

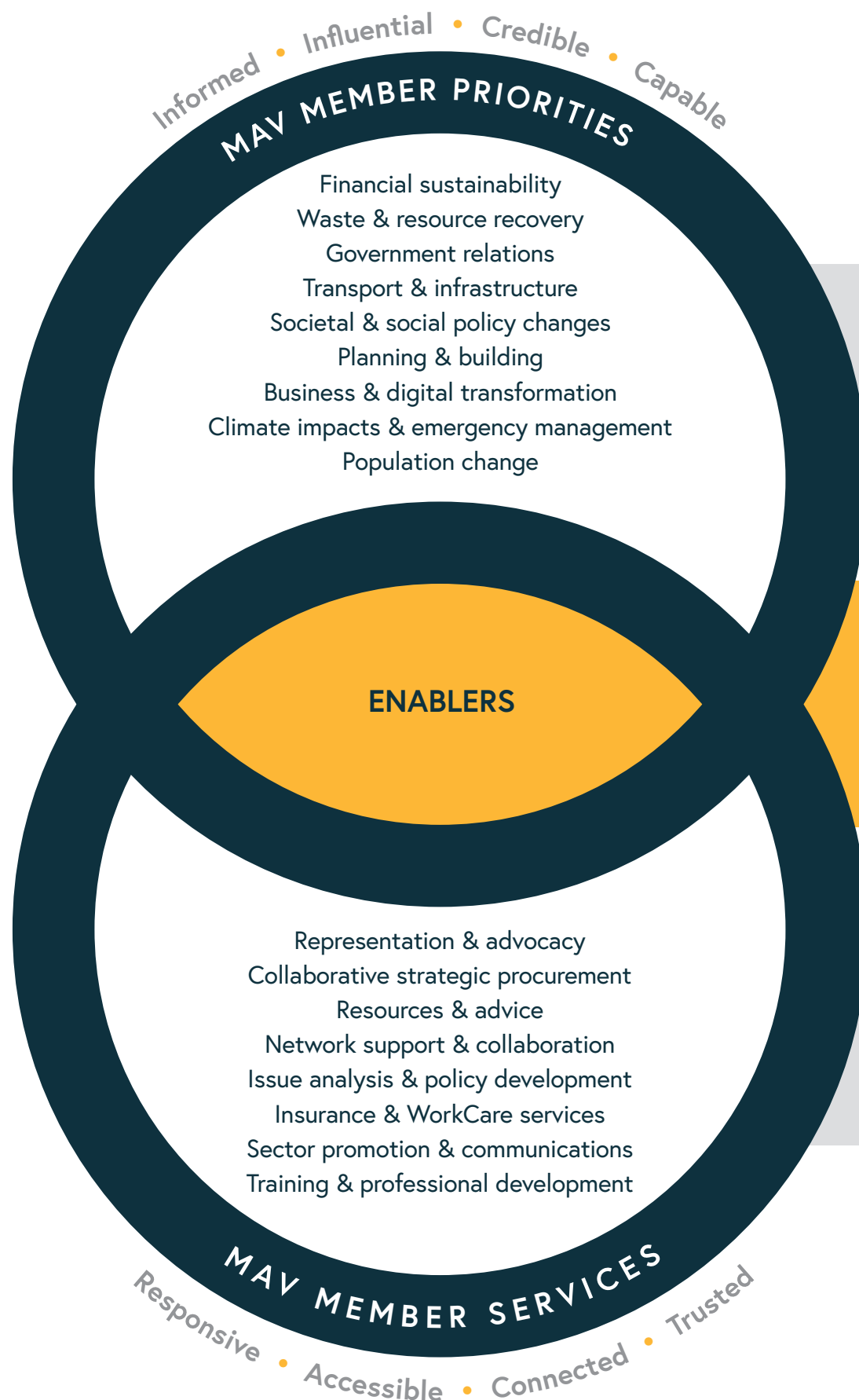


Annual Report

Strategic Plan Outcomes

2019-20

2019-21 Strategic Plan on a page



The MAV provides representation and intergovernmental advocacy to advance the interests of local government

To deliver high-value outcomes for our member councils in 2019-21 we will:

FOCUS OUR EFFORTS

Determine and address a single, clear objective for each member priority issue.

BUILD OUR CAPABILITY

EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY & ADVOCACY

Strengthen our advocacy voice for local government by increasing curation and analysis of data to inform business cases.

ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

Improve awareness of and access to MAV services. Leverage networks to build capability and collaboration in local government.

LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Lead the development of policy roadmaps and governance structures to support local government priorities.

IMPROVE OUR PROCESSES

- Align MAV Strategic Work Plan and State Council activities.
- Review organisational structure to address capability gaps.
- Rationalise and prioritise member service offerings.
- Review business models.
- Transform our business processes and systems.
- Review communication and engagement strategy.
- Explore new ways to adequately resource priorities and enablers.

VALUES & PRINCIPLES

The MAV supports rural, regional, periurban, interface and metropolitan councils to address social cohesion in diversifying communities, reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and in advancing gender equity, preventing family violence, and planning for the anticipated impacts of climate change, population change and emerging technologies. We empower and encourage our staff to support each other and our member councils.

Priorities, objectives & measures

With limited resources, the MAV builds collaborative relationships with key stakeholders including other levels of government and offers services that deliver significant benefits to member councils.

This report presents our progress in addressing the objectives of our Strategic Plan, including the efficiency gains achieved through process improvements at MAV.

Council satisfaction with these progressive outcomes was to be assessed based on the survey method established during the consultation sessions for our two-year Strategic Plan. It was to be directed to councillors, executives and operational staff, with the responses analysed by respondent, region and council type. This was intended to provide greater insight into our perceived performance and help us to more directly target areas for improvement.

While unexpected priorities arise every year, 2020 was one out of the box. On 1 January, we were responding to the devastating bushfires that acutely impacted councils in eastern and north-eastern Victoria, with indirect impacts extending across the sector. Before the fires were extinguished, we were facing a global pandemic.

These unprecedented events dramatically changed both the priorities of the MAV in supporting its members, and our ability to report on our strategic plan outcomes in the manner we had intended. Instead of member surveys, we have self-assessed our first year of progress in addressing the Strategic Plan's objectives, which are listed opposite.

WORKING BEYOND THE PLAN

MAV activities relating to bushfire and pandemic responses during the reporting period included:

BUSHFIRES

- Representing councils on State-level operational committees including the State Emergency Management Team and State Relief & Recovery Team
- Supporting council resource-sharing by developing the MAV Human Resource Sharing Database to log offers of assistance to bushfire-affected councils. Fifty-four councils logged offers on the database and close to 200 deployments were facilitated through this process.
- Working with Bushfire Recovery Victoria and councils on strategic recovery planning, including representing councils on the Premier's Advisory Council.
- Working closely with the Victorian Building Authority to ensure fire affected homes and building were dealt with by appropriately qualified professionals, including building surveyors, environmental health experts, and the construction industry.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Representing councils on State Government emergency management and public health working groups in response, relief and recovery from COVID-19.
- Advocating for the critical council work to support communities and businesses through the COVID-19 crisis, including appearing at the Public Accounts and Estimate Committee.
- Providing clear public health advice to councils through Stage 3 and 4 lockdown in Melbourne and regional Victoria to minimise disruption to the delivery of community services.
- Influencing State Government policy and guidelines on outdoor activation of the hospitality industry as part of COVID-19 recovery.
- Providing up-to-date information and analysis on the public health response and recovery planning, through weekly forums and other communications channels.
- Facilitating sharing of technical information, processes and resources for business continuity during lockdowns.
- Developing and delivering an extensive program of online forums and events to help member councils to share knowledge, experiences, approaches and resources as they adapted to work from home arrangements.

The MAV Strategic Plan guides the MAV's work program for 2019-21. The issues and actions within it have been determined in consultation with our member councils.

PRIORITY 1. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
OBJECTIVE Lead the development of an evidence base and policy roadmap to inform a sustainable financial model for local government.
PRIORITY 2. WASTE & RESOURCE RECOVERY
OBJECTIVE Be a trusted advisor to councils and lead advocacy for investment and reform to the waste and resource recovery system to expedite the transition to a circular economy.
PRIORITY 3. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
OBJECTIVE Lead the agenda on sector priorities and elevate these with State and Federal Government to advance the interests of our communities.
PRIORITY 4. TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE
OBJECTIVE Evaluate available evidence to develop a policy and advocacy framework that prioritises community connectedness and economic viability.
PRIORITY 5. SOCIETAL & SOCIAL POLICY CHANGES
OBJECTIVE Facilitate local government creation and support of resilient and cohesive communities, with fair and equitable access to universal community services.
PRIORITY 6. PLANNING & BUILDING
OBJECTIVE Planning and building regulatory systems serve the interests of communities and respect the role of local government.
PRIORITY 7. BUSINESS & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
OBJECTIVE To lead and facilitate sharing of best practice and innovation that improves community engagement, business efficiency and equity of infrastructure and access for all councils.
PRIORITY 8. CLIMATE IMPACTS & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
OBJECTIVE Advocate for government leadership and investment that supports councils and communities to mitigate and remain resilient to climate-related impacts and emergencies.
PRIORITY 9. POPULATION CHANGE
OBJECTIVE To advocate for assistance for councils to manage the impacts of population growth and decline.
PRIORITY 10. IMPROVE OUR PROCESSES
OBJECTIVE Improve our business, governance and communication processes to increase efficiency, leverage partnerships, strengthen engagement, address capability gaps and prioritise member service offerings.




Mid-Plan Outcomes



PRIORITY 1: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY






OBJECTIVE:

Lead the development of an evidence base and policy roadmap to inform a sustainable financial model for local government.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Number of councils that contributed to the evidence base developed by the MAV.	Representative number	
Councils are satisfied with the policy roadmap developed by the MAV.	75%	
Councils are satisfied with the evidence base developed by the MAV.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

-  Advocate nationally to increase funding for local government in partnership with the Australian Local Government Association.
-  Influence the scope of the Victorian Government Rating Review to include solutions for funding and rating constraints on local government.
-  Progress sustainable funding and resources for rural and regional councils, as identified in key reports including the Rural & Regional Councils Sustainability Reform Program.
-  Quantify the asset renewal gap and explore the establishment of a sustainability fund for local government.
-  Deliver an analysis of cost, risk and responsibility shifts affecting local government.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

COVID-19 recovery planning, with immediate priority on defining where the MAV can add value to the considerable program of initiatives delivered by councils.




Maintained connections to the Federal Government via our ALGA membership, with priority attention on Financial Assistance Grants in the lead-up to the next federal election.



PRIORITY 2: WASTE & RESOURCE RECOVERY





OBJECTIVE:

Be a trusted advisor to councils and lead advocacy for investment and reform to the waste and resource recovery system to expedite the transition to a circular economy.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Councils are satisfied with MAV advocacy effort and outcomes.	75%	
Councils are satisfied with MAV advice and policy development.	75%	
Number of councils that have adopted recycled content procurement targets.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

-  Influence State policy and investment decisions for waste and resource recovery.
-  Voice local government's position on state-wide waste and resource recovery issues to state and federal governments.
-  Facilitate increased local government procurement of recycled materials.
-  Drive the development and adoption of a consistent sector-wide approach to waste service charges.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

In consultation with the sector, prepared four written submissions in response to recycling-related state and federal discussion papers.

Secured State commitment to introduce a container deposit scheme in Victoria as well as significant new investment in recycling infrastructure.

Drove input into State-led program to address high risk waste sites.

Undertook extensive advocacy on the design of the container deposit scheme, the new waste and recycling Act and authority, waste service charges, kerbside reforms and product stewardship.

Organised and ran a forum for councils on glass recycling.




Partnered with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Infrastructure Victoria to run briefings and consultation sessions for councils on various reform proposals.



PRIORITY 3: GOVERNMENT RELATIONS





OBJECTIVE:

Lead the agenda on sector priorities and elevate these with State and Federal Government to advance the interests of our communities.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Councils are satisfied with MAV's level of influence on other levels of government.	75%	
Councils are satisfied that MAV is leading the agenda on sector priorities.	75%	
Increase in number of engagements from state and federal government.	10%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

-  Review and renew the Victorian State and Local Government Agreement, and investigate opportunities to increase partnership agreements with government departments and agencies.
-  Maximise benefits of Australian Local Government Association membership benefits to represent the interests of Victorian councils and communities.
-  Advocate for tripartite agreements with state and federal government.
-  Protect the civic leadership role of local government in the implementation of the new Local Government Act.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

We have continued to actively participate in the work of the ALGA in progressing local government issues nationally. ALGA's advocacy focus has continued to have a strong financial flavour. Two priority areas remain the goal of restoring financial assistance grants to at least 1% of Commonwealth tax revenue and establishing a strategic local roads investment program. The Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program established by the Commonwealth to assist with local economic activity in the face of COVID-19 has been one positive achievement.

Sustained participation in State Emergency Management structures and forums representing councils through 2020 fires and COVID-19.

Maintaining strong relationships with the Department of Health and Human Services that can be drawn on at times of crisis, such as being able to ring through directly to key leading managers about issues impacting local government in their response to COVID-19.

Putting councils' role in domestic onsite wastewater (septic tanks) regulation reform firmly on the agenda of senior levels of government.




Our persistent and strong advocacy throughout all stages of the development of the Local Government Bill achieved significant wins for the sector, including the withdrawal of the voter-led Commission of Inquiry and a watering down of the proposed reforms to the electoral structure framework. Our consultation with the sector enabled us to form fact based, coherent and well-defined positions for our strong and resolute advocacy, on issues including single-member wards. We are continuing our advocacy and engagement in relation to implementation of the new Act which we know will pose significant challenges for the sector.



PRIORITY 4: TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE





OBJECTIVE:

Evaluate available evidence to develop a policy and advocacy framework that prioritises community connectedness and economic viability.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Councils are satisfied with policy and advocacy framework.	75%	
Level of council engagement and participation in MAV activities.	75%	
Councils are satisfied with analysis of available evidence.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

-  Review the STEP Asset Management Program.
-  Represent local government in Heavy Vehicle Law Review.
-  Work with the state government to help councils prepare for introduction of new transport technologies.
-  Advocate for safe and equitable access to public and active transport.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

Active walking and cycling infrastructure project in partnership with VicHealth, including capacity building across local government and raising awareness with State Government.

Freight Policy Reference group established.

Key submissions to the National Transport Commission (NTC) and Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) review papers and forum submissions, including forthcoming regulatory impact statements from the NTC.

Collaborating with Department of Transport and Freight Victoria to support local government participation and implementation of the Victorian Freight Plan

Achieved renewed commitment from DELWP to support the Melbourne Urban Stormwater Institutional Arrangements (60 hectare) review examining the delineation of responsibilities for stormwater flood risk management between Melbourne Water and the 38 councils in greater Melbourne




Through a VicHealth funding and partnership agreement, we have commenced work to support the funding and establishment of walking and cycling infrastructure. The aim is to increase the number of Victorians cycling and walking, particularly for regular short trips.



PRIORITY 5: SOCIETAL & SOCIAL POLICY CHANGES

OBJECTIVE:

Facilitate local government creation and support of resilient and cohesive communities, with fair and equitable access to universal community services.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Councils are satisfied with MAV support for resilient and cohesive communities.	75%	
Level of council engagement and participation in MAV activities.	75%	
MAV activities increase access to fair and equitable universal community services.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

- ✓ Improve local government outcomes for planning, funding, regulation and provision and access to universal and targeted community services.
- ✓ Negotiate partnership agreements with the State and Commonwealth, placing councils in a position of influence to address social issues and collaborate in state-wide community service system design.
- ✓ Support and promote councils' civic leadership role embracing diversity, reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, gender equality and social cohesion initiatives; building creative communities and economic development opportunities for all population and age groups.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

Maintained strong relationships with the Department of Health and Human Services that can be drawn on at times of crisis, such as being able to ring through directly to key leading managers about issues impacting local government in their response to COVID-19.

Appeared before the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Collaborating with Local Government Victoria and Aboriginal community leaders in the development of the Victorian Local Government Aboriginal Action Plan.

Worked with State to delay Commonwealth plan to openly tendering home care assessment services. These now remain under the State allocation model until June 2022. Two further submissions have been made to the Aged Care Royal Commission on governance and the COVID response.

Supported councils in maintaining front line services such as Maternal & Child Health (MCH) services for all new babies & continued community aged care services in the home during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Councils engagement and networking in all areas of social policy has been maximised using on-line formats during the pandemic with very positive feedback from members and high attendance numbers.

Gender Equality legislation groundwork undertaken by MAV with councils & family violence reform submissions made at federal and state levels.




Worked with councils and creative industry partners to promote arts and culture as a vital component of local economies and contributor to wellbeing through COVID-19 recovery.



PRIORITY 6: PLANNING & BUILDING




OBJECTIVE:

Planning and building regulatory systems serve the interests of communities and respect the role of local government.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Councils are satisfied that MAV increases respect for the role of local government.	75%	
Councils are satisfied that MAV represents local government interests in planning and building reform.	75%	
Level of council engagement and participation in MAV activities.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

-  Develop and promote a local government position on reform of the building regulatory system that protects community safety and better aligns the responsibilities and resourcing of stakeholders.
-  Advocate for better consideration of Ecologically Sustainable Development at a state level, building on the leadership already shown by local government.
-  The impact of state-led planning policy on the workloads and policy objectives of local government is more closely considered.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

Developed an influential position on improvements needed for the building sector and subsequent reform of the Building Act and advocated for a building regulatory system that protects the Victorian community and equitably assigns responsibilities and resources among regulators.

Partnered with DHHS, councils and community housing industry to advocate for mandatory affordable housing contributions and deliver a toolkit for affordable housing agreements.

Hosted, supported and promoted the work of the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE).

Successfully advocated that the EPA should have primary responsibility for regulating on-going wind-farm noise, and not councils through either planning schemes or nuisance provisions of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act.




Completed stage 1 of the Port Phillip Bay Coastal Land Use Planning Project.



PRIORITY 7: BUSINESS & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

OBJECTIVE:

Lead and facilitate sharing of best practice and innovation that improves community engagement, business efficiency and equity of infrastructure and access for all councils.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Number of councils sharing best practice and innovation.	75%	
Level of council engagement and participation in MAV activities.	75%	
Councils are satisfied with MAV influence on digital engagement, equity and access.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

- ⊗ Implement the MAV Discovery & Engagement Program, including a digital health report from which future initiatives are prioritised.
- ✓ Work with ALGA to advocate for equitable access to digital infrastructure and funding to support cultural change.
- ✓ Encourage and facilitate co-design, co-investment and co-creation and explore new strategic procurement opportunities.
- ✓ Develop governance structures and processes to de-risk multi-council collaborations enabled by technology.
- ✓ Better coordinate local government digital groups (business transformation, ICT, Geospatial, Information Management, Smart Cities, etc.) to facilitate sharing of skills, knowledge, services and resources.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

Facilitated sharing of technical information, processes and resources for business continuity, working from home, transition to online service provision and virtual Council meetings through the MAV Technology Yammer network, which has more than 650 active members.

MAVTV - developed a comprehensive and free online program of council Collaboration Cafés, industry-partnered Wake-up Webinars and co-design Workshops exploring opportunities for collaborative service design, data management and better integration between council and State government systems.

MAV Technology Awards for Excellence showcased 33 finalist council projects on MAVTV.

Developed (and postponed to April 2021) a three-day national *Champions of Change* Conference & Expo.

MAVHACK – we held collaborative design thinking sessions in Healesville, Ballarat and Coburg to address common council pain points. Representatives from councils, universities and the community worked together to identify and develop waste minimisation initiatives.

Worked in partnership with MAV Procurement to inform and evaluate new, high value digital panels and contracts for member councils.




Enabled sharing of knowledge through multi-council digital specialist groups in areas including data governance, spatial data, business intelligence, information management, smart cities and Office365.



PRIORITY 8: CLIMATE IMPACTS & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE:

Advocate for government leadership and investment that supports councils and communities to mitigate and remain resilient to climate-related impacts and emergencies.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Councils are satisfied with MAV advocacy for government leadership and investment.	75%	
Councils are satisfied with MAV policy and partnership approach.	75%	
Level of council engagement and participation in MAV activities.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

- ✓ Represent and advance local government interests in policy and institutional reform processes for stormwater, environment protection and emergency management.
- ✓ Explore opportunities which will assist councils to implement regulatory reforms and policy for onsite domestic wastewater management, water security and integrated water management, flood mitigation and the new Environment Protection Act.
- ✓ Convene and participate in forums that facilitate cross-agency and inter-government collaboration for integrated water management, biodiversity conservation and emergency management.
- ✓ In partnership with the State, greenhouse alliances and others, support councils to understand and prepare for climate change risks and opportunities.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

Substantially influenced environmental protection reforms and commenced development of an MoU between the MAV and EPA.

Advanced work on various climate change-related matters, including stormwater reforms, the circular economy, public health and wellbeing planning, built environment reforms and urban forest protection.

Sustained participation in State EM structures and forums representing councils through 2020 fires and COVID-19

Participation and advocacy across ongoing EM forums, IGEM reviews and the recent national Royal Commission

Represented councils in the reform of emergency management planning and governance, which will be implemented at the municipal level on 1 December 2020

Supported councils during bushfires and COVID-19 through our membership on the State Emergency Management Team and State Relief & Recovery Team.

Facilitated a roadshow with IGEM to contribute to the Review of Ten Years of Reform in EM.

Contributed to the IGEM bushfires inquiry



Appeared before the National Natural Disaster Royal Commission.



PRIORITY 9: POPULATION CHANGE




OBJECTIVE:

Advocate for assistance for councils to manage the impacts of population growth and decline.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Councils are satisfied with MAV advocacy.	75%	
Councils are satisfied that MAV has promoted the viability of rural communities.	75%	

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

-  Alert ALGA and the state government to opportunities and investment needs, informed by councils' growth plans.
-  Promote local, state, and federal policies that improve provision of adequate social and affordable housing.
-  Promote the social, environmental and economic viability of smaller rural communities.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

Collaborated with the Community Housing Industry Association to jointly produce and promote the report and toolkit on Affordable Housing Agreements: Advice for local government and community housing organisations.

Continued working with a broad range of councils and the Office for Housing on social and affordable housing needs across Victoria's communities.

Worked closely with Rural Councils Victoria to ensure the MAV's work on the particular challenges facing rural councils around the State Government's rating review were considered.

Provided regular briefings and liaison with specific groups of councils such as Rural Councils Victoria and the Peri-Urban group of Councils.



PRIORITY 10: IMPROVE OUR PROCESSES

OBJECTIVE:

Improve our business, governance and communication processes to increase efficiency, leverage partnerships, strengthen engagement, address capability gaps and prioritise member service offerings.

MEASURE	TARGET	OUTCOME*
Number of business, governance and communications processes reviewed.	80%	✓
Increases in efficiency and engagement.	10%	✓
Increases in number and value of partnerships.	10%	✓

* Self-assessed.

PLANNED ACTIVITY SUMMARY

- ✓ Align MAV Strategic Plan and State Council activities.
- ✓ Review organisational structure to address capability gaps.
- ✓ Rationalise and prioritise member service offerings.
- ✓ Complete a review of the MAV LMI Insurance Scheme.
- ✓ Transform our business processes and systems.^
- ✓ Review communication and engagement strategy.^

^ In progress

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTS

Organisational restructure achievements (department reviews, new roles, policy area restructure).

Recruitment of new staff to address capability gaps.

Ongoing program of policy, business process and system improvements including Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform build, Business Systems Review, Office365 implementation, purchasing policies and processes, fraud and corruption policies and processes, Occupational Health & Safety policies and processes, Online meetings and events.

New communication channels established (CEO Alert, CEO Connect, MAVTV)

Communications review completed for MAV Insurance, MAV WorkCare and MAV Procurement.

New collaborations established with LGPro (CEO Forums).

Continued review of MAV Rules.

Re-designed State Council for better member engagement and to create greater alignment with our Strategic Plan priorities and objectives.



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