Annual Report

2025-2026



VICTORIA State Government

North Central CMA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

North Central CMA acknowledges all First Nations People and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We honour their enduring connection to Country and Culture and affirm our support for their sovereignty and self-determination. The North Central CMA is committed to reconciliation through respectful partnerships.

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Front cover: Peter Rose, Catfish release, Horseshoe Lagoon

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Responsible Body Declaration

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, I am pleased to present the North Central Catchment Management Authority's (CMA) Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2026.



Sally Mitchell
Chair
North Central CMA Board

PART 1: YEAR IN REVIEW

Foreword from the Chair

The North Central CMA had another productive year filled with successful programs and projects delivered collaboratively with communities, Traditional Owners, and partners.

This work connected rivers, landscapes and people to deliver lasting positive changes for the north central region of Victoria.

In 2025–26 we farewelled some long-standing Board Members and welcomed new ones and our staff team moved back to our repaired Huntly office.

Our major achievements this year included completing a mid-review of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy, endorsement of Protecting What We Love: North Central Climate Change Strategy, commencing review and renewal of our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan and commencing renewal of the North Central Regional Waterway Strategy.

We also established a joint management approach with DJAARA for environmental water in the Coliban catchment, supported the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Projects East Environment Report for Gunbower National Park and Guttrum-Benwell State Forests, completed the Tragowel Plains Accountable Action Review, led the delivery of a Climate Positive Farming Initiative, discovered a new colony of nationally significant Eltham copper butterfly and embraced stronger accountabilities to prepare and endorse flood mapping.

We spent time preparing for the likely arrival of H5N1 avian bird flu and to support the resilience and recovery of the region's at-risk wildlife, concerned community members and groups, and our staff team.

At the centre of all of that is connection to place. CMAs understand the importance of protecting the places people love. We are uniquely placed to connect communities to government, bringing motivation, knowledge, and action together.

As the organisation's greatest asset, our staff team's continued commitment to delivering high-quality outcomes underpins everything we do. I want to acknowledge their dedication to the natural capital and people of the north central region.

On behalf of the Board, I extend our sincere thanks to all who have contributed to our achievements this year. We look forward to continuing our work together in the year ahead.





Sally Mitchell
Chair
North Central CMA Board

1.1 **Our Vision, Our Purpose, Our Approach, Our Culture**

The North Central CMA's strategic direction creates a clear, purposeful, and enabling path for the organisation to ensure the delivery of the best possible value for our communities, government and interested stakeholders. Our Culture reflects the organisation's appetite towards new challenges, innovation, and collaboration.

Our Vision

Healthy landscapes supporting prosperous communities.

Our Purpose

Connecting rivers, landscapes, and people to deliver lasting positive change.

Our Approach

Connecting natural resource management activities

- Delivering water for the environment and improving waterways.
- Promoting restorative agricultural land stewardship.
- Securing and linking habitats and species.
- Adapting landscapes to a changing climate.

Enabling active communities

- Encouraging and supporting community action for the environment.
- Supporting Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination, values and aspirations, economic inclusion.
- Leading and partnering across government, business and community.

Supporting sound decisions with knowledge

- Identifying regional natural resource management priorities.
- Gathering and sharing knowledge from local, cultural and scientific sources.
- Providing support to prepare and protect the community from extreme events such as flooding.
- Pursuing new opportunities such as natural capital, emerging environmental markets and renewable energy.

Lead, nurture and innovate

- Ensuring safety and wellbeing of our team.
- Valuing diversity and enabling inclusion.
- Encouraging innovation and learning.
- Applying financially, socially and environmentally responsible practices.

Our Culture

As a public-sector entity we align with the Victorian Public Sector values of responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights.

Our values

In addition to the Public Sector values, we have our unique set of values: Care, Courage and Connection (Figure 1) that guide our internal and external interactions and our work.

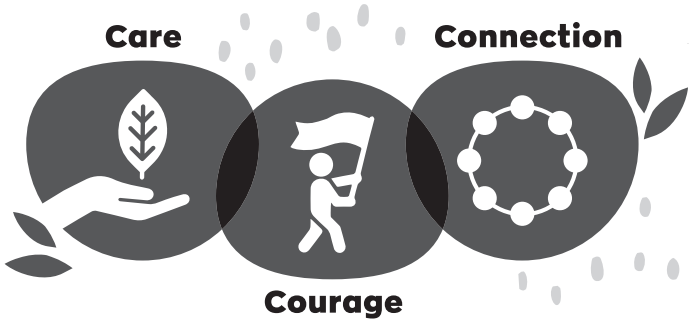


Figure 1 **North Central CMA values**

1.2 **Manner of Establishment and Responsible Ministers**

The North Central CMA is established under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act)* and also has powers and functions under the *Water Act 1989 (Water Act)*.

The responsible Ministers for the reporting period were:

- **1 July 2025 – 14 April 2026**
  The Hon. Gayle Tierney MP, Minister for Water
  The Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP,
  Minister for Environment
- **15 April 2026 – 30 June 2026**
  The Hon. Harriet Minister Shing MLC, MP,
  Minister for Water

1.3 **Nature and Range of Services Provided**

The North Central CMA is principally responsible for protecting and improving the health of the region's natural resources in-line with the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 (RCS) that's underpinned by supporting regional sub-strategies (Figure 2).

Responsibilities also include delivering on statutory obligations for waterway, rural drainage, and floodplain management.

The nature and scope of the North Central CMA's programs and projects contribute to the achievement of its business objectives. The core programs of the North Central CMA are:

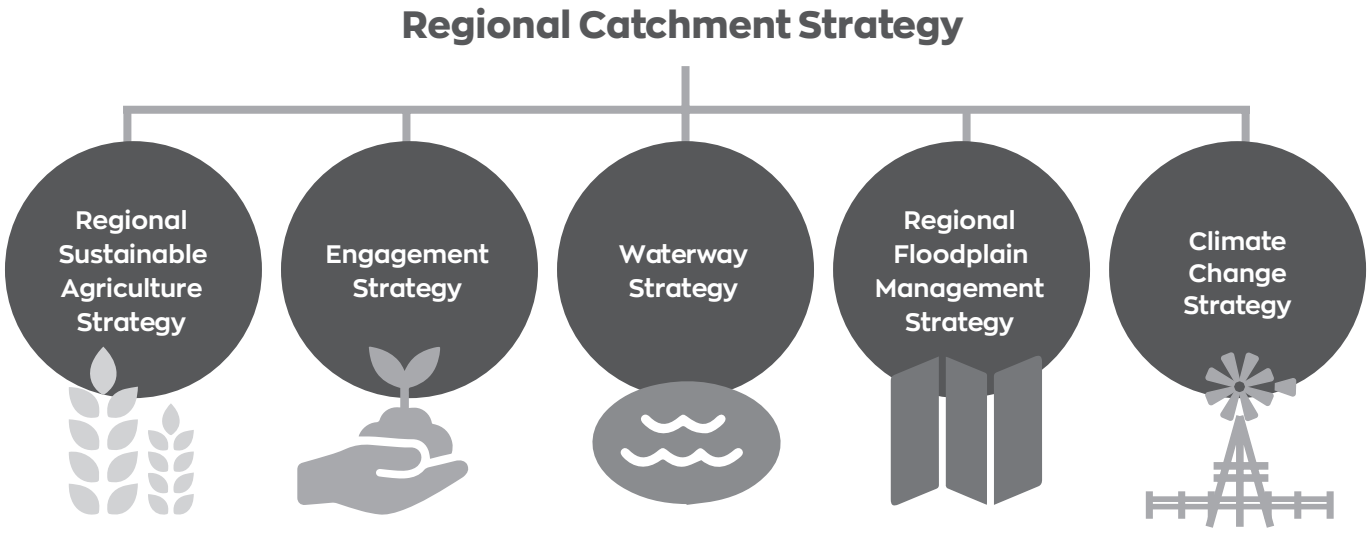


Figure 2 **Sub-strategies of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy**

Environmental Assets
The Environmental Asset program is responsible for delivering a broad range of projects aimed at improving the health of waterways, wetlands, and biodiversity within our region. The program delivers priorities identified within the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy, the North Central Waterway Strategy, and a range of national and international environmental obligations.

The program also works closely with the broader north central Victorian community and Traditional Owner groups to support self-determination and build capacity for delivering shared benefits across the region.

Water for the Environment
The core business of the Water for the Environment program is to deliver against the North Central CMA's statutory responsibilities to manage the environmental water reserve in our region pursuant to the *Water Act 1989*.

This includes long-term and annual planning, adaptively managing delivery, event-based monitoring, reporting to the Victorian Environmental Water Holder and the Murray Darling Basin Authority, and extensive community and Traditional Owner engagement. The program also includes management of works and measures that support environmental watering objectives such as infrastructure to deliver water to a site.

Sustainable Agriculture
The Sustainable Agriculture program works with communities, Traditional Owners, agricultural industries, and partner agencies to achieve productive and sustainable farming which includes protecting the natural resource base.

It delivers regional priorities identified in the North Central Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy that supports agriculture across north central Victoria.

Community and Relationships
The Community and Relationships program works with Traditional Owners, communities and internal and external stakeholders to provide support and leadership across community focused projects and programs with a focus on Landcare, Communications, Aboriginal Partnerships and Citizen Science.

The program supports the region's Landcare networks and groups, administration of the Victorian Landcare Grants, coordinates the delivery of 'Galkangu' North Central CMA's Stretch Reconciliation Acton Plan 2022-25 to support reconciliation and Traditional Owner self-determination, oversees the CMA's cultural heritage due diligence processes, and delivers citizen science activities through projects, such as WaterWatch and the North Central River Detectives Program. It also leads the CMA's communication activities and implementation of the North Central CMA Engagement Strategy 2022-2027.

Strategy and Impact
The Strategy and Impact program provides leadership and coordination across the North Central CMA's strategic planning and investment processes. The program leads the implementation and review of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021–2027 and supports the renewal of key strategies including the Regional Waterway Strategy and the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy.

The program also oversees the CMA's Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Framework and investment reporting processes, ensuring alignment with regional priorities and accountability to stakeholders. A key focus of the program is leading the CMA's approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation, embedding climate considerations across the organisation's work and supporting regional resilience.

Statutory Functions
The Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management program provides flood information and support to the Victorian State Emergency Service, local government, and the community. This contributes to the community understanding of their flood risk while also ensuring infrastructure development considers flood hazard and waterway health to minimise growth in flood risk and to protect and enhance waterway health.

The program also oversees the implementation of the Regional Floodplain Management Strategy which provides a work plan of priority actions from across the region to manage the risk of flooding and improve flood resilience of our communities in the future.

Major Projects
The Major Projects Program delivers works and measures to improve the health and condition of priority natural resource assets in the catchment. Key initiatives include enabling environmental water delivery to iconic water dependent forests and floodplains, constructing native fish passage, supporting the catchment to recover from recent floods and fires, and partnering with Traditional Owners to achieve their cultural values and aspirations for Country.

Disaster Recovery
The disaster recovery program continues to address impacts to waterway infrastructure and natural assets damaged by declared disaster events. The program includes responses to large scale flooding in October 2022, storms and localised flooding in 2023 and 2024 that impacted regional waterway heath, and post-fire recovery activities on public land impacted by the January 2026 bushfires. The program will support restoration works across affected waterways and catchments to protect and restore Victoria's environmental, cultural and social assets and strengthen long-term resilience.

1.4 **Objectives, Functions, Powers and Duties**

The principal statutory obligations of the North Central CMA are prescribed in the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* and *Water Act 1989*.

The core functions of the North Central CMA deliver on the *Catchment and Land Protection Act* and *Water Act* accountabilities, which primarily include:

- Regional planning, coordination, and delivery.
- Statutory functions under Part 10 of the *Water Act 1989*.
- Statutory functions under Part 11 of the *Water Act 1989*.

Section 4.12 of this report, *Compliance with Establishing Act*, describes the CMA's responsibilities and activities that specifically relate to compliance with key components of the *Water Act 1989* and the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

The Victorian Government's Outcomes Framework (Figure 3) focuses on environmental and community outcomes rather than outputs. A focus on outcomes provides a clear line of sight from investment through to success. In response, the North Central CMA developed a Business Outcomes Framework to demonstrate how the CMA will achieve the top two tiers of the Victorian Government's Outcomes Framework and how we will measure success against our vision, purpose, and approach.

Our performance against the Business Outcome Framework is detailed in the Performance Against Objectives, Functions, Powers and Duties section of this report (Table 2).

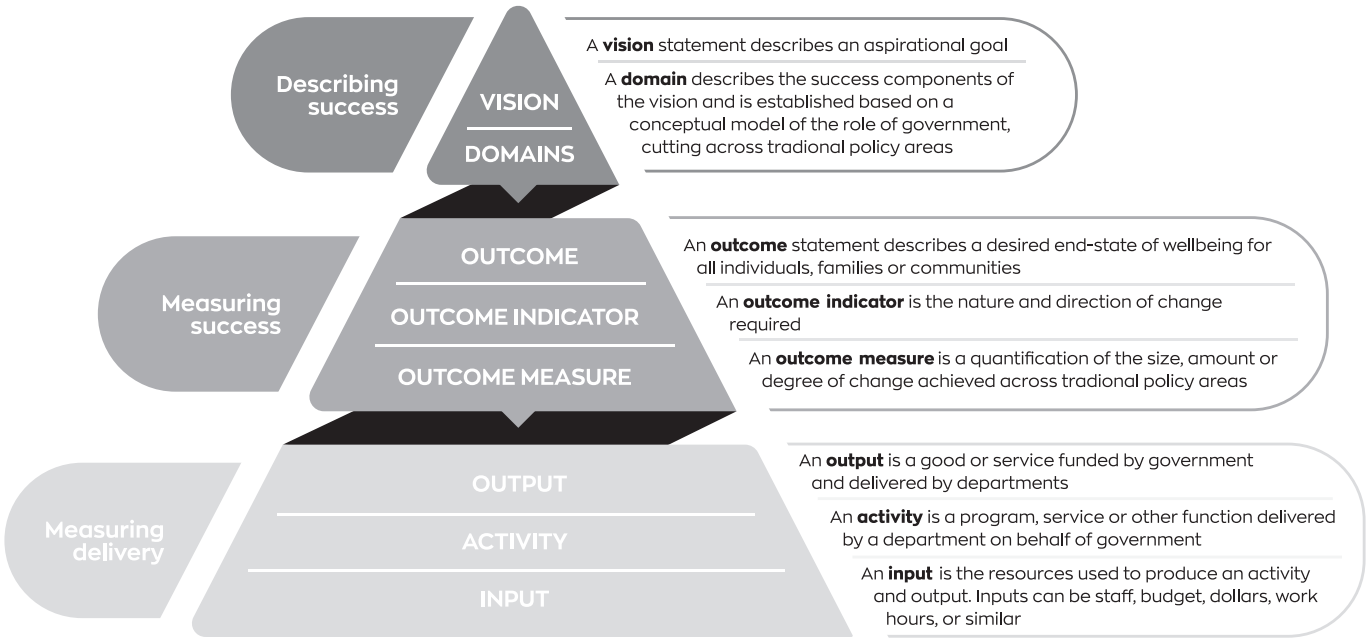


Figure 3 **Victorian Government Outcomes Framework Diagram**

1.5 **Performance Against Objectives, Functions, Powers and Duties**

This section of the report addresses our achievements and operational performance against key areas in our 2025-26 to 2029-30 Corporate Plan and legislative reporting requirements, including:

- Minister's Letter of Expectations Priority Areas
- North Central CMA Business Outcomes Framework
- Organisational Performance Framework
- Regional Catchment Condition
- DEECA Standard Outputs
- Key Initiatives and Projects

Minister's Letter of Expectations Priority Areas
The Minister for Water issues an annual Letter of Expectations to the North Central CMA outlining expectation and performance priorities that align with nine Victorian government policy priorities:

1. Climate Change and Energy
2. Customer, Community and Engagement
3. Recognise Aboriginal Values
4. Recognise Recreational Values
5. Resilient and Liveable Cities and Towns
6. Leadership, Diversity and Culture
7. Performance and Financial Management
8. Waterway and Catchment Health

10. Water for Agriculture

Customer Data Protection

Cyber Security

Table 1 provides a high-level performance statement against each Victorian government priority policy area and outcome indicators outlined in the North Central CMA's 2025-26 to 2029 Corporate Plan.

Additional narrative on our performance can be read in the Key Initiatives and Project Performance section of this report.

Table 1 **Performance Against Letter of Expectations Priority Areas**

Priority Area	Outcome Indicator(s)	Performance statement
1. Climate Change and Energy	**E1 Carbon sequestration** Active investigation into opportunities and/or deliver initiatives to: • sequester carbon and generate carbon offset credits, • adapt to climate change and climate variability	**E1.1** Active investigation into new opportunities that sequester carbon offsets has driven the North Central CMA's Grow Towards Zero project in partnership with four Local Government Authorities. The project works with private landholders to undertake revegetation activities to support multiple outcomes including regional net zero aspirations and biodiversity. **E1.1** The North Central CMA's Board endorsed Climate Change Commitment and Action Plan underpins our commitment to addressing the threats and creating opportunities for the region to cope with a changing climate. **E1.1** The North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 (RCS) recognises the impacts of climate change are pervasive, exacerbating existing threats and vulnerabilities. The RCS considers NRM planning through a climate change lens and includes priority directions under community; land; water and biodiversity themes. **E1.1** The North Central CMA has renewed the North Central Climate Change Strategy published in June 2026. The strategy sets out key priority directions for working together to build healthy, resilient and future-ready catchments. **E1.1** We are a key partner in the City of Greater Bendigo's Climate Collaboration initiative, working together to identify opportunities for the community as a whole to achieve zero emissions by 2030 across the city.
2. Customer, Community and Engagement	**CE1** A strong community engagement focus that is a cornerstone of all CMA's functions	**CE1.1** The North Central CMA Board endorsed a Community Participation Policy in December 2024 that guides the approach, establishment and operation of community participation. Implementation enables the CMA to connect with community members to provide advice about the work of the CMA through a robust governance structure. The approach facilitates community input to regional strategies, programs, and projects and provides formal and informal opportunities for community members to contribute to the work of the CMA. **CE1.1** The North Central CMA Engagement Strategy 2022–27 vision of 'connected and knowledgeable communities and partners working together for a healthy catchment', continues to guide engagement efforts to ensure communities remain central to our work. To enhance engagement outcomes, the strategy prioritises three key focus areas: • Innovation – Applying new and emerging engagement approaches to better meet objectives. • Traditional Owner Self-Determination – Building meaningful partnerships through early engagement, deep listening, trust-building, and shared action to heal Country and community. • Diversity and Inclusion – Creating and pursuing opportunities to engage with diverse groups in alignment with strategic goals. Implementation of the strategy is supported by an Engagement Framework and Toolkit Addendum—a practical resource guiding staff in their engagement with communities, partners, and Traditional Owners to collaboratively deliver the aspirations of the Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). **CE1.2** During 2025-26 Regional Roundtable meetings were held in Bendigo, Echuca and Swan Hill and brought the community together to hear from Catchment Partners about key NRM projects occurring in the local area. Community were able to learn about and provide input into local NRM efforts.

Table 1 **Performance Against Letter of Expectations Priority Areas**

Priority Area	Outcome Indicator(s)	Performance statement
3. Recognise Aboriginal Values	**AC1** Demonstrate effective partnerships with Traditional Owners	**AC1.1/AC1.2** The North Central CMA has informal and formal effective partnerships with the seven Traditional Owner Nations across the catchment including: with Barapa Barapa, Wamba Wemba through a First Nations Working Group formal partnership; a Partnership Agreement with DJAARA; and Yorta Yorta expressing an interest in developing an MOU in the near future. **AC1.1/AC1.2** The North Central CMA's Galkangu Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RecAP) 2022–2025 guides our commitment to walking and working on Country alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as equals, with the shared goal of healing Country. Review and renewal of the RecAP has been in focus during the reporting period with a draft prepared and due for submission to Reconciliation Australia in the new financial year. **AC1.5** Throughout the year, we have continued to support self-determination and strengthen partnerships with First Nations communities, actively involving them in project planning and delivery. Their knowledge and leadership have been integral to projects and programs such as: • The Living Murray Program • Environmental Water Program • Our Catchments, Our Communities • Waterways of the West These collaborations support cultural and ecological monitoring, knowledge sharing, and inclusive reporting, helping us better understand and incorporate Traditional Owner aspirations and perspectives into our work. We also remain committed to supporting Indigenous economic development. In 2025-26 we engaged with several Indigenous businesses and contractors—including Djandak, Biik, Wolka Wolla, Dumawal, and others—to deliver on-ground works, cultural ceremonies, and artistic contributions across our programs.
4. Recognise Recreational Values	**RV2** Demonstrate engagement processes with community or stakeholders **RV3** Accessible and user- friendly information **RV4** Collaboration with other organisations and government agencies	**RV2.1** Through the Community theme of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27, we recognise a healthy environment, including waterways, is critical to providing recreational opportunities for local communities. We ensure that shared recreational benefits of our work are considered during project planning. The CMA integrates recreational benefits through: • the delivery of water for the environment to rivers and wetlands brings essential environmental benefits and creates numerous recreational opportunities, including birdwatching, fishing, kayaking, and camping. • native fish recovery investments directly improve habitat, conditions and increase stock directly to support recovery of fish species, which in turn supports angling, • the delivery of community events, such as fishing, kayaking, nature art, festivals and animal watching provide opportunities for people to participate in recreational activities. As part of the renewal of the North Central Waterway Strategy, greater emphasis is being placed on recognising and integrating the social and recreational values that waterways provide to communities. Community engagement has focused on identifying the social values that local communities associate with waterways and considering objectives that support their ongoing recreational use and community connection to waterways. **RV3.1** Through active involvement with Local Government, the CMA provides information regarding recreational opportunities through visitor information centres, such as the Cohuna Visitor Centre. Programming of CMA activities occurs to ensure access is available to recreational activities such as camping and boating at peak periods. The CMA also hosts a range of recreational activities during the week and weekends for the local community and visitors. For example, Catch a carp day, kayaking through wetlands, and Breakfast with the birds. **RV4.1** The North Central CMA helped host and participated in the statewide ' Recreational Values of Waterways Forum' showcasing healthy rivers as important recreational spaces for the community. The forum included participants from a variety of organisations across Victoria.

Priority Area	Outcome Indicator(s)	Performance statement
5. Resilient and Liveable Cities and Towns	**LC1** Healthy communities and resilient, liveable environments	**LC1.6** The North Central CMA is an active participant in the Coliban, Central Highlands and Northern Mallee Integrated Water Management Forums and has a connection to the Wimmera Forum. **LC1.7** Initiatives including Yarum Yarum Bayikina (Bendigo Creek Awakening), Healthy Coliban Catchment, Tullaroop Catchment, Upper Avoca Healthy Catchment Plan and Forrest Creek revitalisation project exemplify our commitment to prioritising natural resource management efforts for a range of environmental, social and economic benefits including securing the long-term water supply for urban residents while also delivering significant environmental benefits. **LC1.8** Key activities include stock exclusion from reservoirs and waterways, weed control and revegetation along waterways, planning scheme amendments, and other priority actions informed by Aboriginal Water Assessments which focus on cultural management and landscape improvement.
6. Leadership, Diversity and Culture	**G1** Diversity and inclusion	**G1.1** North Central CMA's Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2023-2028 is published on our website and continued to guide our diversity, equity and inclusion activities during 2025-26. **G1.2** North Central CMA's Gender Equality Action Plan 2026 is published on our website and guides the organisation's gender equality initiatives and reporting obligations. **G1.5** 97% staff completed the VPSC People Matter Survey in 2026 **G1.8** North Central CMA continued to promote an inclusive and respectful workplace through implementation of its Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2023–2028. During 2025–26, the organisation completed development of its Gender Equality Action Plan 2026 and renewed its Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–2029. We continued to support flexible work, strengthen cultural capability and promote inclusive employment practices.
7. Performance and Financial Management	**PE1** Delivering efficiencies leading to cost savings and improved reporting systems and processes.	**PE1.1** North Central CMA continued to focus on operational efficiency, cost control and improved business systems during 2025–26. Key initiatives included progressing the Huntly office refurbishment project to improve accommodation efficiency and workplace utilisation, participating in sector-wide initiatives to identify shared services and procurement efficiencies, and continuing to strengthen cyber security, risk management and reporting capabilities. The organisation also focused on maximising project cost recovery, maintaining tight control of corporate expenditure and leveraging internal expertise to reduce reliance on external consultants where appropriate. These initiatives support long-term financial sustainability and improved organisational performance. **PE1.3** North Central CMA continued to collaborate with DEECA and the CMA sector to improve reporting, governance and information management practices. During 2025–26, this included participation in sector initiatives relating to cyber security, climate reporting, workplace health and safety systems, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.

Table 1 **Performance Against Letter of Expectations Priority Areas**

Priority Area	Outcome Indicator(s)	Performance statement
8. Waterway and Catchment Health	**CH2** Improved catchment and waterway health and resilience	**CH2.1** During 2025-26 the North Central CMA undertook a mid-term review of the Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027. The review found that the strategy remains relevant and effective for guiding natural resource management across the region. While implementation is progressing well, there were some opportunities to strengthen partner coordination, regional ownership, data sharing and Traditional Owner engagement. The North Central CMA continues to focus on priority catchments and waterways identified in the Regional Waterway Strategy. The renewal of the North Central Waterway Strategy has commenced. **CH2.2** The North Central CMA is delivering waterway and integrated catchment management in line with Water for Victoria, Our Catchments, Our Communities-Building on the legacy for better stewardship, and Victorian Waterway Management Strategy. Relevant project examples include A Healthy Coliban Catchment, Native Fish Recovery Plan and Ramsar restoration projects. **CH2.2** Waterway heath impacts from Declared Disaster events (flood, storm and fire) were mitigated through construction of erosion control structures on the Avoca River at Charlton and pre-construction works on the Loddon River at Newstead. Community led recovery activities were supported in Harcourt, Creswick, Newbridge, Murrabit, Rochester and Swan Hill. **CH2.3** The Catchment Partners Forum met four times during 2025–26, strengthening strategic alignment and regional collaboration through the implementation of a refreshed annual workplan. The forum continues to provide a valuable platform for connection, communication and collective action, supporting more integrated catchment stewardship across the North Central region. During the year, forum members also participated in cultural competency training to strengthen their understanding of Traditional Owner perspectives and support more effective partnerships in catchment management programs.

Priority Area	Outcome Indicator(s)	Performance statement
10. Water for Agriculture	**WA1** A productive and profitable irrigation sector and vibrant and resilient regional communities that adapt	**WA1.1** The 2020-30 Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan vision of 'using water for healthy, productive, sustainable, irrigated food and fibre' continues to guide purposeful action for a productive and profitable irrigation sector and vibrant and resilient regional communities **WA1.2** The North Central CMA delivered programs which supported irrigation farmers to efficiently use irrigation water, developed a strategy for future irrigation drainage management and reported on accountable actions for salinity. **WA 1.2** The North Central CMA continues to work in partnership with Agriculture Victoria to deliver extension programs. Over the past twelve months 7 Whole Farm Plans surveys over 712ha were completed and 5 Whole Farm Plans over 417ha were completed. The team contributed to the assessment of 1,185ha of new irrigation developments against the guidelines and there were 82ha of new irrigation developments approved. **WA1.2** The Loddon-Murray Irrigation Region Irrigation Drainage Strategy supports the effective management of irrigation drainage. A high-priority action from the strategy, the Irrigation Drainage Toolkit, was developed. **WA1.2** The North Central CMA also contributes to the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management 2030 Strategy and manages the accountable actions register entries for north central Victoria. A fully defined three-dimensional surface water-groundwater model (IAAM) for computing salt loads in northern Victoria was used to complete the Tragowel Plains Accountable Action Review 2026. **WA1.2**A groundwater monitoring program in northern Victoria continues monitoring bores quarterly, with digital loggers installed to record groundwater fluctuations at 4 hourly intervals and downloaded six monthly. A groundwater watertable map has been produced for the lower Loddon Catchment. **WA1.3** The agriculture sector is supported through the CMA's Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator with funding from the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust. The Climate Positive Farming Initiative, Carbon Farming Outreach Program, National Soil Monitoring Program and co-ordination of the Loddon Campaspe Regional Drought Resilience Implementation Plan work with key partners towards increasing adoption of best practice agriculture, build climate resilience by partnering with farmers, communities, First Nations People, universities, and industry through the delivery of a series of events, workshops, demonstration sites and development of extension tools.
Customer Data Protection	Information Security	North Central CMA continued to strengthen its information management and security practices during 2025–26 through a review of backup and recovery arrangements, improved information governance and security awareness training. The organisation also reviewed and updated its Artificial Intelligence Policy and governance arrangements to align with Victorian Government guidance and undertook a review of SharePoint records and data holdings to reduce version control issues, improve information quality and minimise unnecessary data exposure.
Cyber Security	Cyber Security Risk	North Central CMA continued to strengthen its cyber security capability during 2025–26 through implementation of Essential Eight security controls, ongoing monitoring of cyber risks and development of a Cyber Incident Response Plan. The organisation worked with its external ICT provider to improve cyber resilience and support alignment with Victorian Government cyber security requirements.

1.6 **Business Outcomes Framework**

The North Central CMA's Business Outcomes Framework (Table 2) aligns with the 2018 Victorian Government's Business Outcomes Framework (Figure 3).

The Framework describes overarching domains, outcomes and outcome indicators that closely align to the Victorian government's nine key policy areas and includes metrics to measure success. Results demonstrate our value to the community and our investors.

Further commentary on our performance is detailed in the Key Initiatives and Program Performance (1.11) section of this report.

Table 2 **Business Outcomes Framework**

Framework					**Performance**	
Outcomes	**Outcome indicators**	**Measure**	**Output**	**Business Unit Alignment**	**Actual 2025-26**	**Actual 2024-25**
Domain – Healthy Environment						
Priority waterways and associated riparian zones are providing enhanced social, economic and environmental services to the community.	Increased waterway protection and/or improved management.	Hectares; number of systems with improved environmental flows.	Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, water, grazing, management agreement, engagement event, approval and advice, partnership.	Environmental Assets, Water for the Environment, Strategy and Partnerships, Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management.	2,566 ha 8	1,801 ha 7
Priority wetlands and associated riparian zones are providing enhanced social, economic and environmental services to the community.	Increased wetland protection and/ or improved management.	Hectares	Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, water, grazing, management agreement, engagement event, partnership.	Environmental Assets, Water for the Environment, Strategy and Partnerships.	9,449 ha	5,367 ha
Planning guidelines, advice and agencies are reducing the costs and impacts of flooding to property and asset owners, while maintaining floodplain connectivity and flow paths.	Reduced flood risk	Referrals/ hectares	Approval and advice, partnership, measurement station, assessment engagement event.	Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management	673 referrals 29,375 ha	642 referrals 22,627 ha
Priority ecosystems are providing enhanced social, economic and environmental services to the community and protecting threatened species for future generation.s	Increased biodiversity protection and/or improved management.	Hectares	Waterway structure, fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, water, grazing, management agreement, engagement event.	Environmental Assets, Water for the Environment, Strategy and Partnerships.	3,026 ha	2,200 ha
Appropriate land use and management practices are enabling economic profit for farmers, while minimising social and environmental impacts for the community	Improved agricultural management	Hectares	Fence vegetation, soil treatment, grazing, agricultural practice, assessment, engagement events, partnership and plans.	Sustainable Agriculture	2,431 ha	2,033 ha

Outcomes	Outcome indicators	Measure	Output	Business Unit Alignment	Actual 2025-26	Actual 2024-25
Domain – Knowledgeable and Active Communities						
The community is aware, knowledgeable, skilled and resourced to actively participate in environment and agricultural management.	Maintain Landcare Group health. Increased participants knowledge, awareness, skills and/or attitude (KASA).	Landcare Group Health Score; percentage of respondents with increase in KASA	Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, engagement event, partnership	All	91% (Landcare) 100% (KASA)	86% (Landcare) 87% (KASA)
Traditional Owners are aware, knowledgeable, skilled and resourced to actively participate in managing Country.	Increased number of projects with Traditional Owner participation in decision-making about design and delivery	Number of projects	Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, engagement event, partnership	All	13	8



Figure 4 **North Central CMA region**

1.7 **Organisational Performance Framework**

The North Central CMA's Organisational Performance Framework (Figure 4) has been developed to track performance against five enabling themes of the business.

It is also used to inform ongoing activities and includes 14 measures to evaluate performance against and between different organisational functional levels, from governance to people and development.

Many of the measures in the Organisational Performance Framework align with the Business Outcomes Framework (Table 2) and places the North Central CMA in a sound position to further report on outcomes in alignment with Victorian government key policy areas and initiatives.

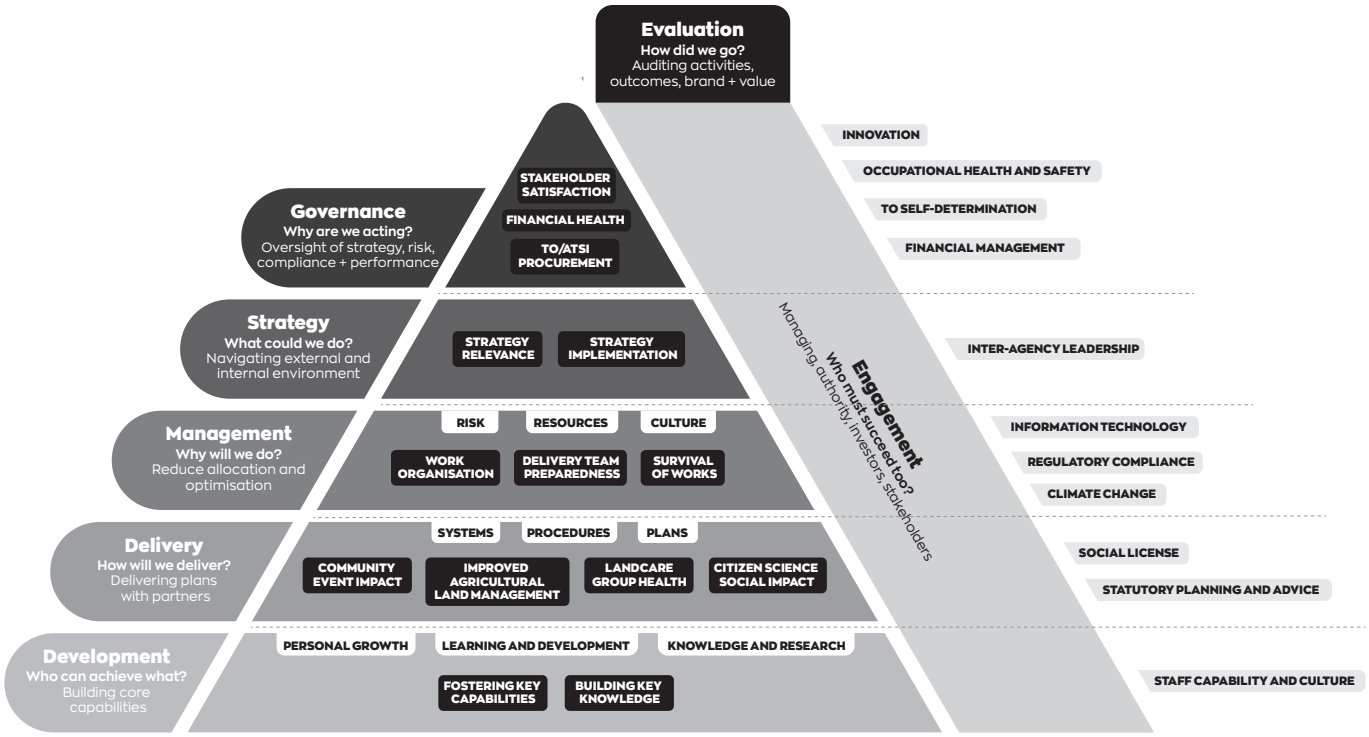


Figure 5 **Organisational Performance Framework**

Legend

- Increasing measure or at (assumed) benchmark
- Slight increase or decrease, but not at (assumed) benchmark
- Significant reduction or low trend, well below (assumed) benchmark

Table 3 provides brief commentary against measures under Governance; Strategy; Management; Delivery and Development headlines outlined in the Organisational Performance Framework. Commentary is informed by data detailed in the Organisational Performance Framework Annual Report 2025-26.

Table 3 **Organisational Performance Framework commentary**

	Measure	Trend	Comment
Governance	Stakeholder satisfaction	↓	A total of 72.2% of respondents to the stakeholder satisfaction survey *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they were satisfied with working with the North Central CMA. While the result is based on a relatively small sample of 18 responses, it indicates a lower level of satisfaction compared with the previous three years, during which satisfaction consistently remained at 88%.
	Financial health	→	Projects funded through Tranche 6 of the Environmental Contribution are secure for 4 years through to 30 June 2028. Commonwealth funding for projects under the Natural Heritage Trust for 2023-24 through 2027-28 has also been secured. Cash balances remained strong at 30 June 2026 due to the timing of grant funding receipts and carry-forward project funding. Cash reserves are expected to reduce as previously received funding is expended through project delivery. During the year, the Huntly office refurbishment was completed within approved budget, improving long-term accommodation certainty and cost management.
	Traditional Owner/ATSI procurement	→	9% of the annual natural resource management spend has been procured through Traditional Owner and/or Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander (TO/ATSI) businesses or employment, exceeding the North Central CMA's Reconciliation Action Plan target of 4%. This has consistently been above 9% for the last three years. The renewed Reconciliation Action Plan will reflect a higher target. We measure this through inclusion of registered ABN holders as per the Social Procurement Framework (section 4.2 – 4.98%) but also include known local First Nations contractors and individuals engaged directly who have not registered themselves through an ABN to the State Registers of First Nations organisations.
Strategy	Strategy relevance	↑	The majority of the region's Natural Resource Management (NRM) strategies are current and continue to guide regional planning and investment. These include: • North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021–2027 • North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy 2018–2028 • Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2020–2030 In 2026, the North Central Climate Change Strategy, Regional Landcare Support Plan 2025–2030, and North Central Citizen Science Program Action Plan to 2028 were renewed. Work is also underway to renew the North Central Waterway Management Strategy 2014–2022. This recent work results in increased strategy relevance.
	Strategy implementation	→	Across nine active strategies, 567 actions have been identified. As of the end of the 2025–26 financial year: 50% are complete, 16% are ongoing, 16% are partially complete and on track, and 18% are yet to commence.

	Measure	Trend	Comment
Management	Work organisation	▲	The 2026 People Matter Survey showed strong results for meaningful work, role clarity and team effectiveness. 97% of staff agreed they understand how their job helps the CMA reach its goals, 97% agreed they achieve something important through their work, 94% agreed they have the authority to do their job well, and 97% agreed their team works well together. Areas for continued focus include workload and career development planning.
	Delivery Team Preparedness	▶	Staff use a range of tools and systems to support project development, delivery, and reporting. Formal and informal feedback mechanisms are in place to identify inefficiencies and opportunities for improvement.
	Survival of works	▶	In 2025-26, thirty NRM review assessments were completed, with 93% of sites showing positive trends toward achieving intended natural resource management outcomes. At the time of assessment, 81% of works were found to be surviving
Delivery	Community event impact	▲	A total of 13,080 people participated in 544 engagement activities across the region, including community events, information sessions, field days, workshops, and training programs. Topics ranged from biodiversity conservation and citizen science to sustainable land management, with activities such as the *PlatyPatch Walk and Talk, Carbon Farming Outreach, Gunbower Turtle School,* and *the Pitch In and Protect Gunbower Kayak Tour.* Evaluation results demonstrated strong outcomes, with 94% of participants reporting improved knowledge and 75% expressing an intention to adopt changed management practices.
	Improved agricultural land management	▶	The CMA works with private land managers to improve land management practices across the dryland and irrigated agricultural sector. Projects include, agricultural extension services, incentives for improved land management and initiatives to work with community and industry groups.
	Landcare group health	▶	Landcare Group Health remains stable. Sixty-one groups responded to the Group Health Survey in 2026. Of those groups 43% are moving forward / OK (compared to 42% from 2025) while 10% are thriving representing a slight decrease from 2025. The renewed Regional Landcare Support Plan 2026-2033 aligns with the *Landcare Plan for Victoria 2023–2033* and further strengthens the North Central CMA's ongoing support for Landcare and environmental volunteer groups across the region.
	Citizen science social impact	N/A	The North Central CMA's biennial Citizen Science Survey will be undertaken in the second half of 2026 and will look to provide valuable insights into how the program supports community volunteers, including its role in strengthening connections with local communities and the environment. Key achievements to date in 2026 include participation of 44 schools and community groups in the program including over 1,900 students engaging in citizen science activities.
Development	Fostering key capabilities	▲	North Central CMA continued to invest in employee development during 2025–26. As at February 2026, 61% of employees had a current development plan, compared to 55% in 2025, while 33% recorded completion of at least one development activity during the financial year.

1.8 **DEECA Standard Outputs**

Table 4 summaries North Central CMA outputs delivered against Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action standard outputs for the reporting period.

Outputs from year-to-year change in response to funded projects, phase of project and external events that influence our work. In 2025-26 many of our projects were mid cycle with a focus on project delivery.

Table 4 **DEECA standard outputs**

Category	Output	Actual 2025-26	Actual 2024-25	Measure
Structural works	Channel	0	0	Kilometres
	Crossing	0	0	Number
	Water storage	16	1	Number
	Pump	0	0	Number
	Waterway structure	13	25	Number
	Terrestrial structure	0	0	Number
	Terrestrial Feature	3	17	Number
	Monitoring structure	0	135	Number
	Fence	20.42	23.16	Kilometres
	Visitor facility	0	0	Number
	Vegetation	209	800	Hectares
	Weed control	2,935	1,243	Hectares
	Pest animal control	37,106	18,339	Hectares
Environmental works	Threatened species response	20	58	Number
	Soil treatment	0	0	Hectares
	Earth works	7..59	0.13	Number
	Rubbish removal	0	0	Hectares
	Grazing regime	39.15	39.64	Hectares
Management services	Agricultural practices	129.66	0.21	Hectares
	Water regime	55	56	Number
	Fire	0	0	Number
	Approval and advice	4,254	4,655	Number
	Management agreement	49	33	Number
	Assessment	1,374	1,244	Number
Planning and regulation	Engagement events	13,080	7,468	Participants
	Partnership	63	45	Number
	Plan	36	24	Number
	Publication	150	115	Number
	Information management system	4	4	Number

1.9 **Regional catchment condition summary**

This section of the annual report provides an assessment of the condition and management of the region's environment and a reflection on the likely impact of annual scale actions, events, and observed change within the previous year, and over the previous six years. A key purpose of monitoring changes in the operating context is to help identify opportunities for adapting and changing the way we manage the environment.

Under the Catchment and *Land Protection Act 1994*, 'each Catchment Management Authority must include in its report of operations prepared under Part 7 of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, a report on the condition and management of land and water resources in its region and the carrying out of its functions'. Since 2022, CMAs have worked collectively to develop an approach to enable this reporting to be undertaken, consistent with the agreed Statewide outcomes framework that links regional outcomes and activity (management) to the high level policy outcomes of the Victorian and Australian Government.

The report is structured in line with the state-wide outcomes framework that links the regional outcomes sought by catchment communities, to the high-level policy outcomes of the Victorian and Australian Governments. These are outlined in each Regional Catchment Strategy (rcs.vic.gov.au).

In 2025-26 reporting has a focus on catchment management ratings. The 2022-23 catchment condition ratings have been adopted and provided here for completeness, with an update to be undertaken in 2027 to align with the availability of data for condition indicators and the formal evaluation needs of the Regional Catchment Strategy.

How to interpret this report

The assessment is based on a set of state-wide indicators outlined in the RCS outcomes framework, augmented with regionally specific indicators that have been selected based on criteria including availability and quality of data, and the linkages back to regional and policy outcomes.

This report provides a summary assessment for condition and management indicators at a theme level (water, biodiversity, land, coast and marine, communities and integrated catchment management).

The management assessment for each theme assesses the delivery of CMA programs and activities.

Reporting on management indicators is undertaken annually.

Reporting on catchment condition indicators is undertaken less frequently, reflecting the timeframes to observe changes in the natural environment and the availability of the supporting data. The 2025-26 annual report includes the 2022-23 condition ratings and an update on factors that may have influenced catchment condition over the preceding year.

As much as possible, the reporting format attempts to provide a transparent path between the evidence and the assessment. It is not a definitive assessment but an assessment at a point in time, based on the best available evidence.

Regional catchment condition and management summary

The catchment condition and management ratings for 2025-26 are presented below. Reasonable climatic conditions and significant work in the region has contributed to 'met expectations' management ratings. Although condition and trend ratings are more variable and will require ongoing restoration works and investment in the region.

2022-2023 Catchment condition rating

An overall condition rating for each theme is provided based on the 2022-23 Catchment Condition Report. Each CMA assigned overall condition ratings at this time based on a set of condition indicators for each theme and consideration of other influencing factors. The assessment incorporated available science, expert advice and other evidence. The annual update aims to provide an overview of the factors that may have influenced catchment condition over the preceding year or any new information relating to catchment condition that will inform future assessments.

Table 5 **Condition Rating**

Condition rating	Description
Good	The condition is classified as good.
Moderate	The condition is classified as moderate.
Poor	The condition is classified as poor.
Not applicable	A condition rating is not applicable for this indicator.

An overall condition rating for each theme is provided based on the 2022-23 Catchment Condition Report.

2022-23 Condition rating					
Water	**Land**	**Coast and Marine**	**Biodiversity**	**Community**	**Integrated Catchment management**
Moderate	Moderate	N/A	Poor-Moderate	Moderate-Good	Moderate-Good

2025-26 Catchment condition update

The annual update aims to provide an overview of the factors that may have influenced catchment condition over the preceding year or any new information relating to catchment condition that will inform future assessments. Additional contextual information is provided in Appendix 3a.

Water
Rainfall was below long-term average, and river flows were significantly reduced compared to long term average. Water for the environment and waterway protection works such as the Native Fish Recovery project, Ramsar protection projects and integrated catchment projects in the upper catchment continue to support improved river health. Below average rainfall and soil moisture made revegetation challenging with most projects requiring follow up watering.

Land
Rainfall and soil moisture were slightly below average and although exposed soils increased slightly from previous year, remains below long-term average. The 2025–2026 season for dryland cropping in the region has been characterised by a challenging, dry autumn and a delayed start, though mid-winter rains ultimately boosted yields to above-average levels. Work to support farmers in improving soil health and adapting to climate change is continuing and building momentum in good management and sustainable agricultural practices.

Biodiversity
Protection and restoration work continue to support biodiversity, with targeted pest herbivore and predator control, weed control and revegetation, although more restoration work is needed. Targeted threatened species work such as the successful implementation of the Plains Wanderer and Eltham Copper Butterfly projects continue to support improved biodiversity. Below average rainfall and soil moisture made revegetation challenging with most projects requiring follow up watering.

Community
The North Central CMA and Natural Resource Management (NRM) Partners continue to work with Traditional Owners to support cultural aspirations including applying self-determination principles. Engagement with communities across the region remains strong, encouraging participation in NRM activities that build capacity, strengthen resilience, and enhance natural assets. Landcare remains stable, consistent with the past five years, and grant funding continues to support Landcare networks and groups to deliver priority NRM projects across the region.

Integrated Catchment Management
The CMA continues to lead integrated catchment management activities across the region through partnerships with Traditional Owners, communities, and partners. This is supported by the Catchment Partners Forum, Regional Roundtables, project advisory groups, and formal partnership arrangements. Examples include the Healthy Coliban Catchment and Tullaroop Catchment Restoration projects and the co-designed Dhelkunyangu Upper Avoca Reconnections project with DJAARA.



Catchment management ratings 2025-26

Management ratings are presented in summary form for each theme and are assessed by comparing the delivered activities for the financial year against the funded activities for the financial year. The table presents results based on the number of indicators assessed as meeting each category (Above expectations, Met expectations, Below expectations or Not applicable) with the total number of indicators assessed in each theme also provided.

The overall management rating for each theme has been assigned by considering the individual indicator ratings and other influencing factors detailed in Appendix 3b. The management summary text provides a rationale for the ratings including commentary on factors influencing the delivery of CMA programs such as climate, natural events, organisational capacity and socio-economic factors.

Table 6 **Management Ratings**

Management Rating*	Description
Above expectations ★★★	Delivery of activities and programs associated with this indicator is assessed as above expectations for the 12-month period (i.e. majority of activities delivered /targets met or exceeded).
Met expectations ★★	Delivery of activities and programs associated with this indicator is assessed as having met expectations for the 12-month period (i.e. the majority of activities delivered/targets were met or almost achieved).
Below expectations ★	Delivery of activities and programs associated with this indicator is assessed as below expectations for the 12-month period (i.e. some critical activities/targets not delivered, or the majority of activities/targets not delivered) .
Not applicable ☆	A management rating is not applicable for this indicator.
Unknown ☆	The rating for this indicator is not known and/or assessable.

*Management Rating - where appropriate, a management rating is provided that is based on the delivery of planned activities and targets relevant to the theme.

North Central Catchment Management Rating Assessment 2025-26

Table 7 **2025-26 Management Rating**

2025-26 Management Rating (no. Indicators assessed as meeting each category)						
Theme	**Not Applicable**	**Below Expectations**	**Met Expectations**	**Above Expectations**	**Total no. indicators assessed**	**Overall Rating**
Water		1	7	1	9	Met expectations
Land			3		3	Met expectations
Coast and marine	-	-	-	-	-	Not applicable
Biodiversity		1	1	1	3	Met expectations
Community			3	1	4	Met expectations
Integrated catchment management			1		1	Met expectations

*Further detailed information can be found in Appendix 3 and the North Central Catchment Condition Report 2026.

2025-26 Management summary

Water
The overall management rating for water is Met expectations with delivery of waterway management works as expected. Rainfall and river flows were below long-term average. Most indicators have seen an increase which was expected due to projects being in full implementation phase after project start up. Water for the environment and waterway protection works such as the Native Fish Recovery project, Ramsar protection projects and integrated catchment projects in the upper catchment continue to support improved river health.

Land
The overall management rating for land is Met expectations. Work to support farmers in improving soil health is continuing and building momentum in good management and sustainable agricultural practices. In response to another slightly below average rainfall year the data shows reasonable soil moisture and below average exposed soils, with dryland farmers generally having average to above average yields. Implementation of the Land and Water Management Plan continues, and the Australian Government funded Positive Farming Initiative continues.

Biodiversity
The overall management rating for biodiversity is Met expectation. We continue to protect and restore biodiversity, through targeted pest herbivore and predator control, managing weeds, and revegetation activities. Targeted initiatives for threatened species focused on Plains Wanderer and Eltham Copper Butterfly are contributing to improved biodiversity. A business case for phase 2 of the Grow Towards Zero Pilot has been completed and has the potential to increase revegetation outcomes in the future.

Community
The overall management rating for community is Met expectations. Significant engagement with the North Central community was undertaken in 2025-26. NRM Partners within the region, including the North Central CMA continue to work with Traditional Owners to support cultural aspirations including applying self-determination principles. Landcare grants continue to support Landcare networks and groups to implement priority NRM works in the region.

Integrated Catchment Management
The overall management rating for Integrated Catchment Management is Met expectations. The CMA continues to lead integrated catchment management activities across the region through partnerships with Traditional Owners, communities, and partners. This is strengthened by the Catchment Partners Forum, Regional Roundtables, project and program committees and by establishing and maintaining formal partnerships. Examples include the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project, Reporting and Accounting for Salinity, Healthy Coliban Catchment project and Waterway Strategy renewal.

1.10 **Our Strategic priorities**

Our Corporate Plan includes a section on our strategic priorities which are identified below. These strategic priorities give us focus to ensure that we are shaping and positioning our organisation to meet the needs of the future.

Table 8 **Strategic Priorities**

Taking action on climate change	**Timeframe**	**Performance**
Taking action on climate change is a key focus of the 2021-2027 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) which identifies renewal of the North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan as a priority to create a clear plan of action. We will work towards changing the conversation from impending disaster to positive actions and will be active in supporting climate adaptation for the region's natural resources and the communities that depend on them. We will also mitigate our own carbon footprint and encourage others to do the same. Priority initiatives include: • Renew the North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan by 2025. • Establish regional partnership arrangements to enable greater climate change collaboration • Develop a climate change standard and check list to support development of strategies, plans and projects. • Implement our Pathway to Net Zero plan. • Revise Sustainable Procurement Framework and Policy to elevate supplier requirements • Develop a plan to support farmers to adapt to the effects of climate change. • Review and update the North Central CMA Climate Action Plan	 2025-26 Ongoing 2025-26 Ongoing 2025-26 2025-26 2025-26	The North Central North Central Climate Change Strategy 'Protecting what we love' was published in June 2026. The strategy sets out key priority directions for working together to build healthy, resilient and future-ready catchments. The CMA continue to work on projects that support managing climate risks, including trialling different weed control techniques and the exploration of other changes to project implementation. The CMA continued to advance its Pathway to Net Zero by implementing initiatives through the Grow Towards Zero program and completing the refurbishment of its office, incorporating a range of improved sustainability features. Two projects to support farmers to become carbon neutral began in 2025-26. The Climate Positive Farming Initiative has developed 25 climate adaptation plans with farmers to quantify and reduce carbon emissions, described as climate-positive initiatives towards a net-zero future. The Carbon Farming Outreach Program saw 3 workshops delivered across the region and two podcasts reaching over 350 people. Workshops focused on emissions reporting and system efficiencies. While primary producers are not expected to eliminate their emissions, they do need to understand the basics of on farm-emissions.
Pursuing new natural resource management opportunities	**Timeframe**	**Performance**
Natural resource management is changing. As society becomes more aware of the decline in the world's ecosystems and its link to our economies there is an increasing expectation that we better measure and protect them. Those profiting from, or impacting on, natural resources are expected to address these impacts, and this has the potential to lead to new interest and investment in our work. In response to emerging opportunities, we will take a leadership position, as a trusted advisor, to build awareness and capability in natural capital approaches across the community, partners, and our organisation and to proactively seek private sector partners and applications to match opportunities to implement the Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). We will explore opportunities to provide in-house capability as fee for service expertise to external organisations. Priority initiatives include: • Finalise and implement our Natural Capital Roadmap • Secure a private sector partnership to trial the application of natural capital approaches • Review current service offerings against market and stakeholder needs. • Continue to foster and develop new and existing networks to explore emerging opportunities in NRM	 Ongoing 2025-26 2025-26 2025-26	A Natural Capital Roadmap is being implemented to help guide the CMA prepare for natural capital opportunities over the next 3-5 years. This has involved training of internal staff and external partners in the region, and trialling natural capital approaches through real life on ground projects. A consortium of Victorian CMA's including North Central CMA, have partnered with the Landscape Finance Lab to develop the Victorian Volcanic Plains (VVP) Landscape Finance Initiative. Private sector partnership will be key to delivering this project over the coming years. The CMA have explored new and innovative approaches such as how environmental markets could amplify the work we do through our Grow Towards Zero program. Our membership and participation in Communities of Practice, conferences and cross sector events across topics such as environmental markets, nature positive and natural capital see us continue to develop our networks and explore new and emerging opportunities.

Supporting Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination	Timeframe	Performance
Victoria has a bold and progressive agenda through its commitment to a Treaty that delivers self-determination for Victoria's First Nations People. North Central CMA recognises the vital role of Traditional Owners in managing Victoria's natural resources, particularly where formalised Recognition and Settlement Agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic)* confer certain requirements on the state and therefore the CMA. The implementation of the North Central CMA's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2025 (RecAP) - *Galkungu, 'we build together' (Dja Dja Wurrung language)*, guides our support for Traditional Owners self-determination, recognition of their values and aspirations and provides the opportunity for Traditional Owners to participate in strategic and program decision making. Priority initiatives include: • Influence all staff to take active ownership of North Central CMA's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2025 *Galkangu 'we build together'* • Seek feedback from First Nations people about the CMA's approach to self-determination and reconciliation through the lens of RecAP renewal and Regional Catchment Strategy implementation. • Develop renewed North Central CMA's Reconciliation Action Plan 2025 – 2028 by June 2026. • Offer to develop or renew MOUs with TO groups to better inform working relationships and delivery of Government commitments	2025-26 2025-26 2025-26 2025-26	The North Central CMA continues to implement *Galkungu* Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2025 with the RecAP Working Group consisting of staff, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members providing oversight of implementation. As at 30 June 2026, 96% of 89 deliverables within the plan are complete. In 2025-2026, North Central CMA drafted its new Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2029. This was guided by formal feedback processes including interviews with First Nations peoples and Traditional Owner organisations to understand the CMA's approach and progress in supporting self-determination and reconciliation. First Nations feedback acknowledged the CMA's commitment to reconciliation and the progress made in building respectful relationships and cultural capability. The feedback also identified opportunities to further support self-determination through greater transfer of decision-making influence, long-term investment, stronger governance participation and increased support for Traditional Owner-led outcomes that has informed renewal. The North Central CMA continues to meet with DJAARA to renew the Partnership Statement and with other TOs where there is an appetite to either renew or develop formal partnership arrangements

1.11 **Key Initiatives and Project Performance**

Delivery Program key initiatives in the North Central CMA's 2025-26 Corporate Plan provide the direction, focus and activities for the reporting period to deliver on federal, state, regional and local priorities.

Summary operational and budgetary objectives including performance

Table 9 provide an overview of North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary that's focused on outcomes rather than outputs and also notes events that have impacted delivery.

Business Units that contribute directly to the Delivery Program are:

- Environmental Assets
- Water for the Environment
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Community and Partnerships
- Strategy and Impact
- Major Projects
- Disaster Recovery
- Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Environmental Assets

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Native Fish Recovery			
Supports recovery of native fish populations through the Murray and Loddon Floodplain Native Fish Recovery by delivering on-ground works and activities to improve riparian, waterway and wetland health and increase the complexity and diversity of instream habitat. Collaborates with agencies, fishing clubs, schools, and community groups to build community awareness and capacity. Collaborates with Traditional Owners on initiatives that support their aspirations, through the sharing of ideas and knowledge. Collaborates with partner agencies in NSW and South Australia to deliver on-ground works, engagement events and conservation stocking projects to improve the trajectory of Threatened small-bodied native fish throughout the Murray corridor.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 Gunbower and lower Loddon Native Fish Recovery plan	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy MDBA's Native Fish Recovery Strategy	The condition of riparian, waterway and wetland health was improved across 120ha through fencing, weed control and revegetation. Threatened small-bodied fish populations were supported through captive breeding and release programs targeting Southern Pygmy Perch and Southern Purple Spotted Gudgeon, Olive Perchlet and Flat-Headed Galaxias. 28 individual conservation stocking events were held, and 13 surrogate sites (including farm dams) were enhanced. Barapa Barapa, Wamba Wemba and Yorta Yorta Traditional Owners were engaged in fish surveys, conservation stocking events and riparian works. A highlight was the successful completion of the Yawiir Withwinny (Fish Will Return) project. Almost 300 people (including recreational fishers, Landcare groups, local community and school students) were engaged through events such as Carp Catch days and Wetlands Warriors Forum, and through citizen science activities including Riverscan and bioblitz events. Engagement aims to increase awareness of the benefits of instream and riparian works and delivery of environmental water to improve native fish populations in Gunbower Creek and the lower Loddon River. Significant funding was leveraged to reintroduce rocky habitat in the upper Gunbower Creek to support flowing water specialist fish such as Murray cod, trout cod, golden perch, and Murray River crayfish. Following more than a decade of implementation, the Native Fish Recovery plan was showcased at the 2025 Australian Society for Fish Biology Conference on 'Ten years of the Native Fish Recovery Plan – Gunbower and lower Loddon: Reflections, connections, and future directions'

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Environmental Assets

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
A Healthy Coliban Catchment			
Improves the health of the upper Coliban River and its tributaries and fosters greater catchment stewardship and improved land management across the upper Coliban catchment through implementation of the Upper Coliban Integrated Catchment Management Plan, in partnership with Coliban Water and Djandak (DJAARA). Works with landholders, agencies and community groups to deliver a range of riparian protection works including willow and woody weed control, fencing and revegetation. Supports the Healthy Landscapes Program to help farmers throughout the catchment identify and implement practical land management practices to improve grazing, productivity, soil health, biodiversity, and waterway health. Partners with Traditional Owners and through employment of Djandak project staff and collaboration on key projects such as rehabilitation of Lauriston Reserve, identified in the Upper Coliban Aboriginal Waterway Assessment.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 Upper Coliban Integrated Catchment Management Plan	Water for Victoria Regional Riparian Action Plan Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management Plan Dhelkunyangu Gatjin Strategy	The health of 71ha of the upper Coliban catchment was improved through the delivery of woody weed control, fencing and revegetation, delivered in partnership with private landholders, DJANDAK and Coliban Water. DJANDAK directly employed two part-time Project Officers to support the delivery of the project, undertaking regular WaterWatch monitoring, facilitating engagement with Djaara Traditional Owners through Kapa Gatjin Wartakas to support the implementation of recommendations from the Lauriston Aboriginal Waterway Assessment. An important achievement of the project was the update of the Integrated Catchment Management Plan in partnership with Coliban Water and DJANDAK. The refreshed plan embeds Djaara voice and values to a far greater extent and has been renamed 'Upper Dindilong Integrated Catchment Management Plan'. The project engaged with more than 850 people through a range of field days and attendance at key regional events such as the Kyneton Agricultural show. Increased landholder stewardship in the catchment, supported through the joint-funded Healthy Landscapes program. The program aims to assist farmers improve their knowledge about grazing livestock, pasture growth, animal health, retaining water in the landscape, soil biology and weed management to improve soil health, enhance biodiversity, reduce exposure to climate risk and increase on-farm productivity and resilience. Funding was provided directly to Hepburn Shire to work with the local community and Landcare groups to deliver works to enhance riparian habitat for project icon species Bright Eyed Brown Butterfly. Presented at the Victorian Weeds Society Conference in Hepburn, in October on "Willows; The Ultimate Influencer" focusing on the history of Willows in the Coliban catchment, how this has resulted in community-held values of willows today.

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Tullaroop Tributaries			
Improves riparian and waterway health of Birch's and Tullaroop Creeks through the implementation of the Tullaroop Integrated Catchment Management Plan in partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung, Central Highlands Water and Goulburn Murray Water. Works with private and public land managers to deliver willow and woody weed control, fencing and revegetation along these key waterways and the tributaries. Collaborates with Traditional Owners, recreational fishing clubs and landholders to increase instream woody habitat to support river blackfish populations. Engages Traditional Owners, partners and citizen scientists in monitoring platypus and river blackfish populations through eDNA sampling. Supports Traditional Owner-led delivery of priority actions identified in the Tullaroop Catchment Aboriginal Waterways Assessment, including revegetation at Long Swamp.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 Tullaroop Integrated Catchment Management Plan	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management Plan Dhelkunyangu Gatjin Strategy	The project improved the condition of Tullaroop Creek and key tributaries through treatment of willow and other high threat woody weeds and revegetation across 57ha. Additionally, leveraged funding enabled the installation of four instream woody habitat structures to support blackfish populations. DJANDAK were funded to directly employ project officers to undertake water quality assessments and deliver priority actions from the Tullaroop and Long Swamp Aboriginal Waterway Assessments, including the implementation of a revegetation plan for Long Swamp. Engaged with 240 people through attendance at key regional events such as Spudfest - a festival celebrating the people and produce of the region. Partnered with landholders and Djaara Traditional Owners to complete spring eDNA sampling across nearly 30 sites along Birch's and Tullaroop Creeks to determine the presence/absence of platypus and river blackfish. The latest survey was a continuation of a 10-year dataset, during which time the detection rate of both species has increased across the survey reach. Project success is driven by strong partnerships between landholders, North Central CMA, water authorities, recreational fishing groups and Traditional Owners.
Waterways of the West			
Delivers on-ground management activities identified in the Upper Avoca Healthy Catchment Plan 2024. Supports engagement with and capacity building for Djaara Traditional Owners by supporting Djaara aspirations and expectations and co-delivering with Djaara. Undertakes cultural assessments and community engagement as part of the outputs, explicitly including community engagement and stewardship.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 Avoca Healthy Catchment Plan 2024	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Dhelkunyangu Gatjin Strategy	DJANDAK were funded to co-deliver the project through the employment of a part time Project Manager. A key achievement has been the finalisation and endorsement of the joint developed North Central CMA and DJAARA Healthy Catchment plan for the upper Avoca - Dhelkunyangu Upper Avoca Plan 2024-34 Engaged with 226 people through attendance at local events such as the Avoca Riverside Market, and through a multi-school excursion called Ambling the Avoca. Established a baseline dataset of species in the upper Avoca River through eDNA sampling.

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Environmental Assets

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Revitalising Forest Creek			
Re-naturalises a reach of channelised and straightened Forest Creek in central Castlemaine, creating habitat and wildlife linkages between Forest Creek, Campbells Creek and Barkers Creek. Partners with Landcare, Council, DEECA and DJANDAK to re-create meanders, riffles and pools, installation of litter traps, and restoration of riparian vegetation. Enhances instream habitat values through removal of sediment and Phragmites, creation of meanders and low flow channel and the establishment of 6 habitat pools. Enhances riparian and aquatic revegetation in Forest, Campbells and Barkers Creeks. Improves urban green spaces.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy	The project achieved completion of a major milestone in 25/26 with earthworks delivered along 700m of highly modified and urbanised creek line in the heart of Castlemaine. Earthworks removed 1500 tonnes of contaminated sediment, creating deep pools and meanders to support a greater quality and diversity of habitat. Initial revegetation was commenced in upstream sections of the creek, and the project delivered 69ha of woody and non woody weed control across the broader project site. Additionally, threatened southern pygmy perch have been returned to the site through a conservation stocking event. Success of the project to date has been underpinned by a strong partnership approach, working in collaboration with Landcare groups, Mount Alexander Shire Council, DEECA and DJANDAK. Djaara Traditional Owners were engaged through a Wartaka, providing project perspectives through a Djaara lens. More broadly, the project engaged with over 800 people through a range of events including working bees, weed management workshops, local farmers markets to name a few.
Plains for Wanderers 2023-28			
Improves Plains wanderer habitat in Northern Plains grasslands of north central Victoria. Continues long-term monitoring of the species with baselines established and indicator monitoring in years 2-5. Undertakes fox/cat monitoring & control to mitigate threat of predation on the species through a targeted baiting and shooting program. Works with priority landholders to establish conservation agreements to improve land management practices and mitigate threats through managed grazing and pest plant & animal control. Supports First Nations groups to develop a Healthy Country Plan for the grasslands, collect seed, propagate and revegetate culturally important/Plains-wanderer food species. Increases awareness of the species through community and stakeholder engagement about critical habitat requirements and land management practices that support these habitats.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27	Australian Government Threatened Species Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017-27	Conservation agreements were established across 300ha, and 39ha of improved land management was achieved though fencing, weed control and strategic grazing management aimed at improving grassland biomass and quality to support Plains-wanderers. Long-term monitoring continued, demonstrating a 5% increase in Plains-wanderer average site occupancy in Northern Plains grasslands from Autumn 2023 baseline levels. Fox and feral cat control was completed over 19,000ha leading to a significant reduction in fox and cat activity. Contributed to statewide and interstate forums to expand the knowledge of the species and coordinate management responses across remaining populations. Partnered with Zoos Victoria to deliver a disease risk workshop to support the zoo-to-wild captive breeding and release program. Supported a biocultural values assessment by Djaara Traditional Owners across four sites on the northern plains, along with seed collection and propagation of culturally important / plains-wanderer food plants.

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Protecting Eltham Copper Butterfly			
Increases the quality of populated habitat and extent of potential habitat in north central Victoria for the nationally Endangered species. Increases knowledge of current populations through baseline and indicator fauna surveys at each of the 12 known populations in the region. Undertakes flora surveys to increase knowledge of potential habitat extent. Addresses habitat fragmentation through targeted revegetation of Bursaria spinosa. Delivers activities to improve the quality of habitat at known populated sites through weed control, revegetation, fencing/ bollards and signage. Undertakes baseline and indicator habitat condition assessments to measure change. Increases awareness of the species through workshops and the development of fact sheets, videos and booklets on the species and their unique habitat requirements.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27	Australian Government Threatened Species Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy	The project completed 9 fauna surveys at three sites, totaling just under 70ha. Surveys were conducted in areas where previous habitat mapping indicated a high likelihood of occurrence. An additional three surveys were undertaken to learn more about a new metapopulation of the butterfly discovered in Flora Hill during the summer flying period. At the time of the discovery, 60 butterflies were observed, and during follow up surveys, another 7 were recorded. Engaged with 238 people through community events and school incursions aimed at increasing awareness of the species. Worked with Mount Alexander Shire Council to deliver targeted weed control at the Castlemaine Botanica gardens flora and fauna reserve. Contributed to statewide Eltham Copper Butterfly Recovery Group to expand the knowledge of the species and coordinate management responses across the state.
Platy Patch			
Collaborates with CMAs across the state and ARI to deliver Platypus habitat improvement works through enhancement of riparian and instream habitat in urban areas. Partners with Friends of Campbells Creek Landcare to improve habitat quality, both in-stream and surrounding Campbells Creek, by replacing invasive exotic plants with natives, including four threatened plant species. Improves water quality and hydrologic regime by encouraging better management of stormwater runoff through partnerships with Coliban Water, Council, DJANDAK and DEECA.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy	The project supported key delivery partner Friends of Campbells Creek to complete 9.2ha of riparian weed control and revegetation along Campbells Creek, improving the surrounding habitat and protecting the banks of the waterway which is known to support platypus. Project partner Coliban Water has improved the hydrology of a drainage line into the creek through the install of 4 leaky weirs. The weirs aim to slow runoff and therefore reduce erosion and sediment transfer into the creek. Djaara Traditional Owners were engaged through a Wartaka, providing project perspectives through a Djaara lens. Engaged 220 people through events such as Landcare working bees, field days and waterbug monitoring.

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Water for the Environment

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
The Living Murray Gunbower Forest			
Provide water for the environment to Gunbower Creek and restore regular flooding to the Gunbower Forest floodplain through operation of infrastructure. Extensive annual ecological monitoring program, meaningful Traditional Owner partnership programs and community engagement are also core to this project.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 Gunbower Creek EWMP	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan Gunbower Forest EWMP (MDBA produced) Water is Life Dhelkunyangu Gatjin strategy	Following a drying phase in 2024-25, water for the environment was delivered to Gunbower Forest to meet the water requirements of high priority wetlands and inundate low lying areas of river red gums with flood dependent understory vegetation. The wetland vegetation responded well providing habitat for waterbirds, turtles and frogs. Outcomes of the environmental watering is closely monitored to understand the benefits and inform adaptive management. Barapa Barapa Traditional Owners continued their yabby and turtle monitoring surveys at Gunbower Forest and led a trial of stocking golden perch fingerlings on the floodplain carried out in partnership with the CMA and Victorian Fisheries Authority.
Environmental Water Management			
Manages specific Victorian Environmental Water Holder entitlements for the Campaspe River (including the Coliban River), Loddon River System (including Tullaroop, Serpentine and Pyramid creeks) and 16 central Murray and mid- Loddon wetlands, and seven Wimmera Mallee Pipeline wetlands. Collaborates with key partners, provide input to water policy, deliver technical investigations. Ensures Traditional Owner Groups have input into planning processes to incorporate cultural values. Ensures shared benefits for key recreational users and the regional economy. Manage flow related issues in unregulated catchments as required.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 Site based EWMPs	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan Water is Life	Water levels receded across most wetlands actively managed though the use of Environmental Water by the North Central CMA. Water delivery occurred across the Loddon, Campaspe and Coliban systems with a high reliance on water for the environment in 2025-26 to achieve flow requirements in rivers due to below average rainfall resulting in little contribution of natural runoff. Water for the Environment was adaptively managed to prevent and or mitigate the impact of heat wave and low flow conditions on both the Loddon and Campaspe Rivers. Traditional Owners self-determine how they are involved in the planning and delivery of water for the environment. A joint management agreement between the CMA and DJAARA for the management of water for the environment for the Coliban River was signed and a joint Seasonal Watering Proposal for 2026/27 endorsed by both Boards and submitted to the VEWH.

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Kerang Wetlands & Gunbower Forest Ramsar Site Management			
Improves the ecological character of the Kerang Wetlands and Gunbower Forest Ramsar sites through on-ground works such as weed control, pest animal control, fencing and revegetation Monitors the 'Critical Components, Processes and Services' of the Ramsar sites to ensure they remain within limits of acceptable change. Strengthens regional partnerships, including with public land managers and Traditional Owners, to deliver effective monitoring and management of these internationally important wetland habitats.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 Kerang Wetlands Ramsar Site Action Plan 2017-25	Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy Australian Government Threatened Species Strategy Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017-27	Kerang Wetlands: Two years of persistent dry conditions since February 2024 contributed to a marked decline in colonial nesting waterbird abundance and breeding opportunities during the 2025–26 season. Total number of waterbirds recorded during surveys was 8,652, representing the lowest abundance recorded since regular monitoring commenced in 2017–18 with the limited extent and diversity of habitat available across the Ramsar wetlands. Barapa Barapa people have been involved in the project through cultural heritage surveys, water quality monitoring, connecting to Country, revegetation, and training opportunities. Priority works were delivered across the site to ensure maintained or improved ecological condition, including 13,300ha of pest animal control, 70ha of revegetation and 850ha of weed control. Gunbower Ramsar site: Implementation of the Wetland Restoration Plan included installation of natural exclusion plots and revegetation of aquatic species in Barapa and Green Swamps. To complement the horehound spraying program a bio-control program using the horehound clearwing moth was implemented in conjunction with Agriculture Victoria and will be monitored to understand its effectiveness. Traditional Owners have been involved in on-Country planning, working with ecologists to undertake monitoring and on-ground works. Priority works were delivered across the site to ensure maintained or improved ecological condition, including 20,900ha of pest animal control and 1,700ha of weed control.

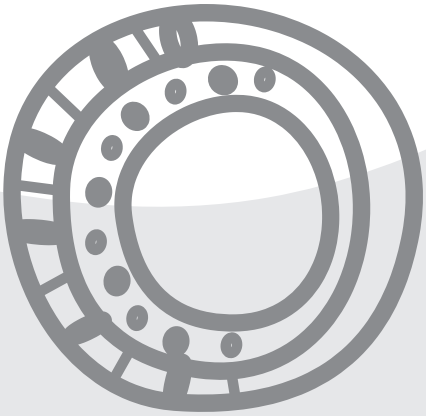


Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Sustainable Agriculture

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Climate Positive Farming Initiative			
Increases the capacity of North Central Victorian agricultural communities to build resilience and adapt to emerging practices to improve soil, biodiversity and vegetation.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy 2016	National Soil R, D & E Strategy Victorian Soil Health Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy National Soil Strategy	The Climate Positive Farming Initiative project began in February 2025 to support the agriculture sector to adopt practices to reduce emissions and build resilience to climate change. To date, the project has delivered eight community / stakeholder engagement events, produced seven communication materials, synthesized and finalised one baseline dataset, and identified and prioritized over 30 sites. Total area covered 103.7ha and 14ha at the Djakitj Enterprise farm (to integrate traditional ecological knowledge). The project is looking at trialling ways to reduce carbon emissions and build resilience to climate change, described as climate positive initiatives towards a net zero future. Four revegetation sites have been established. National Soil Monitoring Project (NSMP) has 41 signed landholder agreements within the North Central CMA boundary for soil sampling. This is to contribute to a data set of soil health across the landscape.
Carbon Farming Outreach Program			
The Carbon Farming Outreach Program assists Victorian farmers and land managers to understand carbon farming and how they can benefit from moving to a low-carbon future.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy 2015	National Soil R, D & E Strategy Victorian Soil Health Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy National Soil Strategy	The Carbon Farming Outreach Program delivered three community engagement events (overall 9 in total over project life) and produced two podcast to help farmers become more familiar with the on-farm emissions and opportunities and future market challenges around carbon accounting. The project reached over 350 people.
Loddon Campaspe Regional Drought Resilience Plan			
Supports Loddon Campaspe community to build drought resilience and ensure they are better prepared to manage future droughts, with an increasing focus on adaption and change.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy 2015	National Soil R, D & E Strategy Victorian Soil Health Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy National Soil Strategy	The Regional Drought Resilience Project delivered 10 projects across the Loddon Campaspe region. Projects supported included mental wellness, agricultural knowledge enhancement, and social connections.

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator			
Directly supports rural, regional and urban communities, including Traditional Owners to improve ecological conditions, farm sustainability and build resilience around changing climate and market demands.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy 2015	National Soil R, D & E Strategy Victorian Soil Health Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy National Soil Strategy	The Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator (SAF) role continued throughout 2025-26 to facilitate partnerships and connections to support the adoption of sustainable natural resource management practices and protect and conserve natural capacity and biodiversity. The SAF facilitates the Regional Sustainable Agriculture Steering Committee and provides a monthly newsletter (11 in total) reaching 350 recipients. During the 2025-26 year, the SAF facilitated 26 connections/partnerships to support the uptake of climate-smart agricultural practices, engage and inform 528 agricultural stakeholders to support the uptake of climate-smart agricultural practices and supported 22 activities delivered through the Regional Delivery Partner to assist the uptake of climate-smart agricultural practices. The SAF supported the co-ordination of the Loddon Campaspe Regional Drought Resilience Implementation Plan.
Healthy Productive Irrigated Landscapes			
Implement the Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan. Implement the Loddon Murray Irrigation Region Irrigation Drainage Strategy Implement Loddon CIR First Nations Engagement Plan. Support the development and management of water-use licences and associated Ministerial determinations. Takes responsibility for changes to Water Use Objectives and Standard Conditions. Implement Northern Victorian Irrigation Development Guidelines. Partner with key organisations to ensure the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters)/GED obligations are met.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2020-30 Loddon Murray Irrigation Region Irrigation Drainage Strategy	Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy 2030 Murray Darling Basin Plan Water for Victoria	Delivery of high-priority actions from the Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan. Delivered the Healthy Creek, Healthy Farms tour at Gunbower Creek. Presented at the Water Industry and Operations Conference in Bendigo on fish screen pilot project and innovation in irrigation systems. Finalised the Irrigation Drainage Toolkit. The irrigation frameworks project supported 8 agency partnerships, 5 community partnerships and 2 Aboriginal Victorian partnerships. More broadly across the GMID, staff contributed to the GMID Resilience Taskforce, Goulburn Murray Region Working Action Group, GMID Land and Water Use Mapping Project (with a particular focus on unregulated diversions land use mapping and the change in intensive livestock) and working groups for the Murray Darling Basin Plan Review. CMA contributed to quarterly meetings of the Northern Victoria Irrigation Development Group (NVIDG), reviewing new irrigation development assessments (8) and referrals (10). New irrigation development applications approved in 2025/26 included various enterprises, including truffle, potato and grazing.

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Sustainable Agriculture

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Reporting and Accounting for Salinity			
Contributes to the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy (BSM2030). Manages accountable actions for MD BSM2030 Salinity Register entries within the north central Victoria. Contributes to Victoria's Annual Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy Report. Assess the salinity impact of environmental watering within the River Murray floodplain.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2020-30	Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy 2030 Murray Darling Basin Plan Water for Victoria	During 2025-26, the focus for the Reporting and Accounting for Salinity Project was on the finalisation of the Accountable Action Review for the Tragowel Plains Accountable Action Review. The groundwater monitoring network for northern Victoria comprises 150 groundwater bores, monitored annually and twenty of the bores have been instrumented to record water tables and groundwater pressures at four-hourly intervals, downloaded every 6 months. A regional groundwater map has been produced for the northern plains. The Victorian Independent Audit Group for Salinity 2025 found CMA fully compliant with the Basin Salinity Management 2030 Strategy. The North Central CMA RAS staff co-ordinated the regional RAS steering committee and technical working group for supporting CMA compliance in meeting obligations to BSM2030 (quarterly meetings). Staff also actively contributed to the Victorian Salt Disposal Working Group.

Community and Partnerships

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Victorian Landcare Grants & Regional Landcare Coordinator			
A rigorous process enables funding through the Victorian Landcare Grants to local Landcare groups. Support Landcare groups and Landcare Networks to undertake regional NRM activities.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 North Central CMA Landcare Support Plan 2018-23	Protecting Victoria's Biodiversity 2037 Landcare Plan for Victoria 2023-2033 Australian Pest Animal Strategy Australian Weeds Strategy Australian Framework for Landcare Community Call for Action Threatened Species Strategy *EPBC Act*	The North Central CMA region is supported by a vibrant network of more than 160 Landcare groups that play a vital role in protecting and enhancing natural resources. Through the Regional Landcare Coordinator (RLC), the CMA delivers the Victorian Landcare Program, supporting community-led natural resource management activities and administering the Victorian Landcare Grants Program (Appendix 2). A key highlight during the year was the development of a draft Regional Landcare Support Plan 2026-2033. Developed with input from Landcare Network Chairs, Landcare Network Facilitators and CMA staff, the plan aligns with the *Landcare Plan for Victoria 2023–2033* and guides North Central CMA's ongoing support for Landcare and environmental volunteer groups across the region. The RLC also delivered a range of capacity-building initiatives, including field days showcasing successful Landcare projects, Cultural Awareness training, and *The Chat* monthly newsletter, which reaches more than 1,700 subscribers. The digital newsletter provides natural resource management advice, research updates, citizen science opportunities, event information, grant opportunities and training updates, helping to keep the Landcare community informed and connected.
WaterWatch and Citizen Science Programs			
Supports people to actively care for their environment by participating in citizen science activities including monitoring and reporting on the health of the region's land, water and biodiversity resources; and participation in training programs that raise awareness and improve skills. Supports broader community to participate in activities that relate to the ecological health of the region.	Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 North Central Citizen Science Program Action Plan to 2028	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Protecting Victoria's Biodiversity 2037	A key achievement during the reporting period was the review and renewal of the North Central Citizen Science Program Action Plan to 2028. The plan guides existing program activities; highlights partnership activities; identifies opportunities where funding is lacking and focuses efforts on working together with the region's Traditional Owners and communities. North Central WaterWatch supported 69 registered volunteers to monitor 110 sites across the region, collecting monthly waterway health data. Volunteers and community members also contributed to seasonal citizen science activities, including waterbug monitoring and eDNA surveys for platypus and other threatened species. The program is embedded and delivered in partnership with CMA projects including A Healthy Coliban Catchment, Tullaroop Tributaries, RiverScan (Native Fish Recovery Plan) and Waterways of the West, providing water quality and waterbug monitoring in priority catchments and supporting project reporting. Through RiverScan, CMA staff and First Nations Peoples coordinated annual spring monitoring across more than 20 sites, assessing water quality, waterbugs, eDNA and threatened fish populations. In partnership with Traditional Owners, WaterWatch monitoring was also undertaken at culturally significant sites across several catchments, with DJAARA expanding monitoring along Bendigo Creek through the Yaram Yaram Bayikina (Bendigo Creek Reawakening Program).

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Community and Partnerships

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
North Central River Detective Program			
Supports youth across the region to participate in educational programs. Raises awareness and improves our future leaders' skills and knowledge in natural resource management.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 North Central Citizen Science Program Action Plan to 2028	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd, Sustainability Plan, Our approach and Commitments	River Detectives engages schools and youth groups to collect and contribute real citizen science data about waterways in their community that are important to them. It gives them agency to share their learning and take positive action to care for waterways and catchments. Agnico Eagle's Community Partnerships Program funded the North Central River Detectives program for the 2025 calendar year, and they have continued their commitment for the 2026 calendar year. Their sponsorship has enabled us to work closely with 47 schools/groups in the reporting period, supporting 70 educators with training and educational resources, engaging more than 2,000 students from Prep to Year 12 and monitoring 63 waterway sites across the region. Additional funding from the Yaram Yaram Bayikina, the Bendigo Creek Reawakening partnership program, has enabled support to a further five schools in the Bendigo Creek catchment providing an intensive two-year River Detectives experience for 15 schools participating in that catchment.

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Aboriginal Partnerships			
Oversees the coordination and organisational delivery of the North Central CMA's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2022- 2025 (RecAP) - *Galkangu, 'we build together' (Dja Dja Wurrung language).* Supports the organisation's compliance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010.* Identifies and leverages opportunities for cultural heritage monitoring and mapping, through consultative structures that address the rights and interests of Victorian Traditional Owners. Supports the organisation to identify opportunities to build and strengthen relationships with Traditional Owners including for the co-design and delivery of project and programs to support self-determination and the cultural values of Traditional Owners to care for Country.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 North Central CMA Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-25	Water for Victoria National Water Initiative The Living Murray Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap Aboriginal Participation Guidelines Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework Dhelkunya Dja, Country Plan Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Plan Taungurung buk dadbagi, Taungurung Country Plan Barapa Barapa Country Plan GROWING WHAT IS GOOD, Barengi Gadjin Land Council, Country Plan	The North Central CMA has a long-standing commitment to working with First Nations peoples. Since 2018, this commitment has been guided through Reconciliation Australia-endorsed Reconciliation Action Plans (RecAPs). Galkangu – North Central CMA Stretch RecAP 2022–2025 provides a practical framework to strengthen organisational cultural capability and support meaningful reconciliation with Traditional Owners and First Nations communities across the region. As at 30 June 2026, 96% of the plan's 89 deliverables are complete, with progress reported to both the North Central CMA Board and Reconciliation Australia. In October 2026, the CMA registered its intent to develop a renewed Stretch RecAP. Extensive engagement with Traditional Owners, First Nations communities and CMA staff, including guidance and advice from the CMA's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, has informed the renewal process, helping identify priorities and opportunities to strengthen reconciliation efforts. The new RecAP (2026–2029) is expected to be finalised in early 2027. The CMA has reviewed its 2018 Cultural Competency Framework and developed a draft Cultural Capability Framework, to be finalised in the first half of the next financial year. Grounded in First Nations Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing, the framework will guide the organisation's approach to strengthening cultural capability, embedding culturally responsive practices, and supporting implementation of the renewed RecAP. The Aboriginal Partnerships team provides strategic advice and support to strengthen partnerships with Traditional Owner Nations and communities, ensuring their knowledge and aspirations inform project design and delivery. This work supports self-determination and includes collaboration across programs such as The Living Murray, Environmental Water, Our Catchments, Our Communities, and Waterways of the West. Led by the Cultural Heritage Coordinator, the North Central CMA continues to meet its obligations under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010.*

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Strategy and Impact

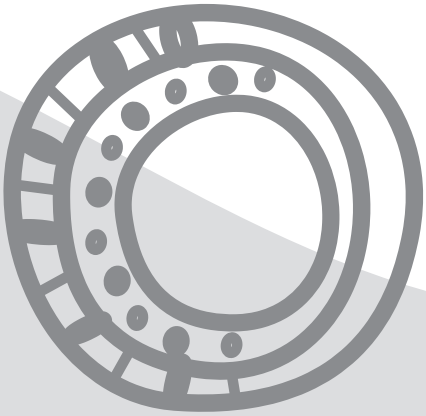
Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Our Catchment, Our Communities			
Working in partnership with Traditional Owners to deliver on mutual priorities with reference to Country Plans and the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy. Work collaboratively with stakeholders and partners to undertake a mid-term review of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021–2027.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27	Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management Plan	The North Central *Our Catchments, Our Communities* (OCOC) program continues to strengthen regional natural resource management governance and partnerships. Through a range of activities, the program actively engages stakeholders and communities in planning and decision-making processes. Key engagement platforms such as the Catchment Partners Forum and Regional Roundtables remain instrumental in fostering collaboration and dialogue on natural resource management issues across the region. A mid-term review of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy was finalised in September 2025. The review confirmed that the North Central RCS remains a relevant and effective strategy for guiding natural resource management across the region. While implementation was progressing well, there are clear opportunities to strengthen partner coordination, regional ownership, data sharing and Traditional Owner engagement. Traditional Owner Country Plans are integrated into project planning and execution, aiming to strengthen shared outcomes and relationships.
Regional Waterway Strategy			
Works with Traditional Owners, community, government agencies and stakeholders to renew the North Central Waterway Strategy 2014-22.	North Central Waterway Strategy 2014-22 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27	Victorian Waterway Management Strategy 2013 Victorian Waterway Management Strategy 2025 (DRAFT)	The renewal of the North Central Waterway Strategy 2014 is well underway. The strategy is being developed in partnership with Traditional Owners, stakeholders, government agencies and community members to ensure it reflects regional priorities, knowledge and aspirations. The renewal process is guided by a Steering Committee comprising representatives from water authorities, Parks Victoria, Traditional Owner organisations, DEECA, the North Central CMA and community representatives. Extensive engagement has informed the strategy's development. During 2025–26, ongoing partnership discussions, workshops and meetings involved 114 Traditional Owners and representatives through Traditional Owner Corporations, supporting their self-determined involvement in shaping the strategy. The strategy is being co-developed by DJAARA and the North Central CMA on Djandak. Six regional workshops brought together 113 stakeholders, community members, Traditional Owners and western science technical experts to share their knowledge, perspectives and aspirations for the region's waterways. Presentations have also been delivered to 64 stakeholders and community groups to build awareness and seek feedback on emerging priorities and directions. This collaborative approach is helping to create a shared vision for the region's waterways, ensuring the renewed strategy is informed by both Traditional Owner knowledge and contemporary science, and reflects community values, regional priorities and contemporary waterway management challenges.

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation			
Works with Traditional Owners, community, government agencies and stakeholders to renew the North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy 2015. Establish regional partnership arrangements to enable greater climate change collaboration.	North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy 2015. North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27	Victoria's Climate Change Strategy Natural Environment Adaptation Action Plan Water Cycle Adaptation Action Plan Primary Production Adaptation Action Plan	*Protecting What We Love: North Central Climate Change Strategy* was finalised in 2026 in response to the growing impacts of climate change. It provides a collaborative and forward-looking strategy to build resilience and protect what we value most: Our people, environment and the places we call home, now and into the future. The strategy was developed in partnership with regional stakeholders, drawing on the collective expertise of land managers, Traditional Owners, local government, water authorities and community organisations. Its development was guided by a Steering Committee representing the North Central CMA, local councils, water authorities, DEECA and Traditional Owner Corporations. The strategy sets out a natural resource management approach to climate action, recognising that our landscapes are living systems that sustain biodiversity, cultural values, waterways, agriculture and community wellbeing.

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Major Projects

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
VMFRP Guttrum-Benwell Forest Floodplain Restoration Project			
Reinstate a more natural flooding regime for the Guttrum and Benwell forests, particularly to address the reduced frequency and duration of floods by delivering water for the environment to the forest and semi-permanent wetlands via pump stations, regulators and levees to contain water on the floodplain.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan	The Guttrum and Benwell State Forests component for the VMFRP East Environment Report and Planning Scheme Amendment was finalised and exhibited publicly from 30 March to 12 May 2026. The full East Environment Report is five volumes comprising introductory chapters, various environmental assessments, environmental delivery standards, detailed maps and Traditional Owner / community engagement logs plus thirteen individual specialist assessments. Various community engagement sessions were conducted during the exhibition, a user-friendly website developed and easy to understand fact sheets provided so that people could engage with the East Environment Report. A total of 20 submissions were received from the community and stakeholders in June 2026. An independent panel, the Standing Independent and Advisory Committee, was appointed by the State Planning Minister to assess if the projects may cause unacceptable environmental impacts. The panel is receiving submissions from the proponent and submitters from 24 June to 9 July 2026. A determination if the projects are approved or not won't be until October 2026. Close engagement with Barapa Barapa and Wamba Wemba continued for the shared interest Country at Guttrum-Benwell Forests. Their values and aspirations for the project site have been developed and finalised into a document for their self-determined usage. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan was also developed for the construction footprint of the project area.



Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
VMFRP Gunbower Forest Floodplain Restoration Project			
Enables the delivery of environmental water to the wetlands and forest of the Gunbower National Park to mimic a natural flood event, including delivering water to almost half of the permanent and temporary wetlands and river red gums with flood dependent understorey. Provision of infrastructure to enable the deployment of water to land that can currently not be watered by any other infrastructure.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22	Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan	The Gunbower National Park component for the VMFRP East Environment Report and Planning Scheme Amendment was also finalised and exhibited publicly from 30 March to 12 May 2026. Gunbower Forest details were also included in the five volumes of the East Environment Report, along with Guttrum and Benwell Forests component. Most of the 20 submissions to the public exhibition of the East Environment Report were related to local community and stakeholder perspectives for Gunbower Forest. The Standing Independent and Advisory Committee appointed by the State Planning Minister is also assessing if the Gunbower Forest project may cause unacceptable environmental impacts under the *Environmental Effects Act 1978*. The panel is receiving submissions from the proponent and submitters from 24 June to 9 July 2026. A determination if the projects are approved or not won't be until October 2026. Engagement with Yorta Yorta is developing an understanding of their values and rights for Gunbower National Park. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan was also developed for the construction footprint of the project area.
Gunbower Fishway Upgrade			
Finalise the construction and commissioning of the Gunbower regulator fishway upgrade	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central CMA Native Fish Recovery Plan – Gunbower and lower Loddon	Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan	Observations over 2025/26 show that the works have been successful and small bodied fish (including juvenile recreational species, Golden Perch and Murray Cod) can pass upstream through the fishway.

Table 9 **North Central CMA's Delivery Program's key initiatives and performance commentary**

Disaster Recovery

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Flood Recovery October 2022			
Design and construction of works to mitigate severe/high risk erosion where there is a potential for change to the watercourse.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22	Victorian Waterway Management Strategy	Construction of the Avoca Rock Chute project was completed in April 2026. This project was undertaken in partnership with Buloke Shire Council and with support from the local community and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. The two rock chutes, installed near the Charlton Weir mitigate impacts of the October 2022 flooding and protect against failure of the weir pool during future flood events.
Summer Storms 2023/24			
Repair/ replacement of environmental water delivery infrastructure. Design and install erosion mitigation structures. Support community led disaster resilience through nature-based projects.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Waterway Strategy 2014 – 2022 Engagement Strategy 2022-27	Victorian Waterway Management Strategy	Design was completed and construction commenced on environmental water delivery infrastructure at Richardsons Lagon. Erosion mitigation works (chutes and rock armouring) was completed on the Avoca River. Design and planning was completed for the replacement of pile fields on the Loddon River. Nature Led Community Resilience Projects delivered on community engagement and nature stewardship through the Creswick Creek pilot program and five NLCR grants of up to $10,000. A diversity of recovery outcomes were delivered in storm / flood impacted communities including public murals and school incursions, revegetation to secure riverbanks, community engagement with native flora through art, and the sharing of TO stories of waterway patterns.
Victorian Bushfires January 2026			
Restoration of natural waterway and catchment assets that were impacted by the Victorian Bushfires.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Waterway Strategy 2014 – 2022 Engagement Strategy 2022-27	Victorian Waterway Management Strategy	The program commenced rapid damage assessment of waterway and catchment assets in and around Ravenswood south and Charlton following the December / January 2026 fires. In late April 2026 a modest package of funding was secured through the State Government to support waterway recovery. This will be delivered in partnership with Connecting Country [Mount Alexander] through the 2026/27 financial year.

Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management

Projects	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Performance commentary
Administration of Statutory Functions			
Provide advice to the community, development industry and local government about the potential impacts of flooding. Protect waterways from the impacts of third party works through the Works on Waterway Permit Scheme.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy 2018-28	Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy 2016	The North Central CMA provided expert advice to local government, community, emergency services and the development industry about the potential and real impacts of flooding. The North Central CMA is compliant with statutory obligations regarding issuing works on waterways permits and floodplain referrals. During 2025/2026 we responded to 1,512 planning referrals and direct requests for flood and development advice. 2,564 reports were downloaded from Flood Eye, being an online self-service portal for the community to obtain property specific flood advice. The North Central CMA responded to 126 works on waterway permit applications or requests for advice
Regional Floodplain Management Strategy Implementation			
Support local government, DEECA, VicSES and the community to implement the priorities of the Regional Floodplain Management Strategy (RFMS). Deliver projects that support the priorities of the RFMS.	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy 2018-28	Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy	North Central CMA continued to support implementation of the Regional Floodplain Management Strategy (RFMS) through provision of technical advice to lead agencies, monitoring and reporting, community engagement, and flood response planning. Across the region, 16 flood studies/ flood management plans were underway, with six completed and funding secured for an additional study to be led by North Central CMA. North Central CMA supported the preparation of 12 grant applications across two funding rounds, with announcements pending. Seven successful grants from previous rounds were announced, representing more than $3 million in grant funding to support projects directly linked to priority actions in the RFMS regional workplan. North Central CMA continued to provide significant advocacy and support to DTP and local government to integrate flood studies into planning schemes and progress flood reforms, helping to strengthen flood risk management outcomes across the region.

1.12 **Five Year Financial Review Performance**

Table 10 provides a comparative summary of the CMA's financial results for the reporting year and the previous four years.

Table 10 **Five year financial performance**

	2025-2026	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022
	$	$	$	$	$
Total revenue	**17,455,987**	**18,255,849**	**18,704,552**	**23,802,254**	**20,050,816**
Total expenditure	**18,610,002**	**18,340,633**	**20,897,368**	**19,999,484**	**15,454,237**
Total surplus/(deficit)	**(1,164,015)**	**(84,784)**	**(2,192,816)**	**3,802,771**	**4,596,579**
Current assets	14,402,963	16,854,934	16,330,416	17,927,641	14,071,708
Non-current assets	4,054,916	2,628,203	2,762,061	2,493,304	2,699,150
Total assets	**18,457,879**	**19,483,137**	**19,092,478**	**20,420,945**	**16,770,858**
Current liabilities	3,477,812	2,496,477	3,059,098	2,352,716	2,500,604
Non-current liabilities	125,138	146,753	108,689	127,218	132,014
Total liabilities	**3,602,950**	**3,643,230**	**3,167,787**	**2,479,934**	**2,632,618**

Current Year Financial Review

For the year to 30 June 2026, the North Central CMA recorded a $1.16 million deficit from operating activities compared with an $84 thousand deficit from operating activities in 2024-2025. The deficit is a reflection of spend against project revenue received in advance during previous financial years.

As at 30 June 2026, the North Central CMA held $9.7 million in contracts representing works yet to be completed under funding contracts where revenue has been recognised on receipt.

All corporate services and project support was provided in-line with budget expectations and on cost recovery principles.

Significant Changes or Factors Affecting Performance

There were no significant changes or factors which affected the North Central CMA's performance during the reporting period..

Capital Projects

During 2025–26, North Central CMA completed the Huntly office refurbishment project within the approved budget. The project represented a significant capital investment during the reporting period and provides improved workplace facilities while reducing uncertainty associated with future accommodation requirements.

Disclosure of Grants and Transfer Payments

In the reporting period the North Central CMA provided grants to 69 community groups totalling $336,750.00 comprising $336,750.00 through the Victorian Government's Victorian Landcare Grants Program. (Appendix 2).

Subsequent Events

There were no events occurring after the balance date which may significantly affect the North Central CMA's operations in subsequent reporting periods.

PART 2: GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

2.1 **Organisational Structure and Corporate Governance Arrangements**

The North Central CMA organisation structure is underpinned by five key business units with a senior manager of each unit reporting directly to the CEO.



Figure 6 **Organisation structure**

Board and committees

The Victorian Government appoints diverse Boards of up to nine members to govern CMAs based on their skills and background relevant to natural resource management. Board members also have a valuable connection to their local community and represent community values and priorities when considering strategic issues relating to the protection and improvement of the region's natural resources.

As at 30 June 2026, the Board has three standing committees each chaired by a Board member. The committees support CMA strategies, initiatives and programs and are complemented by a range of project specific committees.



Figure 7 **Board subcommittees**

2.2 **Governing Board**

Sally Mitchell
(Chair)
SAMARIA
Sally has lived and worked on her family's' irrigated farms for most of her life located in the northern end of the catchment and is committed to the protection and enhancement of environmental assets that deliver environmental, economic and social benefits.

Sally has a strong interest in involving young people in community projects, so that the bank of knowledge built up over many years can be passed on and that new and innovative ways can be incorporated. She believes that communities need good leadership to thrive in times of change. A keystone in her beliefs is that good natural resource management goes hand in hand with sustainable farming practices.

Olivia Lawson
CLARKES HILL
Olivia is a dedicated advocate for sustainable agriculture with more than 20 years of experience as a partner in a cattle seed stock business in central Victoria. Her family business specialises in holistic grazing systems, best practice animal welfare, and sustainable land management, breeding efficient and highly productive beef genetics. Olivia has actively participated in carbon and climate pilot programs within the agricultural sector and has provided police advice on beef sustainability initiatives.

Her commitment to sustainable agriculture has been recognised through awards such as the Landcare Sustainable Farmer of the Year (2013) and the Coles Weekly Times Beef Farmer of the Year (2020), awarded alongside her family. Olivia holds a degree in Agricultural Science from Melbourne University and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

She has served in non-executive director roles on various national and international agriculture-related boards and currently serves as Deputy Chair of the North Central CMA. Additionally, she leads Soils for Life as Chair and is a steering group member for the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework.

Sally Beer-Hurlestone
LEICHARDT (1 October 2025 to 30 June 2026)
Sally grew up in Deniliquin on a mixed farm, and since 2022 is the co-owner/co- manager of a dorper enterprise in Leichardt with her husband.

She is a dedicated advocate for sustainable agriculture and the value of incorporating biodiversity onto farms.

She is now an Agricultural Extension Officer with the City of Greater Bendigo.

She has qualifications in Agriculture and Business from the University of New England, and has experience working in agribusiness and logistics, community engagement, and regenerative agriculture extension.

Peter Goffin
MANDURANG (1 October 2025 to 30 June 2026)
Peter is an experienced Not for Profit Director, Company Secretary and General Counsel. His role as Company Secretary, Returning Officer and General Counsel at Australian Medical Association (Victoria) and previous position as Company Secretary at World Vision Australia have been strongly focused on corporate governance.

He was the founding director at Bendigo Foodshare Inc. and has worked as a volunteer under the Australian Volunteers for International Development program in 2016 and again in 2019 in Fiji and Tonga in governance roles.

Peter holds an LLB B.Com from the University of Melbourne and an Applied Diploma of Corporate Governance from the Governance Institute of Australia, where he is a Fellow and an active member of its Corporate and Legal Issues Committee.

Dawn McBride
MAIDEN GULLY (1 October 2025 to 30 June 2026)
Dawn is a long-term resident of the Loddon Catchment, with over 20 years living along the Loddon River. She brings deep regional knowledge and a strong commitment to sustainable water and land management.

Dawn holds a Bachelor of Arts (Social Science) Honours and has undertaken PhD research into the socio-ecological values of *Eucalyptus largiflorens* wetlands within a changing water regime.

Her professional experience includes water management, agricultural systems and environmental research in Victoria and Queensland. She has contributed to projects addressing salinity, water quality, biodiversity, agricultural productivity, soils and cultural landscapes for Native Title claims.

Dawn is a strong advocate for whole of catchment management approaches to ensure the long-term health and resilience of river systems, communities and agricultural landscapes.

Shayne Rodgers
ELTHAM (1 October 2025 to 30 June 2026)
Shayne is a First Nations man with extensive experience across community service and construction. A former Independent Aboriginal delegate in the water sector, he is a strong advocate for partnerships co-designed with the community.

With more than 20 years' experience in industrial mechanical plumbing, Shayne's career spans both operational and managerial roles. He is currently the Development Manager at a Traditional Owner organisation, focusing on providing housing opportunities for those who need them.

Through volunteering and chairing committees, Shayne has also worked to reduce gambling-related harm in Victoria, including presenting a podcast on the issue.

He holds vocational qualifications in Mechanical Plumbing, Occupational Health and Safety, and Project Management, and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD).

Rob Stephenson
STRATHFIELDSAYE (1 October 2025 to 30 June 2026)
Rob is a qualified accountant, with broad experience during almost 40 years employed in professional, executive and leadership positions in Bendigo. Those roles have included public accounting, non-bank finance, member-service and university sectors.

His family members have farmed in the Loddon River basin for several generations, and Rob is looking forward to supporting prosperous and productive communities in our region, through appropriate and sustainable management of the land, water and biodiversity resources that contribute to them.

He has significant Board experience as a Not-for-Profit Community and Leadership Development organisations and currently serves as a Board Member of Heathcote Health and as an Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee of City of Greater Bendigo.

He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, CPA Australia and Institute of Managers and Leaders, and a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and International Leadership Association.

David Weaver
BOORT (1 July 2025 to 19 March 2026)

David is a fifth-generation farmer in the Boort area, with a lifelong interest in the floodplains, lakes and streams in his area. David enjoyed contributing to the CMA and its future direction.

Mary Bignell
TRENTHAM (1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025)

Mary is a partner in a grazing and broadacre cropping enterprise located in the catchments of the Coliban and Wimmera Rivers. She has been a Non-Executive Director with Statutory Entities since 2010, with experience in the Water and Waste sectors.

With qualifications in agricultural science, Mary has experience in governance, natural resource management, emergency management, auditing and community development.

Adrian Weston
(1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025)

Adrian is currently a Councillor of Campaspe Shire Council and a Director of Goulburn Valley Water. Since 2018 Adrian has been a member of the Basin Community Committee, advising the Murray Darling Basin Authority on the implementation of the Basin Plan.

He has also been a Director of the Gargarro Botanic Gardens since 2021 and owns and operates an irrigated cropping and lamb farm enterprise at Rushworth.

Adrian completed 12 years as Director of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, with two years serving as Chair, and has an extensive knowledge of natural resource management.

Ann Hodge
(1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025)

Ann has more than 25 years of experience in primary production, with a strong focus on dairy management and industry development. She maintains a keen interest in water policy, environmental stewardship, and regional growth opportunities.

Ann serves as Secretary of the Barham-based Western Murray Land Improvement Group, an organisation dedicated to agriculture research, development and extension; industry diversification; Landcare initiatives; environmental services; and environmental markets.

Ann is a current Board Member of the Mallee Catchment Management Authority.

The following table outlines Board member names, term and meeting attendance for the reporting period.

Table 11 **Board membership/term and meeting attendance**

Board Member	Term	Full Board meetings	Out-of-session
Sally Mitchell (Chair)	Oct 2025 – Sept 2029	7 of 8	4 of 4
Olivia Lawson	Oct 2023 – Sept 2027	7 of 8	2 of 4
Sally Beer-Hurlestone	Oct 2025 – Sept 2029	5 of 6	2 of 3
Peter Goffin	Oct 2025 – Sept 2027	4 of 6	3 of 3
Dawn McBride	Oct 2025 – Sept 2029	6 of 6	2 of 3
Shayne Rodgers	Oct 2025 – Sept 2029	6 of 6	3 of 3
Rob Stephenson	Oct 2025 – Sept 2029	6 of 6	3 of 3
David Weaver	Oct 2023 – March 2026	6 of 8	1 of 1
Mary Bignell	Oct 2023 – Sept 2025	8 of 8	1 of 1
Adrian Weston	July 2025 – Sept 2025	3 of 3	1 of 1
Ann Hodge	July 2025 – Sept 2025	3 of 3	1 of 1

2.3 **Board Sub-Committee Membership and Roles**

Audit and Risk Committee

Members are appointed by the Board, usually for a three-year term, and are subject to the committee's Terms of Reference. An independent external member also sits on the Committee.

Meetings are generally held bi-monthly and at any other time on request of a committee member or the internal or external auditor. In 2025—2026 the committee met four times.

The core responsibilities of the audit committee are to:

- Review and report independently to the Board on the Annual Report and all other financial information published by the North Central CMA.
- Assist the Board in reviewing the effectiveness of North Central CMA's internal control environment.
- Assist the Board in reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, reliability of financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Determine the scope of the internal audit function and ensure its resources are adequate and used effectively, including coordination with the external auditors.
- Maintain effective communication with external auditors, consider recommendations made by internal and external auditors and review the implementation of actions to resolve issues raised.
- Oversee the effective operation of the organisations risk management framework.

Table 12 **Audit and Risk Committee membership and meeting attendance**

Name		Term	Attended	Eligible to attend
Mary Bignell	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	0	1
Olivia Lawson	Chair – July 2025 to 2 March 2026	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	4	4
Sally Mitchell	Independent	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	2	4
Fran Raymond	Independent External Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	4	4
Peter Goffin	Chair – 3 March 2026 to 30 June 2026	2 December 2025 to 30 June 2026	2	2
David Weaver	Independent	1 July 2025 to 19 March 2026	0	2

Remuneration Committee

The purpose of the committee is to:

- Oversee the CEO remuneration and alignment with the Victorian Government Public Entity Executive Remuneration Policy (PEER policy).
- Oversee the CEO's work plan, professional development and annual performance appraisal, including 6 monthly reviews.
- Develop a succession plan for the CEO position.

The Committee will also act as a conduit between with the Board in relation to people and culture matters such as:

- Executive remuneration, such as relativities and diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) matters.
- People Matter Survey results.
- Enterprise agreement and bargaining.

Table 13 **Remuneration Committee membership and meeting attendance**

Name		Attendance
Mary Bignell (Chair 1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025)	1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025	1 of 1
David Weaver	1 July 2025 to 19 March 2026	1 of 1
Sally Mitchell	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	2 of 2
Rob Stephenson (Chair 2 December 2025 to 30 June 2026)	2 December 2025 to 30 June 2026	1 of 1
Peter Goffin	3 March 2026 to 30 June 2026	1 of 1

Strategic Directions Committee

The purpose of the committee is to support the North Central CMA to deliver on the strategic direction of the North Central RCS and sub-strategies.

Table 14 **Strategic Directions Committee membership and meeting attendance**

Committee members		Total
Sally Beer (Chair)	2 December 2025 to 30 June 2026	1 of 1
David Weaver	1 July 2025 to 19 March 2026	0 of 0
Dawn McBride	2 December 2025 to 30 June 2026	1 of 1
Shayne Rodgers	2 December 2025 to 30 June 2026	1 of 1
Rob Stephenson	2 December 2025 to 30 June 2026	1 of 1

2.4 **Occupational Health and Safety**

The North Central CMA is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of its employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors whilst at work. This is achieved through maintaining workplaces that are safe and without risk to health so far as reasonably practicable, adhering to risk control documents and integration of Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) in all aspects of the business. People engaged at the CMA premises are inducted to ensure they are familiar with the health and safety policies and emergency procedures.

The CMA procurement process ensures suppliers engaged to perform work have fit for purpose risk control documents and appropriate insurance, regular audits confirm compliance with these requirements. Contractor worksites have pre-start assessment and interim inspections to ensure OH&S compliance; these Risk Management performance measures are reported monthly to the North Central CMA Board.

OH&S policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed. OH&S training is provided to all employees with WorkSafe incidents reported under the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation Act 2013* and Part 5 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (VIC)*. There is an active OHS committee in place, to provide input and consultation from across the CMAs divisions.

During 2025–26, North Central CMA strengthened its health and safety framework through ongoing review of policies, procedures and systems, and completion of psychosocial risk assessments across the organisation. This work informed development of a psychosocial risk register and actions to support a safe and healthy workplace. The OHS Steering Committee continued to oversee health, safety and wellbeing matters, including hazard reporting, incident management and workplace inspections.

Staff wellbeing remained a priority through the annual wellbeing program, wellbeing communications, influenza vaccinations and mental health initiatives. North Central CMA also maintained strong investment in safety training and achieved 100% completion of OHS induction requirements for new employees.

A summary of key data we monitor to ensure OH&S is below.

Table 16 **OH&S data**

Measure	Key performance indicator	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
Incidents	No. of Incidents	17	20	15
	Rate of incidents per 100 FTE	27	31	21
	No. requiring first aid and or further treatment	5	8	3
	No. of hazards reported	20	8	2
	Rate of hazards per 100 FTE	32	11	3
Claims	No. of standard claims	0	0	0
	Rate per 100 FTE	0	0	0
	No. of lost time claims	0	0	1
	Rate per 100 FTE	0	0	1
	No. of claims exceeding 13 weeks	0	0	0
	Rate per 100 FTE	0	0	0
Fatalities	Fatality claims	0	0	0
Claim Costs	Average cost per standard claim	$0	$0	$162
Return to work	Percentage of claims with RTW plan < 30 days	N/A	N/A	N/A
Management commitment	Evidence of OH&S policy statement, objectives, and regular reporting to senior management; and OH&S plans (signed by CEO or equivalent)	Completed	Completed	Compliant
	Evidence of OH&S criteria(s) in purchasing guidelines (incl. goods, services & personnel)	Completed	Completed	Compliant
Consultation and participation	Evidence of agreed structure of designated workgroups (DWGs), health and safety representatives (HSRs), and issue resolution procedures (IRPs).	Completed	Completed	Compliant
	Compliance with agreed structure of DWGs, HSRs and IRPs.	Completed	Completed	Compliant
	No. of OH&S Committee meetings	5	5	4
Risk Management	Number of internal audits, site safety plans or site inspections conducted	44	8	8
	Percentage of reported incidents reviewed or investigated	100%	100%	100%
	Improvement Notices issued across the Authority by WorkSafe	0	0	0
	Percentage of issues identified and actioned arising from • Internal audits, • HSR improvement notices, and • WorkSafe notices	 100% N/A N/A	 83% N/A N/A	 100% N/A N/A
	PPE, equipment and other safety investment as a % of payroll	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%

Measure	Key performance indicator	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
Training	Percentage of managers and staff that: • Have received OH&S training • Trained in First Aid	 87% 15%	 94% 54%	 100% 31%
	Induction • Staff inducted within 5-days of hire • Contractor site inductions undertaken	 100% 42	 87% 62	 100% 61
	Percentage of HSRs trained: • Initial training on acceptance of role • Retraining (optional annual refresher)	 N/A N/A	 80% 0%	 100% 40%
	Training investment as a % of payroll	0.7%	0.1%	0.7%
Wellbeing investment	Wellbeing investment as a % of payroll	0.40%	0.50%	0.39%
	Events, initiatives and ongoing programs conducted	23	16	17
	Number of EO Contact Officers/Peer Support	4	3	4
	Percentage staff trained in Mental Health First Aid	7%	11%	17%

2.5 **Employment and Conduct Principles**

The North Central CMA is committed to applying merit and equity principles when appointing staff. Our selection processes ensure applicants are assessed and evaluated fairly and equitably based on the key selection criteria and other accountabilities without discrimination.

3.1 **Public Sector Values and Employment Principles**

The *Public Administration Act 2004* established the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC). The VPSC's role is to strengthen public sector efficiency, effectiveness and capability, and advocate for public sector professionalism and integrity.

The North Central CMA's policies and practices are consistent with the VPSC's employment standards and provide fair treatment, career opportunities and the early resolution of workplace issues. The North Central CMA advises employees on how to avoid conflicts of interest, how to respond to offers of gifts and how it deals with misconduct.

Our people

Our people are our greatest asset, and we strive to provide a workplace that supports inclusion and participation for everyone. This is sustained by a workplace culture built on respect, and that is inclusive, adaptive, and agile. Our culture is underpinned by values of care, courage, and connection.

The North Central CMA's aim is to be an employer of choice. To achieve this, the CMA is focused on providing current and prospective employees with competitive terms and conditions of employment, and a positive and collaborative work culture that promotes the public-sector values of respect, leadership, human rights, integrity, accountability, impartiality, and responsiveness.

Learning and development

Through our Pursue your Potential Capability and Development Framework, we continue to build organisational capability and leadership capacity across all levels of the organisation. The framework helps employees identify their core capabilities, assess development needs and create tailored professional development plans that support both individual growth and organisational objectives.

Professional development undertaken during 2025–26 supported the continued development of leadership, technical, cultural and safety capability across the organisation.

Employees participated in leadership and management development opportunities including mentoring programs, management training, contact officer training and leadership development programs. Staff also attended industry conferences, forums and specialist training covering natural resource management, planning, conservation finance and related technical disciplines.

The North Central CMA continued to invest in building an inclusive and respectful workplace through cultural capability training, reconciliation learning initiatives, workplace inclusion programs and wellbeing training. Ongoing learning was supported through the Kineo learning platform, providing staff with access to a broad range of professional development and compliance training resources.

A strong focus was also placed on employee health and safety. Employees completed First Aid, CPR, Mental Health First Aid, Health and Safety Representative (HSR), Fire Warden and four-wheel drive training to support safe field operations and workplace safety responsibilities. The organisation also supported work experience placements, providing learning opportunities for students and strengthening community engagement.

3.2 **Comparative Workforce Data**

As of 30 June 2026, the North Central CMA employed the full-time equivalent (FTE) of 61.62 people compared to the full-time equivalent (FTE) of 63.43 people as at 30 June 2025. The breakdown of staff is as follows:

Table 15 **Comparative workforce data**

	June 2026						
	All employees		Ongoing			Fixed term and Casual	
	Head count	FTE	Full time Head count	Part time Head count	FTE	Head count	FTE
Gender							
Women	38	33.44	14	16	27.04	8	6.3
Men	28	27.28	22	5	26.27	1	1.00
Self-described	1	0.90	0	1	0.90	0.00	0.00
Age							
15-24 years	1	1.00	1	0	1.00	0	0.00
25-34 years	6	5.90	4	1	4.90	1	1.00
35-44 years	21	17.71	6	12	16.01	3	1.7
45-54 years	28	26.83	18	7	22.83	3	3.00
55-64 years	10	9.18	6	3	8.58	1	0.60
65+ years	1	1.00	1	0	1.00	0	0.00
Classification data							
Band 4	1	0.95	0	1	0.95	0	0.00
Band 5	7	6.40	3	2	4.40	2	2.00
Band 6	18	16.73	11	5	15.13	2	1.60
Band 7	14	11.75	2	9	9.65	3	2.10
Band 8	15	14.00	10	5	14.00	0	0.00
Executive Officer	7	6.79	5	1	5.79	1	1.00
Senior Executive Officer	4	4.00	4	0	4.00	0	0.00
Chief Executive Officer	1	1.00	1	0	1.00	0	0.00
Total employees	**67**	**61.62**	**36**	**22**	**54.21**	**9**	**7.3**

Notes:

All figures reflect employment levels at the last full pay period in June of each year.

Excluded are external contractors/consultants and temporary staff employed by an employment agency.

Ongoing employees include employees engaged on an open-ended contract of employment and executives engaged on a standard executive's contract who were active in the last full pay period of June.

FTE is the proportional total number of paid hours, i.e., FTE of 1.0 is equivalent to 38 hours per week.

[1] Executive Officers who oversee the operation and directions of a significant part of the business or delivery program and may report to a Senior Manager or to the CEO.

[2] Senior Executive Officers who oversee the operation and directions of the business, and report to the CEO.

	June 2025						
	All employees		Ongoing			Fixed term and Casual	
	Head count	FTE	Full time Head count	Part time Head count	FTE	Head count	FTE
Gender							
Women	39	33.86	14	17	27.46	8	6.4
Men	30	28.67	24	4	27.27	2	1.4
Self-described	1	0.9	0	1	0.9	0	0
Age							
15-24 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25-34 years	10	8.6	5	1	5.8	4	2.8
35-44 years	24	21.13	9	11	17.93	4	3.2
45-54 years	26	24.23	16	8	22.43	2	1.8
55-64 years	9	8.47	7	2	8.47	0	0
65+ years	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Classification data							
Band 4	1	0.84	0	1	0.84	0	0
Band 5	9	7.3	2	1	2.7	6	4.6
Band 6	21	19.53	13	7	18.53	1	1
Band 7	12	10.25	3	7	9.05	2	1.2
Band 8	15	13.72	10	5	13.72	0	0
Executive Officer	7	6.79	5	1	5.79	1	1
Senior Executive Officer	4	4	4	0	4	0	0
Chief Executive Officer	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Total employees	**70**	**63.43**	**38**	**22**	**55.63**	**10**	**7.79**

3.3 **Executive Officer Disclosure**

An Executive Officer is defined as an executive under Part 3 of the PAA or a person to whom the Victorian Government's Public Entity Executive Remuneration Policy applies.

All figures reflect employment levels at the last full pay period in June of the current and corresponding previous reporting year. During the reporting period, the North Central CMA had one employee classified as an Executive Officer. This was the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is male. There were no vacancies or special project executives employed during the reporting period. In the previous reporting period one person met the definition of Executive Officer. This person was the CEO who is male.

3.4 **Workforce Inclusion Policy**

North Central CMA celebrates the differences between people and the contribution these differences make to our work and communities.

We demonstrate care, courage and connection through our work with communities, First Nations Peoples, our partners and each other.

We believe in the value of a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve and are committed to ensuring all people are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

During 2025–26, North Central CMA continued to implement its Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2023–2028 while completing the final year of its Gender Equality Action Plan 2022–2026 and Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan *Galkangu – We Build Together* 2022–2025. Building on this progress, the organisation developed a new Gender Equality Action Plan 2026–2030 and renewed its Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–2029, reinforcing its commitment to cultural capability, accessibility, gender equality, flexible work practices and inclusive employment opportunities.

Table 18 **Progress of inclusion programs**

Progress of inclusion programs	Not started	In progress	Completed or ongoing	Total actions
Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2026	0	0	17	17
Reconciliation Action Plan Galkangu 'we build together' 2022-2025	0	4	85	89

Galkangu 'we build together' (Dja Dja Wurrung language) North Central CMA Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2025

The Plan provides an operational action plan to guide staff, increase organisational cultural competencies, and contribute to genuine reconciliation with Traditional Owners and First Nations communities and organisations of the region. Eighty-nine actions support the following four headline themes:

- Relationships
- Respect
- Opportunities
- Governance

North Central CMA is reviewing and renewing its Reconciliation Action Plan. The development of a second Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2029 reflects increased organisational maturity and a move to more deeply embed reconciliation across core business with a draft submission to Reconciliation Australia due in July 2026.

Gender Equality Action Plan

North Central CMA is committed to advancing gender equality and fostering an inclusive workplace. During 2025–26, the organisation completed the final year of its Gender Equality Action Plan 2022–2026, with all 17 actions either completed or ongoing. Key initiatives delivered under the plan included embedding gender considerations into succession planning, supporting leadership development opportunities, mainstreaming flexible work arrangements, undertaking annual gender equality audits, delivering diversity and inclusion training, and applying a gender lens to recruitment and remuneration practices. As at 2025, 89% of employees had an approved flexible work arrangement.

Building on the progress achieved through the 2022–2026 plan, North Central CMA developed and published a new Gender Equality Action Plan 2026–2030. The new plan was informed by workforce audit results, staff consultation and leadership engagement and provides a renewed focus on gender equality, inclusive employment practices, leadership opportunities, flexible work and addressing barriers to participation across the organisation.

North Central CMA also continued its participation in the City of Greater Bendigo's Coalition for Gender Equity, supporting collective action to advance gender equality and prevent gender-based violence across the region.

Wellbeing and inclusion

The North Central CMA continues to offer the services of an Employee Assistance Program. The program provides employees and their immediate family members with access to professional and confidential counselling services for both work- related and non-work-related matters. We also offer a range of online self-guided resources to support our team members in proactively managing and maintaining their wellbeing. In addition, five employees are certified in Mental Health First Aid, and the organisation maintains a network of trained Contact Officers who provide support and guidance to employees on workplace matters, including equal opportunity, respectful workplaces and family violence concerns.

During 2025-2026, we encouraged staff to participate in a wellbeing program, planned and managed by the Staff Consultative Committee. The program involves a range of work sponsored activities focusing on staff health and wellbeing. Activities included flu vaccinations, health checks, information sessions and support for physical fitness and mental wellbeing.

Additionally, we have a Reward and Recognition program to enable employees across the organisation to directly acknowledge their colleagues. The program is designed to be inclusive and recognise individual preferences in how they are rewarded and acknowledged.

Table 19 **Workforce inclusion reporting**

Inclusion policy initiative	2025-26	2024-25
Commit to women represented of at least 40% at Senior Manager levels	Executive Officer 14%M 86%W Senior Executive Officer 75%M 25%W All Executive (Incl CEO) 42%M 58%W	Executive Officer 14%M 86%W Senior Executive Officer 75%M 25%W All Executive (Incl CEO) 42%M 58%W
Accessibility to flexible working arrangements	87% of employees have some form of formal flexibility arrangement	89% of employees have some form of formal flexibility arrangement
Commit to improving the average gender pay gap[1]	Median pay gap 0% Mean pay gap -0.3%	Median pay gap 0% Mean pay gap 2.4%
Attract and retain First Nations employees	3% of our workforce identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	4% of our workforce identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
Encourage staff to take acting roles to develop leadership skills	25% of staff undertook a higher duties activity (7%M 18%W 0%S) 65% of staff participated in career development training (41%M 24%W 0%S)	87% of staff participated in career development training (37%M 50%W 0%S)
Inclusion training and awareness programs	During 2025/26 our team undertook inclusion training in Gender inclusion (91% participation) and Disability inclusion (91% participation) 77% of staff participated in First Nations cultural training activities	During 2024/25 our team undertook inclusion training in Gender inclusion (80% participation) and Disability inclusion (80% participation) 69% of staff participated in First Nations cultural training activities

[1]Measure includes whole of organisation excluding CEO.

PART 4: OTHER DISCLOSURES

4.1 **Local Jobs First - Victorian Industry Participation Policy**

The *Local Jobs First Act 2003* which came into effect in August 2018, integrates the Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPP) and the Major Project Skills Guarantee (MPSG), previously administered separately.

In 2025–26, North Central CMA completed one Local Jobs First Standard project in regional Victoria, valued at $1.78 million. The project involved engaging a local contractor to refurbish the Huntly office building.

Commitments made under the Local Jobs First policy included:

- 93.8 per cent average local content
- 1.94 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions

The contractor achieved 100 per cent local content and delivered 1.91 FTE.

No statewide projects were commenced during the reporting period.

4.2 **Social Procurement Framework**

The North Central CMA is committed to supporting the Victorian government's directions under the Social Procurement Framework (SPF) and we recognise that we play a key role in advancing social and sustainable outcomes for Victorians.

Our Social and Sustainable Procurement Strategy enables a strategic and clear approach as to how we will deliver social and sustainable outcomes through our procurement in accordance with the SPF and beyond.

Furthermore, social procurement and sustainable procurement (also referred to as socially responsible procurement, social buying, or ethical purchasing) refers to procurements which:

- Result in progressive improvements in the lives of people who contribute to the CMA's supply chain and are impacted by supply chain decisions.
- Help achieve the CMA's organisational objectives towards delivering broader social benefits, through the procurement of goods or services that can provide superior social benefits.

The CMA is advancing social and sustainable objectives through procurement in accordance with the SPF and indeed, social procurement initiatives have been undertaken by the organisation prior to the introduction of the SPF e.g., developing opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people through our Reconciliation Action Plan and project and program development and implementation including engaging local Indigenous entities as primary subcontractors to assist in delivering key activities.

The CMA's strategy prioritises SPF procurement objectives under social and sustainable headlines.

The objectives are detailed in Table 20 that includes type of procurement and focus areas. These SPF objectives were chosen based on their high degree of alignment with the CMA's strategic direction and values as well as being best positioned to advance our identified social procurement opportunities.

Table 20 **Social Procurement Framework metrics for Financial Year 2025-26**

Metric Description	Unit of Measure	2025-26 (Actual)
Aggregate spend		
All suppliers		
Number of suppliers	Number	498
Total spent with suppliers	$	12,772,239
Social benefit suppliers		
Number of social benefit suppliers	Number	13
Total spent with social benefit suppliers	$	737,680
Objective: Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people		
Outcome: Purchasing from Victorian Aboriginal businesses		
Number of Victorian Aboriginal businesses engaged	Number	10
Total expenditure with Victorian Aboriginal businesses (excl. GST)	$	732,680
Objective: Opportunities for Victorians with disability		
Outcome: Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises and Australian Disability Enterprises		
Number of Victorian social enterprises (led by a mission for people with disability) and Australian Disability Enterprises engaged (Group 1)	Number	1
Total expenditure with Victorian social enterprises (led by a mission for people with disability) and Australian Disability Enterprises (excl. GST) (Group 1)	$	2,069
Number of Victorian social enterprises (led by a mission for people with disability) and Australian Disability Enterprises engaged (Group 2)	Number	0
Total expenditure with Victorian social enterprises (led by a mission for people with disability) and Australian Disability Enterprises (excl. GST) (Group 2)	$	-
Objective: Opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians		
Outcome: Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises		
Number of Victorian social enterprises (led by a social mission for one of the five disadvantaged cohorts) engaged (Group 1)	Number	0
Total expenditure with Victorian social enterprises (led by a social mission for one of the five disadvantaged cohorts; excl. GST) (Group 1)	$	-
Number of Victorian social enterprises (led by a social mission for one of the five disadvantaged cohorts) engaged (Group 2)	Number	0
Total expenditure with Victorian social enterprises (led by a social mission for one of the five disadvantaged cohorts; excl. GST) (Group 2)	$	-
Objective: Sustainable Victorian social enterprises and Aboriginal business sectors		
Outcome: Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises and Aboriginal businesses		
Number of Victorian social enterprises engaged (Group 1)	Number	3
Total expenditure with Victorian social enterprises (excl. GST) (Group 1)	$	4,665

4.3 **Government Advertising Expenditure**

The North Central CMA's expenditure in the reporting period on government campaign expenditure did not exceed $100,000.

4.4 **Consultancy Expenditure**

Details of consultancies (valued at less than $10,000)
In 2025-2026, there were no consultancies engaged during the year, where the total fees payable to the individual consultancies was less than $10,000.

Details of consultancies (valued at $10,000 or greater)
In 2025-2026, there were no consultancies engaged during the year, where the total fees payable to the individual consultancies was more than $10,000.

4.5 **Review and Study Expenditure**

In 2025-2026, there were no reviews and studies undertaken.

4.6 **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Expenditure**

In 2025-2026, the North Central CMA had a total ICT expenditure of $773,387 (Table 21).

Table 21 **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Expenditure**

All operational ICT expenditure	ICT expenditure relating to projects to create or enhance ICT capabilities		
Business As Usual (BAU) ICT expenditure	Non-Business As Usual (non BAU) ICT expenditure	Operational expenditure (OPEX)	Capital expenditure (CAPEX)
(Total)	(Total = Operational expenditure and Capital Expenditure)		
740	773	740	33

Notes:

- ICT expenditure refers to North Central CMA's costs in providing business enabling ICT services within the current reporting period. It comprises Business As Usual (BAU) ICT expenditure and Non-Business As Usual (Non-BAU) ICT expenditure.
- Non-BAU ICT expenditure relates to extending or enhancing North Central Catchment Management Authority's current ICT capabilities.
- BAU ICT expenditure is all remaining ICT expenditure, which primarily relates to ongoing activities to operate and maintain the current ICT capability

4.7 **Major Contracts**

North Central Catchment Management Authority did not enter into any major contracts during 2025-2026. A 'major contract' is a contract entered into during the reporting period valued at $10 million or more.

4.8 ***Freedom of Information Act 1982***

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

The North Central CMA is considered a Government Agency under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

The purpose of the *Act* is to extend as far as possible the right of the community to access information held by government departments, local councils, Ministers and other bodies subject to the *Act*. As such an applicant has a right to apply for access to documents held by an Agency.

This comprises documents created by or supplied to the Agency, and may also include maps, films, microfiche, photographs, computer printouts, computer discs, tape recordings, videotapes, emails, team chats and text messages. Information about the type of material produced by the North Central CMA is available on our website under its Part II Information Statement.

The *Act* allows for the refusal of access, either fully or partially, to certain documents or information. Examples of documents that may not be accessed include cabinet documents; some internal working documents; law enforcement documents; documents covered by legal professional privilege, such as legal advice; personal information about other people; and information provided to an Agency in confidence.

From 1 September 2017, the *Act* was amended to reduce the Freedom of Information (FOI) processing time for requests received from 45 to 30 days. However, when external consultation is required the processing time automatically reverts to 45 days. Processing time may also be extended by periods of 30 days, in consultation with the applicant provided an extension is applied for with OVIC before the expiry date of the current deadline. With the applicant's agreement this may occur any number of times.

If an applicant is not satisfied by a decision made by the Department, under section 49A of the *Act*, they have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) within 28 days of receiving a decision letter.

Making a request

Access to documents may be obtained through written request to the Authorised FOI Officer, and as detailed in Section 17 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. An application fee of $34.50 applies. Access charges may also be payable if the document pool is large, and the search for material, time consuming.

When making an FOI request, applicants should ensure requests are in writing and clearly identify what types of material/documents are being sought. Requests for documents in the possession of the North Central CMA should be addressed to the FOI Officer:

By mail:
Freedom of Information Officer, North Central CMA,
PO Box 18 Huntly Vic 3551

By email: privacy@nccma.vic.gov.au

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

FOI statistics/timeliness

During the reporting period the North Central CMA received zero (0) FOI application requests under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Further information

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

4.9 ***Compliance with Building Act 1993***

The North Central CMA owns one building located at 628 – 634 Midland Highway, Huntly, Victoria and is required to include a statement on its compliance with the building and maintenance provision of the *Building Act 1993* in relation to that building.

North Central CMA requires that appropriately qualified contractors are engaged for all proposed works on land controlled by the CMA and that their work and services comply with current building standards. All such contractors are expected to have appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure compliance with the building and maintenance provisions of the *Building Act 1993*.

In relation to existing buildings, the Corporate Services Unit is responsible for mandatory testing of emergency and exit lighting and lift equipment in accordance with relevant standards, monthly, quarterly and bi-annual inspection and preventive maintenance routine of mechanical services and monthly and annual fire service audits. These inspections then inform the works program which is delivered annually through existing maintenance contracts.

Table 22 ***Building Act 1993* reporting**

Number of major works projects undertaken (>$50 000)	1
Number of building permits, occupancy permits, or certificate of final inspection issued in relation to buildings owned	1 building permits 1 occupancy permits 1 certificates of occupancy
Number of emergency orders and building orders issued in relation to buildings	Nil emergency orders Nil building orders
Number of buildings that have been brought into conformity with building standards during the year	Nil buildings brought into conformity

4.10 **Competitive Neutrality Policy**

Competitive neutrality requires government businesses to ensure where services compete, or potentially compete with the private sector, any advantage arising solely from their government ownership be reviewed if it is not in the public interest. Government businesses are required to cost and price these services as if they were privately owned.

Competitive neutrality policy supports fair competition between public and private businesses and provides government businesses with a tool to enhance decisions on resource allocation. This policy does not override other policy objectives of government and focuses on efficiency in the provisions of service.

The North Central CMA is working to ensure Victoria fulfils its requirements on competitive neutrality reporting for technological based businesses against the enhanced principles as required under the Competition Principles Agreement and Competition and Infrastructure Reform Agreement.

4.11 ***Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012***

The North Central CMA is a public body subject to the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*.

The purpose of the *Act* is to enable and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct or corruption by public officers and public bodies, including the North Central CMA, its staff, members, and employees.

The North Central CMA does not tolerate improper conduct by employees, nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct. It is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices and supports the making of disclosures that reveal corrupt conduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health and safety or the environment. The North Central CMA will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for making the disclosure. It will also afford natural justice to the person who is the subject of the disclosure to the extent it is legally possible.

How to make a disclosure

Public interest complaints of improper conduct or detrimental action by the North Central CMA or any of its employees may be made to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC).

Public interest complaints may be made anonymously, in writing, or orally, by contacting IBAC by phone or via their secure website:

Phone: 1300 735 135

Website: www.ibac.vic.gov.au

The North Central CMA is not permitted to receive public interest complaints made under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act*. If the North Central CMA believes a complaint may be a public interest complaint, it will ask that it be made directly to IBAC.

More information and contact details

As required under the *Act*, the North Central CMA has established procedures to facilitate and encourage the making of public interest complaints, and how the North Central CMA will manage the welfare of employees connected with public interest disclosures.

The North Central CMA's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures are available on our website.

For more information about public interest disclosures or the Victorian integrity system visit www.ibac.vic.gov.au/reporting-corruption

4.12 ***Compliance with Establishing Act***

Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Act 1994

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

- Prepare, coordinate, monitor and review the Regional Catchment Strategy.
- Prepare and submit an Annual Report on the condition and management of land and water resources in the region.
- Annually, prepare and submit a Corporate Plan to the responsible Minister(s).
- Comply with the Statement of Obligations.
- In performing its functions and providing its services an Authority shall, in a manner consistent with relevant government policies, frameworks, strategies, plans and guidelines:
  - a) Facilitate and coordinate the management of catchments in an integrated and sustainable manner, including as it relates to land, biodiversity and water resources.
  - b) Take a sustainable approach by balancing social, economic and environmental outcomes.
  - c) Plan and make decisions within an integrated catchment management context.
  - d) Recognising the integral relationship between rivers, their catchments, coastal systems, and estuary and marine environments.
  - e) Recognising the integral relationship between the land – its soil, water, vegetation and fauna – and associated natural ecosystems.
  - f) Recognising the need to foster the resilience of natural assets, including land, biodiversity and water resources, to climate change using the best available scientific information targeting investment to address priorities and deliver maximum improvement in resource condition of catchments, land, biodiversity and water resources.
  - g) Provide opportunities for community engagement in the integrated management of catchments and natural assets, including land, biodiversity and water resources.
  - h) Promote and apply a risk management approach that seeks to protect, enhance and restore natural assets and reduce the impact of climate change.
  - i) Promote and adopt an adaptive approach to integrated catchment management, including continuous review, innovation and improvement.
  - j) Manage business operations in a prudent, efficient and responsible manner.

Water Act 1989

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

- Permits to construct and operate works on a waterway, compliance and community education.
- Resources to planning permit referrals for developments within a flood prone area.
- Responding to applications for flood levels, flood risk reports and flood information before development.
- Flood planning information and advice to councils, state emergency services, developers and others.
- Flood response action plans, including collection of flood information during and after a flood, and assistance with emergency planning and flood warning.
- Flood data management compliance with the Statement of Obligations. The North Central CMA is compliant with its statutory obligations under the *Water Act 1989*.
- Develop strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders including public authorities and government agencies.

The North Central CMA is compliant with its statutory obligations under the *Water Act 1989* and Table 23 provides data relating to the work of the Statutory Floodplain Management Unit.

Table 23 **Statutory Floodplain data**

Unit	Target	Actual
No. of permits exempted	25	38
No. of permits issued	75	26
No. of permits rejected	-	1
No, of complaints investigated for unauthorised works	5	3
No. of formal planning referrals	500	673

4.13 **Emergency Procurement**

During 2025-2026, the North Central CMA did not activate its Emergency Procurement process and subsequently did not have any emergency procurement in accordance with the requirements of government policy and accompanying guidelines

4.14 **Procurement Complaints**

Under the Governance Policy of the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB), the North Central CMA must disclose any formal complaints relating to the procurement of goods and services received through its procurement complaints management system.

The North Central CMA did not receive any formal complaints through its procurement complaints management system in 2025-2026.

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4.15 **Environmental Reporting**

The operational boundary for the 2025-26 reporting period includes a fleet of 18 vehicles and office operations across two locations during the year:

- Huntly office
  (628-634 Midland Highway, Huntly VIC 3551)
- Temporary Office
  (41B Breen Street), used during refurbishment works, with a return to the Huntly site from December 2025

North Central CMA remains committed to environmental sustainability in its operations. This includes addressing the impacts of climate change through regional adaptation and mitigation programs and progressing actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from activities.

Table 25 **Environmental Reporting**

Indicator Code	Indicator Title	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	% variance to 2024-25
	Electricity				
	Electricity consumption (MWh)				
EL1	Purchased Electricity	47.0	51.6	57.4	-9%
	On-site electricity generated (MWh)				
EL2	Exports	5.9	27.0	17.3	-78%
	Total electricity offsets (MWh)				
EL4	Greenpower	13.6	14.9	33.3	-8.7%
	Transportation				
T2	Total internal combustion engine vehicles	17	17	20	0%
	Petrol	-	-	-	-
	Diesel	16	16	18	-
	Hybrid vehicles	1	1	2	-
T2	Total plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV)	1	1	1	-
	Range-extended electric vehicle	1	1	1	-
	Water Consumption				
W1	Total water consumption by an Entity (kilolitres)	170	56	74	204%
W2	Units of metered water consumed normalised by FTE	2.7	0.9	1.3	200%

Electricity production and consumption

Power consumption reduced marginally due to lower office utilisation caused by office refurbishment works.

Electricity consumption for the year reflects operations across both the temporary Breen Street office and the return to the Huntly site from December 2025. Overall energy use was lower due to the transitional period between sites and reduced operational intensity during relocation. Solar energy generation was also reduced, as the 50kW system at the Huntly office was offline for part of the year during refurbishment works and then brought back into service later in the reporting period.

Water Consumption

Water consumption increased during 2025–26 primarily due to the commissioning and refurbishment works undertaken at the Huntly site. These activities required additional water use associated with construction, testing, and operational commissioning processes.

Transportation

North Central CMA's fleet comprised 18 vehicles, with numbers remaining steady over the year. The fleet supports staff travel between offices, meetings with stakeholders, and fieldwork such as site inspections and engagement with landholders. A mix of vehicles suited to both on-road and off-road use is required, including capacity to carry equipment.

The underlying fleet requirement remains stable. As part of the Huntly office refurbishment, underground infrastructure was installed in the compound carpark to support future electric vehicle charging.

Sustainable buildings and infrastructure

During 2025–26, North Central CMA completed refurbishment works at the Huntly office, addressing infrastructure age and prior storm damage. The project included a focus on energy efficiency and renewal of key building services.

Environmentally sustainable design initiatives implemented as part of the works included:

- Replacement of aged heating and cooling systems with more energy-efficient alternatives.
- Installation of double glazing to improve thermal performance.

Sustainable procurement

North Central CMA considers sustainable procurement objectives through its implementation of the Social Procurement Framework, which establishes requirements that apply to Victorian Government departments and agencies when they procure goods, services and construction. North Central CMA's purchasing and procurement policies promote sustainable procurement through its inclusion in evaluation criteria and in work specifications.

Waste and recycling

Waste management and recycling are key priorities for the North Central CMA. Focus areas include efforts to eliminate single-use plastics, as well as maximise recycling and minimise waste sent to landfill. North Central CMA remain active in reducing waste and increasing recycling and have implemented the following activities to reduce waste to landfill:

- avoiding single use food and drink containers
- engaging with environmentally friendly suppliers
- supporting buying of products made from recycled material

Other information

The North Central CMA Procurement Policy complies with the Government's Environmental Purchasing Policy. While value for money is the core principle governing North Central CMA's procurement activities, environmental considerations are also included in the procurement planning stage, tender specifications, and tender evaluation criteria, where applicable.

4.16 **Statement of Availability of Other Information**

In compliance with the requirements of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance, details in respect of the items listed below have been retained by the Authority and are available on request, subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

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

The information is available on request from: Freedom of Information Officer foi@nccma.vic.gov.au

4.17 **Compliance with DataVic Access Policy**

The information used to generate the catchment condition report in the North Central CMA's 2025-2026 Annual Report has come from DataVic. In the reporting period the North Central CMA has not supplied any data directly to DataVic. The North Central CMA has been consistent with the DataVic Access Policy by accessing the data, using it for day-to-day operations, and giving appropriate recognition to DataVic on all published maps.

4.18 **Financial Management Compliance Attestation**

I, Sally Mitchell on behalf of the Responsible Body, certify that the North Central Catchment Management Authority has no Material Compliance Deficiency with respect to the applicable Standing Directions under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Instructions.



Sally Mitchell
Chair
North Central CMA
15 September 2026

PART 5: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

How this report is structured

The North Central Catchment Management Authority has presented its audited general purpose financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 in the following structure to provide users with the information about the Authority's stewardship of resource entrusted to it.

Financial statements

Comprehensive Operating Statement

Balance Sheet

Statement of Changes in Equity

Cash Flow Statement

Notes to the financial statements

1. About this report
The basis on which the financial statements have been prepared and compliance with reporting regulations

2. Funding delivery of our services
Revenue recognised in respect of Government contributions and other income sources

2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services

2.2 Revenue and Income from transactions

3. The cost of delivering services
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8.8 Subsequent events

8.9 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective

5.1 **Declaration in the Financial Statements**

The attached financial statements for the North Central Catchment Management Authority have been prepared in accordance with Direction 5.2 of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian Accounting Standards including interpretations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement and accompanying notes, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2026 and financial position of the Authority at 30 June 2026.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 15 September 2026.

Sally Mitchell
Chair
15 September 2026

Brad Drust
CEO and Accountable Officer
15 September 2026

Scott Cornelius
Chief Finance Officer
15 September 2026



Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Board of North Central Catchment Management Authority

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of North Central Catchment Management Authority (the authority) which comprises the: • balance sheet as at 30 June 2026 • comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended • cash flow statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • declaration in the financial statements. In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the authority as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 7 of the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures.
Basis for opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975.* My staff and I are independent of the authority in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Board's responsibilities for the financial report	The Board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Financial Management Act 1994,* and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

As required by the *Audit Act 1994,* my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the authority's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the authority to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
22 September 2026

Timothy Maxfield
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

North Central Catchment Management Authority
Comprehensive Operating Statement
For the financial year ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
Revenue and income from transactions			
Government contributions	2.1.1	15,606,895	16,056,168
Interest	2.1	561,517	636,664
Other income	2.1.2	1,276,915	1,516,696
Total revenue and income from transactions		**17,445,327**	**18,209,528**
Expenses from transactions			
Employee expenses	3.1.1	8,835,068	8,249,280
Depreciation	4.1.3	164,732	784,114
Materials, maintenance, grants, contracts and consultancies	3.2	7,803,645	7,349,316
Other operating expenses	3.3	1,806,558	1,957,923
Total expenses from transactions		**18,610,003**	**18,340,633**
Other economic flows included in net result			
Net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets	8.2	660	46,321
Total other economic flows included in net result		**660**	**46,321**
Net result from transactions (net operating balance)		**(1,164,016)**	**(84,784)**
Other comprehensive income - Items that will not be reclassified to net result			
Changes in physical asset revaluation surplus		179,037	-
Comprehensive result		**(984,979)**	**(84,784)**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

North Central Catchment Management Authority
Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026	2025
ASSETS		**$**	**$**
Financial assets			
Cash and deposits	6.2	12,008,136	15,700,349
Receivables	5.1.1	1,099,269	454,229
Contract Assets	5.1.2	1,004,480	390,851
Prepayments	5.3	291,078	309,505
Total financial assets		**14,402,963**	**16,854,934**
Non-financial assets			
Property, plant and equipment	4.1	4,054,915	2,628,203
Total non-financial assets		**4,054,915**	**2,628,203**
TOTAL ASSETS		**18,457,878**	**19,483,137**
LIABILITIES			
Liabilities			
Payables	5.2	1,649,999	1,665,762
Employee related provisions	3.1.2	1,952,951	1,977,468
Total liabilities		**3,602,950**	**3,643,230**
NET ASSETS		**14,854,928**	**15,839,907**
EQUITY			
Contributed capital		8,755,693	8,755,693
Physical asset revaluation reserve		1,983,052	1,804,015
Accumulated surplus		4,116,183	5,280,199
TOTAL EQUITY		**14,854,928**	**15,839,907**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

North Central Catchment Management Authority
Cash Flow Statement
For the financial year ended 30 June 2026

Cash Flows from Operating Activities	*Notes*	2026 $	2025 $
Receipts			
Receipts from Government		15,605,927	17,032,793
Interest received	2.1	561,517	636,664
Net Goods and services tax received from the ATO		551,681	540,429
Other receipts		19,353	19,940
Total receipts		16,738,478	18,229,826
Payments			
Payments to suppliers		(11,015,311)	(9,648,279)
Payments to employees		(8,003,633)	(8,028,942)
Total payments		(19,018,944)	(17,677,221)
Net cash flows from (used in) operating activities		**(2,280,466)**	**552,605**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of non-financial assets		(1,412,407)	(671,734)
Proceeds from sale of non-financial assets	8.2	660	67,799
Net cash used in investing activities		**(1,411,747)**	**(603,935)**
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		**(3,692,213)**	**(51,330)**
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		15,700,349	15,751,679
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	6.2	**12,008,136**	**15,700,349**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

North Central Catchment Management Authority
Statement of Changes in Equity
For the financial year ended 30 June 2026

	Accumulated Surplus	Contributed Capital	Physical Assets Revaluation Reserve	Total
	$	$	$	$
Balance at 30 June 2024	**5,364,983**	**8,755,693**	**1,804,015**	**15,924,691**
Net result for the year	(84,784)	-	-	(84,784)
Balance at 30 June 2025	**5,280,199**	**8,755,693**	**1,804,015**	**15,839,907**
Net result for the year	(1,164,016)	-	-	(1,164,016)
Other comprehensive income for year	-	-	179,037	179,037
Balance at 30 June 2026	**4,116,183**	**8,755,693**	**1,983,052**	**14,854,928**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

North Central Catchment Management Authority
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2026

NOTE 1. ABOUT THIS REPORT

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (The Authority) is a government authority of the State of Victoria, established on 1 July 1997 by the State Government.

Its principal address is: North Central Catchment Management Authority
628-634 Midland Highway
Huntly Vic 3551

A description of the nature of its operations and its principal activities is included in the Report of Operations, which does not form part of these financial statements.

Basis of preparation

These financial statements are Tier 2 general purpose financial statements prepared in accordance with AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* (AASB 1060) and Financial Reporting Direction 101 *Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards* (FRD 101).

These financial statements are in Australian dollars and the historical cost convention is used unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the note associated with the item measured on a different basis.

The accrual basis of accounting has been applied in preparing these financial statements, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Capital grants which have been designated as contributions by owners are recognised as contributed capital. Other transfers that are in the nature of distributions to or contributions by owners have also been designated as contributions by owners.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about financial information being presented. The significant judgements made in the preparation of these financial statements are disclosed in the notes where amounts affected by those judgements are disclosed. Estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in applying AAS that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates are disclosed in the notes under the heading: ‘Significant judgement or estimates’.

These financial statements cover the North Central Catchment Management Authority as an individual reporting entity and include all the controlled activities of the North Central Catchment Management Authority. There is no entity consolidated into the North Central Catchment Management Authority.

Amounts in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest $1, unless otherwise stated. Figures in the financial statements may not equate due to rounding.

Compliance Information

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* (FMA) and applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AASs) which include Interpretations, issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB).

Where appropriate, those AASs paragraphs applicable to not-for-profit entities have been applied. Accounting policies selected and applied in these financial statements ensure that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported.

NOTE 2. FUNDING DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The Authority's overall objective is for the co-ordinated control of natural resource management within the broader catchments of North Central Victoria. The role of the Authority is to ensure effective implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategy, strategic planning and advice to Government.

To enable the Authority to deliver on its objectives, it receives revenue and income predominately through State and Commonwealth Government Contributions.

Significant judgement – Grants revenue

The Authority has made the judgement that funding received in relation to the services for Natural Heritage Trust should be recognised under AASB 15 on the basis that signed contracts show sufficient specificity in performance obligations. All other revenue falls under AASB 1058.

2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
Government contributions	2.1.1	15,606,895	16,056,168
		15,606,895	16,056,168
Interest		561,517	636,664
Other Income	2.1.2	1,276,915	1,516,696
		1,838,432	2,199,681
Total revenue and income from transactions		**17,445,327**	**18,255,849**

Revenue and income that funds delivery of the Authority's services are accounted for consistently with the requirements of the relevant accounting standards disclosed in the following notes.

2.1.1 Government contributions

	2026 $	2025 $
Income recognised as income of a not- for-profit entity - AASB 1058		
State Government		
Catchment Planning	698,000	1,013,000
Sustainable Irrigation	1,035,000	916,000
River Health	8,082,502	8,743,975
Floodplain Management	556,045	1,990,806
Other State Funding	1,457,305	340,844
	11,828,852	13,004,625
Commonwealth Government		
Natural Heritage Trust Program	987,339	931,907
The Living Murray	1,240,027	1,215,027
Other Commonwealth Funding	546,197	540,258
	2,773,563	2,687,192
Revenue recognised as revenue from contracts with customers - AASB 15		
Natural Heritage Trust Program	1,004,480	364,351
	1,004,480	364,351
Total Government contributions	**15,606,895**	**16,056,168**

NOTE 2. FUNDING DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES (CONTINUED)

2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services (continued)

2.1.1 Revenue and income from transactions (continued)

Grants recognised under AASB 1058

The Authority has determined that the grant income included in the table above under AASB 1058 has been earned under arrangements that are either not enforceable or linked to sufficiently specific performance obligations.

Income from grants without any sufficiently specific performance obligations, or that are not enforceable, is recognised when the Authority has unconditional right to receive cash which usually coincides with receipt of cash. On initial recognition of the assets, the Authority recognises any related contribution by owners increase in liabilities, decrease in assets, and revenue ('related amount') in accordance with other Australian Accounting Standards. Related amounts may take the form of:

- contributions by owners, in accordance with AASB 1004 *Contributions* ;
- revenue or a contract liability arising from a contract with a customer, in accordance with AASB 15;
- a financial instrument, in accordance with AASB 9 *Financial Instruments;* or
- a provision, in accordance with AASB 137 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets.*

Grants recognised under AASB 15

Income from grants that are enforceable and with sufficiently specific performance obligations are accounted for as revenue from contracts with customers under AASB 15. These grants relate to the National Landcare Program and the Natural Heritage Trust Program. Revenue is recognised when the Authority satisfies the performance obligation by providing the relevant services to the relevant stakeholders (e.g., kms of fencing, hectares revegetated, hectares of pest control, service hours to deliver project). This is recognised based on the consideration specified in the funding agreement and to the extent that it is highly probable a significant reversal of the revenue will not occur. The funding payments are normally received shortly after the relevant obligation is satisfied. The value of services provided but not invoiced as at 30 June 2026 is included as a contract asset as disclosed at Note 5.1.2.

2.1.2 Other income

	2026 $	2025 $
Partnership Contributions	1,257,562	1,496,756
Employee Contributions	19,353	19,940
	1,276,915	**1,516,696**

Partnership contributions consists of funds received from organisations as partners in major projects, and are recognised as income on receipt as they do not contain sufficiently specific performance obligations, and are disclosed in the comprehensive operating statement as other income.

Employee contributions include staff contributions towards the private use of motor vehicles.

All other income is recognised when the right to receive payment is established.

NOTE 3. THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

This section provides an account of the expenses incurred by the Authority in delivering services. In Section 2, the funds that enable the provision of services were disclosed and in this note the cost associated with the provision of services are disclosed.

3.1 Expenses incurred in delivery of services

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
Employee expenses	3.1.1	8,835,068	8,249,280
Materials, maintenance, grants, contracts and consultancies	3.2	7,803,645	7,349,316
Other operating expenses	3.3	1,806,558	1,957,923
Total expenses incurred in the delivery of services		**18,445,271**	**17,556,519**

3.1.1 Employee benefits in the Comprehensive Operating Statement

	2026 $	2025 $
Superannuation	866,066	792,491
Salaries and wages, annual leave and long service leave	7,969,002	7,456,789
Total employee expenses	**8,835,068**	**8,249,280**

Employee expenses include all costs related to employment including wages and salaries, payroll tax, fringe benefits tax, leave entitlements, termination payments and Work Cover premiums.

The amount recognised in the comprehensive operating statement in relation to superannuation is employer contributions for members of defined contribution superannuation plans that are paid or payable during the reporting period.

3.1.2 Employee-related Provisions

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave (LSL) for services rendered to the reporting date and recorded as an expense during the period the services are delivered.

	2026 $	2025 $
Current provisions		
Annual leave	406,086	427,279
Purchased leave	16,983	10,256
Long Service Leave	1,114,147	1,101,178
Time in Lieu and rostered days off	61,502	62,579
Provisions for on-costs	229,093	229,423
Total current provisions for employee benefits	**1,827,811**	**1,830,715**
Non-current provisions:		
Long Service Leave	109,379	128,272
On-costs	15,759	18,481
Total non-current provisions for employee benefits	**125,138**	**146,753**
Total provisions for employee benefits	**1,952,949**	**1,977,468**

Wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave:

Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and on-costs) are recognised as part of the employee benefit provision as current liabilities, because the North Central CMA does not have an unconditional right to defer settlements of these liabilities.

NOTE 3. THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES (CONTINUED)

3.1.2 Employee-related Provisions (continued)

Wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave (continued)

The liability for salaries and wages are recognised in the balance sheet at remuneration rates which are current at the reporting date. As the North Central CMA expects the liabilities to be wholly settled within 12 months of reporting date, they are measured at undiscounted amounts.

The annual leave liability is classified as a current liability and measured at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid, as the North Central CMA does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and it is not considered probable that the average sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the benefits accrued in the future. As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement as it is taken.

Employment on-costs such as payroll tax and workers compensation are not employee benefits. They are disclosed separately as a component of the provision for employee benefits when the employment to which they relate has occurred.

Long service leave (LSL)

Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability, even where the North Central CMA does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months because it will not have the unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement should an employee take leave within 12 months.

The components of this current LSL liability are measured at either:

- undiscounted value – if the North Central CMA expects to wholly settle within 12 months.
- present value – if the North Central CMA does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Conditional LSL is disclosed as a non-current liability. There is a conditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement until the employee has completed the requisite years of service. This non-current LSL is measured at present value.

Any gain or loss following revaluation of the present value of non-current LSL liability is recognised as a transaction, except to the extent that a gain or loss arises due to changes in bond interest rates for which it is then recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the net result.

NOTE 3. THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES (CONTINUED)

3.2 Materials, maintenance, grants, contracts and consultancies

	2026 $	2025 $
Materials	212,882	99,287
Repairs and maintenance	48,086	51,038
Grants paid	637,823	624,327
Contractors	6,904,854	6,565,145
Consultants	-	9,519
Total materials, maintenance, grants, contracts and consultancies	**7,803,645**	**7,349,316**

Grant expenses are contributions of the Authority's resources to another party for specific or general purposes where there is no expectation that the amount will be repaid in equal value (either by money, goods or services).

Grants can either be operating or capital in nature. Grants can be paid as general-purpose grants, which refer to grants that are not subject to conditions regarding their use. Alternatively, they may be paid as specific purpose grants which are paid for a particular purpose and/or have conditions attached regarding their use.

Grant expenses are recognised in the reporting period in which they are paid or payable. Grants can take the form of money, assets, goods, services or forgiveness of liabilities.

Materials, maintenance, contracts and consultancies are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

3.3 Other Operating expenses

	2026 $	2025 $
Information and communications technology	744,618	748,421
Fares and Accommodation	130,469	152,637
Advertising	17,756	35,011
Audit costs - internal and external	43,406	67,719
Motor vehicle costs	89,898	81,933
Insurance (general)	75,390	133,652
Meeting expenses	218,804	270,710
Minor Capital Purchases	76,982	56,584
Promotions and public relations	100,945	87,101
Short-term lease expenses	26,500	54,500
Training and education	53,729	100,023
Utilities	22,288	27,655
Uniforms and staff facilities	48,518	50,006
Other operating expenses	157,255	91,971
Total other operating expenses	**1,806,558**	**1,957,923**

Other operating expenses generally represent the day-to-day running costs incurred in normal operations and are recognised as an expense, under accrual accounting principles, in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

The following lease payments are recognised on a straight-line basis:

- Short-term leases – leases with a term 12 months or less.

NOTE 4. KEY ASSETS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY

Introduction

The Authority controls property that is utilised in fulfilling its objectives and conducting its activities. They represent the key resources that have been entrusted to the Authority to be utilised for delivery of those services.

4.1 Total property, plant and equipment

Significant judgement: Fair value (refer note 7.3)

	Gross carrying amount		Accumulated depreciation		Net carrying amount	
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
	$	$	$	$	$	$
Land at fair value	1,500,000	960,000	-	-	**1,500,000**	**960,000**
Buildings at fair value	2,290,000	684,361	-	(17,109)	**2,290,000**	**667,252**
Assets under construction at cost	-	671,734	-	-	**-**	**671,734**
Plant and equipment at fair value	458,253	570,039	(440,423)	(543,358)	**17,830**	**26,681**
Furniture and Office equipment	238,272	218,933	(176,555)	(214,385)	**61,717**	**4,548**
Motor Vehicles at fair value	832,741	832,741	(647,373)	(534,754)	**185,368**	**297,987**
Net carrying amount	**5,319,266**	**3,937,808**	**(1,264,351)**	**(1,309,606)**	**4,054,915**	**2,628,203**

4.1.1 Property, plant and equipment

Initial recognition

Items of property, plant and equipment, are measured initially at cost and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Where an asset is acquired for no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value at the date of acquisition. Assets transferred as part of a machinery of government change are transferred at their carrying amount.

The cost of constructed non-financial physical assets includes the cost of all materials used in construction and direct labour on the project and an appropriate proportion of variable and fixed overheads.

Impairment of property, plant and equipment

The recoverable amount of primarily non-cash-generating assets of not-for-profit entities, which are typically specialised in nature and held for continuing use of their service capacity, is expected to be materially the same as fair value determined under AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*, with the consequence that AASB 136 does not apply to such assets that are regularly revalued.

4.1.2 Depreciation and amortisation

All buildings, assets under construction, plant and equipment and other non-financial physical assets that have finite useful lives, are depreciated. The exceptions to this rule include items under assets held for sale, cultural assets and land.

Depreciation is generally calculated on a straight-line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life. Typical estimated useful lives for the different asset classes for current and prior years are included in the table below:

Asset	Useful Life
Buildings	40 years
Plant and equipment	10 - 15 years
Furniture & office equipment	5 - 10 years
Motor vehicles	5 years

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation method are reviewed at the end of each annual reporting period. Adjustments were made where appropriate.

Indefinite life assets: Land, which is considered to have an indefinite life, is not depreciated. Depreciation is not recognised in respect of these assets because their service potential has not, in any material sense, been consumed during the reporting period.

NOTE 4. KEY ASSETS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY

Introduction

The Authority controls property that is utilised in fulfilling its objectives and conducting its activities. They represent the key resources that have been entrusted to the Authority to be utilised for delivery of those services.

4.1 Total property, plant and equipment

Significant judgement: Fair value (refer note 7.3)

	Gross carrying amount		Accumulated depreciation		Net carrying amount	
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
	$	$	$	$	$	$
Land at fair value	1,500,000	960,000	-	-	**1,500,000**	**960,000**
Buildings at fair value	2,290,000	684,361	-	(17,109)	**2,290,000**	**667,252**
Assets under construction at cost	-	671,734	-	-	**-**	**671,734**
Plant and equipment at fair value	458,253	570,039	(440,423)	(543,358)	**17,830**	**26,681**
Furniture and Office equipment	238,272	218,933	(176,555)	(214,385)	**61,717**	**4,548**
Motor Vehicles at fair value	832,741	832,741	(647,373)	(534,754)	**185,368**	**297,987**
Net carrying amount	**5,319,266**	**3,937,808**	**(1,264,351)**	**(1,309,606)**	**4,054,915**	**2,628,203**

4.1.1 Property, plant and equipment

Initial recognition

Items of property, plant and equipment, are measured initially at cost and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Where an asset is acquired for no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value at the date of acquisition. Assets transferred as part of a machinery of government change are transferred at their carrying amount.

The cost of constructed non-financial physical assets includes the cost of all materials used in construction and direct labour on the project and an appropriate proportion of variable and fixed overheads.

Impairment of property, plant and equipment

The recoverable amount of primarily non-cash-generating assets of not-for-profit entities, which are typically specialised in nature and held for continuing use of their service capacity, is expected to be materially the same as fair value determined under AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*, with the consequence that AASB 136 does not apply to such assets that are regularly revalued.

4.1.2 Depreciation and amortisation

All buildings, assets under construction, plant and equipment and other non-financial physical assets that have finite useful lives, are depreciated. The exceptions to this rule include items under assets held for sale, cultural assets and land.

Depreciation is generally calculated on a straight-line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life. Typical estimated useful lives for the different asset classes for current and prior years are included in the table below:

Asset	Useful Life
Buildings	40 years
Plant and equipment	10 - 15 years
Furniture & office equipment	5 - 10 years
Motor vehicles	5 years

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation method are reviewed at the end of each annual reporting period. Adjustments were made where appropriate.

Indefinite life assets: Land, which is considered to have an indefinite life, is not depreciated. Depreciation is not recognised in respect of these assets because their service potential has not, in any material sense, been consumed during the reporting period.

NOTE 4. KEY ASSETS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)

4.1 Total property, plant and equipment (continued)

4.1.3 Reconciliation of movements in carrying values of property, plant and equipment

	Land	Buildings	Work In Progress	Plant and equipment	Furniture and office equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
Carrying Amount							
Balance at 1 July 2024	960,000	1,270,462	-	35,531	24,634	471,434	**2,762,061**
Additions	-	-	671,734	-	-	-	**671,734**
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(13,166)	(8,312)	**(21,478)**
Depreciation	-	(603,210)	-	(8,850)	(6,919)	(165,135)	**(784,114)**
Balance as at 1 July 2025	**960,000**	**667,252**	**671,734**	**26,681**	**4,549**	**297,987**	**2,628,203**
Additions	-	-	1,349,856	-	62,551	-	**1,412,407**
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer	-	2,021,590	(2,021,590)	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	540,000	(360,963)	-	-	-	-	**179,037**
Depreciation Expense	-	(37,879)	-	(8,851)	(5,382)	(112,620)	**(164,732)**
Balance as at 30 June 2026	**1,500,000**	**2,290,000**	**-**	**17,830**	**61,718**	**185,367**	**4,054,915**

The Huntly office refurbishment was completed in December 2025. In March 2026, an independent valuation of the Huntly Land and Buildings was undertaken as part of the regular Valuer-General Victoria valuation cycle. The valuation report was provided as at 30 June 2026 and the revised values were adopted at that date.

Fair value assessments have been performed for all classes of assets in this purpose group.

NOTE 5. OTHER ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Introduction

This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from the Authority's operations.

5.1 Other assets

5.1.1 Receivables

	2026 $	2025 $
Current receivables		
Contractual		
Receivables	55,000	257,926
Accrued income	897,813	49,766
	952,813	307,692
Statutory		
GST input tax credits recoverable	146,456	146,537
Total current receivables	**1,099,269**	**454,229**

Receivables consist of:

Contractual receivables are classified as financial instruments and categorised as 'financial assets at amortised costs'. They are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. North Central CMA holds the contractual receivables with the objective to collect the contractual cash flows and therefore subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Statutory receivables do not arise from contracts and are recognised and measured similarly to contractual receivables (except for impairment), but are not classified as financial instruments for disclosure purposes. The Authority applies AASB 9 for initial measurement of the statutory receivables and, as a result, statutory receivables are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction cost.

5.1.2 Contract assets

	2026 $	2025 $
Contract assets		
Total Contract assets	**1,004,480**	**390,851**
represented by		
Current contract assets	1,004,480	390,851
Non-current contract assets	-	-

Contract assets relate to the Authority's right to consideration in exchange for goods transferred to customers for works completed, but not yet billed at the reporting date. The contract assets are transferred to receivables when the rights become unconditional, at this time an invoice is issued. This usually occurs when the Authority issues an invoice to the customer. The balance of the contract assets at 30 June 2026 was impacted by timing of the works completed by contractors and is not billable at this stage. The works are expected to be completed and recovered early next year.

5.2. Other liabilities

Current payables	2026 $	2025 $
Contractual		
Trade payables	186,934	1,132,235
Accrued expenses	1,463,065	533,527
Total current payables	**1,649,999**	**1,665,762**

Payables consist of:

- **Contractual payables:** Classified as financial instruments and measured at amortised cost. Trade payables and accrued expenses represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Authority prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid.

5.3 Other non-financial assets	2026 $	2025 $
Prepayments	**291,078**	**309,505**

Other non-financial assets include prepayments which represent payments in advance of receipt of goods or services or that part of expenditure made in one accounting period covering a term extending beyond that period.

NOTE 6. HOW WE FINANCED OUR OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This section provides information on the sources of finance utilised by the Authority during its operations and other information related to financing activities of the Authority.

This section includes disclosures of balances that are financial instruments, such as cash balances. Note 7.1 provides additional, specific financial instrument disclosures.

6.1 Leases

6.1.1 Expense recognised for short-term leases

The following amounts are recognised as expense relating to short-term leases:

	2026 $	2025 $
Expenses relating to short term leases	26,500	54,500
Total amount recognised as expense	**26,500**	**54,500**

North Central CMA elected to account for short-term lease using the practical expedients. Instead of recognising a right-of-use asset and lease liability, the payments in relation to this lease is recognised as an expense in profit or loss included in “other operating expenses” (see note 3.3) on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

6.2 Cash flow information and balances

6.2.1 Recognition and Measurement Policy

Cash and deposits, including cash equivalents, comprise cash on hand and cash at bank, deposits at call and those highly liquid investments with an original maturity of three months or less, which are held for the purpose of meeting short-term cash commitments rather than for investment purposes, and which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. The North Central CMA bank account is held in the Central Banking System (CBS) under the *Standing Directions 2018*.

For cash flow statement presentation purposes, cash flows are included in the Cash Flow Statement on a gross basis. The GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

Cash disclosed in the balance sheet		
Cash at bank	12,008,136	15,700,349
Balance as per cash flow statement	**12,008,136**	**15,700,349**

Of the total cash balance, $9.7M represents grant funds received for specific future program expenditure commitments and is not otherwise available for working capital purposes.

NOTE 6. HOW WE FINANCED OUR OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

6.3 Commitments for expenditure

Commitments for future expenditure include operating and external program commitments arising from contracts. These commitments are recorded below at their nominal value and inclusive of GST. These future expenditures cease to be disclosed as commitments once the related liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet.

6.3.1 Total commitments payable

Nominal Amounts 2026	Less than 1 year $	1-5 years $	5+ years $	Total $
Other commitments payable	3,612,782	-	-	**3,612,782**
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	**3,612,782**	**-**	**-**	**3,612,782**
Less GST recoverable				(328,435)
Total commitments (exclusvie of GST)				**3,284,347**

Nominal Amounts 2025	Less than 1 year $	1-5 years $	5+ years $	Total $
Other commitments payable	3,104,000	-	-	**3,104,000**
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	**3,104,000**	**-**	**-**	**3,104,000**
Less GST recoverable				(282,182)
Total commitments (exclusvie of GST)				**2,821,818**

NOTE 7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, CONTINGENCIES AND VALUATION JUDGEMENTS

Introduction

It is often necessary for the Authority to make judgements and estimates associated with recognition and measurement of items in the financial statements. This section sets out financial instrument specific information, as well as those items that are contingent in nature or require a higher level of judgement to be applied, which for the Authority relate mainly to fair value determination.

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

Introduction

Financial instruments arise out of contractual agreements that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Due to the nature of North Central CMA's activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statute rather than a contract (for example taxes, fines and penalties). Such assets and liabilities do not meet the definition of financial instruments in AASB 132, *Financial Instruments: Presentation.*

Categories of financial assets

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets are measured at amortised costs if both of the following criteria are met and the assets are not designated as fair value through net result:

- the assets are held by the Authority to collect the contractual cash flows, and
- the assets' contractual terms give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest.

These assets are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less any impairment.

The Authority recognises the following assets in this category:

- cash and deposits; and
- receivables (excluding statutory receivables).

Derecognition of financial assets

A financial asset (or, where applicable, a part of a financial asset or part of a group of similar financial assets) is derecognised when:

- the rights to receive cash flows from the asset have expired: or
- the Authority retains the right to receive cash flows from the asset, but has assumed an obligation to pay them in full without material delay to a third party under a 'pass through' arrangement; or
- the Authority has transferred its rights to receive cash flows from the asset and either:
  - has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of the asset; or
  - has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards of the asset but has transferred control of the asset.

Where the Authority has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards or transferred control, the asset is recognised to the extent of the Authority's continuing involvement in the asset.

NOTE 7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, CONTINGENCIES AND VALUATION JUDGEMENTS (CONTINUED)

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures (continued)

Categories of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities at amortised cost

Financial liabilities measured at amortised costs are initially recognised on the date they are originated. They are initially measured at fair value less any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial recognition, these financial instruments are measured at amortised cost with any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value being recognised in profit and loss over the period of the interest-bearing liability, using the effective interest rate method. The Authority recognises the following liability in this category:

- payables (excluding statutory payables).

Derecognition of financial liabilities

A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation under the liability is discharged, cancelled or expires.

When an existing financial liability is replaced by another from the same lender on substantially different terms, or the terms of an existing liability are substantially modified, such an exchange or modification is treated as a derecognition of the original liability and the recognition of a new liability. The difference in the respective carrying amounts is recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the Comprehensive Operating Statement.

7.1.1 Financial instruments – Net gain/(loss) on financial instruments by category

2026	Contractual financial assets at amortised cost $	Contractual financial liabilities at amortised cost $	Total $
Contractual financial assets			
Cash and deposits equivalents	12,008,136	-	**12,008,136**
Contractual receivables (i)	952,813	-	**952,813**
Total contractual financial assets	**12,960,949**	**-**	**12,960,949**
Contractual financial liabilities			
Contractual payables (i)	-	1,649,999	**1,649,999**
Total contractual financial liabilities	**-**	**1,649,999**	**1,649,999**

2025	Contractual financial assets at amortised cost $	Contractual financial liabilities at amortised cost $	Total $
Contractual financial assets			
Cash and deposits equivalents	15,714,924	-	**15,714,924**
Contractual receivables (i)	307,692	-	**307,692**
Total contractual financial assets	**16,022,616**	**-**	**16,022,616**
Contractual financial liabilities			
Contractual payables (i)	-	1,665,762	**1,665,762**
Total contractual financial liabilities	**-**	**1,665,762**	**1,665,762**

(i) The total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts (e.g. amounts owing from Victorian Government and GST input tax credit recoverable and taxes payable).

NOTE 7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, CONTINGENCIES AND VALUATION JUDGEMENTS (CONTINUED)

7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the balance sheet but are disclosed and, if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value.

As at 30 June 2026, the Authority has no known contingent assets or liabilities.

7.3 Fair value determination

Significant judgement: Fair value measurements of assets and liabilities

This section sets out information on how the Authority determines fair value for financial reporting purposes. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

The Authority's property, plant and equipment are carried at fair value (refer note 4.1 fory carying values).

Fair value hierarchy

In determining fair values a number of inputs are used. To increase consistency and comparability in the financial statements, these inputs are categorised into three levels, also known as the fair value hierarchy. The levels are as follows:

- Level 1 - Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2 - Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and
- Level 3 - Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

The Authority determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by reassessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

The Valuer General Victoria (VGV) is the Authority's independent valuation agency. In conjunction with VGV, the Authority monitors changes in the fair value of each asset and liability through relevant data sources to determine whether revaluation is required.

For those assets and liabilities for which fair values are determined, the following disclosures are provided:

- valuation techniques
- details of significant assumptions used in the fair value determination.

7.3.1 Fair value determination: Non-financial physical assets (continued)

Valuation techniques and significant assumptions of non-financial physical assets measured at fair value

AASB 2022-10 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities amended AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* by adding Appendix F *Australian implementation guidance for not-for-profit public sector entities.* Appendix F explains and illustrates the application of the principles in AASB 13 on developing unobservable inputs and the application of the cost approach. These clarifications are mandatorily applicable annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024. FRD 103 permits Victorian public sector entities to apply Appendix F of AASB 13 in their next scheduled formal asset revaluation or interim revaluation process (whichever is earlier).

The last scheduled full independent valuation of the Authority's non-financial physical assets was performed by Valuer-General Victoria in April 2026 with an effective valuation date of 30 June 2026. The North Central CMA applied AASB 2022-10, including Appendix F of AASB 13 and the requirements of FRD 103 prospectively as part of the current scheduled formal revaluation process (Refer note 4.1 for carrying values).

For all assets measured at fair value, the Authority considers the current use to be the highest and best use. The June 2026 valuation of the Huntly land and buildings was undertaken using market-based valuation techniques and Level 2 observable inputs. The valuation adopted the market approach, supported by capitalisation and direct comparison methodologies, consistent with the Valuer-General Victoria valuation framework.

NOTE 7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, CONTINGENCIES AND VALUATION JUDGEMENTS (CONTINUED)

7.3 Fair value determination (continued)

7.3.1 Fair value determination: Non-financial physical assets (continued)

Non-specialised land and non-specialised buildings are valued using the market approach, whereby assets are compared to recent comparable sales or sales of comparable assets that are considered to have nominal value. Valuation of the assets was determined by analysing comparable sales and allowing for share, size, topography, location and other relevant factors specific to the asset being valued. From this analysis, an appropriate rate per square metre has been applied to the subject asset.

Plant and equipment is held at fair value. When plant and equipment is specialised in use, such that it is rarely sold, fair value is determined using the current replacement cost method.

Vehicles are valued using the current replacement cost method. The Authority acquires new vehicles and at times disposes of them before the end of their economic life. The process of acquisition, use and disposal in the market is managed by experienced fleet managers in the Authority who set relevant depreciation rates during use to reflect the utilisation of the vehicles.

Description of significant assumptions applied to fair value measurement

Refer Note 4.1 for carrying amounts

	Valuation technique	Significant assumption	Range (weighted average)
Non-specialised buildings	Market Value	5 yearly valuation with Valuer Generals indexation	70-95 per cent (86 per cent)
		Useful life of non-specialised buildings	35-45 years (40 years)
Non-specialised land	Market Value	5 yearly valuation with Valuer Generals indexation	70-95 per cent (86 per cent)
		Unlimited useful life	Unlimited useful life
Plant and equipment	Current Replacement cost	Cost per unit	$3,000- $6,000 per unit ($5.000 per unit)
		Useful life of plant and equipment	10-15 years (13 years)
Office furniture and equipment	Current Replacement cost	Cost per unit	$3,000-$6,000 per unit ($5,000 per unit)
		Useful life of office furniture and equipment	5-10 years (8 years)
Vehicles	Current Replacement cost	Cost per unit	$40,000-$60,000 per unit ($50,000 per unit)
		Useful life of vehicles	3-6 years (5 years)

The fair value of the financial assets and liabilities is included at the amount at which the instrument could be exchanged in a current transaction between willing parties, other than in a forced or liquidation sale.

NOTE 8. OTHER DISCLOSURES

INTRODUCTION

This section provides additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report.

8.1 Ex gratia expenses

Ex gratia expenses are the voluntary payments of money or other non-monetary benefit (e.g. a write-off) that is not made either to acquire goods, services or other benefits for the entity to meet a legal liability, or to settle or resolve a possible legal liability of or claim against the entity.

The Authority had no ex gratia expenses for the year ending 30 June 2026 (2025: $NIL).

8.2 Other economic flows included in net result

Other economic flows are changes in the volume or value of an asset or liability that do not result from transactions.

	2026 $	2025 $
Net gain on disposal of non-financial assets		
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property plant and equipment	660	67,799
Less written down value	-	(21,478)
Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of non-financial assets	**660**	**46,321**

8.3 Responsible persons

In accordance with the Ministerial Directions issued by the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994* , the following disclosures are made regarding responsible persons for the reporting period.

Names

The persons who were responsible persons at anytime during the financial year were:

		From	To
The Hon. Harriet Shing, MP	Minister for Water	15-Apr-26	30-Jun-26
The Hon Enver Erdogan, MP	Minister for Environment	15-Apr-26	30-Jun-26
The Hon. Gayle Tierney, MP	Minister for Water	1-Jul-25	14-Apr-26
The Hon. Steve Dimopoulos, MP	Minister for Environment	1-Jul-25	14-Apr-26
Sally Dene Mitchell	Board Chair	1-Jul-25	30-Jun-26
Olivia Lawson	Board Member	1-Jul-25	30-Jun-26
Sally Beer	Board Member	1-Oct-25	30-Jun-26
Peter Goffin	Board Member	1-Oct-25	30-Jun-26
Dawn McBride	Board Member	1-Oct-25	30-Jun-26
Shayne Rodgers	Board Member	1-Oct-25	30-Jun-26
Rob Stephenson	Board Member	1-Oct-25	30-Jun-26
Ann Hodge	Board Member	1-Jul-25	30-Sep-25
Adrian Weston	Board Member	1-Jul-25	30-Sep-25
David Weaver	Board Member	1-Jul-25	19-Mar-26
Brad Drust	Chief Executive Officer	1-Jul-25	30-Jun-26

Remuneration

Remuneration received or receivable by the Accountable Officer (CEO) in connection with the management of the Authority during the reporting period was in the range: $320,000–329,000 (2025: $310,000–319 000).

8.4 Remuneration of executive officers

Other than the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to whom the Victorian Government's Public entity Executive Remuneration (PEER) Policy applies, North Central CMA did not have any other executive officers. The CEO is an accountable officer and therefore remuneration is disclosed under Note 8.3 Responsible persons.

NOTE 8. OTHER DISCLOSURES (CONTINUED)

8.5 Related parties

The Authority is a wholly owned and controlled entity of the State of Victoria. Related parties of the Authority include:

- all key management personnel and their close family members and personal business interests (controlled entities, joint ventures and entities they have significant influence over);
- all departments and public sector entities that are controlled are consolidated into the whole of state consolidated financial statements.
- all Cabinet Ministers and their close family members.

All related transactions have been entered into on an arm's length basis.

Key management personnel

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Authority, directly or indirectly. Key management personnel (as defined in AASB 124 *Related Party Disclosures*) includes the Portfolio Minister, all Board Members, the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Management group who have the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Authority directly or indirectly, during the financial year.

Remuneration of key management personnel

The compensation detailed below excludes the salaries and benefits the Portfolio Minister receives. The Minister's remuneration and allowances is set by the *Parliamentary Salaries and Superannuation Act 1968* and is reported within the State's Annual Financial Report.

Compensation of KMPs	2026 $	2025 $
Total	1,227,276	1,128,396

Significant transactions with government-related entities

North Central CMA is a wholly owned and controlled entity of the state of Victoria.

During the year, the Authority received significant funding from the following government-related entities for natural resource and environmental works in the form of grants and contracts for delivered services. There is one unsettled balance of $50,000 from Lower Murray Water.

Entity	Nature of Transactions	2026 $ Funding received	2025 $ Funding received
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Service Level Agreements	10,022,540	12,400,931
Department of Justice and Community Safety	Service Level Agreements	302,500	141,000
Victorian State Emergency Services	Service Level Agreements	300,000	-
Victorian Fishing Authority	Service Level Agreements	306,614	92,367
Lower Murray Water	Service Level Agreements	626,992	458,129
Coliban Water	Service Level Agreements	374,613	364,000
Central Highlands Regional Water Corporation	Service Level Agreements	-	300,000
Wimmera Catchment Management Authority	Service Level Agreements	121,711	76,686
Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	Service Level Agreements	69,001	100,256
Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority	Service Level Agreements	161,305	61,580
Total		**12,285,276**	**13,624,316**

During the year, the Authority made significant payments to the below government-related entity for specialist information and advice services. There are no unsettled balances.

Entity	Nature of Transactions	2026 $ Payments made	2025 $ Payments made
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Service Level Agreements	622,856	789,546
Goulburn Murray Water	Service Level Agreements	82,000	81,944
		704,856	**871,490**

NOTE 8. OTHER DISCLOSURES (CONTINUED)

8.5 Related parties (continued)

Transactions with key management personnel and other related parties

Given the breadth and depth of Authority's activities, related parties transact with the Victorian public sector in a manner consistent with other members of the public e.g. stamp duty and other government fees and charges. Further employment processes within the Victorian public sector occur on terms and conditions consistent with the *Public Administration Act 2004* and Codes of Conduct and Standards issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. Procurement processes occur on terms and conditions consistent with the Victorian Government Procurement Board requirements.

A private company of which the brother of Timothy Shanahan (Executive Manager of North Central CMA), is a principal (RM Consulting Group) was awarded various contracts totalling $168,338 under the Authority's procurement process. Transactions involved included Traditional Owners cultural values surveys, monitoring and pest management control .

All of these transactions were entered into on commercial terms, at 'arm's length', following a standard procurement process in which the related party did not participate.

All other transactions that have occurred with KMP and their related parties have not been considered material for disclosure. In this context, transactions are only disclosed when they are considered necessary to draw attention to the possibility that the Authority's financial position and profit or loss may have been affected by the existence of related parties, and by transactions and outstanding balances, including commitments, with such parties.

No provision has been required, nor any expense recognised, for impairment of receivables from related parties.

8.6 Remuneration of auditors

	2026	2025
	$	$
Victorian Auditor-General Office (VAGO) for audit of financial statements	26,000	24,700
Internal audit costs	17,406	43,019
Total remuneration of auditors	**43,406**	**67,719**

8.7 Subsequent events

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the reporting period which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the authority, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the authority in future financial years.

8.8 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective

A new revised accounting standard have been issued but is not effective for the 2025-26 reporting period. This account standard has not been applied to the Financial Statements.

AASB 18 *Presentation and Disclosre in Financial Statements*

The AASB has issued AASB 18 *Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements* to improve how entities communicate in financial statements, with a particular focus on information about financial performance in the statement of profit or loss.

The key presentation and disclosure requirements established by AASB 18 are:

- the presentation of newly defined subtotals in the statement of profit or loss;
- the disclosure of management-defined performance measures; and
- enhanced requirements for grouping information (i.e. aggregation and disaggregation).

These new requirements will enable investors and other financial statement users to make more informed decisions, including better allocations of capital, that will contribute to long-term financial stability.

AASB 18 will replace AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements.*

For Tier 2 Not for profit entities, the proposed effective date begins on1 July 2030 and the Authority is in the process of analysing the impacts of this Standard. The Authority will not early adopt the Standard.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: **Disclosure Index**

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

Legislation	Requirement	Page No.
Standing Directions and Financial Reporting Directions		
Report of operations		
Charter and purpose		
FRD 22	Manner of establishment and the relevant Ministers	5
FRD 22	Purpose, functions, powers and duties	7
FRD 22	Key initiatives and projects	28
FRD 22	Nature and range of services provided	5
Management and structure		
FRD 8	Performance against output performance measures	8
CALP 19B	Annual Catchment Condition and Management Report	20
FRD 22	Organisational structure	50
Financial and other information		
FRD 10	Disclosure index	104
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[1] References to FRDS have been removed from the Disclosure Index if the specific FRDs do not contain requirements that are in the nature of disclosure.

[2] Refer to the Model financial statements section (Part two) for further details.

Appendix 2: **2025-26 Grants and Transfer Payments**

Victorian Landcare Grants (VLG)

In the 2025 VLG round, $311,750 funded 19 projects and $25,000 support grants were allocated to 50 groups. A total investment of $336,750.

Organisation name	Project Title	Project Summary	Total Allocated
Mt Korong Eco-Watch Association Incorporated	Control of African Lovegrass at Little Mount	African Lovegrass (Eragrostis curvula) is spreading on and around Little Mount on private properties and roadsides. Mt Korong Eco-Watch would like to begin a campaign of control of the populations on the private properties, especially where they border covenanted properties to the south. We will engage volunteers to do mapping, and also manual removal where ALG has encroached on the endangered orchid, Pterostylis valida. We will use a contractor for open areas.	$19,575
Donald and District Landcare Group	Connecting Lake Buloke with Revegetation of Lunettes.	This project is to revegetate a section of private land near Lake Buloke, Donald. The land - a lunette - has been degraded by agricultural activity over three decades, and has previously been salinity-affected. Revegetation of native, indigenous species will include salt bush forms, trees and grasses. The project will connect areas of the landscape that have had some revegetation work completed, allowing for the extension of a lunette biolink.	$19,931
Woodend Landcare Inc.	Fauna Discovery Survey of Five Mile Creek, Woodend	The Five Mile Creek remnant and revegetation refugium winds it's way through the heart of Woodend. For approximately 30 years Woodend Landcare (WL) has been caring for and replanting the Creek corridor. A fauna survey has never been conducted of the area. Although not listed on VBA, last year platypus and rakali were seen. With mature revegetation and wildlife returning, learning what animals live in and visit the Five Mile Creek corridor would be timely.	$20,000
Golden Point Landcare Incorporated	Forest Creek Gravel Pits restoration in the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park	Forest Creek in the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park has significant gorse infestation. Golden Point Landcare has supported landscape restoration in the area for 30 years. We have identified the old Metcalfe Shire gravel pits as an area to continue gorse removal and would benefit from riparian plantings. This is a high visibility walking/cycling area in the CDNHP on a trail which will showcase the value and nature of landscape restorative works.	$7,726
Wedderburn Conservation Management Network	Connect with Nature - Making tracks in the Wychitella: Restoring habitat and Reviving country	This exciting project will breathe life back into the Wychitella landscape by restoring Mallee fowl habitat with appropriate, native plants from the Mallee Shrubland and Box-Ironbark EVCs. By boosting biodiversity, improving soil health, and connecting habitat, it also empowers smaller landholders to join the movement and grow their patch of the wild!	$20,000
Campaspe River and Land Management Group	From the ground up- riparian grass and sedgeland rehabilitation along the Campaspe River	The Project aim is twofold: 1. Carry out and maintain rehabilitation gains in ecosystem condition along the Campaspe River in Kyneton. 2. Engage the community in these works through planting local EVC plants to provide a biological corridor boost to the condition of native vegetation along the river in Kyneton. People want to do something to help; someone just has to provide that opportunity.	$19,853
Moolort Landcare Group	Moolort Plains Old Growth Remnant Vegetation Protect and Propagate	Protect old growth remnant vegetation/habitats by regeneration and revegetation. Fence selected existing trees. Collect seed under expert guidance for propagation. Engage with, and inform the community about the value of these large, old trees, and understory and value of involvement in conservation actions. Gain knowledge from other groups who have performed similar restoration works, especially those who have faced increasing pressure from agricultural intensification. Seek knowledge from respected ecologists and champions in this field.	$14,502
Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group Inc.	Empowering and upskilling land managers in rabbit control.	Rabbit populations are threatening native vegetation and biodiversity, allowing invasive pest plants to flourish, and reducing agricultural productivity. Many residents in peri-urban regions such as Lockwood South lack knowledge, equipment, and skills to manage the problem. This project brings together land managers from mixed vocations and complex difficulties, to empower and upskill them to confidently manage rabbits to improve their land, protect the environment, and engage with the wider community to spread the knowledge further.	$19,888
Avon Plains Banyena Landcare Group Inc.	Safeguarding our Threatened Species	Our region's threatened flora survive in small, isolated patches vulnerable to habitat degradation, weeds, and grazing. This project would implement conservation actions (e.g., enhancement plantings, protective fencing, ecological burns and flora surveys) for species identified through our annual monitoring program at Walkers Lake, and nearby farms and roadsides. We'll expand monitoring to include significant roadside areas while training community members in threatened species identification and conservation techniques, to ensure their protection for generations to come.	$19,931

Organisation name	Project Title	Project Summary	Total Allocated
Avon Plains Banyena Landcare Group Inc.	Safeguarding our Threatened Species	Our region's threatened flora survive in small, isolated patches vulnerable to habitat degradation, weeds, and grazing. This project would implement conservation actions (e.g., enhancement plantings, protective fencing, ecological burns and flora surveys) for species identified through our annual monitoring program at Walkers Lake, and nearby farms and roadsides. We'll expand monitoring to include significant roadside areas while training community members in threatened species identification and conservation techniques, to ensure their protection for generations to come.	$19,931
Axe Creek Landcare Group	Enhancing our remnants and connecting our corridors	This project supports landholders in the Axe Creek area to enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity across the landscape. Activities include assisting members implement understorey and infill tubestock planting, continuing weed control on existing revegetation sites, and initiating new revegetation works. A key focus is the enhancement of biodiversity values around dams containing threatened fish, alongside the strategic connection of remnant vegetation across the project area to strengthen habitat corridors and improve overall ecosystem resilience.	$14,126
Northern Bendigo Landcare	Huntly Gardens Natural Reserve - boosting biodiversity and community connection	Huntly Gardens Natural Reserve is a valuable tract of remnant vegetation in the heart of Huntly. Little-known and under-utilised, it has enormous potential as a hotspot for biodiversity, important link for connectivity and a community resource for nature education, participation and well-being. As Huntly grows, protection and enhancement of remnant vegetation is vital. Through revegetation, installing nestboxes and engagement activities we hope to restore the environment, expand participation, enhance knowledge and develop strong community networks.	$16,882
Friends of the Grey-crowned Babbler	Re-assessing threatened Grey-crowned Babbler populations in North-Central thirty years on.	Grey-crowned Babblers (GCBs) are listed as vulnerable under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act because of their widespread decline across Victoria. When the last statewide assessment of their status was done in the mid 1990s, approximately 260 (40%) of known groups occurred in North Central region. There has been no systematic re-assessment of population status since then to inform conservation decisions and help to prioritise on-ground works. This project will address that gap.	$20,000
North Harcourt and Sedgwick Landcare	Love your Creek - Restoration Works at Emu Creek, Sedgwick	This project aims to undertake environmental restoration works along Emu Creek on the site of the Sedgwick Bushland Reserve for a length of approx. 380m with the aim to showcase best-practice creek restoration. On-ground works will focus on weed control, under- and ground storey revegetation and a nestbox program. This will be accompanied by community education events and provision of information to local landholders as nearby freehold streamside land is currently subdivided for rural living.	$16,271
Wycheproof and District Landcare group	Living and a'Working on the Lands - Grasslands, Wetlands and Community Engagement project	This project will assess and improve the natural environment and engage the Wycheproof community. We will do this by conducting surveys of grassland remnants, by continuing native planting of the Wycheproof Wetlands and by providing community engagement with grassland ecology and biodiversity. The surveys will allow us to better conserve and restore our local grasslands and engagement will have the benefit of educating the community about the value of these natural environments.	$17,265
Mid Loddon Sub Catchment Management Group	Refresh, Reinvigorate, Renew – Planning for our Community's Future	The aim of this proposal is to reinvigorate the Mid Loddon Sub-Catchment Management Group (a network of six Landcare and Associated Groups). The group does not currently have a Strategic Plan, and needs time to renew it's activities, in order to become a cohesive and capable Landcare Network. This project will hold several facilitated community events (including guest speakers) to develop a Strategy for on-ground works and motivate the local community.	$19,800
Nature Network Bendigo Region	Building blocks of Natural Networks	Deliver a range of events and activities that support diverse community engagement and the development of Nature Network, and connections and collaboration between its member groups. These funded activities will build on our fledgeling engagement program, complementing other, low-cost events that are being planned and coordinated by Nature Network, its facilitator and member groups.	$10,700
Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network	A Natural Connection - Culture, Capacity and a 'funny looking bird'.	This proposal seeks to progress several aspects of our Windharp Horizons program. Predominantly centered on community capacity and capability improvements, this project will also allow individuals and groups to access nature through our Junior Landcare, citizen science and traditional owner cultural activities. We also seek to establish a survey program in our northern grasslands where the presence of Plains Wanderer has either been confirmed or suspected.	$20,000
Upper Loddon & Avoca Landcare Network	Upper Loddon & Avoca Landcare Education & Membership Drive	We wish to increase the membership of our groups by raising awareness of Landcare in our area through hosting community events targeting newcomers to our area, particularly small landholders. Events include The Secret Life of Bats, Birds in our area including the migration of the Swift Parrot, The Benefits of living next to working farms, What's in our Soils and Waterways. Spotlighting evenings and seed collection/germination workshops	$8,500
Friends of Blue Gum Rise	Habitat and understanding for furry, flying marsupials	The aim of this project is to continue working with species of Glider and allied marsupials in our region. This will be done by producing nest boxes made to specification for small arboreal marsupials. We will also conduct some community surveys throughout the region as part of the Biolinks Alliance 'Glideways' program. Finally, we will produce some resource materials for use in schools and community functions, detailing the presence of native species in our region.	$6,800

Organisation Name	Project Summary	Total Allocated
Blampied Kooroocheang Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Maldon Urban Landcare Inc.	Support Grant	$500
Woosang Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Friends of Campbells Creek	Support Grant	$500
Friends of Riley St Natural Reserve Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Friends of Cornish Hill	Support Grant	$500
Campaspe Valley Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
McKenzie Hill Action and Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Ullina Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Newstead Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Castlemaine Landcare Group Inc	Support Grant	$500
Myall Land Management Group	Support Grant	$500
Australian Plants Society (APS) Bendigo Inc.	Support Grant	$500
Lockington & District Family Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Northern Plains Conservation Management Network Inc (aka Northern Plains Conservation Alliance)	Support Grant	$500
Nuggetty Land Protection Group	Support Grant	$500
Lexton Landcare	Support Grant	$500
Land Covenantors Victoria	Support Grant	$500
Pipers Creek & District Landcare	Support Grant	$500
Tarrangower Cactus Control Group Inc	Support Grant	$500
Loddon Plains Landcare Network Inc.	Support Grant	$500
Victoria Gully Group	Support Grant	$500
St Arnaud Field Naturalists Club	Support Grant	$500
Bald Hills-Creswick Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Connecting Country (Mount Alexander Region) Inc	Support Grant	$500
Baynton Sidonia Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Chewton Bushlands Association Inc	Support Grant	$500
Salisbury West Landcare group	Support Grant	$500
Glenlyon Upper Loddon Landcare Group Inc	Support Grant	$500
Natte Yallock Landcare Group Inc	Support Grant	$500
Trentham Public Purpose Reserves inc	Support Grant	$500
Mount Bolton Beckworth Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Fairley Bael Bael Sandhill Lake Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Ironbark Gully Friends Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Lake Boga and District Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500

Organisation Name	Project Summary	Total Allocated
Gunbower Landcare Incorporation Inc.	Support Grant	$500
Strathallan Family Landcare	Support Grant	$500
Friends of Kooyoora Inc	Support Grant	$500
Shepherds Flat Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Harcourt Valley Landcare	Support Grant	$500
Friends of Crusoe Reservoir and Number 7 Park	Support Grant	$500
Kerang Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Taradale Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Boort and District Agricultural Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Post Office Hill Action Group	Support Grant	$500
Muckleford Catchment Landcare Group Inc	Support Grant	$500
Trentham & District Landcare Inc.	Support Grant	$500
Baringhup Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500
Barkers Creek Landcare and Wildlife Group	Support Grant	$500
Loddon Vale Landcare Group	Support Grant	$500

Appendix 3a: **Catchment Condition Reporting contextual information**

The following information provides some context to the 2025-26 year and has largely been sourced from the *Australia's Environment Report card for 2025* and presents information at the North Central Region scale.

Annual Rainfall

This indicator looks at the annual rainfall. Rainfall and the timing of rainfall will impact on agricultural production, opportunities to maximise environmental flow releases and water quality.

Annual rainfall for 2025 calendar year was 380.5 mm, below the long-term average of 455.4 mm, and river flows were significantly reduced compared to long term average. Water for the environment and waterway protection works such as the Native Fish Recovery project, Ramsar protection projects and integrated catchment projects in the upper catchment continue to support improved river health. Below average rainfall and soil moisture made revegetation challenging with most projects requiring follow up watering.

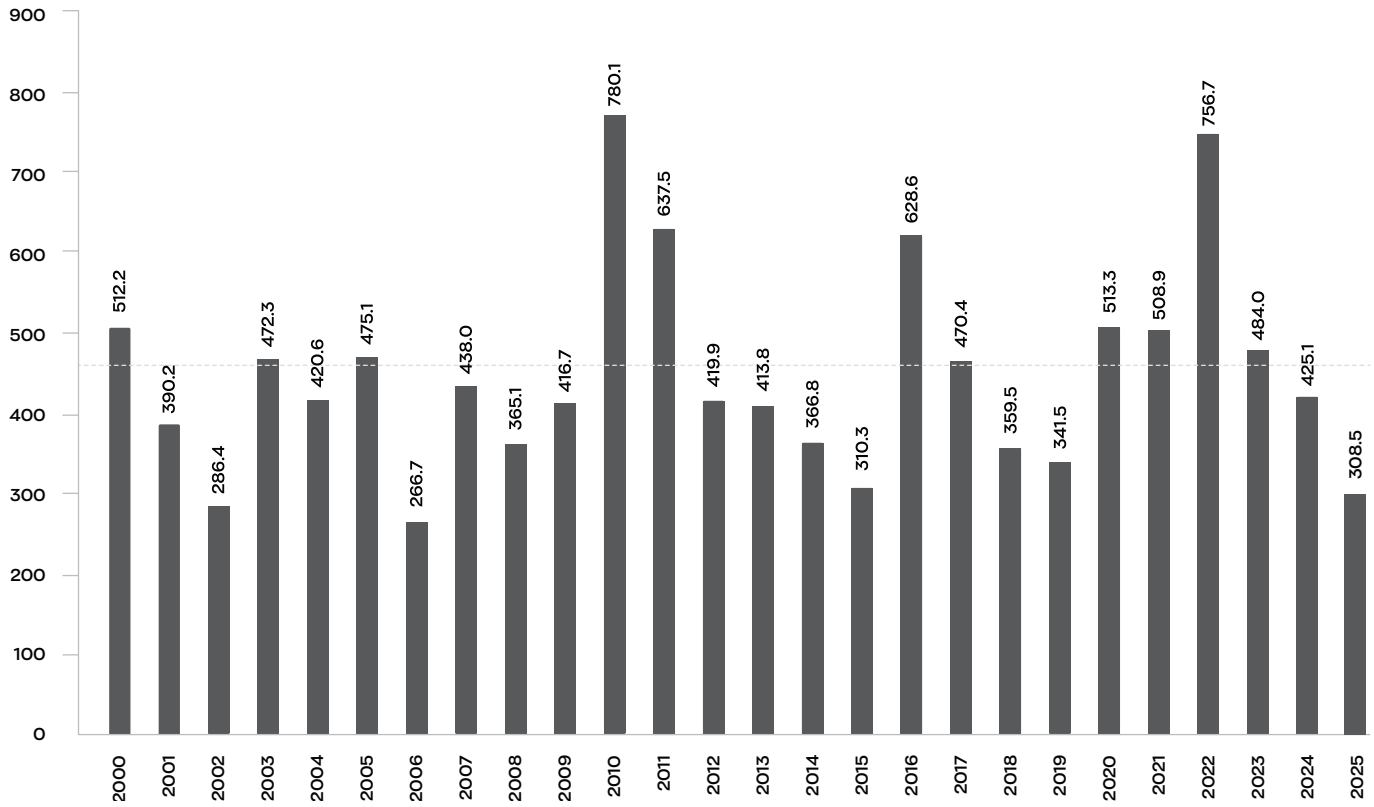
2025 Results: 380.5 mm

Overall average (2000-2025): 455.4 mm

Change compared to previous year (2024): -44.6 mm

Difference to average: -74.9 mm

ANNUAL RAINFALL (MM)
(2000 - 2025)



Source Australia's Environment – 2025 Report Card

River Inflows

This indicator provides estimates of river inflows in the 2025

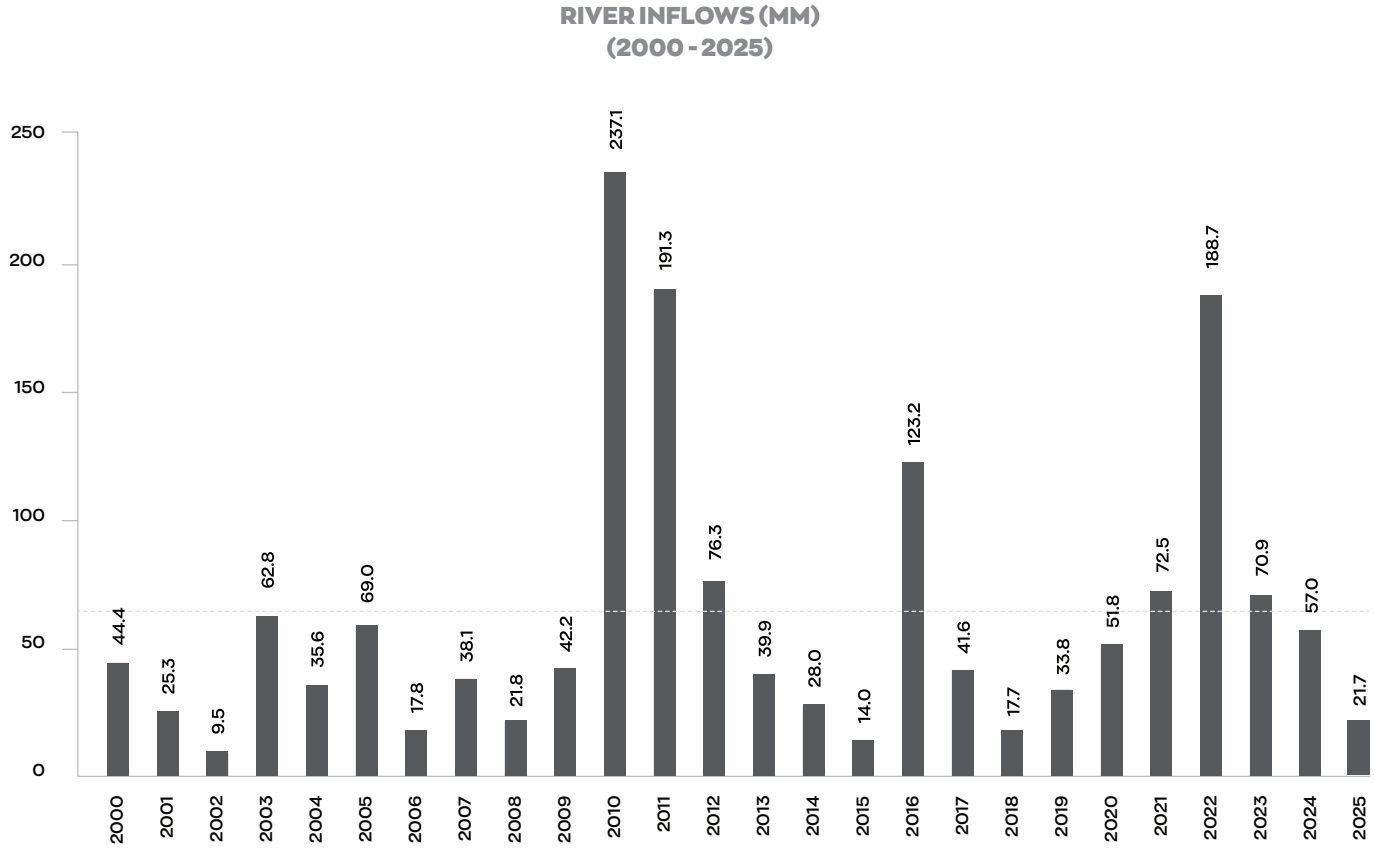
River inflows in 2025 measured 21.7mm, which is well below the long-term average 62.4 mm, indicating a drier year. Maintaining appropriate river flows remains essential for supporting the health of the region's waterways.

2025 Results: 21.7 mm

Overall average (2000-2025): 62.4 mm

Change compared to previous year (2024): -35.3 mm

Difference to average: -40.7 mm



Source Australia's Environment – 2025 Report Card

Exposed Soil

This indicator looks at the percentage of unprotected soil.

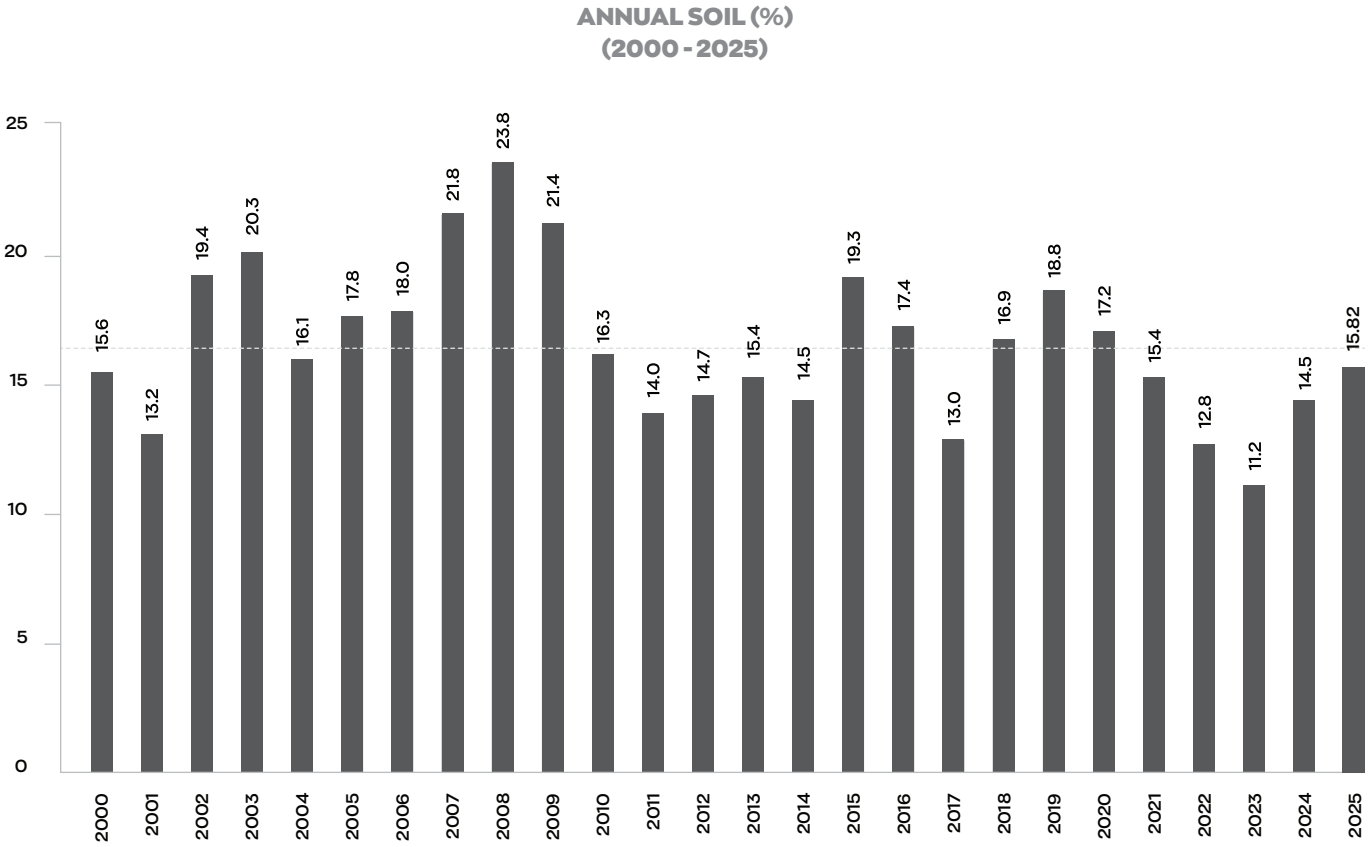
The 2025 exposed soil result is positive with a reduction from long term average although slightly increased exposed soils compared to the previous year. Exposed soil over summer and autumn resulted in the region's topsoil's being susceptible to wind and water erosion. The 2025–2026 season for dryland cropping in Victoria's North Central CMA region has been characterised by a challenging, dry autumn and a delayed start, though mid-winter rains ultimately boosted yields to above-average levels. Work to support farmers in improving soil health and adapting to climate change is continuing and building momentum in good management and sustainable agricultural practices.

2025 Results: 15.8%

Overall average (2000-2025): 16.7%

Change compared to previous year (2024): -0.9%

Difference to average: -0.9%



Source Australia's Environment – 2025 Report Card

Soil Moisture

This indicator provides an estimate of soil moisture

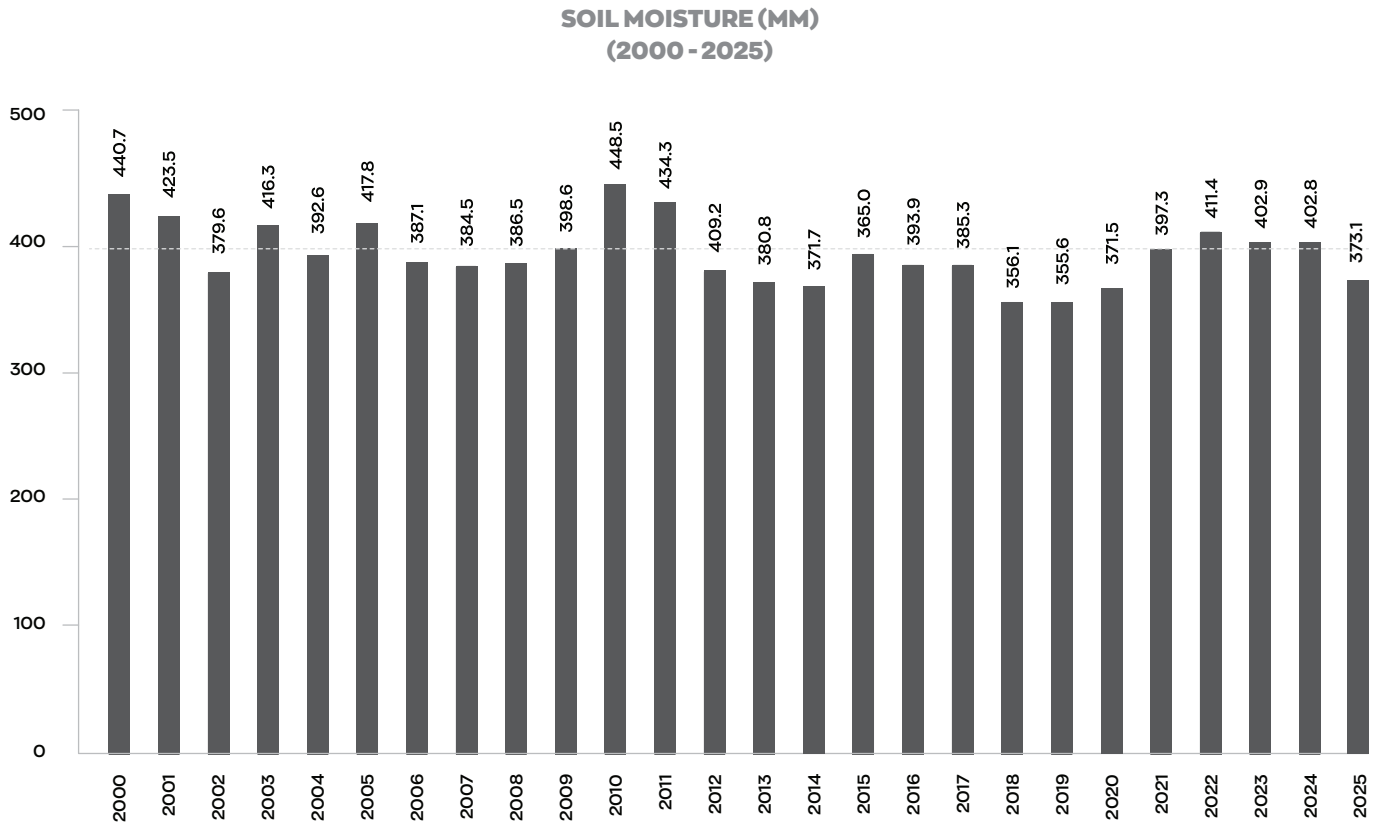
Soil moisture across the region in 2025 was recorded at 373.1 mm, slightly below the long-term average of 395.6 mm, reflecting generally dry conditions throughout the year. Winter and early spring were characterised by below-average soil moisture levels; however, significant rainfall events in autumn 2026 improved conditions, lifting soil moisture to average or above-average levels across much of the region. Despite this recovery, several grain-growing areas continued to experience deep soil moisture deficits following the preceding dry summer.

2025 Results: 373.1 mm

Overall average (2000-2025): 395.6 mm

Change compared to previous year (2023): -29.7 mm

Difference to average: -22.5 mm



Source Australia's Environment – 2025 Report Card

Natural / extreme events
Reporting for this item should include a short narrative on key natural events that may have impacted on the region. This section reports on notable natural or extreme events that have taken place in the region.

The region experienced generally dry conditions. While winter and early spring saw regional deficits, soil moisture averaged out to average to above average, following autumn 2026 rainfall events. The region also experienced bush fires that impacted on areas including Harcourt and near Charlton.

Other optional – maximum temp, number of hot days, no. of frost and snow days
This section reports on the supplied optional parameters.

Hot days are defined as days when temperatures exceed 35°C. In 2025, there were an average 20.6 hot days – an increase of 6.1 days compared to the previous year and an increase of 4.8 days over the long term average.

2025 (days): 20.6 days
Change from previous year: +6.1 days
2000-2025 average: 15.7 days

Cold days are defined as days when temperatures fall below 0°C. In 2025, there was an average of 4.2 cold days – a decrease of 0.3 days compared to the previous year. This figure is consistent with the long-term average 4.5 days.

2025 (days): 4.2
Change from previous year: -0.3
2000-2025 average: 4.5

In the 2025 calendar year, the average maximum temperature recorded was 40.3°C, 0.6°C cooler than the previous year, and 0.6°C colder than the long-term average of 41.1°C.

2025 (temp): 40.3 °C
Change from previous year: -0.6°C
2000-2025 average: 41.1°C

For the 2025 calendar year, the annual average minimum temperature was -1.0°C, 0.5°C warmer than the previous year and warmer than annual long-term average of -1.3°C.

2025 (temp): -1.0°C
Change from previous year: -0.5°C
2000-2025 average: -1.3°C

Source Australia's Environment - 2025 Report Card

Appendix 3b: **Catchment Management Reporting by Regional Catchment Strategy Theme**

Water Theme

The overall management rating for water is met expectations with delivery of waterway management works as expected. Rainfall and river flows were below long-term average. Most indicators have seen an increase which was expected due to projects being in full implementation phase after project start up.

Water for the environment and waterway protection works such as the Native Fish Recovery project, Ramsar protection projects and integrated catchment projects in the upper catchment continue to support improved river health.

Water indicators used in the assessment: (indicators in italics are optional)

Indicator	Management rating	Comment
Extent of protected or improved riparian land (ha)	Met expectations ★★	Area protected and maintained as expected. 2025-26: 12,015 (ha) 2024-25: 7,170 (ha)
Water Storage - trough (no.)	Met expectations ★★	Water Storage structure delivery is satisfactory. 2025-26: 7 Water storage structure built 2024-25: 1 Water storage structures built
Waterway Structure (no.)	Met expectations ★★	Waterway structure delivery as expected. 2025-26: 16 Waterway structures built. 2024-25: 25 Waterway Structures built
Vegetation (ha)	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: 151 (ha) of vegetation works 2024-25: 67 (ha) of vegetation works
Weed Control (ha)*	Met expectations ★★	A satisfactory level of waterway, riparian and public and private land weed control was achieved in 25/26. 2025-26: 4,374 (ha) of weed control 2024-25: 773 (ha) of weed control works
Management Agreement (no.)	Met expectations ★★	Management agreement with landholders increased in 2025-26 compared to the previous years. This was largely due to project establishment and funding profile. 2025-26: 25 Management agreements 2024-25: 5 Management agreements established
Environmental flow compliance	Met expectations ★★	Relativity high water allocations have allowed a significant volume of water to be delivered to Waterways in region. 2025-26: 54 deliveries for a total of 60 GL Systems managed: • 2 major rivers (Campaspe and Loddon) • 4 minor rivers/creeks (Coliban River and Birchs, Serpentine and Pyramid Creeks) • 2 major wetland systems (Central Murray and Boort) • 1 minor wetlands system managed (Wimmera Mallee) • Gunbower Wetlands
Water Act permits (no.)	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: 64 Water Act Permits distributed
Statutory advice (no.)	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: 673 Referrals outputs 839 Advice outputs 2,564 FloodEye outputs

Sources: North Central CMA Reporting and Monitoring Dashboard (mapped outputs)

Extent of protected or improved riparian land

The indicator reflects efforts to protect or improve the condition of riparian lands, including fencing, weed control, and revegetation and pest control (e.g. rabbits).

Efforts to improve and protect riparian land in the North Central catchment include fencing, management agreements, vegetation projects, and targeted pest animal and weed control.

Extent of protected/improved riparian works in 2025-26 Financial Year

Earthworks	2 ha
Fence	16 (km)
Grazing	0 (ha)
Management Agreement	25 (number)

Pest Animal Control	56,262 (ha)
Vegetation	151 (ha)
Water Storage	7 (number)
Weed Control	4,374 (ha)

Total protected/improved riparian land: 12,015 hectares (Footprint)

Management rating: Met expectations ★★

Data analysed in Table above incorporates works within a 200m buffer of waterways (Rivers, Creeks and Wetlands) and also includes some works from Partner Organisations.

Land Theme

The overall management rating for land is met expectations. Work to support farmers in improving soil health is continuing and building momentum in good management and sustainable agricultural practices.

Implementation of the Land and Water Management Plan continues, and the Australian Government funded Climate Positive Farming Initiative continues.

Land indicators used in the assessment: (indicators in italics are optional)

Indicator	Management rating	Comment
Area of improved Agricultural Practices (ha)	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: • 82 ha of New Irrigation Development referral approved. 2024-25: • 340 ha of New Irrigation Development referral approved.
Number of Agricultural Assessments	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: • 7 Whole Farm Plan surveys over 712 ha completed. • 1,185 ha assessed against the New Irrigation Development guidelines 2024-25: • 5 Whole Farm Plan surveys over 533 ha completed. • 1,384 ha assessed against the New Irrigation Development guidelines
Number of Property Plans	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: • 5 Whole Farm Plan designs over 417 ha completed. 2024-25: • 5 Whole Farm Plan designs over 508 ha completed

Management rating: Met expectations ★★

Sources: North Central CMA Reporting and Monitoring Dashboard (mapped outputs)

Biodiversity Theme

The overall management rating for biodiversity is met expectations. We continue to protect and restore biodiversity, through targeted pest herbivore and predator control, managing weeds, and revegetation activities.

Targeted initiatives for threatened species focused on Plains Wanderer and Eltham Copper Butterfly are contributing to improved biodiversity. A business case for phase 2 of the Grow Towards Zero Pilot has been completed and has the potential to increase revegetation outcomes in the future.

Biodiversity indicators used in the assessment: (indicators in italics are optional)

Indicator	Management rating	Comment
Vegetation (ha)	Below expectations ★	2025-26: 209 (ha) of revegetation 2024-25: 800 (ha) of revegetation
Pest herbivore and predator control (ha)	Above expectations ★★★	Significant works have occurred across the region although ongoing management is required to maintain outcomes. 2025-26: 37,106 (ha) of pest herbivore/ predator control 2024-25: 18,339 (ha) of pest herbivore/ predator control
Weed control (ha)	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: 2,935 (ha) of Weed control works 2024-25: 1,243 (ha) of Weed control works
Additional area of permanent protection through CMA programs (ha)	Not applicable ☆	N/A

Management rating: Met expectations ★★

Sources: North Central CMA Reporting and Monitoring Dashboard (mapped outputs)

Community Theme

The overall management rating for community is met expectations. Significant engagement with the North Central community was undertaken in 2025-26.

NRM Partners within the region including the North Central CMA continue to work with Traditional Owners to support cultural aspirations including applying self-determination principles. Landcare grants continue to support Landcare networks and groups to implement priority NRM works in the region.

Community indicators used in the assessment: (indicators in italics are optional)

Indicator	Management rating	Comment
Number of formal* partnership agreements with Traditional Owners / First Nations	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: 11 TO partnerships/agreements 2024-25: 5 TO partnerships/agreements
Number of participants in engagement events	Above expectations ★★★	Significant number of community members engaged over the 2025-26 year. 2025-26: 13,080 total participants 2024-25: 6,293 total participants
Number of volunteers in CMA programs	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: 69 Water Watch volunteers 2024-25: 53 Water Watch volunteers
Total quantum of grants awarded	Met expectations ★★	A total of $336,750 through the Victorian Landcare Grants Program distributed through grants in the 2025-26 financial year.

Management rating: Met expectations ★★

Sources: North Central CMA Reporting and Monitoring Dashboard (mapped outputs) *Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs Report definition of formal partnership

Integrated Catchment Management Theme

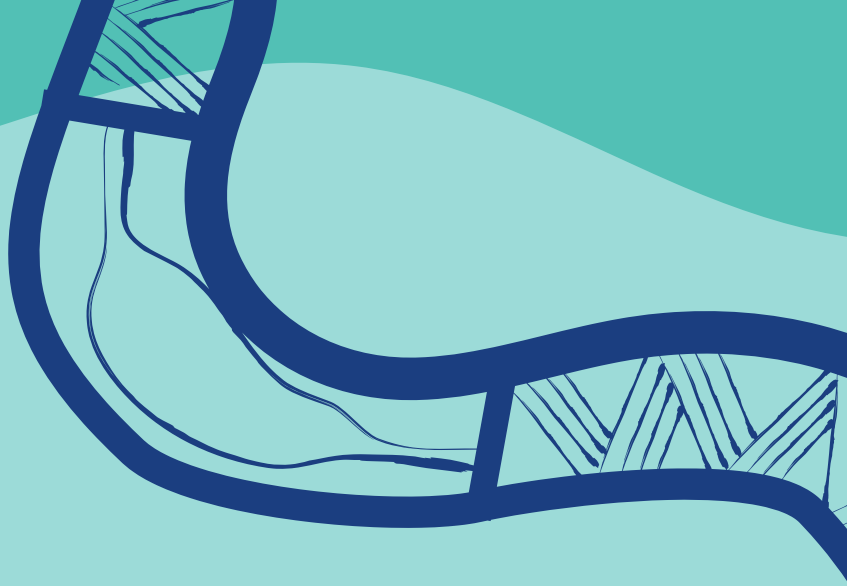
The overall management rating for Integrated Catchment Management met expectations.The CMA continues to lead integrated catchment management activities across the region through partnerships with Traditional Owners, communities, and partners. This is strengthened by the Catchment Partners Forum, Regional Roundtables, project and program committees and by establishing and maintaining formal partnerships. Examples include the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project, Reporting and Accounting for Salinity, Healthy Coliban Catchment project and Waterways Strategy renewal.

Integrated indicators used in the assessment: (indicators in italics are optional)

Indicator	Management rating	Comment
Number of partnerships	Met expectations ★★	2025-26: 63 partnerships 2023-24: 46 partnerships

Management rating: Met expectations ★★

Sources: North Central CMA Reporting and Monitoring Dashboard (mapped outputs)



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