



Lake Wellington Catchment Irrigation & Nutrient  
Management Demonstration Project  
Irrigation Demo Project

# Landholder Booklet

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# Summary – Need to know basics

## Who should apply?

The Irrigation Demo Project, is a pilot project aimed at irrigators who are interested in trialling emerging technologies and methods on their farm and sharing the learnings with the irrigation community.

The target audience for the project is irrigators in Central Gippsland, inclusive of ALL agricultural sectors.

All applicants must be on irrigated farms in the Lake Wellington catchment (that includes all irrigated farms in the Avon, Macalister, Thomson and Latrobe River catchments).

## What are the project objectives?

The Project is funded through the Victorian Government's Sustainable Irrigation Program. Its aim is to demonstrate on-farm activities that help to achieve the objectives of the [Lake Wellington Land and Water Management Plan](#) including:

- Reduction in nutrients and other pollutants in the Gippsland Lakes
- Contain impacts of salinity and high-watertables
- Sustainable regional economic growth
- Improved understanding and management of social and cultural values
- Reduced greenhouse emissions from irrigated agriculture

## How will demonstration projects be selected?

All applications will be scored against the project objectives stated above. In addition, the evaluation process will also consider the following **core principles**:

- The projects should serve as a catalyst for practice change, for example projects should;
  - be repeatable on other Gippsland farms,
  - showcase new technology or innovative practices that have NOT yet been widely adopted in Gippsland, or
  - capture real data around existing practices that currently only have anecdotal evidence in a Gippsland context
- The farm must be willing to share all pertinent information (both successes and failings) with the community via site visits/field days/conversations and a broad range of media (eg. newspaper, radio, web, social media).
- The project must be able to monitor and evaluate outcomes (eg. increased water use efficiency, crop pasture yield, decreased nutrient/water/power/fert use, etc).
- Projects should be applicable to a wide irrigation audience across Gippsland
- Projects with an ability to leverage other projects/grants would be advantageous
- Linkages with industry bodies would be advantageous (eg. GippsDairy, VegNET/FFG, AusVeg, VFF)

Further details on the evaluation process are provided within this booklet.

## What are the timelines?

**Expressions of Interest Close at: 4pm, Friday 18 March 2022**

All successful projects will develop a project timeline as part of their project planning. Successful projects must be able to commence before 30 June 2022 and be fully completed and signed off by 30 March 2024.

### How much funding is available?

The funding pool available to irrigators is \$54,000. The project is looking to fund at least 2 demonstration projects up to a maximum value of \$27,000 per project. There is a limit of 1 grant per irrigation business. Further details on the funding arrangements are provided in this booklet.

### What activities are eligible for funding?

Activity Type	Example
Professional agricultural planning or consulting services	Contracting a professional agricultural planner or consultant to develop or assist with the development and implementation of on-farm plans or activities that meet the project objectives.
Equipment and/or infrastructure	Purchasing of equipment or infrastructure that contribute to project objectives.
Monitoring and evaluation equipment and/or services	**All funded projects <u>must</u> include a plan for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the demonstration. This could include specific monitoring equipment and/or contracting professional services to assist with monitoring and evaluation. Costs associated with monitoring can be included in the grant application.
Other	As a rule of thumb, any expenditure on products or services that are necessary for the demonstration to succeed will be eligible.

\*A full eligibility checklist and a list of ineligible activities is provided within this booklet

### How do I apply?

If you are interested in applying for the project, please contact the Agriculture Victoria irrigation team to discuss your ideas and arrange an on-farm consultation session to work through the application process.

Alexis Killoran – Ph: 0428 387 869 or Email: [alexis.c.killoran@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:alexis.c.killoran@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

Billy Marshall – Ph: 0418 718 527 or Email: [billy.marshall@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:billy.marshall@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

### Further Information

If you are interested in finding out more about the Sustainable Irrigation Program or the Lake Wellington Land and Water Management Plan please contact the WGCMA project team:

Anthony Goode – Ph: 0438 507 184 or Email: [anthonyg@wgcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:anthonyg@wgcma.vic.gov.au)

Brad Missen – Ph: 0472 501 223 or Email: [bradm@wgcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:bradm@wgcma.vic.gov.au)

# Introduction & Background

## Introduction

This booklet outlines the governance protocols associated with the implementation of the Lake Wellington Catchment Irrigation and Nutrient Management Demonstration Project (hereby referred to as the Demo Project).

It is important for achieving the goals of the projects, that processes be implemented with consistency, transparency, equity and confidentiality. Those responsible for implementing this process are expected to act in accordance with the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct.

This paper is designed to be a 'living' document that is continually updated as the project evolves, and governance processes need to be adapted accordingly.

## Lake Wellington Land & Water Management Plan (2018)

The Lake Wellington Land and Water Management Plan is a 10-year strategy that was developed in 2018 with the following vision and objectives:



In delivering these objectives the Plan recommended the introduction of industry linked trials and demonstrations as a central part of a broader suite of extension services and community and industry engagement tools.

## Victorian Government's Sustainable Irrigation Program

The Lake Wellington Land and Water Management Plan is primarily funded through the Victorian Government's Sustainable Irrigation Program (SIP), regionally implemented in Gippsland by the West Gippsland CMA and Agriculture Victoria.

In 2020, a 4-year program was developed for the implementation of SIP in West Gippsland. This 4-year program included a small allocation to develop and implement an irrigation and nutrient management demonstration project as per the recommendation of the LWMP.

# Objectives, Scope & Timelines

## Project Objectives

In accordance with the LW-LWMP, all trials and demonstrations funded through this project will be assessed against the following long-term outcomes:

- Reduction in nutrients and other pollutants in the Gippsland Lakes
- Contain impacts of salinity and high-watertables
- Sustainable regional economic growth
- Improved understanding and management of social and cultural values
- Reduced greenhouse emissions from irrigated agriculture

## Secondary Objective

Following a difficult 2 years, a broad objective of the Sustainable Irrigation team is to reconnect with the community and, as much as possible, help the irrigation community reconnect with each other. For 2 years now, restrictions have effectively stopped field days, discussion groups, training events and even less formal social networks have struggled to stay together. The SIP team is well placed to play an important role in reconnecting some of the networks in 2022 and this demonstration project can play an integral part in that process.

## Scope: Target Audience & Project Boundary

The target audience for the project is irrigators in Central Gippsland, inclusive of all agricultural sectors (noting that dryland farmers may be interested in some of the demonstrations too). In consideration of the objectives and the distribution of irrigation farms across Gippsland there is likely to be a natural focus on the Macalister Irrigation Area and surrounds.

In accordance with project funding and the LW-LWMP objectives, all funded projects must be on irrigated farms in the Lake Wellington catchment.

## Timelines

All successful projects will develop a project timeline as part of their project planning. Broadly projects will need to comply with the below timeline.

All successful projects must be able to commence before 30 June 2022 and be fully completed and signed off by 30 March 2024.



## Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI)

MERI activities will be coordinated in line with the West Gippsland Sustainable Irrigation Program MERI Plan. Each individual project funded through the project will be required to develop a mini-MERI plan that is fit-for-purpose for that project. Baseline reporting requirements for each project will include a final project report upon completion to be completed by the proponent with the support of the AgVic case manager.

# Project Governance Arrangements

The project governance structure is displayed below. This describes which agencies and staff are involved in the project and their respective roles. Note: The WGCMA's Irrigator Reference Group comprises 13 irrigators from the community who provide advice on the Sustainable Irrigation Program in West Gippsland. The Irrigator Reference Group will be directly involved in many aspects of this project.

GROUP	MEMBERSHIP	ROLE	COMMUNICATIONS
<b>Oversight committee</b>	Shayne Haywood (WGCMA) Sarah Killury (AgVic)	Provision of oversight including endorsement of working group decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Email</li> <li>- Evaluation meeting at start</li> </ul>
<b>Project Implementation</b>	<u>Agriculture Victoria</u> Alexis Killoran Billy Marshall	Primary contact for irrigators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application receipt &amp; evaluation short-listing</li> <li>- Day to day support for irrigators</li> <li>- Monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>- Extension services incl. field days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Day to day comms by email / phone</li> <li>- Evaluation Meeting at start</li> <li>- Quarterly meetings thereafter</li> </ul>
	<u>West Gippsland CMA</u> Anthony Goode (WGCMA) Brad Missen (WGCMA)	Central governance role including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluation guidance</li> <li>- Eligibility checks</li> <li>- Communications and engagement</li> <li>- Contract management</li> <li>- Finance management</li> </ul>	
	<u>DELWP</u> Michael Quinane	Investment oversight Alignment with funding objectives	
<b>Irrigator Reference Group</b>	As per current Irrigator Reference Group membership list	Advisory and evaluation role ensuring compliance with community needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advice on principles of funding</li> <li>- Evaluation recommendations</li> <li>- Community engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Email</li> <li>- Evaluation meeting at start</li> <li>- Word-of-mouth promotions</li> </ul>
<b>Technical input (as required)</b>	John Crosby (WGCMA) Adam Bruce (EPA) Robyn McLean (GippsDairy) Bonnie Dawson (Hort Ext) Carmen Lee (Maffra Landcare) Mark Coleman (Wellington Shire) Irrigator Reference Group	Technical input (as required), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Works on waterways or floodplain management</li> <li>- EPA compliance support</li> <li>- Dairy extension support</li> <li>- Revegetation, shade and shelter</li> <li>- Planning approvals and IDGs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Email</li> <li>- Attendance at meetings as required</li> </ul>

Figure 1: Governance structure for the demonstration project

## Confidentiality, Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Declarations

All members of the Oversight Committee, Implementation Group and Irrigator Reference Group will be required to sign a VPS Code of Conduct declaration and/or Conflict of Interest declaration form. In addition, all evaluation meetings shall have a standard agenda item calling for any declarations of conflict of interest from all parties present at the meeting. Any external parties, eg. community members, present at evaluation meetings shall also be required to sign a Deed of Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Form at the commencement of the meeting.

## Funding & Finance Arrangements

The funding available to implement the project is as follows:

Fund Source	Eligible Activities	Funding Available	Grants available
Irrigation Drainage Management	Nutrient management activities on irrigation farms that can be shown to reduce the export of nutrients to the Gippsland Lakes	\$14,000	Minimum of 2 grants to be awarded. At least one grant must meet the nutrient management objective  Max of \$27,000 per grant**  Max of 1 grant per business.
Wise Water Use and Best Practice Irrigation Management	Irrigation or irrigation drainage activities that meet 2 or more the LW-LWMP long-term outcomes	\$40,000	
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>		<b>\$54,000</b>	

*\*\* All costs will need to be reconciled via provision of quotes at the commencement of the project and invoices at the conclusion of the project. Only quotes and invoices from registered Australian businesses with an ABN will be accepted.*

All successful applicants will be required to enter into a Landholder Partnership Agreement with the WGCMA. A copy of the agreement template can be provided on request.

A payment schedule linked to milestone deliverables will be negotiated between successful applicants and the WGCMA. As a general rule the payment structure will be as follows:

- 50% at project start-up following signing of a WGCMA Landholder Partnership Agreement and provision of quotations
- 30% at a specified project mid-point subject to provision of relevant invoices
- 20% on project completion subject to provision of relevant invoices

## Eligible Activities & Criteria

The table below lists the eligible activities and the incentive rates available through the project.

### Eligible activities for use with project funds

Activity Type	Example
Professional agricultural planning or consulting services	Contracting a professional agricultural planner or consultant to develop or assist with the development and implementation of on-farm plans or activities that meet the project objectives.
Equipment and/or infrastructure	Purchasing of equipment or infrastructure that contribute to project objectives.
Monitoring and evaluation equipment and/or services	**All funded projects <u>must</u> include a plan for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the demonstration. This could include specific monitoring equipment and/or contracting professional services to assist with monitoring. Costs associated with monitoring can be included in the grant application.
Other	As a rule of thumb, any expenditure on products or services that are necessary for the demonstration to succeed will be eligible.

## Ineligible Activities

The following activities/costs are not eligible to be claimed as part of a project:

- Labour, staffing or time related expenses (other than contracted professional services)
- Any activities considered to be routine farm maintenance or costs associated with routine maintenance
- Any product or service funded, in part or in whole, by another Government run grants program. However, the project may fund activities that add to or extend other funded projects (eg. Funding monitoring equipment to measure the benefits of a previously funded activity).
- General supplies and consumables

## Eligibility Checklist

#	Eligibility Criteria	Criteria Met (Y / N / NA)
1	Is the property within the Lake Wellington catchment?	
2	Does the property have a current irrigation licence (groundwater, river & drain diversion licences ARE acceptable)?	
3	Does the property have an approved irrigation farm plan?  Any infrastructure works or major earthworks must be in accordance with a completed and APPROVED Irrigation Farm Plan showing a detailed design of the proposed project. NB: Planning activities, including updates to existing farm plans can be incorporated into the project plan.	
4	Is the applicant in a position to comply with any Milestones set in the project contract?	
5	Can the applicant complete the works within the agreed timeframe?	
6	Is the applicant able to meet all statutory requirements and provide a copy of all relevant permits for on-ground works prior to incentives payment being processed including any permits relating to the clearing of native vegetation?	
7	Has the applicant confirmed that the works have not commenced?  Projects must not commence until the WGCMA Landholder Partnership Agreement has been signed. No retrospective payments will be made.	
8	Is the applicant willing to meet any additional criteria stated in the landholder contract?	
9	Is the application deemed eligible by the Oversight Committee?  The Oversight Committee reserves the right to overturn the eligibility status of an application (from eligible to ineligible and vice versa) if, in the opinion of the Oversight Committee, the eligibility criteria is creating a perverse or unintended outcome in the context of the project objectives.	

## Funding Principles

As a trial and demonstration project, all funded projects should aim to meet the following **principles**:

- The projects should serve as a catalyst for practice change, for example projects should;
  - be repeatable on other Gippsland farms,
  - showcase new technology or innovative practice that have NOT yet been widely adopted in Gippsland, or
  - capture real data around existing practices that currently only have anecdotal evidence in a Gippsland context
- The farm must be willing to share all pertinent information (both successes and failings) with the community via site visits/field days/conversations and a broad range of media (eg. newspaper, radio, web, social media).
- The project must be able to monitor and evaluate outcomes (eg. increased water use efficiency, crop pasture yield, decreased nutrient/water/power/fert use, etc).
- Projects should be applicable to a wide irrigation audience across Gippsland
- Projects with an ability to leverage other projects/grants would be advantageous
- Linkages with industry bodies would be advantageous (eg. GippsDairy, VegNET/FFG, AusVeg, VFF)

## Procedure – How will my application be handled?

This procedure describes how the project will run including how an application will be managed and evaluated.



### Step 1. Expressions of Interest (EOI)

1. If you are interested in submitting an EOI, please contact one of the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Officers listed on the front of this booklet to discuss your ideas and arrange a 1 hour on-farm consultation session.
2. Following the consultation, you may apply for the project at any time during the EOI period by completing an application form and basic project plan (refer to Attachment 1).
3. The Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Officer will be able to provide some guidance on completing the application.
4. On receipt of an application, Agriculture Victoria will record the application on a secure database in preparation for the evaluation process

### Step 2. Application Shortlisting & Eligibility Checks

1. Your application will be preliminary assessed against the eligibility criteria. All applications that are deemed eligible will move onto the next step.
2. Depending on the number of eligible applications received, the Project Oversight Committee may need to short-list applications. Application short-listing is based on the assessment criteria contained in Attachment 2.
3. Short-listed applications will move onto the next step.
4. If your application is not short-listed, you will be contacted by your Agriculture Victoria case manager who will provide an explanation for the decision. You also have the right to request an explanation from the Project Oversight Committee, if you are not satisfied with the outcome.

### Step 3. Final Evaluation (Irrigator Reference Group Meeting)

1. A meeting with the WGCMA's Irrigator Reference Group shall be called to inform the final evaluation. During the meeting, all applications will be anonymised. That is, the Irrigator Reference Group will not know who the applicants are, but will be provided with an overview of the project's method and intended outcomes.
2. During the meeting the Group will discuss and comment on the scoring given to each of the applications using the assessment template. The scoring system will be used a guide only. The final project selection will take into account additional factors such as:

- The diversity of projects (eg. it may not be desirable to fund the two highest ranking projects if they are both very similar projects)
  - The available budget (eg. the combined impact of funding 2 or 3 'low-cost' projects may be deemed to be greater than funding 1 'high-cost' project)
3. The Irrigator Reference Group will provide a recommendation on projects to be funded to the Project Oversight Committee.
  4. The Project Oversight Committee have the final say on which projects get funded.
  5. Your Agriculture Victoria case manager will contact you regarding the outcome of the evaluation process. You also have the right to request an explanation from the Project Oversight Committee if you are not satisfied with the outcome.

#### Step 4. Landholder Partnership Agreement

1. **IMPORTANT!!! – DO NOT COMMENCE ANY WORKS UNTILL YOU HAVE SIGNED THE WGCMA LANDHOLDER PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT! WORKS COMMENCED BEFORE THIS TIME WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING.**
2. All successful applicants will be required to develop a detailed project plan in consultation with their AgVic case manager.
3. Where deemed relevant, a copy of your draft project plan may be supplied to the following parties:
  - a. SRW who may advise on supply or drainage considerations.
  - b. WGCMA Statutory Planning regarding any Works on Waterways or earthworks on the floodplain
  - c. Local Government regarding native vegetation issues
  - d. EPA who may identify whether the applicant has existing sanctions of relevance to the project
4. The project plan will then form an addendum to the WGCMA Landholder Partnership Agreement which will be signed by the relevant Landowner and WGCMA Unit Manager.

#### Step 5. Project Delivery & Milestones

1. Your AgVic case manager will be your primary point of contact throughout the project lifetime and will provide support as necessary.
2. In order to track progress of individual projects, and ensure projects are completed on time, successful applicants will be required to meet milestones described in the project plan. Milestones will include pertinent extension activities such as:
  - a. Public field days and farm walks (at least 2 throughout the project lifetime)
  - b. Participation in interviews including podcasts and videos as described in your project plan (at least one throughout the project lifetime)
  - c. Provision of all pertinent information and data to create written case studies (at least one throughout the project lifetime)
3. Milestone payments shall be made in accordance with the agreed schedule in the project plan
4. During the project delivery phase, if there are any **variances** required to the project plan the irrigator must advise their case manager.
5. Depending on the nature of the variance, a variation to the project plan may be required in which case the Plan may need to be reapproved.
6. The Oversight Committee will have the final say on whether project variations are acceptable or not.

## Step 6. Project Close

1. Project close and final payments shall be made in accordance with the schedule in the project plan.
2. Each demonstration site may be utilised for extension purposes for up to 3 years following project close at the request of Agriculture Victoria or the WGCMA.

## Intellectual Property

Any reports, case studies, media, etc, and therefore any data, information and Intellectual Property contained within these publications, that are produced as a result of the funded projects, in accordance with the Landholder Partnership Agreement, will become the property of the WGCMA. As a public entity, all WGCMA publications would then be freely available to the public.

If there is specific information or data (eg. confidential information) that a landholder did not want published, the WGCMA will consider all reasonable requests and discuss this as part of the landholder agreement process. In considering privacy and confidentiality, the WGCMA will refer the request to the project's Oversight Committee to consider whether the need for privacy will unreasonably compromise the objectives of the project.

Any formal arrangement regarding confidentiality and/or intellectual property will be clearly described in the Landholder Partnership Agreement.

# Attachment 1 – Expression of Interest Form



Company trading name	
Contact name(s)	
Phone number(s)	
Postal address	
Email	
Company ABN	
Farm address/Lot:	
Irrigation water source:	

**Proposed project**

Please provide a short description of your proposed demonstration project. Your Agriculture Victoria case manager will then undertake a site visit and help you develop a full project proposal for assessment.

**Select which outcome applies to your project:**

- Reduction in runoff of nutrients and other pollutants to the Gippsland Lakes
- Contain/improve impacts of salinity and high-watertables
- Sustainable regional economic growth
- Improved understanding and management of social and cultural values
- Reduced greenhouse emissions from irrigated agriculture

Please email the completed form to the following contacts:

<p><b>Alexis Killoran</b> Senior Irrigation Extension Officer M: 0428 387 869 <a href="mailto:alexis.c.killoran@agriculture.vic.gov.au">alexis.c.killoran@agriculture.vic.gov.au</a></p>	<p><b>Billy Marshall</b> Senior Irrigation Extension Officer M: 0418 718 527 <a href="mailto:billy.marshall@agriculture.vic.gov.au">billy.marshall@agriculture.vic.gov.au</a></p>
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**Privacy:** Personal information supplied by you and contained on/within the application form is collected, stored and maintained for the purpose of facilitating and administering this program. The information may be disclosed to relevant government organisations or other agencies for the sole purpose of administering the program.

Funding for this project comes from the Victorian Government Sustainable Irrigation Program.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Eligibility Checks	Yes	No	NA
Is the applicant the property owner?			
Is the property within the Lake Wellington catchment?			
Has the project/project area been previously funded by government incentive?			
Does the property have an approved irrigation farm plan?			
Does the property have a current irrigation license (groundwater, river & drain diversion licenses ARE acceptable)?			

Please refer to the Project Landholder Booklet for a full list of the eligibility criteria.

# Attachment 2 – Assessment Template

The assessment template is used as a guide only. The final project selection will take into account additional factors such as:

- The diversity of projects (eg. it may not be desirable to fund the two highest ranking projects if they are both very similar projects)
- The available budget (eg. the combined impact of funding 2 or 3 'low-cost' projects may be deemed to be greater than funding 1 'high-cost' project)

Lake Wellington Land and Water Management Plan					
Irrigation Demonstration Program					
RAW SCORES GUIDANCE					
5 = Will certainly have a strong contribution to the objective/principle	2 = May have a small contribution to the objective/principle				
4 = Will more than likely have a good contribution to the objective/principle	1 = Unlikely to have any contribution to the principles				
3 = Will likely have some contribution to the objective/principle	0 = Potential negative contribution to the objective/principle*				
* Any project scoring a 0 in any category will be referred to the Oversight Committee. If the negative contribution is deemed to be to significant then the project may be deemed ineligible, regardless of how well it scores on the other criteria.					
Assessment Matrix					
PART A - LWMP Objective		Raw Score (1-5)	Weight	Weighted Score	Comments
Reduction in nutrients and other pollutants in the Gippsland Lakes*		4	40%	16	
Contain impacts of salinity and high-watertables		2	25%	5	
Sustainable regional economic growth		3	10%	3	
Improved understanding and management of social and cultural values		1	10%	1	
Reduced greenhouse emissions from irrigated agriculture		4	15%	6	
<b>PART A SCORE (OUT OF 50)</b>				<b>31</b>	
<i>* At least one project scoring 3 or more for 'reduction in nutrients' must be funded</i>					
PART B - Demonstration Principle		Raw Score (1-5)	Weight	Weighted Score	Comments
Potential to act as a catalyst for practice change		2	20%	4	
Applicability to wide irrigation audience across Gippsland AND potential for repeatability on other Gippsland farms		5	20%	10	
Ability to showcase new technology or innovative practice that have NOT yet been widely adopted in Gippsland; OR Capture real data around existing practices that currently only have anecdotal evidence in a Gippsland context		1	20%	2	
Ability to monitor and evaluate outcomes (eg. increased water use efficiency, crop pasture yield, decreased nutrient/water/power/fert)		2	20%	4	
Potential for linkages with other industry bodies/groups (eg. GippsDairy, VegNET/FFG, VFF)		3	20%	6	
<b>PART B SCORE (OUT OF 50)</b>				<b>26</b>	
<b>COMBINED SCORE (OUT OF 100)</b>				<b>57</b>	
Evaluation Panel Comments					