

## **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE**

Response to Question on Notice

Session - Inquiry into Auditor-General's Report No. 202: Meeting Obligations to Protect Ramsar Wetlands (2016)

Location – Edithvale Discovery Centre, 278 Edithvale Road, Chelsea Heights, VIC 3196

Asked By - Mr Sam Hibbins

Addressed To – Mr John Woodland

Asked Date - 3 December 2019

### **Question**

Mr Hibbins: Sorry, I am not sure if we covered this yesterday or today, but are you able to provide the Committee, and perhaps take it on notice, with the entire funding allocated for this site, the Port Phillip site? And I think you also provide funding to Western Port as well?

### **Response**

Melbourne Water is the Site Coordinator for Edithvale Seaford Wetlands, and site Manager for the WTP portion of the Port Phillip Bay and Bellarine Peninsula site (the site coordinator for this site is the Corangamite CMA).

With this in mind, Melbourne Water is able to provide a level of detail around our funding of those two sites. Questions regarding the full funding for the Port Phillip Ramsar site are best addressed by the site Coordinator.

Melbourne Water does not have any formal Ramsar management responsibilities at the Westernport Ramsar site (aside from having representation at the site coordinating committee meetings).

### **Costing categories**

For the two sites where we maintain formal Ramsar responsibilities, our costings are represented across the following categories.

#### **1. Investigations**

Investigations include conservation management plan development, environmental flows investigations and reporting to the Federal Government.

#### **2. Monitoring**

Monitoring of key values on site such as waterbirds, Growling Grass Frogs, vegetation quality.

#### **3. Maintenance**

The main maintenance expense is weed control (chemical spraying, brush cutting, hand weeding), followed by pest animal control (fox, cats & rabbits) and maintenance of civil assets such as fences and flow control structures.

#### 4. Capital Works

Construction of civil assets such as fences and flow control structure.

##### Edithvale Seaford Wetlands Ramsar site

###### Average per annum

Investigations	Monitoring	Maintenance	Capital Works	Total
\$56,365	\$22,000	\$223,896	\$125,166	\$427,427

###### Financial year 2018/19

Investigations	Monitoring	Maintenance	Capital Works	Total
\$147,094	\$22,000	\$253,963	\$125,166	\$548,223

###### Year to date 2019/20

Investigations	Monitoring	Maintenance	Capital Works	Total
0	20,800	37,975	93,874	\$152,649

##### WTP (Part of the Port Phillip and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site)

###### Average per annum

Investigations	Monitoring	Maintenance	Capital Works	Total
\$238,500	\$238,500	\$676,285	\$75,143	\$1,228,428

###### Financial year 2018/19

Investigations	Monitoring	Maintenance	Capital Works	Total
\$166,600	\$235,090	\$657,360	\$18,785	\$1,077,835

###### Year to date 2019/20

Investigations	Monitoring	Maintenance	Capital Works	Total
\$83,458	\$41,080	\$228,162	\$11,000	\$363,700

## Westernport Site

Melbourne Water does not hold any formal Ramsar responsibilities at the Westernport Ramsar wetlands site.

However, Melbourne Water does undertake a range of works in the Westernport region which benefit the Ramsar values. These works and costings are as follows:

<b>Works</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Average spend per annum</b>
Spartina Grass Management	Management of pest Spartina grass at Bass Estuary and The Inlets (Cardinia, Toomuc, Deep Creek	\$ 290,000
Research	Our research into Westernport sets out to better understand threats to the Ramsar site, such as the source and nature of sediment loads to the Bay, which affect water quality and seagrass beds; and the source and nature of toxicants to the Bay.	\$ 300,000
Rural Land Program	Assisting landholders improve on-farm management practices through financial and technical assistance	\$ 500,000
		Total - \$ 1.09M