

# Joint Media Release



23 March 2018

## Shipwreck Coast delegation to Canberra

A delegation advocating for Shipwreck Coast investment will meet Ministers, shadow Ministers and high-level department officials in Canberra next Tuesday (27 March).

Delegation members will include:

- Regional Development Australia Barwon South West Committee chair & Warrnambool City Council CEO Bruce Anson;
- Great Ocean Road Tourism chair Wayne Kayler-Thomson;
- Surf Coast Shire CEO Keith Baillie; and
- G21 – Geelong Region Alliance CEO Elaine Carbines.

The delegation will explain the challenges facing the Shipwreck Coast and promote opportunities for \$152 million of government plus private investment in key region-building projects, including proposed world-class visitor facilities.

The Shipwreck Coast is an iconic destination on the Great Ocean Road. It runs 28 kilometres along Victoria's south-west from Princetown to the Bay of Islands and includes the Port Campbell National Park, the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park and the Bay of Islands Coastal Park.

Investment in projects that surround these attractions is important to overall economic growth along the entire Great Ocean Road. There are clear synergies between visitations the Shipwreck Coast and the visitor economies of the Geelong region and centres along the south-west coast.

The Great Ocean Road area attracts more than 6 million tourists a year and is projected to reach 8.1 million in the next decade. Yet many visitors spend little money with local businesses, while causing crowding at the largely under-developed viewing platforms and other facilities.

The challenge is to provide a better, safer and more environment-friendly experience for visitors, both on the coast itself and in the hinterland, while encouraging spending with local and regional businesses.

Without investment, the area which is heavily promoted to international tourists by federal and state government, risks major capacity, safety, and reputational issues.

The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan was developed several years ago by local south-west councils, tourism bodies and state government agencies, after extensive community consultation.

The State Government has already committed \$14.8 million towards Master Plan implementation works, such as improvements and maintenance at the Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre, viewing areas, carpark and associated facilities.

The delegation will promote a \$152 million stage of the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan designed to harness the huge growth of inbound tourism to the region to deliver significant economic benefits.

The \$152 million package includes 37 integrated infrastructure projects to drive transformation and encourage private investment. The projects are interdependent and need to be delivered sequentially over four to five years.

They include a world-class visitor experience centre, vastly upgraded visitor facilities at the Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge, improved visitor transport and town facilities and environmental works. This investment will support and encourage private sector investment in accommodation and other visitor experiences and services.

Modelling shows that an investment of \$152 million in the Shipwreck Coast would produce \$840 million of economic benefits over 20 years and sustain some 1300 direct and indirect jobs over nine years.

The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan has had a good hearing from politicians, however the delegation will reinforce the need for funding as part of the upcoming Federal Budget or a potential federal-state City Deal funding package for Geelong and the Great Ocean Road.

***Media contacts:***

***Bruce Anson***, RDA Barwon South West Committee chair & Warrnambool City Council CEO, 0428 528 819

***Wayne Kayler-Thomson***, Great Ocean Road Tourism chair, 0417 054 041

***Keith Baillie***, Surf Coast Shire CEO, 0427 096 122

***Elaine Carbines***, G21 CEO, 0437 202 300

***Andrew Mason***, Corangamite Shire CEO, 0428 301 909