

2017 Floodplain Management Australia National Conference

A levee management framework for Victoria



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Environment, Land, Water, and Planning

Overview

- Victoria's levee problem
- Reviews and inquiries
- The government's response
- The framework and underlying expectations of levee management
- Conclusion
- It's all about resetting expectations



2

4,000 km of rural levees



Region	Percentage
North Central	61%
Goulburn Broken	15%
North East	11%
Other areas	13%

3

70 km of urban levees



4

What is the problem with the existing levees?

- Town levees are generally OK
 - In Council's interest to maintain
 - Low impacts to surrounding areas
- Rural levees are not (as a rule)
 - Poor standards of design and construction
 - Often not built in the best location
 - Little or no routine maintenance
 - Uncertain ownership



5

Reviews and inquiries






Government's response Oct 2013



Parliamentary Inquiry into flood mitigation infrastructure Aug 2012



Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy 2016




6

Parliamentary Inquiry Findings

Revised Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy required

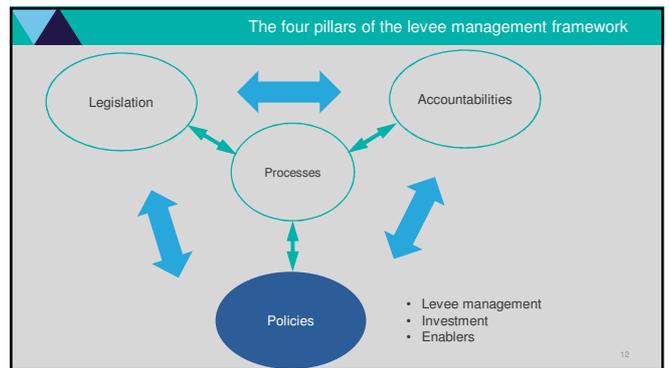
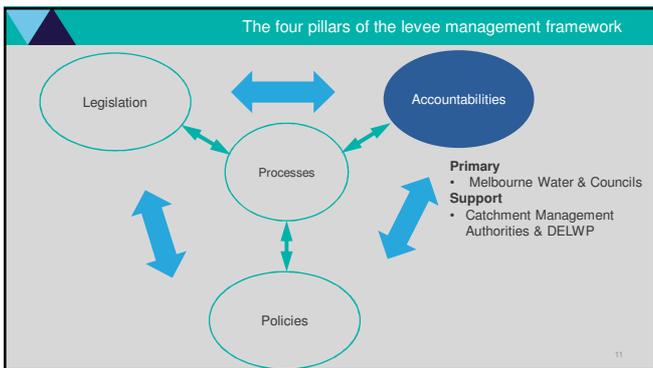
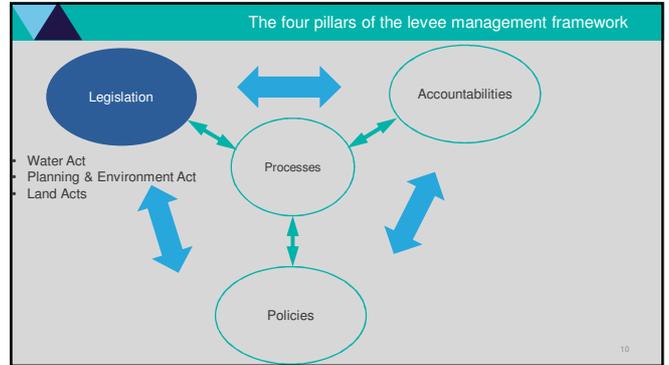
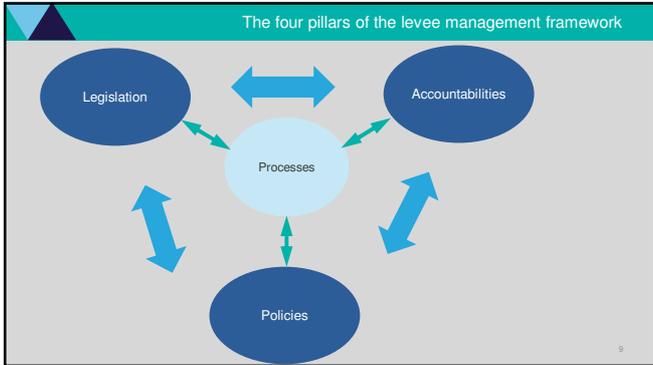
- Principles, roles and responsibilities for ownership, management and maintenance
- Apply beneficiary pays principle (not land tenure or history)
- Allow an individual to maintain a levee on Crown land
- Ready access to maintain the levees
- Prioritise levees for the purpose of future investment
- *All addressed in Chapter 17 of the Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy*

7

Setting up for success

- Levee assessments
- Regional Floodplain Management Strategies commenced:
- Guidance tool to assess risks
- Consultation process to identify gaps and needs
- Guidance note to help stakeholders decide which levees are important

8



Processes

- Formally managed levees
- Unmanaged levees
- Deciding which is which



13

Formally managed levees

- Formal management:
 - Someone agrees to ongoing management, including maintenance
 - Define the standard of maintenance
- Water Management Scheme preferred:
 - Investigation of alternatives
 - Public consultation
 - Opportunities to make submissions
 - VCAT review
 - Minister nominates council to implement
 - Council consent required



Water Act 1989
EUROA WATER MANAGEMENT SCHEME
 In accordance with Section 215 (3B and 4) of the Water Act 1989, I, Sheryl Gabbutt, Minister for Environment and Conservation, have agreed to accept the Euroa Water Management Scheme which was prepared by the Euroa Floodplain Management Study Community Consultative Committee. The scheme has been accepted as submitted with no modifications.

14

Process for unmanaged levees

- Crown land
 - licence to maintain a levee
- Private land
 - flood controls in planning schemes
- Most unmanaged levees will continue to deteriorate



15

Deciding which is which

- Investment criteria
 - Cost effective
 - Community input
 - Consideration of options
 - Benefits outweigh the costs
 - Commitment to maintain
- Favours urban levees
- Rural levees will rarely satisfy the criteria



16

Levees for environmental watering

- Arrangements for managing levees for environmental watering are a special case – a work in progress
 - Requires an owner and an authority to maintain
 - Government on behalf of the community is the beneficiary



17

Conclusion



- Interaction of legislation, accountabilities, policies and processes
- Main drivers
 - Beneficiary pays principle & commitment to care about important levees
- Most likely consequences
 - Rural levees continue to deteriorate
- Clarification on management arrangements

18