**The Minister’s Guidelines for Heritage Advisor Qualifications are being revised**

**Feedback is invited on proposed changes to the Minister’s Guidelines for Heritage Advisor Qualifications**.

Heritage Advisors play an important role in the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. It is essential that Heritage Advisors have appropriate expertise and experience, and that they understand their responsibilities to work with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs).

A person can only be engaged as a Heritage Advisor if they satisfy either of two pathways set out in section 189(1) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*:

1. by being **appropriately qualified and experienced in a discipline** relevant to the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage such as anthropology, archaeology or history; or
2. by having **extensive experience or knowledge** in relation to the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs would like to revise and update the existing Guidelines, which currently only address the qualifications needed under the first pathway. The Minister has already consulted with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council (VAHC), and is now seeking feedback from RAPs and Heritage Advisors.

The revised Guidelines will provide a clearer description of the roles and obligations of Heritage Advisors. Another proposed change is that new Heritage Advisors (and existing Heritage Advisors with less than two years active experience in Victoria) will need to provide two written references, with at least one being from a RAP or an equivalent organisation in another jurisdiction. There will be a six month transitional period during which existing Heritage Advisors must reapply.

Other proposed changes to the Minister’s Guidelines are:

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| Pathway 1: via qualifications and experience | * an experience element is added ‑ at least one year full-time equivalent professional experience in south-eastern Australia
* where studies towards a qualification don’t include relevant Australian content, then at minimum an additional year of professional experience is needed
* types of membership and key professional organisations that can ‘stand in’ for tertiary qualifications are updated
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| Pathway 2:via extensive experience or knowledge | * what ‘extensive experience or knowledge’ looks like, including:
	+ extensive cultural knowledge
	+ at least three years relevant work experience, and
	+ a capacity to oversee or prepare written reports
* FP-SR must seek the advice of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council on these applications.
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or more information, and to view the proposed revised Guidelines, go to <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/guidance-for-heritage-advisors-changing>

**Please email your feedback by 10 June 2022 to** **aboriginal.heritage@dpc.vic.gov.au****, or send by post to Heritage Services FP-SR, GPO Box 4912, Melbourne, VIC 3001.**