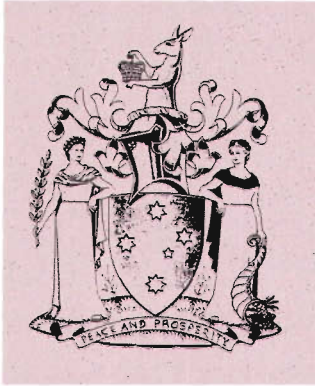


# 1 Geography and Government



## GEOGRAPHY

### Geographic position and area

The most southerly point of Wilsons Promontory, latitude  $39^{\circ} 08'$  S., longitude  $146^{\circ} 22' 30''$  E., is the southernmost point of the mainland of Victoria and similarly of the mainland of Australia; the northernmost point is where the western boundary of the State meets the Murray River, latitude  $33^{\circ} 59'$  S., longitude  $140^{\circ} 58'$  E; the point furthest east is Cape Howe, situated in latitude  $37^{\circ} 31'$  S., longitude  $149^{\circ} 58'$  E. The westerly boundary lies upon the meridian  $140^{\circ} 58'$  E., and extends from latitude  $33^{\circ} 59'$  S. to latitude  $38^{\circ} 04'$  S., a distance of 451 kilometres.

Victoria covers an area of about 227,600 square kilometres. It is therefore slightly smaller than Great Britain which (if inland water is included) contains 229,900 square kilometres.

TABLE 1.1 AREA OF STATES AND TERRITORIES

State or Territory	Area in square kilometres	Length of coastline in kilometres	Percentage of total area
Western Australia	2,525,500	12,500	32.88
Queensland	1,727,200	7,400	22.48
Northern Territory	1,346,200	6,200	17.52
South Australia	984,000	3,700	12.81
New South Wales	801,600	1,900	10.44
<b>Victoria</b>	<b>227,600</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>2.96</b>
Tasmania	67,800	3,200	0.88
Australian Capital Territory	2,400	35	0.03
<b>Australia</b>	<b>7,682,300</b>	<b>36,735</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### Coastline

The Victorian coastline comprises many types of environments. Broad sandy beaches and impressive cliffed headlands along the ocean coast contrast with mangrove-fringed mudflats and marshland of the sheltered embayments and estuaries. There are approximately 1,300 kilometres of ocean coast between Cape Howe and the South Australian border; in addition three large embayments — Port Phillip Bay (270 kilometres), Western Port Bay (150 kilometres), and Corner Inlet (80 kilometres) — partially enclose protected waters where most of the ports and harbours are situated.

### Physical divisions

The chief physical divisions of Victoria are shown on page 18. Each of these divisions has certain physical features (elevation, geological structure, climate, and soils) which distinguish it from the others.

1. Murray Basin Plains:
  - (a) The Mallee
  - (b) The Riverine Plains
  - (c) The Wimmera
2. Central Highlands:
  - A. The Eastern Highlands
  - B. The Western Highlands:
    - (a) The Midlands
    - (b) The Grampians
    - (c) The Dundas Tablelands
3. Western District Plains:
  - (a) The Volcanic Plains
  - (b) The Coastal Plains
4. Gippsland Plains:
  - (a) The East Gippsland Plains
  - (b) The West Gippsland Plains
5. Southern Uplands:
  - (a) The Otway Ranges
  - (b) The Barrabool Hills
  - (c) The Mornington Peninsula
  - (d) The South Gippsland Highlands
  - (e) Wilsons Promontory

The following table lists Victoria's highest mountains:

**TABLE 1.2 HEIGHT OF SELECTED MOUNTAINS, VICTORIA**  
(metres)

<i>Mountain</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Mountain</i>	<i>Height</i>
Bogong	1,986	Niggerhead	1,843
Feathertop	1,922	Mckay	1,843
Nelse North	1,883	Cobberas No. 1	1,838
Fainter South	1,877	Cope	1,837
Loch	1,874	Spion Kopje	1,836
Hotham	1,861	Buller	1,804

## REGIONS

### Statistical divisions

In 1974 Victoria was divided into twelve statistical divisions, the standard Australian Bureau of Statistics regions, which were combinations of legal local government areas forming coherent socio-economic zones.

These statistical divisions correspond with the regions adopted by the Victorian Government in October 1981 except in the cases of the Metropolitan region and, because of consequential effects, the Central Highlands and Loddon-Campaspe regions. The Victorian Government's Metropolitan region comprises the Melbourne and East Central Statistical Divisions, and the Shires of Bacchus Marsh and Gisborne. Statistical divisions are subject to change.

### Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)

Since January 1986, ABS geographical divisions and nomenclature have been based on the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). Each geographic area (or spatial unit) in the classification (such as the Melbourne Statistical Division) constitutes a particular 'category' of the classification, and all spatial units of a particular type which together cover a defined area, e.g. all statistical divisions in Australia, constitute a particular 'hierarchy level' of the classification.

### Statistical districts

For statistical purposes, certain areas comprising statistical local areas or parts thereof have been designated statistical districts. In Victoria, these are the Albury-Wodonga, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Morwell, and Shepparton-Mooroopna Statistical Districts.

## CLIMATE

### General conditions

The major topographical determinant of the climate is the Great Dividing Range, running east-west across the State, and rising to nearly 2,000 metres in the eastern half. This acts as a barrier to the moist south-east and south-west winds and together with its proximity to the coast, causes the south of the State to receive more rain than the north.

To the south of Victoria, except for Tasmania and its islands, there is no land for 3,000 kilometres. This vast area of ocean has a moderating influence on Victoria's climate in winter. Snow, which is a common winter occurrence at similar latitudes on the eastern seaboard of the great land masses of the northern hemisphere, is rare in Victoria below elevations of 600 metres. To the north of Victoria, the land mass of Australia becomes very hot in the summer, and on several days at this time of year the temperature over the State may rise to between 35°C and 40°C, often with a strong northerly wind.

### Climate in Melbourne

The proximity of Port Phillip Bay bears a direct influence on the climate of the metropolitan area. The hottest months in Melbourne are normally January and February, when the average maximum temperature is 26°C. Inland, Watsonia has an average of 27°C, while along the Bay, Aspendale and Black Rock, subject to any sea breeze, have an average of 25°C. This difference does not persist throughout the year, however, and in July average maxima at most stations are within 1°C of one another at approximately 13°C. The hottest day on record in Melbourne was 13 January 1939, when the temperature reached 45.6°C. This is the second highest temperature ever recorded in an Australian capital city. In Melbourne, the average number of days per year with maxima over 35°C is about nine, but there were twenty-five in the summer of 1897-98 and there has been only one year with no occurrence, namely 1984. The average annual number of days over 30°C is approximately twenty-nine.

Nights are coldest at places a considerable distance from the sea, and away from the city where heat retention by buildings, roads, and pavements may maintain the air at a slightly higher temperature. The lowest temperature ever recorded in the city was -2.8°C on 21 July 1869, and the highest minimum ever recorded was 30.6°C on 1 February 1902.

In Melbourne the overnight temperature remains above 20°C on about four nights per year. During the early years of record, temperatures below 0°C were recorded during most winters. However, over more recent years, the urban 'heat island' effect has resulted in such low temperatures occurring only once in two years on average. Minima below -1°C have been experienced during the months of May to August, while even as late as October extremes have been down to 0°C. During the summer, minima have never been below 4°C.

Wide variations in the frequencies of occurrences of low air temperatures are noted across the Melbourne metropolitan area. For example, there are approximately ten annual occurrences of 2°C or less around the Bay, but frequencies increase to over twenty in the outer suburbs and probably to over thirty a year in the more frost susceptible areas. The average frost-free period is about 200 days in the outer northern and eastern suburbs, gradually increasing to over 250 days towards the city, and approaching 300 days along parts of the bayside.

The means of the climatic elements for the seasons in Melbourne, computed from all available official records, are given in Table 1.3.

### Rainfall

The average annual number of days of rain (0.2mm or more in 24 hours) is over 150 on the West Coast and in West Gippsland, and exceeds 200 over the Otway Ranges. The average number of wet days a year is reduced to 100 at a distance of approximately 160 kilometres inland from the coast. The distribution of rainfall in Victoria by districts is given in Table 1.4.

Distribution of average rainfall in Victoria is shown in Figure 1 on page 21. Average rainfall ranges from 250mm for the driest parts of the Mallee to 2,600mm at Falls Creek in the Alps.

TABLE 1.3 MEANS OF CLIMATIC ELEMENTS, MELBOURNE

Meteorological element	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Mean atmospheric pressure (hectopascals)	1,015.0	1,013.2	1,018.3	1,018.5
Mean maximum temperature of air in shade (°C)	19.5	25.1	20.2	14.0
Mean minimum temperature of air in shade (°C)	9.4	13.7	10.8	6.3
Mean relative humidity at 9 a.m. (per cent, saturation = 100)	64	61	72	79
Mean rainfall (mm)	186	154	168	149
Mean number of days of rain	40	25	34	44
Mean amount of evaporation (mm) (a)	359	564	278	1438
Mean daily amount of cloudiness (scale 0 to 8) (b)	4.9	4.2	4.8	5.2
Mean daily hours of sunshine (c)	6.6	8.4	5.6	4.5
Mean number of days of fog	1.4	0.6	5.8	10.3

(a) Measured by Class A Pan (records commenced 1967).

(b) Scale: 0 = clear, 8 = overcast.

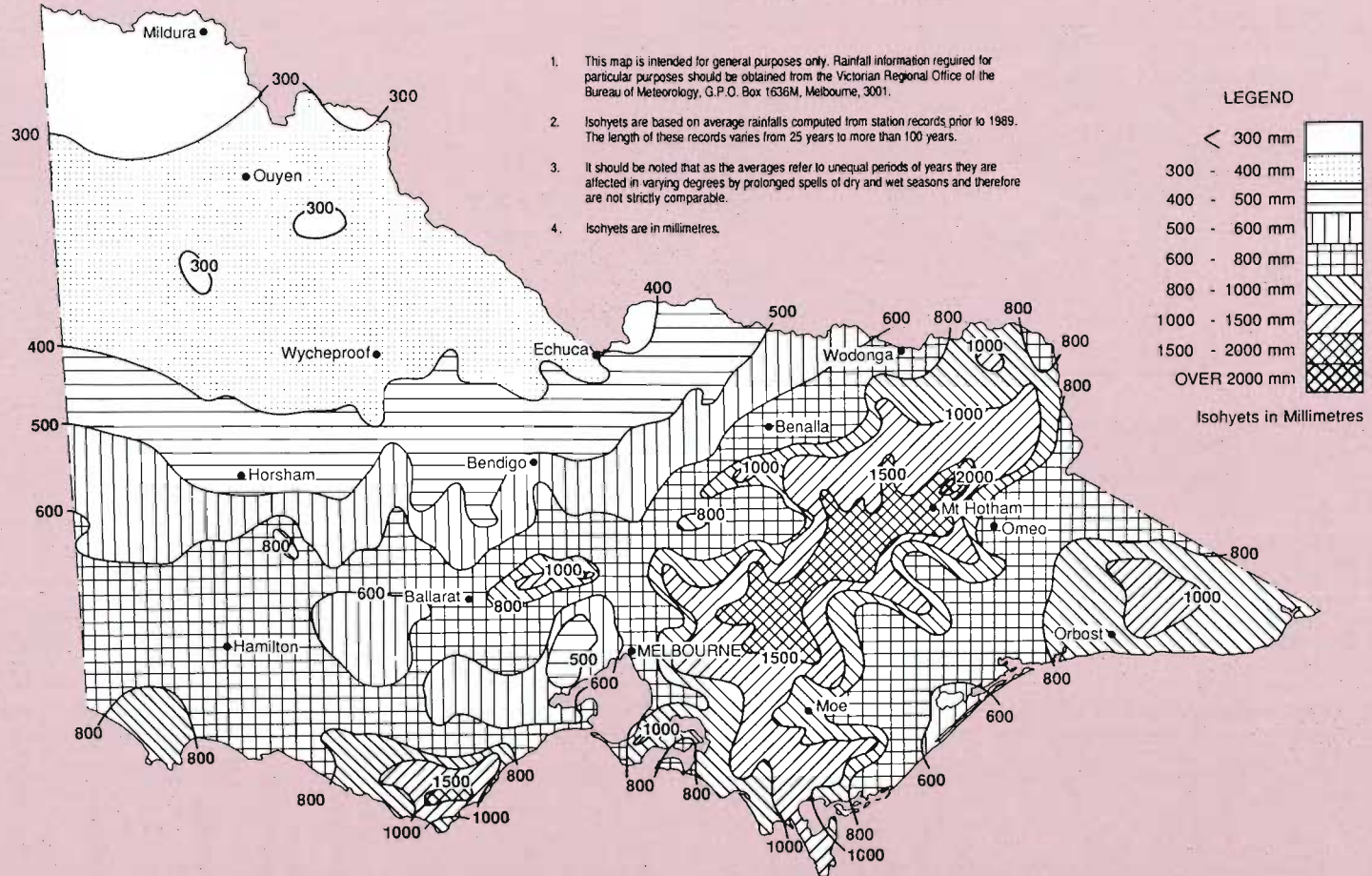
(c) Measured at Laverton (records commenced 1968).

TABLE 1.4 RAINFALL IN DISTRICTS, VICTORIA  
(mm)

District	Year						Average (a)
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	
North Mallee	260	270	357	316	348	358	309
South Mallee	283	316	414	378	408	429	354
North Wimmera	337	391	415	400	441	431	413
South Wimmera	498	440	616	547	630	568	503
Lower North	407	400	420	364	537	519	435
Upper North	485	492	516	452	634	613	518
Lower Northeast	793	769	910	688	954	927	779
Upper Northeast	932	1,023	1,289	1,068	1,341	1,334	1,106
East Gippsland	819	1,062	576	639	868	910	778
West Gippsland	920	953	959	828	982	999	915
East Central	851	892	965	859	931	1,094	891
West Central	536	646	611	690	635	741	613
North Central	719	751	858	815	920	932	729
Western Plains	613	612	659	634	592	641	631
West Coast	792	814	849	724	760	858	776

(a) Average for 77 years 1913 to 1989.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL



1. This map is intended for general purposes only. Rainfall information required for particular purposes should be obtained from the Victorian Regional Office of the Bureau of Meteorology, G.P.O. Box 1636M, Melbourne, 3001.
2. Isohyets are based on average rainfalls computed from station records prior to 1989. The length of these records varies from 25 years to more than 100 years.
3. It should be noted that as the averages refer to unequal periods of years they are affected in varying degrees by prolonged spells of dry and wet seasons and therefore are not strictly comparable.
4. Isohyets are in millimetres.

**LEGEND**

< 300 mm	
300 - 400 mm	
400 - 500 mm	
500 - 600 mm	
600 - 800 mm	
800 - 1000 mm	
1000 - 1500 mm	
1500 - 2000 mm	
OVER 2000 mm	

Isohyets in Millimetres

Figure 1. Average annual rainfall of Victoria

Source: Bureau of Meteorology

## **GOVERNMENT**

The system of government in Victoria provides for responsible Cabinet government based on a legislature of two Houses, the Legislative Assembly (Lower House) and the Legislative Council (Upper House), both elected by Australian citizens over the age of 18. Voting is compulsory.

### **The Constitution**

From 1855 until 1975, the Constitution of Victoria was contained in the Schedule to an Act of the United Kingdom in 1855, but Victoria finally adopted a Constitution of its own with the *Constitution Act* 1975.

Under the Victorian Constitution, the ultimate executive power is vested in the Crown, and is exercised by the Governor as the Monarch's representative. The Governor is the titular head of the government, while the Premier is the effective head of government. Further information on the powers and function of the Governor may be found on page 60 of the *Victorian Year Book* 1986.

The Constitution is affected by the Commonwealth Constitution enacted by the *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act* 1900, an act of the Imperial Parliament, by which legislative and executive powers upon certain specified matters were granted to the Commonwealth Parliament and the Commonwealth Government, some of them exclusively, and provision was made that, in case of inconsistency of valid laws, the Commonwealth law should prevail.

### **Victorian Government responsibilities**

The Victorian Government is responsible for such things as health, education, law enforcement, administration of justice, the control of resources, and the provision of roads, water, sewerage, power, and other services. Under Victorian law a complete system of courts, a police force, a teaching service, and many statutory bodies have been established.

### **Victorian government departments and statutory authorities**

Victorian government departments and statutory authorities administer legislation, implement government policy, provide policy advice to government, and supply goods and services to the people of Victoria.

Information concerning Victorian government departments and statutory authorities may be found in previous editions of the *Victorian Year Book*. More recent information may be found in the *Victorian Government Directory*, which is compiled by Information Victoria - Ministry of Ethnic, Municipal and Community Affairs.

### **Victorian representation in the Commonwealth Parliament**

The federation of the Australian colonies formally commenced on 1 January 1901. The House of Representatives was seen as representing the people and directly chosen by the people for a maximum three year term on single Member constituencies. The Senate was seen as representing the rights of the States, and Senators are appointed for a six year term with half of them retiring every three years. Senators are chosen directly by the people on a single State wide electorate and on a proportional representation system.

Since the 1984 electoral redistribution Victoria has had 39 members in the House of Representatives, and 12 Senators.

TABLE 1.5 ELECTORS ON JOINT ROLLS, VICTORIA, 30 JUNE

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of electors enrolled</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of electors enrolled</i>
1985	2,630,653	1988	2,680,181
1986	2,601,091	1989	2,773,200
1987	2,702,932	1990	2,805,773

Source: Australian Electoral Commission

## Ministry

A simultaneous election for the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly of the Victorian Parliament was held on 1 October 1988. The Australian Labour Party, under the leadership of the Hon. John Cain, was elected to office. On 10 August 1990, following Mr Cain's resignation the Hon. Joan Kirner became the first female Premier of Victoria. Her first Ministry, and Victoria's 66th, was reshuffled in January 1991. The Ministry consisted of the following members as at 1 February 1991.

### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Hon. Joan Kirner	Premier and Minister responsible for Women's Affairs
The Hon. Jim Kennan	Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for the Arts and Minister for Major Projects
The Hon. Ian Baker	Minister for Agriculture
The Hon. Steve Crabb	Minister for Tourism and Minister for Conservation and Environment
The Hon. Andrew McCutcheon	Minister for Planning and Housing
The Hon. Neil Pope	Minister for Labour
The Hon. Tom Roper	Treasurer
The Hon. Barry Rowe	Minister for Small Business
The Hon. Mal Sandon	Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrections
The Hon. Kay Setches	Minister for Community Services and Minister responsible for Child Care
The Hon. Tony Sheehan	Minister for Finance
The Hon. Peter Spyker	Minister for Transport
The Hon. Neil Trezise	Minister for Sport and Recreation

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The Hon. David White	Minister for Manufacturing and Industry Development and Minister responsible for Ports
The Hon. Caroline Hogg	Minister for Ethnic, Municipal and Community Affairs
The Hon. Maureen Lyster	Minister for Health
The Hon. Brian Mier	Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
The Hon. Barry Pullen	Minister for Education and Training

## MINISTRIES, VICTORIA 1943 TO 1990 (a)

<i>Ministry and name of Premier</i>	<i>Date of assumption of office</i>	<i>Date of retirement from office</i>	<i>Duration of office (days)</i>
Albert Arthur Dunstan	18 September 1943	2 October 1945	746
Ian Macfarlan, K.C.	2 October 1945	21 November 1945	51
John Cain	21 November 1945	20 November 1947	730
Thomas Tuke Hollway	20 November 1947	3 December 1948	380
Thomas Tuke Hollway	3 December 1948	27 June 1950	572
John Gladstone Black McDonald	27 June 1950	28 October 1952	855
Thomas Tuke Hollway	28 October 1952	31 October 1952	3
John Gladstone Black McDonald	31 October 1952	17 December 1952	48
John Cain	17 December 1952	31 March 1955	835
John Cain	31 March 1955	7 June 1955	69
Henry Edward Bolte, G.C.M.G.	7 June 1955	23 August 1972	6,288
Rupert James Hamer, E.D.	23 August 1972	5 June 1981	3,209
Lindsay Hamilton			
Simpson Thompson, C.M.G.	5 June 1981	8 April 1982	299
John Cain (b)	8 April 1982	10 August 1990	3,046
Joan Elizabeth Kirner	10 August 1990	still in office	

(a) A complete list since responsible government in 1855 can be found on pages 741-2 of the *Victorian Year Book 1984*.

(b) The Hon. John Cain is the son of the Hon. John Cain who held the office of Premier on three occasions between 1945 and 1955.

## Local government administration

At 30 June 1989, Victoria was divided, for local government purposes, into 210 municipal districts and the Yallourn Works Area, which was severed from the municipal districts of which it then formed a part by the *State Electricity Commission (Yallourn Area) Act 1947*. For certain purposes it is deemed to be a borough and municipal administration is the responsibility of the Commission, assisted by an Advisory Council. The 210 municipalities comprise 68 cities, 1 rural city, 5 towns, 6 boroughs, and 130 shires.

The only unincorporated areas of Victoria are French Island (154 square kilometres) in Western Port, Lady Julia Percy Island (1.3 square kilometres) off Port Fairy, Bass Strait islands (3.8 square kilometres), Gippsland Lakes (part) (309 square kilometres), and Tower Hill Lake Reserve (5.0 square kilometres) which is within the Shire of Warrambol.

Councils may make by-laws on a number of specified subjects. They exercise functions relating to roads and bridges, for which they have a construction and maintenance responsibility; drainage, water supply and sewerage; building control; community welfare, including infant and pre-school centres, home help, elderly citizens, meals-on-wheels and garbage; parking areas and traffic engineering.

TABLE 1.6 RATEABLE PROPERTIES, VICTORIA, 30 SEPTEMBER

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of rateable properties</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of rateable properties</i>
1984	1,716,533	1987	1,803,015
1985	1,746,443	1988	1,832,255
1986	1,782,130	1989	1,862,832

## REFERENCES

## ABS publications

*Statistical Maps, Victoria* (1103.2)

*Melbourne Statistical Division Map* (1104.2)

*Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (1216.0)