

# Sustainable Hunting Action Plan

Quarterly Progress Report – September 2017

The Victorian Government released its \$5.3 million Sustainable Hunting Action Plan in December 2016. The Government is getting on with the job of implementing this plan through practical actions that maximise benefits for hunters, the environment, the economy, and the whole Victorian community.

## PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE HUNTING

The cornerstone of responsible hunting is making sure that hunters are well educated and trained in responsible, safe and sustainable hunting practices. Promoting responsible hunting is the responsibility of government, hunting organisations, the shooting industry and hunters.

## PROVIDE BETTER ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Game Management Authority (GMA) has continued to improve its website, making it a one-stop-shop for hunters with the most up-to-date hunting information and advice. Hunters can now undertake a range of activities online, including:

- updating game licence details (e.g. for change of address)
- reporting illegal hunting
- completing a practice Waterfowl Identification Test
- entering the Hog Deer ballot
- viewing education videos and
- booking tests.

We have improved seasonal announcements about hunting using the Victorian Game Hunting App push notifications and will continue to make improvements to the way we let hunters know about changes to hunting conditions.



The GMA will also develop its social media presence on platforms like Facebook to ensure key messages and information are distributed beyond its website.

## GROWING HUNTING'S BENEFITS

The action plan seeks to maximise the social and economic benefits derived from hunting in Victoria.

## PROMOTE REGIONAL HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES



Hunting provides significant economic benefits to rural and regional Victoria. The Government supports the initiative of councils like Towong Shire which is developing its own hunting tourism action plan. The plan seeks to leverage Towong Shire's game hunting opportunities by looking at ways to improve the hunting experience in the Shire, including looking at options associated with guiding and private land access.

A copy of the draft hunting tourism action plan can be viewed at [www.towong.vic.gov.au](http://www.towong.vic.gov.au)

## ENSURING SUSTAINABLE HUNTING

Sustainable hunting is about healthy, humane, responsible and safe recreational hunting opportunities. It relies on good science, research, and sound game, conservation and land management.

### DEVELOP A DEER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



Deer have increased in number throughout Victoria which has resulted in significant environmental, economic and social impacts.

It is important that Victoria has a coordinated and strategic approach to deer management which is why we are developing a deer management strategy.

The deer management strategy will establish a plan to manage the impacts of deer in an effective and humane way across public and private land.

The draft strategy will be released for public consultation to ensure the views and ideas of the community and other stakeholders are considered during the strategy's development.

### UNDERTAKE RESEARCH, MONITORING AND EVALUATION



Sound research is critical to inform better decisions around sustainable hunting. That is why we are working on a number of research projects and programs including:

- a state-wide Stubble Quail monitoring program, scheduled to commence in 2018, which will improve knowledge of quail abundance, distribution and habitat use
- researching land and habitat management techniques to benefit native game species
- implementing the Waterfowl Conservation Harvest Model, which will enable the sustainable management of game ducks.

### IMPROVE CONTROL PROGRAMS



The Government is working closely with hunting stakeholders like the Australian Deer Association (ADA) and Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (SSAA) to deliver programs to control deer and invasive animals like feral pigs, feral goats, rabbits and foxes.

Twenty-eight control programs are scheduled to be conducted with ADA and SSAA for this financial year and we have provided funding of \$300,000 over four years to the ADA to assist with deer control programs.