

VICTORIAN STORMWATER ACTION PROGRAM

GRANT GUIDELINES

Publication 783

September 2001

INTRODUCTION

In June 2000 the Government launched the three year \$22.5 million Victorian Stormwater Action Program (VSAP). The principal goal of VSAP is to improve the environmental management of “urban stormwater” in Victoria. This is being achieved through the adoption of integrated urban stormwater management by councils, as outlined in the Urban Stormwater Best Practice Environmental Guidelines (BPEMG) published by CSIRO in 1999. The VSAP Grants program is one element in achieving this goal.

To encourage a “shift in management culture”, VSAP provides grants under two main categories. These are:

- Stormwater Management Plan Development Grants

Development grants are for regional councils (councils outside Melbourne Water Corporation’s drainage jurisdiction) to develop Stormwater Management Plans (SWMPs). This financial year (2001-2002) is the final year that VSAP Development Grants will be available to regional councils.

- Implementation Grants

Implementation grants are available to encourage and assist councils with the implementation of their SWMPs. These grants are available to all councils, to help fund projects and actions identified in their SWMPs.

Where necessary EPA Victoria will place conditions on development and implementation grants, to ensure the VSAP requirements are met and effective monitoring and evaluation of project implementation occurs.

WHAT IS VSAP ALL ABOUT?

To improve the quality of Victoria’s water environments through better environmental management of urban stormwater.

VSAP PRINCIPLES

1. VSAP is about value adding, not duplicating.
2. VSAP requires the adoption of best practice environmental management – ie. Urban Stormwater BPEMG (CSIRO, 1999).
3. VSAP will demonstrate the benefits of effective environmental management of urban stormwater.

4. VSAP encourages the development of Stormwater Management Plans (SWMPs) at the local government level.
5. VSAP will support an urban stormwater management cultural change both to:
 - Ensure ongoing ownership and commitment to incorporating environmental management into core business; and
 - Improve general community awareness and behaviour.
6. VSAP advocates partnerships and collaborative ventures.
7. VSAP encourages maximum funding leverage.
8. VSAP advocates the use of stormwater as a resource.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR VSAP FUNDING?

- a) Development Grants – councils located in regional Victoria are eligible to apply for Development Grants.
- b) Implementation Grants – any Victorian council that has a draft or final SWMP developed in accordance with the BPEMGs, is eligible to apply for an Implementation Grant.

GST AND THE GRANTS

VSAP Grants given by EPA to local government are exempt from GST. However, the goods and services that are to be used in completing the project are subject to GST. Councils should include all GST amounts incurred and record these in the appropriate column in the budget. These charges

can be claimed back from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as “input credits”.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Development grants will be provided to councils outside Melbourne Water Corporation’s drainage jurisdiction. This funding will cover 50 per cent of the cost for the development of the SWMP by consultants.

The SWMP being prepared with the grant must be developed in accordance with the:

1. BPEMG;
2. Methodology outlined in the revised Chapter 3;
3. VSAP principles for Stormwater Management Planning (see below).

VSAP PRINCIPLES FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING

VSAP advocates Stormwater Management Planning, that:

- is consistent with VSAP principles;
- is carried out within the context of regional catchment management;
- incorporates integrated management;
- supports the prevention of environmental problems;
- supports preservation and enhancement of natural drainage and waterway elements;
- supports ‘at source’ management rather than ‘end of pipe’;

- incorporates, and is complementary to, other programs and information;
- considers environmental, social and economic benefits; and
- engages all stakeholders including community & friends groups, government,
- industry and private sector.

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Only councils who have or are currently developing a SWMP are able to submit applications. Up to 50 per cent of the eligible costs of a project may be provided as a grant. There will be no retrospective funding ie funding of projects that have been completed, or are currently underway. VSAP requires all projects to undertake an independent audit at the completion of the project. Audit expenses should comprise two to four per cent of the total project budget.

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate the following:

- Partnerships between local government, community groups, Melbourne Water, Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs), other state government agencies and industry.
- Integration of structural and non-structural methods.
- At source control.
- The use of stormwater as a resource.
- Maximum funding leverage.

- Whole of urban sub-catchment/catchment projects aimed at improving urban stormwater quality and/or management.
- Primary aim to increase urban water quality and/or management.

Applications will be assessed on the following five (5) key criteria:

1. Is the project improving the quality (or environmental management) of urban stormwater?
2. Cost effectiveness;
3. Multiple benefits:
 - Environmental – eg, Will the project provide habitat?
 - Social – eg, Will the project increase community awareness/participation?
 - Economic – eg, Will it encourage increased economic activity into the area?
4. Is it addressing a priority in a council(s) SWMP?
5. Is it implementing best practice environmental management of urban stormwater?

Applications for Development Grants and Implementation Grants can be made by filling out the appropriate application form. Application forms may be obtained from the VSAP website www.epa.vic.gov.au/Programs/Stormwater/ or by contacting the EPA Stormwater Team: Ian Innes-Wardell (03) 9695 2872 or Geoff Ralphs (03) 9695 2549.

ELIGIBLE LAND USES

In order to obtain funding, the Council's project must be related to stormwater runoff in an urban setting. For the purpose of this program, urban settings include land that has been zoned for:

- Residential (including Low Density Residential)
- Commercial
- Industrial

ELIGIBILITY OF ACTIVITIES

1. Nonstructural Projects

1.1 Education/Awareness Programs

This area includes training projects and industry audits, as well as other education/awareness activities. These projects will be eligible for funding if they have the primary aim of increasing awareness and/or changing behaviour in relation to best practice urban stormwater management. The following points should be addressed in your application for funding:

- Methodology of the project/program;
- Indicate how the project/program will be evaluated ⇒ what will determine if your project is a success?
- The proposed length of the project/program;
- Follow up actions that will be carried out after the project/program has been completed to ensure a behavioural or cultural change has occurred.

1.2 Employment Costs

1.2.1 Existing/On-Going Staff

VSAP funding cannot be used for the employment costs of existing staff or on-going staff associated with a project, unless exceptional circumstances are proven by the applicant.

Employment costs of council employees may be included as an 'in-kind' contribution for cost-sharing purposes where they are working on the project for 20 per cent or more of their time.

1.2.2 Calculation of 'In-Kind' Contributions

Calculations for 'in-kind' contributions should be made using the following method:

- Up to \$20 per hour, including on-costs.
- Employment costs not to exceed more than 10 per cent of the total project cost (including on-costs).
- On-cost include Council contribution to superannuation and workcover payments and payroll tax

1.2.3 Contractors/Consultants

VSAP funds can be used for the cost of contractors/consultants. Where such costs are being claimed, a detailed cost breakdown must be provided.

1.3 Feasibility/Design Studies

Feasibility/Design studies will be eligible for funding if they have been identified as a high priority within a SWMP.

1.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring will only be eligible for funding when it is directly linked to evaluating the project/program.

Components that will be funded include the following:

- collecting and compiling performance information;
- producing progress and final reports;
- communication materials/activities.

1.5 Planning

ELIGIBLE for VSAP funding	NOT ELIGIBLE for VSAP funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of planning scheme amendments; • Development of technical guidelines for Council staff; • Development and implementation of training programs for Council staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs of adopting planning amendments ⇒ panel fees and cost of changing planning schemes.

2. Structural Projects

ELIGIBLE for VSAP funding	NOT ELIGIBLE for VSAP funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment devices ⇒ swales, bioretention systems, on-site retention, ponds and storage tanks, GPTs, litter traps and sediment traps, etc.; • Wetlands for treatment of urban stormwater runoff. • Signs that are part of an awareness/education campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syringe Containment Unit; • Litter Bins; • On-going Maintenance; • Recreational Assets ⇒ park benches, walking tracks, etc.; • Waterway Management Activities ⇒ erosion & weed control; habitat rehabilitation; waterway restoration works; ecological monitoring/assessment.