

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for CHMP Guidelines

Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Government acknowledges
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
as the Traditional Custodians of Country.

We respectfully acknowledge all First Peoples
of Victoria and celebrate their enduring
connection to land, skies and waters. We
thank First Peoples for their care of Country
and contributions to Victorian communities.
We honour and pay our respects to First
Peoples' Elders past and present.

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Introduction

The Cultural Heritage Management Plan Guidelines seek to improve heritage protection. Directly, they seek to:

- elevate RAP engagement earlier in the CHMP process than currently
- focus the most work, time and cost on protecting heritage of high relative significance
- for the first time explicitly ask that intangible heritage values be considered in the CHMP
- allow for the consideration and documentation of the sensitivity of activity areas
- request survey, excavation and salvage strategies be explicitly agreed and documented
- propose Indigenous data agreements to protect sensitive cultural information
- promote CHMP conditions proportionate to cultural heritage significance
- promote less salvage and more targeted excavation, limiting disturbance to heritage.

Monitoring and evaluation strategy

- DPC will monitor the preparation of CHMPs to confirm whether the Cultural heritage Management Plan Guidelines support appropriate management conditions informed by timely assessments.
- This will include data collected from DPC's Aboriginal cultural heritage management database (NRMS), the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register Information System (ACHRIS), and from approved CHMPs.
- DPC will also collect stakeholder feedback through survey and consultation with key stakeholders and representative bodies.
- DPC will review data collected from 1 July 2026, with evaluations carried out after 6, 12 and 18 months. Qualitative data will also be collected through survey of key stakeholders at these intervals.
- This will be compared, where possible, to the baseline data collated prior to the Guidelines coming into effect.
- DPC will submit a final evaluation report to the Minister for Treaty and First Peoples once the monitoring program concludes after 18 months. DPC will submit interim reports to the Minister after 6 and 12 months.
- Do CHMPs better manage places with Aboriginal Intangible Values? (IO 2)
- Is RAP engagement occurring earlier in the CHMP process? (IO 10)
- Are CHMP conditions proportionate to cultural heritage significance? (IO 3, 7, 8, 16)
- Is protecting and managing places of high relative significance prioritised in the CHMP process? (IO 1, 3, 7, 15)
- Is sensitive cultural information protected throughout the CHMP process? (IO 12)
- Has the average CHMP preparation time improved? (IO 17)
- To what extent is archaeological salvage better targeted and more meaningful? (IO 7, 15)
- To what extent is Aboriginal cultural heritage considered early in the assessment by Sponsors? (IO 10)
- To what extent are complex assessments carried out only when required (by the Regulations)? (IO 5, 14)
- Are complex assessment subsurface testing strategies proportionate to their standard assessment results and predictive models? (IO 14)

Key evaluation questions

Evidence will be gathered using the Key Evaluation Questions (KEQ) provided below. DPC will use the KEQs to guide the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Guidelines:

- Do these Guidelines improve heritage protection compared with before the Guidelines? (Intended outcome (IO) 1)
- Is there a change in the number of Aboriginal places being registered per CHMP? (IO 18)
- Are CHMP participants carrying out their responsibilities according to their roles set out under the Act? (IO 4)
- Does enactment of contingencies cause unreasonable delays (IO 6)?

Data collection

- DPC will use data collected at 6, 12 and 18 – month intervals to monitor the impact of the guidance set out in the guidelines (“Post Implementation”). These measures are set out in Table 1 and Table 2.
- The “Base case” dataset will be a random sample of 20 per cent of CHMPs approved each financial year between 2021-22 and 2025-26 (i.e. five financial years).
- Data collection for both the Base Case and Post Implementation datasets will predominantly use quantitative data from approved and lodged CHMPs; where quantitative data is collected, predefined values will be used to record data.
- Data collection will include the date the Notice of Intent (NOI) was lodged for each CHMP for both the Base Case and non-Base Case CHMPs. CHMPs which began preparation before or after the launch of the Guidelines on 1 July 2026 will be identified, as well as CHMPs whose NOIs were lodged between 1 January and 30 June 2026, so that trends from the influence of the draft Guidelines as well as the effective implementation date of the final Guidelines can be distinguished.
- Analysis of Base Case and Post Implementation datasets will be disaggregated by assessment level and activity size, as well as combined datasets, as appropriate.
- Data records will be identified by CHMP number, and will include the relevant authority that approved the CHMP (e.g. the Secretary, specific RAPs, the VAHC). Sponsors and Heritage Advisors will not be recorded. This is both for data collected from approved and lodged CHMPs, and for disagreement assistance events and complaints.
- Qualitative data will be collected by stakeholder survey at 6, 12 and 18 months after implementation of the Guidelines.
- Interpretation of data will note any non-Guideline factors that may be contributing to changes in outcomes.

Monitoring of guidance

DPC will use data to monitor the impact of the guidance set out in the guidelines. These measures are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Evaluation indicators - guidance

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
1. Increase in number of Aboriginal places that CHMPs avoid or minimise harm to (KEQ a, e)	More Aboriginal places have harm avoided or minimised, and fewer are completely destroyed, by CHMPs	a. For each Aboriginal place managed by a CHMP, in s61 matters, is harm avoided, minimised, or will full destruction occur.	Approved CHMPs
2. Increased management of places with Aboriginal intangible values (Guidelines 3.1) (KEQ b)	CHMPs more often assess and manage impacts to places with Aboriginal intangible values and/or Aboriginal cultural place components ¹	<p>a. Number of CHMPs with Preliminary Statement of Sensitivity Statements for the Activity Area included with RAP response to NOI to evaluate</p> <p>b. Number of CHMPs where Aboriginal intangible values (specific to Aboriginal places) has been integrated into the activity design</p> <p>c. Number of CHMPs with conditions to manage impacts to places with Aboriginal cultural place components</p> <p>d. Have places with specific Aboriginal intangible values had harm avoided, minimised or 100% destroyed?</p>	Approved CHMPs

¹ Conditions or activity design integration could relate to maintaining TO physical access, maintaining visual connection across the landscape, maintaining original landform shape/topography, maintaining water flows, etc

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
3. Management conditions informed by cultural heritage	Management conditions are justified by the cultural heritage significance of the relevant Aboriginal place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of CHMPs where conditions are explicitly linked to the cultural heritage significance of the heritage to be impacted b. Relative cultural and archaeological significance of each Aboriginal place c. For each Aboriginal place, do their specific conditions in total avoid harm, minimise harm, or allow 100% destruction 	Approved CHMPs
4. CHMP participants carry out the responsibilities according to the roles set out under the Act (Guidelines 3.3) (KEQ – m)	Participants in the CHMP process act within the limits of their own powers, responsibilities, expertise, and rights	a. CHMPs with complex assessment conduct agreements	Approved CHMPs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Are RAPs provided with sufficient relevant information by HAs and Sponsors at CHMP meetings, to allow decisions to be made c. Do RAPs perceive an increased workload burden with implementing the Guidelines? 	Stakeholder survey

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
5. Low density artefact distributions and isolated artefacts² are assessed appropriately (Guidelines 3.4) (KEQ j)	Complex assessment is carried out in fewer circumstances than base case where only low density artefact distributions and isolated artefacts are likely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of CHMPs that conclude at standard assessment and where only low density artefact distributions and isolated artefacts are predicted b. Number of CHMPs including a complex assessment where no Aboriginal cultural heritage is identified c. Number of CHMPs including a complex assessment where only low density artefact distributions and isolated artefacts are identified 	Approved CHMPs
6. Contingencies do not cause unreasonable delays or costs to Sponsors (Guidelines 3.5) (KEQ – n)	Contingencies, where enacted, provide timely and effective resolution to unexpected matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of CHMPs where DPC's standard contingencies have been used b. Number of new Aboriginal places registered as a result of unexpected finds contingencies being enacted. 	Approved CHMPs

² For data clarity, these comprise low density artefact distributions (LDADs) and 'isolated artefact' artefact scatters (n=1-4 artefacts) that were registered prior to the introduction of LDADs in 2012;

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
7. Archaeological salvage only occurs where justified (Guidelines 3.7) (KEQ d, e, h)	Archaeological salvage is only required where an Aboriginal place is of relative significance and will be harmed by the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of CHMPs requiring 100% salvage of an Aboriginal place b. Relative cultural and archaeological significance of Aboriginal place to be salvaged c. Number of CHMPs that require salvage of low density artefact distributions or isolated artefacts d. Number of CHMPs with salvage conditions documenting an agreed salvage strategy e. For each Aboriginal place to be salvaged, what is the total area to be salvaged in the condition? 	Approved CHMPs
8. Cultural Heritage Inductions ('site inductions') only occur when required (Guidelines 3.8) (KEQ d)	Inductions are only required in circumstances where Aboriginal cultural heritage is present; inductions relate only to managing Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of CHMPs that include an induction condition where heritage was not identified b. Number of CHMPs that include induction conditions that do not relate to managing the Aboriginal cultural heritage in the activity area c. Number of site inductions required per CHMP d. Types of formats of site inductions offered per CHMP 	Approved CHMPs

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
9. Generally, monitoring construction works should not be included in the conditions of a CHMP (2024 Guide 4.2.4) (KEQ – d)	Active monitoring of construction activities is a reactive measure, not suitable for conditions to avoid and minimise harm	a. Number of CHMPs with conditions that require monitoring construction activities, whether for compliance or any other reason	Approved CHMPs

Monitoring of procedures

DPC will use data to monitor whether the procedures support CHMP participants prepare CHMPs according to the guidance set out in the guidelines. These measures are set out in Table 2.

Table 2 Evaluation indicators - Procedures

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
10. Sponsors engage heritage advisors and RAPs early in the process (KEQ c)	Pre-NOI meetings	a. Number of CHMPs that document a meeting prior to submitting a Notice of Intent, by activity size	Approved CHMPs, PAHTs - quantitative
11. RAPs provide Preliminary Statements of Sensitivity for the activity area (KEQ i)	CHMPs are alerted to major landscape-scale issues which may impact the conduct of the activity, and which Sponsors can use to plan harm avoidance measures early	a. Number of CHMPs with NOI responses from RAPs that include a statement of sensitivity b. Number of CHMPs where the Statement of Sensitivity has developed from NOI to approved CHMP	Approved CHMPs - quantitative
		c. Does identifying the Statement of Sensitivity for the Activity Area assist in better protection of Aboriginal places in the CHMP process?	Stakeholder surveys
12. Sensitive cultural information protected throughout the CHMP process (KEQ f)	An Indigenous Data Agreement (DA) is prepared to manage sensitive cultural information throughout the CHMP process	a. Number of CHMPs which reference an IDA for that CHMP	Approved CHMPs – quantitative

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
13. Standard assessments provide meaningful information to inform the need for complex assessment (Step 4-6) (KEQ j)	Complex assessments are only carried out where required by the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of CHMPs that include a standard assessment strategy b. Number of CHMPs that cease at standard assessment when LDAD are the only likely heritage type predicted. c. Number of CHMPs that cease at standard assessment stage after only finding LDADs d. Number of CHMPs that proceed to complex when standard only found LDADs 	Approved CHMPs – quantitative
14. Complex assessment program justified by the results of the standard assessment (Step 7-9) (KEQ k)	Complex assessment program includes subsurface testing strategy and justification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of CHMPs that include a complex assessment program with strategy and justification b. Total area (m²) excavated in complex assessment, also as % of activity area size c. Is the subsurface testing strategy targeted to areas of potential, or is it a 'blanket' approach of uniform coverage? d. Are predictive models being applied effectively in the preparation of CHMPs 	Approved CHMPs – quantitative Stakeholder surveys
15. Archaeological salvage is only carried out where justified (KEQ h)	Management conditions are informed by the cultural heritage significance of the relevant Aboriginal places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. For each Aboriginal place to be salvaged, what is their relative cultural and archaeological significance b. Method of salvage (manual, mechanical, surface, combination) (also refer to IO 7) 	Approved CHMPs – quantitative

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
16. Sponsors and Heritage Advisors will engage and consult early, appropriately and thoroughly with RAPs (KEQ c)	Early, appropriate and thorough consultation with RAPs will reduce disagreements and benefit overall timing	a. Number of meetings with RAPs compared to activity area size (ha), activity size (small / medium / large), CHMP completion time and number of conditions	Approved CHMPs – quantitative NRMS – quantitative
17. Decreased times between NOIs to Approval of CHMPs (KEQ g)	A reduction in the average number of days per standard and complex CHMPs	a. Time from NOI lodgement date to CHMP approved and lodged with FPSR date. b. Are the Guidelines affecting CHMP preparation times? c. What non-heritage factors have been affecting CHMP preparation times in the last six months?	NRMS – quantitative Stakeholder survey – qualitative

Monitoring of Aboriginal place registrations

Table 3. Monitoring Aboriginal place registrations

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
18. Is there a change in the average number of Aboriginal places registered per CHMP?	Either a decrease, or no change, or an increase in the average number of Aboriginal places managed by each approved CHMP, compared to Base Case	a. For each CHMP, how many registered Aboriginal places are within its activity area?	Approved CHMPs, ACHRIS

Monitoring of complaints and disagreements

Table 4. Complaints and disagreements

Intended outcome	Indicator (compared to base case)	Measure	Data source
19. Number of complaints and disagreements	Complaints and disagreements	a. The number of complaints and disagreements and any observable trends.	Requests for disagreement assistance and complaints

Stakeholder surveys

The content of the stakeholder surveys will continue to be developed but will include the following:

- How satisfied are you with the Guidelines?
- Which parts of the Guidelines are working well? (maximum of three choices)
- Which parts of the Guidelines are difficult to implement? (maximum of three choices)
- RAPs: How have the Guidelines impacted RAP self-determination? (improved, no change, decreased)
- RAPs: Is relevant information presented at desktop, standard and complex meetings, to enable decisions regarding progressing assessment or finalising of condition wording? (always, usually, sometimes, rarely, never)
- Do RAPs perceive an increased workload burden with implementing the Guidelines? (no change, workload has increased, workload has decreased)
- In your experience, are the Guidelines affecting CHMP preparation times (yes, they're reducing them; yes, they're decreasing them, no, they're not making any difference).

