



Education Strategy

2020 - 2025

CONTENTS

Purpose	2	GMA's strategic education framework	7
Measures of success	3	Element 1 – Strengthening the foundation	9
Authorising environment	4	Element 2 – Making meaningful partnerships	17
Our vision.....	4	Element 3 – World class delivery	21
Our purpose	4	Mobilising the Strategy	23
GMA strategic goals.....	4		
Educating for compliance	5		
Delivering across the spectrum	6		



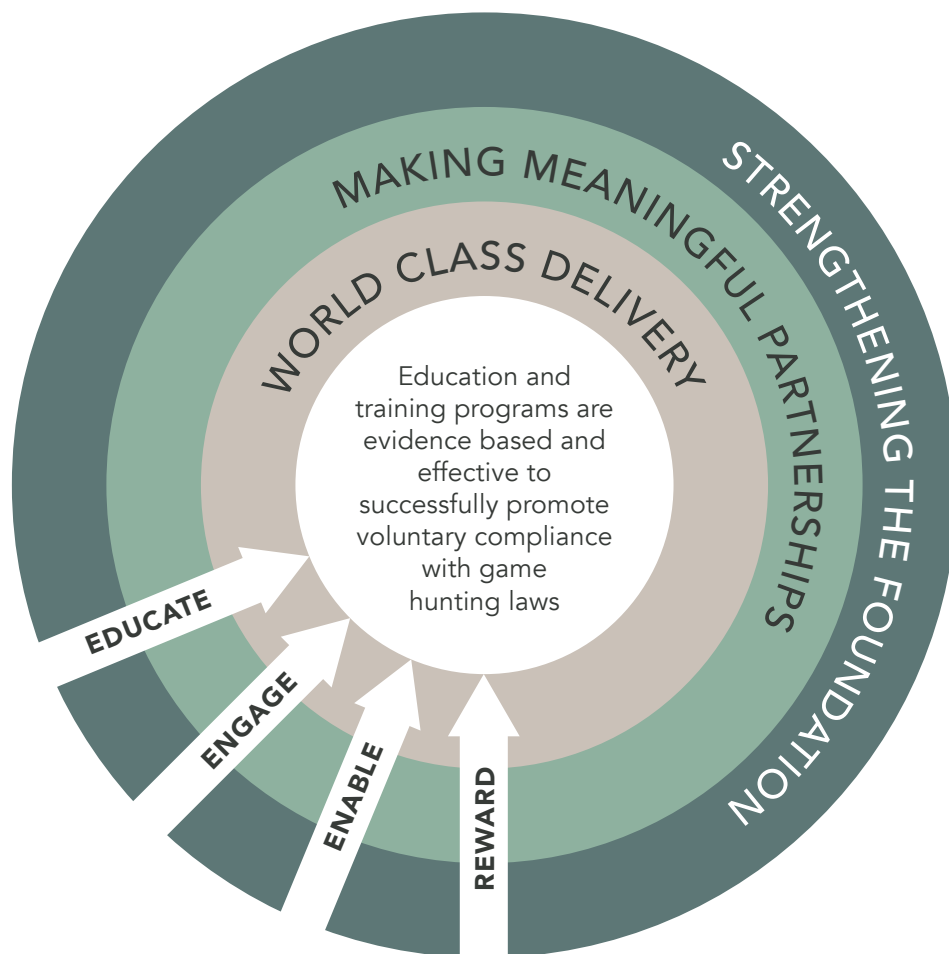
PURPOSE

The GMA Education Strategy (the Strategy) has been developed to direct education and training programs and activities for the next five years. The Strategy ensures programs are evidence-based and effective to successfully promote voluntary compliance with game hunting laws.

This Strategy is to be delivered in conjunction the *GMA Compliance Strategy* and its key objective of achieving voluntary compliance through assistance and education.

At the core of this Strategy are three key elements:

1. Strengthening the foundation
2. Making meaningful partnerships
3. World-class delivery



MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Success in meeting the objectives of this Strategy will be measured by:

- › stronger partnerships with industry and community
- › more hunters achieving voluntary compliance with relevant laws
- › increased sector knowledge through proactive engagement
- › informed and educated game hunters to better meet community expectations
- › educational programs that are consistent with international standards



Mobile education program, Alpine National Park

AUTHORISING ENVIRONMENT

The GMA is an independent statutory authority established under the *Game Management Authority Act 2014* (the Act), to promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting and perform functions as specified by the Act.

These functions include, but are not limited, to:

- › promoting and monitoring compliance with the Act or any relevant laws in relation to game hunting
- › developing procedures addressing the sustainable hunting of game animals; the humane treatment of animals that are hunted or used in hunting; and strategies to minimise any negative impact on non-game wildlife, including protected and threatened wildlife; and the conservation of wildlife habitats
- › promoting sustainability and responsibility in game hunting
- › monitoring, conducting research and analysing the environmental, social and economic impacts of game hunting and game management.

Our vision

Game hunting in Victoria meets community expectations as a sustainable and well-regulated activity based on science and conducted in a responsible manner.

Our purpose

We regulated through education, research and enforcement to achieve responsible and sustainable game hunting in Victoria.

GMA strategic goals

The five strategic goals of the GMA are:

1. Make evidence-based education a cornerstone of our work
2. Ensure hunting of native game species is conducted sustainably and in ways that minimise adverse animal welfare outcomes
3. Be respected and recognised as an effective regulator
4. Deliver risk-based and intelligence-led enforcement programs
5. Become a learning organisation that pursues excellence.

EDUCATING FOR COMPLIANCE

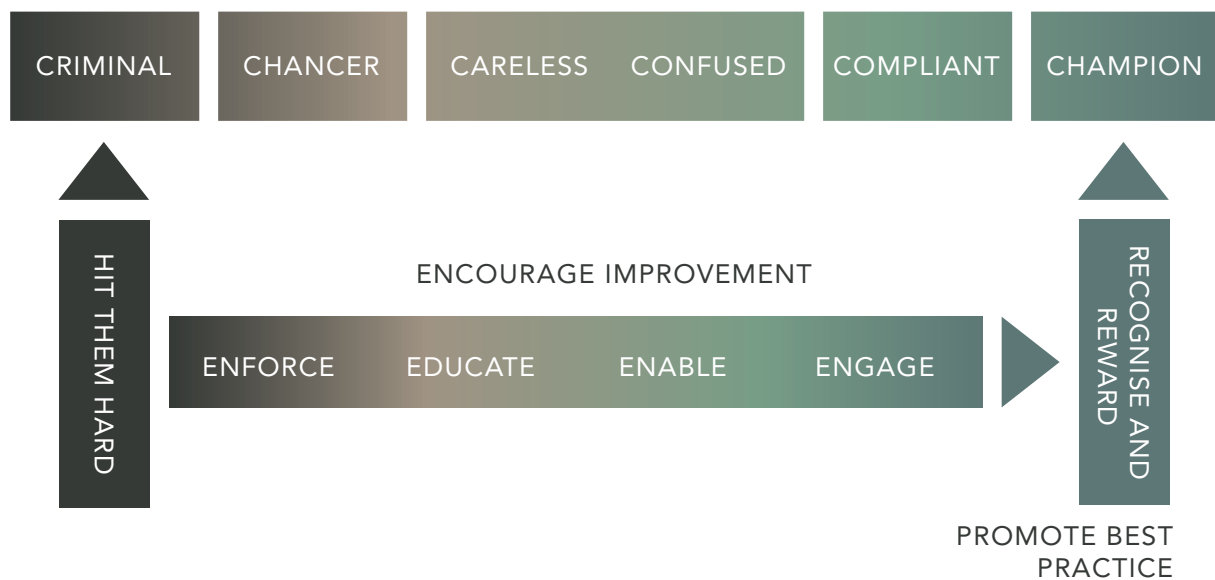
The GMA is a regulator that uses a broad range of tools and works across the compliance and engagement spectrum to ensure hunters act in accordance with game hunting laws. Education and training are key tools in delivering behavioural change that allows game hunters to undertake their legal recreation in a compliant manner. These tools also enable hunters to become self-regulating, preventing them from inadvertently committing an offence.

Further, successful education and training programs builds an engaged industry, informs the community and strengthens the social licence of game hunting in Victoria.



DELIVERING ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

COMPLIANCE AND ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM (SOURCE SEPA)¹



Education and training are considered the most effective and low-risk compliance tools available. The GMA will effectively use these tools to improve engagement and enable hunters to voluntarily comply. This Strategy articulates a number of goals and actions that aim to educate, enable, engage and reward stakeholders.

¹ Scottish Environment Protection Authority www.sepa.org.au

GMA'S STRATEGIC EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

ELEMENT 1

Strengthening the foundation

GOAL	ACTION
Goal 1: Targeted and relevant education engagements	Action 1.1 (Educate): Identify gaps in knowledge and deliver in-field responses
	Action 1.2 (Enable): Produce best practice theoretical and practical education and training programs
Goal 2: Delivering a productive and rich experience for licence holders	Action 2.1 (Enable): Equip licence holders with necessary information to support responsibility and sustainability in game hunting
	Action 2.2 (Enable): Accessible and relevant material is provided
	Action 2.3 (Educate): Building the capability of staff as effective educators
Goal 3: Addressing community expectations	Action 3.1 (Educate): Inform community of how game hunting is regulated and the role of GMA
	Action 3.2 (Educate): Increase community awareness of game hunting
	Action 3.3 (Engage): Understand changing community needs
Goal 4: Capitalising on existing engagements	Action 4.1 (Engage): Increase awareness of licence holders undertaking existing testing
	Action 4.2 (Educate): Support juniors through specific education

ELEMENT 2

Making meaningful partnerships

GOAL	ACTION
Goal 5: Strengthening partnerships	Action 5.1 (Engage): Work with industry to develop appropriate training packages
	Action 5.2 (Engage): Engage with industry and work across government to develop a positive game hunting culture
Goal 6: Develop new market opportunities	Action 6.1 (Educate): Expand education programs to ensure a minimum level of understanding
	Action 6.2 (Engage): Engage the broader community through exhibition of training and education programs
Goal 7: Understanding hunter motivations	Action 7.1 (Enable): Develop programs to understand the motivations of hunters
	Action 7.2 (Reward): Measure changes in attitudes over time

ELEMENT 3

World class delivery

GOAL	ACTION
Goal 8: Using contemporary engagement methods	Action 8.1 (Enable): Innovate education and training services through contemporary delivery
Goal 9: International alignment	Action 9.1 (Enable): Produce world-leading education programs and align with international standards and accreditation

Element 1 – Strengthening the foundation

The demographics of Game Licence holders are changing rapidly. Some of these changes are demographical, while others are cultural providing new and emerging sectors to the industry. These changes challenge the historic delivery of education and training programs and highlight the need for a refreshed direction in the delivery, platforms and material used to educate game hunters and the broader community.

The GMA values the new and emerging diversity of the industry it regulates, and the identified need to produce broader education and training than previously delivered. This direction embraces the acceptance that many new hunters lack a rural background or have little understanding of the environments they undertake their recreation. Ensuring that all game hunters have a minimal understanding of laws as well as responsible and sustainable hunting practices improves general compliance, enhances game hunter experiences and meets changing community expectations.



Delivering Gamebird Hunting Essentials Masterclass

GOAL 1: TARGETED AND RELEVANT EDUCATION ENGAGEMENTS

GMA will provide innovative and relevant engagements to increase the knowledge of Victorian game hunters

Action 1.1 (Educate)

Identify gaps in knowledge and deliver in-field responses

The nature of game hunting and the environments in which it takes place provide opportunities for the GMA to engage with hunters in-field. This allows for targeted in-field education and the dissemination of materials and practical tools that help hunters comply with relevant law. These engagements will broaden the experience of licensed game hunters with the GMA who often only encounter enforcement actions while in-field.

Action 1.2 (Enable)

Produce best practice theoretical and practical education and training programs

The majority of Game Licence holders undertake no training prior to be granted a licence. Hunters wishing to hunt game ducks must pass a Waterfowl Identification Test, however, this test is limited in scope and doesn't provide any competency or assurances in understanding law or responsible practices.

Hunters wishing to hunt Sambar Deer with the aid of scent-trailing hounds must undertake a test to show proficiency with laws and hunting practices. However, the number of hunters endorsed to hunt with hounds is less than ten percent of the total number of Game Licence holders.

There is an identified need to ensure a minimum knowledge of game hunters. To do this, GMA will investigate the development of targeted theoretical education modules that must be undertaken prior to hunters be granted a Game Licence. In addition, the GMA will investigate the feasibility of practical training programs that address specific issues and equip hunters to act responsibly and meet community expectations when in-field.

GOAL 2: DELIVERING A PRODUCTIVE AND RICH EXPERIENCE FOR LICENCE HOLDERS

GMA will provide a rewarding experience for Game Licence holders

Action 2.1 (Enable)

Equip licence holders with necessary information to support responsibility and sustainability in game hunting

The GMA will continue to provide a range of new materials to enable game hunters to comply with relevant law. These materials will address identified knowledge gaps that hunters have regarding laws and responsible hunting practices and build on products already made available, such as the *Game Hunting in Victoria Manual* and the *More to Explore* mobile phone application.

Action 2.2 (Enable):

Accessible and relevant material is provided

Interactions with Game Licence holders has significantly changed over the last decade. Historically, hunters would proactively engage with game regulators through face-to-face interactions in government offices. However, hunters are now seeking information from different sources, such as social media. Further, recent research commissioned by the GMA indicates that the majority of licence holders have a preference to access web-based information through mobile platforms.

To mirror these preferences, the GMA is currently developing MyGL, a new cloud-based licensing system that will allow hunters to access their licence details and amend online. Further, this system will also provide the platform for interactive web-based learning modules. In addition, GMA has significantly increased its social media footprint through Facebook and is currently investigating other platforms such as Instagram.

GMA will continue to investigate and use contemporary platforms to deliver information to hunters in an accessible manner.



Selection of educational material currently available to game hunters

Action 2.3 (Educate)

Building the capability of staff as effective educators

The GMA acknowledges the different skillsets required to be an effective communicator and the importance of these skills in successfully educating game hunters and the community. GMA will increase the capability of its staff through targeted training and specific recruitment procedures to ensure existing and new staff have the required skills to effectively deliver current and future education programs. This includes implementing strategies to establish a GMA workforce that is reflective of current Victorian community demographics.



GOAL 3: ADDRESSING COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

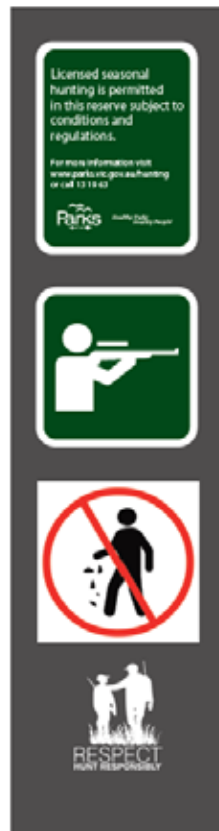
GMA will engage with the broader community to provide assurance that game hunting is well regulated

Action 3.1 (Educate)

Inform community of how game hunting is regulated and the role of GMA

In Victoria, game hunting is regulated by a number of different government departments and under the direction of three Ministers. This causes confusion for the broader community which often leads to a lack of confidence in game hunting being effectively regulated. Much of this confusion is a result of not understanding the accountabilities of different government portfolios or knowing who to contact when issues arise.

To address these community concerns, GMA will proactively engage with local community groups (e.g. LandCare and Victorian Farmers Federation) and will attend regional workshops to provide them with a point of contact and a one-stop source of information. In addition, GMA will work with other government entities to deliver consistent messaging to the Victorian community.



GMA worked with Parks Victoria to develop consistent message on artwork for totem signs placed in State Game Reserve

Action 3.2 (Educate)

Increase community awareness of game hunting

In acknowledging the benefit of engaging with game hunters and community members in-field, the GMA has implemented an annual calendar of mobile education programs and events. These interactions are targeted not only to engage with game hunters but to increase the exposure of the GMA with local communities. This is further bolstered by GMA having stands at local field and agricultural shows to provide a more convenient pathway of interaction.

In addition to these face-to-face interactions, the GMA will produce material, where relevant, to explain what to expect when observing legal game hunting. A recent successful program, aimed at increasing community awareness, was undertaken to explain new legal Hog Deer hunting opportunities on Snake Island.

Action 3.3 (Engage)

Understand changing community needs

There is a growing interest from the community in how game hunting is conducted. This stems from a greater awareness for animal welfare, as well as changing demographics in rural areas where hunting has traditionally occurred.

To maximise input from the community, the GMA will actively engage a broad range of stakeholder groups when developing education and training programs and material. This approach was successful when developing the *Game Hunting in Victoria Manual* and more recently, the *Guidelines for Humane Dispatch of Downed Ducks*.

Building on GMA's local community presence, through its annual calendar of mobile education programs and events, the GMA will deliver programs that actively encourage and facilitate feedback from local communities regarding game hunting and issues or concerns they may have. Input from these programs will be used to better inform education programs and materials.



GOAL 4: CAPITALISING ON EXISTING ENGAGEMENTS

GMA will improve the services it provides to licence holders through existing engagement

Action 4.1 (Engage)

Increase awareness of licence holders undertaking existing testing

Hunters wishing to hunt game ducks or Sambar Deer with the use of scent-trailing hounds must undertake a test, providing the GMA with an opportunity to engage face-to-face with new hunters. To enhance this engagement, GMA will develop education packages that will provide additional information to the test applicants as well as tools that will assist them to comply with relevant law and responsible hunting practices. Further, GMA will structure the testing sessions to enable a more interactive experience for students.



GMA stand at the Seymour Alternative Farming Expo



Providing training at licence test session

Action 4.2 (Educate)

Support juniors through specific education

Achieving behavioral and cultural change is paramount to effective regulation in a changing environment. One of the more productive avenues for effecting change is capturing juniors coming into game hunting as they are less likely to have developed poor hunting habits. Having informed and educated juniors leads to better regulatory outcomes into the future. To capitalise on this, GMA will develop specific education packages for all junior licence holders. It will also investigate practical programs developed for junior hunters to increase their understanding of laws and responsible hunting practice.



Element 2 – Making meaningful partnerships

Genuine and ongoing partnerships between the game hunting industry and the GMA are critical to developing a fully informed and regulated game hunting environment.

At present, the GMA has limited reach with new game hunters apart from issuing them with a licence and passively providing them with information on hunting laws. Should the government introduce mandatory testing prior to people obtaining a Game Licence, this will enhance the initial reach of the GMA for prospective game hunters, but it won't necessarily increase the ongoing reach of the GMA for the life of a game hunter.

Often game hunters source their knowledge from peers and industry who, in many cases are ill-informed and provide inaccurate or outdated information.

For the GMA to drive cultural change it needs to develop strong partnerships with industry to ensure they are informed and educated to provide correct advice and that any education programs or material is fit-for-purpose with a level of industry support.



Attending an industry information day

GOAL 5: STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

GMA will work with industry to build a positive game hunting culture through informed hunters

Action 5.1 (Engage)

Work with industry to develop appropriate training packages

The GMA will continue to engage industry in the development and implementation of all training programs. This follows the current model for the delivery of the *Gamebird Hunting Essentials Masterclass* which is delivered in partnership with the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (Victoria) and Field and Game Australia. This model also caters for specifically educating and informing industry.

Action 5.2 (Engage)

Engage with industry and work across government to develop a positive game hunting culture

The GMA will continue to engage with industry to improve hunting culture and compliance. The GMA, in partnership with other government agencies and industry, developed and implemented the RESPECT: Hunt Responsibly program. This program provides a banner to promote responsible hunting practices as well as providing hunters with practical tools to assist them to hunt responsibly.

GMA will continue to deliver this program with industry and look at innovative products and tools that can assist and educate hunters.

GMA will promote the RESPECT program across government as a vehicle for consistent messaging. In addition, GMA will work with other government agencies to increase their awareness of legal game hunting and where appropriate, provide opportunities for them to support the GMA in engagement programs.



GOAL 6: DEVELOP NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

GMA will increase market capture through broader education programs and community engagement

Action 6.1 (Educate)

Expand education programs to ensure a minimum level of understanding

Changing demographics have resulted in the need for broader education. Recent research conducted by the GMA through focus groups, indicated that there was a strong desire to be provided with information that educates them on general safety and skills required for responsible public land hunting. Although these programs don't necessarily address minimum legal knowledge, they provide more informed and educated hunters, resulting in an improved regulated environment.

The GMA consistent with information already presented in the *Game Hunting in Victoria Manual* will continue to develop and disseminate education material that increases baseline hunter knowledge of activities that are often associated with game hunting, such as boating and camping.

Action 6.2 (Engage)

Engage the broader community through exhibition of training and education programs

When conducting education and training programs, GMA will use the opportunities to maximise exposure and interaction with the broader community. This will assist in developing a more informed community. Regular interactions with rural groups will be continued through shows and agriculture days and attendance at regional workshops.

In the delivery of training programs, GMA will look at opportunities to showcase the course content to interested community members as well as providing them with the outcomes of any training.

GOAL 7: UNDERSTANDING HUNTER MOTIVATIONS

GMA will conduct research to better understand hunter behaviours

Action 7.1 (Enable)

Develop programs to understand the motivations of hunters

Understanding the motivations of hunters, including motivations that drive non-compliance, is essential to understanding what compliance tools are necessary to encourage compliance. Understanding motivations also informs what targeted and specific educational materials should be developed.

GMA will conduct research into licence holders to understand their baseline knowledge of game hunting laws and motivations behind compliance and non-compliance.

Action 7.2 (Reward):

Measure changes in attitudes over time

To understand the effectiveness of education and training programs it is important to measure changes in hunter behavior over time. If programs are effective, it is expected that behaviours would change supporting a positive and responsible hunting culture. Hunters will be rewarded through a strengthening of social licence.



Delivering Gamebird Hunting Essentials Masterclass

Element 3 – World class delivery

Throughout the world and other Australian jurisdictions, targeted and specific education and training programs are being implemented to achieve hunter compliance.

To maintain a contemporary education presence, the GMA will ensure its delivery and education content is consistent with other jurisdictions and international standards. Where there are gaps, the GMA will strive to produce world-leading programs delivered in a contemporary manner.

To maximise efficiency, the GMA will also look to partner with other agencies and jurisdictions in the production of education programs. This capitalises on small resource pools and leads to improved products compared to products developed in isolation. This was demonstrated in the successful production of the *DuckWISE DVD*, an educational learning tool that was developed in partnership with other Australian jurisdictions and delivered across four different states for all duck hunters required to sit a Waterfowl Identification Test. Taking learnings from other jurisdictions also allows the GMA to be better informed and targeted when implementing an educational response.



Stand at Wild Deer and Hunting Expo 2020

GOAL 8: USING CONTEMPORARY ENGAGEMENT METHODS

GMA will invest in delivery platforms that make education and training programs widely accessible

Action 8.1 (Enable)

Innovate education and training services through contemporary delivery

For education programs to be effective it's important to ensure that they are accessible to all and are not seen as a disproportionate barrier to people trying to become legal game hunters. To ensure education and training services are accessible, the GMA will continue to invest in contemporary delivery platforms.

The GMA is currently developing a cloud-based licensing system which will also host a Learning Management System that will allow access to education and training modules from any mobile and networked device. The GMA is also replacing previous fact sheets and written material with short educational videos and animations. This allows for easy dissemination, doesn't discriminate against poor literacy skills and provides a more visible and relatable medium.

GOAL 9: INTERNATIONAL ALIGNMENT

GMA will ensure education programs are best practice and consistent with international standards

Action 9.1 (Enable)

Produce world-leading education programs and align with international standards and accreditation

Victoria has consistently led other Australian jurisdictions in implementing education programs and driving changes in hunter behaviour. This has included campaigns such as 'Give Non-Toxic a Shot' which saw Victoria lead the way in removing the use of toxic shot from duck hunting, the development of the *Gamebird Hunting Essentials Masterclass* and the *Guidelines for Humane Dispatch of Downed Ducks*.

In these programs GMA and its predecessors have actively engaged with international experts to ensure world-class products. GMA is currently scoping the development of education modules that can be delivered through e-learning. GMA is working with other jurisdiction to ensure that where appropriate, modules will be accredited under the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA).

The mission of IHEA is to 'continue the heritage of hunting worldwide by developing safe, responsible, knowledgeable and involved hunters'.

GMA will continue to engage with experts both national and internationally when developing new education programs.

MOBILISING THE STRATEGY

To deliver against the Strategy, actions will be embedded in GMA Annual Business Plans and progress will be reported on in the GMA Annual Report.

The measures of success will be reviewed at the end of this strategy (2025) to understand our delivery in meeting the prescribed goals and inform continuous improvement to our approach to deliver effective education and training programs.



Mobile education program at Arbuckle Junction, Alpine National Park

