

# PLUM Communication Testimonial

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council  
various environmental investigations



PLUM communication has provided communication and stakeholder management support for the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) throughout its investigations into public land use in Victoria – including the high profile River Red Gum Forest Investigation (2005-2008).

The River Red Gum Forest Investigation, which ran for a period of almost three years, covered a 1,600 kilometre stretch of land along the Murray River. The investigation was initiated by the Minister for Environment and its purpose was to make recommendations to government around the sustainable use of public land.

PLUM communication was brought on early in the project to assist with a range of communication and stakeholder planning and activity.

We were provided with an excellent range of contractors to select from and were happy with all of the staff provided by PLUM who worked with our team.

They were quick to understand the project and get across the detail and fitted into the structure of our existing group. They were also flexible about working from our offices and travelling with us to stakeholder events throughout regional Victoria.

Some of the activities PLUM provided included developing a communication and stakeholder strategy, liaising and reporting to our Council, establishing contacts within the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Minister's office and providing media training and ongoing advice.

PLUM also assisted VEAC with a very challenging stakeholder engagement program, which required management of a diverse and large range of stakeholders throughout Victoria, including large protest groups.

The engagement advice and implementation we received from PLUM was critical in dealing with the investigation's stakeholders. PLUM assisted us in communicating with special interest groups, managing angry protestors and addressing issues as they arose.

## Project Snapshot

The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council was established in 2001 to provide independent and strategic advice to the Government of Victoria on matters relating to the protection and ecologically sustainable management of the environment and natural resources of Victoria's public land.

It has conducted a number of major investigations including the three-year River Red Gum Forest Investigation along the River Murray.

The Council's investigations have been fundamental in creating a number of national parks and reserved areas – and promoting indigenous co management in the state of Victoria.

PLUM's media management was also excellent. Even though it was a controversial and highly publicised investigation, the media strategy provided us with a strong run of key messages, good exposure of our chairman and a quick response to issues. PLUM also developed useful media connections throughout the state.

PLUM has been very flexible in providing us with support throughout our investigations. Their work is always of a high quality, detailed and thorough. Following the successful completion of the investigation we are now working with PLUM on a new branding campaign and website development.

**Joan Phillips, CEO**

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council

## Key Achievements

- Development of a communication and stakeholder strategy for VEAC's large and controversial investigation along the Murray River
- Managed media across regional and metropolitan press
- Organised stakeholder events throughout regional Victoria
- Developed communication materials including investigation brochures, media kits, ministerial briefings, key messages and issues register
- Organised media training for key VEAC staff
- Organised conflict management training for VEAC staff
- Received a high level of stakeholder participation (9000 submissions)
- Worked with communications units across the Premier and Minister's offices and DSE for media events