



Game Management Authority Annual Business Plan

2021 - 22

Table of Contents

Message from the Chair and CEO	1
1 Who we are	3
1.1 Our role	3
1.2 Our structure	3
1.3 Our people	4
1.4 Our stakeholders	6
1.5 Our partner agencies	6
1.6 Our focus	6
1.7 Our purpose	6
1.8 Our vision	6
1.9 Our values	6
2 Our regulatory functions.....	9
2.1 Our regulatory approach	9
3 Managing our risks	10
4 Risk in our operating environment.....	10
5 Our performance framework	11
6 Our business plan.....	11
7 Our Work Program in 2021 – 2024.....	12
8 2021-22 Budget.....	23
8.1 Financial risks and implications of financial projections	23
8.2 Savings and service delivery improvements	23
8.3 Mitigation strategies to manage the budget.....	25
8.4 Four-year budget forecast.....	25

Message from the Chair and CEO

On behalf of the Board, Executive and staff, we are pleased to present the Victorian Game Management Authority's (GMA) 2021-22 Annual Business Plan.

In recent years, the GMA has made significant improvements through a reform of its operational capability and practices. This reform was made possible by a \$1.5 million increase in annual funding to the GMA in 2019.

As part of its reform, the GMA restructured its operations and established a specific division to focus on strategy and research. The new Strategy and Research division analyses and gathers data and evidence on the abundance and distribution of game species, drivers of hunter behavior and the impact of hunting on game species.

Over the past three years the GMA has established regional offices in Lakes Entrance, Traralgon, Benalla, Bendigo and Ballarat. The majority of GMA staff are located in these regional offices giving a greater presence in the areas where hunting occurs. This is one component of the GMA Board's focus on building strong stakeholder relationships as a core objective. This will include engaging with hunters and the communities in which hunting occurs.

With the new structure in operation, the GMA is well positioned to continue improving compliance outcomes, increasing engagement with stakeholders, providing educational materials to hunters and building its research capability. Ensuring that game hunting is conducted in a sustainable and responsible way that is aligned with the GMA's statutory obligations is the guiding principle for all these activities.

The GMA commissioned the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research to develop a survey methodology to estimate the abundance of game ducks in Victoria. This is an important component as we move to meet the Government's commitment for the introduction of an adaptive harvest model for the setting of annual duck season arrangements. The implementation of the adaptive harvest model will provide robust data on waterbird populations and environmental conditions – and will be a valuable addition to the process for recommending sustainable duck season arrangements. The pilot survey was conducted in November of 2020 and an evaluation report identified some refinements that will be incorporated into the 2021 survey.

The GMA's new online Game Licence system (MyGL) went live in early 2021. The new system delivers a contemporary approach to game licensing in Victoria to the benefit of both hunters and the GMA. The development and implementation of the new system was a significant investment of \$3 million. This was funded from the reserves that the GMA had been building specifically for the development of an online game licensing system, since it was identified as a priority by the inaugural Board in 2014.

Beyond game hunting, the GMA is also now providing compliance services to the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) for the management of forest protests and the Kangaroo Harvest Program on a contract for service basis.

The increased funding and resources have enabled the GMA to continue to strengthen its compliance and research capability and allowed the GMA to upgrade its systems and equipment. The GMA will draw on some of its financial reserves to fund critical pieces of research to gather evidence to support and guide its activities and initiatives moving forward.

In addition to detailing the GMA's budget forecast, this business plan outlines the activities that the GMA will focus on for the next three years. This plan will position the GMA to deliver on its statutory responsibility to effectively promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting in Victoria.



Brian Hine
GMA Board Chair



Graeme Ford
GMA CEO

1 Who we are

1.1 Our role

The GMA is an independent statutory authority responsible for the regulation of game hunting in Victoria. It undertakes activities to promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting in Victoria.

Under the *Game Management Authority Act 2014*, the GMA is responsible for:

- issuing Game Licences, authorities and permits
- managing open and closed seasons for game species
- enforcing game hunting laws and taking action against those who do not hunt legally
- educating and informing hunters on how to hunt legally in Victoria.

The GMA also has an important advisory role in the management of natural resources across Victoria including:

- the sustainable harvest of game species
- the humane treatment of animals that are hunted and used in game hunting
- minimising any negative impacts on non-game wildlife, including protected and threatened species
- the conservation of wildlife habitats
- the environmental, social and economic impacts of game hunting and management.

We work with our partner agencies, including Parks Victoria (PV), the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR), Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA), Victoria Police, and the community to ensure that game hunting is sustainable, safe and humane.

1.2 Our structure

The GMA is accountable to the Minister for Agriculture and is governed by a Board. The Board's primary role is to ensure that the GMA fulfils its legislated functions effectively and complies with its governance framework.

The Board sets the strategic direction and business objectives of the GMA and ensures that these are consistent with the GMA's legislative and regulatory framework. This includes:

- setting and approving the strategic and annual business plans
- approving the GMA's annual report
- regularly reviewing major risks
- ensuring adequate risk management of all strategic business and operational risks
- providing recommendations to relevant Ministers
- reviewing internal financial and operational controls
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) selection, appointment, succession planning and performance assessment
- oversight of the management of the GMA by the CEO to ensure effective operation and a culture of compliance and best practice business performance in all areas of operational, financial, human resources, risk management and asset management.

The current Board has three committees: the Audit and Risk Management Committee, the Research Committee and the People and Culture Committee. Each year the board reviews the GMA's strategic directions including the Board's performance and committee structures.

The CEO manages the day-to-day operations of the GMA under the direction of the Board and is responsible for implementing the GMA's vision and delivering against the annual business plan.

1.3 Our people

The GMA recognises the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our people and provide workplaces where everyone feels valued and respected.

We are organised into four main business functions to deliver the projects and programs identified in this plan.

Stakeholder and Hunting Programs

The Stakeholder and Hunting Programs Division is focused on developing hunting stakeholder relationships and providing practical and useful advice, education, licensing and training to hunters, to increase voluntary compliance. This team maintains working relationships with industry and supports other GMA functions to manage open and closed seasons for game species, conduct field research and enforce game hunting laws.

Compliance and Intelligence

The Compliance and Intelligence Division's operational context incorporates a range of government policy and community drivers. This includes: departmental compliance and policies and systems; legislation and regulations; Ministerial Statement of Expectations; Victorian community expectations; other government agencies and regulators; political; social; economic; resource protection and values.

The GMA considers itself to be a risk-based, intelligence-led and outcomes-focused regulator with a strong emphasis on improved outcomes for the Victorian community.

Strategy and Research

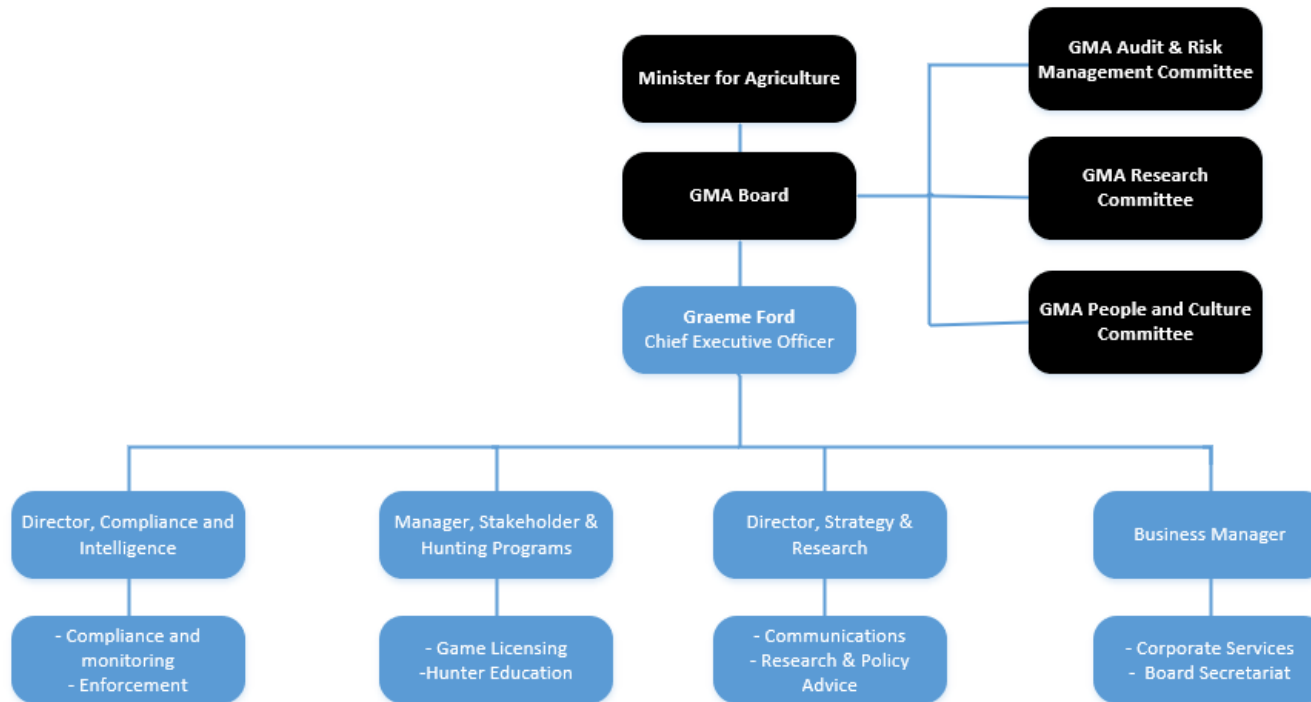
The Strategy and Research Division is responsible for developing advice for the Board and to government, providing communications and media services on behalf of the GMA, conducting and coordinating research, and monitoring the needs and performance of hunters, game harvesting and the impacts of hunting on game species.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Division supports the CEO in managing the day-to-day operations of the GMA, including finances, risk management, procurement, information technology, human resources, audits, assets and other corporate service functions. This team also assists in the operation of the Board and its committees by providing secretariat services.

Organisation Structure

GMA Organisation Chart



1.4 Our stakeholders

Game hunting has broad social, economic, environmental and cultural impacts on the Victorian community.

The GMA has diverse stakeholder relationships. We are often tasked with developing workable solutions to meet the expectations of stakeholders that sometimes exist at opposite ends of philosophical and social spectrums in relation to hunting native and non-native species. We understand the importance of listening to the views of our stakeholders about approaches to ensure that game hunting is managed sustainably and responsibly. Building trusted, engaged and respectful relationships is at the core of everything we do.

Our primary stakeholder is the Minister for Agriculture. We work with a broad range of stakeholders including state and federal government agencies and other public-sector entities, Game Licence holders, hunting, environment, animal welfare interest groups, Traditional Owners and the Victorian community.

We will continue to engage with our stakeholders through face-to-face meetings and workshops, attendance at shows, expos and demonstration days, interactions in the field, through our digital communication channels and written consultation.

1.5 Our partner agencies

Our key government partner agencies include Victoria Police, DJPR, PV, DELWP and the VFA.

1.6 Our focus

Our obligation under the *Game Management Authority Act 2014* is to promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting in Victoria. We will act as a modern regulator and work closely with the Victorian Government, our partner agencies and hunters to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and obligations. We will also work closely with communities across Victoria to promote responsibility and sustainability in game hunting and raise awareness of how to report illegal behavior including breaches to public safety and hunting laws.

We will promote compliance with the hunting laws and implement enforcement action where breaches are identified. By promoting compliance, we will ensure community safety and preserve the sustainability of game populations. The GMA will continue to drive the RESPECT: Hunt Responsibly program with stakeholders to help ensure the community has confidence that game hunting is conducted in a sustainable and responsible manner.

The GMA Charter outlines our purpose, vision, goal and five strategic goals that guide our business plans and the investment of our resources.

1.7 Our purpose

The Game Management Authority (GMA) regulates through education, research and enforcement to achieve sustainable and responsible game hunting in Victoria.

1.8 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.

1.9 Our values

Our work is made stronger by the values that guide it.

- We respect each other and the commitment of all our stakeholders to their work and their causes.
- 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

Goals	Key Result	Success Factors
<p>1. Make evidence-based education a cornerstone of our work.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategic approach to delivering targeted education to hunters and stakeholders • All licensed game hunters in Victoria to have a minimum level of understanding of the game hunting laws and good hunting practice • Our understanding of hunter motivations and behaviours to compliance with law and ethical practices grows • Develop a stronger culture of respect and responsibility among hunters.
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve our understanding of the population drivers and dynamics of native game species • Improve our understanding of adverse effects of hunting on game species populations • Encourage stakeholders to contribute to building a better understanding of game species populations • Improve our understanding of the impact of hunting practices on the environment and the community.
<p>3. Be respected and recognised as an effective regulator.</p>	<p>We make decisions based on the best available information and data to deliver on our statutory obligations with integrity and transparency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunting of game animals is conducted with improved animal welfare outcomes and with a reduction in illegal hunting incidents • Sustainability of the native game species populations is paramount to our advice and actions • Community concern about unlawful hunting activities reduces • The community is satisfied with the GMA's provision of information and with their engagement experience • Stakeholders from all perspectives are treated equally • Allied agencies understand the GMA's role • Provide transparent reporting on metrics.
<p>4. Deliver risk-based and intelligence-led compliance programs.</p>	<p>We are able to measure and improve compliance through an agile, innovative and risk-based approach delivered in partnership with the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve a high level of compliance with game hunting laws • Compliance operations are driven by intelligence with priority given to activities likely to cause the greatest harm • The GMA builds a strong understanding of the motivations for non-compliance • Where the potential harm is the greatest the GMA uses the full force of its powers as a deterrent • Stakeholder support for GMA's compliance activities increases

	community and other agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GMA has a >85% success rate with prosecutions.
5. Become a learning organisation that pursues excellence and is focused on the safety and wellbeing of staff	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GMA's systems and procedures meet or exceed government standards Each business unit meets its performance targets High-level staff job satisfaction Staff are trained and qualified to manage the risks inherent in their roles Workplace safety is a priority The GMA bases its advice to Government on evidence and where adequate data is unavailable, the risks of taking a particular course of action are included in the advice.

2 Our regulatory functions

Pursuant to Section 6 of the *Game Management Authority Act (Vic) 2014*, the functions of the GMA are to:

- a) perform the regulatory, investigative and disciplinary functions conferred on the GMA by or under this Act or any relevant law
- b) administer the scheme for issuing game licences under the *Wildlife Act 1975* in relation to hunting, taking or destroying game
- c) promote and monitor compliance with this Act or any relevant law in relation to game hunting
- d) investigate compliance with this Act and any relevant law in relation to game hunting
- e) develop operational plans and procedures addressing:
 - (i) the sustainable hunting of game animals
 - (ii) the humane treatment of animals that are hunted or used in hunting
 - (iii) strategies to minimise any negative impact on non-game wildlife, including protected and threatened wildlife
 - (iv) the conservation of wildlife habitats
- f) work with public land managers to improve the management of public land and facilities on public land where hunting is permitted
- g) promote sustainability and responsibility in game hunting
- h) monitor, conduct research and analyse the environmental, social and economic impacts of game hunting and game management
- i) make recommendations to relevant Ministers in relation to:
 - (i) game hunting and game management
 - (ii) the control of pest animals
 - (iii) declaring public land open or closed to game hunting, open and closed seasons and bag limits
 - (iv) the management of public and private land as it relates to game and their habitat.

The GMA has the powers necessary to exercise and perform its functions under its governing Act or any other relevant Act. The GMA is also subject to written directions provided by the Minister for Agriculture.

2.1 Our regulatory approach

Our regulatory approach is to work across the compliance spectrum from education and the provision of information to enforcement action. Where people wish to be compliant, the GMA will endeavour to assist them to achieve compliance; where deliberate non-compliance is a problem, the GMA will actively enforce the law.

The approach taken in these activities is risk-based targeting those areas of greatest risk for non-compliance and harm to the community. The GMA delivers its regulatory obligations by considering:

- our legislative requirements as provided for under the *Game Management Authority Act (2014)*, *Public Administration Act (Vic) 2004*, the *Wildlife Act 1975* and relevant regulations
- the Minister for Agriculture's Statement of Expectations, which elaborates on the requirement for the GMA to meet its statutory obligations in a manner that is consistent with Victorian Government policies and guidelines
- the GMA's Strategic Charter outlines the work and activities that will be performed by the GMA to meet its legislative obligations
- Our Policy Framework, which includes a range of policies and procedures that outline our core governance, actions and responsibilities.

3 Managing our risks

The GMA identifies, prioritises and mitigates risk through an Risk Management Framework, aligned to the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework. Embedded into the risk management process is an ongoing focus on key areas of strategic risk identified by the GMA Board, including:

- Governance – ensuring that the GMA operates in a way that meets the standards of diligence and probity expected of a government body.
- Statutory reporting – ensuring that the GMA meets its legislative and regulatory responsibilities.
- Occupational health and safety – ensuring that the GMA provides a workplace that cares for the physical and psychological health and safety of its staff.
- Reputation – ensuring that the GMA is effective, fair, consistent, transparent, meets community expectations and treats all private data with the strictest confidence and highest security.
- Financial – ensuring that the GMA manages its finances diligently and sustainably.
- Regulatory – ensuring that the GMA’s compliance and enforcement activities cover the breadth of the compliance spectrum from education for voluntary compliance, through to enforcement action. Enforcement is guided by intelligence and targeted at the activities posing the highest risk of harm. This approach will ensure compliance activities are conducted efficiently, consistently and effectively to reduce the likelihood and consequence of non-compliance.
- Stakeholder relationships – ensuring the GMA maintains effective relationships across government, stakeholders and the community.

Key areas identified above form the categories of the Strategic Risk Register, which includes controls/mitigation strategies and a responsible person for managing each risk.

The Board considers the Strategic Risk Register at each meeting, approves amendments to the risk management framework and monitors the effectiveness of the risk management.

On an annual basis the Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) and the Strategic Risk Register is reviewed by the Board to ensure it remains current and enhanced, as required to comply with requirements under the Standing Directions 2018.

4 Risk in our operating environment

There are two significant macro level risks in the operating environment for game hunting:

- Social – the focus on hunting and the activism of those opposed to hunting will continue to challenge the community’s acceptance of hunting as a recreational and commercial activity.
- Environment – a changing climate is creating a set of challenges that, over time, are likely to impact on game species and game hunting practices. Reducing negative impacts on the environment and on human health caused by hunting is also important.

From the social perspective, there are some sections of the community that actively oppose game hunting. For game hunting to maintain a social licence, a well-regulated hunting community needs to demonstrate that hunting meets the broader Victorian community’s expectations of acceptable practice. The community expects that adverse animal welfare impacts are minimised and that hunters have the education and skill required to achieve this. The GMA is undertaking research and education to improve animal welfare outcomes and provide advice to government on areas of necessary regulatory reform. As the regulator, the GMA applies a compliance approach that aims to maximise voluntary compliance through educating and informing hunters of their legal obligations and good hunting practice. We also apply targeted enforcement action to effectively address breaches to hunting laws and regulations.

From the environment perspective, a drying climate and changes in land management practices are impacting on the range and abundance of game species. For native waterfowl and Stubble Quail, these changes appear to be negatively

impacting populations. Managing the sustainability of native game duck and Stubble Quail hunting will require dedicated research to strengthen our scientific understanding of population dynamics and the direct relationship between populations and the environment. This will include gathering science-based evidence about the fluctuations of game duck and Stubble Quail populations in response to climatic conditions and the impact hunting has on populations. Minimising the risks associated with game hunting on non-game native species, particularly those that are threatened or vulnerable, requires active management.

The challenge with deer is the possible risk of populations increasing to the point of causing increased environmental and economic damage. In this case, well-regulated hunting may be one valuable tool that could contribute to controlling deer populations.

Some materials used in hunting equipment can be a source of environmental pollution and impact on human health if not managed effectively. Plastics associated with gamebird hunting shotgun cartridges can pollute wetlands and waterways and pose a risk to other wildlife and act as a source of microplastics. Lead shot used in shotgun cartridges for Stubble Quail and non-indigenous gamebirds and lead in bullets used in deer hunting can be a source of environmental pollution, poison non-target species that consume lead from carcass remains or pose a threat to human health if ingested in game meat. The GMA will conduct research into some of these impacts, raise awareness among the hunting community and promote the use of more environmentally sensitive alternatives and provide advice to government on the need for regulatory reform where required.

5 Our performance framework

The GMA has several election commitments and obligations that shape our work, our priorities and where we allocate our resources. The Minister's Statement of Expectations is a key driver of our work, along with government election and budget commitments, and commitments contained in key government strategic documents, such as the Sustainable Hunting Action Plan.

These documents, together with the GMA's Charter, set the priorities to be addressed in our annual business plan. The GMA reports on its progress in its annual reports, which are tabled in Parliament and published on our website.

6 Our business plan

In fulfilling our statutory responsibilities, the GMA is guided by the five strategic goals, with supporting "key result" areas. These strategic goals are underpinned by our vision that game hunting in Victoria meets community expectations as a sustainable and well-regulated activity based on science and conducted in a responsible manner.

These strategic goals guide the investment of our resources into areas of priority. For each goal and key result area, we identify what success looks like, our performance indicators, strategies to achieve success and the timeframe for delivery.

The next section documents the GMA's business plan deliverables for the 2021 – 22 financial year through to 2023-24.

7 Our Work Program in 2021 – 2024

Goal 1 **Make evidence-based education a cornerstone of our work**

Key result

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

		Performance Measure		
Success	Actions	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
We apply a strategic approach to delivering targeted and relevant education to hunters and stakeholders	1. Develop and implement an Education Strategy that directs education and training programs for the next five years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Learning Management System with online education and testing functionality is developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% of Game Licence holders have accessed online education modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of Game Licence holders have accessed online education modules
	2. Development of a new game licensing system to better interact with game licence holders and allow online learning modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35% of all Game Licence holders have an account with MyGL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of all Game Licence holders have an account with MyGL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of all Game Licence holders have an account with MyGL
	3. Develop and deliver against an education and engagement calendar, ensuring GMA has a presence at major expos and in-field education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three major hunting and industry field-days/expos are attended Four major multi-day education events held >150 hunters engaged in-field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three major hunting and industry field-days/expos are attended Four major education events held >200 hunters engaged in-field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four major hunting and industry field-days/expos are attended Six major education events held >300 hunters engaged in-field

Our understanding of hunter motivations, behaviors and ability to comply with the law and ethical practices grows	1. Study to understand reasons for non-compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a study to monitor the reason for hunter offending and publish the findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and commence implementation of a plan to monitor and improve levels of hunter compliance 	
All licensed game hunters in Victoria understand the game hunting laws and good hunting practices	1. All new licence holders are provided with introductory education material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Game Hunting in Victoria</i> manual is updated and re-formatted to support new online education modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated <i>Game Hunting in Victoria</i> manual is made available to all new Game Licence applicants 	
	2. Existing licence tests are revised and delivered through an interactive online platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of new duck and hound hunters undertake e-learning modules prior to booking in a respective test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of new duck and hound hunters undertake e-learning prior to sitting a test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of remote testing commences.
	3. Develop and implement new mandatory Game Licence testing for all new licence holders, in consultation with stakeholders, for incorporation into new online platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder forum held to develop content framework for Game Licence tests Six online core educational and testing modules developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% of all new Game Licence applicants' voluntary access online education modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new Game Licence applicants complete online education and testing
	4. Requirements and practicality of delivering in-field testing of game hunters are researched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish report on effectiveness of proficiency testing of Game Licence holders Hold stakeholder forum on proficiency testing Develop proficiency test for Game Licence holders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with industry to deliver proficiency testing and courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proficiency course finalised and produced
A culture of respect for ethical hunting practices and the	1. Engage with industry and work across government to develop a positive game hunting culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twelve industry venues are attended by staff and provided with GMA educational material for dissemination to the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twelve industry venues are attended by staff and provided with GMA educational material for dissemination to the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixteen industry venues are attended by staff and provided with GMA educational material for dissemination to the public

hunting laws is fostered among hunters.	2. World-leading education programs that align with international standards and accreditation are produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder forum held to develop content framework for Game Licence tests Research international approaches to hunter education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minimum of two education modules are accredited with International Hunter Education Association Eight online e-learning modules are produced and published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test components for all relevant e-learning modules are published and made mandatory for all new Game Licence applicants
	3. Maintain the RESPECT: Hunt Responsibly program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review RESPECT program incorporating stakeholder and partner views Hold one workshop with program partners with an emphasis on animal welfare, reducing environmental impacts and a compliant hunting culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold one workshop with program partners to review the existing program, develop the next year's work program and implement it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold one workshop with program partners to review the existing program, develop the next year's work program and implement it

Goal 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.

		Performance Measure		
Success	Actions	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
GMA implements a range of effective programs across the compliance spectrum to ensure hunters are knowledgeable, informed, capable and compliant	1. Contemporary engagement methods will be used to make education programs widely accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the finding of the Hunters' Knowledge Survey to identify areas of weakness and develop a program to address knowledge gaps Implement strategy for delivery of information to Game Licence holders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% of Game Licence holders access GMA information material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of Game Licence holders access GMA information material
	2. Develop innovative products and tools that can assist and educate hunters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six educational video clips are developed for inclusion in online training modules An education package for junior licence holders is developed and distributed to all juniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% of Game Licence holders access GMA information material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of Game Licence holders access GMA information material
	3. Provide access to interactive education modules that inform hunters of expected behaviour and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary education modules covering topics such as firearms basics and survival skills, is made available through an online platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% of new Game Licence applicants complete voluntary online education modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40% of new Game Licence applicants complete online educational modules

Improve our understanding of the population drivers and dynamics of native game species	1. Implement adaptive harvest management (AHM) for waterfowl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations from game duck monitoring program evaluation report Conduct aerial and ground surveys to inform AHM population model and contribute to duck season deliberations Contribute to development of AHM framework and harvest strategy led by DJPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct aerial and ground surveys to inform AHM population model and contribute to duck season deliberations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review AHM abundance monitoring program to determine if refinements are required
	2. Implement Stubble Quail abundance and distribution monitoring and other research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the experimental design for quail abundance and distribution monitoring with an emphasis on walked transect sampling Implement a trial Stubble Quail abundance and distribution monitoring program Commence a trial wing collection program to age and sex Stubble Quail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Stubble Quail abundance and distribution monitoring program Implement broad quail wing collection program to study quail demographics Review approach to Stubble Quail population monitoring and adjust as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Stubble Quail abundance and distribution monitoring program Implement broad quail wing collection program to study quail demographics Partner with a university to use satellite and radio telemetry to monitor fine-scale movements, habitat use and refuge areas for Stubble Quail Commission experimental design of a program to model quail abundance and distribution in response to environmental drivers
Improve our understanding of the impacts of hunting on game species populations and sustainable take	1. Review the wetland closure process to ensure it is risk-based and effective to protect non-target wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the watch list of wetlands where rare and threatened species regularly occur Hold a stakeholder workshop and develop management closure guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the watch list of wetlands where rare and threatened species regularly occur Engage hunting and conservation groups to monitor known threatened species hotspots prior to the season and post results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the watch list of wetlands where rare and threatened species regularly occur Engage hunting and conservation groups to monitor known threatened species hotspots prior to the season and post results
	2. Monitor annual game harvests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce annual harvest reports for game birds and deer Review annual game harvesting surveys, including questions, data collection methodology and implications of existing data for seasonal arrangements Undertake annual wing collection programs and include data in population models for ducks and quail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce annual harvest reports for game birds and deer Undertake annual wing collection programs and include data in population models for ducks and quail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce annual harvest reports for game birds and deer Undertake annual wing collection programs and include data in population models for ducks and quail

Encourage stakeholders to contribute to building a better understanding of game species populations and the impacts on hunting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite hunters and other stakeholders to participate in existing/newly implemented research projects 2. Disseminate results of research to stakeholders (via targeted comms, annual or biannual research forum or Webinars) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game Licence holders and stakeholders involved in research / monitoring to complement helicopter game duck monitoring Game Licence holders contribute to bullet efficacy and hound metrics research Research outcomes made public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game Licence holders and stakeholders involved in research / monitoring to complement helicopter game duck monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game Licence holders and stakeholders involved in research / monitoring to complement helicopter game duck monitoring
Improve our understanding of the impact of hunting practices on the environment and the community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess the magnitude of toxic material deposition and pollution caused by hunting and investigate strategies to ameliorate these effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with the EPA, RMIT and Melbourne University to investigate Stubble Quail exposure to agricultural toxicants Undertake research into the effectiveness of non-lead projectiles in harvesting deer Provide advice to DJPR on possible regulatory reform to reduce the impact of lead and plastics from hunting on the environment Encourage hunters to consider using non-polluting ammunition, reduce wounding-type behaviours and maintain a culture of compliance through the RESPECT: Hunt Responsibly program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct research into the impact of hunting on regional communities and residents Undertake stage 2 of the stakeholder sentiment survey by surveying regional communities to understand their perceptions of GMA's performance 	

Goal 3 Be respected and recognised as an effective regulator

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

		Performance Measure		
Success	Actions	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Hunting of game animals is conducted sustainably, with improved animal welfare outcomes and	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement a waterfowl wounding reduction action plan and consider wounding rates in other game species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wounding monitoring program commenced Waterfowl wounding reduction working group established and Action Plan prepared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wounding monitoring program continues Conduct research into shots fired per harvested duck Implement actions from the wounding reduction action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wounding monitoring program continues Publish a report quantifying the frequency of embedded pellets in Victorian waterfowl Publish at least one paper on the frequency of embedded pellets in game ducks in a peer-reviewed journal

with a reduction in illegal hunting incidents			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise hunter harvest survey to include questions on perceived wounding losses for all game species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of at least one paper in a peer-reviewed research journal Develop proficiency testing frameworks Game Licence holders for implementation in response to any regulatory reforms
	2. Contribute to regulatory reform to contribute to the safe, sustainable and humane hunting of game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the development of replacement regulations for the Wildlife (Game) Regulations 2012 Develop education material/ advice for hunters and stakeholders on any changed regulations Provide advice on animal welfare legislative reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and address levels of compliance with any changed legislation/ regulations Implement animal welfare reforms as required in conjunction with responsible policy agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use intelligence holdings to target areas of non-compliance
	3. Measure the impact of quail callers used in hunting of Stubble Quail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Deakin University in research into the effectiveness of quail callers. Complete research study and publish results Provide advice to government as required on findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement any regulatory reforms for the use of quail callers, including enforcement if required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the effectiveness of the regulatory reforms, including targeted enforcement activities
	4. Implement an effective process for the reporting of illegal hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an advertising campaign to promote community reporting of illegal hunting Review the quality of reports provided to the GMA website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the response to the report illegal hunting advertising campaign, including the number and quality of reports provided to the GMA website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the mechanisms by in which community can continue to report illegal hunting
Government has confidence in the work of the GMA	1. GMA meets requirements of Statement of Expectations (SoE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil variances from SoE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil variances from SoE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil variances from SoE.
	2. Work with our regulatory partners and build relationships to extend our reach and impact on illegal hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 GMA led operations have inter-agency support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 GMA led operations have inter-agency support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 GMA led operations have inter agency support
Community concern about unlawful hunting activities reduces	1. Develop a categorisation system for the level of severity of community complaints about unlawful hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public reporting on complaints of unlawful hunting include number of complaints according to community risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the categorisation system to ensure it is appropriate and accurately captures the severity of community complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A decline in community complaints of the highest risk unlawful hunting activities

The community is satisfied with the GMA's provision of information and with their engagement experience	1. Conduct stakeholder surveys to better understand stakeholder perspectives and inform improved stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and implement a program to address findings of the stakeholder sentiment survey ▪ 60% stakeholder satisfaction with GMA engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 75% stakeholder satisfaction with GMA engagement. ▪ The GMA's reputation as an effective regulator is monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The GMA's reputation as an effective regulator is monitored
Stakeholders from all perspectives are treated equally	1. Stakeholders from across the spectrum of views on game hunting are effectively engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and implement Stakeholder Engagement Strategy that addresses the engagement approach to different types of stakeholders. ▪ Traditional owners are effectively engaged ▪ GMA Staff are trained in the application of the Stakeholder strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traditional owners are surveyed for the effectiveness of GMA's engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommendations from review of Traditional Owner engagement implemented
Allied agencies understand the GMA's role	1. Establish a high-level environment regulators community of practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forums conducted twice yearly ▪ Conduct a minimum of 8 multi agency operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct a minimum of 10 multi agency operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct a minimum of 14 multi agency operations
Transparent reporting on metrics is provided to the community	1. In consultation with stakeholders determine relevant reporting metrics, which are publicly available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a new dashboard incorporating interactive elements ▪ Aim to achieve at least 60% community satisfaction of the reporting system for the period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aim to achieve at least 75% community satisfaction for the reporting period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the reporting dashboard to ensure it is meeting community expectations
Partnerships are developed to clarify our role and amplify our effectiveness	1. Establish partnership agreements confirming GMA's role and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and revise 50% previously signed partnership agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and revise the remaining 50% previously signed partnership agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify further opportunities to put in place formal partnership agreements

Goal 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.

		Performance Measure		
Success	Actions	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Continuous improvement in compliance with game hunting laws	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen voluntary compliance through targeted activities in line with our compliance strategy/priorities Education campaigns aimed at building awareness of the relevant laws and how hunters can comply Game Bird Farms are audited annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information and education to those seeking it and those already participating in game hunting Record and track recommendations resulting from game bird farm audits to ensure implementation <15% in variance from relevant standard in audits/ inspections of game bird farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <15% reduction in variance from standard in audits/ inspections of game bird farms 70% of new game licence applicants pass new test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the progress of the implementation of previous recommendations
Compliance operations are driven by intelligence with priority given to activities likely to cause the greatest harm to the community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Drive a culture of capturing and committing information and intelligence to Information Reports (IR's) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the findings of research into illegal hunting in Victoria conducted by UNE and the Centre for Rural Criminology and develop a response plan Further 25% increase in IR's submitted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further 25% increase in IR's submitted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed review of the highest levels of harms reported and captured over the previous 2 business years
The GMA builds a strong understanding of the contributors to deliberate non-compliance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Effective use of intelligence to highlight reasons for deliberate non-compliance Statistical analysis drives compliance operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review data on non-compliance for trends, geographic, species hunted, hunter demographic, hunting practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update data analysis annually and develop compliance plans utilising the data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness of the targeted compliance operations, i.e. IR's/ community complaints

Where the potential for harm is the greatest, the GMA uses the full force of its powers as a deterrent	1. GMA activities are prioritised according to the level of risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 operations targeting the highest level of risk, i.e. illegal spotlighting, are undertaken Seizure of equipment, including vehicles/ firearms, etc is reported publicly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 operations targeting the highest level of risk, i.e. illegal spotlighting, are undertaken. Seizure of equipment, including vehicles/ firearms, etc is reported publicly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 operations targeting the highest level of risk, i.e. illegal spotlighting, are undertaken Seizure of equipment, including vehicles/ firearms, etc is reported publicly
Stakeholder support for GMA's compliance activities increases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the regional communities to understand their issues Encourage stakeholders to report illegal activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 GMA led operations have inter-agency support Conduct 6 regional forums where the community is invited to attend 60% of regional community's members surveyed are satisfied with the GMA's activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct 8 regional forums where the community is invited to attend 75% of regional community's surveyed are satisfied with the GMA's activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct 10 regional forums where the community is invited to attend Community roadshows conducted highlighting the effectiveness of community reports

Goal 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.

		Performance Measure		
Success	Actions	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
GMA adopts a culture of continuous improvement and challenges status quo	1. Conduct biannual Board and staff planning day to ensure strategies are aligned with appropriate actions Programs to drive a 'One GMA' culture are developed and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of staff undertake professional development Program to recognise staff demonstrating GMA values. Staff survey of One GMA shows 80% satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of staff undertake professional development Program to recognise staff demonstrating GMA values. Staff survey of One GMA shows 85% satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of staff undertake professional development Program to recognise staff demonstrating GMA values. Staff survey of One GMA shows 90% satisfaction
GMA monitors international developments in best practice approaches to hunting regulation and	1. Monitoring of international literature/scientific/regulatory papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International engagement strategy prepared for Board approval. Twice yearly report on relevant international papers presented to staff and Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide 6 relevant information, journal articles, research reports to the Board and staff GMA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide 8 relevant information, journal articles, research reports to the Board and staff

implements or leads in these				
GMA's systems and procedures meet and exceed government standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure GMA record management system is at an appropriate standard Develop and implement an Internal Communications Strategy to ensure staff are aware of activities, programs and initiatives across the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate and enhance the SharePoint online site for team collaboration with 100% of staff actively using ▪ Evaluate effectiveness of the Internal Communications Strategy and incorporate actions to improve internal communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review systems and processes against recommended best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review systems and processes against recommended best practice
Each business unit measures and meets its performance targets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a quarterly performance report to the Board, to monitor and evaluate the progress of each business unit Ensure each business unit's performance target is embedded in annual work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Divisions are meeting 75% of performance targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Divisions are meeting 90% of performance targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Divisions are meeting 90% of performance targets
High-level of staff job satisfaction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff collaborate well across different business units 2. Encourage staff to complete the annual People Matter Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People Matter Survey results show 80% staff satisfaction ▪ Less than 10% annual turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People Matter Survey results show 85% staff satisfaction ▪ Less than 10% annual turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People Matter Survey results show 90% staff satisfaction ▪ Less than 10% annual turnover ▪ Average time worked at GMA is > 3 years
Staff are trained and qualified to manage the risks inherent in their roles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff training programs targeted at high priority areas 2. Ensure risk management is covered at new starter induction day 3. Engage a qualified provider to provide annual risk refresher training to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake Health, Safety and Wellbeing Audit of organisation ▪ Create staff training matrix including risk management in their roles ▪ Ensure staff's annual performance plan contain risk management embedded ▪ Minimum of one risk management training session is provided annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct a formal review of staff risks and implement changes where required ▪ Minimum of one risk management training session is provided ▪ 100% of field staff have undertaken training as documented in training matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of field staff have maintained required training as documented in training matrix

Workplace safety is a priority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create an effective 'safety first' culture including mental and physical wellbeing within the GMA 2. All hazards and incidents/near misses are recorded, and hazards are considered for rectification/learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lost time due to injury (including wellbeing issues) less than 5 days per annum. ▪ No reports of bullying or harassment ▪ A safety vision is defined ▪ An Action Plan is developed to address recommendations from Health, Safety and Wellbeing Audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lost time due to injury (including wellbeing issues) less than 5 days per annum. ▪ No reports of bullying or harassment ▪ 100% of accepted recommendations from Health, Safety and Wellbeing Audit are implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lost time due to injury (including wellbeing issues) less than 5 days per annum. ▪ No reports of bullying or harassment
The GMA bases its advice to Government on evidence and where adequate data is unavailable the risks of taking particular courses of action is included in the advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GMA undertakes strategic research to meet its statutory obligations to ensure hunting remains safe and sustainable and animal welfare outcomes are maximised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three research projects commenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One research project completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two research projects completed
The Board implements changes to improve its performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board's Governance framework is reviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Board monitors the achievement of strategic objectives ▪ Board Directors undertake yearly professional development course to enhance skills matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Board ensures organisational performance continues to improve ▪ Board Directors undertake yearly professional development course to enhance skills matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Board ensures organisational performance continues to improve ▪ Board Directors undertake yearly professional development course to enhance skills matrix

8 2021-22 Budget

The GMA has prepared its forecast budget for 2021-22 based on delivering those actions, projects and programs identified in Section 7 Work Program and to support its operation as an independent statutory authority.

8.1 Financial risks and implications of financial projections

The 2021-22 budget has been prepared with consideration given to delivering the work program and the continued implementation of several reforms across its operations. The GMA is not reliant on funding through the revenue collected on game licences and therefore would not anticipate any financial risks in relation to forecast revenue. However, the coronavirus (COVID-19) is impacting all areas of Government and increases the uncertainty of forward revenue streams.

A majority of the GMA's operating expenses relate to staff salaries and associated staff cost.

The GMA has implemented a new contemporary online Game Licence System (MyGL). This is a relatively significant investment with the nature of the software development process posing some risk of cost increases. This risk has been minimised through an extensive design and procurement process. The ongoing risk is managed by daily oversight of the contract and formal monitoring by a project control board. Expenses are monitored through reporting provided to the Board and the GMA anticipates no significant risk post system implementation.

In 2021-22 a significant investment will be committed to research.

Our budget will provide for the following:

- Transparent best practice governance and delivery of the GMA's functions as described in the *Game Management Authority Act 2014*
- Compliance with all requirements of the *Public Administration Act 2004* and the *Financial Management Act 1994* (the FMA Act) and the Department of Treasury and Finance's Standing Directions 2016
- External audits under the direction of the Victorian Auditor General's Office and the appointment of internal auditors as required under the *FMA Act*
- Meeting legal obligations in relation to the health and safety of our staff and community safety
- Advice to Ministers on game hunting and game management matters
- Mitigating all risks identified by the GMA against the Victorian Risk Management Framework
- Administering licences and authorisations and the development of a new online Game Licence system
- Research to develop greater understanding of environmental impacts from game hunting, data analysis and stock assessments
- Compliance activities, including surveillance, intelligence, inspections, audits and education
- Game Licence Test Education module
- Equipping staff with the necessary equipment and training to undertake their duties, including an investment in new technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of staff operating in the field
- Working with DJPR to facilitate meeting the Department's Budget Paper 3 objectives and outputs in relation to the GMA (i.e. - *Key statutory obligations relevant to the Game Management Authority complied with (tabling annual report, audits, business plan and board appointments – 100 per cent met).*

8.2 Savings and service delivery improvements

The GMA continues to apply cost effective options in regional office accommodation to reduce its operating costs and improve service delivery and working conditions for staff.

Operating Statement	2021-22
Grants	8,262,565
Interest on Reserves	29,252
Total Revenue	8,291,817
Employee Related Expenses	4,770,309
Communications	100,000
General Expenses	100,800
IT Expenses	285,000
IT Education (annual licence)	80,000
Game Licensing System (annual licence)	244,000
Occupancy and Property Holding Costs	235,000
Office Expenses	146,150
Personal & Travel Costs	106,500
Purchase of Services from Government	286,600
Staff Related Expenses	146,040
Vehicle & Equipment Expenses	206,509
Sub-Total	6,706,908
Amortisation	155,000
Depreciation	525,000
Agency staff, Contractors, Consultancies	328,000
Research Projects	1,009,000
Total Expenses	8,723,908
Net Result	-432,091

8.3 Mitigation strategies to manage the budget

The GMA has established a financial reserves policy, which ensures the GMA holds a minimum financial reserve at a prudent level that meets the requirements of the fiscal responsibility of Directors in maintaining an ability to pass a 'going concern' test. This is to ensure that the GMA has sufficient financial reserves to cover outstanding financial commitments and obligations. The appropriate level of financial reserves will be reviewed twice per year and where the current reserves are outside of a positive or negative 10 per cent variance of financial obligations, steps will be taken to bring the variance back into compliance with the policy. For example, if reserves fall below the target range, the GMA will take action to cut costs and/or increase revenue.

The GMA has an Audit and Risk Management Committee (A&RMC) to assist the Board in its governance, risk management and financial reporting responsibilities. The A&RMC provides oversight and review, and makes recommendations to the Board in relation to:

- overall policy direction of the audit compliance and risk management function
- effective management of financial and non-financial risks as directed by the board
- compliance with relevant laws, regulations and codes
- compliance with the Authority's policies
- timely, accurate and reliable financial reporting
- reviewing the external auditors annual report and management letter; and
- reviewing and monitoring the internal control framework.

The A&RMC meets a minimum of four times a year and reviews the CFO's financial report prior to Board approval. Questions raised by members of the A&RMC are addressed and resolved if required, prior to the Board approving financial reports.

In addition, regular management reports are provided to the GMA executives and the Senior Management Team. Any identified budget risks are highlighted in consultation with the CEO and A&RMC to enable appropriate planning. Mitigation strategies are also developed to prevent further escalation of budget risks.

8.4 Four-year budget forecast

In 2019-20, GMA received \$6 million over four years from Government to increase our workforce by 30% to greater expand our footprint and serve the community across Victoria.

The forecast revenue takes into consideration expiry of operational funds provided by Government (\$1.5 million over four years from 2019-20) and expiry of additional services provided by GMA under a Service Level Agreement, such as Forest Protest Management.

The proposed expenses in the forecast years are reduced to reflect the decreased income in 2023-24 to 2024-25. The assumption in the outyears mainly relates to reduction in employee related expenses, domestic travel and general operational costs if operational funds were not renewed.

The following tables provide the four-year budget projection, financial position and cash position based on the GMA's current approved funding allocation.

Deficit budgets have been prepared for the next four years as reserves are drawn down to the level established under the Reserves Policy.

Operating Statement	Four Year Budget Projection			
	\$ 2021-22	\$ 2022-23	\$ 2023-24	\$ 2024-25
Grants	8,262,565	8,271,981	6,456,886	6,123,315
Interest on Reserves	29,252	27,968	27,964	26,913
Total Revenue	8,291,817	8,299,949	6,484,850	6,150,228
Employee Related Expenses	4,770,309	4,889,567	3,077,806	3,154,751
Communications	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
General Expenses	100,800	100,800	7,800	7,800
IT Expenses	285,000	285,000	285,000	285,000
IT Education (annual licence)	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Game Licensing System (annual licence)	244,000	244,000	244,000	244,000
Occupancy and Property Holding Costs	235,000	235,000	235,000	235,000
Office Expenses	146,150	147,612	149,088	150,578
Personal & Travel Costs	106,500	106,500	81,500	81,500
Purchase of Services from Government	286,600	286,600	286,600	286,600
Staff Related Expenses	146,040	147,500	80,975	80,975
Vehicle & Equipment Expenses	206,509	208,574	210,659	212,766
Sub-Total	6,706,908	6,831,153	4,838,429	4,918,971
Amortisation	155,000	155,000	155,000	155,000
Depreciation	525,000	525,000	525,000	525,000
Agency staff, Contractors, Consultancies	328,000	334,560	341,251	348,076
Research Projects	1,009,000	907,000	982,000	822,000
Total Expenses	8,723,908	8,752,713	6,841,680	6,769,048

Four Year Financial Position Projection				
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Assets	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Financial assets				
Cash and deposits	7,088,673	6,991,909	6,991,079	6,728,260
Receivables	650,093	750,093	750,093	750,093
Total financial assets	7,738,766	7,742,002	7,741,172	7,478,353
Non-financial assets				
Right of use- office lease	831,181	708,293	602,083	570,163
Game Licensing System	2,080,569	1,783,345	1,486,121	1,188,897
Office Fit out	483,541	398,140	312,739	227,338
Plant and equipment (inc MV)	1,023,830	746,941	486,781	226,621
Total non-financial assets	4,419,121	3,636,719	2,887,723	2,213,018
Total assets	12,157,888	11,378,721	10,628,896	9,691,372
Liabilities				
Right of use- office lease	886,951	728,029	580,377	426,918
Payables	1,148,116	1,140,000	1,140,000	1,140,000
Borrowings	355,000	270,564	186,128	101,692
Provisions	1,191,465	1,331,465	1,471,465	1,611,465
Total liabilities	3,581,532	3,470,058	3,377,970	3,280,075
Net assets	8,576,356	7,908,663	7,250,926	6,411,297
Equity				
Accumulated surplus	8,576,356	7,908,663	7,250,926	6,411,297
Net worth	8,576,356	7,908,663	7,250,926	6,411,297

Cashflow Statement	Four Year Cash Position Projection			
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Cash flows from operating activities				
Receipts received Government	8,262,565	8,271,981	6,456,886	6,123,315
Interest received	29,252	27,968	27,964	26,913
Payments to suppliers and employees	-8,043,908	-8,072,713	-6,161,680	-6,089,048
Net cash inflows/ (used in) operating activities	247,909	227,236	323,170	61,180
Cash flows from investing activities				
Purchases of non-financial assets	-238,000	-80,000	-80,000	-80,000
Net cash flows from/(used in) investing activities	-238,000	-80,000	-80,000	-80,000
Cash flows from financing activities				
Repayment of financial and accom leases	-244,000	-244,000	-244,000	-244,000
Net cash inflow from /(used in) financing activities	-244,000	-244,000	-244,000	-244,000
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	-234,091	-96,764	-830	-262,820
Cash at beginning of financial year	7,322,764	7,088,673	6,991,909	6,991,079
Cash at end of financial year	7,088,673	6,991,909	6,991,079	6,728,260

