



GMA Board Charter

1 Legislation (Game Management Authority Act 2014)

Our primary Objective S 5 (a) is:

“to promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting in Victoria”

Our Guiding principles S 8 A are:

The Authority must have regard to the following principles when exercising its powers or performing its functions under this Act—

- (a) the principle of integrated decision-making, which means seeking to achieve government policy objectives through coordination between all levels of government and government agencies;
- (b) the principle of triple bottom-line assessment, which means an assessment of all the economic, social and environmental costs and benefits, taking into account externalities;
- (c) the principle of equity, which means—
 - (i) equity between persons irrespective of their—
 - (A) personal attributes including age, physical ability, ethnicity, culture, gender and financial situation; and
 - (B) location, including whether in a growth, urban, regional, rural or remote area; and
 - (ii) equity between generations by not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs;
- (d) the principle of an evidence-based approach, which means considering the best available information when making decisions;
- (e) the principle of stakeholder engagement and community participation, which means taking into account the interests of stakeholders and members of the local community in implementing appropriate processes for stakeholder engagement;
- (f) the principle of transparency, which means that members of the public should have access to reliable and relevant information in appropriate forms to facilitate a good understanding of game management issues and the process by which decisions in relation to game management are made.

2 Our purpose

Our purpose is:

“We regulate through education, research and enforcement to achieve sustainability and responsibility in game hunting in Victoria.”

3 Our vision

Our vision is:

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

4 Our values

Our values are:

- We respect each other and the commitment of all our stakeholders to their causes. This value is evident in the quality and diversity of our relationships with each other and with our stakeholders
- We act with integrity, courage and transparency by focusing tightly on our role as an impartial, predictable regulator on behalf of all Victorians
- We value expertise and advice based on sound science and direct experience
- We are always open to learning from and engaging with our stakeholders
- We aspire to excellence in our behaviour, our work and our outcomes.

5 Our Decision Making

We regulate in the public interest, that is on behalf of all Victorians. Game is part of the national and international biodiversity estate for which in Victoria we have an important stewardship responsibility that we take seriously, especially for the bird species which are endemic to Australia. The impact of hunting on non-game species, particularly those that are rare and threatened and habitat is also considered.

We utilise the best available science, based upon established, agreed methodologies and evidence. We carefully consider, analyse and apply judgment to the science in developing our advice. We do this consistent with our legislative responsibilities including the primary Objective and Guiding principles of the GMA Act outlined under 1 above.

6 Strategic Challenges

6.1 Stakeholder Engagement

Game hunting is a highly contested activity characterised by diverse and emotive views across the community with an emerging focus on environmental and animal welfare considerations. This makes effective consultation and engagement a challenge; making it difficult to progress changes that are beneficial to achieving sustainability and responsibility in hunting. This sometimes causes issues to spill over into the public arena and can result in misinformation being promulgated to the wider community. Creating productive relationships with stakeholders is critical to achieving sustainability and responsibility in game hunting and improved community understanding of game hunting regulation.

6.2 Sustainable and Responsible Hunting

Game hunting can have positive and negative impacts on the environment and the community's perception of hunting as a sustainable practice. Positive impacts are through the control of introduced species, ecological benefits through the habitat improvement efforts of hunting groups and the monitoring of game and related non-game species as a result of hunting; economic activity created by hunting, and social and mental welfare benefits experienced by hunters. Negative impacts include the deposit of lead and plastics used in hunting, adverse animal welfare outcomes, destruction and disturbance of protected species, amenity impacts on the environment and the community and dangerous behavior associated illegal hunting.

Maximizing the positive impacts while minimising the negative impacts is important to achieving the legislative mandate of sustainability and responsibility in game hunting.

6.3 Science and Research

GMA is committed to scientific evidence-based decision making. Conducting research and growing the

understanding of the complex biological, ecological, social and economic issues related to game hunting is crucial to ensuring game hunting is conducted sustainably and responsibly. However, available international and domestic research leaves some gaps in understanding important factors related to game hunting and species conservation.

Research is expensive and the GMA has finite resources available for monitoring and research activities which are critical to our objective of continuous innovation and improvement in game hunting outcomes. It will be important to carefully prioritize projects to address critical gaps in the knowledge base.

Leveraging the research funds, the GMA has available through partnerships with other organisations and institutions and taking advantage of funding opportunities will expand the amount of knowledge and understanding achieved. This will include engaging with traditional owners to utilize their knowledge of country and its animals.

6.4 Capability

Over recent years the GMA has built a solid resources base. Staff levels have increasing by 45% and the annual budget by 80%. There has been significant investment in systems, processes and training which ensure staff have capability and capacity to conduct the various developing roles required of the GMA. The contested nature of hunting, however, places a high level of scrutiny on the operations of the GMA. A continuous commitment to innovation, improved methods, and the development of efficient systems is required to meet the expectations the community has now and in the future of GMA's regulatory performance.

The GMA will continue to explore options to provide additional services to support Government policy where it is synergistic and does not detract from the GMA's legislative responsibilities.

7 Strategic Goals

7.1 Make evidence-based education a cornerstone of our work.

Key Result

Our educational programs are based on developing an understanding of hunter motivations, abilities and behaviours. They are designed and delivered on innovative and accessible platforms resulting in a measurable improvement in hunting standards and behaviour.

7.2 Monitor game animal abundance and harvest levels and undertake research to ensure hunting remains sustainable and adverse animal welfare outcomes and environmental impacts from hunting are minimised.

Key Result

Our research, and the application of a growing knowledge base ensures that hunting does not threaten native species populations and animal welfare and environmental impacts are reducing over time.

7.3 Be respected and recognised as an effective regulator

Key Result

We engage with stakeholders and make decisions based on the best available information and data to deliver on our statutory obligations with integrity and transparency.

7.4 Deliver risk-based and intelligence-led compliance programs.

Key Result

We are able to measure and improve compliance through an agile, innovative and risk-based approach delivered in partnership with the community and other agencies.

7.5 Become a learning organisation that pursues excellence and is focused on the safety and wellbeing of staff.

Key Result

We have the expertise and culture that delivers innovation, enables effective evaluation, operates with transparency, and demands that staff safety and wellbeing is at the forefront of all planning, activities and operations.