

MEDIA RELEASE

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HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF VICTORIA'S ALPINE RESORTS

The alpine resort community, industry and visitors are invited to have their say on the future of Victoria's six alpine resorts as part of a review by the Alpine Resorts Co-ordinating Council (ARCC) of the *Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy*.

The ARCC is the peak government body charged with facilitating the development and management of the state's alpine resorts – Mount Baw Baw, Lake Mountain, Mount Stirling, Mount Hotham, Falls Creek and Mount Buller – and is required under The *Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997* to conduct a review of its strategic plan, every five years.

Chairperson of the ARCC, Mr Des Powell, said: "The *Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy* is vital to ensuring the resorts are being managed and developed in the best interests of Victoria. With this in mind, the Strategy review and the resulting consultation draft are focused on financial viability, equitable access, cultural heritage and reducing the ecological footprint on our alpine resorts.

"Victoria's alpine resorts are unique tourism destinations, visited by more than 1.2 million people annually. They generate over \$610 million in gross state product and around 6,200 jobs in winter alone," he said.

"Over the last decade, the resorts have been able to achieve growth in visitor numbers, despite a decline in tourism generally in Victoria. One factor contributing to this has been more snow-making capacity, which has brought greater stability for visitation.

Mr Powell added: "The review has also identified areas where we can do better. We need to pay more attention to long term financial viability and to focus on the competitive strengths of individual resorts.

"Winter is the 'economic engine' of the resorts so we need to be more targeted in our approach to green season products. We will be looking to build stronger partnerships with local government, regional tourism bodies, indigenous communities and other land managers to maximise benefits to the resorts and the Victorian community.

"Better co-ordination and integration of public and private investment and promotion opportunities are also key. This would be aided by consistent master planning conducted by each resort.

"The funding model for resorts needs to be reviewed and we need to consider alternate ways to fund and deliver community services which are important to the resort and to the region but not within the normal range of commercial activities," Mr Powell said.

The consultation draft will be available for review from 12 June to 16 July 2012. Public workshops will also be held to encourage community consultation.

"The ARCC is committed to ensuring that everyone gets to have a say in how our resorts are run, with the aim of securing the best possible outcomes for Victoria. I encourage all interested parties to participate and help shape the future of our Alpine resorts."

For information on how to obtain a copy of the draft *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012* and the public workshops please visit: arcc.vic.gov.au

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