was set	1,600 hectares – The lower 2025-26 target reflects planned hectares of planting during the 2024 and 2025 planting seasons.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure did not exist in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 1,763 hectares
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the actual result as at December 2024, as results for this measure are based on works completed that meet the BushBank/ Reporting standards each calendar year.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Ongoing-trends-in-volunteering-in-Australia-November-2023.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0031/727852/Volunteering-Naturally-2024-Final-Report-WB.pdf](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0031/727852/Volunteering-Naturally-2024-Final-Report-WB.pdf)

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Priority conservation actions for threatened species</b>
Output the measure relates to	Environment and Biodiversity
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of direct (targeted) management actions necessary to improve the likelihood of threatened species persistence and recovery. These include actions such as gene mixing, translocations, ex-situ management (captive breeding and seed banks) and supplementary feeding.
The previous target	70
The new target and how it was set	45 – The lower 2025-26 target reflects the completion of many threatened species projects in 2024-25 in line with the program’s delivery schedule.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 70
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data and scheduled program activity to 30 June 2025, as assessed through progress reports from delivery partners.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Cumulative increase in the capacity of Victoria’s resource recovery infrastructure</b>
Output the measure relates to	Circular Economy
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of new collection schemes plus the number of infrastructure upgrades to existing e-waste facilities for collection and storage of e-waste.
The previous target	2,200,000 tonnes
The new target and how it was set	2,400,000 tonnes – The higher 2025-26 target reflects activities underway to commission a large number of projects under the Industry and Infrastructure Development Package, increasing resource recovery of kerbside materials.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was not met in 2023-24 (2023-24 target was 2,000,000 tonnes; 2023-24 actual was 1,776,154 tonnes) due to delays in some required project site approvals, resulting in the deferral of commissioning 150,000 tonnes of processing capacity. It is anticipated that the shortfall will be recovered by June 2025. 2024-25 Expected Outcome – 2,200,000 tonnes
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on analysis of the latest available data and the capacity of projects scheduled for completion by 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Annual visitation to Zoos Victoria</b>
Output the measure relates to	Management of Public Land and Forests
Description/purpose of the measure	This measure counts the total number of visitors to Zoos Victoria at four properties in Parkville, Werribee, Healesville and Kyabram.
The previous target	2.9 million
The new target and how it was set	3.0 million – The higher 2025-26 target reflects anticipated growth of local, interstate and international tourism and the first full year of the Werribee Open Range Zoo expansion being open to the public.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24 within the 5 per cent variance threshold 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 2.8 million
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data, plus forecasted numbers to 30 June 2025 using management estimates.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Specimens curated in the State Botanical Collection</b>
Output the measure relates to	Management of Public Land and Forests
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports on the number of specimens curated in the State Botanical Collection of Victoria at the National Herbarium of Victoria. Curation is the process of preparation, identification, mounting, imaging, databasing specimen information and incorporating the specimen into the herbarium component of the collection.
The previous target	20,000
The new target and how it was set	27,000 – The higher 2025-26 target reflects National Herbarium of Victoria increased capacity.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was exceeded in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 27,000
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data extrapolated to forecast the 30 June 2025 result.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Visitors to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne and Cranbourne</b>
Output the measure relates to	Management of Public Land and Forests

Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure assesses the value of the Melbourne Gardens and the Cranbourne Gardens as visitor destinations.
The previous target	2.3 million
The new target and how it was set	2.0 million – The lower 2025-26 target reflects expected visitation for the year, based on previous year visitation rates for both Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria sites.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The 2023-24 result was below target at 1.7 million visitors, due to above average rainfall and poor weather at both sites, extensive roadworks affecting access to the Cranbourne Gardens and increased competition for the annual ticketed Lightscape festival from other events. The 2024-25 expected outcome is 1.8 million visitors.
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus expected levels of visitation using historical data and planned activities to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Visits to national, state, urban and other terrestrial parks</b>
Output the measure relates to	Parks Victoria
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure provides information on the total number of visits to national, state, urban and other terrestrial parks in Victoria.
The previous target	84 million
The new target and how it was set	85 million – The higher 2025-26 target reflects expected increases in visitation and takes into account population growth.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure was not measured in 2023-24. Results for this measure are reported every 2 years. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 84 million
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data extrapolated to forecast the year-end result.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Visits to piers and jetties</b>
Output the measure relates to	Parks Victoria
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure provides information on the total number of visits to piers and jetties in Victoria.
The previous target	39 million
The new target and how it was set	40 million – The higher 2025-26 target reflects expected increases in visitation following the restoration of assets and takes into account population growth.
The justification for changing the target	

An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure was not measured in 2023-24. Results for this measure are reported every 2 years. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 39 million
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data extrapolated to forecast the year-end result.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>100 per cent of burns identified in the current year of the Joint Fuel Management Program ready for on ground delivery</b>
Output the measure relates to	Fire and Emergency Management
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure tracks the date at which all planned burns in the Joint Fuel management Program are ready for on ground delivery. To reach readiness for on ground delivery, the planned burns need to be prioritised in terms of size, impact and risk, included in a roster of works, and resourced accordingly. The Joint Fuel Management Program is an outline of the expected work program of fuel treatment activities to be conducted by the Department and Parks Victoria over the next three years. It is a rolling three-year plan, which is updated/amended annually.
The previous target	February 2025
The new target and how it was set	May 2026 – The 2025-26 target has been updated to better reflect the seasonal delivery schedule for burns.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was not met in 2023-24 (2023-24 target was February 2024; 2023-24 actual was April 2024) due to above average rainfall during December 2023 and January 2024, and resource impacts from bushfire response and storm damage in February 2024, which led to a two month delay in the preparation and planning of burns identified in the Joint Fuel Management Program. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: May 2025
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus information received from delivery teams that works are in progress to achieve the target by May 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Number of worker support payments finalised under the Victorian Forestry Transition Program</b>
Output the measure relates to	Agriculture - Sustainably Manage Forest Resources sub-output

Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of worker support payments finalised under the worker support program. The measure relates to a Government commitment to fund redundancy top-up payments for workers who lose their job due to the cessation of native timber harvesting from state forests.
The previous target	400
The new target and how it was set	50 – The lower 2025-26 target reflects an anticipated decrease in further redundancies and a reduction in line with the program's delivery schedule.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure did not exist in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 200
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus the forecasted number of payments expected to be finalised to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Number of business and community development grants awarded</b>
Output the measure relates to	Agriculture - Sustainably Manage Forest Resources sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of grants awarded under the Community Development Fund to business, community or industry groups; or private sector businesses. Business grants are part of the Community Development Fund (Stream 2) where there is alignment to the outcomes of the community's Local Development Strategy and where they have been endorsed by the town or community's community organisation that oversees the implementation of the town's Local Development Strategy.
The previous target	12
The new target and how it was set	40 – The higher 2025-26 target reflects an anticipated increase in the number of businesses applying for and receiving grants under the available business innovation grant programs; and more communities moving to the implementation stage of the Local Development Strategy Program and receiving community development grants to support this phase.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure did not exist in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 16
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus the forecasted number of grants likely to be approved to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Number of training activities undertaken under the Victorian Forestry Transition Program</b>
Output the measure relates to	Agriculture - Sustainably Manage Forest Resources sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of workers who have received one or more episodes of training under the Victorian Forestry Transition Program.
The previous target	1,400
The new target and how it was set	450 – The lower 2025-26 target reflects an anticipated decrease in further redundancies, funded training caps being reached and a reduction in line with the program's delivery schedule.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure did not exist in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 1,400
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus the forecasted number of training events likely to be delivered to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Number of trees planted under the Gippsland Plantation Investment Program</b>
Output the measure relates to	Agriculture - Sustainably Manage Forest Resources sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of trees planted under the Gippsland Plantation Investment Program.
The previous target	1,000,000
The new target and how it was set	2,000,000 – The higher 2025-26 target reflects an anticipated increase in trees planted in the 2025 winter planting season due to activities ramping up to full capacity to meet the overall project outcome of 16 million trees.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure did not exist in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 1,039,500
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus the forecasted number of trees expected to be planted to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Value of co-investment from external (non-state) funding sources attracted to the Department's programs that support the growth of Victoria's plantation estate</b>
Output the measure relates to	Agriculture - Sustainably Manage Forest Resources sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure evaluates the effectiveness of the department in attracting co-investment to grow Victoria's plantation estate
The previous target	\$5 million

The new target and how it was set	\$12 million – The higher 2025-26 target reflects an increase in the expected co-investment into the Gippsland Plantation Investment Program and the Department’s programs that support the growth of Victoria’s plantation estate.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This measure did not exist in 2023-24. The 2024-25 expected outcome is \$10 million.
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on expected land purchase, establishment and management activities, and community engagement and economic development activities to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Area of active stewardship to improve catchment health and resilience through broadacre management</b>
Output the measure relates to	Effective Water Management and Supply
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure provides information on the delivery of regional catchment strategy priorities through on-ground works. Active stewardship for catchment health and resilience will lead to better outcomes for land, water and biodiversity.
The previous target	9,500 hectares
The new target and how it was set	15,000 hectares – The higher 2025-26 target reflects the planned second year roll-out phase of a four year program of work following detailed planning and engagement by catchment management authorities with community and Traditional Owners.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome is 9,500 hectares
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is estimated by Catchment Management Authorities based on the latest available data in addition to the expected hectares to be delivered before 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Area of waterway vegetation works undertaken to improve the health and resilience of waterways</b>
Output the measure relates to	Effective Water Management and Supply
Description/purpose of the measure	This measure provides information on the delivery of waterway on-ground works to restore waterways rated as severely degraded and improve their resilience. These works include fencing to manage stock access, weed and pest animal management control, and revegetation.
The previous target	5,000 hectares

The new target and how it was set	8,000 hectares – The higher 2025-26 target reflects the planned second year roll-out phase of a four year program of work following detailed planning and engagement by catchment management authorities with community and Traditional Owners.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome is 5,000 hectares
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus an estimation of works that will be completed by 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Long-term water monitoring site parameters maintained</b>
Output the measure relates to	Effective Water Management and Supply
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure provides information on the number of long-term water monitoring site parameters maintained. Parameters include water level/flow, phosphorus, nitrogen, turbidity, electrical conductivity and pH. Long-term water monitoring site parameters are the most valuable in the water monitoring network as they have long continuous data records and provide information on long term change in water resources across the State.
The previous target	1,568
The new target and how it was set	1,700 – The higher 2025-26 target reflects the cumulative nature of this measure, as the number of sites maintained meet the parameters criteria to become ‘long-term’.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24 within the 5 per cent variance threshold. 2024-25 Expected Outcome is 1,688.
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available number of parameters that meet the criteria to be considered a long-term water monitoring site parameter.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Number of Traditional Owner groups funded to undertake self-determined water projects</b>
Output the measure relates to	Effective Water Management and Supply
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of Traditional Owner groups funded to undertake self-determined priorities for water, including enabling Traditional Owner organisations to establish and maintain their own water programs, water unit staff and self-determine projects that align with ‘Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap’ outcomes.
The previous target	16

The new target and how it was set	20 – The higher 2025-26 target reflects the renewal of existing agreements.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	This performance measure did not exist in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome – 20
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus additional funding agreements that are known will be completed (with a high degree of certainty) by 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Place-based plans and actions completed for healthier communities and environments that encompass multiple values (Aboriginal, social, environmental and economic)</b>
Output the measure relates to	Effective Water Management and Supply
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of completed place-based plans and actions that address multiple values to achieve community objectives for integrated water management, recreational management of water assets or integrated land use and water management of urban waterways.
The previous target	2 place-based plans and actions underway
The new target and how it was set	7 completed place-based plans and actions – The higher 2025-26 target reflects the transition of previously approved grant programs from a start-up phase to the implementation of actions.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome is 2
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on the latest available data plus additional funding agreements that will be completed (with a high degree of certainty) by 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Schools signed up to Schools Water Efficiency Program (SWEP)</b>
Output the measure relates to	Effective Water Management and Supply
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports on the number of schools signed up to the Schools Water Efficiency Program (SWEP), which enables schools to track their water usage using data logger technology.
The previous target	1,900
The new target and how it was set	

The justification for changing the target	1,600 – The lower 2025-26 target reflects expected cumulative progression from the 2024-25 result.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was not met in 2023-24 (2023-24 target was 1,800; 2023-24 actual was 1,452) due to other competing school priorities (energy, waste and other day to day operations) and the residual impacts of COVID-19 on school participation. 2024-25 Expected Outcome is 1,520.
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on analysis of the latest available data plus an estimation of the number of schools expected to be recruited to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Vulnerable Victorian energy consumers supported to navigate the energy market by the Energy Assistance Program</b>
Output the measure relates to	Energy
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the number of vulnerable Victorian energy consumers reached through the Energy Assistance Program.
The previous target	5,000
The new target and how it was set	3,000 – The lower 2025-26 target reflects the number of vulnerable energy consumers expected to be supported in 2025-26, in line with the 2024-25 expected outcome.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 3,000
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is forecast based on the extrapolation of the latest available data.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificates (each representing one tonne of greenhouse gas emissions avoided) surrendered by energy retailers to meet their liabilities under the Victorian Energy Efficiency Target</b>
Output the measure relates to	Solar Victoria
Description/purpose of the measure	A Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificate (VEEC) is a virtual certificate that represents one tonne of greenhouse gas emissions avoided due to energy efficiency activities undertaken in Victoria. Energy retailers are required to surrender these certificates and provide them to the Essential Services Commission, to meet their obligations under the <i>Victorian Energy Efficiency Target Act 2007</i> .
The previous target	7.1 million certificates
The new target and how it was set	

The justification for changing the target	7.3 million certificates – The higher 2025-26 target reflects the target for the Victorian Energy Upgrades program for 2025, which under the <i>Victorian Energy Efficiency Target Act 2007</i> , must be met by April 2026 unless extended by the scheme administrator, the Essential Services Commission.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24 within the 5 per cent variance threshold 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 7.1 million certificates
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is estimated based on the availability of registered VEECs, energy retailers' holdings of VEECs and the price VEECs are traded for.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Applications for Solar panel system rebates for households approved</b>
Output the measure relates to	Solar Victoria
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the approval of eligible applications for rental and owner-occupied households.
The previous target	50,000
The new target and how it was set	47,700 – The lower 2025-26 target reflects the number of rebates available through the program. This measure previously captured only owner-occupied households. From 2025-26, the target reflects both owner-occupied and rental households.
The justification for changing the target	
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was not met in 2023-24 (2023-24 target was 52,000; 2023-24 actual was 47,877) due to customer demand. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 46,000
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on analysis of the latest available data plus an estimation of the number of approved applications to 30 June 2025.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Rebated installations audited by the Solar Homes Audit Program within 6 months of installation</b>
Output the measure relates to	Solar Victoria
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure quantifies the proportion of rebated installations audited by the Solar Homes Audit Program.
The previous target	5.0 per cent
The new target and how it was set	2.5 per cent – The lower 2025-26 target reflects the maturation of the Solar Homes Program with robust controls in place, leading to improvements in compliance. The 2025-26 audit rate target is appropriate and will continue to be targeted and risk-based, allowing non-compliance to be proactively identified and rectified.
The justification for changing the target	

An explanation of why the target was not met in 2023–24, if applicable, and the 2024–25 expected outcome	The target was met in 2023-24. 2024-25 Expected Outcome: 5 per cent
The methodology behind estimating the 2024–25 expected outcome in the 2025–26 Budget	The 2024-25 expected outcome is based on an analysis of the latest available data plus an extrapolation to 30 June 2025.

### Question 32 – discontinued performance measures

For performance measures that are identified as to be discontinued in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please provide:

- the output the measure related to
- a description/purpose of the measure and the year the measure was introduced
- the previous target
- when the target was last modified and reasons for modification
- the justification for discontinuing the measure, including any further information that is not available in *Budget Paper No. 3*
- any performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure in part or full.

### Response

Performance measure	Stakeholder satisfaction with climate action engagement events
Output the measure related to	Climate Action
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure reports on the level of satisfaction of internal and external stakeholders with climate change engagement events that are delivered by or include representation from DEECA. This measure was introduced in 2021-22.
The previous target	75 per cent.
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued because the department conducts a very small number of climate action engagement events where stakeholder satisfaction surveys are conducted.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

Performance measure	Completion of Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report
Output the measure related to	Climate Action

Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure tracks the completion of the Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report by DEECA by 31 October each year, as required by the <i>Climate Change Act 2017</i> . The measure was introduced in 2021-22.
The previous target	October 2024
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified – it has always been to complete the report by October of each year.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued and replaced with the 2025-26 performance measure 'Delivery of statutory outputs under the <i>Climate Action Act 2017</i> within statutory timeframes'. The measure has been replaced to represent a broader range of activities and reflect the timely delivery of key climate action planning and reporting outputs under the <i>Climate Action Act 2017</i> that support achieving Victoria's target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Delivery of statutory outputs under the <i>Climate Action Act 2017</i> within statutory timeframes.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Delivery of agreed milestones for climate action policy, advice and research within agreed timeframes</b>
Output the measure related to	Climate Action
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure reports on the timely delivery of agreed milestones for climate action policy, advice and research. The measure was introduced in 2016-17 under the name 'Delivery of policy, advice and research on climate change within agreed timeframes'.
The previous target	80%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it is not a useful or relevant measure of output performance and delivery of policy advice is a process rather than an output. This aligns to the Auditor-General's findings in its reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Annual Melbourne tram network demand offset by solar generated large-scale generation certificates</b>
Output the measure related to	Energy
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure quantifies the percentage of energy usage from the Melbourne tram network that is offset by solar generated large-scale generation certificates. This measure was introduced in 2019-20 under the name 'Solar energy purchases sufficient to meet annual Melbourne tram network demand'.
The previous target	100%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued because it is not a useful or relevant measure of output performance. This aligns to the Auditor General's findings in its reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024). Since the introduction of this performance measure in 2019-20, Melbourne's tram network has been and will continue to be 100 per cent offset by renewable energy due to the establishment of the Numurkah and Bannerton solar farms.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Renewable Certificate Purchasing Initiative projects that contribute to meeting the Renewable Energy Target liability associated with designated government sites annual electricity usage</b>
Output the measure related to	Energy
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure reports on DEECA purchasing renewable energy certificates directly from new Victorian renewable energy projects to provide revenue certainty for developers to underwrite their projects. This measure was introduced in 2019-20 under the name 'Large-scale Generation Certificates procured under the Renewable Certificate Purchasing Initiative sufficient to meet annual electricity demand of participating government sites'.
The previous target	100%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified.

The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued because it is not a useful or relevant measure of output performance. This aligns to the Auditor General's findings in its reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024). Since the introduction of this measure in 2019-20, the percentage of Renewable Energy Certificates sold to the State to meet government demand has consistently been 100 per cent. The target of 100% per cent would continue to be met as this is a contractual requirement agreed through the Inter-Agency Agreement with participating government agencies, in order to satisfy legislated obligations of their electricity retailers under the <i>Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000</i> .
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report a better understanding of their usage costs after using the website</b>
Output the measure related to	Energy
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure surveys Victorian Energy Compare website users to measure the percentage of users who have a better understanding of their energy usage costs after using the website. This measure was introduced in 2017-18.
The previous target	65%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2020-21 (2020-21 target was 65%; 2019-20 target was 60%). The reason for the modification was to reflect new funding announced as part of the 2020-21 Budget's 'Maintaining Essential Energy Functions' initiative.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it has been replaced with the 2025-26 performance measure 'Users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report they are likely to recommend the website to others.' The new measure provides better insight into the usefulness of the Victorian Energy Compare website and the likelihood that more Victorians will use and benefit from the website over time.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Users of the Victorian Energy Compare website who report they are likely to recommend the website to others

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Applications for Solar Battery loans approved</b>
Output the measure related to	Solar Victoria
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure quantifies the number of interest free loans issued by Solar Victoria for households installing solar batteries. This measure was introduced in 2023-24.
The previous target	2,500
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2024-25 (2024-25 target was 2,500; 2023-24 target was 4,500). The reason for the modification was to reflect the demand for solar batteries at the time.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as this program ends on 30 June 2025.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Applications for Solar PV rebates for rental households approved</b>
Output the measure related to	Solar Victoria
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure quantifies the approval of eligible Solar PV rebate applications for rental households. This measure was introduced in 2023-24.
The previous target	2,000
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2024-25 (2024-25 target was 2,000; 2023-24 target was 1,000). The reason for the modification was to reflect initiatives targeting renters including 'Solar for Apartments'.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as funding in the 2025-26 Budget provides an allocation for a combined number of solar PV rebates for owner occupied and rental households, without specifying individual targets for these components. Solar PV rebates for rental households will continue to be reported as part of the 2025-26 measure 'Applications for Solar panel system rebates for households approved'.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Applications for Solar panel system rebates for households approved.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Regulatory audits completed within agreed timelines</b>
Output the measure related to	Resources

Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure tracks the timely completion of regulatory audits of site operators by the earth resources regulator. Auditing site operators is a key function of the regulator to ensure sites are operating in compliance with work plans and licence conditions and are also managing risks appropriately. This measure was introduced in 2014-15.
The previous target	98%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2017-18 (2017-18 target was 98%; 2016-17 target was >95%). The reason for the modification was to reflect improved regulatory practices as part of the reforms implemented by the earth resources regulator.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it has been replaced with the 2025-26 measure 'Earth resources regulatory audits completed in line with the agreed compliance work program'. The new measure better reflects activity within the department's control and reflects the totality of field activity conducted to monitor and intercept at the earliest opportunity, potential non-compliance. The previous measure was influenced by the time required by the audited party to supply additional information and review the audit.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Earth resources regulatory audits completed in line with the agreed compliance work program.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Exploration and mining licences which are active</b>
Output the measure related to	Resources
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure reports on how many resources regulatory licences are active, as defined by whether licence holders are meeting their expenditure commitments as set within their licence obligations. The higher the level of active licences, the greater the opportunity for the discovery of new resources developments leading to jobs and economic growth. This measure was introduced in 1998-99 under the name 'Exploration and mining licenses which are not active'.
The previous target	82.5%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2017-18 (2017-18 target was 82.5; 2016-17 target was >82.5). The reason for the modification was to amend the target in accordance with the recommendation from the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee that measures with unbounded ranges as targets should be modified to a single number except where a range is necessary and appropriate.

The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued because it does not align with the Resource Management Framework, with performance measure results not being directly attributable to the actions of the department. This addresses findings and recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Strategies developed to maintain and/or grow export opportunities, pathways and capability and overcome identified trade barriers</b>
Output the measure related to	Agriculture - Agriculture industry development and regulation sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	<p>This performance measure counts the total number of export development strategies prepared. It demonstrated that strategies were being developed to progress prioritised market access issues and overcome trade barriers and disruptions along the export pathway, where possible.</p> <p>This measure was originally introduced in 2006-07 under the name 'Trade barriers identified and strategies developed to overcome them'. The original measure was proposed to be discontinued in the 2019-20 Budget, however was reinstated in the 2021-22 Budget following the PAEC report on the 2019-20 Budget Estimates, and renamed to reflect broader priorities.</p>
The previous target	3
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	This performance measure was discontinued in the 2019-20 Budget, however the measure was later reinstated through the 2021-22 Budget, consistent with PAEC recommendations. The target was modified in 2021-22 (2021-22 target was 3; 2020-21 target was 7). The reason for the modification was to reflect the reduction in funding due to the lapsing Growing Food and Fibre Markets Program component of the Growing Agriculture Exports, Farms and Tourism program.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued because it reports on a process rather than an output, and as such does not align with the Resource Management Framework. This addresses findings and recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).

Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.
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<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Genetic improvement of dairy cows achieved through breeding contributing to increased milk production and dairy productivity</b>
Output the measure related to	Agriculture - Agriculture research sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure reports on increases/decreases in the performance of dairy cows through herd recording of production including milk volume and quality. This measure was introduced in 2009-10.
The previous target	1%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it is an outcome measure rather than an output measure, which does not align with the Resource Management Framework. This addresses findings and recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Key bioscience platform technologies established</b>
Output the measure related to	Agriculture - Agriculture research sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure counts the number of new DEECA-led bioscience platform technologies established to support major innovation capability to deliver agriculture productivity and biosecurity outcomes. This measure was introduced in 2008-09 under the name 'Number of new key enabling technologies and core science capacity competencies established/upgraded by DPI'.
The previous target	1
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2012-13 (2012-13 target was 1; 2011-12 target was 2). The reason for the modification was because of changes to program scope and industry co-investment to reflect the achievement of government savings.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it is an input measure rather than an output measure and is mainly for internal use, which does not align with

	the Resource Management Framework. This addresses findings and recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Value of co-investment from external (nonstate) funding sources attracted to the Department's research projects that support productive agriculture</b>
Output the measure related to	Agriculture - Agriculture research sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure reports on the total dollar amount of co-investment contracted (from external funding sources) for the Department's research projects that support productive agriculture. This measure was introduced in 2005-06 under the name 'Value of external (non-state) funding contribution to research projects that support productivity and sustainable farming systems'.
The previous target	\$36 million
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2024-25 (2024-25 target was \$36 million; 2023-24 target was \$41 million). The reason for the modification was to reflect the expected co-investment from external stakeholder funding in 2024-25. As industry generally seeks a 1:1 co-investment ratio with government for agricultural research, budget phasing of the program was reflected in a lower target for 2024-25.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it has been replaced with the 2025-26 performance measure 'Ratio of external funds co-invested in agriculture research and development projects'.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Ratio of external funds co-invested in agriculture research and development projects

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Improved agricultural services, programs and products developed</b>
Output the measure related to	Agriculture - Biosecurity and Agriculture Services sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure describes the annual number of improvements to the agriculture service offer of the department through the introduction or improvement of services, programs, or products as specified in the annual business plan. This measure was introduced in 2014-15.
The previous target	10

When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2015-16 (2015-16 target was 10; 2014-15 target was 8). The reason for the modification was to reflect an acceleration of agriculture development activity.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it does not align with the Resource Management Framework. This addresses findings and recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Number of timber communities to have completed or are undertaking the Local Development Strategy Program</b>
Output the measure related to	Agriculture - Sustainably Manage Forest Resources sub-output
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure quantifies the total number of timber communities that have completed or are undertaking the Local Development Strategy Program. This measure was introduced in 2024-25.
The previous target	11
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. This was a new performance measure in 2024-25.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as all the timber communities will have completed or are undertaking their Local Development Strategy Program in 2024-25. Communities will be supported to implement their Local Development Strategies through the Community Development Fund.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Crown land leases directly managed by the Department</b>
Output the measure related to	Management of Public Land and Forests
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure tracks the total number of direct Crown land leases managed by DEECA. The measure was introduced in 2008-09.
The previous target	640

When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2024-25 (2024-25 target was 640; 2023-24 target was 666). The reason for the modification was to reflect the transfer of some leases to other agencies.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as direct leasing of Crown land is a demand driven activity outside the control of the Department. This aligns to the Auditor-General's findings in its reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Crown land licenses directly managed by the Department</b>
Output the measure related to	Management of Public Land and Forests
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure tracks the total number of direct Crown land licenses managed by DEECA. This measure was introduced in 2008-09 under the name 'Crown land licenses issued'.
The previous target	45,000
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2018-19 (2018-19 target was 45,000; 2017-18 target was 44,000). The reason for the modification was to reflect an increase in demand for Crown land licenses at the time, partially due to reinstating old apiary sites.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as direct licencing of Crown land is a demand driven activity that is outside the control of the Department. This aligns to the Auditor-General's findings in its reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024).
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Local parks, playgrounds and dog parks under development</b>
Output the measure related to	Management of Public Land and Forests
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure tracks deliverables of the <i>Delivering better parks and playgrounds</i> and <i>Protecting our parks, pets and wildlife – dog parks</i> programs funded through the 2023-24 State Budget. This investment provides funding to specific public land managers to design and deliver new and upgraded open space projects. The measure was introduced in 2024-25.

The previous target	35
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. This was a new performance measure in 2024-25.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This measure is proposed to be discontinued as it has been replaced with the new 2025-26 measure 'Local parks, playgrounds and dog parks completed'. The new measure reflects the completion of projects under the 'Delivering better parks and playgrounds' and 'Protecting our parks, pets and wildlife – dog parks' initiatives. The new measure is also better aligned to the Resource Management Framework (RMF) as completed projects are considered outputs, rather than projects underway, which are considered as inputs and therefore do not align with the RMF.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Local parks, playgrounds and dog parks completed

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Suburban pocket parks completed</b>
Output the measure related to	Management of Public Land and Forests
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure quantifies the number of suburban pocket parks completed under the Suburban Parks Program. The measure was introduced in 2022-23.
The previous target	2
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2024-25 (2024-25 target was 2; 2023-24 target was 9). The reason for the modification was to reflect that in 2024-25 the department was delivering the final remaining pocket parks funded under the Suburban Parks Program.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as all pocket parks funded through the Suburban Parks Program have been delivered.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Bridges or crossings on the strategic fire access road network replaced or upgraded</b>
Output the measure related to	Fire and Emergency Management
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure quantifies the number of bridges or crossings replaced or upgraded across the public estate. These replacements and upgrades address the risk that emergency response vehicles and people cannot access (or evacuate from) strategic fire attack locations used to prepare for and respond to bushfires. This measure was introduced in 2020-21.

The previous target	10
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as it is not a suitable measure of Victoria's emergency management capacity.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Proportion of Community Based Bushfire Management partnerships rated as high functioning</b>
Output the measure related to	Fire and Emergency Management
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This measure assesses the quality of communities and agencies working collaboratively and in partnership, to address local bushfire risk management through Community Based Bushfire Management. This measure was introduced in 2019-20.
The previous target	80%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target has not been modified.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued due to the prioritisation of frontline response.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Climate and hydrology research activities underway that focus specifically on Victoria</b>
Output the measure related to	Effective Water Management and Supply
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure quantifies the number of research activities undertaken to provide an initial insight into the outputs from climate and hydrology research investment. The measure was introduced in 2020-21.
The previous target	5
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	The target was last modified in 2024-25 (2024-25 target was 5; 2023-24 target was 11). The reason for the modification was to reflect changing priorities in the 2024-25 Budget for the 'Knowing and sharing Victoria's water resources' initiative.

The justification for discontinuing the measure	This performance measure is proposed to be discontinued as all funded research activities are expected to be completed by 30 June 2025.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable.

### Question 33 – information base for output performance measures

Across all outputs and performance measures in the 2025–26 *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, please describe:

- any work planned or underway to improve the performance measures
- the quality of the data or information base used to assess output performance
- any changes required to improve the quality of the information used to assess output performance.

#### Response

Output	
Work planned or underway to improve performance measures	DEECA actively undertakes reviews of all Departmental Performance Statement content annually as part of each year's budget paper development process. Additional reviews have been included in DEECA's process since publication of the Victorian Auditor-General's reports on Measuring and Reporting on Service Delivery (2021) and Fair presentation of service delivery (2022, 2023 and 2024). DEECA's performance measure reviews include assessing compliance with the Resource Management Framework, alignment to relevant objectives and availability of meaningful results.
Quality of data or information base used to assess performance	DEECA ensures that information reported for performance measures within annual reports is as robust and accurate as possible. DEECA maintains detailed data dictionaries for performance measures for each departmental objective. These data dictionaries document basic data characteristics and business rules, in addition to details on data quality, limitations/assumptions, data collection, validation processes and controls.
Any changes required to improve the quality of the information used to assess performance	DEECA manages Departmental Performance Statement information on a continual improvement basis. All content is reviewed annually as part of each year's budget paper development process, and in response to reports from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) and the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee. Where issues of non-compliance with the Resource Management Framework are identified, reviews identify where to improve metrics. These changes are documented in footnotes in the 2025-26 Departmental Performance Statement. Non-compliant metrics may be retained in some cases, so as not to reduce public reporting on initiatives, with the aim to replace these where possible with suitable metrics as they become available. To further ensure the quality of the information used to assess output performance measures, data dictionaries and the replicability of existing performance measure results are internally

assessed on a regular basis. Issues that are identified are documented and investigations are undertaken to improve the quality of information.

## Employees

### Question 34

The Independent Review of the Victorian Public Service will include recommendations on how to reduce the size of the Victorian public service (VPS), including the current level of executives. In terms of the interim recommendations made as part of the Review for inclusion in the 2025–26 State Budget, please estimate:

- a) the planned number roles reduced in 2024–25 by VPS/Executive classification (Please list each level and actual FTE)
- b) the number of roles planned for reduction in 2025–26 by VPS/Executive classification (Please list each level and actual FTE)
- c) anticipated total budgeted savings made as part of the Review for 2024–25 (\$ million)
- d) anticipated total budgeted savings made as part of the Review for 2025–26 (\$ million)
- e) the functions within the department expected to be impacted by the reduction of roles
- f) the impact of role reductions on service delivery.

### Response

Number of roles planned for reduction in 2024–25 by VPS/Executive classification (Actual FTE)	Number of roles planned for reduction in 2025–26 by VPS/Executive classification (Actual FTE)	Anticipated total budgeted savings for 2024–25 (\$ million)	Anticipated total budgeted savings in 2025–26 (\$ million)	Functions expected to be impacted by the reduction of roles	Impact of the role reductions on service delivery
DTF/DPC are providing a response to this question on behalf of departments.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

### Question 35

Please provide the department's (actual/expected/forecast) Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff numbers for the financial years ending 30 June 2024, 30 June 2025 and 30 June 2026:

- broken down into employee classification codes
- broken down into categories of on-going, fixed term or casual
- according to their gender identification
- employees identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or having a disability.

#### Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

#### Response

a)

Classification	As at 30-06-2024		As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
Secretary	1.0	0.02%	1.0	0.0%	1.0	0.0%
EO-1	9.6	0.17%	8.8	0.2%	8.8	0.2%
EO-2	41.4	0.71%	43.0	0.8%	43.0	0.8%
EO-3	117.9	2.03%	118.2	2.1%	118.2	2.1%
VPS Grade 7.3	7.0	0.12%	6.0	0.1%	6.0	0.1%
VPS Grade 7.2	11.8	0.20%	12.0	0.2%	12.0	0.2%
VPS Grade 7.1	17.7	0.30%	17.8	0.3%	17.8	0.3%
VPS Grade 6.2	429.1	7.39%	422.4	7.5%	422.4	7.5%
VPS Grade 6.1	377.5	6.50%	358.4	6.4%	358.4	6.4%
VPS Grade 5.2	662.4	11.40%	674.1	11.9%	674.1	11.9%
VPS Grade 5.1	754.5	12.99%	717.9	12.7%	717.9	12.7%
VPS Grade 4	1,266.2	21.80%	1,220.9	21.6%	1,220.9	21.6%
VPS Grade 3	656.7	11.30%	580.0	10.3%	580.0	10.3%

VPS Grade 2	201.48	3.47%	183.1	3.2%	183.1	3.2%
VPS Grade 1	2.0	0.03%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%
Government Teaching Service						
Health services						
Police						
Allied health professionals						
Child protection						
Disability development and support						
*Youth Justice Workers						
*Custodial officers						
Other (Please specify)**	1,253.0	21.57%	1,279.5	22.7%	1,279.5	22.7%
Total	5,809.2		5,643.0		5,643.0	

\*Please provide a breakdown for Youth Justice and Custodial officers by level (for example, YW1, YW2, YW3, YW4, YW5 and YW6).

\*\*"Other" Includes Field Staff, Project Fire Fighters, Principal Scientists, Wild Dog Controllers, Science Adaptive Classifications, Legal Adaptive Classifications and Trainees. The Full Time Equivalent (FTE) estimate as at 30 June 2025 and 30 June 2026 is based on actual staffing levels as at March 2025 with the non-core component (Project Firefighters and casual staff) being based on the 30 June 2024 actual (207 FTE) as this represents a more accurate estimate due to the seasonal nature of these positions.

b)

Category	As at 30-06-2024		As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
Ongoing	4,592.46	79.05%	4,610.3	81.7%	4,610.3	81.7%
Fixed-term	1,208.6	20.80%	1,024.7	18.2%	1,024.7	18.2%
Casual	8.2	0.14%	8.0	0.1%	8.0	0.1%
Total	5,809.2		5,643.0		5,643.0	

c)

Identification	As at 30-06-2024		As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
Men	2,881.4	49.6%	2,746.5	48.7%	2,746.5	48.7%
Women	2,903.2	49.98%	2,867.0	50.8%	2,867.0	50.8%
Self-described	20.6	0.35%	22.5	0.4%	22.5	0.4%
Prefer not to say	4.0	0.07%	7.0	0.1%	7.0	0.1%
Total	5,809.2		5,643.0		5,643.0	

d)

Identification	As at 30-06-2024		As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
People who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	111.3	1.92%	107.1	1.78%	107.1	1.78%
People who identify as having a disability	29.3	0.50%	27.7	0.46%	27.7	0.46%
Total*	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

\*The total is not applicable as a staff member may be included within both categories

## Workforce capability and capacity

### Question 36

What are the main gaps in the department's capability and capacity identified in the 2024–25 financial year, and expected in the 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years?

### Response

Financial year	Main gaps in capability and capacity
2024–25	Not applicable.
2025–26	Not applicable.
2026–27	Not applicable.

For the 2024-25 financial year-to-date, any roles undertaken by contractors, consultants, and labour hire arrangements were identified by management as addressing a specific point-in-time capability gap or required a special skillset that cannot usually be filled through standard VPS recruitment processes.

## Contractors

### Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

### Question 37

For each of the 2023–24, 2024–25 and 2025–26 financial years, please outline the actual, expected or anticipated:

- spend on contractors
- occupation categories for those contractors
- total number of contractor arrangements.

### Response

	2023–24 (actual)	2024–25 (to 31 March 2025)	2025–26 (anticipated) <sup>11</sup>
<b>Spend*</b>	\$293.9 million (amended) <sup>12</sup>	\$272.6 million	Not applicable
<b>Occupation categories<sup>13</sup></b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Total number of contractor arrangements</b>	2,783	Information will be available after 2024-25 Annual report is issued.	Not applicable

<sup>11</sup> The Department is unable to provide accurate forecasts of future spend, given a forecast would be based on future business requirements with consideration to the business circumstance at the time.

<sup>12</sup> Previously reported as \$323.6 million. Amended for labour hire costs

<sup>13</sup> The Department does not currently collect data to determine the FTE number of contractors as we do not engage contractors as employees. They are engaged based on a statement of work. The Department does not capture occupation category information for contractors.

\*Costs include both controlled and administered expenses. Spend is exclusive of GST

## Consultants

### Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

### Question 38

- a) For the 2023–24 financial year, please outline the department's total spend on consultants and completed consultancy projects.

### Response

For the 2023-24 financial year, DEECA spent \$56.9 million on consultancies. Reporting is based on spend for the financial year.

- b) For the 2023–24 financial year please outline: the **top five** department consultancy projects that were completed by spend, the actual outcomes achieved by the listed **top five**, the relevant occupation categories for those consultants, and the total number of consultant arrangements

Top five consultancy projects (For 2023-24)

Consultant	Project	Outcomes	Contract Start Date	Contract End date
Deloitte Consulting Pty Limited	Victorian Water Register 10 year strategy	Provided on-going advisory services.	01/05/2022	01/05/2025
Ernst & Young	VicGrid REZ – Offshore Wind	Provided commercial advisory services.	30/04/2023	30/04/2024
Ernst & Young	SEC Implementation Office	Provided advisory services.	03/04/2023	18/12/2024
Jacobs Group (Australia) Pty Ltd	VicGrid	Provided on-going technical advisory services.	08/02/2023	20/02/2025
Ernst & Young	VicGrid	Provide on-going commercial advisory services.	26/02/2024	25/02/2029

- c) For the 2024–25 financial year please outline: the department’s expected spend on consultants, the relevant occupation categories for those consultants, and the total number of consultant arrangements
- d) For the 2025–26 financial year please outline: the department’s anticipated spend for consultants, and what the anticipated occupation categories are for consultant arrangements.

	2023–24	2024–25 (to 31 March 2025)	2025–26 (Anticipated) <sup>14</sup>
<b>Spend*</b>	\$56.9 million	\$49.9 million	Not applicable
<b>Outcomes</b>	For individual consultancies valued at \$10,000 or greater, the name of the consultant and the purpose of the consultancy is outlined each year on DEECA’s website (Annual Report web page).	For individual consultancies valued at \$10,000 or greater, the name of the consultant and the purpose of the consultancy is outlined each year on DEECA’s website (Annual Report web page).	Not applicable
<b>Occupation categories<sup>15</sup></b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Total number of consultant arrangements</b>	300	Information will be available in the 2024-25 Annual Report.	Not applicable

<sup>14</sup> The Department is unable to provide accurate forecasts of future spend, given a forecast would be based on future business requirements with consideration to the business circumstance at a given time.

<sup>15</sup> The Department does not capture occupation category information for consultants. The number of engagements is based on a specific contract for a particular supplier.

\* Costs include both controlled and administered expenses. Spend is exclusive of GST.

## Labour Hire arrangements

### Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

### Question 39

For the 2023–24, 2024–25 and 2025–26 financial years, please outline the department's actual, expected or anticipated:

- spend on labour hire arrangements
- occupation categories for those labour hire arrangements
- total number of labour hire arrangements.

### Response

	2023–24 (actual)	2024–25 (to 31 March 2025)	2025–26 (anticipated) <sup>16</sup>
<b>Spend*</b>	\$29.7 million	\$17.3 million	Not applicable
<b>Occupation categories</b> <sup>17</sup>	Administration 37.6% Specialist 43.3% IT 19.1%	Administration 34.8% Specialist 44.9% IT 20.3%	Not applicable
<b>Total number of labour hire arrangements</b> <sup>18</sup>	623	459	Not applicable

<sup>16</sup> The Department is unable to provide accurate forecasts of future spend, given a forecast would be based on future business requirements with consideration to the business circumstance at a given time.

<sup>17</sup> The Department is only able to report on the occupation category for agency labour hire spend under the Staffing Services State Purchase Contracts (SPC) in DEECA's Vendor Management System.

<sup>18</sup> The FTE number of Agency Labour Hire Arrangements relates only to the number of engagements under the SPC (in DEECA's Vendor Management System) and is 'headcount' rather than FTE. An accurate FTE number of engagements outside of the SPC is not collected and cannot be obtained at this time.

\* Costs include both controlled and administered expenses. Spend is exclusive of GST.

## Enterprise Bargaining Agreements

### Question 40

- a) Please list all Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) that are expected to be completed during the 2025–26 year that affect the department, along with an estimate of the proportion of your department’s workforce (full-time equivalent) covered by the EBA.
- b) Please describe the effect the EBAs listed above have had on estimates of 2025–26 employee benefits.

### Response

a)

The department is currently engaged in negotiations for a replacement to the *Field Staff and Wild Dog Controllers Agreement 2021*. Negotiations are expected to conclude before or during the 2025-26 financial year. 17.9 per cent of the department’s workforce on a full-time equivalent basis is covered by the *Field Staff and Wild Dog Controllers Agreement 2021*.

b)

The effect of this enterprise agreement on 2025-26 employee benefits cannot be estimated at this time as negotiations have not concluded.

## Relationship between the Commonwealth and Victoria

### Question 41

What impact, if any, have changes to federal/state capital funding agreements and Commonwealth Government policy initiatives have had on the department's 2025–26 Budget?

### Response

The 2025-26 Commonwealth Budget was announced on 25 March 2025. The 2025-26 Commonwealth Budget included initiatives relating to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) as outlined below.<sup>1,2</sup>

- National Water Grid Fund (\$172.7 million over five years);
- Warburton Mountain Bike Destination Project (\$3.0 million in 2024-25);
- Energy Bill Relief (\$1,376.4 million over two years);
- Boosting HPAI biosecurity response capability (\$1.7 million over two years);
- Building resilience to manage fruit fly (\$1.3 million in 2024-25);
- Community Solar Banks Program (\$14.2 million over two years);
- Environment Restoration Fund (\$0.8 million in 2024-25);
- Food Waste for Healthy Soils Fund (\$3.0 million over two years);
- Farm business resilience (\$1.4 million in 2024-25);
- Household Energy Upgrades Fund (Social Housing) (\$45.1 million over three years);
- Hydrogen energy supply chain project (\$3.8 million in 2024-25);
- Management of established pests and weeds (\$1.3 million over two years);
- National Hydrogen Technology Skills Training Centre (\$10.0 million over three years);
- National Plant Health Surveillance Program (\$0.2 million in 2024-25);
- Partnering to implement the National Soil Action Plan (\$3.2 million over three years);
- Pest and disease preparedness and response programs (\$48.7 million in 2024-25);
- Plastics technology stream (\$15.6 million over three years);
- Recycling Infrastructure (\$7.2 million over two years);
- Strengthen Australia's frontline biosecurity capability and domestic preparedness (\$1.0 million in 2024-25);
- Transforming Digital Environmental Assessments (\$0.9 million in 2024-25);
- Urban Rivers and Catchments Program (\$17.5 million over four years);
- Improving Compliance in the Murray-Darling Basin (\$3.1 million over three years);
- Sustainable rural water use and infrastructure program (\$174.0 million over three years);

- Implementation of Constraints Measures (\$2.8 million in 2024-25); and
- Resilient Rivers Water Infrastructure Program (\$1.3 million over two years).

1. *It is noted there were initiatives relating to DEECA which were included in the Commonwealth Budget papers with funding amounts yet to be determined. These initiatives have not been included in the response above.*
2. *The initiatives and funding amounts included in this response have been extracted from the 2025-26 Commonwealth Budget papers. These initiatives are subject to further assessment by the department, and may require discussions with the Commonwealth Government, to confirm how much funding may be received by DEECA.*

## Climate Change

### Question 42

- a) Please specify the initiatives in the department's 2025–26 Budget that will contribute to Victoria's Climate Change Strategy. Please also outline the budget allocation, the ways in which the initiatives will contribute to Victoria's Climate Change Strategy and the year the initiative will likely realise benefits.

### Response

Initiatives in 2025–26 Budget that contribute to Climate Change Strategy	Budget allocation in 2025–26 Budget	How will the initiative contribute to Victoria's Climate Change Strategy	Year likely to realise benefits
Delivering agriculture sector emissions reductions	3.1	This initiative will deliver enabling activities to position the Victorian agriculture sector for future emissions reduction and contribute to meeting Victoria's climate action targets.	2025-26 and 2026-27
Offshore Wind Program	10.0	Offshore wind is critical to meeting Victoria's renewable energy targets and emission reduction targets.	2032-33
Supporting Landcare and Coastcare volunteers	8.7	Coastcare Victoria and Landcare support environmental stewardship and enable volunteers and communities to achieve sustainable agricultural and environmental outcomes, and participate in marine and coastal planning and management of the coast.	2025-26 and 2026-27
Solar Homes Program – Hot water rebates	29.7	This initiative will contribute to the Strategy by supporting households to switch from emissions intensive gas hot water systems or inefficient electric systems, to energy efficient	2025-26

Initiatives in 2025–26 Budget that contribute to Climate Change Strategy	Budget allocation in 2025–26 Budget	How will the initiative contribute to Victoria’s Climate Change Strategy	Year likely to realise benefits
		heat pump and solar alternatives, thereby reducing emissions and their overall energy consumption.	
Continue the establishment of Liwik Barring conservation area and protect Victoria’s faunal emblems	1.9	Revegetation is a key component of the Liwik Barring and Faunal Emblems program. To date the DEECA Liwik Barring project team has managed numerous native revegetation projects. Active and natural revegetation will result in regeneration of Crown land frontages and improvements to waterway health. This will further support climate action.	2025-26
Industrial Renewable Gas Guarantee	1.5	<p>Should a 4.5 PJ per year by 2035 renewable gas target be supported, this will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce Victorian gas sector emissions by around 50,000 to 100,000 tonnes in 2030;</li> <li>• reduce Victorian gas sector emissions by around 250,000 tonnes in 2035; and</li> <li>• contribute significantly to Victoria’s 2045 net zero target, as around one quarter of Victoria’s current fossil gas use cannot likely be electrified long term.</li> </ul>	2035

- b) *The Climate Change Act 2017*, Part 3, section 17, requires decision makers from some departments to have regard to climate change.
- i. What is the most significant challenge for the department in complying with section 17?
  - ii. What guidance does the department have in place to assist decision makers to comply with the *Climate Change Act 2017*?
  - iii. What work is planned and budget allocated in 2025–26 to facilitate compliance of the department with section 17?

**Response**

<p>Most significant challenge with compliance</p>	<p>Climate change impacts all activities and decisions undertaken by DEECA, and meeting these challenges often requires the development of different approaches to traditional decision making. The challenge for DEECA is to work closely with communities to ensure that they understand why in some cases, difficult decisions will need to be made. For example, with projected sea level rise, retreat of coastal communities is one of the potential responses.</p>
<p>Guidance in place to assist decision makers</p>	<p>DEECA provides decision-makers with information and advice on climate change issues and climate action by the Victorian Government to inform assessments under section 17 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria’s Climate Science Report 2024 – provides a summary of the best available scientific evidence on climate change and projections for Victoria and can be used to inform decision making including climate risk assessments and adaptation planning.</li> <li>• Victoria’s Future Climate Tool – spatial tool that can be used to explore climate projections for local regions and export climate data to use in other spatial tools.</li> <li>• 10 regional climate summaries updated in 2024 – provide a summary of climate projections from the Climate Science Report for Victoria’s regions.</li> <li>• Adaptation Action Plans to guide government action to respond to the risks and opportunities of climate change for seven key systems (Built Environment, Education and Training, Health and Human Services, Natural Environment, Primary Production, Transport and Water Cycle).</li> </ul>

- Victoria’s greenhouse gas emissions report 2022 – this annual report provides detailed information on Victoria’s emissions since 1990 including key trends by sector.
- Victoria’s Climate Change Strategy 2021 (to be updated in 2025) – outlines the Victorian Government’s whole of economy plan for achieving net zero emissions by 2045 and a climate resilient Victoria.
- Victoria’s Emission Reduction Pledges 2021 for seven sectors (Agriculture, Energy, Industrial Processes and Product Use, Land Use Land Use Change and Forestry, Transport, Waste and Whole of Victorian Government Pledge) outline the policies and programs the Victorian government is taking to reduce emissions in each sector.
- Analysis and modelling on Victorians Climate Action Targets (which are now legislated).
- The Victorian Government Climate-related Risk Disclosure Statement 2022 outlines the climate-related risks and opportunities that are relevant for Victoria and the actions the Victorian Government is taking to manage the risks and capitalise on the opportunities.

#### **Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria guidance**

In 2023, EPA developed an internal guideline to support a consistent approach to considering climate change in permission decisions.

To support the guidelines, EPA has also developed an Emission Contribution Tool and supporting methodologies to assist staff responsible for assessing permission applications received by EPA to calculate the applicant’s emission impact against Victoria’s total emissions.

The methodology enables EPA to evaluate an applicant’s approach to identifying, quantifying, and mitigating their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Authorised officers are also supported in any compliance and enforcement activities and decision making through the development of inspection support guides for climate change.

In 2023, EPA developed external guidance for businesses and industries that it regulates to identify, quantify, and mitigate their GHG emissions

	<p>(<a href="https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/2048-minimising-greenhouse-emissions">https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/2048-minimising-greenhouse-emissions</a>).</p> <p>EPA is also developing guidance relating to the consequences of climate change, which will support business identify, assess and minimise their pollution and waste risks in a changing climate.</p> <p>EPA’s statement of regulatory intent on climate change sets EPA’s regulatory strategy on climate change and clarifies EPA’s role, who it will focus on and expectations for business and industry to minimise their climate-related risks. The statement makes it clear that EPA’s permission decision-making function plays a key role in EPA’s work to address risks from the causes and consequences of climate change, and our expectations.</p>
<p>Work planned/budget allocation to facilitate compliance in 2025–26</p>	<p>DEECA factors in the implications for climate change in all policies, programs and services it delivers. This includes consideration in the areas of bushfire risk management, coastal assets, biodiversity science, forests and resources, energy policy and programs including solar initiatives, land management, waste and recycling, planning and management of water and catchments, and agricultural policies and programs.</p> <p>Work planned by DEECA’s central climate action policy team to support the department’s (and VPS) compliance with the requirements of the Act in 2025-26 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing an updated Victorian Climate Change Strategy for 2026-2030.</li> <li>• Preparing updated Emission Reduction Pledges for the seven sectors (Agriculture, Energy, Industrial Processes and Product Use, Land Use Land Use Change and Forestry, Transport, Waste and Whole of Victorian Government Pledge) for the period 2026-2030.</li> <li>• Supporting the application of Victoria’s Climate Science Report 2024 through capability building and use in key decision-making processes.</li> <li>• Preparing Victoria’s annual greenhouse gas emissions report.</li> <li>• Capacity development at the practitioner level through a climate action community of practice.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy development for updated Adaptation Action Plans for release in the second half of 2026.</li> <li>• Regular reporting to senior executive forums across the Victorian Public Sector, including the Victorian Secretaries’ Board, and supporting action through a government climate action Interdepartmental Committee</li> <li>• Information and advice as needs arise.</li> </ul> <p>EPA will continue to promote and raise awareness of its Statement of Regulatory Intent on climate change and implement it, which will include continuing to consider climate change in permission decision-making, and compliance monitoring to ensure major emitters and activities most at risk from a changing climate are meeting their obligations.</p>
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c) Under *FRD 24 Reporting of environmental data by government entities*, Victorian Government organisations must report their greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts. Does the department have internal targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions? If yes, please provide details, quantifying where possible and outlining actions that will be taken in the 2025–26 year onwards to achieve these targets.

**Response**

<b>Internal targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions</b>	<b>Actions to be taken in 2025–26 and onward to achieve these targets</b>
<p>The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) Board has committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2030 (in line with FRD 24 reporting). DEECA has a net zero plan in place.</p>	<p><b>Building gas emissions</b> Gas assets at all DEECA controlled sites will be phased out at end of life. There are an estimated 202 gas assets across DEECA sites. Currently it is predicted that 68 per cent of these assets will have been replaced by 2030 with the remainder being replaced by 2053.</p> <p><b>Shared passenger vehicle emissions</b> There are 62 zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) currently in the fleet. The shared passenger vehicle fleet will transition to ZEVs once current leases expire. It is estimated that the shared passenger vehicle fleet will fully transition to ZEVs by 2030.</p> <p><b>Electricity emissions</b> 100 per cent Green Power purchasing is in place for all DEECA controlled electricity accounts. It is anticipated that from July 2025 onwards, DEECA</p>

	will be able to achieve zero emission electricity across all DEECA controlled sites.
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## Gender Responsive Budgeting

### Question 43

- a) Please list the programs/initiatives (output and asset) from the 2025–26 Budget for which the department has undertaken a gender impact assessment and describe the main outcomes or results of the gender impact assessment process for each program/initiative. Please also advise what percentage of the department’s 2025–26 output and asset initiatives have been subject to a gender impact assessment.

#### Response

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) undertook gender impact assessments for all budget bids lodged as part of the 2025-26 Budget process. For initiatives identified as having gender impacts, DEECA ensured that the gender impacts were considered in the development of the budget bid to promote gender equality and inclusivity, and factored that into how the program will be delivered.

- b) Please list any other programs/initiatives (output and asset) in the 2025–26 Budget where Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) processes or principles were applied/considered by the department. Please detail: the initiative, how GRB was applied/considered and the outcome of this consideration.

#### Response

Not applicable. As detailed in the response to the previous question, all programs/initiatives lodged by DEECA in the 2025-26 Budget undertook gender impact assessments.

- c) Please list what evaluations of the department’s programs/initiatives have been undertaken from a gender perspective and what the key findings of the evaluations were.

#### Response

DEECA undertook gender impact assessments for all budget bids lodged as part of the 2025-26 Budget process.

- d) What further work is being undertaken by the department in 2025–26 to embed GRB?

**Response****Further work being undertaken by the department in 2025–26 to embed GRB**

- In early 2024, DEECA launched the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) App, a digital tool to automate and centralise GIA reporting.
- GIA App training targets relevant work areas to increase capability building across the organisation for staff responsible for preparing budget bids.
- DEECA is prioritising further work on the establishment of a robust reporting and governance processes to monitor progress and completion of GIAs through the App.
- DEECA is also seeking to further consider the intersectional gender impacts of the department's work.

**Implementation of PAEC recommendations****Question 44 - Update on status of implementation**

Please provide an update on the status of the implementation of:

- Committee recommendations that were made in the *Report on the 2023–24 Budget Estimates* and supported by the Government
- Committee recommendations that were made in the *Report on the 2024–25 Budget Estimates* and supported by the Government

Please populate the below table according to each department's supported recommendations.

**Response****Update on the implementation of recommendations made in the 2023–24 Budget Estimates Report**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Recommendation supported by Government</b>	<b>Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire</b>	<b>Update on status of implementation</b>
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 47: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action outline the specific programs, services and payments delivered through funding provided for the Timber Harvesting Transition Support and Timber worker and industry support initiatives, including the total funding allocated to each program, and report on the total support	The VicForests 2022-23 Annual Report indicates it funded \$149.0 million in sawmill compensation and harvest and haulage contract payments. As part of the Government's support packages for Forestry Transition announced in 2023-24, \$200 million was allocated for a managed transition out of native timber harvesting. This funding targeted support for sawmill businesses. DEECA will be able to provide the actual	VicForests reported on the sawmill compensation and harvest and haulage contract payments for the 2023-24 year in its 2023-24 Annual Report (p. 51). DEECA reported actual grant expenditure by recipient for the 2023-24 year in its 2023-24 Annual Report (Appendix 6 – Table 2). This included the

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
	payments to workers and the outcomes of these programs and services on the Forestry Transition Program website.	allocation against business and worker support at financial year end. This is due to the nature of it being demand based grant predicated on business and worker application. Some businesses have chosen to remain open or continue working with Government. Workers attached to these businesses will continue to be employed. Only genuine worker redundancies will be eligible for Worker Support payments.	recipients of business support and transition package payments. The 2023-24 funding paid to ForestWorks to deliver the worker support program is also disclosed in DEECA's 2023-24 Annual Report (Appendix 6 – Table 2).
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 48: The Victorian Government undertake a comprehensive review into the forestry transition program that assesses and reports on the outcomes of the support provided to native timber workers, industry and communities and articulate its plan for VicForests and public land formerly subject to native timber harvesting as soon as practicable.	To support the transition of Victoria's native timber industry, the Government committed support for workers and their families to transition away from native timber harvesting earlier than planned. This is in addition to further investment to engage harvest operators. Procurement of an independent supplier to provide monitoring and evaluation services for the Forestry Transition Program is expected to be completed by 30 June 2024. The provider will design a framework for monitoring key initiatives for native timber workers, businesses and communities, enabling the Department to understand, report and respond to delivery issues. The Program Evaluation will assess the design and implementation of worker, business and community programs against the objectives of Forestry Transition and the	The evaluation process for the Forestry Transition Program has commenced with a full evaluation of the outcomes of the program expected in early 2027. VicForests ceased operating on 30 June 2024 and was abolished by the Sustainable Forests (Timber) Repeal Act 2024 on 1 July 2024. The Government has appointed the Great Outdoors Taskforce that will consider future use of over 1.8 million hectares of state forest previously managed for timber harvesting. Public consultation ran from 19 November 2024 to 12 January 2025. This feedback is currently being reviewed with a

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
		<p>Victorian Government's public commitments to those affected by native forestry transition. The evaluation will include quarterly monitoring of progress, engage external stakeholders and provide a full evaluation of the outcomes of the program by early 2027.</p> <p>On 1 April 2024, the Government appointed the Great Outdoors Taskforce which will consider future use of over 1.8 million hectares of state forest previously managed for timber harvesting. The Taskforce will undertake consultations with Victorians and provide recommendations to government. The Taskforce will be established in partnership with Victorian Traditional Owners and work is underway to support each relevant Traditional Owner Group to determine its involvement as well as ensuring the state-wide interests of Aboriginal Victorians in this work.</p> <p>The government has also made the decision that VicForests will cease operating by 30 June 2024. The government worked closely with VicForests to prepare for the closure of the entity and to support VicForests employees in making decisions about their future. From 1 July 2024, functions like forest planning, spatial mapping,</p>	<p>report to government expected in mid-2025.</p>

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 49: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action detail in its annual report the total payments provided under the Zero Emissions Vehicles subsidy program and the reasons for ending the program earlier than scheduled.	seed collection and forest regeneration will become the responsibility of DEECA. DEECA will report on the total payments provided under the Zero Emissions Vehicles subsidy program in the 2023-24 annual report.	The 2023-24 DEECA Annual Report (p. 41) included the total payments provided under the Zero Emissions Vehicles subsidy program from the commencement of the program on 1 May 2021 to its conclusion on 30 June 2023.
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 53: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action develop an objective indicator that reports on the relative share of Victoria's energy sourced from State Electricity Commission projects.	DEECA will develop an objective indicator that reports on the relative share of Victoria's energy sourced from State Electricity Commission (SEC) projects in future budget papers once appropriate data becomes available for annual reporting.	Generation from all renewable energy projects, large and small, will be counted towards Victoria's renewable energy targets and included in the renewable generation share for the reporting year, once operational. Energy sourced from SEC projects will be included once data is available.  DEECA will continue to work with SEC to develop an appropriate indicator as data becomes available.
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 56: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action clearly outline the responsibilities, related initiatives, outputs, objectives, objective indicators and performance measures of the State	DEECA supports this recommendation in principle. Information about the State Electricity Commission's (SEC) responsibilities, related initiatives and long-term goals are outlined in the SEC Victoria Strategic Plan 2023-2035. Relevant information on	DEECA's Department Performance Statement and SEC's annual report incorporates information relating to the State Electricity Commission portfolio where available. Further incorporation

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
	Electricity Commission portfolio in the 2024–25 Budget.	outputs, objectives, objective indicators, and performance measures will be incorporated into the Department Performance Statement once the SEC is fully operationalised.	of measures and indicators for the SEC will be developed as SEC programs are fully implemented.
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 58: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action consider ways to report on the quality or impact of targeted conservation actions for threatened species, not just the number of actions taken.	DEECA supports this recommendation in principle. DEECA released the Biodiversity Indicator Framework (BIF) in 2024 as a new approach for reporting on biodiversity status and trends and for assessing the effectiveness of management and conservation actions. The BIF includes a chapter on Management Effectiveness, which reports on the quality, or effectiveness, of actions not just the number of actions taken. The BIF represents broader biodiversity reporting, but DEECA will consider if or how Management Effectiveness indicators can also be reported through State Budget Papers.	The DEECA Biodiversity Indicator Framework (BIF) is organised according to five key themes, with each theme addressing an important component for understanding changes in biodiversity and the effects of efforts to manage Victoria’s native flora and fauna. The Expected Survival theme in the BIF monitors and reports on the estimated capacity for species and their habitats to persist into the future, even under a changing climate. A key indicator within this theme is species persistence under current management regimes across Victoria that is intended, in time, to include reporting on the impact of landscape-scale threat management and targeted conservation actions for threatened species. To support this approach, DEECA has developed a method for reporting on the impact of

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
			<p>packages of targeted conservation actions on the likely persistence of threatened species. Further, DEECA has commenced implementation of approaches to report on Management Effectiveness from threat management actions funded through DEECA on-ground programs. Noting the time needed to detect changes in flora and fauna from targeted or landscape scale management actions, development of the requisite Management Effectiveness indicators will continue and be included in future updates to the BIF and reported in future State Department Performance Statement reporting if deemed suitable and as they become available.</p>
DEECA	<p>RECOMMENDATION 59: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action ensure future budget papers detail the department’s rationale for discontinuing proposed performance measures</p>	<p>DEECA supports this recommendation to provide information in future budget papers on the department’s rationale for discontinuing proposed performance measures aligned to the Resource Management Framework requirements. Decisions to discontinue measures and the detail published in budget papers is determined by the Assistant Treasurer, in consultation with portfolio Ministers.</p>	<p>DEECA will continue to provide information on the rationale for proposed discontinued performance measures to the Department of Treasury and Finance for publication in the Department Performance Statement.</p>

Update on the implementation of recommendations made in the *2024–25 Budget Estimates Report*

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 32: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action develop performance measures regarding the Container Deposit Scheme for inclusion in the next Budget.	DEECA supports this recommendation to develop performance measures regarding the Container Deposit Scheme for inclusion in the 2025-26 Budget.	A new performance measure on the Container Deposit Scheme has been developed as part of the 2025-26 Budget: 'Container Deposit Scheme refund collection points provided to Victorians'. This new performance measure reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to reducing litter by providing accessible drink container collection points.
DEECA	RECOMMENDATION 34: The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate action revisit the modified target of 600 for the performance measure 'Victorian schools participating in the ResourceSmart Schools program' in the 2025–26 budget papers.	<p>DEECA supports-in-principle this recommendation.</p> <p>DEECA and Sustainability Victoria (SV), that deliver the ResourceSmart Schools (RSS) program, have reviewed the target and have determined it appropriate to retain it at 600 schools for 2025-26.</p> <p>The target of 600 was established based on the requirements outlined in the DTF Resource Management Framework, which emphasises setting challenging yet attainable targets to drive performance and support effective program management.</p>	<p>SV is implementing changes to the RSS online portal to increase accessibility and decrease the time teachers spend in the program modules.</p> <p>The aim is to ease the administration requirements for teachers and keep active schools engaged in the RSS program.</p> <p>SV is also in the initial stages of trialling different ways to engage with and recruit geographically remote schools, including using local networks and online facilitation sessions,</p>

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
			as there is a lower participation rate in these locations.

## Community consultation on budget initiatives

### Question 45

With regard to the new initiatives in the 2025–26 Budget, which relevant and interested community groups and stakeholders did the department consult or engage with? Please detail the budget initiatives' consultation related to and the final outcomes of consultation.

#### Response

- Industrial Renewable Gas Guarantee:** On 11 September 2023, the Victorian Government released *Victoria's Renewable Gas Consultation Paper*, seeking industry and community views on potential policies that could help to establish a renewable gas market in Victoria. In May 2024, the Victorian Government released *Summary of Stakeholder Submissions* report (on Engage Victoria) in response to the 49 submissions received to the Consultation Paper. On 9 December 2024, the Victorian Government released *Victoria's Renewable Gas Directions Paper*, responding to stakeholder feedback and assessing the key policy options to establish a renewable gas market in Victoria. Stakeholder feedback helped shape the policy approach to establishing renewable gas in Victoria and the Industrial Renewable Gas Guarantee initiative.
- Joint management of Barmah National Park:** Extensive consultation occurred with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation in the development of the bid. Broad community consultation has been undertaken in previous years to develop the Joint Management Plan for Barmah National Park.
- Delivering agriculture sector emissions reductions:** Targeted engagement was undertaken with the Victorian Farmers Federation and the Victorian Agriculture and Climate Change Council on future directions for emissions reductions in the agriculture sector. Council membership includes industry leaders and internationally renowned climate experts, provides strategic advice to the Minister for Agriculture and the department on how the agriculture sector can prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change and facilitates engagement with different parts of the agriculture sector and supply chain. Both the Victorian Farmers Federation and the Victorian Agriculture and Climate Change Council have a high level of commitment to and ambition for the Victorian Government's response to climate change.

## Victoria's Housing Statement

### Question 46

- a) Please list the department's output and asset initiatives in the 2025–26 Budget that will deliver on outcomes outlined in *Victoria's Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034*.<sup>19</sup>

### Response

Initiative	2024–25 funding (\$ million)	2025–26 funding (\$ million)	2026–27 funding (\$ million)	2027–28 funding (\$ million)	2028–29 funding (\$ million)
Sustaining the EPA's strengthened regulatory functions	30.0	23.7	23.7	23.7	23.7
Efficient and timely environmental assessments	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0

- b) What will be the impact of the initiatives on
- i. housing affordability
  - ii. Victoria's planning system
  - iii. housing supply
  - iv. the regulation of rental properties
  - v. public housing supply
  - vi. community housing supply

<sup>19</sup> Department of Premier and Cabinet, *Victoria's Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034*, Melbourne, 2023, <[https://content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/DTP0424\\_Housing\\_Statement\\_v6\\_FA\\_WEB.pdf](https://content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/DTP0424_Housing_Statement_v6_FA_WEB.pdf)>

## Response

Initiative	Timeframe (e.g. 1-5 years, 5-10 years)	Housing affordability (if applicable)	Victoria's planning system (if applicable)	Housing supply (if applicable)	The regulation of rental properties (if applicable)	Public housing supply (if applicable)	Community housing supply (if applicable)
Sustaining the EPA's strengthened regulatory functions	1-5 years	Not applicable	Not applicable	The EPA is instrumental in this initiative, providing essential services to approve applications and ensure economic growth generated by housing projects do not adversely affect local Victorian communities or the environment.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Efficient and timely environmental assessments	1-5 years	Not applicable	Will address immediate and medium-term needs to build capacity providing consistent and timely environmental	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

			advice and assessments, while transforming existing policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks.				
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## Cyber security

### Question 47

- a) What actions has the department taken over 2024–25, and plans to take over 2025–26, to improve cyber security and mitigate the risk of a cyber-attack or data breach?

### Response

	<b>Cyber security and cyber-attack risk mitigation measures planned by department</b>
2024–25	<p>In 2023-24, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) adopted an industry recognised framework from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) which organises cyber security into five cyber security functions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. identify;</li> <li>2. protect;</li> <li>3. detect;</li> <li>4. respond; and</li> <li>5. recover.</li> </ol> <p>DEECA’s cyber security program and operational services are aligned to these five functions and are designed to continuously uplift the department’s overall cyber security posture. During 2024-25, DEECA refreshed its cyber security strategy which included a three-year roadmap (2024-2026). Year 1 of the three-year roadmap (2024-25), has four delivery streams as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maturing the department’s overall cyber security governance, focusing on ensuring up-to-date policies are in place, and targeted training availability for high-risk staff.</li> <li>2. Uplifting DEECA’s foundational security controls and capabilities to better protect departmental information, focusing on the Essential 8 controls of the department’s most critical systems.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Improving the department’s detection capability, particularly coverage of DEECA’s critical systems and improving threat and risk identification.</li> <li>4. Implementing cyber security exercise recommendations and optimising the department’s response capability.</li> </ol>
2025–26	<p>In 2025-26, DEECA will continue to strengthen its overall cyber security posture through implementation of Year 2 of the three-year roadmap (2025-26). The five cyber security functions as adopted by the industry recognised NIST framework continue to set and improve the foundation for DEECA’s cyber security program. Year 2 of the roadmap will prioritise the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identity and Access Management (IDAM) Strategy: Effective management of identities and access is crucial for all aspects of cybersecurity. Implementing a comprehensive strategy will ensure consistency and mitigate vulnerabilities within IDAM processes.</li> <li>2. Extend vulnerability management capability: Consistent and improved monitoring of risk exposure to DEECA managed assets of any known or new vulnerabilities.</li> <li>3. Tailored staff training and continued phishing campaigns: Employees in different roles encounter different types of threats. Tailored training ensures that each employee understands the specific risks associated with their job and how to mitigate them.</li> <li>4. Additional data loss prevention measures: Having established the initial controls in the previous fiscal year, the next fiscal year will address securing other points of data exit such as email and external hard drives.</li> <li>5. The continual addressing of actions from incident response exercises.</li> </ol>

b) What resources in terms of funding levels and staffing has the department assigned to cyber security for 2024–25 and 2025–26?

**Response**

	Department cyber security funding	Staff (FTE)
2024–25	\$973,000	12
2025–26	To be determined *	To be determined *

*\* The funding levels and staffing for the Cyber Security Program are determined at the start of each financial year and are therefore unable to be provided for 2025-26 at this time.*

If the department (or any of the department’s agencies) have experienced a cyber attack or data breach since 2023:

c) What was the impact of this data breach on the department/agency’s resources, staffing, services provided to the community and ongoing support to individuals impacted by the cybersecurity event?

**Response**

Cyber attack/data breach	Impact on department/agency resources	Impact on staffing	Impact on services provided by department/agency to community	Ongoing support to individuals impacted by cyber-attack or data breach
March 2025 Data breach – Entity	Low. The entity notified the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) of the incident.	Nil	Nil	Nil
March 2025 Data breach – DEECA	Low. DEECA reported the incident to OVIC.	Minor. New process implemented.	Nil	Nil
February 2025 Data breach – Entity	Low	Minor. Additional training to staff member.	Nil	Nil
February 2025 Data breach – DEECA	Low. DEECA reported the incident to OVIC.	Minor. Additional training to staff member. All-staff email reminder.	Nil	Nil
February 2025 Data breach – DEECA	Low	Nil	Nil	Nil
December 2024 Data breach – entity	Low	Nil	Nil	Nil

d) What measures were implemented after the event to improve cyber security?

**Response**

Cyber security breaches and incidents inform the implementation of future controls, operations and policy within the department as part of the cyber security program. Some of the initiatives that have resulted in key risk reduction during 2024-25 are:

- Staff education on how to spot a phishing email through simulated phishing campaigns.

- Staff education on how to use system controls appropriately such as those within SharePoint (managing access) and email (using BCC).
- Controlling and blocking suspected malicious physical devices accessing the department's network.
- Data loss prevention applied on unapproved websites.
- Additional services monitored through the department's 24/7 Security Operations Centre.
- Several cloud security controls implemented which include conditional access controls and multi factor authentication.
- Improved "suspicious activity" monitoring on workstations and servers.
- Protecting of DEECA's information when accessed by staff via mobile devices.

## Health spending – DH only

### Question 48

Not applicable – DH only.

## Large scale infrastructure projects – DTF/DTP only

### Question 49

Not applicable – DTF/DTP only.

## Economic forecast – DTF only

### Question 50

Not applicable – DTF only.

## Grants – DTF only

### Question 51

Not applicable – DTF only.

### Question 52

Not applicable – DTF only.

## Equity funding – DTF only

### Question 53

Not applicable – DTF only.

## Land transfer duty – DTF only

### Question 54

Not applicable – DTF only.

## Public Private Partnerships – modifications and accountability – DTF only

### Question 55

Not applicable – DTF only.

## Net Debt – DTF only

### Question 56

Not applicable – DTF only.

## Long term financial management objectives – DTF only

### Question 57

Not applicable – DTF only.

### Question 58

Not applicable – DTF only.

## Treasurer's Advances and Central Contingencies – DTF only

### Question 59

Not applicable – DTF only.

### Question 60

Not applicable – DTF only.

Question 10 - Capital asset expenditure.

2025-26 State Budget Paper No. 5/Relevant state financial reports

Line Item	2022-23 actual (\$ million)	2023-24 budget (\$ million)	2023-24 revised (\$ million)	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)
Payment for non financial assets	215	346	317	181	326	272
<b>Total</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>272</b>

2025-26 State Budget Paper No. 4.

Capital projects	2022-23 actual (\$ million)	2023-24 budget (\$ million)	2023-24 revised (\$ million)	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)
<b>New</b>						
Continue the establishment of Lwix Barrng conservation area and protect Victoria's faunal emblems (Yellingbo)	-	-	-	-	-	0.4
<b>Existing</b>						
Additional recovery support for summer 2023-24 floods and storms (statewide)	-	-	-	-	6.1	0.4
Bendigo mine-impacted groundwater long-term management (Bendigo)	0.3	20.4	-	-	43.8	40.0
Critical bushfire and emergency asset maintenance and replacement (statewide)	-	-	-	-	-	9.0
Improving Victoria's water resources knowledge and access (statewide)	-	-	-	-	-	0.2
Investing in Serendip Sanctuary and the You Yangs, Wurdji Youang (Lara)	-	0.9	0.9	-	-	1.5
Suburban Parks Program (Creating a Ring of New Parkland) (Metropolitan)	30.1	11.5	11.5	15.0	-	10.5
<b>Completed</b>						
Big Housing Build: Improving the Planning System for Urban and Regional Development and State Infrastructure	2.9	-	-	-	-	-
Community infrastructure accessibility and sustainability (statewide)	0.2	5.8	2.5	2.2	-	-
Community recovery from storms, floods and fire	1.6	-	-	-	-	-
Critical capital works to keep Victorians safe from fire and other emergencies	7.9	-	-	0.2	-	-
Digital Twin Victoria	1.0	-	-	-	-	-
Emergency animal disease preparedness (statewide)	4.1	0.3	2.0	1.4	-	-
Enhancing Victoria's liveability through improvements to the parks and reserves estate (statewide)	3.2	-	-	-	-	-
Historic Boost for camping in Victoria's Great Outdoors (statewide)	0.5	-	-	0.1	-	-
Horsham alternative proteins glasshouse complex and incubation hub (Horsham)	0.1	8.3	10.8	9.3	1.1	-
Managing Bushfire Risk (statewide)	0.8	-	-	-	-	-
Protecting our parks, pets and wildlife-animal welfare including review of the Wildlife Act (statewide)	-	2.8	2.8	-	-	-
Protecting the Future of Hanging Rock (Woodhead)	3.0	-	-	-	-	-
Reducing Bushfire Risk in a Rapidly Changing Climate (statewide)	0.3	11.0	11.0	10.1	11.0	-
Revitalising Central Geelong	0.01	-	-	-	-	-
The evidence base for Victorian water: availability and knowledge (statewide)	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.3	-	-
ViCoasts: Building a Safer, Healthier and More Resilient Marine and Coastal Environment for the Community (statewide)	-	6.8	-	-	-	-
Werrisbee Open Range Zoo (Werrisbee South)	-	25.9	-	-	-	6.8
Yellingbo Conservation Area - Implementing the Yellingbo Conservation Area 10 Year Plan (regional)	-	0.8	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>94.8</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>60.8</b>

Note: The amounts listed in the table above relate to Budget Paper 4 reported projects that have payments classified as 'payments for non-financial assets'. Other capital programs which include payments relating to other classifications, including equity contributions and capital grants, are not listed in line with report criteria.

Line Item	2022-23 actual (\$ million)	2023-24 budget (\$ million)	2023-24 revised (\$ million)	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)
This funding relates to the Department's minor capital programs and various trust accounts that impact PNFA. This is partially offset by movements in creditors, depreciation, accumulated depreciation and asset revaluations.	158.9	251.3	275.2	142.7	256.0	211.4
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>158.9</b>	<b>251.3</b>	<b>275.2</b>	<b>142.7</b>	<b>256.0</b>	<b>211.4</b>

PPPs	2022-23 actual (\$ million)	2023-24 budget (\$ million)	2023-24 revised (\$ million)	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)
Insert PPP name here	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Note: The department has no PPP payments that are classified as 'payments for non-financial assets'.

<b>Total Payment for non financial assets</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>272</b>
	Correct	Correct	Correct	Correct	Correct	Correct

Please note the total of capital projects for each year is expected to reconcile to the total payments for non financial assets  
Please insert rows as required