



Annual report 2021-22





Responsible body's declaration

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, I am pleased to present Infrastructure Victoria's Annual Report for the reporting period ending 30 June 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'M' followed by a horizontal line.

Jim Miller
Chair, Infrastructure Victoria

7 December 2022

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Chair and CEO's report

Now in our seventh year of operation, at Infrastructure Victoria we pride ourselves on work that is rigorous, evidence-based and influential. Our job is to independently assess and help guide the infrastructure policy and investment decisions of the Victorian Government in the short, medium, and long term. We advise, the government decides.

A key measure for any advisory authority is demonstrated influence in informing government policy and decision-making. Infrastructure Victoria can proudly point to a strong record of impact – more than 90% of the 137 recommendations from our first 30-year strategy are now substantially complete or in progress.

This year has also seen strong outcomes across our three work streams – strategy, research and advice. We released 9 major publications, 8 technical reports and 9 updated regional profiles and participated in 3 parliamentary inquiries to share our findings. Our work spans all types of infrastructure including community services, education, energy, environment, health and human services, information and communications technology, justice and emergency services, land use planning, transport and water.

Infrastructure Victoria reached many milestones throughout the past financial year – one of the most significant was presenting *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* to the Victorian Parliament in August 2021. It is the second integrated, cross-sectoral infrastructure strategy in the state's history.

Our updated 30-year strategy makes 94 recommendations about both future infrastructure investment decisions and how to maximise the benefits of existing government commitments. Charting the next stage of Victoria's infrastructure journey, the strategy responds to opportunities, challenges and changes in our society including the impacts of climate change and the coronavirus pandemic. More than half of the strategy's recommendations are for policy changes and reforms to make the most of the infrastructure we already have. This is particularly important given market capacity and budget constraints.

The scope of work to reach these final recommendations was extensive, incorporating 5 years of new research as well as regular consultation across the state. Our strategy engagement program included 675 participants in consultation activities and generated more than 25,000 website visits. We received more than 200 formal written submissions. As a result of new evidence and feedback from the community and stakeholders, new recommendations were added and several others were changed or removed, prior to the parliamentary tabling of the final strategy.

More than 90 significant national and state-wide media stories were published following the release of *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*. This included editorials in the state's major daily newspapers recognising the importance of Infrastructure Victoria's role in providing independent, evidence-based advice to guide infrastructure planning and investment.

In December 2021, the Victorian Government published its *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* which responded to the 94 recommendations detailed in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*. The 5-year plan indicated the Victorian Government supports 83 of the updated strategy's recommendations in full, in part or in principle, while a further 5 recommendations are subject to further consideration.

In this annual report, we have assessed how the government has progressed implementation of its infrastructure plan in the first 6 months since it was released. We have revised our implementation assessment approach to better evaluate the Victorian Government's priorities and progress in meeting Victoria's infrastructure needs. As noted, our assessment of the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* was carried out less than one year into the new plan. We have therefore focused on priorities and initiatives underway or announced, helping to build the foundations



for future assessments. This year our assessment has welcomed a range of government announcements and policy commitments which align strongly with our work, as well as identifying further opportunities for the government to meet Victoria's infrastructure needs. We will continue to monitor the implementation of the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* and report on progress in future annual reports.

In early 2021 the Victorian Government requested that Infrastructure Victoria provide an independent, state-wide analysis of the implications of the energy transition for Victoria's extensive gas infrastructure assets. In providing this advice, we assessed the relative economic, social, and environmental impacts of different scenarios and identified infrastructure decisions that need to be made, and when, to optimise the opportunities for our existing gas infrastructure. This included exploring the extent to which gas infrastructure can be used for hydrogen, carbon capture and storage and/or biomethane.

In July 2021, we released our interim advice to the Victorian Government, *Towards 2050: Gas infrastructure in a net zero emissions economy*. In developing our advice, we engaged with industry, regulators, the community, government and other key stakeholders as well as drawing on international experience and research. More than 1000 community members helped us understand perceptions of Victorian households towards gas usage, and a further 2,301 people viewed our interim report and had their say about the future of gas infrastructure in the state. We also received 121 formal submissions from organisations, groups and individuals, which informed our final advice to government.

In July 2022, we released *Towards 2050: gas infrastructure in a zero emissions economy – final report*. This advice informed the Victorian Government's *Gas substitution roadmap*, also released in July 2022, and can guide broader government policy and investment decisions to achieve net zero emissions.

Infrastructure Victoria prides itself on work backed by evidence, engagement and consultation that not only informs government decision-making but can be used by stakeholders across every infrastructure sector to challenge, support and progress their own work. We provided submissions and appeared before several parliamentary inquiries throughout the year, including inquiries into renewable energy in Victoria, apartment design standards and school bus use. We are pleased that much of our evidence and many suggested recommendations have been incorporated into the final reports of these parliamentary committee inquiries.

We also wish to acknowledge the enduring impact of Infrastructure Victoria's inaugural CEO Michel Masson, who left the organisation in October 2021 to take up a new role. Michel led Infrastructure Victoria from early 2016 and was a driving force in establishing our organisation as a respected independent voice on a broad range of infrastructure issues. In March 2022, following a formal executive search process, the board announced the appointment of Dr Jonathan Spear as Infrastructure Victoria's new Chief Executive Officer.

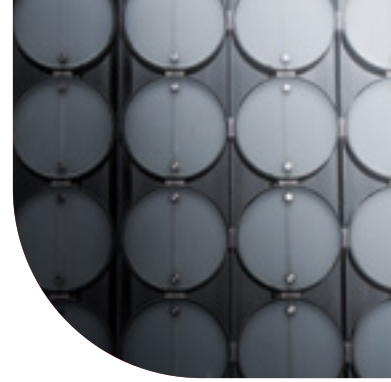
Finally, Ann Sherry will conclude her term as board director in September 2022. Ann was appointed in 2015 and has made a significant contribution to the organisation's achievements. We thank her and wish her well in her future endeavours.

Reflecting on the past 12 months, we're extremely proud of all the work achieved by our dedicated team and look forward to another successful year ahead.

Jim Miller
Chair, Infrastructure Victoria

Jonathan Spear
CEO, Infrastructure Victoria

Infrastructure Victoria's functions



Infrastructure Victoria is a statutory authority which provides independent and expert advice about Victoria's current and future infrastructure needs and priorities to support improved social, economic and environmental outcomes for the state.

The *Infrastructure Victoria Act 2015* came into effect on 1 October 2015. The Act established Infrastructure Victoria as a statutory authority, with the independence and appropriate powers to support its role to provide trusted, evidence-based advice to the Victorian Government, Parliament and the community.

Functions

Infrastructure Victoria promotes rigorous and transparent decision-making and improves public debate and consensus about priority infrastructure projects for Victoria.

Infrastructure Victoria has three key functions pursuant to the *Infrastructure Act 2015*:

- prepare a 30-year infrastructure strategy for Victoria
- provide advice to the Victorian Government on infrastructure matters
- publish research on infrastructure matters

Infrastructure Victoria also supports the development of sectoral infrastructure plans by government departments and agencies.

Infrastructure Victoria takes a whole of Victoria approach in considering infrastructure needs including central and metropolitan Melbourne, interface councils, regional cities and rural and regional Victoria.

It also takes a broad view of infrastructure covering 10 key sectors:

- culture, sport and community
- education and training
- energy
- environment
- health and human services
- information and communications technology
- justice and emergency services
- land use planning
- transport
- water

Infrastructure Victoria's independence

The Act has key provisions which ensure Infrastructure Victoria operates independently:

Objective of independence

Infrastructure Victoria's legislated objective is to provide independent and expert advice about Victoria's current and future infrastructure needs. This independence strongly informs the organisation's culture and behaviour.

Independent board

Infrastructure Victoria's board consists of 7 directors. Four of these directors are appointed by the Governor in Council and must meet private sector knowledge and experience requirements. Appointed board members cannot be removed without the agreement of the Governor of Victoria. The Chair of the board cannot be removed without a statement of grounds being provided to Parliament. Three of the board directors are Secretaries of Victorian Government departments. These Departmental Secretaries appropriately represent and inform Infrastructure Victoria. While acting in their role with Infrastructure Victoria, all board directors have a legal duty to give priority to the best interests of the organisation.

No Ministerial direction or control

Infrastructure Victoria is not subject to direction or control of the Minister when it performs functions such as development of the 30-year infrastructure strategy, undertaking research or supporting development of sectoral infrastructure strategies. A Departmental Secretary cannot be directed by a Minister in relation to his or her role as a director of Infrastructure Victoria.

Freedom to publish

Infrastructure Victoria does not require the approval of the government to publish its 30-year strategy or research. The 30-year strategy is transmitted to the Parliament for all Victorians to see as soon as possible after it is completed.

Independence of advice

The Minister may request that Infrastructure Victoria provide the government with advice on infrastructure matters. The Minister cannot direct what Infrastructure Victoria's advice will be in response to such a request.

Power to obtain information

Infrastructure Victoria has the power to request information from the public sector to perform its functions. This information must be provided in a timely and efficient manner. Infrastructure Victoria also has the power to receive confidential information from anyone and not disclose it – even to the government – without consent.



Infrastructure Victoria's values

Independence

We exercise our independence with integrity. It provides us freedom to challenge, consider new ideas and create consensus.

Influence

We aim to change the culture of infrastructure decision making. We build trust and influence through practical, evidence-based advice.

Innovation

We are bold, creative and open to change and new ideas. We anticipate important issues and are invested in Victoria's future.

Openness

We say what we mean. We are accountable and transparent. We offer up our evidence and thinking to scrutiny.

Engagement

We value understanding the needs, interests and preferences of the community. We share information and respond to feedback. We collaborate with colleagues and stakeholders.

People

We succeed through our people. Our culture esteems teamwork and welcomes diversity. Our people are valued, supported and challenged.

Key achievements and projects

Infrastructure Victoria continued to make significant progress during 2021–22, delivering new work across our strategy, research and advice programs. This included:

- In August 2021, we presented *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* to the Victorian Parliament for tabling. The updated strategy details 94 recommendations for projects, policies and reforms spanning many types of infrastructure and presents a vision for a thriving, inclusive and sustainable Victoria over the next 30 years.
- Volume 2 of *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* documents and assesses the Victorian Government's implementation of recommendations from our first cross-sectoral, 30-year strategy released in 2016. It finds more than 92% of the 137 recommendations are substantially complete or in progress.
- In developing our updated 30-year strategy, Infrastructure Victoria undertook a strategic assessment and costing of 6 major transport projects which have both significant benefits and costs, and the potential to address several of the state's key challenges. This work was released as our *Major transport program strategic assessment report* and *Major transport program costing report*.
- Infrastructure Victoria applied the innovative Victorian Land Use and Transport Integration (VLUTI) model to our major transport strategic assessment to better estimate land use changes, transport network performance and broader economic impacts from those projects. Our *Victorian Land Use and Transport Integration model architecture report* details the theoretical and technical components of the VLUTI model.
- Our report *Driving down emissions: accelerating Victoria's zero emission vehicle uptake*, investigates and outlines priority actions for the Victorian Government to encourage a greater uptake of low and zero emission vehicles as we transition to a net zero economy, including a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles from the early 2030s.
- In October 2021, Infrastructure Victoria released our research on *Social infrastructure in Melbourne's growth areas* which showed population growth is rapidly outstripping the supply of vital social infrastructure in Melbourne's 7 fastest growing local government areas.
- In November 2021, we released our report on *The post-pandemic commute: the effects of more working from home in Victoria* which looks at how an ongoing preference for working from home some of the time, for those who can, might influence how Victorians live, work and commute in the longer-term.
- In July 2022, Infrastructure Victoria released *Towards 2050: gas infrastructure in a net zero emissions economy – final report*. Our advice to the Victorian Government is the first independent, state-wide analysis of the implications of the energy transition for Victoria's extensive gas infrastructure assets.



Our year by the numbers 2021–22

During the year, we released 9 major publications, 8 technical reports and 9 updated regional profiles and participated in 3 parliamentary inquiries.

Here's a snapshot of Infrastructure Victoria's digital and engagement activity for the financial year ended 30 June 2022.

Online



Our website, digital news centre, and social media platforms continue to draw people to our work, giving everyone an opportunity to be informed and engage with infrastructure planning and research in Victoria.

Website



137,233

pageviews
– average of 376
pageviews per day



46,287

unique users

Webinars



7

online webinar
events



39,374

downloads or html views
of *Victoria's infrastructure
strategy 2021–2051*



20,303

publication
downloads

831

attendees

87%

combined
engagement and
satisfaction score



4,219

views of our
web blogs



7,869

views of
our videos

61%

average attendance
conversion rate
– above 40% average
industry attendance rate

Social media



10,242

LinkedIn followers
– up 15.4% compared
with last year

223,729

LinkedIn impressions
– a 17.9% increase from
the previous year

3.8%

average engagement
– highest-ever average
engagement rate



63,044

Twitter impressions

2,468

Twitter followers

2.8%

**average
engagement**

* LinkedIn and Twitter are
Infrastructure Victoria's primary
social media channels



Engagement and consultation

Through our consultation and engagement activities, we heard from more than 1,400 stakeholders and community members including:

1,098 community members completed a survey to help us understand perceptions of Victorian households towards gas usage

31 key stakeholders attended **2** workshops to inform and test recommendations for our gas infrastructure advice

121 submissions received on our interim report *Towards 2050: gas infrastructure in a zero emissions economy*

2,301 people visit our Engage Victoria portal to view our interim report and to have their say about the future of gas infrastructure in the state

124 people attended **6** stakeholder workshops to explore taking a strategic approach to enhancing the climate resilience of infrastructure

68 briefings and presentations provided on *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*

183 key stakeholders participated in an independent assessment of our approach to engagement

230 briefings or presentations provided on our work program to stakeholder organisations including a broad range of peak bodies and their members



Research and advice program

Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051

Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051 was presented to the Victorian Parliament for tabling on 17 August 2021. The updated strategy builds on the work of our first cross-sectoral infrastructure strategy, and presents a vision for a thriving, inclusive and sustainable Victoria over the next 30 years.

Since Infrastructure Victoria released the state's first 30-year infrastructure strategy in 2016, the Victorian Government has allocated billions of dollars in investment for new infrastructure. Of the 137 recommendations included in our first strategy, our most recent assessment found 127, or more than 92%, were either substantially complete or in progress.

Our updated 30-year strategy charts the next stage of Victoria's infrastructure journey and builds upon the recommendations from the 2016 strategy, while incorporating lessons from its development. It is the culmination of years of work, reflects the challenges of the current environment and draws upon the input of thousands of Victorians.

Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051 includes extensive new research, modelling, data and findings from advice we have provided to the Victorian Government. It contains 94 recommendations for projects, policies and reforms spanning many types of infrastructure.

The updated 30-year strategy aims to help the Victorian Government confront long-term challenges, manage urban change, harness infrastructure for productivity and growth and develop regional Victoria. It is also based on extensive evidence, research and consultation with stakeholders and community members.

Over a three-month period in early 2021, all Victorians were invited to have their say on the draft strategy through surveys, roundtables, discussion groups and online events or by making a submission. Our engagement program received more than 200 formal, written submissions and nearly 700 people participated in consultation activities.

The strategy makes many recommendations about changing the way we use and manage infrastructure to get better results. Our integrated approach also shows how actions in one infrastructure sector can provide benefits in others, and delay or reduce the need to invest.

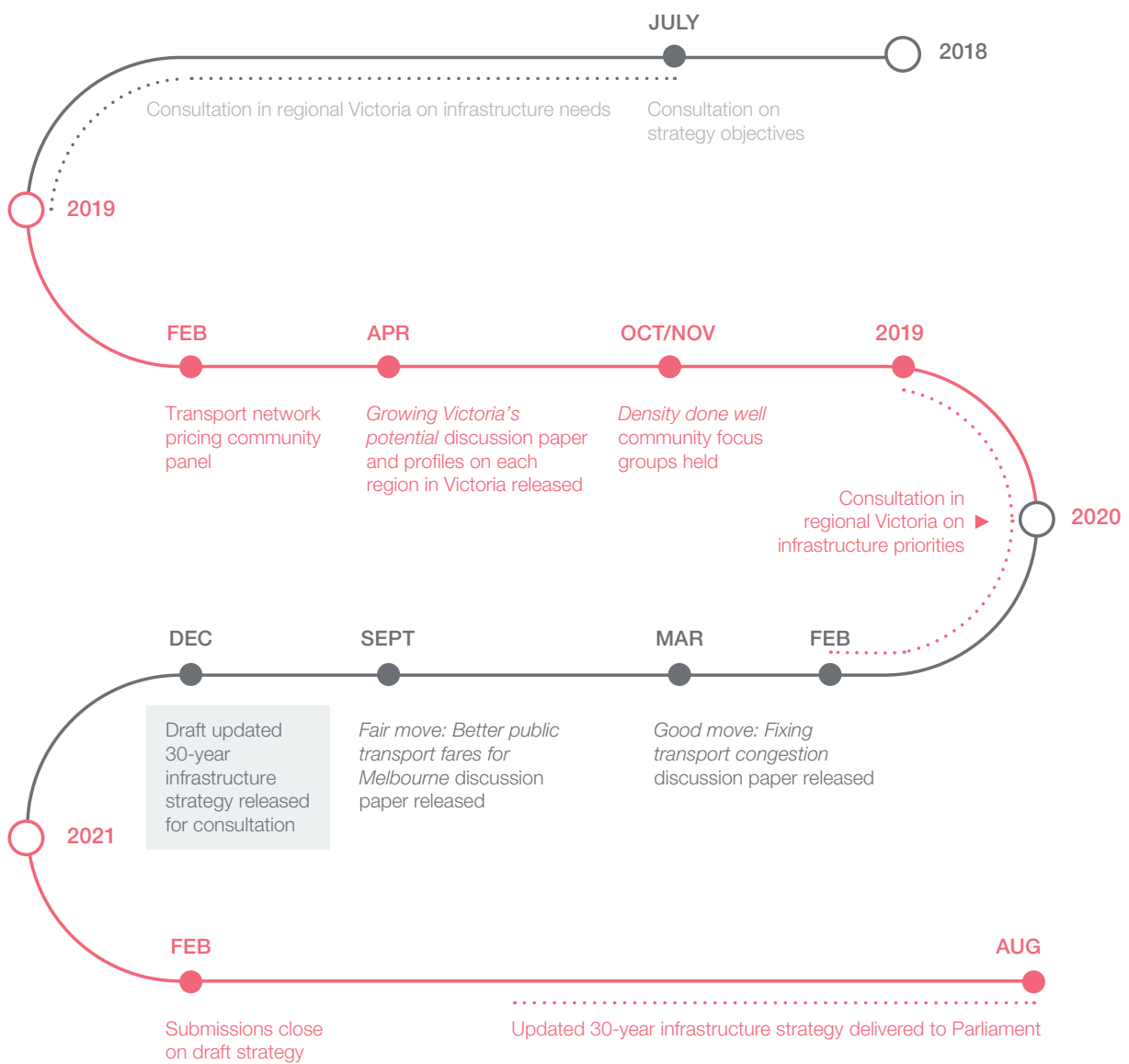
Smarter use and management of infrastructure, combined with selecting and progressing strategic high-performing projects, can keep infrastructure affordable, meet Victorians' needs, and help achieve broader social, economic, and environmental goals.

In December 2021, the Victorian Government published its *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* which responds to the 94 recommendations detailed in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*. The 5-year plan indicates the Victorian Government supports 83 of the strategy recommendations in full, in part or in principle, while a further 5 recommendations are subject to further consideration.

In this annual report, we have assessed how the government has progressed implementation of its infrastructure plan in the first 6 months since it was released. We will continue to monitor its implementation and report on progress in future annual reports.



Timeline





Major transport program strategic assessment

In developing the updated 30-year strategy, Infrastructure Victoria undertook a strategic assessment of 6 potential major transport projects: City Loop Reconfiguration and Northern Rail Corridor Upgrade; Cross City Motorway; Melbourne Metro Two and Direct Geelong Rail Line; Outer Metropolitan Ring Road; Road Management Systems and Western Rail Corridor Upgrade.

Approaches to assessing infrastructure programs have evolved over time. Our innovative assessment framework considered a range of elements, reflecting a maturity in how we assess major transport projects. We considered alignment with the objectives of Victoria's infrastructure strategy through a multi-criteria analysis, an economic evaluation that has been expanded to consider land use changes, a broader social, environmental and economic assessment, and consideration of distributional impacts.

Using this assessment framework, modelling, scenario and sensitivity testing, we identified the conditions within which a transport project is required, as well as measures that are required to support the benefits and mitigate against any potential unwanted outcomes.

The assessed projects have both significant benefits and costs, plus the potential to address several of the state's key challenges. They could help accommodate future population growth in areas expected to come under the greatest

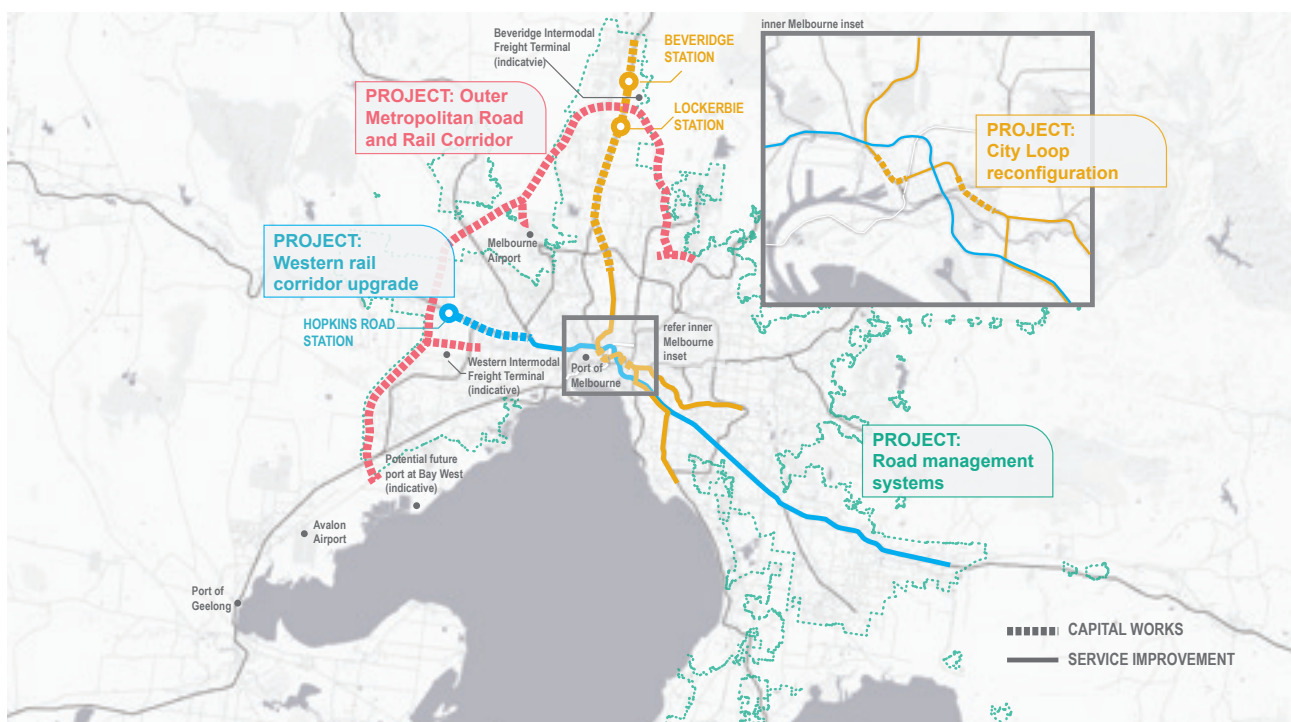
pressure and improve access to jobs and services between Melbourne, key precincts, and outer suburban and growth areas.

Victoria has a significant pipeline of infrastructure projects under construction or planned to be delivered in the next decade. This includes the Metro Tunnel project, removal of 75 level crossings across Melbourne, the West Gate Tunnel, North East Link, major road upgrades, Melbourne Airport Rail, Suburban Rail Loop and upgrades to every regional passenger line in Victoria.

The 6 major transport projects assessed in the *Major transport program strategic assessment report* have the potential to build upon, and make the best use of, this historical level of delivery and commitment to major road and rail projects by the Victorian Government.

A separate *Major transport program cost report* documents the assumptions behind Infrastructure Victoria's development of capital cost estimates for each of the 6 projects. As the projects are in very early stages of conceptual development, a range of capital costs were considered for the strategic assessment.

AECOM and Arup supported us by developing initial cost estimates, undertaking demand modelling, and an initial economic analysis. These outputs were used to inform the development of refined cost estimates, which were then used as inputs to our strategic assessment.





Victorian Land Use and Transport Integration (VLUTI) model

Transport infrastructure can support economic productivity and growth, and strengthen community and social benefits. This occurs through reduced costs benefiting businesses and individuals including lower freight and business trip costs, shorter travel times, improved safety and enhanced access to education, services, employment opportunities and recreational activities.

Not all transport infrastructure projects produce the same benefits and governments therefore need to effectively assess projects to prioritise investments.

Transport modelling has long been used to effectively estimate the costs and benefits of projects. Traditionally, such models have assumed fixed land use and do not account for future relocations of businesses and residents, resulting in potential over-estimation or under-estimation of project benefits. Integrated land use and transport modelling can overcome this drawback.

Given the importance of integrating land use and infrastructure planning, Infrastructure Victoria led the development of the Victorian Land Use and Transport Integration (VLUTI) model in close collaboration with Victoria University, Arup and AECOM.

The purpose of the VLUTI model is to assess medium to long-term land use changes, transport network performance and broader economic impacts from major transport infrastructure interventions, policies and reforms. It is a powerful tool for the assessment of land use and transport infrastructure related scenarios and can provide valuable insights into the economic impacts of transport infrastructure proposals – particularly at the regional and subregional level.

Using the VLUTI model, Infrastructure Victoria has obtained insights into how infrastructure investments might change land use in the future – for example how they might shift the location of populations or employment growth. The VLUTI modelling framework captures the interrelationship between land use and the transport network to better estimate the full impacts of infrastructure policies and transport infrastructure projects.

Infrastructure Victoria applied the VLUTI model to 6 major transport projects and 2 future scenarios in its *Major transport strategic assessment report*. The modelling informed economic assessments of the transport projects and underpinned recommendations in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*.

Our strategy recommendations were also supported by use of the Melbourne Activity Based Model, another Infrastructure Victoria initiative, which tests the impacts of transport policy and infrastructure proposals on the behaviour of transport system users.

Infrastructure Victoria will continue to work with government agencies and other stakeholders to integrate and improve innovative transport modelling tools that assist long-term strategic transport planning. The *Victorian Land Use and Transport Integration model architecture report* details the theoretical and technical components of the VLUTI model, along with strengths and limitations in supporting transport and infrastructure decisions.



Accelerating Victoria's zero emission vehicle uptake

In Victoria, cars are responsible for over half of the state's transport emissions. Transport is the state's second biggest contributor to greenhouse gases and, while emissions are declining in most other sectors, transport emissions are increasing.

The Victorian Government's legislated target of net zero emissions by 2050 will not be reached if Victoria's transport emissions continue to rise. To assist the government in its efforts to plan for and minimise the risks posed by climate change, Infrastructure Victoria has conducted extensive research, analysis, and consultation to identify the most effective way to reduce Victoria's transport emissions.

Widespread zero emissions vehicle (ZEV) uptake has the potential to not only result in significant emissions reductions in Victoria and help reach the net zero target by 2050, but also deliver hundreds of millions of dollars every year in health and environmental benefits to the community.

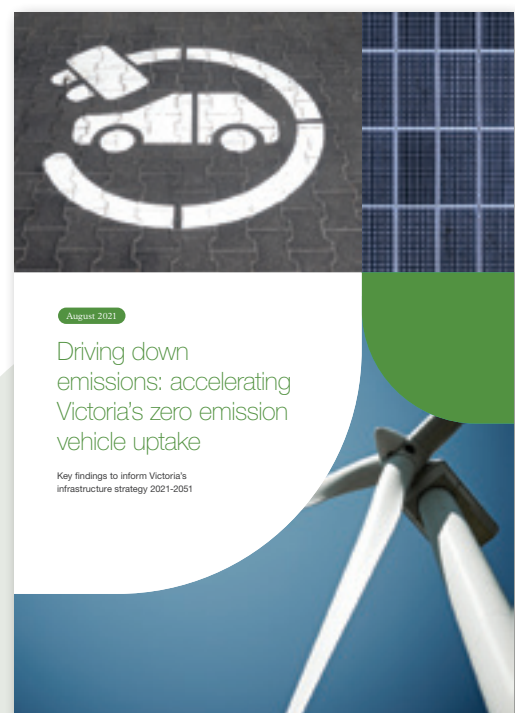
We recognise there are other ways to reduce transport emissions which must also be pursued, such as getting more people on public transport, walking, and cycling. But for many Victorians, cars are essential and this reliance on private vehicles will likely continue.

Our research examined the main barriers to ZEV uptake and found the biggest deterrents for consumers, are purchase price, access to charging infrastructure, and driving range anxiety. To understand how the Victorian Government could overcome barriers and promote ZEV uptake in Victoria, we sought the views of everyday Victorians through an online deliberative engagement process.

Over a 4-week period, 211 people from a range of age groups, cultural backgrounds, employment status and postcodes across Victoria came together in the largest community panel of its kind to address the question 'How should the Victorian Government support more people to adopt low or zero emissions vehicles sooner?'.

Through the deliberations we learned of the strong appetite for accelerating the uptake of electric vehicles, with the panel recommending a date be set to end the sale of new internal combustion engine vehicles. The community also told us that while reducing or offsetting purchase costs is important, there are many more opportunities beyond financial incentives to encourage a greater uptake of zero emissions vehicles.

Infrastructure Victoria's report, *Driving down emissions: accelerating Victoria's zero emission vehicle uptake*, outlines priority actions for the Victorian Government to encourage a greater uptake ZEVs as we transition to a net zero economy, including a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles from the early 2030s and a requirement that all new government fleet vehicles be ZEVs, where available.







Social infrastructure in Melbourne's growth areas

In October 2021, Infrastructure Victoria released research on *Social infrastructure in Melbourne's growth areas* which showed population growth is rapidly outstripping the supply of vital social infrastructure in Melbourne's 7 fastest growing local government areas.

The research supported our recommendation in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* for the Victorian Government to increase funding in the next 5 years to support local governments to plan and deliver libraries and aquatic and recreation centres in Melbourne's growth areas.

We examined the benefits of this type of social infrastructure and investigated the need for aquatic centres and libraries in Melbourne's growth areas. Infrastructure Victoria collected data on the number of aquatic and recreation centres and libraries across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria on a per capita basis, compared to rates of accessibility and predicted rates of population growth.

Our research showed growth areas have fewer aquatic and recreation centres and libraries than almost all other metropolitan local government areas and this difference is likely to grow as populations increase.

An added challenge for growth areas is the rapid increase in families with young children which generate much of the demand for these facilities. Over one-third of Melbourne's children aged 4-years or younger live in growth area local government areas, and by 2036 this proportion is likely to increase to 40%.

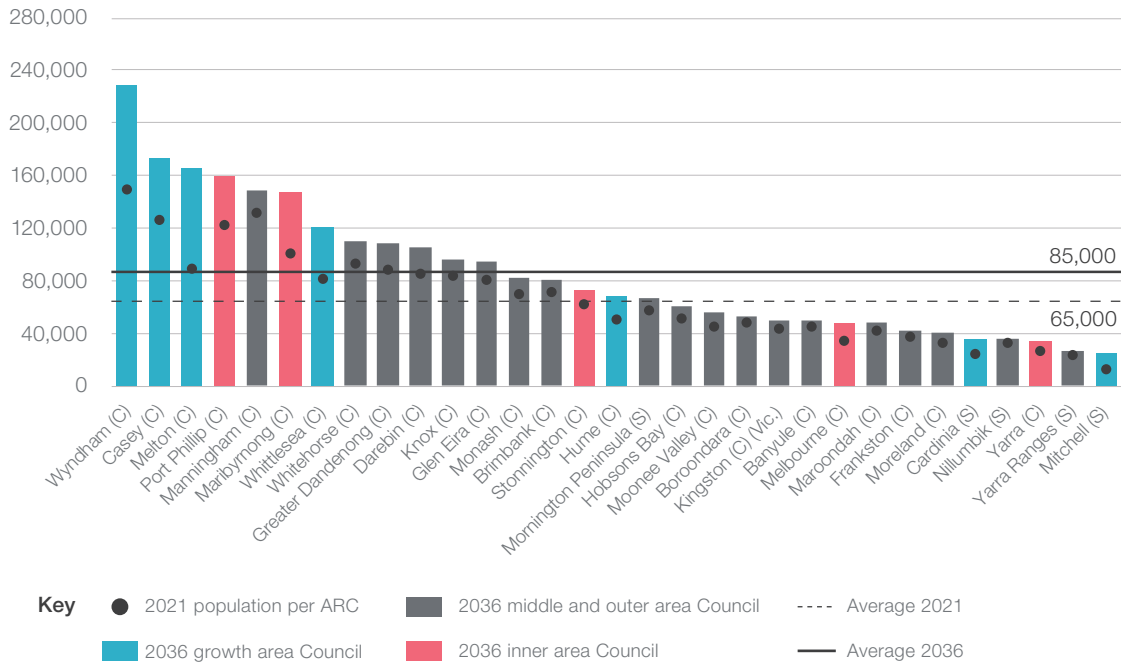
Infrastructure Victoria found the areas of Melton, Casey, Whittlesea and Wyndham will each need both a new aquatic and recreation centre and a new library in the next 5 years. Of the remaining growth areas, Cardinia and Hume will also each need a new library.

Additionally, our research recommended state and local governments start planning for potential new aquatic centres in Cardinia and Hume. In Mitchell, where existing infrastructure is disconnected from new growth area suburbs, the report found planning should begin immediately to assess the need for both a library and aquatic recreation centre.

Both libraries and aquatic centres provide essential services to the community and in many cases act as a community hub, improving physical and mental health and supporting productive and engaged communities. Our research shows the benefits of this infrastructure to both communities and to the businesses located in these precincts can outweigh the costs.

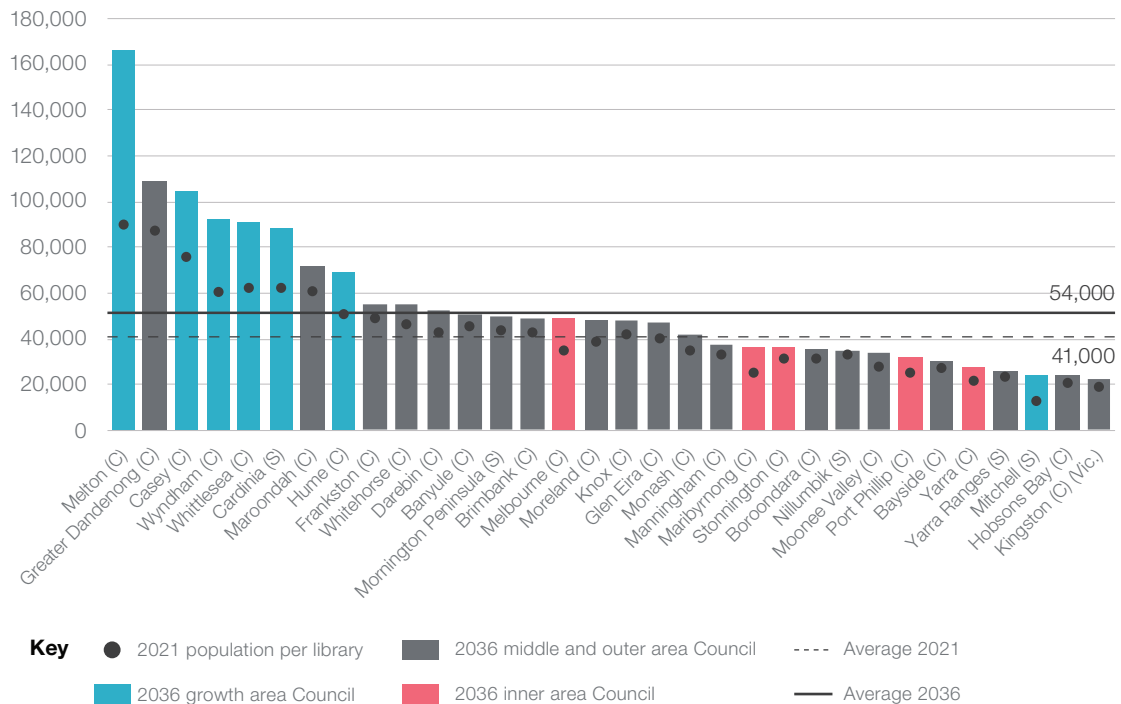
Growth areas have fewer Aquatics Recreation Centres (ARC) per person

This figure shows there are generally fewer ARCs per person in new growth areas than in established areas. This disparity will become more pronounced as the population in growth areas increases.



Growth areas have fewer libraries per person

This figure shows there are generally fewer libraries per person in new growth areas than in established areas. This disparity will become more pronounced as the population in growth areas increases.





The effects of more working from home in Victoria

In November 2021, Infrastructure Victoria released research which examined how an ongoing preference for working from home some of the time – for those who can – might influence how Victorians live, work and commute in the longer-term.

Based on a third of workers working from home 2 to 3 days a week by 2036, our integrated land use and transport modelling showed Victoria's population could be more spread out as people seek out the lifestyle benefits of a tree or sea-change and are willing to tolerate a longer, but less frequent, commute.

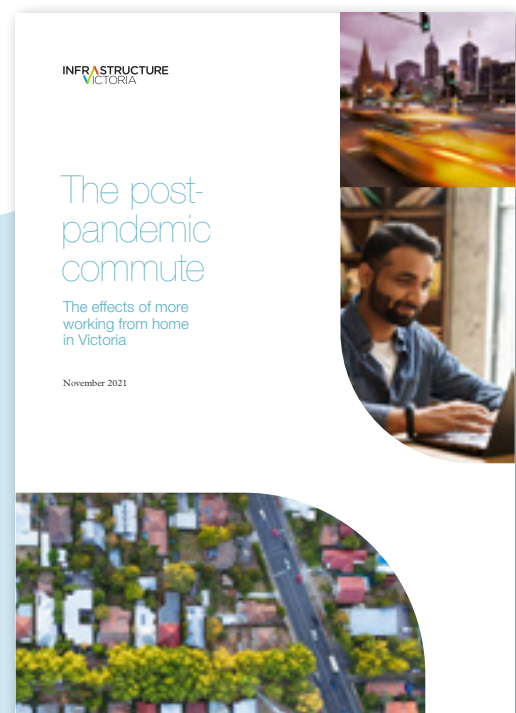
This population shift could mean Melbourne's outer suburbs, new growth suburbs and peri-urban areas experience faster population growth than they otherwise would. The population dispersion could also impact the state's larger regional cities including Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong.

These population dispersal effects mirror the impacts of other future trends. For example, our previous work found that more widespread use of electric vehicles and autonomous vehicles can also produce slower population growth in inner and middle areas of Melbourne. This means the cumulative impact of working from home and more widespread electric and autonomous vehicle use could produce a more substantial population dispersion than working from home by itself.

Our modelling also showed faster jobs growth in inner Melbourne than might have otherwise occurred as businesses continue to locate where they can access the largest workforce catchment, harness the benefits of being physically near each other and leverage the existing transport network.

Our report, *The post-pandemic commute: the effects of more working from home in Victoria*, made several recommendations to the Victorian Government, including:

- increase measures to improve the energy efficiency of homes to reduce household energy bills and network demand
- ongoing support for more homes in established areas to reduce additional population pressure in new growth and peri-urban areas, including social housing to ensure equitable access
- timely delivery of green and social infrastructure for Melbourne's new growth areas, such as interconnected open space networks, urban tree canopies, aquatic recreation centres and libraries
- greater planning protection for peri-urban areas of environmental sensitivity, bushfire risk, or a gricultural value
- focus employment support outside of central Melbourne on a limited number of priority suburban hubs, considering the multiple factors driving urban population dispersal and employment centralisation.



The future of Victoria's gas infrastructure in a net zero emissions economy

In December 2020, Infrastructure Victoria was asked to provide the Victorian Government with advice relating to the future of Victoria's extensive gas infrastructure under a range of 2050 energy sector scenarios.

Under the *Victorian Climate Change Act 2017*, the Victorian Government has committed to a whole-of-economy, net zero emissions target by 2050. Our advice assessed the relative economic, social, and environmental impacts of each scenario and identified infrastructure decisions that need to be made, and when, to ensure opportunities for existing gas infrastructure can be optimised while also meeting emissions reduction targets. This included exploring the extent to which gas infrastructure can be used for hydrogen, carbon capture and storage and biomethane.

We released an interim advice report in July 2021, setting out key early findings and evidence, significant risks and opportunities and key issues for further consultation. We received 121 submissions as part of our consultation on the interim report which informed our final advice. As expected for an issue which directly affects more than 2 million Victorians, submissions reflected a diversity of opinions from a wide range of stakeholders including industry, consumer groups, community members and environmental organisations.

Workshops with key stakeholders were held in October 2021 to test our early findings and advice. The feedback we received from stakeholders provided valuable insights on priority issues and concerns, and informed our final advice and recommendations.

In July 2022, Infrastructure Victoria released *Towards 2050: Gas infrastructure in a net zero emissions economy – final report* the first independent, state-wide analysis of the implications of the energy transition for Victoria's extensive gas infrastructure. The report made 11 recommendations to the government, underpinned by extensive research, modelling and stakeholder input.

While Victoria's gas assets are privately owned, our advice showed the Victorian Government can play a leading role in supporting decarbonisation of the sector. It found the gas sector Victoria has today will need to look very different in 2050 if the state's net zero emissions targets are to be met. Victorian households are the highest users of gas in the country, driven by the need to heat homes in winter. Altogether, Victoria accounts for around two-thirds of Australia's total household and commercial gas use.

Infrastructure Victoria's advice showed that many of Victoria's gas assets could be repurposed to accommodate low emissions technologies, but not without further assessment and resolving logistical challenges. By 2050, some of Victoria's existing gas infrastructure may be decommissioned while other parts of the network could be reconfigured to accommodate hydrogen, bioenergy and carbon capture and storage.

The report found immediate and sustained action now and over coming decades is needed. From now to 2030 the challenge is to reduce emissions as much as possible with proven methods such as energy efficiency and bioenergy, while also laying the foundations for accelerated emissions reduction in the 2030s, once it has been determined whether new technologies such as hydrogen and carbon capture and storage are proven at scale and the electricity market has further decarbonised.

Our report informed the Victorian Government's *Gas substitution roadmap*, also released in July 2022, and can guide broader government policy and investment decisions to achieve net zero emissions.







How our work informs and engages

Infrastructure Victoria continued its strong reputation for developing independent research and advice which influences government decision making, contributes to complex policy reform and is cited in a wide range of academic, industry and policy publications.

Below are highlights of how our research and advice has informed government policy and decision making in the past financial year:

- The Victorian Government released its *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* which responds to the 94 recommendations detailed in our 30-year infrastructure strategy, *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*. The 5-year plan indicates the Victorian Government supports 83 of the strategy recommendations in full, in part or in principle, while 5 more recommendations are subject to further consideration.
- Consistent with our strategy recommendation, in December 2021 the government announced \$50 million in funding to combat youth homelessness, including the development of Youth Foyers, which provide young people aged 16 to 24 years with stable accommodation and mentoring as they complete their education or training or enter employment.
- As part of the 2022–23 State Budget, the government committed \$36 million towards the construction of a 30-bed adult residential withdrawal and rehabilitation facility for the Mallee and north-west region – in line with our recommendation to build in-patient rehabilitation facilities in Victoria's regions where they are currently not available or planned.
- The previous State Budget allocated \$15 million to add 400 zero emission vehicles to the government fleet over two years and to upgrade and install electric vehicle supply equipment across government-owned and leased buildings. The commitment aligns with our strategy recommendation to transition the government fleet to ZEVs where available.
- In November 2021, the government committed \$5.73 million in funding to establish new recycling facilities and upgrade existing facilities across the state - in line with our recycling and resource recovery advice - to increase Victoria's output of recycled organics, textiles and glass by up to 350,000 tonnes each year.

- In June 2022, \$3.6 million in government funding was announced to boost the value of recycled organics and support agriculture while also looking at ways to improve soil quality, boost crop production and develop new markets for the growing volume of recycled organics products.
- Of the 137 recommendations included in Infrastructure Victoria's first cross-sectoral strategy released in 2016, our most recent assessment of Victorian Government implementation found 127, or more than 92% of the recommendations, were either substantially complete or in progress.
- Victorian Planning Authority's new *Precinct structure planning guidelines* include a target of 30% tree canopy coverage and other infrastructure planning approaches closely aligned with our strategy recommendations.
- The Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning *Water cycle climate change adaptation plan* aligns closely with our strategy recommendation regarding Victoria's emergency water supply point network.

Infrastructure Victoria draws on its sound evidence-base and recommendations to contribute to complex policy reform. During the past year we participated in several Victorian parliamentary inquiries including:

- Provided a submission and appeared before a parliamentary inquiry into renewable energy in Victoria. The inquiry final report makes 80 references to Infrastructure Victoria's work and the findings are strongly aligned with recommendations and evidence from our interim advice on Victoria's gas transmission and distribution networks and *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*, including a recommendation that government should strengthen minimum efficiency standards for rented homes.
- Provided a submission and appeared before a parliamentary inquiry into apartment design standards to explain what the community told us about design quality in our *Density done well* deliberative engagement, the importance of better using infrastructure through greater housing density in established areas, and why access to green space is critical. The inquiry findings about amenity, design review panels and density in established areas were well aligned with Infrastructure Victoria's work.

- Submission and evidence given to parliamentary inquiry into the use of school buses in rural and regional Victoria. The inquiry final report aligns with our strategy recommendations to re-design regional public transport, so it is better integrated to meet local needs. This includes converting underutilised school buses to public transport routes in areas of high demand, provided they comply with accessibility standards. Also incorporated into the report's final recommendations is our call for on-demand transport to assist in delivering better quality services and making the best use of available public transport resources.
- Infrastructure Victoria's research and recommendations were extensively referenced in the final report of the inquiry into environmental infrastructure for growing populations, tabled in parliament in February 2022.

Below are some examples of how other organisations have referenced and drawn upon our work:

- Infrastructure Australia's *Regional strengths and infrastructure gaps (Victoria)* analysis is informed by our research findings and recommendations, making more than 50 references to Infrastructure Victoria published reports.
- Infrastructure Australia's *Australian infrastructure plan 2021 and Progress since the 2016 Australian infrastructure plan* report extensively references our program of work and recommendations
- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) *Implementation handbook for quality infrastructure investment* references our deliberative engagement with Victorian communities.
- The Grattan Institute's *Grattan orange book 2022* cites Infrastructure Victoria's research *What are the impacts of living in social housing?*
- The Grattan Institute references our social housing research findings in an article for *The Conversation*
- The Grattan Institute's *The Grattan car plan: practical policies for cleaner transport and better cities* aligns with our published *Advice on automated and zero emission vehicles* recommendations and policy positions
- The Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities cites our research in *Bridging the integrated water management funding and financing guide*
- The New Zealand Infrastructure Commission's *Draft New Zealand infrastructure strategy* references 4 Infrastructure Victoria research reports
- The Committee for Melbourne inaugural *Benchmarking Melbourne report 2022* is informed by our research and 30-year strategy recommendations
- The Planning Institute of Australia and Sustainability Victoria reference Infrastructure Victoria's strategy recommendation that all new homes be required to achieve a 7-star energy rating by 2022
- The Victorian Auditor General's report on *Integrated transport planning* references our research
- A Deloitte independent transport review for City of Melbourne references our research publications and aligns closely with multiple Infrastructure Victoria transport and active transport strategy recommendations
- A Roads Australia submission to the Productivity Commission's 2022 Productivity Inquiry references Infrastructure Victoria's research on transport network user-pricing
- The Suburban Rail Loop business case makes 35 references to our published research including both the 2020 draft 30-year strategy and 2016 infrastructure strategy, *Infrastructure provision in different development settings* and various technical reports
- A Transurban industry report on mobility trends references Infrastructure Victoria's advocacy for distance-based road user charges

Stakeholder perceptions of trust, value and communication

In early 2022, we commissioned an independent assessment of stakeholders' perceptions of Infrastructure Victoria. The research sought to measure stakeholder views of our approach to engagement and effectiveness in delivering on our strategic objectives and legislated functions.

An online survey was completed by 146 stakeholders and a further 37 key stakeholders participated in confidential in-depth interviews to provide feedback on our work, how we engage, opportunities for improvement and potential research areas for future focus.

Feedback was positive with stakeholders reporting that Infrastructure Victoria develops robust, evidence-based research and advice that is used and trusted by a wide range of audiences. Stakeholders particularly value our integrity, transparency and credibility and clear advice on priorities for infrastructure reform and investment.

The assessment found that Infrastructure Victoria scored highly across three key research domains: trust, value and communication. We will use the research findings to inform our planning and future approach to stakeholder engagement.

Value



Trust



Communication



Perceptions



Five-year financial summary

Five-year financial summary	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Total income from transactions	9,849,369	9,934,765	10,056,029	10,123,596	9,842,785
Total expenses from transactions	9,310,816	9,466,675	10,128,246	10,123,596	9,842,785
Net result from transactions	538,553	468,090	(72,217)	-	-
Other economic flows included in net result ^(a)	53,806	79,099	(16,178)	(35,438)	1,669
Net result for the period	592,359	547,189	(88,395)	(35,438)	1,669
Net cash flow from operating activities	336,459	312,288	296,608	37,576	5,275
Total assets	5,719,438	4,631,972	4,345,948	2,419,205	1,951,442
Total liabilities	4,687,458	4,192,351	4,453,516	2,438,378	1,935,177

(a) Includes gains or losses from disposal of non-financial assets and revaluation of leave liabilities for changes in the government bond rate.

2021-22 financial review

Infrastructure Victoria is funded through annual appropriations and does not receive revenue outside of the government allocation. In FY 2022 Infrastructure Victoria's total expenditure was \$9.3 million, lower than its annual appropriation by \$539k. The primary driver was savings created in Consultancy costs, related to a difference of timing between the budget cash flow and actual expenditure payments in the Research Program that is planned to be completed in FY 2023.

As an independent advisory body, Infrastructure Victoria does not undertake or manage any capital projects or investment projects and has not provided any grants or transfer payments to companies or organisations in 2021-22.

Financial position – Balance sheet

Total assets of Infrastructure Victoria increased from \$4.6 million last year to \$5.7 million this year, mainly due to the increase in Current Receivables.

The increase in total liabilities from \$4.2 million to \$4.7 million, was due to the increase in Accrued Expenses in the balance sheet.

Cash flows

The net cash flows from operations were steady at \$0.3 million this year compared to the previous year's \$0.3 million. This movement is mainly due to receipts from government to pay for office accommodation lease expenses that are separately reported under financing activities in the cash flow statement.

Subsequent events

There were no events, subsequent to the reporting period and prior to the finalisation of this report, that had the potential to significantly impact the ongoing structure and financial activities of Infrastructure Victoria.

Governance and organisational structure

Infrastructure Victoria is led by a board of 7 directors comprising 4 members from the private or non-government sectors, and 3 from the public sector.



Jim Miller Chair

Jim Miller chairs the Infrastructure Victoria board. He is also Vice Chair at J.P. Morgan.

Jim was an Executive Director at Macquarie Capital from 1994 to 2015. With experience across a range of sectors, he has led over \$150 billion in transactions and worked with both government and private sector clients both as a principal and adviser.

Jim has extensive experience in infrastructure having worked in the areas of regulated assets, transport, digital, energy, utilities and resources and social infrastructure. He has both a Bachelor and Masters of Economics from Macquarie University.



Maria Wilton AM Deputy Chair

Maria Wilton's experience in the investment industry spans 30 years and includes portfolio management and business roles. Maria is a director of Victorian Funds Management Corporation, Confident Girls Foundation and Dexus Wholesale Property Fund. She was formerly Managing Director and Chair of Franklin Templeton Investments Australia.

Maria holds a Bachelor of Economics from the University of Tasmania and is a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) charterholder. In 2019 she was made a Member of the Order of Australia.



Professor Margaret Gardner AC

Professor Margaret Gardner AC is the current President and Vice Chancellor of Monash University. Prior to this Margaret was President and Vice Chancellor of RMIT from April 2005 to August 2014. Margaret is the Chair of the Group of Eight and a director of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

She has a first-class honours degree in economics and a PhD from the University of Sydney, and held a Fulbright postdoctoral fellowship.

Ann Sherry AO

Ann Sherry AO is one of Australia's leading business executives with a career spanning government, banking and tourism. Ann is Chair of UNICEF Australia, Eneo Group and Port of Townsville. She is a director of National Australia Bank, Sydney Airport Corporation (until February 2022), and Museum of Contemporary Art Australia.

Ann is the Chancellor of Queensland University of Technology and was awarded an Order of Australia in 2004.

**Ann Sherry concluded her term as board director in September 2022. Ann was appointed in 2015 and has made a significant contribution to the organisation's achievements. Infrastructure Victoria would like to thank her and wish her well in her future endeavours.*



John Bradley PSM

John was appointed Secretary of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in 2017.

He is President of Institute of Public Administration Australia (Victoria). John was previously CEO of Energy Networks Australia and 3 Queensland Government agencies.

John holds an MBA from Queensland University of Technology and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Queensland. He is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has served on boards in the energy, conservation, and public purpose sectors including academic institutions.



David Martine PSM

David has been Secretary of the Department of Treasury and Finance since 2014. He leads the department in providing economic, policy and financial advice to the Victorian Government.

David is also a director of the Treasury Corporation of Victoria and Victorian Funds Management Corporation. David previously held a number of senior roles in the Commonwealth public sector.

He holds an MBA and has a Bachelor of Economics (Hons) from Monash University.



Jeremi Moule

Jeremi was appointed Secretary for the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet in November 2020 and was previously the department Deputy Secretary, Governance, Policy and Coordination.

Jeremi has held various Victorian public sector executive positions over a 17-year period and was CEO of a registered training organisation. He lives in Bendigo and has worked extensively in regional Victoria.

Jeremi holds a journalism degree from the University of South Australia and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Jonathan Spear
Chief Executive Officer

Dr Jonathan Spear is Infrastructure Victoria's Chief Executive Officer.

Previously the organisation's Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel, Jonathan has led Infrastructure Victoria's work on Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy, research program and provision of independent advice to the Victorian Government.

Before joining Infrastructure Victoria during its establishment in 2015, Jonathan held senior leadership, policy, strategy and legal roles with the Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Justice, Victoria Police and Slater and Gordon Lawyers.

Jonathan holds a Doctor of Philosophy in History, Executive Master of Public Administration, Master of Laws, Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Bachelor of Arts (Honours). He is also a legal practitioner, a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Williamson Community Leadership Program, and a director of the Melbourne Forum.



Allison Stewart
Deputy CEO

Dr Allison Stewart is Infrastructure Victoria's Deputy CEO.

Allison is an experienced capital projects leader, strategist, academic and management consultant specialising in infrastructure and energy. She has worked as an industry practitioner, academic, consultant, and civil servant in jurisdictions around the world including Tanzania, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Prior to joining Infrastructure Victoria, Allison was an executive at the Suburban Rail Loop Authority, Victoria's largest integrated land use and transport project. She also previously led Infrastructure Victoria's research into the infrastructure required to enable automated and zero emissions vehicles.

Allison holds Doctor of Philosophy in Management and Master of Science degrees from the University of Oxford, and a Bachelor of Commerce degree from McGill University. She is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

**Dr Allison Stewart was appointed Deputy CEO in July 2022.*



Mandy Frostick
Executive Director
Communications
and Engagement

Mandy Frostick leads Infrastructure Victoria's communications and engagement functions including strategic counsel, stakeholder relations, community engagement, media relations, brand and digital activity.

Mandy has extensive consulting experience across a broad range of industry sectors including health, energy, resources, finance, technology and government. She has also held senior leadership positions with some of Victoria's best-known organisations including WorkSafe, City of Melbourne, the Royal Women's Hospital and BHP.

Mandy is a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a non-executive director of the Royal Women's Hospital.



Peter Kartsidimas
Director Networks and Planning

As Director Networks and Planning, Peter Kartsidimas leads the delivery of complex and expert advice across a range of infrastructure matters, including transport, land use and infrastructure planning.

Prior to joining Infrastructure Victoria, Peter was the Senior Manager Transport, Planning and Infrastructure at RACV, where he was responsible for a variety of public policy and advocacy activities. He has more than two decades' experience working across the public and private sectors in the planning and design of infrastructure projects.

Peter holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Civil), and has served as a volunteer on several organisations including as AITPM WA State President and the National Chair of the Transport Modelling Network.



Llewellyn Reynders
Director Research and Economics

Llewellyn Reynders leads Infrastructure Victoria's Research and Economics team, specialising in carrying out research in areas such as urban productivity, social equity and the impact of climate change on infrastructure.

Llewellyn joined Infrastructure Victoria as the Manager, Strategy and Policy, coordinating the development of recommendations for projects, policies and reforms and the delivery of Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051. Llewellyn was previously policy manager at the Victorian Council of Social Service and has held leadership and policy roles in other government and not-for-profit organisations. He holds a Master of Social Policy from the University of Melbourne, and a Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Science from the Australian National University.



Victoria Thaine
Director Corporate & People and Culture

Victoria Thaine is Infrastructure Victoria's Director Corporate and People and Culture, leading the delivery of operational functions including procurement, budgeting and governance. She is also responsible for designing and implementing key organisational culture initiatives.

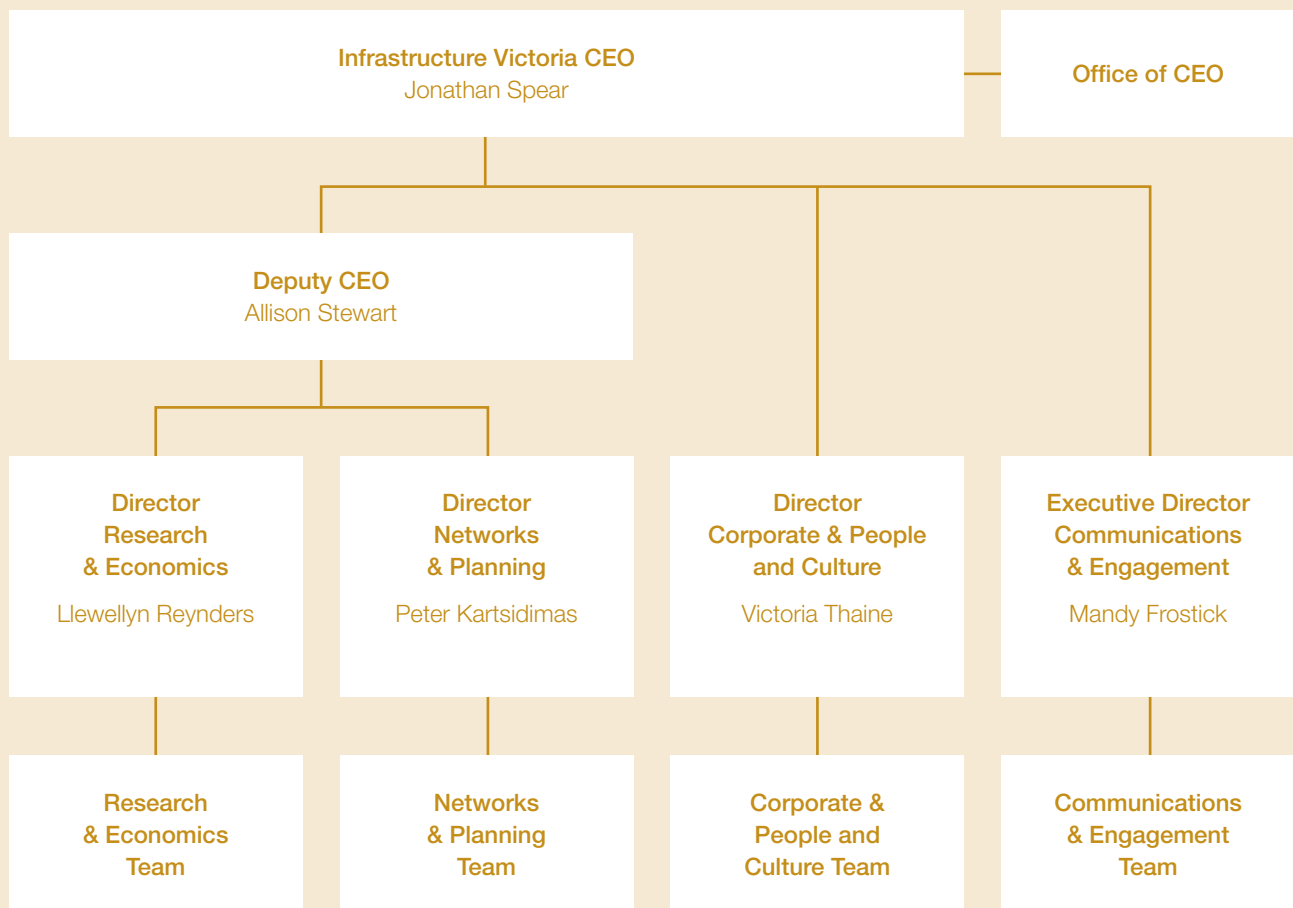
Prior to joining Infrastructure Victoria, Victoria worked across a variety of government agencies, including in large departments, central agencies and private ministerial offices.

Victoria is an accredited organisational coach and holds a Graduate Certificate in Business Administration.

Organisational structure

Infrastructure Victoria is managed within four groups: Communication and Engagement, Research and Economics, Networks and Planning and Corporate, People and Culture.

**Allison Stewart was appointed Deputy CEO in July 2022.*



Conflicts of Interest or Duties

Infrastructure Victoria's Conflicts of Interest or Duties Policy sets out the board's obligations in relation to managing conflicts of interest or duties. The policy ensures there is a clear, transparent and accountable process in place for directors to manage conflicts of interest or duties. The Policy fulfils Infrastructure Victoria's legislative obligations regarding conflicts of interest or duties under both section 81 of the *Public Administration Act 2004* and section 26 of the *Infrastructure Victoria Act 2015*. Under these Acts, Infrastructure Victoria must report any details of a conflict of interest disclosed by a director in a financial year.

The board identified and agreed that John Bradley had actual or potential conflicts of interest or duty in relation to Infrastructure Victoria's advice on gas infrastructure. Following existing precedent for the management of these conflicts of interest, John Bradley was included in board discussions but not decision making in relation to the advice on gas infrastructure at meetings of the board during 2021.

To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, Jeremi Moule, David Martine and John Bradley excused themselves from the board's consideration of Infrastructure Victoria's annual assessment of the Victorian Government's priorities and progress in meeting Victoria's infrastructure needs at a meeting of the board on 16 September 2021.

To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, it was agreed at a meeting of the board on 24 March 2022 that Jeremi Moule, David Martine and John Bradley would take part in discussions but not decision making in relation to Infrastructure Victoria's method and approach to the annual assessment of the Victorian Government's priorities and progress in meeting Victoria's infrastructure needs.

To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, it was agreed at a meeting of the board on 28 April 2022 that Jeremi Moule, David Martine and John Bradley would take part in discussions but not decision-making regarding Infrastructure Victoria's asset management research to the extent that it intersects with their departmental portfolio responsibilities.

To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, Jeremi Moule, David Martine and John Bradley excused themselves from the board's consideration of Infrastructure Victoria's annual assessment of the Victorian Government's priorities and progress in meeting Victoria's infrastructure needs at a meeting of the board on 23 June 2022.

Audit and risk committee

The Audit and Risk Committee comprises the following members:

- Maria Wilton – Chair
- David Martine – Member
- Trish Donohue – Independent Member

Trish has worked in the investment, finance and superannuation sectors for over 30 years. She held the executive investment role at Cbus superannuation fund from 2000 to 2018 managing the assets under management which grew from \$2 billion to over \$40 billion over that time, and invested across all major asset classes. Trish's non-executive director roles have included directorships on the boards of Tasplan Superannuation Fund and the Australian Council of Superannuation Investors. Trish holds a Bachelor of Science from Melbourne University, and is an Associate of the Institute of Actuaries Australia and a graduate from the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

The main responsibilities of the audit committee are to:

- review the annual report and all other financial information published by Infrastructure Victoria
- assist in reviewing the effectiveness of the internal control environment covering:
 - effectiveness and efficiency of operations
 - reliability of financial reporting and
 - compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- determine the scope of the internal audit function and ensure its resources are adequate and used effectively, including coordination with external auditors
- maintain effective communication with external auditors
- consider recommendations made by internal and external auditors and review the implementation of actions to resolve issues raised and
- oversee the effective operation of the risk management framework.

The committee met 4 times in 2021-2022.

Occupational health and safety

Infrastructure Victoria maintains a policy on Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S). There were no reportable incidents relating to OH&S in 2021–2022.

Employment and conduct principles

Since the establishment of Infrastructure Victoria in October 2015, the organisation has implemented processes to provide the staffing resources necessary to deliver statutory requirements.

Infrastructure Victoria is committed to applying merit and equity principles when appointing staff. The selection processes ensure that applicants are assessed and evaluated fairly on the basis of key selection criteria and other accountabilities without discrimination. We are proud of the diversity of our staff's demographics, backgrounds, skills and capabilities.

Infrastructure Victoria maintains a range of detailed employment policies to guide staff on matters relating to resolving grievances, flexible work opportunities, discrimination, recruitment, and performance. All policies and practices are consistent with the Victorian Public Sector Commission employment standards and the *Equal Opportunity Act* (2010).

Infrastructure Victoria's workforce policies and processes provide for fair treatment and early resolution of workplace issues. All staff are advised on how to avoid conflicts of interest, how to respond to offers of gifts, and how Infrastructure Victoria deals with misconduct.



Workforce data

The following table discloses the head count and full-time equivalent (FTE) of all Infrastructure Victoria employees as at the conclusion of the current reporting period 30 June 2022 and of the previous reporting period ending 30 June 2021.

	Jun-22						Jun-21					
	Ongoing		Fixed Term/ Casual		Total		Ongoing		Fixed Term/ Casual		Total	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
Gender												
Male	10	10.00	5	4.00	15	14.00	10	10	6	4.41	16	14.41
Female	22	20.70	2	1.60	24	22.30	13	13	8	6.61	21	19.99
Self-described	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age												
Under 25	1	1.00	3	2.00	4	3.00	0	0	2	1.4	2	1.4
25-34	8	8.00	3	2.60	11	10.60	5	5	4	2.91	9	7.91
35-44	12	11.60	1	1.00	13	12.60	10	10	4	3.8	14	13.6
45-54	8	7.60	0	0.00	8	7.60	5	5	4	2.91	9	7.71
55-64	3	2.50	0	0.00	3	2.50	3	3	0	0	3	2.6
65+	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
VPSG2	0	0.00	4	2.60	4	2.60			1	1	1	1
VPSG3	2	2.00	0	0.00	2	2.00	1	1	2	1.8	3	2.8
VPSG4	6	5.80	2	2.00	8	7.80	2	2		-	2	2
VPSG5	4	4.00	0	0.00	4	4.00	3	2.8	4	3.9	7	6.7
VPSG6	16	14.90	0	0.00	16	14.90	12	12	3	3	15	14.4
STS	0		0	0.00	0		-	-	-	-	-	
EO1	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	1	-	-	1	1
EO2	1	1.00	1	1.00	2	2.00	1	1	-	-	1	1
EO3	3	3.00	0	0.00	3	3.00	3	3	-	-	3	3
Other	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	-	-	4	1.33	4	1.33
Total	32	30.70	7	5.60	39	36.30	23	23	14	11.03	37	33.23

Demographic Data

The following table discloses the annualised full-time total salary for senior employees categorised by classification.

Salary band	Executives - June 22		Executives - June 21	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
< \$199,999	0	0.00	1	1.00
\$200,000 - \$219,999	2	2.00	1	1.00
\$220,000 - \$239,999	1	1.00	1	1.00
\$240,000 - \$259,999	0	0.00	1	1.00
\$260,000 - \$279,999	2	2.00	0	0.00
>\$280,000	0	0.00	1	1.00

Executive officer data

An executive officer (EO) is defined as a person employed as an executive under Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004* or a person to whom the Victorian Government's Policy on Executive Remuneration in Public entities applies. The table below reflects employment levels as at the last full pay period in June of the current and corresponding previous reporting year broken down by gender against EO classification levels.

The definition of an EO does not include a statutory office holder or an accountable officer.

	Jun-22								Jun-21							
	Female		Male		Self-described		Total		Female		Male		Self-described		Total	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
SES-3	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	1.00	0	0.00	1	1.00
SES-2	2	2.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	2.00	1	1.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	1.00
SES-1	1	1.00	2	2.00	0	0.00	3	3.00	1	0.00	2	1.00	0	0.00	3	3.00
Total	3	3.00	2	2.00	0	0.00	5	5.00	2	1.00	3	2.00	0	0.00	5	5.00

The number of executives in the Report of Operations is based on the number of executive positions that were occupied at the end of the financial year. Note 8.5 in the financial statements lists the total number of EOs and the total remuneration paid to EOs over the course of the reporting period. The financial statements note does not include the Accountable Officer, nor does it distinguish between executive levels or disclose separations of executives who have left Infrastructure Victoria during the 2021-22 financial year. These disclosures are reconciled in the table below:

Reconciliation of executive numbers	2021-22	2020-21
Executives (as per Note 8.3)	5	5
Accountable Officer	1	1
Separations	-1	0
Total executive number 30 June	5	6

Other disclosures

Local Jobs First

The *Local Jobs First Act 2003*, introduced in August 2018, brings together the Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPP) and Major Project Skills Guarantee (MPSG) policy which were previously administered separately.

Infrastructure Victoria is required to apply the Local Jobs First policy to all Metropolitan Melbourne or state-wide projects valued at \$3 million or more. Additionally, the policy must also be applied to any regional Victoria projects valued at \$1 million or more. MPSG applies to all construction projects valued at \$20 million or more.

Infrastructure Victoria undertook no projects subject to the *Local Jobs First Act 2003* during the 2021–2022 reporting period.

Government advertising expenditure

In 2021-2022, Infrastructure Victoria undertook no government advertising campaigns.

Consultancy expenditure

Details of consultancies (valued at \$10,000 or greater)

In 2021–22, Infrastructure Victoria undertook 16 consultancy engagements where total fees payable exceeded \$10,000. The total expenditure incurred during 2021–22 in relation to these consultancies was \$1,394,807 (excluding GST). Details of individual consultancies are provided in the following table.

Details of consultancies under \$10,000

In 2021-2022, there were five consultancies engaged during the year where the total fees payable to the individual consultants were less than \$10,000. The total expenditure incurred during 2021-2022 in relation to these consultancies was \$20,245 (excl. GST).

ICT expenditure

The Department of Treasury and Finance provides ICT services to Infrastructure Victoria on a fee for service basis under the terms of a memorandum of understanding. In 2021-2022, business-enabling ICT, finance and human resources services were provided through a shared services arrangement with the Department of Treasury and Finance for a fee of \$260,081.

Consultancy expenditure

Consultant	Contract Description	Start Date	End Date	Total Approved Project Fee (ex. GST)	Expenditure 2021-22 (ex. GST)	Future Expenditure (ex. GST)
ADVISIAN	Gas infrastructure analysis	12-Jul-21	10-Sep-21	\$192,000	\$192,000	
NORTHMORE GORDON	Gas infrastructure analysis	12-Jul-21	10-Sep-21	\$79,442	\$72,220	
DORIS ENGINEERING	Gas infrastructure analysis	14-Jul-21	1-Oct-21	\$311,195	\$282,905	
JOHNSON PARTNERS	Board performance assessment	13-Oct-21	30-Nov-21	\$29,480	\$26,800	
RPM REAL ESTATE GROUP	Housing data	6-Dec-21	10-Dec-21	\$36,561	\$33,237	
NATION PARTNERS PTY LTD	Stakeholder engagement assessment	19-Jan-21	30-Apr-21	\$39,005	\$39,005	
JEANETTE POPE	Greenfield Housing peer review	17-Jan-22	28-Feb-22	\$14,630	\$13,300	
CENTRE OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS	Greenfield Housing Choice Modelling	26-Apr-22	30-Jun-22	\$197,475	\$78,403	
JACOBS GROUP PTY LTD	Transport policy peer review	8-Feb-22	30-Jun-22	\$15,000	\$15,000	
AECOM AUSTRALIA PTY	Climate Change Consequences	18-Mar-22	22-Jul-22	\$356,808	\$285,447	\$71,361
ARUP P/L	Transport Scenario modelling and assessment	24-Aug-20	30-Jun-21	\$766,980	\$117,225	
CAPIRE CONSULTING	Community engagement	11-Aug-20	30-Jun-21	\$275,000	\$48,317	
PKF MELBOURNE AUDIT & ASSURANCE PTY LTD	Internal Audit	21-Aug-20	30-Jun-22	\$91,500	\$19,200	
QUANTUM MARKET	Gas infrastructure analysis	1-Jun-21	30-Jun-21	\$33,000	\$30,000	
RUSSELL REYNOLDS ASSOCIATES	Executive recruitment services	30-Nov-21	31-Mar-22	\$130,000	\$130,748	
THE NOUS GROUP PTY LTD	Gas infrastructure peer review	25-Jun-21	9-Dec-21	\$15,000	\$11,000	

Freedom of Information requests

Freedom of Information Act 1982 allows the public a right of access to documents held by Infrastructure Victoria. In 2021-2022 Infrastructure Victoria received one request from a general member of the public. One decision was made within the statutory 30-day time period.

Access to documents may be obtained through written request to the Freedom of Information Manager, as detailed in s17 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

In summary, the requirements for making a request are:

- it should be in writing
- it should identify as clearly as possible which document is being requested and
- it should be accompanied by the appropriate application fee (the fee may be waived in certain circumstances).

Requests for documents in the possession of Infrastructure Victoria should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Manager
Infrastructure Victoria
Level 33/140 William St
Melbourne VIC 3000

Requests can also be lodged online at www.foi.vic.gov.au. Access charges may also apply once documents have been processed and a decision on access is made for example, photocopying and search and retrieval charges.

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

Compliance with the *Building Act 1993*

Infrastructure Victoria does not own or control any government buildings and consequently is exempt from notifying its compliance with the building and maintenance provisions of the *Building Act 1993*.

Competitive Neutrality Policy

Infrastructure Victoria does not provide services that compete with the private sector and is therefore not subject to the requirements of the Victorian Competitive Neutrality Policy or subsequent reforms.

Compliance with the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012*

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012* encourages and assists people in making disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies. The Act provides protection to people who make disclosures in accordance with the Act and establishes a system for the matters disclosed to be investigated and rectifying action to be taken.

Infrastructure Victoria encourages its officers and members of the public to report known or suspected incidences of improper conduct and detrimental action.

You may make a protected disclosure to Infrastructure Victoria:

- in person
- by phone
- by leaving a voicemail message
- in writing by post, personal delivery or email
- by any other form of electronic communication and/or
- anonymously.

Alternatively, disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by the Department or any of its employees and/or officers may also be made directly to the Independent Broadbased Anticorruption Commission:

Level 1, North Tower, 459 Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000
Phone: 1300 735 135
Internet: www.ibac.vic.gov.au

Compliance with the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*

To the extent applicable, Infrastructure Victoria has taken all practical measures to comply with obligations under the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

Compliance with the *Disability Act 2006*

Infrastructure Victoria acknowledges the importance of strengthening the rights of people with a disability. We are committed to creating and maintaining an accessible and inclusive environment for all people with a disability who come into contact with Infrastructure Victoria, whether as employees, stakeholders or members of the public more generally.

Office base environmental impacts

Infrastructure Victoria minimises the use of electricity through the use of motion sensitive lighting and efficient appliances. All staff are encouraged to avoid printing where possible and, where necessary, all printers default to double sided printing reducing paper waste. Additionally, every Infrastructure Victoria printer uses 100% recycled copy paper. All office waste systems are segregated, reducing the amount of recyclable material directed to landfill. Finally, all staff are encouraged to employ active or public modes of transport when undertaking business activities.

Additional Information

Infrastructure Victoria's published reports and documents are available online at www.infrastructurevictoria.com.au

Any relevant information in relation to the financial year is retained by the Accountable Officer and is available on request subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Attestation for financial management compliance with Ministerial Standing Direction 5.1.4

Infrastructure Victoria Financial Management Compliance
Attestation Statement

I Jim Miller, on behalf of the Responsible Body, certify that the Infrastructure Victoria has complied with the applicable Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Instructions.

Disclosure index

The Infrastructure Victoria annual report is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislation and pronouncements. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of Infrastructure Victoria's compliance with statutory disclosure requirements.

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(a) References to FRDs have been removed from the Disclosure Index if the specific FRDs do not contain requirements that are of the nature of disclosure.

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Assessment of
priorities and progress
in meeting Victoria's
infrastructure needs

Introduction

Each year, Infrastructure Victoria assesses the Victorian Government's specified priorities and progress in meeting the infrastructure needs identified in the Victorian infrastructure plan.

The *Infrastructure Victoria Act 2015* requires Infrastructure Victoria to publish this in its annual report. In August 2021, Infrastructure Victoria tabled *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* in the Victorian Parliament. It contains 94 recommendations for projects, policies and reforms to confront long-term challenges, manage urban change, harness infrastructure for productivity and growth, and develop regional Victoria. The Victorian Government responded to the recommendations when it published its new 5-year infrastructure plan, the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*.

Assessing priorities and progress in meeting infrastructure needs

Approach to the assessment

Because the Victorian Government published a new plan, the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*, Infrastructure Victoria reviewed its assessment approach to better evaluate its priorities and progress in meeting infrastructure needs.

The plan covers 8 infrastructure sectors. It lists 35 long-term priorities, 103 key projects and 43 reforms. Infrastructure Victoria assessed the plan against these 35 long-term priorities. The plan generally expresses each priority as a high-level objective or outcome, interpreted as 'infrastructure needs'. This report assesses the priorities and, over time, will measure progress against them.

Infrastructure Victoria reviewed each priority and interpreted the main objective each aims to achieve. In some instances, a sector's priorities have overlapping elements, or a priority seeks to achieve multiple objectives. Others target a single objective.

The assessment is based on publicly available information that Infrastructure Victoria could locate at the time of assessment. For each priority, Infrastructure Victoria described Victoria's current performance using contextual information or readily available data, that can be maintained over the long-term and updated periodically. This will indicate progress over time. In some areas, Infrastructure Victoria did not find suitable indicators. The analysis can be refined over time, adopting better data or indicators to improve insights.

To assess progress in meeting the priorities, Infrastructure Victoria reviewed all projects and reforms in the plan and assigned them to one of the 35 long-term priorities. It also reviewed the 2022–23 Victorian Budget for initiatives that align with the Victorian Government's specified priorities, reviewed departmental websites for evidence of progress on relevant initiatives, and government media releases. It drew together all information collected to provide a largely qualitative assessment. The review may not capture every relevant policy commitment, or all departmental and agency work. However, the commitments and initiatives documented indicate the direction that Victoria is headed.

Summary

The Victorian Government is undertaking many initiatives to progress the priorities of its second 5-year infrastructure plan. The government published its plan in December 2021 and the assessment occurred less than one year into the plan. The 2021–22 assessment focuses on documenting priorities and initiatives underway or recently announced. This helps build foundations on which to measure progress in future assessments. The assessment also identifies gaps or areas for improvement for the Victorian Government to consider. Where possible, Infrastructure Victoria intends to use the indicators in this assessment to measure future progress on the government's infrastructure priorities.

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* contains 4 key objectives, all of which featured in the government's previous 2017 plan:

- create a job-generating and inclusive economy
- provide a sustainable environment
- build thriving and resilient communities
- establish an innovative and highly adaptable Victoria.

These objectives generally align with those in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021-2051*. Infrastructure Victoria developed the strategy's objectives in consultation with the community and considered the directions in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.¹

The plan's priorities have different aims and objectives. Some priorities have a broad scope, such as the transport sector's 'building for the future' priority that covers many transport infrastructure projects and policies. A handful were specific to certain programs, like the 'kindergarten for all 3-year-olds' priority in the education and training sector. Some priorities focus on service delivery outcomes, such as health and human service sector priorities. In this sector, the link between infrastructure and priorities is less direct compared to the transport sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered the use and needs of Victoria's infrastructure. For example, significant changes in travel and work patterns² and lower migration levels³ have affected population growth. The plan acknowledges using best practice land use planning, new technologies and other reforms alongside infrastructure to help the economic and social recovery from the pandemic. *The post-pandemic commute: the effects of more working from home in Victoria*, made recommendations which can support these aims.⁴

The plan groups priorities based on sectors, which generally align with Victorian Government department responsibilities. Sector-based plans can streamline accountability but coordinated efforts can achieve the best outcomes on long-term and systemic challenges. Major cross-sectoral issues include climate change mitigation and adaptation, which the plan covers in the energy, transport and environment sectors. Similarly, sustained reform across several sectors and systems can realise recommendations from royal commissions into family violence and mental health needs. The Victorian Government can also manage change in communities by integrating land use and infrastructure planning. Infrastructure Victoria has previously recommended the government produce public plans

for priority infrastructure sectors. These can allow different levels of government and agencies to find synergies, combine funding and synchronise infrastructure delivery.⁵ For new growth areas and priority urban renewal precincts, Infrastructure Victoria also recommended empowering a government body to monitor and publicly report on infrastructure delivery in precinct plans, and proactively advise on delivery sequencing and funding.⁶

The plan recognises working to empower Victoria's First Nations peoples' self-determination in infrastructure. For example, in the health and human services sector, the *Wungurilwil Gapgapduir: Aboriginal children and families agreement* aims to resource and support Aboriginal organisations to care for their children, families and communities.⁷ Water sector reforms include working with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal peak bodies to develop an Aboriginal Access to Water Roadmap.⁸ The 2022–23 Victorian Budget also funded planning for two co-designed healing centres to support and promote the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians.⁹ The Victorian Government funds two Aboriginal community-controlled refuges to support First Nations victim survivors of family violence and provide emergency accommodation.¹⁰ These initiatives provide tangible steps to address Aboriginal disadvantage, fight racism, overcome intergenerational trauma, and help begin meeting the current and future infrastructure needs of Victoria's First Nations people. A further step would be to begin a co-design process with Aboriginal Victorians to develop a plan to guide investment in Aboriginal community-controlled infrastructure, as recommended in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*.¹¹ It can build upon existing plans, agreements, and reports for specific sectors, including for water,¹² health,¹³ mental health,¹⁴ family violence,¹⁵ education,¹⁶ children and families,¹⁷ justice,¹⁸ economic development,¹⁹ and housing and homelessness.²⁰

The next section provides an assessment of each priority contained in the plan, outlining initiatives currently underway or that have been recently announced, and initial indicators to provide guidance on how Victoria is tracking in meeting its infrastructure needs.

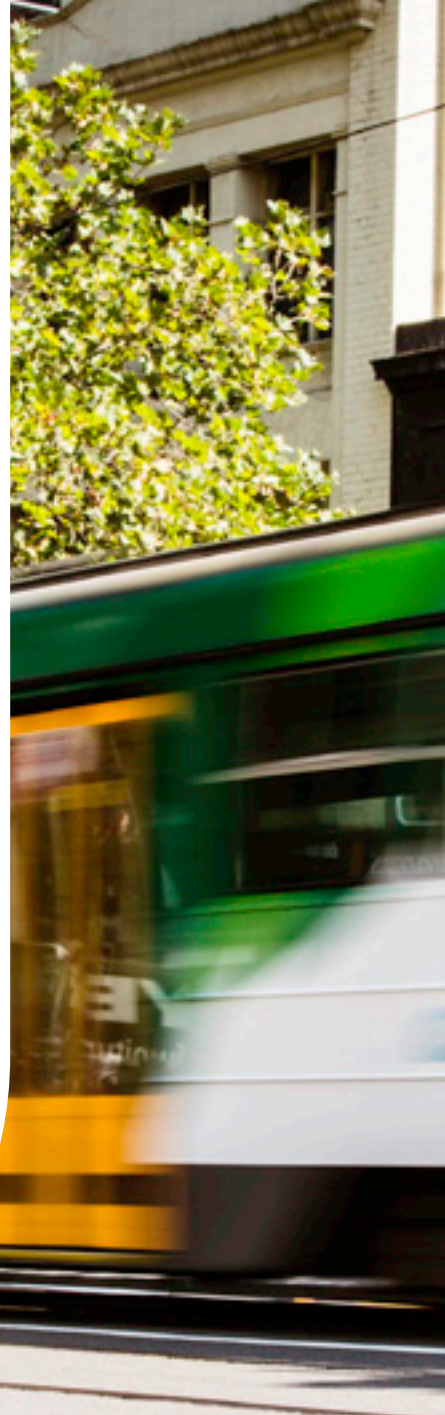
Assessment of priorities and progress in meeting Victoria's infrastructure needs

Transport

Victoria's transport infrastructure sector includes an interconnected system of roads, rail, public transport, private transport, pedestrian and cycling paths and ports. The transport network facilitates moving people and goods to their destinations.

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* outlines four transport priorities which cover existing and new state-wide and community-level infrastructure, and smart technology that can shape new travelling patterns. The priorities largely complement the *Department of Transport strategic plan 2021–25*.²¹ The transport priorities are:

- making the most of existing assets
- building for the future
- connecting communities
- smarter transport solutions



Making the most of existing assets

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria's transport network is extensive, covering every corner of the state. We're making the most of this valuable asset by investing in maintenance and upgrades which increase its capacity, efficiency and longevity.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority emphasises maintaining and upgrading existing transport infrastructure. It seeks to get the most out of existing transport infrastructure to deliver efficient services and increase its useful life. Maintenance and upgrades improve and expand existing transport infrastructure. While this priority also mentions increasing capacity as an aim, Infrastructure Victoria focused primarily on assessing maintenance and upgrades which deliver efficiency and longevity aims and will discuss capacity aims in the 'building for the future' priority assessment.

Transport infrastructure is long-lived, costly and often disruptive to build. Making the most of existing assets reduces the need to build new infrastructure. Victoria's existing infrastructure also needs to be maintained to help accommodate future growth. Changing how and when people use and manage infrastructure offers the greatest benefits in the long term.

Between 2009 and 2020, the Victorian Government increased funding for Victorian arterial road and bridge maintenance from \$282.4 million to \$569 million (using constant 2019–20 prices).²² Regional Victoria has pronounced infrastructure needs relating to this priority. An increasing proportion of the regional road network is in very poor condition.²³ The regional rail freight network is also in relatively poor condition, impeding rail freight uptake and contributing to V/Line trains failing to meet key service performance targets.²⁴ To help overcome this, Infrastructure Victoria recommended the Victorian Government specify clear service levels, dedicate longer-term funding informed by suitable prioritisation criteria and make network development and asset management plans publicly available.²⁵

The Victorian Government is undertaking a significant maintenance and upgrade program, which helps make the most of existing transport assets. Projects that align with this priority include maintenance and upgrades for different modes of transport including road, rail and ports, covering projects in both regional and metropolitan locations.

Examples of maintenance projects from the 2022–23 Budget include \$24 million for West Gate Bridge maintenance and over \$200 million for road maintenance across Victoria.²⁶ Upgrade-focused projects include metropolitan road upgrades²⁷ such as the \$522 million for the Mordialloc Freeway, and the M80 Ring Road upgrade.²⁸ Rail projects include capacity improvements to Wyndham Vale and Melton for future operation of higher capacity trains.²⁹ The Victorian Government has also announced funding for critical maintenance work for local ports.³⁰

This priority aims to cover every corner of the state. Metropolitan-based projects underway include the Monash Freeway upgrade – Stage 2³¹ and suburban roads upgrades such as the Northern Roads Upgrade and South-Eastern Roads Upgrade.³² Regional-based projects include the Regional Rail Revival and regional road upgrades initiatives. Some projects include both metropolitan and regional delivery including capacity improvements to Melton and Ballarat rail, and road pavement works.³³ To build on these, the Victorian Government should deliver long-term funding certainty for regional road maintenance and upgrades, allowing prioritisation of projects that deliver outcomes to improve safety, reduce vehicle emissions and lift productivity.³⁴

Investing in maintenance and upgrades is part of asset management, which will also need to consider future climate impacts. The *Transport climate change adaptation action plan 2022–2026*³⁵ contributes to this priority, as it aims to strengthen transport assets, infrastructure and services to increase resilience to future climate change impacts.

Achieving maximum efficiency from existing infrastructure can improve its productivity and effectiveness. Investing in maintenance and upgrades can help make the most of existing assets. Infrastructure Victoria's research shows that comprehensive pricing reforms for roads, public transport and parking can also help get the most from the transport system and is an effective way to reduce congestion.³⁶ The Victorian Government can fund more maintenance and upgrades, over a longer time horizon, to ensure the transport network can effectively service every corner of the state.

Building for the future

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

To meet projected growth across Victoria and keep people and freight moving in the future, the Government is planning and delivering state-changing and city-shaping major projects to increase transport capacity and connections.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority focuses on new transport infrastructure to support Victoria's growing population and freight task. It seeks to build greater capacity to meet more demand and create new options for people and freight to move around

the state. As it includes major projects in its description, many initiatives under Victoria's Big Build are aligned to this priority.

Measuring short term changes in transport capacity is no easy task. However, between 2010 and 2018, Victorian roads are estimated to have increased by over 5,300 km, bringing the total length of roads to just over 149,000 km.³⁷ The majority of this increase was in urban local roads,³⁸ which could include those for new housing developments. Road upgrades are also delivering more capacity.

Scheduled service kilometres is a basic measure to indicate changes in public transport capacity over time. The COVID-19 pandemic is still affecting public transport patronage. Between 2016–17 and 2020–21, metropolitan and regional buses and trains increased total scheduled service kilometres, while trams increased only slightly (Table 1).³⁹

Table 1 – Scheduled service kilometres 2016–17 to 2020–21 (million kms)

Service	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Bus services - metropolitan	116.4	119.8	122.3	123.1	125.7
Bus services - regional	25.7	25.7	26	27.3	27.3
Train services - metropolitan	22.9	23.1	23.8	23.8	24.9
Train services - regional	24.6	26	26.5	26.5	27.4
Tram services	24.1	24.5	24.6	24.6	24.6

Source: Department of Transport output performance measures

Victoria's many major transport infrastructure projects will contribute to increasing capacity. While the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to reduce population growth in the short to medium-term, the government will still need to plan and deliver transport infrastructure.⁴⁰

Rail projects made up the majority of the major transport infrastructure projects that align with this priority. Major city-shaping projects will have significant impacts on transport journeys, ideally leading to better connections across the city and greater service capacity. This includes the Metro Tunnel, Suburban Rail Loop and Melbourne Airport Rail which will connect people to more places using Victoria's train network.⁴¹ Other major projects contributing to this priority include the Cranbourne Line Duplication and stage 2 of the Hurstbridge Line upgrade.⁴² *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* provides recommendations for future rail initiatives aligned with this priority, including preparing for Melbourne Metro Two and direct Geelong rail services, and extending rail services in Melbourne's western and northern growth areas.⁴³ Reconfiguring the City Loop for more frequent and reliable services is a promising and high priority project to allow more trains to pass through central Melbourne, allowing more frequent and reliable services that accommodates future rail patronage.⁴⁴

Major road projects contributing to this priority include North East Link and the West Gate Tunnel project. North East Link will support population growth in the north east of Melbourne by taking an estimated 15,000 trucks off local roads per day and reducing travel times by up to 35 minutes.⁴⁵ Infrastructure Victoria's *Major transport program strategic assessment* found a compelling case to construct Phase A of the outer metropolitan road and rail corridor (also known as the E6 motorway) following completion of North East Link.⁴⁶ Infrastructure Victoria recommended within two years, the Victorian Government determine staging for the outer metropolitan rail and road corridor, and subject to detailed business cases, start construction of priority sections, starting with the E6 motorway by the end of this decade. The freight rail link should be delivered to broadly coincide with the opening of the Western Intermodal Freight Terminal.⁴⁷

The Victorian infrastructure plan priority also seeks to meet projected growth across Victoria's regions, and major projects such as the Geelong Fast Rail⁴⁸ and the Western Rail Plan are likely to contribute to progress in this area.

At 30 June 2022, projects were at various stages of completion. For instance, the government had announced the detailed northern corridor transport and land use plan,⁴⁹ high-capacity metro trains were in planning⁵⁰ and new trains for Sunbury were under construction.⁵¹

The sheer number and size of projects announced or underway demonstrates a strong commitment to building transport infrastructure for the future. Infrastructure Victoria recommends publishing an integrated transport plan to support the Victorian Government effectively prepare for growth and change, make integration with land use clearer, and assist coordination with local government and private sector investments.⁵²

Connecting communities

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Local and regional economies are important to the prosperity of the entire state. It is vital to support changing work and travel patterns, particularly as Victoria recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are improving safety, reliability and journey times for all network users, and driving the efficient movement of freight across Victoria.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority aims to align infrastructure to Victorians' travel patterns for work and other purposes, connecting communities to jobs, services and leisure. It targets infrastructure serving regional or local economies, informed by travel pattern information. Initiatives related to changes in travel following the COVID-19 pandemic may also be part of this priority.

This priority should improve safety, reliability and journey times for all transport users over time – including for people living with a disability. Recent indicators for safety, reliability and journey times have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as different road traffic use and public transport patronage, workforce impacts and service changes.⁵³ To assist Victoria's recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Infrastructure Victoria recommends reducing bus and tram fares to encourage people to make greater use of cost-effective

public transport services. This could contribute to many of this priority's objectives including reducing road traffic congestion, air pollution and injuries from road crashes.⁵⁴

On-road public transport reliability improved, with trams and buses delivering a similar percentage of scheduled services in 2020–21 compared to 2017–18, with some improvements in punctuality, particularly for metropolitan buses and trams. Train reliability was mixed, with a small decline in the percentage of scheduled services delivered, but improvements in punctuality.⁵⁵

Reliability on metropolitan roads, measured by the percentage of nominal 30-minute trips that would have been completed within 35 minutes on normal weekdays during school terms, improved to 92.3% in 2020–21, up from 87.7% from 2017–18.⁵⁶

Safety on Victoria's roads has plateaued. In 2021 there were 232 fatalities, which is similar to 2013 numbers with 243 fatalities.⁵⁷ Road crashes resulting in hospital claims increased between 2016 to 2018 to 8,043 claims, before significantly decreasing to 3,275 claims by 2021. Lower road traffic in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic can explain this reduction.⁵⁸

The Victorian Government is making investments to improve transport connections for regional and local communities, covering a diversity of transport modes.

For public transport, projects include service upgrades⁵⁹ and \$195 million for more metro and regional train services across Victoria following the completion of major projects including the Ballarat line upgrade, Cranbourne–Pakenham line upgrade and High-Capacity Metro Trains. New rolling stock investment is also underway.⁶⁰ The government continues to reform buses by further investing in bus service improvements and accessibility upgrades in line with *Victoria's bus plan*.⁶¹ These improvements align with Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation to connect people to suburban jobs through Next Generation Buses and road upgrades.⁶² The 2022–23 Budget committed \$81.1 million to deliver the tram plan. This plan is a package of tram infrastructure works to improve safety, prepare for the Metro Tunnel opening and Next Generation Trams, and support compliance with Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport.⁶³

The *Accessible public transport action plan 2020–24*⁶⁴ is a strategy for delivering accessible bus, train, tram and taxi services that cater for the needs of users with diverse accessibility requirements. One objective is to continue upgrades that provide 'next service' information. This includes providing new access features at public transport facilities including railway stations, tram stops, and bus stops and transport interchanges. Infrastructure Victoria recommended further effort be made to improve tram accessibility as a priority, as only 400 of over 1,700 tram

stops are currently accessible.⁶⁵ The government is also developing a Tram Stop Accessibility Strategy, due for completion by late 2022.⁶⁶ This provides an opportunity to measure or articulate desired progress to legislated accessibility targets.

Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure projects also contribute to the 'connecting communities' priority. The government is making targeted investments across Melbourne and regional Victoria.⁶⁷ The government has provided more funding for active transport priority projects to improve connections and safety on Victoria's walking and cycling network,⁶⁸ progressing toward the aim of 25% of trips to be by foot or cycle by 2030.⁶⁹ It is also trialling up to 100 kms of new and better bike routes across inner Melbourne suburbs as part of the pop-up bike lanes program.⁷⁰ Further opportunity exists to transform cycling mode share, safety and connectivity in Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong as recommended in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*.⁷¹ The infrastructure strategy also recommends reallocating road space to priority transport modes to better reflect desired movement functions,⁷² such as initiatives that change local roads to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users over cars and trucks.

The Murray Basin Rail Project will improve freight efficiency by delivering 21 more freight paths and taking an estimated 20,000 truck trips off the road.⁷³ Steps to progress planning and development activities for the Western Interstate Freight Terminal and its associated rail connection also aim to improve freight efficiency. The 2022–23 Budget includes funding to keep delivering the *Road safety strategy*⁷⁴ and its first three-year *Road safety action plan*.⁷⁵

Easier access to jobs, education, services and leisure will improve Victorians' lives. When considering a post-pandemic Victoria, Infrastructure Victoria's research suggests that if workers continue to work from home some days each week, more people could live further away from the Melbourne CBD,⁷⁶ meaning considering better transport options in Melbourne's outer suburbs and new growth areas.⁷⁷

Smarter transport solutions

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Technology solutions have the potential to drive efficiencies in the way we operate the transport network, and improve safety, capacity, sustainability and amenity, which complement and enhance infrastructure. Emerging mobility options also have the potential to change the way we move and improve connections to economic and social opportunities.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about using technology and emerging mobility options to improve transport for Victorians. Using new technologies, particularly to operate the network for greater capacity and choosing new vehicle technologies, can make journeys safer and more efficient, pleasant, and sustainable. This priority has several components. The previous 'building for the future' priority already covered some, such as capacity and safety. The Victorian Government is using multiple projects to make progress on different elements of this priority.

Projects to drive efficiencies in the transport network include developing a new automated road assessment and permit system to allow heavy vehicles to access the road network in a faster and more efficient way.⁷⁸ New mobility reforms include projects to improve safety and efficiency. These include trialling FlexiRide, a form of demand responsive transport on the bus network, installing dozens of sensors at pedestrian crossings to improve safety, and exploring Mobility as a Service (MaaS) for real-time journey planning, responsive transport services and payment across multiple modes of transport.⁷⁹

Victoria is investing \$340 million in Smarter Roads, a technology-based monitoring, management and technology solution. It focuses on improving the movement of passenger and freight vehicles, reducing congestion and journey times and improving productivity of the transport network.⁸⁰ This would contribute to improving capacity. Continued investment in this initiative is consistent with Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation to the Victorian Government to introduce new road network demand management technologies across the state and integrate management systems for different road-based transport modes.⁸¹

In 2019, the transport sector produced 24.8% of Victoria's total net emissions.⁸² Transport emissions grew by 6.8 Mt CO₂-e (42.6%) between 1990 and 2019. This is the largest growth in emissions from any sector or sub-sector over this period.⁸³ This shows that smarter transport solutions must contribute to reaching Victoria's legislated goal of net zero emissions by 2050.⁸⁴

The *Transport sector pledge 2021–25* provides steps towards net zero emissions transport. It has a 50% target for new light vehicle sales to be zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) by 2030, and all new public transport bus purchases will be ZEVs by 2025, with a trial currently underway.⁸⁵ ZEVs can help achieve sustainable emissions reductions in the transport sector, and improve amenity by reducing noise and pollution. In the Netherlands, the government is introducing electric bus fleets for amenity, health and environmental reasons. These modern buses provide a quiet and comfortable ride, with no diesel exhaust emissions.⁸⁶ The Victorian Government can help accelerate ZEV take-up by committing to no longer registering new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2035 at the latest, consistent with Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation.⁸⁷

The Victorian Government also provided \$600,000 in the 2022–23 Budget to commence the transition to a centralised government fleet management model. This aims to improve fleet utilisation and efficiency to support the ongoing uptake of zero emission vehicles.⁸⁸ The government can raise its ambition over the next five years, such as requiring all new government fleet vehicles to be ZEVs where available.⁸⁹ The government also continues to support other forms of emerging transport options such as the e-scooter trial underway in the City of Melbourne, City of Yarra, City of Port Phillip and the City of Ballarat.⁹⁰

Culture, sport and community

Cultural, sport and community infrastructure are venues and places that bring people together to enrich lives, contribute to health and wellbeing, and foster social cohesion.

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected the culture, sport and community infrastructure sector, including large state-owned facilities, major stadiums and smaller community infrastructure. Recovering from these COVID impacts will be an immediate challenge for the sector. This sector has linkages with other priorities such as in the environment sector. The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* contains four priorities for the culture, sport and community sector:

- maintaining Victoria's competitive edge
- planning for a growing population
- growing participation
- maintaining and improving our current facilities



Maintaining Victoria's competitive edge

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is the cultural and sporting heart of Australia. Driving recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and growing our reputation nationally and internationally will require continuous improvement to the infrastructure that makes our world-class events possible and provides high-quality and demand driving tourism products.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority seeks to build Victoria's competitive edge and reputation of hosting world-class cultural and sporting events, including to help drive more tourism.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected Victoria's ability to host cultural and sporting events, with local, national and international movement curtailed in 2020 and 2021. Visitor expenditure declined by \$19.5 billion in 2020, including a \$5.4 billion decline in regional Victoria from 2019 levels.⁹¹ Overnight visitors to Victoria in 2021 remained 40% lower compared to pre-pandemic levels, and visitors to Melbourne declined by 62%.⁹² Visitor and major sporting and cultural event numbers are currently below 2016–17 levels.⁹³ Borders have reopened and tourism is recovering, though some forecast the Victorian domestic visitor economy may not return to its pre-pandemic level until the end of 2023–24.⁹⁴

The Victorian Government is using infrastructure investment to increase Victoria's hosting capacity for world class cultural and sporting events, to help major events and tourism return to pre-pandemic levels.

Significantly, the government committed \$2.6 billion to prepare for the 2026 Commonwealth Games, including for modern sports infrastructure, helping to further build Victoria's competitive edge.⁹⁵ This investment provides an opportunity to consider wider community benefits and the infrastructure legacy the Games will leave for regional communities.

The government also made substantial contributions to upgrades for Kardinia Park⁹⁶ and Marvel Stadium,⁹⁷ so the stadiums are fit for large scale events. The State

Sports Centres Trust and the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust received extra support to continue operations and undertake asset renewals.⁹⁸

For cultural infrastructure, major investments include the \$1.7 billion Melbourne Arts Precinct,⁹⁹ the expansion of the Geelong Arts Centre¹⁰⁰ and constructing a sixth sound stage at Docklands Studio Melbourne.¹⁰¹ These projects can help grow Victoria's reputation nationally and internationally. The Victorian Government also provided more support for Victoria's creative agencies to activate redeveloped spaces, such as to the Australian Centre for the Moving Image.¹⁰²

The Victorian Government is also progressing its regional tourism programs, such as its flagship regional tourism infrastructure projects,¹⁰³ which received extra funding in the 2022–23 Budget.¹⁰⁴ The Regional Tourism Investment Fund has further funded regional tourism infrastructure,¹⁰⁵ guided by the *Visitor economy recovery and reform plan*.¹⁰⁶ Other regional tourism projects include the completed Lakeside Visitor Centre at Puffing Billy Railway,¹⁰⁷ and funding to implement the *Puffing Billy master plan*.¹⁰⁸

These Victorian Government initiatives show it is active in assisting Victoria's cultural and sporting sector's recovery through infrastructure investment. Major government strategies, like *Creative state*, and sound investment frameworks can help further guide decision-making to maximise benefits for the Victorian community from investment decisions.

Planning for a growing population

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victorian communities need land and space for new sporting and cultural facilities and upgrades to existing facilities. Modernising existing facilities and coordinating approaches to better meet demand is key to equitable access.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is to plan for sufficient cultural, community and recreational land and facilities to meet growing demand and provide equitable access. Investing in updating existing sporting and cultural facilities can help achieve this.

Culture, sport and community

The priority also highlights coordination because other governments and the private and community sectors can help contribute to this outcome.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Victoria's population was growing strongly and it is expected to return to near pre-pandemic growth rates by around 2024–25.¹⁰⁹ One challenge in meeting demand is finding land and space for new and upgraded facilities, particularly in inner city and established suburbs.¹¹⁰ Growth areas have fewer libraries and aquatic centres than the rest of Melbourne, and this will likely worsen over time as populations increase, demonstrated by the existing rapid growth in families with young children.¹¹¹

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* lists two actions likely to contribute to this priority: developing a training base for national women's football squads and the Community Sports Infrastructure Stimulus Program.

The Victorian Government is providing \$101 million for the Home of the Matildas and State Football Centre, a training and administrative base for the national women's football squads and Rugby Victoria. Grassroots sporting clubs will have extensive access for training and development.¹¹² Students at La Trobe University will be able to use the facilities for student placements and research studies.

The Community Sports Infrastructure Stimulus Program provided funding to local councils, sporting clubs and alpine resort boards to develop sporting infrastructure.¹¹³ The Victorian Government has funded 69 community sport infrastructure projects, including \$5 million to transform Debneys Park in Flemington into a new community and sports hub, and funding for the Western Park Netball Facilities Redevelopment in Gippsland.¹¹⁴ Construction has been completed on some projects, such as the Diamond Creek netball courts upgrade,¹¹⁵ and planning and design works was underway in the first half of 2022 for the Olympic Park Redevelopment in Heidelberg,¹¹⁶ which received \$4.5 million from the program.¹¹⁷

The Growing Suburbs Fund will likely contribute to this priority. In 2021–22, the fund provided \$163 million to 43 projects to help meet infrastructure requirements in interface and peri-urban councils. The projects included the Inverloch to Wonthaggi Trail and the Rokewood Community Hub and Pavilion Upgrade.¹¹⁸ The government provided a further \$50 million to the fund in the 2022–23 Budget.¹¹⁹

The Victorian Government can evaluate these programs as initiatives are delivered, to continually improve and refine its selection methods and delivery approaches. Communities with rapid population growth or inadequate existing facilities will likely have the greatest need.

Infrastructure Victoria recommended the Victorian Government increase funding for local governments to plan and deliver libraries and aquatic recreation

centres in Melbourne's seven growth area municipalities.¹²⁰ Documenting criteria for equitable access may help target funding to areas with the greatest infrastructure need, as can identifying locations where coordinating approaches could yield significant benefits.

Growing participation

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Targeted investments in new and existing natural and built assets give people the opportunity to actively participate, creating healthier and more inclusive communities.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is to target investments to increase participation in sport and community activities. It aims to allow more people to participate in sporting and community activities and increase the number of activity types, to produce healthier and more inclusive communities. This assessment focuses on sport and recreation facilities.

Removing barriers can increase participation. For example, women may not play organised sport without proper facilities. Currently, some socio-economic groups participate in sport and recreation less than the Victorian average. In 2019, 60.1% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders participated in sport or recreational activities three times per week compared to the Victorian average of 63.7%. People who speak a language other than English at home (55.1%) and people with a disability (52.5%) also participate less than the Victorian average.¹²¹ While overall participation in sport and recreational activities has been growing since 2019, these disparities persist.¹²² Addressing participation rates in these groups will increase overall participation, supporting healthier and more inclusive communities.

The Victorian Government is delivering several initiatives to grow participation in sport and recreation. The Local Sports Infrastructure Fund supports individuals and communities who participate less by investing in opportunities to facilitate participation and advance inclusive and accessible development.¹²³ It has five funding streams: indoor stadiums/aquatic centres, female friendly facilities, community sports lighting, community facilities, and planning. In 2021, it provided funding to 73 projects, such as \$2 million towards the Yarrowonga Multisport Stadium.¹²⁴ Applications for the 2022 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund closed in July 2022, and projects are expected to begin construction in April 2023.¹²⁵ The 2022–23 Budget provided more funding, as part of the \$88 million for community grants programs for new and upgraded community sport and recreation infrastructure.¹²⁶

Active Victoria is the government's strategic framework to guide sport and recreation activities. The 2017–2021 strategic framework is being updated to guide investment in sport and recreation to 2025.¹²⁷ It should assist in growing participation by identifying challenges to participating in sport, including a growing population and the lack of available land in inner city and established suburbs.¹²⁸ A strong policy framework will help to increase participation by ensuring that investment decisions factor in the participation rate of disadvantaged groups. At the time of assessment, the revised strategy was yet to be released.

The Victorian Government is making progress on growing participation in sport and recreational activities, with room to increase participation in groups that face barriers and disadvantage. This will help further build overall participation.

Maintaining and improving our current facilities

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria has significant cultural, sporting, recreation and community assets. Maintaining and improving these assets will ensure they are safe, suitable and appropriate, maximising positive benefits for both current and future generations in the community.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about maintaining and improving Victoria's existing cultural, sporting, recreation and community infrastructure. It seeks to make infrastructure fit-for-purpose and last the distance.

The quantity and diversity of Victoria's cultural, sporting, recreation and community assets make them difficult to assess. The Victorian Government owns state-significant infrastructure, but many facilities in Victoria are owned and managed by local governments. Maintaining and upgrading cultural, sporting, recreation and community infrastructure is a process of continual improvement. Community facilities grants approved by the Victorian Government over the past six years varied considerably. It approved 170 in 2016–17, reaching 320 in 2018–19 and falling back to 170 expected in 2021–22.¹²⁹

The Victorian Government is contributing to several larger projects towards this priority and providing grants funding to smaller scale ones. The government contributed \$105 million and Knox City Council \$26 million to the State Basketball Centre upgrade, due for completion in late 2023.

Upgrades include 12 new indoor basketball courts, training facilities for high-performance basketball, new gymnastics facilities, new administration facilities and an outdoor town square.¹³⁰ The project is expected to increase the annual use of the facilities from 800,000 people to more than 2 million, serving both local and professional sporting clubs and players.¹³¹ Similarly, work was completed on the redevelopment of Melbourne Football Club's training oval at Gosch's Paddock to which the Victorian Government contributed \$2 million. The upgrade brings the oval in line with other AFL club training facilities, better matching the dimensions of the MCG, with the community also able to use the facilities.¹³²

The Country Football and Netball Program is likely to contribute to this priority through improving local sporting facilities. Much smaller in scale, funding allocated to projects announced in 2022 include \$197,000 for a new netball court at Anakie Recreation Reserve, \$200,000 to install new oval lighting at Galvin Park in Werribee, and \$200,000 to redevelop Linton Oval in Golden Plains Shire Council.¹³³ Similarly, the \$20 million World Game Facilities Fund will improve football (soccer) facilities across Victoria.¹³⁴ Applications closed in May 2022 with successful projects likely to include improvements to change rooms, playing fields, lighting or pavilions.¹³⁵

To improve community facilities, the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program provides funding of between \$10,000 and \$1,000,000 to councils and regional library corporations to deliver new or upgraded library facilities.¹³⁶ The 2022–23 program closes to applications in July,¹³⁷ with the program previously providing funding to projects such as the Euroa Library refresh.¹³⁸ Also contributing to this priority is the \$17.5 million creative infrastructure grants program announced in the 2022–23 Budget. This will help maintain and improve existing cultural and community facilities across Victoria, including upgrading Castlemaine Art Museum and Footscray Community Arts Centre.¹³⁹ The government also announced the Living Local Fund in the 2022–23 Budget. This includes grants for local community building projects such as revitalising suburban shopping strips and regional community infrastructure projects.¹⁴⁰

Given the complexity of assessing different project types, the government faces challenges in ensuring that funding goes to projects with the greatest need. Victorian councils also spend about \$2 billion each year on infrastructure,¹⁴¹ while managing assets worth over \$115 billion.¹⁴² Sometimes there are complex challenges in managing these facilities, such as strong community attachment to older assets, despite them no longer meeting community needs. Infrastructure Victoria recommended the Victorian Government update community infrastructure by funding regional councils to update, repurpose or retire outdated community infrastructure for better service delivery.¹⁴³

Assessment of priorities and progress in meeting Victoria's infrastructure needs

Education and training

Victoria education infrastructure supports lifelong learning including kindergarten, primary school, secondary school and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes. The education sector helps meet child development milestones and develops skills for future learning and jobs.

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* outlines six education and training priorities:

- catering for a growing population
- creating inclusive shared spaces
- maximising use of technology
- developing skills for tomorrow
- improving education infrastructure
- kindergarten for all 3-year-olds



Catering for a growing population

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Future population growth means more Victorians engaged in education. Maintaining educational excellence and equity requires more infrastructure and better asset use.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority aims to ensure sufficient capacity to accommodate Victoria's growing population. While it encompasses all levels of education, this priority assessment focuses on capacity in primary and secondary schools. Capacity related to early childhood education is discussed in the priority related to kindergarten for all 3-year-olds, and higher education, skills and training is discussed in the priority assessment about 'developing skills for tomorrow'.

In February 2021, 558,235 students were enrolled in primary school and 438,315 students were enrolled in secondary school in Victoria.¹⁴⁴ By 2052, Victoria's primary school aged population is expected to grow to over 790,000 and secondary school aged population to over 670,000.¹⁴⁵ Measures to accommodate this growth range from short-term solutions to meet immediate demands, to longer-term plans to support future needs in growing and established areas.

The Victorian Government has committed to build 100 new schools by 2026,¹⁴⁶ demonstrating a commitment to providing education infrastructure for a growing population. Between 2019 and 2021, the government opened 34 new schools, and funded 28 more to open between 2022 and 2024. In the 2022–23 Budget, the government committed a further \$527 million to build 13 new schools, scheduled to open in 2026.¹⁴⁷

The Victorian Government invested \$236 million towards land acquisition for future school sites in the 2022–23 Budget.¹⁴⁸ The government also undertakes provision planning work and is developing 20-year estimates for government school demand.¹⁴⁹ These estimates will inform Precinct Structure Planning processes to plan for sites in Melbourne's greenfield growth areas. Producing public plans for priority infrastructure sectors, including education, could optimise these processes, as recommended in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*.¹⁵⁰ Public plans support agencies working together to align infrastructure decisions and helps governments and the private and not-for-profit sector align their decision-making to invest and support government objectives.

Education infrastructure for a growing population also requires addressing immediate needs, to better use existing assets. The relocatable buildings program relieves pressure on government schools reaching their student capacity and provides flexibility to add capacity to schools in areas with high enrolment demand across Victoria. The program received an extra \$92 million in the 2022–23 Budget.¹⁵¹ The government is also upgrading schools, such as expanding capacity at several primary, P–12 and secondary schools in established areas to meet enrolment growth.¹⁵² This includes \$98 million for seven schools ready for the 2023 school year,¹⁵³ \$85 million for six schools ready for the 2024 school year,¹⁵⁴ and \$56.4 million for two schools to be ready by the 2025 school year.¹⁵⁵ The established areas project also considers the infrastructure and planning needs of existing government schools, providing strategic analysis on enrolment demand. The project considers what targeted, place-based approaches can be applied to support schools with enrolment growth including both infrastructure and non-infrastructure interventions.¹⁵⁶

Overall, the Victorian Government has a suite of primary and secondary school infrastructure initiatives underway to cater for a growing population. Continued focus on planning and sharing plans will support efforts to better integrate land use and infrastructure.

Creating inclusive shared spaces

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Schools are at the heart of local communities. With smart design, land use and facility sharing, schools will be places the whole community can benefit from.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about sharing the use of schools with the community. It seeks to do so through smart design, land use and sharing facilities.

Better sharing school facilities helps support rapidly growing areas to meet social infrastructure demand.¹⁵⁷ Schools can enter into hiring and licencing agreements with third parties, such as local governments and community organisations, to use existing school facilities.¹⁵⁸ The Victorian Government also supports schools with a standard process, known as a Community Joint Use Agreement, for constructing or extending jointly-used community facilities such as stadiums, sporting grounds and theatres.¹⁵⁹ Each Community Joint Use Agreement has unique circumstances, and hiring and licencing agreements tend not to be reported centrally.

Universal design principles aim to build environments that are accessible and enable participation for a variety of physical, perceptual and cognitive abilities. These are incorporated into the government's building quality standards handbook for all education infrastructure projects.¹⁶⁰

The Victorian Government's school site selection guidance has a general principle that new school sites should be co-located with existing or proposed community facilities and public open spaces.¹⁶¹ It is also creating inclusive shared spaces such as including kindergartens onsite or next door to every new Victorian primary school. This makes kindergarten programs easier to access, drop-off time simpler and more convenient for parents and caregivers and supporting a smoother school transition for children.¹⁶² For example, the government partnered with Maribyrnong City Council to build a new integrated early learning centre next to Footscray City Primary School to support the growing demand for early years and education services in the area.¹⁶³ The government is delivering 17 kindergartens on new school sites between 2021 and 2023.¹⁶⁴

For rural areas, children's health and development milestones are consistently behind those in urban areas.¹⁶⁵ While not appropriate for all health needs, greater use of telehealth services could help improve the wellbeing of children in regional areas. Infrastructure Victoria recommended using rural schools for children's specialist and allied telehealth services,¹⁶⁶ which the Victorian Government supported in principle.¹⁶⁷ Infrastructure Victoria looks forward to future progress on this recommendation as it aligns with creating inclusive shared spaces with schools at the heart of local communities.

Maximising use of technology

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Students need access to the latest technology to equip them with the adaptive skills and knowledge to succeed now, and in future.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority aims to increase student's access to technology so they can effectively participate in their learning and have opportunities to develop knowledge and skills for future success.

Students and teachers used technology more in delivering remote learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On returning to in-person learning, retaining and progressing these skills requires a focus on technology-based education infrastructure.

In the 2022–23 Budget, the Victorian Government announced two initiatives to support maximising the use of technology by students. It provided \$103.8 million to upgrade software tools to enhance capabilities for students, school staff and administrators.¹⁶⁸ This improves resources for digital learning and helps to reduce administration. The second is a \$31.5 million initiative to continue to develop centrally procured educational software for government schools.¹⁶⁹ The government will also provide professional learning so schools and teachers can make best use of the software.

Infrastructure Victoria recommended funding regional libraries to provide better internet access, which would make studying more accessible to regional students, who may not have reliable internet access at home.¹⁷⁰

The Victorian Government is also progressing the Child Link register in accordance with the *Child Legislation Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2018*. Child Link will provide factual information about a child to authorised users to facilitate information sharing and promote child wellbeing and safety outcomes.¹⁷¹ It supports a safer environment for students to undertake their learning in person and remotely.

Technology will continue to be an integral part of how students learn, and can align with emerging career pathways. Maximising the use of technology, such as by investing in software and other forms of technology, prepares students for the future.

Developing skills for tomorrow

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

The Education State develops the skills students need to thrive in future industries. Job-focused training and growing young Victorians' Asia engagement capability are two examples.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority aims for the right education infrastructure to support students developing skills in future industries. The priority specifically highlights growing jobs-focused training and this assessment focuses on the training and skills system.

Victoria's 12 TAFE institutes are established under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, and welcomed over 146,000 government-subsidised enrolments in 2020–21.¹⁷²

The Victorian Government has invested more than \$220 million in TAFE infrastructure projects since 2019 through the Building Better TAFEs Fund.¹⁷³ Projects under delivery include the \$68 million Chisholm Institute Frankston Campus Redevelopment – Stage 2, \$60 million Bendigo Kangan Institute's Broadmeadows Campus Redevelopment and the \$40 million Melbourne Polytechnic Collingwood Campus Redevelopment.¹⁷⁴

The *Education and training climate change adaptation action plan 2022–2026* contains actions to develop climate change adaptation skills and capabilities for Victoria.¹⁷⁵

This includes working with the Victorian TAFE and training system to improve the sector's understanding of climate change impacts on the training system and incorporating climate change adaptation actions into the government's clean economy workforce skills initiative. This initiative seeks to create partnerships between the Victorian TAFE and training sector and industry to develop and deliver training for decarbonising Victoria.¹⁷⁶

The priority also specifically highlights growing young Victorians' Asia engagement capability. Infrastructure Victoria could not identify any infrastructure initiatives aligned with this aspect of the priority, but do observe that the Victorian Young Leaders program is aimed at growing young Victorians' Asia engagement capability.¹⁷⁷ This program is an immersion experience for Year 9 students and accompanying teachers to spend time at an international host school and develop their leadership, global citizenship and language skills, and build intercultural understanding and awareness.

Improving education infrastructure

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

The quality of school facilities is linked to education outcomes for students and teachers.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about improving primary and secondary school facilities. It aims to improve education outcomes through quality infrastructure to enhance both student learning and teaching. Emerging evidence shows a clearer relationship between the quality and location of school infrastructure and better child learning outcomes. Education infrastructure design affects learning by optimising factors such as sources of natural light and air quality, appropriate colour choices and flexibility of the learning space to cater for different activities.¹⁷⁸

In 2022, the Victorian Government announced funding of \$234 million to upgrade 29 mainstream schools. This initiative aims to provide high-quality classrooms and facilities for learning and community use.¹⁷⁹ The minor capital works fund received an extra \$41.8 million for high-priority projects to improve the learning environment, condition or character of Victorian schools.¹⁸⁰

Education and training

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* highlights the inclusive schools fund, which targets the educational and social needs of children and young people with disability by supporting small, yet innovative school building projects such as outdoor sensory gardens and learning areas, specialist play equipment and adapting indoor learning spaces to be more inclusive.¹⁸¹ The government is also investing \$326 million to upgrade 36 special schools to create modern and safe places for students with high-quality teaching spaces.¹⁸²

Asset management also supports the quality of school facilities by keeping them fit-for-purpose. The rolling facilities evaluation program consists of condition assessments for buildings and other assets such as car parks, footpaths and fencing at schools on a rolling five-year cycle. Following assessment, schools develop a 5-year school maintenance plan which addresses maintenance issues and builds a routine maintenance program.¹⁸³ The Victorian Government also provided an extra \$237.4 million to government schools for several essential maintenance and compliance programs covering regular and routine maintenance, outdoor facilities and grounds maintenance, and to address priority asset defects.¹⁸⁴

Overall, the Victorian Government is investing in school upgrades and maintenance aligned with its aims to improve education infrastructure.

Kindergarten for all 3-year-olds

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria will be the first state or territory in Australia to introduce a universal funded kindergarten program for three-year-olds. From 2022, 3-year-olds across the state will have access to at least 5 hours of a kindergarten program per week. The hours will then increase into the full 15-hour program by 2029.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about the Victorian Government's commitment to a universal funded 3-year-old kindergarten program. Currently, 3-year-olds have access to at least five hours of kindergarten per week. The number of children funded to participate in kindergarten in the 2 years before school has exceeded its targets¹⁸⁵ since the policy's introduction in 2020,¹⁸⁶ and the government is planning

to increase to a full 15 hour per week program by 2029. In 2020 and 2021 the 15 hour per week program was rolled out to 21 local government areas in Victoria, with the 5 hour per week program rolled out to the remaining 58 local government areas in 2022.¹⁸⁷

This assessment focuses on infrastructure capacity to support this program. Maintaining service quality while expanding will be important.¹⁸⁸ This includes building new kindergartens or increasing capacity of existing facilities. Since 2019, around 90% of education and care services offering a funded kindergarten program met or exceeded the national quality standard.

In June 2022, the Victorian Government announced a significant expansion to early childhood education, including free kindergarten across the state from 2023, and a new year of universal pre-prep for 4-year-olds, meaning that over the next decade, 4-year-old kindergarten will transition to pre-prep. This increases to a universal 30-hour a week program of play-based learning for every 4-year-old child in Victoria. The expansion also includes establishing 50 government-operated childcare centres from 2025, located in areas with the greatest unmet demand and informed by the 'childcare deserts' work from the Mitchell Institute.¹⁸⁹

The 3-year-old kindergarten project itself commits \$1.68 billion until 2029 for infrastructure. This includes the Building Blocks Grants program which provides funding to local councils and eligible providers to build, expand and improve early years infrastructure.¹⁹⁰ In 2022, the Building Blocks Capacity Stream held two rounds of grants with 6 recipients announced as at 30 June 2022.¹⁹¹ The government also committed \$11.9 million to building inclusive kindergartens in the 2022–23 Budget.¹⁹² The Building Blocks Inclusion stream provides grants for upgrades to buildings, playgrounds, equipment and activities to help kindergartens become more accessible for children of all abilities and enhance learning environments for children with disability or additional needs.

The Victorian Government is progressing infrastructure investment to support its 3-year-old kindergarten program. Other expansions to early childhood education services mentioned above will also increase demand on infrastructure.



Energy

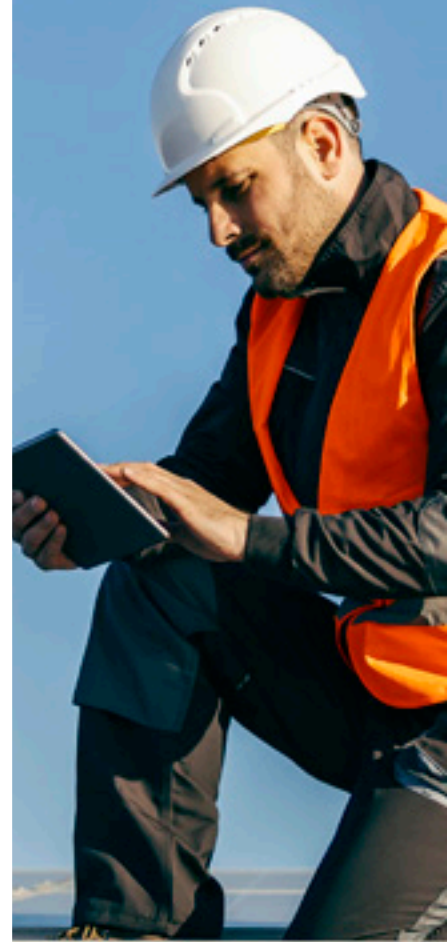
Energy infrastructure delivers energy, such as electricity and gas, from various sources to homes, businesses and industry. It includes large-scale production and generation assets, transmission and distribution networks, as well as infrastructure used directly by consumers such as rooftop solar, battery storage and electric vehicle chargers.

The energy sector is almost entirely under private ownership, with several national and state-based government agencies providing regulatory oversight for various elements of the systems. The Victorian Government maintains a strong role in energy policy.

The energy priorities in the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* are interrelated and cover affordability, security, sustainability and maintaining a sound investment environment aims as the sector decarbonises. The energy priorities are:

- ensuring efficient and affordable energy services
- protecting our energy security
- leading our transition to a clean energy economy

In 2021 Infrastructure Victoria provided advice to the Victorian Government on the implications of the energy transition to net zero emissions for gas infrastructure, *Towards 2050: Gas infrastructure in a net zero emissions economy*.¹⁹³ On 1 July 2022, the Victorian Government released the *Gas substitution roadmap* that outlines how Victoria will use energy efficiency, electrification, hydrogen and biomethane to drive down bills and cut carbon emissions, while ensuring Victoria has a secure, reliable, and safe supply of energy.¹⁹⁴ As the roadmap was issued outside of the assessment period, it will be considered in Infrastructure Victoria's 2022–23 assessment.



Ensuring efficient and affordable energy services

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is making sure we improve energy efficiency standards to slash emissions, while helping Victorians reap the benefits of the energy transition. This includes helping Victorian households and businesses make the most of the energy generated, allowing for increased consumer control over new energy technologies, and supporting energy affordability.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority focuses on increasing energy efficiency, and household and business use of new clean energy technologies. It aims to reduce energy emissions and costs for consumers.

Victoria needs to maintain energy affordability while adapting network infrastructure to support renewable energy. This priority focuses on energy efficiency improvements which reduce energy demand, keep bills down and help to avoid or defer infrastructure investment. It also includes new energy technologies for households and business.

Households and businesses can benefit from new renewable technologies. Rooftop solar power generation capacity uptake has increased threefold - from around 1000MW in 2017 to nearly 3000MW capacity by 2021.¹⁹⁵ However, other data suggests that the benefits of new technologies are not shared by everyone. Electricity and gas service disconnections for non-payment decreased during the first 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic but had returned to 2019 levels by February 2022.¹⁹⁶

The Victorian Government is using subsidies, rebates and loan schemes to help households and businesses adopt new energy technologies. This includes programs for solar generation and storage equipment, and energy efficient household appliances. It has also offered cash bonuses, with some targeted to concession holders.¹⁹⁷ The Traditional Owner Renewable Energy Program provides grants to support self-determination aims, with the first project completed in March 2022 by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.¹⁹⁸

Initiatives contributing to this priority include the 10-year Solar Homes Program to encourage household solar electricity generation and storage adoption. Established in 2018, Solar Victoria offers rebates for solar panels, solar hot water and solar batteries, along with incentives including interest-free loans for solar panels.¹⁹⁹ This initiative directly assists households and businesses to adopt new technology and has contributed 785MW of Victoria's installed rooftop solar panel energy generation capacity.²⁰⁰

The Victorian Government continues to deliver Victoria's Household Energy Savings Package. This includes delivery of new high efficiency heating and cooling systems for low-income households to help them save money on electricity bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Upgrades to social housing properties include installing household insulation, draught sealing, and installing energy efficient appliances.²⁰¹ The government could consider extending this program to more low-income households and renters, because improving the thermal properties of housing, especially draught proofing, can make houses more comfortable, reduce emissions and help reduce energy bills.²⁰² Measuring the cost, energy efficiency and emissions reduction outcomes of programs can inform further residential energy policy development. The government could also consider extending energy efficiency programs to business and industry to reduce energy demand. In *Towards 2050: Gas infrastructure in a net zero emissions economy*, Infrastructure Victoria identified burner and boiler upgrades, heat recovery and installation of heat pumps in the industrial and large commercial sectors can achieve significant savings.²⁰³

Other initiatives contributing to efficient and affordable energy services include the Victorian Energy Upgrades program,²⁰⁴ the Victorian Default Offer,²⁰⁵ and legislation to protect Victorian households and businesses from exploitative practices by energy retailers.²⁰⁶ They also include the Cheaper Electricity for Victorians initiative, which created a website and provided support for vulnerable customers to navigate the energy market.²⁰⁷ Announced in 2022, Victorian households can access a \$250 incentive payment if they use the Victorian Energy Compare website from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. This is supported by the energy assistance program which supports vulnerable Victorians accessing the energy market.²⁰⁸ The Victorian Government can further strengthen the focus on managing equity and overall affordability, by increasing the scale and scope of energy efficiency programs specifically targeting initiatives for low-income households.²⁰⁹

Protecting our energy security

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is implementing policies and reforms to encourage new technology, improve energy security and drive improved safety outcomes. This will help the energy system withstand shocks and disruptions, and equip Victoria to take corrective action when necessary during periods of peak energy demand.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about improving the security and safety of energy systems through policies, reforms and new technology adoption. Energy security's core objective is to protect consumers from an uncertain energy supply and disruptions to services.

Victoria's electricity system is experiencing an evolving power supply mix, more frequent extreme weather events, global supply factors, changing consumer demand preferences and in some areas, ageing infrastructure. The Australian Energy Market Operator manages transmission system security. The Victorian Government works with regulators and the Australian Energy Market Operator to minimise risk to energy security.

The Victorian Government is undertaking several initiatives that align with this priority. For instance, the Neighbourhood Batteries and Microgrid programs are trialling new technologies. This includes functions of grid resilience, bushfire resilience and energy safety in fire-affected communities, and localised community energy storage infrastructure.²¹⁰ Battery pilot projects aim to document the benefits, opportunities and challenges of different neighbourhood scale battery models, and identify how to maximise the consumer benefits.²¹¹ In 2021, a consultation identified 12 priorities to shape the ongoing delivery of the trial, which received further funding in the 2022–23 Budget.²¹²

The Victorian Government started investigations in 2021 to identify further long-term reforms to the electricity distribution network, following prolonged power outages caused by severe storms in June and October 2021.²¹³ The investigation will examine how distribution businesses can improve network preparedness and response to prolonged power outages, and strengthen community resilience. An expert panel published their recommendations in June 2022, with a government response under development.²¹⁴

The government provided \$6.5 million to establish community power hubs to develop and deliver renewable energy projects in regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne.²¹⁵ The Community PowerHubs program is an extension of the pilot project commenced in 2017, which initially developed three hubs in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. An assessment of the pilot program indicated a strong return on investment and broad community benefits, including increased community resilience.²¹⁶

On safety aspects of this priority, the Victorian Government continues to deliver reforms to ensure adequacy of the safety regulatory obligations, incentives and other arrangements governing the safety of the electricity and gas networks. This includes responding to the 2018 *Independent Review of Victoria's Electricity and Gas Network Safety Framework* (Grimes Review) which made 43 recommendations, chiefly focused on broadening Energy Safe Victoria's capabilities and preparedness to take strong regulatory action. The Powerline Bushfire Safety Program also received further funding in the 2022–23 Budget to continue delivering the program, including business case development for future technology-led investment that reduces powerline related bushfire risk.²¹⁷

Initiatives assessed as contributing to this priority largely focus on localised electricity solutions and distribution network resilience. The Victorian Government accepted Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation to support augmentation of electricity transmission infrastructure. As part of that recommendation, the government may need to consider expediting land use planning and development approval processes for the Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector (VNI) West project and the Marinus Link project to support timely delivery by 2027–28.²¹⁸

Leading our transition to a clean energy economy and supporting jobs in the new energy sector

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

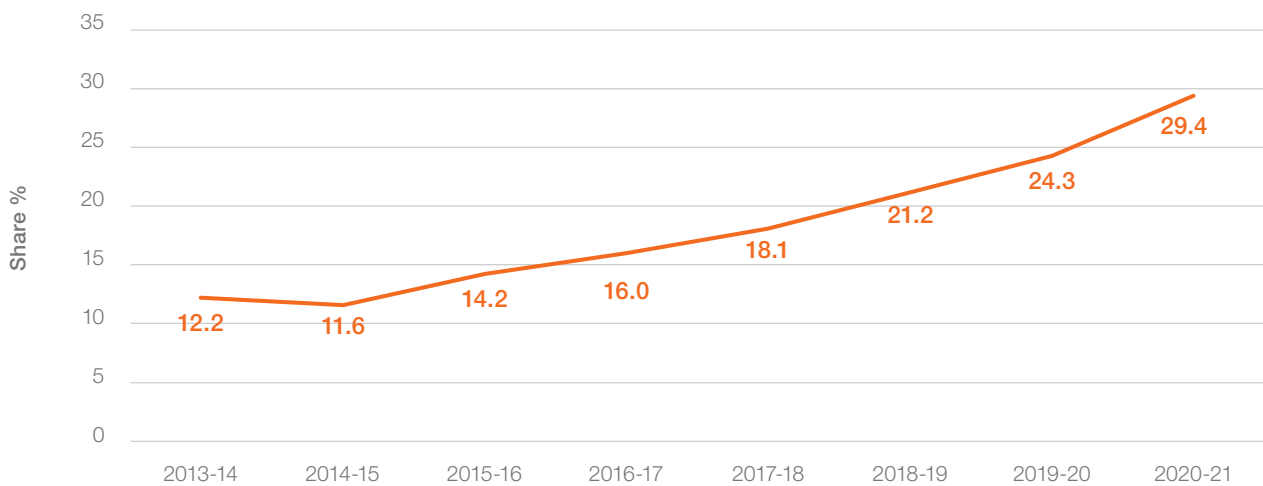
Victoria’s economy will recover and grow through a range of large-scale, sustainable energy and planning projects to ensure Victoria is stronger than ever and thriving in the long term. Victoria is working with the renewable energy industry, electricity networks, and consumer groups to attract and facilitate investment in renewable energy – creating jobs, cutting emissions and helping regional economies realise the benefits of the energy transition.

Infrastructure Victoria’s assessment

This priority is about the clean energy transition, covering both electricity and gas. It aims to create jobs, reduce emissions and create regional economic benefits. The priority seeks to do so through attracting and facilitating large-scale sustainable energy projects and planning for projects.

Significant new infrastructure needs to be delivered in the next 5 years to achieve interim emissions reduction targets and renewable electricity targets. Renewable electricity share has increased from 11.6% in 2014–15 to 29.4% in 2020–21 (Figure 1) showing the transition is underway for the electricity sector. Interim renewable targets are 40% by 2025 and 50% by 2030.²¹⁹

Figure 1: Victorian renewable electricity generation share, 2013–14 to 2020–21



Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Energy

New technologies are developing for electricity and gas that can further support a clean energy future, including for transport decarbonisation.

Initiatives in the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* include the above-mentioned renewable energy target which seeks to encourage investment in Victoria's energy sector. They also include the Cheaper Cleaner Energy project to drive economic recovery. This initiative includes work on developing 6 Renewable Energy Zones in the state to contribute to this priority over time. The government established a \$540 million fund in the 2020–21 Budget to invest in electricity network infrastructure for the Renewable Energy Zones, and \$12.6 million to bring online more than 600 MW of new, clean energy through a second renewable energy auction 'VRET2'.²²⁰ The government established VicGrid to lead the delivery of this initiative, with announcements on the first stage of network infrastructure upgrades due by mid-2022²²¹ and VRET2 auction results expected later in 2022.²²²

The Victorian Government has released an *Offshore wind policy directions paper*, which indicates Victoria's ambition to establish an offshore wind industry.²²³ The 2022–23 Budget provided funding for planning and policy development for offshore wind, and further policy development to support renewable hydrogen projects committed in 2022.²²⁴

The government continues to implement the *Zero emissions vehicle (ZEV) roadmap*. The roadmap contains actions to remove barriers to ZEV uptake, including subsidies for new ZEV purchases, more electric vehicle charging infrastructure and replacing 400 vehicles in the Victorian Government fleet with ZEVs.²²⁵ The Government has also set a target of 50% of all new light vehicle sales being ZEVs by 2030.²²⁶ Infrastructure Victoria's engagement on electric vehicles suggests the Victorian community has an appetite for even more ambition, including the full phase-out of new combustion engine vehicle registrations by 2035 at the latest.

The Victorian Government developed a *Renewable hydrogen industry development plan* in 2021 to help lead the transition to sustainable fuels. It is supported with multiple initiatives to promote partnership with businesses, the higher education sector and the community to further explore the use of hydrogen as a fossil fuel substitute.²²⁷ The 2022–23 Budget provided nearly \$12 million for the Hume Hydrogen Highway, a renewable hydrogen project between Victoria and New South Wales to support heavy freight transport decarbonisation.²²⁸

Victoria is the most gas reliant state or territory in Australia with gas-use representing nearly 20% of Victoria's emissions. The clean energy transition initiative listed in the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* includes developing a gas roadmap. The Victorian Government's *Gas substitution roadmap* will help the state navigate the gas sector's path to net zero emissions.²²⁹ As identified in Infrastructure Victoria's advice to the government on gas infrastructure, opportunities to support the gas sector's transition include even further support for domestic, commercial and industrial energy efficiency, targeted electrification, co-investment in development of green hydrogen and biogas, and detailed planning of energy needs for each region.²³⁰

The initiatives listed above are likely to contribute to jobs growth. More support for renewable jobs was announced in 2022 with the improving energy safety and skills initiative to support training for electrical workers.²³¹



Environment

Victoria's natural environment is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of every Victorian. It provides clean air and water, productive soils, natural pest control, pollination, flood mitigation and carbon sequestration – and supports productive activities that underpin Victoria's liveability and economic advantage. Environmental and waste management infrastructure is an essential component of liveable communities.

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* includes four priorities for the environment sector that aim to preserve and maintain Victoria's natural environment for future generations. The environment priorities are:

- protecting Victoria's biodiversity by 2037
- managing our parks
- taking action on climate change
- improving resource recovery and waste management



Protecting Victoria's biodiversity by 2037

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is taking a modern and effective approach to protecting the state's rich biodiversity, with conservation efforts that ensure our natural environment is healthy, valued and cared for.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about protecting biodiversity. The built environment can affect biodiversity through its impact on habitats. Converting and developing land to residential and other purposes contributes to habitat loss and biodiversity decline.²³² Transport projects also convert natural landscapes to impervious surfaces. This can increase waterway pollution from road runoff and affect biodiversity by fragmenting habitats and movement corridors.²³³

The department has key performance indicators relating to protected native vegetation, area covered by pest predator control, weed control measures and revegetation activities. Most of the targets set by the government were met or exceeded in recent years due to significant bushfire recovery work, except for revegetation targets, as planning for large-scale revegetation programs takes time.²³⁴ Bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic may have further affected efforts to protect biodiversity. The next Victorian State of the Environment is due for release in 2023.²³⁵

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* does not include any specific projects or reforms that strongly align to this biodiversity priority. However, the government has several initiatives outside of the plan.

The *Natural environment climate change adaptation action plan*, developed under the *Climate Change Act 2017*, identifies infrastructure as a risk to the ongoing resilience of Victorian marine and coastal habitats. As sea levels rise, marine and coastal habitats like mangroves and saltmarsh must migrate landwards to survive. Where built structures like roads, concrete paths and levee banks are adjacent to coastal vegetation, these habitats cannot move further inland.²³⁶

Natural disasters have a significant impact on Victoria's biodiversity. The 2019–20 Victorian bushfires burnt approximately 1,500,000 hectares, including approximately 78% of the remaining warm temperate rainforest in Victoria and impacting threatened species.²³⁷ *Victoria's bushfire emergency: Biodiversity response and recovery* report assessed the impact of the Victorian bushfires on over 4,400 species and found that 244 species of plants and animals had at least 50% of their likely statewide habitat burnt, 215 of which are rare or threatened species.²³⁸

The Victorian biodiversity bushfire response program includes the creation of and support for a network of ecological refuges across Victoria.²³⁹ They can provide safe habitats for native flora and fauna, assisting in their recovery from crisis events and enhancing their overall resilience. The 2022–23 Budget included nearly \$5 million to safeguard Victoria's critical seed and botanical collection and nearly \$28 million for the Victorian forestry plan, which includes eucalyptus seed collection and storage.²⁴⁰ These initiatives are steps in protecting Victoria's biodiversity into the future.

In urban areas, connected patches and corridors of open space provide opportunities for habitat connectivity, promoting biodiversity. To this end, *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* recommended the Victorian Government develop an interconnected network of open space.²⁴¹ The Victorian Government is developing implementation actions for the *Open space for everyone* strategy.²⁴²

Managing our parks

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Sound management of our parklands will ensure all Victorians can continue to enjoy our natural environment, while supporting growth in nature-based tourism. The Government continues to invest in enhancing and improving Victoria's parks estate, including through the Victoria's Great Outdoors and Suburban Parks programs.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about enhancing and improving Victoria's parks, for Victorians to enjoy those parks, and to grow nature-based tourism.

Victoria's parks estate was around 4.12 million hectares in 2020–21, or roughly 18% of Victoria's total area. This area has remained roughly the same since 2016–17, with visitor numbers steadily increasing. Around 86 million visits to Victoria's parks occurred in 2020–21, about 6 million more than anticipated due to an increase in domestic tourism and more Victorians connecting with nature under eased COVID settings.²⁴³

Investments such as Victoria's Great Outdoors program, the expansion of the Werribee Open Range Zoo, and other Budget initiatives aimed at upgrading significant assets in Victorian parks are well-aligned with the intent of boosting nature-based tourism in Victoria.²⁴⁴ This includes upgrades to the Werribee Park Mansion, Point Nepean Forts and Lighthouses at Cape Otway, Cape Schanck, Point Hicks and Wilsons Promontory. When implemented, these initiatives will deliver economic benefits across Victoria.

In 2022, Victoria's alpine resorts and the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority received funding to support the management of these significant natural assets.²⁴⁵ In winter, alpine resorts collectively contribute nearly \$1.1 billion to the Victorian economy, attracting one million visitors and sustaining nearly 10,000 jobs.²⁴⁶

The Victorian Government has a Suburban Parks program, which will improve access to open space. The program has a total investment of \$315 million. Initiatives include creating over 6,500 hectares of new and connected parklands and planting 500,000 trees in Melbourne's west.²⁴⁷ They also include 29 new pocket parks, 14 off-leash dog parks, \$10 million for park revitalisation grants and new trails in the Northern Metropolitan region.²⁴⁸

Metropolitan Melbourne has urban tree canopy cover ranging from 25.9% in the eastern region to 5.5% in the western region, based on 2018 data.²⁴⁹ The Victorian Government's investments will lead to better access to open space and better climate resilience from increased tree canopy across Melbourne's west. Tree canopy reduces urban heat island effects and produces lower surface temperatures on days of high heat. The *Open space for everyone* strategy also suggests that parts of Melbourne's outer south-east have high levels of heat vulnerability.²⁵⁰ Increasing tree canopy in this area could help address this issue, which is a recommendation in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*.²⁵¹ Suburban park initiatives can fit into a broader strategic approach to produce a connected network of open space, maximising the benefit to the community of these and future investments. Infrastructure Victoria recommended the Victorian Government help create an interconnected open space network and extend the urban tree canopy, by providing direct funding, and reviewing and reforming the developer open space contribution scheme.²⁵²

Local governments contribute to a network of open space, particularly in new growth areas, and maintaining existing open space. This could be achieved in implementing the open space strategy, particularly initiatives relating to funding and financing, and clarifying governance and responsibilities.²⁵³

Taking action on climate change

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2050 and becoming climate resilient. Victoria's Climate Change Strategy sets out our priorities for climate action. Victoria has set ambitious, but achievable targets to reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 28–33% by 2025 and 45–50% by 2030. To help meet these targets, we have prepared emissions reduction pledges for each emissions sector for 2021–2025 – the first in a progression of five-yearly pledges required under the *Climate Change Act 2017*. We have also made ambitious commitments to reduce emissions from the Victorian Government's own operations. By 2025, Victorian Government operations will be powered by 100% renewable electricity.

Victoria’s Climate Change Strategy also sets adaptation priorities for the next five years and Adaptation Action Plans, required by the *Climate Change Act 2017*, respond to those priorities. The plans are for seven systems vulnerable to the impacts of climate change or essential to prepare for future change, and will commence in 2022. These system-based plans are complemented by community-led regional adaptation strategies that will guide collective effort to reduce the impacts of climate change and maximise opportunities across Victoria’s regions.

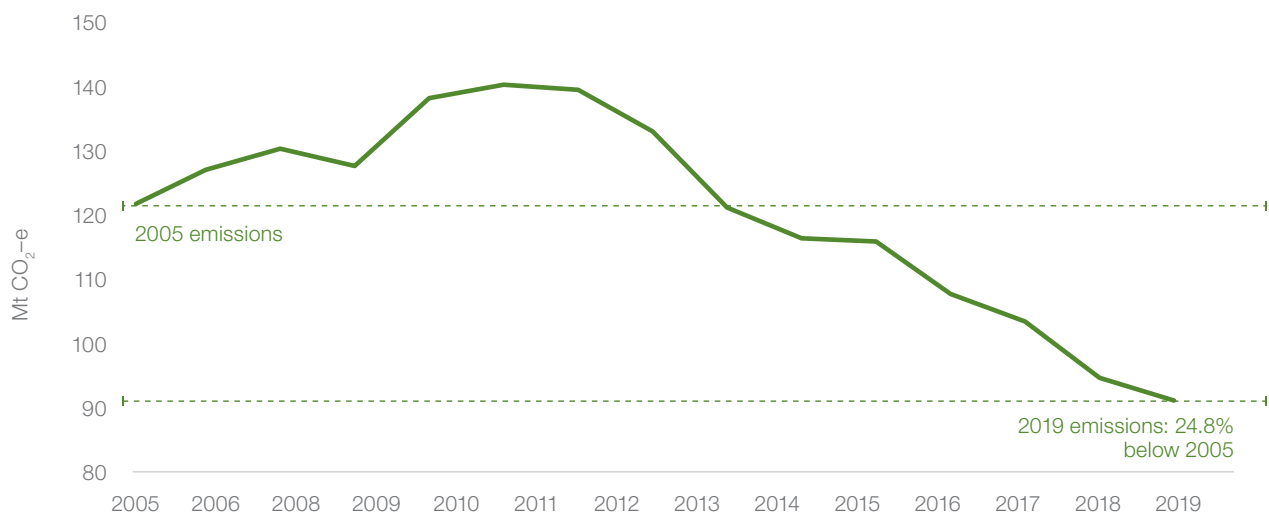
Infrastructure Victoria’s assessment

This priority sets out Victoria’s commitments and actions under the *Climate Change Act 2017*. Infrastructure contributes to climate change by generating greenhouse gas emissions from its direct operations, the materials used in its construction, the activities it enables, and ongoing maintenance of infrastructure.²⁵⁴ The infrastructure that Victoria builds today can lock in future emissions, especially without a plan to convert it to zero emissions technologies later.²⁵⁵ Infrastructure also needs to perform in a warmer, drier climate and be resilient to more extreme weather.

Taking action on climate change has two elements – emissions reduction and adaptation. By cutting emissions, Victoria contributes to global efforts to reduce the severity of climate change. The systems and regional adaptation plans seek to build resilience to climate change impacts.

In 2019 Victoria’s emissions fell to 24.8% below 2005 levels (see Figure 2) – exceeding the 2020 target of a 15-20% reduction on 2005 levels – and Victoria is on track to meet its 2025 reduction target of 28-33%– on the way to net zero emissions by 2050.²⁵⁶

Figure 2: Victorian emissions 2005–2019



Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Environment

To help achieve the legislated targets, the Victorian Government has many policies and investments, including a significant household energy efficiency package, and a commitment to 100% renewable electricity for all government operations by 2025, including metropolitan trains and trams.²⁵⁷ The energy and transport sectors are two of the largest contributors to Victoria's emissions. Several initiatives are underway in each sector, such as renewable energy targets and promoting uptake of zero emissions. In *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*, Infrastructure Victoria made recommendations relating to navigating the energy transition which, if implemented, can contribute to emissions reductions.²⁵⁸

In February 2022, the Victorian Government released seven adaptation action plans covering the built environment, education and training, health and human services, natural environment, primary production, transport and water cycle systems. Each plan lists adaptation activities. For example, the built environment plan includes measures such as climate-wise buildings, an expanded urban forest and green infrastructure, reducing heat absorption on streets, pavements and other surfaces, and urban planning and enhanced infrastructure design. Implementing the adaptation action plans will be a step toward improving the preparedness, resistance, recovery and redundancy aspects of infrastructure resilience.

A continued focus on delivering the sector pledges and the adaptation action plans will be critical in ensuring ongoing progress against Victoria's emissions reduction targets and making Victoria climate-ready.

In June 2022, the Victorian Government released the *Marine and coastal strategy*. It observes that many past developments were not designed with natural processes in mind, resulting in infrastructure and coastal uses that conflict with natural coastal processes.²⁵⁹ The strategy identifies two actions that are likely to have future implications for infrastructure in coastal areas:

- building resilience and adaptation capability in ecosystems, communities and built assets to climate change; and
- support sustainable use and development of the marine and coastal environment.

Under these actions, the government aims to embed adaptation as a core component of planning in the marine and coastal environments. The department will review and update the Victorian guidelines for dredging to include risk-based environmental, human health and cultural protection practices.²⁶⁰ These actions should embed greater consideration of biodiversity impacts of infrastructure planning and delivery in marine and coastal environments. In *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*, Infrastructure Victoria recommended investing in protection and adaptation for Victoria's coasts. The government can consider other actions, such as committing to at least an extra \$30 million for coastal infrastructure maintenance and upgrades.²⁶¹

Improving resource recovery and waste management

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

The Victorian Government's circular economy policy, *Recycling Victoria: a new economy*, is driving reform in recycling and waste resource recovery. Long-term planning and investment in waste management will ensure Victoria has efficient and sustainable resource recovery systems to make the most of our finite resources.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about improving resource recovery and waste management in Victoria through long-term planning and investment. It aims for a more circular economy to make the most of finite resources. The priority specifically includes *Recycling Victoria: a new economy*. Released in 2020, the Victorian Government committed \$300 million to support delivery of the policy and reforms.

Victoria is producing more waste today than ever before. In 2019–20, Victoria generated 15.86 million tonnes of waste, with 11.05 million tonnes diverted from landfill (69.7%).²⁶² The Recycling Victoria policy contains several targets against which progress will be measured.

Actions relating to this priority in 2022 include opening the second round of grants from the Recycling Victoria Business Support Fund. Funding will go to projects that potentially avoid waste, extend the life of products and replace products with services.²⁶³ This funding has potential to both reduce waste generation and grow jobs.

The *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* came into effect on 14 December 2021. Recycling Victoria, a dedicated government business unit intended to deliver state-wide stewardship, planning, regulatory and market oversight functions, will begin operating in 2022–23.²⁶⁴ A ban on single-use plastics, due to take effect in February 2023 through the *Environment Protection Amendment (Banning Single-Use Plastic Items) Regulations 2022*, will reduce the amount of non-recyclable products being used, and should help improve recovery rates over time.

All Victorian households will get access to services for four waste and recycling streams. This includes separate streams for glass, food organics and garden organics, mixed recyclables and household rubbish. A staged transition to the new system has begun. The recovery of materials for each stream – when and where items are collected – will vary in each local government area.²⁶⁵ A more standardised approach to collection will increase the recovery rate of materials collected from kerbside recycling by better sorting and reduced contamination.

Infrastructure Victoria's work on recycling and resource recovery infrastructure included advice on the volume and location of processing infrastructure needed to respond to projected waste volumes and improve resource recovery rates.²⁶⁶ For example, recent media suggests that there is insufficient capacity for processing organic waste across metro Melbourne (almost all of which is recyclable).²⁶⁷

Implementing the actions and reforms outlined in *Recycling Victoria: a new economy* and the above initiatives, paired with increasing processing capacity in line with Infrastructure Victoria's advice on recycling and resource recovery infrastructure can help improve sector performance.

Health and human services

Victoria's health and human services systems deliver some of the highest standards of care and outcomes. But these systems are under growing pressure – from unprecedented population growth and ageing, from the rise in chronic disease, the impacts of COVID-19 and the increasingly complex needs of the Victorian community.

The Victorian infrastructure plan 2021 includes six priorities for the health and human services sector:

- building a proactive system than anticipates demand
- driving system-wide reform for safer, better services
- integrating care across the health and social service system
- improving equity and access
- investing in the future
- all Victorians have stable, affordable and appropriate housing



Building a proactive system that anticipates demand

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria's population is growing and ageing, altering the nature and demand on services. Anticipating future needs lets us build capacity to keep pace with change.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about building capacity in the Victorian health system, including mental health, to respond to increasing demand for services from Victoria's growing and changing population.

Capacity indicators for the health sector relate to wait times, both for elective surgeries and for admissions at emergency departments. The wait times (at the 50th percentile) for elective surgery in Victoria has improved over time from 31 days in 2008–09 to 27 days in 2019–20.²⁶⁸ Overall, Victorian hospitals admitted 80.4% of non-urgent (category 3) elective patients within 365 days in 2020–21. This was below the target of 95% for the second year in a row, due largely to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁶⁹

An indicator of emergency department capacity, the number of patients treated within 'clinically recommended time to treatment' has consistently been below target (80%) for several years, and in 2020–21 was the lowest since measurement began in 2011–12. This was due to COVID-19 impacts, including changes in patient complexity, heightened infection control practices and significant workforce impacts.²⁷⁰

The initiatives and reforms identified in the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* build on the actions identified in the *Statewide design, service and infrastructure plan for Victoria's health system 2017–2037*²⁷¹ and are supported by significant investment in health infrastructure in the 2022–23 Budget. These initiatives expand Victoria's infrastructure capacity to respond to existing and expected demand for health services.

The Barwon Women's and Children's Hospital at the University Hospital Geelong will significantly boost maternity and paediatric services for the growing Barwon region and its surrounds. Melbourne's west is a significant growth corridor for Melbourne. Its population is predicted to grow by 60% in the next 20 years.²⁷² The new Footscray hospital will add around 200 beds providing over 60% capacity uplift for the service, allowing 15,000 more patients to be treated each year and 20,000 more people seen by the emergency department.²⁷³ The 2022–23 Budget also funded the new Melton hospital which will expand capacity in one of the fastest growing areas of Melbourne.

The Victorian Government's response to the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System* includes expanding and upgrading mental health facilities, providing an increase in capacity. The government is delivering 144 new acute public mental health beds to address urgent capacity in Victorian public hospitals. The new hospital-based beds and services will be located at Northern Hospital (Epping), Sunshine Hospital (St Albans), The Royal Melbourne Hospital (Parkville) and the McKellar Centre (Geelong). The new hospital-based beds will provide more than 43,000 days of care, providing 2,500 more Victorians with access to mental health services every year.²⁷⁴

Maintaining and upgrading existing facilities also supports hospital capacity. Spending on capital works has not kept pace with the need for asset maintenance and renewal.²⁷⁵ Old facilities can require more frequent and expensive emergency repairs. Many older buildings do not meet modern standards for accessibility, safety or energy efficiency.²⁷⁶ The Victorian Health Building Authority administers over \$440 million of grant funding for eligible health services to undertake necessary upgrades. The Victorian Government can take a more strategic approach to the statewide, whole-of-life management and renewal of hospital assets, in line with the recommendation in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021-2051*.²⁷⁷

Driving system-wide reform for safer, better services

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

The challenges facing our systems mean new approaches to health and human services design, quality assurance, workforce capabilities and technology.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority relates to new approaches to health and human services design, quality assurance, workforce capabilities and technology. It aims for safer, better services. It closely aligns with a recommendation in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* to use innovation to deliver better models of health care.²⁷⁸

The relevant initiatives from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* reflect the Victorian Government's reform priorities in response to significant challenges documented by the Royal Commissions into both family violence and mental health. The Victorian Government has accepted all the recommendations from both Royal Commissions and is implementing the *Family violence reform rolling action plan 2020–2023* and mental health reform. The Victorian infrastructure plan includes actions to implement family violence reforms, including phasing out communal refuges and replacing them with 20 new core and cluster refuge facilities. This initiative is expected to improve access to support services for women and their children in refuge by providing onsite support services alongside living units.

Similarly, the infrastructure plan reflects reforms to care services, which received \$75 million over four years in the 2021–22 Budget to support all Victorian care leavers transitioning to adulthood through the *Home Stretch* and *Better Futures* programs.²⁷⁹ The programs provide more support to children entering residential care, maintaining connection to families and carers as much as possible. Children who leave care with strong and positive family relationships are more likely to do well.²⁸⁰

Better funding for mental health and alcohol and other drug services will help meet significant need in the Victorian community. The Royal Commission recommended a new statewide mental health and wellbeing service plan from late 2022 to 2023,²⁸¹ which *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* also recommended.²⁸² Progressing these recommendations will mean an overarching strategy will inform future investment in Victoria's mental health and wellbeing system.

A good health system functions as a network, with each health service having clearly distinct roles and capacity requirements, and aims to improve the quality of care delivered to Victorians, regardless of where they live and how they access care. An example of this is recent establishment of nine Local Public Health Units. The Local Public Health Units strengthen the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other communicable diseases and health issues, and provide a new statewide system of public health delivery and oversight. They include health service organisations working together to achieve a strategic and supportive approach to COVID-19 contact tracing, care pathways and vaccination.²⁸³ This approach, if successful, should also improve quality and safety across the system by encouraging specialisation and capacity building in and across health services. The number of major trauma patients transferred to a major trauma service is an indicator of clinical network service efficiency. This measure has remained relatively static since 2017–18.²⁸⁴

The 2022–23 Budget builds on these reforms by providing significant funding to support new models of delivery of clinical mental health services, and improving the quality of mental health facilities across Victoria. At the same time, the Budget also invests in new models of delivery in health to allow care to be provided as close to the home as possible to free up hospital capacity for more complex cases.²⁸⁵

Progress against this priority is reflected by quality and safety outcomes in the health and human services sectors, such as sentinel events. Sentinel events are broadly defined as adverse patient safety events that result in serious harm or death.²⁸⁶ In 2020–21, Safer Care Victoria received 168 sentinel event notifications, down 8% from 2019–20, but considerably higher than previous years.²⁸⁷ The recent spike in events may be driven by COVID-19 related factors. Sentinel events are not a perfect indicator of overall safety, given they are extreme events, but they represent a current, publicly available dataset for measurement.

Integrating care across the health and social service system

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Those who are vulnerable or with complex needs rely on multiple providers. Better service connections will strengthen early intervention, outcomes and lower cost.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority seeks to improve service delivery by creating better service connections for Victorians who rely on multiple providers. It aims to enhance early intervention, leading to better outcomes at a lower cost.

Better service connections, or integrated care, is an aim of many health systems globally, such as the UK and Europe. Yet changes in actual practice tend to trail behind policy intentions.²⁸⁸ Better integration of health and social care can deliver multiple benefits, including better health outcomes, higher quality services, lower costs, and better workforce wellbeing.²⁸⁹ The *Statewide design, service and infrastructure plan 2017–37* identifies integrated care as a long-term priority.²⁹⁰

Establishing support and safety hubs and the Orange Door network will contribute to this priority. These initiatives align with the need for greater integration of support services that the 2016 Royal Commission into Family Violence identified. These sites bring services together and make it easier for vulnerable Victorians to access care and services from multiple providers.

The Victorian Government's implementation of the recommendations from the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System* includes developing integrated treatment care and support for people with co-occurring needs.²⁹¹ The 2022–23 Budget contains initiatives supporting these efforts, such as new emergency department mental health and alcohol and other drugs crisis hubs at Latrobe Regional Hospital and planning for future hubs in Ballarat, Bendigo and Shepparton.²⁹² These hubs will support people presenting with mental health, alcohol and other drug-related issues with fast-tracked specialist support, adding to the existing hub at Sunshine Hospital.²⁹³

Parts of the broader health and social service system have a degree of integration, such as community health services and super clinics. The COVID-19 pandemic is placing significant pressure on Victoria's health services, reinforcing the benefits of reforms that deliver better outcomes efficiently. It may also present opportunities. Examining existing efforts to deliver more integrated services,

such as the Orange Door network, could also reveal lessons for more integrated service delivery for other cohorts with complex needs, such as elderly or Aboriginal Victorians, or in locations of high need.

Improving equity and access

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Better planning and policy design will target support where it's needed most, to give people the best care, wherever they live.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority aims to provide Victorians with the care in the places and at the time they need it, regardless of location, background or circumstance. It seeks to provide greater equity in access to services through better planning and policy design.

Victoria's social infrastructure needs to grow and change with its people, with drivers of demand differing across sectors.²⁹⁴ For instance, more people are seeking mental health assistance, with mental illness disproportionately affecting young people, people experiencing disadvantage, residents of remote areas, Aboriginal Victorians, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, and people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+).²⁹⁵ Drug and alcohol abuse is growing faster in regional areas than in Melbourne, and people in regional areas are more likely to have consumed an illicit drug or consumed alcohol at dangerous quantities.²⁹⁶ Regional Victoria has 8 of the top 10 most disadvantaged Victorian local government areas.²⁹⁷

The Victorian Government is delivering the regional health infrastructure fund, multiple regional hospital redevelopments and expansions, and 10 new community hospitals. These investments cumulatively represent nearly \$2.5 billion to improve access to health services for Victorians living in regional areas and growing areas of Melbourne. Investments in more mental health infrastructure and rehabilitation services for alcohol and other drugs responds to significant needs in regional areas, including projects in the Barwon, Hume and Gippsland regions.²⁹⁸ Announcements in the 2022–23 Budget for the Latrobe Regional Hospital and planning funding for future hubs at Ballarat, Bendigo and Shepparton also align with this priority. Providing more support for other areas with particularly urgent needs can further supplement this work, such as Great South Coast, Mallee, and Wimmera Southern Mallee as recommended in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*.²⁹⁹

The Victorian Government is supporting culturally and linguistically diverse communities to build and upgrade community infrastructure to reduce barriers to access and for community cohesion.³⁰⁰ The government is also providing funding for universal early years healthcare to continue maternal and child health services delivered by Aboriginal organisations, and the Aboriginal co-design of Aboriginal early years health services.³⁰¹ This contributes to closing the gap in health outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians. In *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051* Infrastructure Victoria recommended the Victorian Government start a co-design process with Aboriginal Victorians for an Aboriginal community-controlled infrastructure plan.³⁰² The Aboriginal community-controlled infrastructure plan should identify current and future infrastructure needs, appropriate locations for facilities and delivery of services, and suitable funding, design and procurement approaches. This plan should acknowledge and be informed by the Victorian Treaty process,³⁰³ and reflect self-determination principles and priorities in the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* and the *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework*.³⁰⁴

These investments are steps to reducing disparities in spatial and demographic health and wellbeing outcomes in Victoria.

Investing in the future

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Development and adoption of cutting-edge research, practice and technology will maintain Victoria's world-class health and human services system in future.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority focuses on the development and adoption of cutting-edge research, practice and technology in Victoria. It aims to invest in research to maintain a world-class health and human services system.

Infrastructure supports world-class research and can attract research investment. For example, the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct attracts more annual competitive biomedical research funding than any other precinct in Australia, and precinct partners produce academic publications with a citation rate well above the international average.³⁰⁵

The Victorian Government is funding the Australian Institute for Infectious Diseases and delivering the Victorian Heart Hospital.³⁰⁶ Both build on Victoria's existing strengths in medical research and care, and further support partnerships

in precincts. As a centre of excellence, the Victorian Heart Hospital will embed cardiac research, education and training in clinical services, delivering benefits to patients.³⁰⁷

The Victorian Government is also building Victoria's industry capacity through initiatives such as LaunchVic, and the Breakthrough Victoria Fund to address Victoria's historical challenges with commercialising research.³⁰⁸ A strong focus on translational health impacts of this research can further support this priority.

Capital works spending has not kept pace with advances in medical science and technology.³⁰⁹ Recent digital healthcare investment to upgrade network infrastructure supporting patient-related services will deliver better service delivery and a more secure network by strengthening cybersecurity measures for public health and ambulance services.³¹⁰ At a minimum, this will update technology to contribute to improving the overall resilience of the health system.

The priority includes both health and human services. Infrastructure Victoria did not identify infrastructure initiatives relating to research, practice and technology for the human services sector. The Victorian Government can support the significant human services reforms underway with strategic and complementary investments.

All Victorians have stable, affordable and appropriate housing

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victorians have safe homes that provide emotional and physical sanctuary, and have security of tenure in housing that is accessible, appropriate, affordable and tailored to them. This includes supports to reduce housing insecurity and homelessness, to enable suitable housing for all.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about stable, affordable and appropriate housing for all Victorians. This covers all segments of housing, including public, community and private housing, and includes both homeowners and renters. The Victorian Government defines affordable housing as "housing suitable for the needs of a range of very low to moderate income households and priced so households can meet other essential living costs".³¹¹ Affordable homes seek to address the gap between private rental rates and community housing rates so people can afford a private rental or local housing close to where they work.³¹²

Social housing infrastructure meets a basic need of low-income Victorians for secure, affordable and appropriate housing. In the past, Victorian capital expenditure on social housing was less than 60% of the national average.³¹³ Victoria had 3.2 social housing dwellings for every 100 households in June 2020, compared with the national average of 4.4.³¹⁴ Different estimates indicate more social housing is required to meet Victoria's needs ranging from 1,700 each year – just to keep pace with population growth – to 8,300 annually to cover all evident need. Reaching a statewide provision rate of 4.5 social housing properties for every 100 households by 2031 would require between 3,900 and 4,900 extra properties each year.³¹⁵

The Victorian Government is taking steps to address the shortfall in social and affordable housing, such as through the \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build program, which aims to build more than 9,300 new social housing dwellings. Regional Victoria will benefit from around 25% of the program funding. The Big Housing Build provides a minimum investment commitment to 18 regional local government areas that have a significant regional town or city, or have high population growth.³¹⁶ Additionally, the government committed to leave a legacy of affordable housing for the regions as part of the 2026 Commonwealth Games investment.³¹⁷ The government is also building 2,900 more affordable and low-cost homes as part of the Big Housing Build, including a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom homes, responding to changing household sizes in Victoria.³¹⁸ The Big Housing Build program also includes targeted support for Aboriginal Victorians through the social housing growth fund. The fund also provides for mental health supported housing.³¹⁹

Regional Victoria is experiencing deteriorating housing affordability, with the proportion of new rentals affordable to lower income households falling from around 60% to 35% in five years. Infrastructure Victoria recommended the government expand social housing in regional centres, in locations with good access.³²⁰ Homes Victoria is developing a 10-year strategy for social and affordable housing in Victoria. This strategy presents an opportunity to consider funding mechanisms, such as value capture or the use of targets, to increase social housing stock, and encourage social housing in areas with good access to employment and services, including in regional areas.

Beyond building new housing stock, upgrading existing social housing to improve safety and accessibility aligns with this priority. Essential upgrades to more than 23,000 housing units across Victoria responds to the needs identified by Infrastructure Victoria to rapidly renew old public housing, but more will need to be done.³²¹ The Public Housing Renewal Program is underway with the task of

replacing seven major public estates with completely new, modern, attractive and energy efficient dwellings.³²²

The government will make available a further \$1 billion in low interest loans and government guarantees to community housing agencies to deliver social and affordable housing. This could facilitate up to 6,000 new social and affordable housing dwellings.³²³ The Victorian Government also offers assistance to private renters who may have difficulty entering the private rental market through RentAssist bond loans,³²⁴ which are somewhat underutilised. Most years, the number of bonds issued is fewer than the government's target. The program has been affected in recent years by the continued economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the private rental market.³²⁵

The priority includes supports to reduce homelessness. The From Homelessness to a Home initiative is to provide 1,845 households with access to stable medium- and long-term housing and support packages to people experiencing homelessness who are residing in emergency accommodation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.³²⁶ The Victorian Government provided an extra \$66 million in the 2022–23 Budget to extend the program, supporting up to 250 eligible families with children in emergency accommodation to secure stable housing.³²⁷ The number of people assisted to address and prevent homelessness has fluctuated over the years, and demand is expected to be higher than anticipated in 2021–22 due to economic conditions, including the rollback of employer support such as JobKeeper.³²⁸

Justice and emergency services

Justice and emergency services infrastructure serves to protect the community, hold offenders accountable, help emergency services aid Victorians, improve community resilience and respond to danger and major disasters. It includes stations and facilities for emergency services, courts and tribunals, remand centres, prisons and youth justice facilities. Facilities are enabled and supported by specialised equipment and ICT infrastructure including case management systems, audio-visual links, public safety systems and mobile communications to support operations.

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* outlines five priorities for the justice and emergency services infrastructure sector. Many agencies are involved in justice and emergencies services including the Community Safety Building Authority, Court Services Victoria, Emergency Management Victoria, Victoria Police, Ambulance Victoria, State Emergency Services, Fire Rescue Victoria, the Country Fire Authority and Forest Fire Management Victoria. The justice and emergency services priorities are:

- keeping Victorians safe
- building the corrections and youth justice facilities we need
- new and improved court services
- deploying ICT innovations
- enhancing public safety



Keeping Victorians safe

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is implementing nation-leading family violence reforms, including significant investment in Specialist Family Violence Courts to keep women and children safer.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about keeping Victorians safe from experiencing family violence by delivering family violence reforms. From a justice and emergency services sector perspective, this means significant investment in infrastructure such as specialist family violence courts.

Specialist family violence courts were recommended by the *Royal Commission into Family Violence*.³²⁹ Having a specialist court for family violence matters means a greater focus on early engagement and holistic responses to instances of family violence, supported by purpose-built facilities, local service integration and a specialist workforce.³³⁰ From 2019 to December 2021, five specialist family violence courts opened in Shepparton, Ballarat, Moorabbin, Heidelberg and Frankston. The government is working to deliver two more in new justice complexes in Bendigo and Wyndham, and at seven more locations funded in the 2020–21 Budget – Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Geelong, Latrobe Valley, Melbourne, Ringwood and Sunshine.³³¹ Monitoring outcomes from family violence reforms is challenging, made even more so by the COVID-19 pandemic. Public health restrictions exacerbated the risk of family violence, with Victoria Police reporting an increase in family violence incidents including first time reporting.³³² At the same time, case clearance rates for family violence intervention orders declined from 92.9% in 2017–18 to 84% in 2020–21.³³³ Over the same time, applications for a family violence intervention order increased by 1,942 to 41,512 applications in 2020–21.³³⁴

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Victorian Government committed to an expansion of remote hearing services in several more locations across Victoria in the *Family violence reform rolling action plan 2020–2023*.³³⁵ Remote service delivery and using enhanced audio-visual link technology accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. The government is considering embedding these practices

into the standard specialist family violence courts delivery model.³³⁶ Remote hearing infrastructure can support the safety of victim survivors, aligning with this priority, and make it easier for people to participate in court hearings.

Other infrastructure initiatives outside of the justice and emergency services sector are also keeping women and children safer. For example, the health and human services sector delivers The Orange Door, a free state-wide service across 15 locations for adults, children and young people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence and families who need extra support with the care of children.³³⁷

Building the corrections and youth justice facilities we need

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is upgrading and building new corrections and youth justice facilities to meet demand, improve system effectiveness, and increase community safety.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about upgrading and building new corrections and youth justice infrastructure. It aims to meet demand, improve system effectiveness and increase community safety.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected Victoria's corrections system. Victoria's prison population over the last 10 years has increased significantly from 4,851 in May 2012 to 6,633 in May 2022.³³⁸ Corrections needs adequate infrastructure capacity now and into the future to safely house offenders.

The Victorian Government is investing in facilities aligned to its aims of meeting demand. New facilities include the Western Plains Correction Centre, a 1,248-bed maximum security prison,³³⁹ which received an extra \$39.5 million in the 2022–23 Budget to commission systems at the centre, and for maintenance.³⁴⁰ More capacity is also being created in existing facilities, such as 106 new beds for female prisoners at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre by 2022–23,³⁴¹ and a \$791 million prison infill expansion program to upgrade existing infrastructure at five prisons across Victoria.³⁴²

Improving system effectiveness means delivering safe corrections and youth justice infrastructure that provides support services. For example, 49% of children and young people in youth justice present with mental health issues.³⁴³ In response, the new Cherry Creek Youth Justice Centre contains a mental health unit and an intensive intervention unit. The facility has been designed to deliver a specialised facility that focuses on staff safety and reducing re-offending.³⁴⁴ The government also invested \$11 million in the 2022–23 Budget to divert children from the youth justice system, including including funding for more Aboriginal youth justice hubs.³⁴⁵ Another measure is the independent review of Victoria's prison system culture, to be delivered to the Minister for Corrections by mid-2022.³⁴⁶

Increasing community safety includes providing infrastructure to reduce rates of recidivism. In May 2022, the Victorian Government announced four more years of funding for the Maribyrnong Community Residential Facility.³⁴⁷ This facility provides short-term accommodation for men exiting the prison system, who would otherwise be homeless, supporting them to transition into the community.³⁴⁸ According to media reports, 71 men have been through the facility since March 2020 – most moving into private rentals, back in with family or a partner, and 4 returning to custody.³⁴⁹ This is consistent with a long-term downward trend of recidivism with an 8.2 percentage point reduction of people returning to corrective services in 2 years of discharge between 2011–12 and 2020–21.³⁵⁰

Based on available evidence, the Victorian Government is upgrading and building new corrections and youth justice infrastructure, contributing towards its aims. It has also supported Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation to plan and consistently deliver infrastructure while managing demand.³⁵¹ Building infrastructure is not the only way to address demand for correctional and youth justice facilities. Any investment must be considered alongside policy changes that can reduce long-term demand, avoid short-term volatility, deliver treatment (including for mental illness), and help address the over-representation of Aboriginal Victorians in custody.³⁵²

New and improved court services

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Victoria is expanding and upgrading courts to ease demand pressures and improve our court system.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about expanding and upgrading court buildings. It aims to ease demand pressures and improve court services.

Courts need to be safe, fit-for-purpose and people-centred venues.³⁵³ Around two-thirds of court buildings do not meet contemporary requirements.³⁵⁴ Modern approaches to delivering justice means adapting buildings such as for specialist courts. This includes Specialist Family Violence Courts, the Koori Court, which is usually set up differently to traditional courtrooms, and in line with therapeutic services, such as the Assessment and Referral Court list.³⁵⁵ Existing buildings need to be brought up to a standard condition, and some demand estimates forecast a 70% increase in physical facilities could be needed to meet future requirements by 2036.³⁵⁶

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* contains 3 projects aligned with this priority. The Victorian Government is delivering the redevelopment of the Bendigo Law Courts, the main component of which is due for completion by late 2022 and the Bendigo Drug Court by mid-2024.³⁵⁷ The \$271 million Wyndham Law Court Development is to be completed by 2024–25, supporting Melbourne's west and will be the largest court complex outside of Melbourne's central business district.³⁵⁸ The Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine will also be upgraded, with funding provided for technologies, facilities and structural upgrades to improve its forensic capabilities.³⁵⁹

Smaller initiatives received funding in the 2022–23 Budget, such as \$10 million for critical asset maintenance, repairs and renewal works for court buildings and over \$4 million to support the Magistrates' Court of Victoria hearing federal jurisdiction matters previously heard by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.³⁶⁰

The Victorian Government indicated support for Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation to increase court efficiency and help meet demand by digitising suitable court systems and procedures, and invest in contemporary, adaptable, multi-jurisdictional court facilities during the next 10 years.³⁶¹ As part of this recommendation, Infrastructure Victoria identified court facilities in the central Melbourne

legal precinct as a pressing issue, along with renewal of aged facilities in the city's rapidly growing north and south, and targeted investment in regional cities. This can be complemented by greater use of digital or alternative service channels and consolidating underused or unsuitable facilities.³⁶²

Deploying ICT innovations

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Adopting new technologies enables justice and emergency services to offer Victorians the best service possible.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about adopting new technology to modernise and improve services. The scope covers justice and emergency services which includes courts, corrections, police, emergency management, fire, ambulance and rescue services.

Investing in technology and digital solutions can support delivering services and provide better client experiences with public services. ICT can help disseminate timely information and coordinate emergency responders. Legacy systems and processes can sometimes inhibit reform. The Department of Justice and Community Safety's 2021–2025 corporate plan identifies developing ICT strategies and investments.³⁶³

The new courts case management system for the Magistrates' Court of Victoria and the Children's Court of Victoria will improve services. Partially in response to addressing family violence, the system will support appropriate information sharing across courts and agencies.³⁶⁴ Other courts initiatives include funding in the 2022–23 Budget to establish an integrated Magistrates' Court of Victoria service centre, continue operating the Supreme Court's eCourt program and more resources for the Children's Court of Victoria active case management program.³⁶⁵ The Victorian Government is also establishing a specialist weekend online Children's Court to support children who have offended and help divert young people from custody.³⁶⁶ Continuing to digitise suitable court systems and procedures will increase court efficiency and help meet demand, as recommended in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*,³⁶⁷ which the government supported implementing over 10 years.³⁶⁸

For emergency services, the Victorian Government is investing in the State Control Centre, including data analytics, ICT support and a rostering system to support a 24/7 workforce.³⁶⁹ The government is also funding digital radios and access to the Victorian Radio Network for marine search and rescue units, allowing interoperability with other emergency services.³⁷⁰ Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation to improve regional telecommunications infrastructure resilience so communities can stay safe during emergencies can also support the government's aims to offer the best service possible.³⁷¹ Digital connectivity can increase the preparedness of the community to react in an emergency.

Departments and agencies publicly report on IT projects over \$1 million using the Victorian Government IT Dashboard. In the third quarter of 2021–22, 40 projects in the law and justice, and emergency and safety domains were at pre-delivery or delivery stage. The three largest IT projects under delivery were the courts case management system, fines IT system reform project, and stage 2 of the digital radio upgrade program which will transition Ambulance Victoria's regional communications onto the state's shared digital network and replace the regional radio fleet.³⁷²

Further embracing technology and innovation can support alternative service delivery models, and in some cases, can substitute for buildings, like for some courts services. Infrastructure Victoria made recommendations to invest in technological capacity to better support a responsive police service, which the government supported.³⁷³ This can include new technology to aid more complex investigations, visualisation and analytical tools to assess disparate pieces of information and mobile devices to process and receive information outside stations to support police when in the community.³⁷⁴

Enhancing public safety

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Updating and developing facilities, plus better management processes, will ensure Victorians feel supported in emergencies.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about updating and building facilities and improving emergency management processes, so Victorians feel supported in emergencies. Emergency services infrastructure included in this assessment includes police, fire, state emergency services (SES) and lifesaving facilities, and other supporting infrastructure that helps manage emergency responses. The Emergency Management Commissioner, supported by Emergency Management Victoria, leads and coordinates emergency preparedness, response and recovery.³⁷⁵

The Victorian Government is building new police and fire stations. It is investing \$29 million for a new Benalla Police Station, expected to be completed in 2023–24,³⁷⁶ and \$68 million for new stations in Clyde North and Narre Warren, expected to be completed in 2022. This funding was announced as part of the Community safety statement, which also includes police station refurbishments.³⁷⁷ The 2022–23 Budget included \$46.9 million for a replacement 24-hour Southern Melbourne Station and a new Point Cook police station.³⁷⁸ The government is also building eight new fire stations, with land for the Clyde North fire station purchased in 2021 and construction expected to be completed in 2023.³⁷⁹

Upgrades to existing facilities and capability upgrades also contribute to enhanced public safety. Relevant initiatives include \$125 million to support the operation of the SES³⁸⁰ by replacing buildings no longer fit-for-purpose and constructing new facilities in growth municipalities.³⁸¹ The 2022–23 Budget further funded improved emergency services facilities. This includes renewing and replacing critical fire and emergency assets,³⁸² condition assessments of SES facilities, priority maintenance and replacement vehicles, and \$9 million for new changing facilities to support gender diversity in Country Fire Authority (CFA) stations and the Victorian Emergency Management Training Centres.³⁸³ It also included \$12 million to improve Life Saving Victoria clubhouses and support lifesaving services.³⁸⁴

The infrastructure plan contains two reforms relating to emergency management. The *Victorian emergency management strategic action plan* outlines actions to guide reform. It is a rolling plan, with the latest update published in 2020 highlighting a new emergency management planning framework.³⁸⁵ The *Crime prevention strategy* aims to deliver innovative solutions that address the underlying causes of crime and improve safety.³⁸⁶ It seeks to strengthen community safety including through the community safety infrastructure grants program.³⁸⁷ Infrastructure Victoria recommended investing in technical capacity to better support a more responsive police service and delivering infrastructure to enable policing to transition to a more contemporary hub-and-spoke model.³⁸⁸ Victoria Police is reviewing and modernising its service delivery for more efficient and effective use of police resources, better accessibility for all Victorians and a more visible presence in the community.³⁸⁹

Other actions undertaken by the Victorian Government include purchasing 48 new dual-cab heavy tankers and two light tankers for the CFA to improve the ability to respond to bushfires.³⁹⁰ Funding of between \$10,000 and \$250,000 is available through the risk and resilience grant program to decrease the risk of emergencies,³⁹¹ while the Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program has enabled the CFA, Life Saving Victoria and SES to purchase essential operational equipment, vehicles and appliances and undertake minor facility improvements.³⁹²

Improvements to emergency response times will help ensure that Victorians feel safe and supported in an emergency. Available indicators suggest some room for improvement in Fire Rescue Victoria meeting emergency response times benchmarks for structural fires and road accident responses, but performing well in emergency medical response times.³⁹³



Water

Victoria's water sector has many roles and responsibilities, separated and distributed across many different entities, including Victorian Government departments and agencies, local governments, and multiple public water corporations and catchment management authorities.

The *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021* contains three long-term priorities for the water sector.

The water priorities are:

- extending and using our water grid better
- building resilience to climate change
- improving the health of waterways and catchments

Achieving these priorities requires long-term water planning, such as through the Sustainable Water Strategies and Urban Water Strategies. At the time of writing, the final *Central and Gippsland region sustainable water strategy* and several urban water strategies, such as the Greater Melbourne *Water for Life* and the Barwon Water urban water strategy, were yet to be released.

The government released *Water is life: Traditional Owner access to water roadmap* for consultation in June 2022. It is a major reform which touches upon all three water priorities. *Water is life* takes a 'restorative justice' approach to Traditional Owner water rights, with the Victorian Government committed to returning water to Traditional Owners and increasing their influence in water management.³⁹⁴ The roadmap recommends developing guidelines to increase the participation of Traditional Owners in infrastructure projects, enabling early consideration of Traditional Owners interests and whether the benefits of future water entitlements would offset other impacts of new infrastructure projects on Country.³⁹⁵

Extending and using our water grid better

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

Good water management means modernising our water grid, making sure we're using water efficiently, and securing additional water resources.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority seeks to extend and modernise the water grid to increase water efficiency, particularly in areas with previously inefficient water networks or poor access to water. This can be achieved by securing more water resources, such as constructing a pipeline from a recycled water plant, or through modernisations and efficiency measures, which can include upgrading water meters and replacing irrigation channels with pipelines to reduce water losses. Some irrigation regions see water losses of up to 43%.³⁹⁶

Victoria's water mains have increased from over 48,000km in 2016–17 to over 51,000km in 2020–21. Planned and unplanned supply interruptions per 100km of water mains has decreased over the same period, indicating the benefits of water grid extensions and modernisation.³⁹⁷ Sustained pressure on water resources from population growth and climate change means continuing to improve the water grid and securing more water resources is valuable.

The Victorian Government is delivering many projects to modernise and use the water grid better. Irrigation-specific initiatives related to this priority include a water efficiency project by Goulburn-Murray Water which seeks to increase water efficiency through channel decommissioning, channel modernisation, meter decommissioning and meter modernisation. The project has already delivered water savings, estimated to increase to 15.9 gigalitres upon completion in 2024.³⁹⁸ Phase 2 of the Macalister district modernisation project³⁹⁹ and the construction of the Western Irrigation Network in the Parwan-Balliang agricultural district⁴⁰⁰ will also contribute to this priority when completed in 2024 and 2025.

Water grid extension initiatives can secure more water resources for communities. A reticulated water supply project for the Mitiamo district has constructed over 300 kms of new pipelines,⁴⁰¹ and the second stage of a recycled water program for the Bellarine Peninsula is now complete.⁴⁰² The East Grampians Water Supply project is constructing 1,600 kms of pipeline and will help secure more water services across the region with reticulated water supply.⁴⁰³

More recently, the 2022–23 Budget announced \$24.8 million towards the \$72 million Dingley Recycled Water Scheme which includes 42 kms of pipeline to help water 46 sites including parks and sports ovals. This initiative is part of the draft *Central and Gippsland region sustainable water strategy*.⁴⁰⁴ It demonstrates the Victorian Government's commitment to modernising and extending the water grid by increasing use of recycled water to assist in building resilience to climate change.

Given the high spatial and temporal variation in rainfall across Victoria, quantifying the overall contribution of these projects in increasing Victoria's total water efficiency is difficult. However, these projects are likely to progress this priority by improving infrastructure and water efficiency in certain geographic regions. Over time, opportunities to contribute funding for planning and delivery of water infrastructure and irrigation modernisation projects across Victoria can further support this priority, as can considering all water supply sources. These are recommendations in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021-2051*.⁴⁰⁵

Building resilience to climate change

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

We will continue to enhance Victoria's water security by enabling access to all sources of water (including manufactured water), increasing resilience of urban, regional and rural areas to manage the risks of climate change and droughts, as well as considering longer term options and investments to secure our water supply.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

The priority seeks to achieve water security, primarily through increasing the use of diverse water sources, in preparation for a warmer, drier climate. The intended outcome is increased resilience across Victoria's varied land-use settings.

Alternative water sources, such as recycled water and desalinated water, are not dependent on rainfall and are therefore more resilient to climate change.⁴⁰⁶ The total volume of water available in Victoria is influenced by rainfall,⁴⁰⁷ with significant variations shown in the table below. Recycled water use is indirectly influenced by rainfall through demand changes, but it is expected that more recycled water will be used in future to build resilience to climate change. In recent years, recycled water volumes have varied only slightly, despite wastewater production increasing over the same period (Table 2).⁴⁰⁸ The Victorian-Auditor General found recycled water use has not increased over the last decade, yet wastewater production has, and made recommendations which the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the Environment Protection Authority are implementing in partnership with water agencies.⁴⁰⁹

Table 2 – Volumes of different types of water in Victoria, 2016–17 to 2019–20, gigalitres

	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Overall volume of water available	32,239	15,375	12,073	18,291
Wastewater production	494	475	461	551
Recycled water use	84	97	100	79
Surface water, groundwater and recycled water taken for consumptive purposes	3,633	4,087	3,958	3,340

Source: Victorian Water Accounts (various)

Efforts are underway across government to build resilience to climate change by enhancing water security. Commitments include the Integrated Water Management Program and policy,⁴¹⁰ funding and grants for integrated water management projects,^{411,412} and updating urban water strategies.⁴¹³ The *Victorian infrastructure plan* included the Integrated Water Management Program and policy and funding for integrated water management projects.

The Integrated Water Management Program supported 106 strategic and capital works programs and 68 technical studies, which aim to improve resilience to climate change.⁴¹⁴ Over two thirds of these were in regional Victoria. Many regional Victorian projects were in urban centres, such as the detailed design of three urban wetlands in Bendigo. Many townships and cities in Victoria have place-based integrated water management plans.⁴¹⁵ In October 2021, the government announced an \$11 million infrastructure grant fund to help respond to a hotter and drier climate.⁴¹⁶ Other projects completed under the Integrated Water Management Program include expansion of the Werribee Recycled Water Network and construction of the Beaufort Water Recycling System.⁴¹⁷

Completing the urban water strategies will help build resilience to climate change by planning for sustainable water supplies over the next 50 years. Urban water strategies consider the entire water cycle, with a focus on integrated water management. They are used to plan for infrastructure to help meet the growing demand for water in urban systems. As noted earlier, the final joint strategy from Melbourne Water, Greater Western Water, South-East Water and Yarra Valley Water⁴¹⁸ and the urban water strategy from Barwon Water had not been released at the time of writing.

These initiatives are likely to contribute to building climate change resilience. The government will need to continue to focus on integrated water management and efforts to increase recycled water use in the future, even in years without drought. Longer term options and investments to secure water supply form part of water planning underway. This provides an opportunity to clarify decision-making for urban water investment. With wastewater production increasing and recycled water use remaining steady in recent years, recycled water use can be increased by changing current policy restrictions, including considering purified recycled drinking water. Opportunities also exist to improve integrated water cycle management policy settings. These opportunities align with recommendations in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051*.⁴¹⁹

Improving the health of waterways and catchments

Priority description from the *Victorian infrastructure plan 2021*

We're investing in infrastructure, developing preservation plans and working with local communities to protect our rivers and catchments.

Infrastructure Victoria's assessment

This priority is about improving the health of Victoria's waterways and catchments, which are under increased pressure from changes in land use, urbanisation and climate change.⁴²⁰ It seeks to use specific mechanisms to achieve its aims, such as preservation plans, working with local communities, and investing in infrastructure.

Drier conditions will reduce the water available for the environment. Assessing the health of Victoria's waterways and catchments is one way to track whether the aims of this priority are being achieved over time, but this is difficult given the limited information available at a state level and the long-term nature of challenges. Output-based measures include the area of waterway vegetation works which has increased from 7,713 hectares in 2016–17 to 9,400 hectares in 2020–21.⁴²¹

To contribute to this priority, the Victorian Government is implementing structural reforms to protect waterways through changes to water and catchment legislation.⁴²² This legislation introduces approvals which regulate the place, rate and taking of water from a declared water system and increases financial penalties to further deter water theft and ensure that irrigated water is being used within the rules.⁴²³ Structural reforms will be implemented in 2022 while market reforms will be implemented in 2023.

Other initiatives related to this priority include preservation plans such as the *Burndap Birrarung Burndap Umarkoo – Yarra strategic plan*,⁴²⁴ the *Rivers of the Barwon (Barre Warre Yulluk) action plan*,⁴²⁵ the *Rivers and riparian action plan*,⁴²⁶ the *Loddon Campaspe irrigation region land and water management plan 2020–2030*⁴²⁷ and the *Waterways of the West action plan*.⁴²⁸ The 2022–23 Budget also allocated funding for the implementation of the *Central and Gippsland region sustainable water strategy*, due for release in 2022.⁴²⁹ The draft sustainable water strategy aims to improve waterway and catchment health by preparing for a decline in water availability and recommending actions to minimise the detrimental effect of drier seasonal conditions on waterway and catchment ecologies.⁴³⁰

These initiatives can contribute to better waterways and catchment health, with market and structural reforms likely to have the most immediate impact. Some work of the *Rivers and riparian action plan* have been completed, such as excavation works and the installation of a regulator on the Kynmer Creek in Barmah National Park to allow more water to reach the Barmah wetland.⁴³¹ Other components will be progressively implemented or contribute to a smaller geographic area. The Australian Government also funds infrastructure projects through the Murray Darling Basin Authority.

Financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2022



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Accountable Officer's and Chief Financial Officer's declaration

The attached financial statements for Infrastructure Victoria have been prepared in accordance with Direction 5.2 of the Standing Directions of the Assistant Treasurer under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian Accounting Standards, including interpretations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, cash flow statement, statement of changes in equity and accompanying notes, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2022 and financial position of Infrastructure Victoria as at 30 June 2022.

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

We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 22 November 2022.



Tania Reaburn
Chief Financial Officer

Melbourne
22 November 2022



Jonathan Spear
Chief Executive Officer

Melbourne
22 November 2022

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of Infrastructure Victoria

Opinion	<p>I have audited the financial report of Infrastructure Victoria which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• balance sheet as at 30 June 2022• comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended• statement of changes in equity for the year then ended• cash flow statement for the year then ended• notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies• accountable officer's and chief financial officer's declaration. <p>In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Infrastructure Victoria as at 30 June 2022 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 7 of the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i> and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.</p>
Basis for Opinion	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of Infrastructure Victoria in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
Board's responsibilities for the financial report	<p>The Board of Infrastructure Victoria is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i>, and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p> <p>In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing Infrastructure Victoria's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.</p>

**Auditor's
responsibilities
for the audit
of the financial
report**

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

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

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

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

MELBOURNE
2 December 2022



Timothy Maxfield
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Comprehensive operating statement

For the financial year ended 30 June 2022

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Income from Transactions			
Output appropriations		-	-
Grants	2.1	9,849,369	9,934,765
Resources received free of charge		-	-
Total Income from Transactions		9,849,369	9,934,765
Expenses from Transactions			
Employee benefits	3.2.1	5,998,293	6,116,950
Depreciation and amortisation	4.2	404,423	402,922
Interest expenses	3.1	60,535	71,212
Capital asset charge	3.1	-	1,998
Other operating expenses	3.3	2,847,565	2,873,593
Total Expenses from Transactions		9,310,816	9,466,675
Net Result from Transactions		538,553	468,090
Other Economic Flows Included in Net Result			
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of non-financial assets		-	-
Net gain/(loss) from the revaluation of leave liabilities		53,806	79,099
Total other economic flows included in net result		53,806	79,099
Net Result from Transactions		592,359	547,189
Other Economic Flows – Other Non-Owner Changes in Equity			
Adjustments to Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit)		-	-
Net Result		592,359	547,189
Comprehensive Result		592,359	547,189

The above comprehensive operating statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balance sheet

As at 30 June 2022

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Assets			
Financial Assets			
Cash Assets		-	-
Receivables	5.1	3,472,850	2,089,184
Total Financial Assets		3,472,850	2,089,184
Non-Financial Assets			
Prepayments	5.4	109,590	88,678
Property, Plant and Equipment	4.1	2,136,998	2,454,110
Total Non-Financial Assets		2,246,588	2,542,788
Total Assets		5,719,438	4,631,972
Liabilities			
Payables	5.2	1,243,310	499,158
Employee benefits	3.2.2	1,051,580	1,045,491
Other provisions	5.5	98,667	98,667
Borrowings	6.1	2,282,923	2,532,071
Deferred lease incentive	5.3	10,978	16,964
Total Liabilities		4,687,458	4,192,351
Net Assets		1,031,980	439,621
Equity			
Accumulated Surplus		1,031,980	439,621
Net Worth		1,031,980	439,621

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Cash flow statement

For the financial year ended 30 June 2022

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Receipts			
Receipts from Government		8,646,777	8,928,778
Total receipts		8,646,777	8,928,778
Payments			
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(8,249,783)	(8,543,280)
Capital asset charge paid		-	(1,998)
Interest and other finance costs paid		(60,535)	(71,212)
Total payments		(8,310,318)	(8,616,490)
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities	6.2	336,459	312,288
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Investing Activities		-	-
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
Proceeds from disposal of motor vehicles		-	-
Repayment of leases		(336,459)	(312,288)
Net cash flows (used in) financing activities		(336,459)	(312,288)
Net Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		-	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		-	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		-	-

The above cash flow statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of changes in equity

For the financial year ended 30 June 2022

	Notes	Accumulated Surplus \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2020		(107,568)	(107,568)
Net Result for the year		547,189	547,189
Balance at 30 June 2021		439,621	439,621
Net Result for the year		592,359	592,359
Balance at 30 June 2022		1,031,980	1,031,980

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the financial statements

1. About this report

Infrastructure Victoria was established by the *Infrastructure Victoria Act 2015* and commenced operations on 1 October 2015.

The principal address is:

Infrastructure Victoria
Level 33
140 William Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

A description of the nature of Infrastructure Victoria's operations and its principal services are included in the "**Report of Operations**" of the Annual Report which does not form part of these financial statements.

Basis of preparation

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

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

Consistent with the requirements of AASB 1004 *Contributions*, contributions by owners (that is, contributed capital and its repayment) are treated as equity transactions and therefore, do not form part of the income and expenses of Infrastructure Victoria.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in applying Australian Accounting Standards (AASs) that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates are disclosed in the notes to which they relate.

These financial statements cover Infrastructure Victoria as an individual reporting entity and include all its controlled activities.

All amounts in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar unless otherwise stated.

Compliance information

These general-purpose financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* and applicable AASs, which include Interpretations, issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). In particular, they are presented in a manner consistent with the requirements of AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.

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

Other accounting policies

Significant and other accounting policies that summarise the recognition and measurement basis used and are relevant to an understanding of the financial statements, are provided throughout the notes to the financial statements.

2. Funding of our services

INTRODUCTION	STRUCTURE
<p>Infrastructure Victoria is an independent advisory body, which is funded by Parliamentary appropriations for the provision of outputs. These appropriations are received by the Department of Treasury and Finance and provided to Infrastructure Victoria in the form of grants.</p>	<p>2.1 Income that funds the delivery of our services</p>

2.1 Income that funds the delivery of our services

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Grants from the Department of Treasury and Finance	9,849,369	9,934,765
Total Income from Transactions	9,849,369	9,934,765

Income from grants (other than contribution by owners) is recognised when Infrastructure Victoria obtains control over the grant. Infrastructure Victoria has determined that this grant income is recognised as income of not-for-profit entities in accordance with AASB 1058, except for grants that are reciprocal in nature (i.e. equal value is given back by the recipient of the grant to the provider) and are enforceable and have sufficiently specific performance obligations, they are accounted for as revenue from contracts with customers in accordance with AASB 15.

Infrastructure Victoria do not have any grants other than grants received from the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF). These grants are grants from DTF recognised under AASB 1058 when Infrastructure Victoria has delivered the services or DTF has transferred the grant.

3. Cost of delivering our services

INTRODUCTION	STRUCTURE
This section provides an account of the expenses incurred by Infrastructure Victoria in delivering its services.	3.1 Expenses incurred in the delivery of services
The funds that enable the provision of the services were disclosed in Note 2	3.2 Employee benefits
	3.3 Other operating expenses

3.1 Expenses incurred in the delivery of services

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Employee benefits	3.2.1	5,998,293	6,116,950
Interest expenses		60,535	71,212
Capital asset charge		-	1,998
Other operating expenses	3.3	2,847,565	2,873,593
Total operating expenses		8,906,393	9,063,753

Interest expenses relate to the notional interest cost in leases recognised under AASB16 Leases. For Infrastructure Victoria this relates to the accommodation lease for the William Street Office facility.

The Capital asset charge (CAC) was discontinued on 1 July 2021. The removal of CAC reduces the grant income and CAC expense by the same amount.

3.2 Employee benefits

3.2.1 Employee benefits in the comprehensive operating statement

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Salaries and wages, annual leave and long service leave		5,532,164	5,645,909
Defined contribution superannuation expense		466,129	471,041
Total employee expenses		5,998,293	6,116,950

Employee benefits include all costs related to employment including salaries and wages, superannuation, leave entitlements, fringe benefits tax, redundancy payments and WorkCover premiums.

3.2.2 Employee benefits in the balance sheet

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

Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Current provisions		
Annual leave		
Unconditional and expected to settle within 12 months	377,589	362,427
Unconditional and expected to settle after 12 months	146,188	87,680
Long service leave		
Unconditional and expected to settle within 12 months	25,357	37,350
Unconditional and expected to settle after 12 months	249,111	308,626
Total current employee related provisions	798,245	796,083
Non-current provisions		
Long service leave	224,515	224,400
On Costs	28,820	25,008
Total non-current employee related provisions	253,335	249,408
Total provisions for employee benefits	1,051,580	1,045,491

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

Unconditional Long Service Leave (LSL) is disclosed as a current liability even where Infrastructure Victoria does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months because it will not have the unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement should an employee take leave within 12 months.

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

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

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

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

Infrastructure Victoria does not recognise any defined benefit liabilities because it has no legal or constructive obligation to pay future benefits relating to its employees. Instead, the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) discloses in its annual financial statements the net defined benefit cost related to the members of these plans as an administered liability (on behalf of the State as the sponsoring employer).

3.3 Other operating expenses

Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Purchases of services	1,857,260	1,905,158
Supplies and services	654,501	692,853
Low-value lease expenses	47,494	34,351
Information technology costs	196,272	89,849
Occupancy costs	92,038	151,382
Total supplies and services	2,847,565	2,873,593

Other operating expenses represent the day-to-day running costs incurred in delivering the services of Infrastructure Victoria.

All leases are accounted under AASB 16 Leases in the balance sheet, except for the following which are expensed on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

- Short-term leases – leases with a term less than 12 months; (there are none in 2021-2022) or
- Low value leases – leases with the underlying asset's fair value (when new, regardless of the age of the asset being leased) is no more than \$10 000.

4. Key assets available to support output delivery

INTRODUCTION	STRUCTURE
Infrastructure Victoria controls property, plant and equipment in fulfilling its objectives and conducting its activities. These assets represent the key resources that Infrastructure Victoria uses for the delivery of these activities.	<p>4.1 Property, plant and equipment</p> <p>4.2 Asset depreciation</p>

4.1 Property, plant and equipment

	<i>Gross carrying amount</i>		<i>Accumulated depreciation</i>		<i>Net carrying amount</i>	
	2022 \$	2021 \$	2022 \$	2021 \$	2022 \$	2021 \$
Right-of-use buildings	3,095,214	3,095,214	(1,114,723)	(743,149)	1,980,491	2,352,065
Leasehold improvements	304,323	304,324	(257,067)	(231,346)	47,256	72,978
Leased motor vehicles	125,289	37,977	(16,038)	(8,910)	109,251	29,067
Net carrying amount	3,524,826	3,437,515	(1,387,828)	(983,405)	2,136,998	2,454,110

Leasehold Improvements - Initial Recognition

The cost of leasehold improvements is capitalised as an asset and depreciated over the expected term of the lease or the estimated useful life of the improvements, whichever is the shorter.

Leasehold Improvements - Subsequent Measurement

In reporting periods subsequent to initial recognition, leasehold improvements are valued using the fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Historical cost is used as a close proxy to the current replacement cost due to its short useful life.

Right-of-use asset acquired by lessees – Initial Recognition

Infrastructure Victoria recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentive received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

Right-of-use asset – Subsequent measurement

Infrastructure Victoria subsequently depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight-line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The right-of-use assets are also subject to revaluation.

In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any and adjusted for certain remeasurements of the lease liability.

Motor vehicles (including Motor vehicles under leases)

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

Impairment

Property, plant and equipment are tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset may be impaired.

The assets concerned are tested as to whether their carrying value exceeds their recoverable amount. Where an asset's carrying value exceeds its recoverable amount, the difference is considered to be an impairment and is written off as an 'other economic flow', except to the extent that it can be offset to an asset revaluation surplus amount applicable to that class of asset.

The recoverable amount for most assets is measured at the higher of current replacement cost and fair value less costs to sell. Recoverable amount for assets held primarily to generate net cash inflows is measured at the higher of the present value of future cash flows expected to be obtained from the asset and fair value less costs to sell.

4.1(a) Reconciliation of movements in carrying amounts of property, plant and equipment

	Right of use buildings	Leasehold improvements	Leased motor vehicles	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
2022				
Carrying amount at the start of the year	2,352,065	72,977	29,068	2,454,110
Additions	-	-	87,311	87,311
Depreciation expenses	(371,574)	(25,721)	(7,128)	(404,423)
Carrying amount at the end of the year	1,980,491	47,256	109,251	2,136,998
2021				
Carrying amount at the start of the year	2,723,640	98,697	34,695	2,857,032
Depreciation expenses	(371,575)	(25,720)	(5,627)	(402,922)
Carrying amount at the end of the year	2,352,065	72,977	29,068	2,454,110

4.2 Asset depreciation

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Right-of-use buildings	371,574	371,574
Leasehold improvements	25,721	25,721
Leased motor vehicles	7,128	5,627
Total depreciation	404,423	402,922

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, to its useful life. Depreciation begins when the asset is first available for use in the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by the entity.

Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful lives.

Right-of-use assets are generally depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life and the lease term.

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation method are reviewed at least annually. Typical estimated useful lives applicable for the different classes are included in the table below:

Useful life of assets

Asset class	Useful life (years)
Right-of-use buildings	9
Leasehold improvements	2-5
Motor vehicles under finance lease	2-3

5. Other assets and liabilities

INTRODUCTION	STRUCTURE
This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from Infrastructure Victoria's operations.	5.1 Receivables 5.2 Payables 5.3 Deferred lease incentive 5.4 Prepayments 5.5 Other provisions

5.1 Receivables

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Statutory		
Amounts owing from government	3,407,961	2,026,321
GST recoverable	64,889	62,863
Total receivables	3,472,850	2,089,184
Represented by:		
Current receivables	3,219,514	1,839,776
Non-current receivables	253,336	249,408

Statutory receivables do not arise from contracts and are not classified as financial instruments. They are recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial measurement they are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment and are not classified as financial instruments.

5.2 Payables

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Contractual		
Creditors and accruals	1,216,292	473,687
Statutory		
Amounts payable to other government agencies	27,018	25,471
Total payables	1,243,310	499,158
Represented by: Current payables	1,243,310	499,158

Contractual payables are classified as financial instruments and measured at amortised cost. Creditors and accruals represent liabilities for goods and services provided to Infrastructure Victoria prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid.

Statutory payables are recognised and measured similarly to contractual payables but are not classified as financial instruments and not included in the category of financial liabilities at amortised cost, because they do not arise from contracts.

5.3 Deferred lease incentive

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Current	5,987	5,987
Non-current	4,991	10,977
Total deferred lease incentive	10,978	16,964

The lease incentive relates to Infrastructure Victoria's William Street, Melbourne, office facilities. The total lease incentive is being amortised annually over the term of the lease that expires at the end of April 2024.

5.4 Prepayments

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Occupancy costs	-	32,374
Information technology costs	29,585	25,557
Membership costs	80,005	30,747
Total prepayments	109,590	88,678

Prepayments represent payments in advance for receipt of goods or services made in one accounting period covering a term extending beyond that period.

5.5 Other provisions

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Make-good provision	98,667	98,667
Total other provisions	98,667	98,667

The make-good provision is recognised in accordance with the agreement over the leased premises when Infrastructure Victoria is required to remove any leasehold improvements from the leased premises and restore the premises to its original condition at the end of the lease term. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the obligation, after considering the risks and uncertainties surrounding the restoration costs.

6. Financing our operations

INTRODUCTION	STRUCTURE
This section provides information on the sources of finance utilised for Infrastructure Victoria's operations, along with interest expenses (the cost of borrowings) and other information related to financing activities of Infrastructure Victoria.	<p>6.1 Borrowings</p> <p>6.2 Reconciliation of the net result for the period to cash flow from operating activities</p> <p>6.3 Commitments for expenditure</p>

6.1 Borrowings

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Secured		
Current lease liabilities	386,542	334,590
Non-current lease liabilities	1,896,381	2,197,481
Total Borrowings	2,282,923	2,532,071

For any new contracts entered into, Infrastructure Victoria considers whether a contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'. To apply this definition, Infrastructure Victoria assesses whether the contract meets three key evaluations:

- Whether the contract contains an identified asset, which is either explicitly identified in the contract or implicitly specified by being identified at the time the asset is made available to Infrastructure Victoria and for which the supplier does not have substantive substitution rights;
- Whether Infrastructure Victoria has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the identified asset throughout the period of use, considering its rights within the defined scope of the contract and Infrastructure Victoria has the right to direct the use of the identified asset throughout the period of use; and
- Whether Infrastructure Victoria has the right to take decisions in respect of 'how and for what purpose' the asset is used throughout the period of use.

Separation of lease and non-lease components

At inception or on reassessment of a contract that contains a lease component, the lessee is required to separate out and account separately for non-lease components within a lease contract and exclude these amounts when determining the lease liability and right-of-use asset amount.

Recognition and measurement of leases as a lessee

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease if that rate is readily determinable or Infrastructure Victoria's incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments) less any lease incentive receivable;
- variable payments based on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- payments arising from purchase and termination options reasonably certain to be exercised.

Interest expenses include costs incurred in connection with the borrowing of funds or the notional interest cost in the accommodation lease recognised under the AASB16 Leases. Interest expense is recognised in the period in which it is incurred.

Lease Liability – subsequent measurement

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification, or to reflect revised in-substance fixed payments.

When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset, or profit and loss if the right-of-use asset is already reduced to zero.

Short-term leases and leases of low-value assets

Infrastructure Victoria has elected to account for short-term leases and leases of low-value assets using the practical expedients. Instead of recognising a right-of-use asset and lease liability, the payments in relation to these are recognised as an expense in profit or loss on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Presentation of right-of-use assets and lease liabilities

Infrastructure Victoria presents right-of-use assets as 'property plant and equipment' (refer to Note 4.1 (a)) unless they meet the definition of investment property, in which case they are disclosed as 'investment property' in the balance sheet. Lease liabilities are presented as 'borrowings' in the balance sheet.

6.1 (a) Amounts recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement

The following amounts are recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement relating to leases:

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	60,535	71,212
Low-value lease expenses	94,988	34,351
Total amount recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement	155,523	105,563

6.1 (b) Amounts recognised in the Cash flow statement

The following amounts are recognised in the Cash flow statement for the year ended 30 June 2022 relating to leases.

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	60,535	71,212
Low-value lease expenses	94,988	34,351
Lease liability payments	336,461	312,288
Total cash outflow for leases	491,984	417,851

6.2 Reconciliation of the net result for the period to cash flow from operating activities

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Net result for the period	592,359	547,189
Non-cash movements:		
Depreciation	404,423	402,922
Movements in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	(1,383,666)	(664,759)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(20,912)	(24,187)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	744,152	223,362
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	6,089	(166,252)
Increase/(decrease) in lease incentive	(5,986)	(5,987)
Net cash flow from operating activities	336,459	312,288

6.3 Commitments for expenditure

	Less than one year \$	1-5 years \$	Greater than 5 years \$	Total \$
Nominal amounts				
2022				
Other commitments payable	331,970		-	331,970
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	331,970	-	-	331,970
<i>Less GST recoverable</i>	(30,179)		-	(30,179)
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)	301,791	-	-	301,791
2021				
Operating and lease commitments payable	379,850	69,700	-	449,550
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	379,850	69,700	-	449,550
<i>Less GST recoverable</i>	(34,454)	(6,336)	-	(40,790)
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)	345,396	63,364	-	408,760

Commitments for future expenditure include operating and capital commitments arising from contracts. These commitments are reported above at their nominal value and inclusive of GST. Where it is considered appropriate and it provides additional relevant information to users, the net present values of significant individual projects are stated. These future expenditures cease to be disclosed as commitments once the related liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet.

7. Risks, contingencies and valuation judgements

INTRODUCTION	STRUCTURE
<p>Infrastructure Victoria is exposed to risk from its activities and outside factors. In addition, it is often necessary to make judgements and estimates associated with recognition and measurement of items in the financial report.</p> <p>This section sets out financial instrument specific information (including exposures to financial risks) as well as those items that are contingent in nature or require a higher level of judgement to be applied.</p>	<p>7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures</p> <p>7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities</p>

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

Introduction

Financial instruments arise out of contractual agreements between entities that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Due to the nature of Infrastructure Victoria's activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statute rather than a contract. Such financial assets and financial liabilities do not meet the definition of financial instruments in AASB 132 *Financial Instruments: Presentation*. For example, statutory receivables do not meet the definition of financial instruments as they do not arise under contract. Infrastructure Victoria's statutory receivables are disclosed in note 5.1.

Categories of financial assets

Financial assets at amortised cost

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

Categories of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities at amortised cost

Financial instrument liabilities are initially recognised on the date they are originated. They are initially measured at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs.

Financial instrument liabilities measured at amortised cost include all of Infrastructure Victoria's contractual payable and lease liabilities.

Derecognition of financial assets

A financial asset (or, where applicable, a part of a financial asset or part of a group of similar financial assets) is derecognised when the rights to receive cash flows from the asset have expired.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

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

Offsetting financial instruments

Financial instrument assets and liabilities are offset, and the net amount presented in the balance sheet when, and only when, Infrastructure Victoria has a legal right to offset the amounts and intend either to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

7.1.1 Categorisation of financial instruments

	Category	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
Financial assets				
Receivables*	Financial assets at amortised cost	5.1	-	-
Financial liabilities				
Payables	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	5.2	1,216,292	473,687
Lease Liabilities	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	6.1	2,282,923	2,532,071
			3,499,215	3,005,758

Note: * Receivables and payables disclosed exclude statutory receivables (i.e. amounts owing from Victorian Government and GST recoverable) and statutory payables (i.e. amounts payable to other government agencies).

7.1.2 Financial risk management objectives and policies

Infrastructure Victoria's financial risk management program seeks to manage the risks arising from volatility in financial instruments.

Infrastructure Victoria's main financial risks include credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk. Infrastructure Victoria manages these financial risks in accordance with its financial risk management policy.

Credit risk

Credit risk arises from the financial assets of Infrastructure Victoria, which comprise trade and other receivables. Infrastructure Victoria's exposure to credit risk arises from the potential default of counterparties on their contractual obligations resulting in financial loss to Infrastructure Victoria. Credit risk is measured at fair value and is monitored on a regular basis.

Credit risk associated with Infrastructure Victoria's financial assets is minimal because the main debtors are the Victorian Government departments.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk arises when Infrastructure Victoria is unable to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. Infrastructure Victoria operates under the Victorian Government's fair payments policy of settling financial obligations within 30 days and, in the event of a dispute, makes payments within 30 days from the date of resolution.

Infrastructure Victoria's exposure to liquidity risk is deemed insignificant based on the current assessment of risk. Maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amount of financial liabilities. Infrastructure Victoria manages its liquidity risk by maintaining an adequate level of uncommitted funds that can be used at short notice to meet its short-term obligations.

Market risk

Infrastructure Victoria has no exposure to interest rate, foreign currency or other price risks. Interest rates on Infrastructure Victoria's lease liabilities are fixed.

7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

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

Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable respectively.

Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity.

These are classified as either quantifiable, where the potential economic benefit is known, or non-quantifiable.

There were no contingent assets based on the above definitions relating to Infrastructure Victoria as at 30 June 2022 (30 June 2021: Nil).

Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
 - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligations; or
 - the amount of the obligations cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Contingent liabilities are also classified as either quantifiable or non-quantifiable.

There were no contingent liabilities based on the above definitions relating to Infrastructure Victoria as at 30 June 2022 (30 June 2021: Nil).

8. Other disclosures

INTRODUCTION	STRUCTURE
This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report.	8.1 Subsequent events 8.2 Changes in accounting policies 8.3 Australian Accounting Standards issued but not yet effective 8.4 Responsible persons 8.5 Remuneration of executives 8.6 Related parties 8.7 Remuneration of auditors

8.1 Subsequent events

There were no subsequent events that had the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of Infrastructure Victoria.

8.2 Changes in accounting policies

There have been no changes in accounting policies for Infrastructure Victoria during 2021-22 (2020-21: None).

8.3 Australian Accounting Standards (AASs) issued but not yet effective

Certain new and revised accounting standards have been issued but are not effective for the 2021-22 reporting period. These accounting standards have not been applied to these Financial Statements. Infrastructure Victoria is reviewing its existing policies and assessing the potential implications of these accounting standards which includes:

- AASB 2020-1 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-Current*

This Standard amends AASB 101 to clarify requirements for the presentation of liabilities in the statement of financial position as current or non-current. It initially applied to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2022 with earlier application permitted however the AASB has recently issued AASB 2020-6 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current – Deferral of Effective Date* to defer the application by one year to periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023. Infrastructure Victoria will not early adopt the Standard. Infrastructure Victoria is in the process of analysing the impacts of this Standard. However, it is not anticipated to have a material impact.

Several other amending standards and AASB interpretations have been issued that apply to future reporting periods but are considered to have limited impact on Infrastructure Victoria's reporting.

- AASB 2020-3 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Annual Improvements 2018-2020 and Other Amendments*
- AASB 2021-2 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure of Accounting Policies and Definitions of Accounting Estimates*
- AASB 2021-6 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure of Accounting Policies: Tier 2 and Other Australian Accounting Standards*

8.4 Responsible persons

The persons who held the positions of Minister and Accountable Officer in Infrastructure Victoria (from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022) were:

Position	Names	
Treasurer	The Hon Tim Pallas MP	(1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022)
Chief Executive Officer	Jonathan Spear	(1 November 2021 to 30 June 2022)
Chief Executive Officer	Michel Masson	(1 July 2021 to 31 October 2021)

Remuneration received or receivable by the Accountable Officer, in connection with the management of Infrastructure Victoria during the reporting period, was in the range: \$510,000-\$519,999 (2020-21: \$590,000-\$599,999).¹

¹ The change in remuneration range is largely driven by an adjustment of long service leave entitlements relating to previous CEO.

8.5 Remuneration of executives

The number of executive officers, other than Ministers and Accountable Officers, and their total remuneration during the reporting period are shown in the table below. Total annualised employee equivalents provide a measure of full time equivalent executive officers over the reporting period.

Remuneration comprises employee benefits in all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by the entity or on behalf of the entity, in exchange for services rendered, and is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Post-employment benefits include employer contributions for members of both defined benefit and defined contribution superannuation plans.

Other long-term benefits include long service leave, other long-service benefits or deferred compensation.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	\$	\$
Remuneration of executives officers		
Short-term employee benefits	1,035,135	1,128,093
Post-employment benefits	107,381	74,137
Other long-term benefits	39,059	46,464
Termination benefits	78,531	-
Total remuneration	1,260,106	1,248,694
Total number of executives⁽ⁱ⁾	7	5
Total annualised employee equivalents⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	4.5	5.0

Notes:

(i) The total number of executive officers includes persons who meet the definition of key management personnel of the entity under AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures and are also reported within the related parties note disclosure (Note 8.6).

(ii) Annualised employee equivalent is based on paid working hours of 38 ordinary hours per week over the 52 weeks for the reporting period.

8.6 Related parties

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

- all key management personnel and their close family members;
- all cabinet Ministers and their close family members; and
- all departments and public sector entities that are controlled and consolidated into the whole of State consolidated financial statements.

Significant transactions with government-related entities

Infrastructure Victoria received grants from the Department of Treasury and Finance of \$ 9.8 million in 2021-22 (\$9.9 million received in 2020-21).

The Key Management Personnel (KMP) of Infrastructure Victoria includes the Portfolio Minister being the Hon Tim Pallas MP and members of the Senior Executive Team, which includes:

Key management personnel	Role at Infrastructure Victoria
James Miller	Chair, Board
Maria Wilton	Deputy Chair, Board & Chair Audit & Risk Committee
Jeremi Moule*	Board Member
John Bradley*	Board Member
Margaret Gardner	Board Member
Ann Sherry	Board Member
David Martine*	Board Member
Michel Masson	Chief Executive Officer (from 1 July 2021 to 31 October 2021)
Jonathan Spear	Deputy Chief Executive Officer (1 July 2021 to 31 October 2021) Chief Executive Officer (from 1 November 2021 to 30 June 2022)

*Departmental secretaries

The compensation detailed below excludes the salaries and benefits the Portfolio Minister receives. The Minister's remuneration and allowances are set by the *Parliamentary Salaries and Superannuation Act 1968* and is reported in the State's annual financial report.

The compensation details below also exclude the departments' secretaries who are also board members of Infrastructure Victoria; these are reported in the financial report of each respective department.

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Compensation of KMPs		
Short-term employee benefits	902,687	1,093,313
Post-employment benefits	34,969	46,314
Other long-term benefits ²	(33,464)	34,673
Total	904,192	1,174,300

² Other long-term benefits include an adjustment of long service leave entitlements relating to previous CEO.

Transactions with KMPs and other related parties

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

Outside of normal citizen type transactions with Infrastructure Victoria, there were no related party transactions that involved KMPs and their close family members. No provision has been required, nor any expense recognised, for impairment of receivables from related parties.

8.7 Remuneration of auditors

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Audit fees paid or payable to the Victorian Auditor-General's Office		
Audit of the Annual Financial Statements	17,000	16,500
Total	17,000	16,500

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office provided no other direct services to Infrastructure Victoria.

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