

## **Freedom of Information Part II Information Statement**

### **Information Available**

East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (Authority) releases information through online and print publishing, as well as in-person service delivery. This Part II Statement demonstrates how the Authority is making information readily available to the public. Making information easily accessible reduces the need for members of the public to submit requests under the *Freedom of Information Act (Act) 1982*. This document outlines the role of the Authority and makes it easy for the public to find the information they need regarding key services, functions, reports and outputs. Please note, the examples below provide only a snapshot of the types of documents held by the Authority and how to locate them – they by no means represent an exhaustive list of the information that is publicly available.

### **Organisation and functions**

The Authority's major functions, powers and duties under its governing legislation are described below.

#### ***Catchment and Land Protection Act (CaLP Act) 1994***

Responsibilities under the CaLP Act include:

- Develop a regional catchment strategy for the region and co-ordinate and monitor its implementation.
- Promote the co-operation of those involved in the management of land and water resources in the region.
- Provide advice to the Minister on regional priorities for activities and resource allocation to those involved in the management of land and water resources in the region.
- Provide advice on matters relating to catchment management and land protection and resource condition.

The Authority helps build government and community cooperation in maintaining our natural resources and promotes community awareness and understanding of the importance of land and water resources, their sustainable use and issues relating to catchment management.

The Authority disseminates government policy and information to the community of East Gippsland and acts as a conduit for government investment into the region for natural resource management (NRM) activities and projects.

#### ***Water Act 1989***

Responsibilities under the Water Act include provision of all waterway and floodplain-related service delivery including:

- On-ground waterway health works
- Water statutory functions
- Community engagement

Information relating to the Authority and its functions can be found at the Authority's website, online publications or by calling the Authority on 03 5152 1184. The Authority's Annual Report and

Corporate Plan along with the Regional Catchment Strategy can be found on the Authority's website and provide information on the Authority's governance, Board, Organisational structure, responsibilities, and performance.

### **Categories of documents**

The Authority handles the following types of documents:

- Policies, procedures and standards
- Briefings and reports
- Project files
- Registers
- Correspondence
- Applications, licences and permits
- Financial records
- Photos

### **Publications**

The Authority's website contains documents and publications relevant to the organisation and the functions it undertakes: [EGCMA | Home](#)

In compliance with the requirements of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance, details in respect of the items listed below have been retained by the Authority and are available on request, subject to the provisions of the Act:

- a) Details of publications produced by the Authority about itself, and how these can be obtained.
- b) Details of any major external reviews carried out on the Authority.
- c) Details of major research and development activities undertaken by the Authority.
- d) Details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by the Authority to develop community awareness of the entity and its services; and
- e) Details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged.

### **Freedom of Information arrangements**

The Act allows the public a right of access to documents held by the Authority. The purpose of the Act is to extend as far as possible the right of the community to access information held by government departments, local councils, Ministers and other bodies subject to the Act.

An applicant has a right to apply for access to documents held by the Authority. This comprises documents both created by the Authority or supplied to the Authority by an external organisation or individual, and may also include maps, films, microfiche, photographs, computer printouts, computer discs, tape recordings and videotapes.

The Act allows the Authority to refuse access, either fully or partially, to certain documents or information. Examples of documents that may not be accessed include; cabinet documents, some internal working documents, law enforcement documents, documents covered by legal professional privilege, such as legal advice, personal information about other people and information provided to the Authority in-confidence.

Under the Act processing time for requests received is 30 days. However, when external consultation is required under ss29, 29A, 31, 31A, 33, 34 or 35, the processing time automatically

reverts to 45 days. Processing time may also be extended by periods of 30 days, in consultation with the applicant. With the applicant's agreement this may occur any number of times. However, obtaining an applicant's agreement for an extension cannot occur after the expiry of the timeframe for deciding a request.

If an applicant is not satisfied by a decision made by the Authority, under section 49A of the Act, they have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) within 28 days of receiving a decision letter.

### **Making a Freedom of Information request**

FOI requests can be lodged online at [www.foi.vic.gov.au](http://www.foi.vic.gov.au). An application fee of \$33.60 applies. Access charges may also be payable if the document pool is large, and the search for material, time consuming.

Access to documents can also be obtained through a written request to the Authority, as detailed in s17 of the Act.

When making an FOI request, applicants should ensure requests are in writing and clearly identify what types of material/documents are being sought.

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

The FOI Officer  
East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority  
PO Box 1012  
Bairnsdale, Vic 3875  
Phone: 03 5150 1184 Email: [FOI@egcma.com.au](mailto:FOI@egcma.com.au)

### **Boards and Committees**

The Authority's Annual Report provides details on the Board and Sub-Committees that have been established and operate as part of the Authority. Please refer to the Annual Report for more information.

### **Contacting the Authority**

Members of the public can write directly to the Authority seeking information on any aspect of its operations. Correspondence can be addressed to the relevant Senior Manager: East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority PO Box 1012, Bairnsdale VIC 3875 or emailed to [reception@egcma.com.au](mailto:reception@egcma.com.au)