

Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority appoints inaugural Chief Executive

Following an extensive search, the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority Board has appointed Ms Jodie Sizer as the inaugural Chief Executive.



Ms Sizer, a local Torquay resident, is currently the Co-CEO of PwC's Indigenous Consulting.

Authority Chair Libby Mears said Ms Sizer brings dynamic leadership, expertise in transformational change and critical skills in economic and regional development to the role.

"Jodie is a passionate Djap Wurrung/Gunditjmara woman who is committed to creating positive impact through empowering communities, building diverse high performing teams and realising opportunity".

"Jodie's strong values-based leadership and genuine passion for the Great Ocean Road environment really impressed the Board."

"She understands the importance of listening, creating trust, bringing research and evidence and testing ideas as the foundations for the future of the Authority".

Libby Mears, Authority Chair

Commencing her career as an accountant with Ernst and Young, Ms Sizer has worked across private and public sectors and in several Indigenous organisations and is currently Chair of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander Studies and a Director of the Collingwood Football Club.

Ms Sizer has also been acknowledged for her contributions as a finalist in the Telstra Business Woman of the Year Award, is listed in the Who's Who of Australian Women, and has been inducted on the Victorian Women's Honour roll, in addition to receiving the Prime Minister's Centenary Medal and listed as one of Australia's 100 Women of Influence in the Australian Financial Review.

Victorian Budget Update

The **2020-21** and **2021-22 Victorian Budgets** have provided over \$51 million for Great Ocean Road management reforms, improvements to visitor facilities and a new coastal trail.

\$7.87 million has been provided to implement the *Great Ocean Road Action Plan*, including establishing the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority, develop a strategic framework plan to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach to the management of the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes, transfer public land management to the new Authority, establish sustainable revenue streams and support the Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners to actively participate in the management of traditional lands.

\$20.33 million is to increase the capacity for camping on the surf Coast and for the Authority to improve visitor facilities and associated infrastructure. This includes upgrades to visitor facilities and infrastructure such as toilets, caravan parks, viewing platforms, trails, beach access and car parking. This also includes the installation of smart nodes at key locations along the Great Ocean Road to provide free public Wi-Fi and sensors for the efficient management of energy use and waste collection.

\$23.8 million will deliver the first three stages of a landmark coastal trail from Fairhaven to Skenes Creek, featuring up to five swing suspension bridges that will provide iconic, never seen before views.

Planning Matters

The Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee (GORRSAC) was appointed by the Minister for Planning to provide independent expert advice on planning, policy and strategic matters in the Great Ocean Road Region, as well as on the development or review of coastal and marine management plans and consents to use marine and coastal Crown land.

The GORRSAC has reported on two matters referred to it for advice.

Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve

On 5 August 2020, the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change referred the Bells Beach elevated walkway and viewing platform components of the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve Coastal and Marine Management Plan 2015-25 (CCMP) to the GORRSAC for advice.

The GORRSAC found that there appeared to be no pressing or overwhelming need for a permanent elevated walkway, and that no

decision on a permanent elevated structure should be taken at this point in time.

The Minister accepted the findings and recommendations of the GORRSAC and on the 29 April 2021 approved the CCMP, subject to its amendment to remove the proposed elevated walkway and viewing platform component.

Freshwater Creek

At the request of the Surf Coast Shire Council, on 6 September 2020 the Minister for Planning referred a planning permit application for a visitor economy development proposal in Freshwater Creek to the GORRSAC for advice.

The GORSAC found that the proposal should not be supported due to its incursion into the 'green break' between Torquay and Geelong. The committee noted that the long-held policy to protect the non-urban break will be strengthened by the Surf Coast Distinctive Area and Landscape process.

At a council meeting on 23 February 2021, the Surf Coast Shire determined to refuse the application.

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