

TOURISM VICTORIA'S REGIONAL
MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2011-2012

THE MURRAY



Tourism Victoria



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INTRODUCTION



In late 2008, we released the ***Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009-2012*** to address key challenges impacting the regional tourism industry over the medium term and to accelerate the development of tourism in regional areas.

This plan articulates our commitment to regional tourism and provides a roadmap to guide the development of Victoria's regional tourism industry and enhance its competitive positioning.

A key commitment of the ***Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009-2012*** is the annual development of Regional Marketing and Development Plans (RMDPs). Since 2009, we have released an annual RMDP to assist each region and its stakeholders in planning and coordinating marketing and development activities.

In 2011 we have again developed a RMDP for The Murray. This will inform the local industry on Tourism Victoria's priority marketing and development activities for the forthcoming financial year. The actions highlight opportunities for participation and will allow stakeholders to more effectively develop marketing budgets with a strategic alignment to Tourism Victoria activities.

The actions outlined in the RMDPs underpin the overall strategic commitments of the ***10 Year Tourism and Events Industry Strategy*** and further support the direction of the ***Tourism Victoria Business Plan 2008-2011*** and ***Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009-2012***.

Our key actions for the 2011-2012 financial year are highlighted under the priority areas identified in the ***Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009-2012***.

- improving regional industry structures
- improving the supply and quality of tourism experiences
- increasing consumer demand for regional tourism experiences
- addressing skills, service standards and environmental sustainability

While we have made every effort to ensure activities are accurate, the RMDPs are subject to change due to budget and market requirements. Recent events such as the global financial crisis and natural crises have reinforced the need to be adaptive and responsive to market forces.

We look forward to a continued partnership with Victoria's regional tourism industry as we action and implement the key planks of the ***Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009-2012***.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Stone', written in a cursive style.

Mark Stone
Chief Executive

IMPROVING REGIONAL INDUSTRY STRUCTURES

INDUSTRY STRUCTURES

Improving industry structures is important in enabling more effective coordination of tourism activities at a regional level. A new model has been developed in consultation with industry that involves the creation of a single peak Regional Tourism Board (RTB) in each campaign region. The RTBs will guide the strategic direction of the region and will be responsible for holistic development including the functions of marketing, industry development, product development, skills training, mentoring and ensuring a sustainable industry.

Activity	Overview	Target market	Timing
Regional Tourism Board	Established and operational		
Regional Tourism Board Review	Undertake an annual review of the Regional Tourism Board operations as detailed in Memorandum of Understandings (MOU's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Board- Stakeholders- Industry	February 2012

IMPROVING THE SUPPLY AND QUALITY OF TOURISM EXPERIENCES

INVESTMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

A number of priority investment and infrastructure projects were identified for The Murray in the recent ***Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009-2012***. The investment and infrastructure priorities were identified through a process of consultation with stakeholders and investor groups. Tourism Victoria will continue to work with State Government agencies, Local Government, investors and industry to develop and facilitate proposals that seek to capitalise on the identified key priorities and market opportunities.

Activity	Overview	Timing
Tourism Victoria will work with State Government agencies, the Regional Tourism Board, Local Government, investors and industry to facilitate the following priority projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality accommodation with large capacity integrated with a regional conference facility (Mildura, Wodonga and Yarrawonga). • Nature-based infrastructure and investment product along the Murray River, including the consideration of a river trail with appointed visitor accommodation (similar to the Great Ocean Walk model); • Tourism infrastructure and product to support the Port of Echuca as a heritage port and Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement; • Implementation of the Mildura Riverfront Master Plan to create a riverside tourism precinct that integrates the Mildura Central Business District with the Murray River and the marina; and • Completion of the Bonegilla Migrant Centre experience. 	The State Government has committed \$14.5m to progress stage 1 of the Mildura Riverfront project. Tourism Victoria will continue working with Mildura Rural City Council and Regional Development Victoria to progress Stage 1.	On-going
	Assisted Swan Hill Rural City Council to complete an investment strategy and interpretive plan for the Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement to enhance and reposition the attraction. Tourism Victoria are assisting Council in scoping the project and funding opportunities.	December 2011
	Work with the Shire of Campaspe on a new tourism investment proposal.	December 2011
	Assist Shire of Campaspe, Echuca Moama Tourism and New South Wales local councils to investigate the feasibility of scheduled air services along the Murray.	May 2011

INCREASING CONSUMER DEMAND FOR REGIONAL TOURISM EXPERIENCES

DESTINATION MARKETING

The **10 Year Tourism and Events Industry Strategy** recognises interstate and international markets providing future growth opportunities for Victoria. Given that many regional tourism ventures are small businesses, there is limited capacity to undertake stand alone marketing plans. As such, Tourism Victoria provides a number of co-operative marketing activities for businesses to access key domestic and international markets.

A number of key product strengths have been identified to raise awareness of regional destinations, attractions and experiences and to realise Victoria's regional competitive advantages. Accordingly, strategies and marketing campaigns are underway for these segments to provide a framework to assist in attracting visitation to the regions and aid visitor dispersal from Melbourne.

SEGMENT STRATEGIES AND MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Melbourne Marketing Strategy

This strategy aims to market Melbourne as a cutting edge, creative city and the gateway to regional Victoria. The next Jigsaw Phase 10 Melbourne campaign is aimed at interstate and New Zealand markets and is an evolution of the ***It's easy to lose yourself in Melbourne*** marketing campaign. That campaign resonated strongly with consumers, producing significant results. Interstate respondents now view Melbourne as the most trendy, cultural, stylish and creative city in Australia.

A key objective of the next phase of the Melbourne communications is to leverage this brand equity and develop executions which provide evidence that Melbourne continues to be a creative, innovative destination. The multifaceted campaign is currently being built and will utilise a variety of media including television, cinema, online, mobile and print mediums and will be launched in Australia in May 2011. A launch date for New Zealand is to be confirmed.

Food and Wine Action Plan 2011-2015

This strategy aims to raise awareness of Victoria as a leading food and wine destination in key interstate markets by profiling key restaurants, chefs, wineries and local produce. The strategy is integrated with destination and product campaigns to reinforce Victoria's compact diversity message.

Spa and Well-being Action Plan 2011-2015

This strategy aims to raise awareness of Victoria as a leading spa and wellbeing destination in key interstate markets by differentiating Victoria from other spa and massage destinations. To do this it suggests a holistic wellbeing experience encompassing authentic local food, wine, nature and the naturally occurring mineral springs.

In 2011-12 Tourism Victoria will continue the implementation of the ***Daylesford: Lead a Double Life*** campaign. The focus of the remaining campaign period is Sydney, with a particular focus on females with high income and an ability to influence the target market.

The campaign will be implemented over three major bursts during 2011-12 with a focus on public relations and the development of partnerships with premium magazine titles and aligned brands.

Cycle Tourism Action Plan 2011-2015.

Tourism Victoria is about to launch the first cycle plan for Victoria. It will incorporate four key areas: cycle events, mountain biking, rail trails and road cycling and aims to increase the supply of cycle tourism product and build strong consumer demand for cycle experiences.

The ***Cycle Tourism Action Plan 2011-15*** will feed into Tourism Victoria's overarching ***Nature-Based Tourism Strategy 2008-12***. This strategy aims to build Victoria's credibility as a nature-based destination by offering a diverse range of natural experiences complemented by sophisticated offerings. The Strategy highlights key nature based product as well as national parks and nature based experiences.

Aboriginal Tourism Development Plan 2011-2020.

Tourism Victoria is currently preparing a ten year Aboriginal Tourism Development Plan, providing a long-term vision for Aboriginal tourism in Victoria. It will be launched in mid 2011.

Villages of Victoria Marketing Strategy

The Villages of Victoria Program aims to leverage the Daylesford campaign by promoting the unique and varied village experiences throughout the State. The strategy aims to build consumer confidence of regional experiences and provide a means to support the above marketing strategies.

In 2011-12 Tourism Victoria will undertake significant marketing activity to highlight the food and wine, nature based and spa and wellbeing experiences in and around Victoria's villages. The program builds on the existing strategy of developing content and includes activity that will be implemented in intrastate and interstate markets. Initiatives that allow other towns and destinations to participate will be developed and cooperative marketing program for 2011-12 will be released.

Activity	Overview	Target market	Tourism Victoria budget	Timing	Buy-in/leverage opportunity for region
Major marketing activity					
Regional Marketing Program	A marketing funding grant will be allocated to Murray River Regional Tourism Board via the Regional Marketing Program	Interstate Intrastate	\$170,000	July 2011 - June 2012	Opportunities for industry to participate in marketing programs will be developed by the Murray River Regional tourism Board
Villages of Victoria Marketing Program	Tourism Victoria will continue to promote destinations and experiences as part of the Villages of Victoria Marketing Program. Marketing activities will include public relations, media partnerships, television sponsorship, content distribution and tactical marketing.	Interstate Intrastate	\$1.3 million	July 2011 – June 2012	Opportunities for regions to participate will be identified in the Villages of Victoria Cooperative Marketing Program to be released in February 2011.
Villages of Victoria Cooperative Marketing Program	A Villages of Victoria Cooperative Marketing Program will be released in February 2011. The program will include a range of participation opportunities that will include both intrastate and interstate initiatives.	Interstate Intrastate	Initiatives will be subsidised by Tourism Victoria from the Villages of Victoria budget	July 2011 – June 2012	Opportunities to participate will be outlined in the cooperative program to be released in February 2011.
Public relations and destination communications					
Strategic advice	Tourism Victoria will work with Murray River Regional Tourism and its appointed external public relations agency to develop an annual PR plan. *Plan to be signed off by Tourism Victoria and the RTB. Tourism Victoria will facilitate regular meetings and provide ongoing strategic advice as required.	N/A	-	July 2011 – June 2012	-
Domestic familiarisation program	The implementation of domestic media familiarisations is the responsibility of the appointed external PR agency. Tourism Victoria will financially support media famils initiated or managed by the PR agency (including from leads generated by Tourism Victoria) where in line with Tourism Victoria's marketing/events strategies and within budget allocation. Tourism Victoria will identify and manage additional famil opportunities with top tier media relevant to Tourism Victoria's strategies/priorities, including the 'Food and Wine Adventures' campaign.	Melbourne Intrastate Interstate 'Murray Meanderers' (couples aged 30-64, no kids)	\$7000	July 2011- June 2012	Opportunity for The Murray to work with Tourism Victoria to plan joint activities and to determine suitability of content and featured operators.
Television	Tourism Victoria will pitch The Murray story lines to relevant television travel shows including Getaway and Postcards.	Interstate Intrastate	Various	July 2011- June 2012	Region can submit ideas regarding new products/experiences to Tourism Victoria's PR unit.

Other public relations activities	Inclusion of Murray product and events in ongoing public relations activities such as Pieces of Victoria , monthly events notification and Victorian story pitches to media.	Interstate Intrastate	N/A	July 2011 – June 2012	Region is encouraged to submit media releases on events, new products and experiences to Tourism Victoria's PR unit.
	Tourism Victoria will work collaboratively with The Murray's contracted public relations agency and third party publicists to leverage PR opportunities.	Interstate Intrastate	N/A	July 2011-June 2012	-
Activity	Overview	Target market	Timing	Buy-in/leverage opportunity for region	
International marketing activity					
Trade shows, missions and associated familiarisations Representatives from Tourism Victoria's head office and regional overseas offices co-ordinate and lead industry participation for key trade shows and missions held in Australia and overseas. The following activities align with the priority international markets for The Murray	Australia's Tourism Exchange (Australia)	International wholesale and retail travel agents	June 2012	Internationally active Victorian tourism product/regions may apply to participate. Participation cost is \$9,000 (approx.)	
	Tri States Walkabout, New Zealand	Retail/wholesale consultants training seminars	May 2012	Victorian tourism product and regions currently active in the NZ market are eligible to participate in this activity. Participation cost is \$2000 plus airfares and personal expenses.	
Trade cooperative marketing opportunities	Trade and consumer activity as part of ongoing agreements with trade partners.	Germany New Zealand	July 2011 – June 2012	Expressions of interest may be sought for support of consumer incentives, competition prizes and editorial exposure.	
	Tourism Australia's Aussie Specialist Program. The on-line format of the Aussie Specialist Programme was created to equip travel agents with the knowledge and skills they need to sell	110 countries participate in the Aussie Specialist Program.	July 2011 – June 2012	Regions have the opportunity to buy-in to advertising in the Aussie Specialist e-newsletters at a minimum cost of \$25 per 100 emails.	
	Drive publication produced by DTN, New Zealand	Travel trade and consumers	January 2012	Opportunity as part of Sydney Melbourne Touring Route Participation cost is \$5000	
Trade familiarisations program	Tourism Victoria manages a familiarisations program for visiting international trade.	International wholesale/retail travel agents and trade media	July 2011 – June 2012	Operators are encouraged to offer free of charge or heavily discounted rates in order to be involved with familiarisations	
Consumer cooperative marketing opportunities	Regional Magazine, New Zealand	Consumers	Feb 2012	Opportunity for The Murray to participate in regional Victoria supplement. Participation cost from \$4,000.	
	'Inspire' House of Travel supplement, New Zealand	Consumer	Varies according to House of Travel requests	Consumer supplement. By invitation and eligible to regions/products currently listed with House of Travel Participation cost is from \$ 4000	
Public relations	Coverage in public relations activities delivered by Tourism Victoria's international public relations agencies.	Germany New Zealand	July 2011 – June 2012	The Murray is encouraged to provide unique story angles, product updates and press releases to Tourism Victoria's International Media Officer for potential release throughout Tourism Victoria's public relations network.	
Consumer media familiarisations program	Tourism Victoria manages a familiarisations program for visiting international media.	International consumer media	July 2011 – June 2012	Operators are encouraged to offer free of charge or heavily discounted rates in order to be involved with familiarisations	

ONLINE

A key priority for Tourism Victoria this year will be to improve the uptake of regional businesses to online booking including **visitvictoria.com**. This will involve working with the Murray Regional Tourism Board to enhance industry understanding of online technologies and eMarketing activities.

Tourism Victoria will also be working to maximise the opportunities and benefits of the redevelopment of the consumer site. This will include the development and launch of the new **visitvictoria.com** consumer sites in 2010/11.

Activity	Overview	Target market	Tourism Victoria budget	Timing	Buy-in/leverage opportunity for region
Visitvictoria.com					
Full annual online content revision.	Images and content for all region pages on visitvictoria.com will be reviewed	-	-	March 2012	-
Local online tourism strategy	Rollout of local destination link strategy and integration of Australian Tourism Data Warehouse content	Regional Tourism Boards, Local Associations	-	On-going	Closer integration of local sites into regional strategies and promotions
Business listing	Tourism Victoria will facilitate 12 month business listings on visitvictoria.com	Tourism operators	-	On-going	Listing fees are returned to the Regional Tourism Board
Web Analytics	Provide website statistics and comparative reporting on visitvictoria.com's regional webpages	Regional Tourism Board	Nil for standard monthly reports	Monthly	Communicate reports to stakeholders
Visitvictoria.com redevelopment	Operator training program to assist in migrating to new system and maximising opportunities	-	-	July 2011 – September 2011	Opportunity for training for operators
Education					
Online booking	Tourism Victoria will supply access to an online booking industry consultant to work to improve and educate operators in online booking	Tourism operators	-	On-going	Increased take-up of online booking across region
Online training activities	Facilitate online workshops in regional Victoria	Industry organisations and tourism operators	-	By mutual agreement with the region	Option for up to two online workshops per region per year
Innovation					
Regional Online Innovation Fund	Tourism Victoria to facilitate digital strategy and projects to promote regions and drive innovation	Regional Tourism Boards	-	September 2011 – July 2012	Option to leverage industry cooperation in digital innovation projects

EVENTS

Events play a critical role in growing tourist arrivals to the State and subsequently enabling dispersal of an increased number of visitors into regional Victoria. Events are a key part of Victoria's tourism brand and the State has continued to own the title of Australia's events capital.

Tourism Victoria's Events Program assists event organisers, local government and other relevant groups to increase visitor numbers, length of stay and visitor yield at events. Funding is allocated through a cooperative marketing agreement. Event organisers can apply to Tourism Victoria for funding at any time.

Activity	Overview	Target market	Tourism Victoria budget	Timing
The following events are those considered a priority for development in the Murray region and will receive support from Tourism Victoria's Events Program.	Carnivale Wodonga - Community festival.	Melbourne	TBC	February – March 2012
	Mildura Country Music Festival. - Country music festival.	Interstate Melbourne.	TBC	September – October 2011
	SheppARTon Festival. - Community arts event.	Melbourne	TBC	March 2012
	The Man from Snowy River Bush Festival. - Showcase of high country lifestyle.	Interstate Melbourne	TBC	April 2012
	Echuca-Moama Winter Blues Festival. - Music festival.	Interstate Melbourne	\$17,500	July 2011
	Southern 80 - Waterskiing event.	Waterskiing fans.	TBC	February 2012
	Riverboats, Jazz, Food and Wine Festival. - Music, food and wine festival.	Melbourne Interstate	TBC	February 2012
	Echuca-Moama Celtic Festival. - Celtic festival.	Interstate Melbourne	TBC	March 2012
	Echuca Steam, Horse and Vintage Rally. - Steam transport showcase.	Melbourne	TBC	June 2012
	Mildura Palimpest. - Arts festival.	Melbourne.	TBC	September 2011
	Mildura Writers' Festival. - Writers' festival.	Melbourne	TBC	July 2012
	Mildura Jazz, Food and Wine Festival. - Music, food and wine festival.	Interstate Melbourne	TBC	October – November 2011
	Murray River International Music Festival. - Music, food and wine festival.	International Interstate Melbourne	TBC	January – February 2012
	Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival. - Arts festival.	Melbourne	TBC	February – March 2012
	Tour of the Murray. - Cycling event.	Melbourne Interstate	TBC	August – September 2012
	Mildura Gospel Festival. - Gospel music festival.	Melbourne	TBC	October 2011.
	Swan Hill Region Food and Wine Festival. - Food and wine event.	Interstate Melbourne	TBC	March 2012
	Willowfest Cricket Club Championships. - Cricket event.	Melbourne	TBC	December 2011
	Australasian School's Cycling Cup - School cycling event.	Interstate Melbourne	TBC	March 2012
	Opera by the Lock. - Opera music event.	Melbourne	TBC	March 2012

Events that do not meet the current assessment criteria for cooperative marketing assistance through Tourism Victoria's Events Program can apply for funding through the Country Victoria Events Program. Closing dates for applications for the Country Victoria Events Program are 1 October and 1 April annually.

TOURING / ALLIANCE MARKETING

Many regions in Victoria have recognised the value of touring routes and regional alliances, prompting the creation of several strong touring routes and strategic alliances across the State. The use of touring routes and strategic alliances has been particularly effective in providing regional destinations with a vehicle to cooperatively leverage activity to target international and interstate markets.

Activity	Overview	Target market	Tourism Victoria budget	Timing	Buy-in / Leverage opportunity for region
Sydney Melbourne Touring	Support provided to Sydney Melbourne Touring which includes the Murray.	International	-	July 2011 - June 2012	Opportunities to participate/buy in will be developed by Sydney Melbourne Touring.

RESEARCH

The promotion and delivery of research related services is an integral part of Tourism Victoria. Reports, presentations and detailed results on a variety of tourism research topics, such as domestic and international visitation, visitor forecasts and consumer awareness assist regions understand historical trends and guide future direction.

Tourism Victoria contributes approximately \$380,000 per annum to a national cooperative research program which funds the management and delivery of research statistics from Tourism Research Australia (TRA) including, but not limited to, the National Visitor Survey and the International Visitor Survey.

Activity	Project overview	Tourism Victoria Budget	Timing	Buy-in/leverage opportunity for region
Regional Market Profile (Year ending December 2011)	The fact sheet provides a comprehensive profile of visitors to the Murray campaign region incorporating various data sources.	-	May 2012	-
National Visitor Survey (NVS) Regional and Sub-regional fact Sheets	<p>These reports track domestic overnight visitor numbers, nights, daytrips, and growth for Victoria and its tourism regions.</p> <p>The NVS survey is collected throughout the year and published quarterly by Tourism Research Australia.</p> <p>Expenditure reports are produced once per annum for year ending December results.</p>	Per TRA national cooperative research program.	September 2011 December 2011 March 2012 June 2012	-
International Visitor Survey (IVS) Regional and Sub-regional fact Sheets	<p>These reports track international overnight visitor numbers, nights, and growth for Victoria and its tourism regions.</p> <p>The IVS survey is collected throughout the year and published quarterly by Tourism Research Australia.</p> <p>Expenditure reports are produced annually for year ending December results.</p>	Per TRA national cooperative research program.	September 2011 December 2011 March 2012 June 2012	-
Survey of Tourist Accommodation (STA) Regional and Sub-regional fact Sheets	<p>This report provides a performance overview of Hotels Motels and Serviced Apartments of 15+ rooms for Victoria and its tourism regions. Results compare the current quarter with the same quarter the previous year.</p> <p>The STA data is collected throughout the year and published quarterly by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.</p>	-	October 2011 February 2012 April 2012 July 2012	-
Tourism Forecasting Committee (TFC): Forecast Summary Factsheet	<p>The forecast report for Victoria is based on the TFC forecast and represents the most likely outcome for inbound, and domestic travel given past trends, economic indicators and the impact of policy and industry changes.</p> <p>The TFC Forecasts are published twice per annum.</p>	Per TRA national cooperative research program.	November 2011 June 2012	-
Regional Awareness and Perceptions Study (RAPS)	<p>Tracking research on consumer awareness of destinations/campaign regions and association of product to regional destinations.</p> <p>Findings released. Fieldwork expected in November / December 2011</p>	\$80,000 – \$100,000	February 2012	Funding is provided through the Regional Marketing Program 2009-2012.

ADDRESSING SKILLS, SERVICE STANDARD AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

TOURISM EXCELLENCE

The new **Tourism Excellence Program** was launched in late 2008 to improve synergies between programs and create a competitive advantage for Victoria through improved service standards and visitor satisfaction. The Program involves an integrated approach, bringing together elements such as customer satisfaction, staff skills and business development that, combined, will contribute to the broader tourism objectives of market development and increased visitor yield.

Activity	Overview	Target market	Tourism Victoria Budget	Timing	Buy-in/leverage opportunity for region
Victorian Tourism Awards Program	Mentoring	Industry	-	March – August 2011	
Victorian Tourism Awards Program	Gala ceremony	Industry	-	14 November 2011	
Tourism Excellence Grants Program	Tourism Victoria provides grant funding to regions to undertake tourism excellence initiatives such as business audits, mentoring, leadership programs and workshops for the industry.	Industry	\$25,000	1 July 2011 - - 30 June 2012	Grants Program

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