



4.4 Condition and management outcomes for Aboriginal cultural places and historic heritage places

Indicators

- Condition of Aboriginal cultural heritage places
- Condition of historic heritage places and assets
- Extent management objectives met for conservation of cultural and heritage places

Context

The condition of cultural and heritage places, whether Aboriginal cultural places or historic places is affected by natural forces such as weathering, bushfire and climate, other direct threats such as disturbance by humans or animals the level of knowledge and types of park management interventions.

Understanding the condition of Aboriginal cultural places and the appropriate interventions to restore or maintain the places requires the involvement of Traditional Owners working in partnership with park managers. In several cases, Traditional Owners are joint or co-managers of parks.

The appropriate condition of historic places reflects its physical role as well as its scale and complexity. The condition criteria for a large fully functioning building, such as an operating lighthouse, differs significantly from criteria for a standing remnant such as Fort Nepean or an archaeological site such as a mine relic, where the goal may be to allow natural decline.

Condition of Aboriginal cultural heritage places

Park managers reported that Aboriginal places and objects were in excellent or good condition in 34% of relevant Parks. However the condition was unknown in around half of the relevant parks. More parks with Aboriginal places and objects reported that condition declined than improved and more than half of the relevant parks reported that the trend in condition was unknown. Appendix 4.2 provides information on condition and trend.

Figure 4.3.1 Overall condition of Aboriginal cultural places

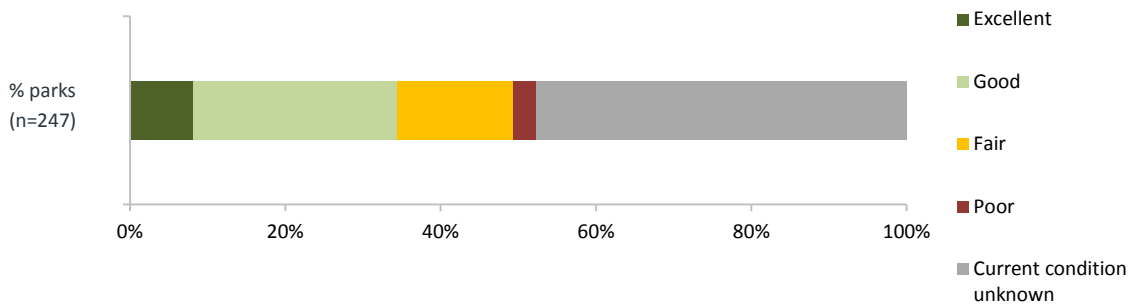
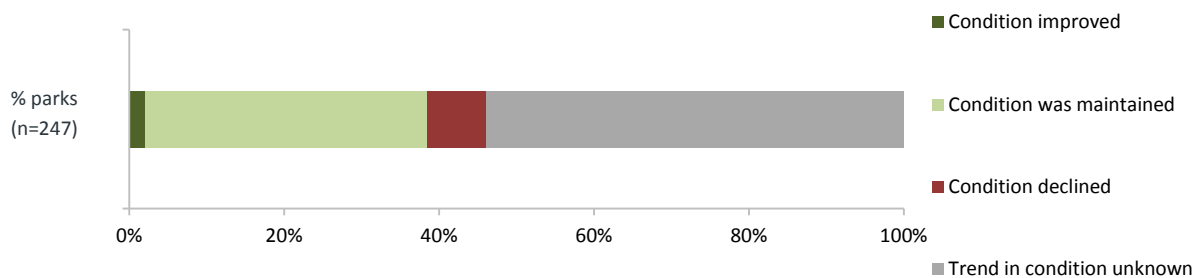


Figure 4.3.2 Trend in condition of Aboriginal cultural places



Condition of historic cultural heritage places

Park managers reported that the heritage places and objects of 39% of parks were in excellent or good condition, with 35% of parks reporting that current condition was fair. Few parks reported that the trend in condition of heritage places and objects improved, while 20% of parks reported that condition of historic places had declined. Appendix 4.3 provides more detail on condition and trend

Of the 69 parks with heritage places listed on Victorian heritage Register parks, 48% reported that heritage places were in excellent or good condition. Forty-eight percent reported that condition was improved or stable and 32% reported that condition had declined since 2010.

For specific heritage assets, 63% of heritage buildings were in improving or stable condition 36% were declining in condition.

Figure 4.3.3 Condition of all historic heritage places

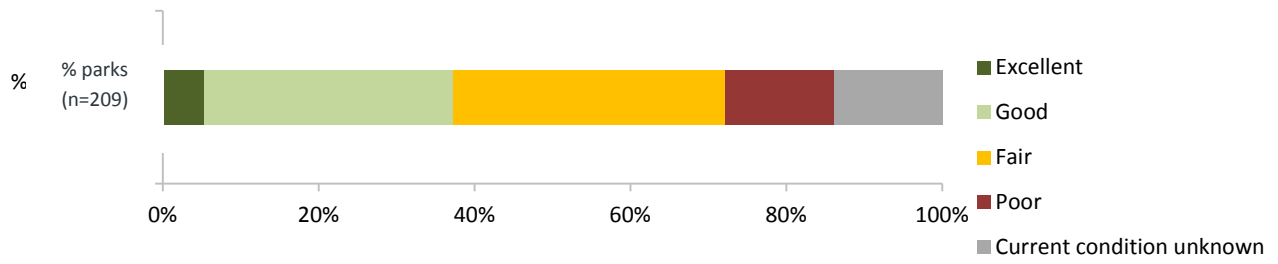


Figure 4.3. 5 Trend in condition of all heritage places

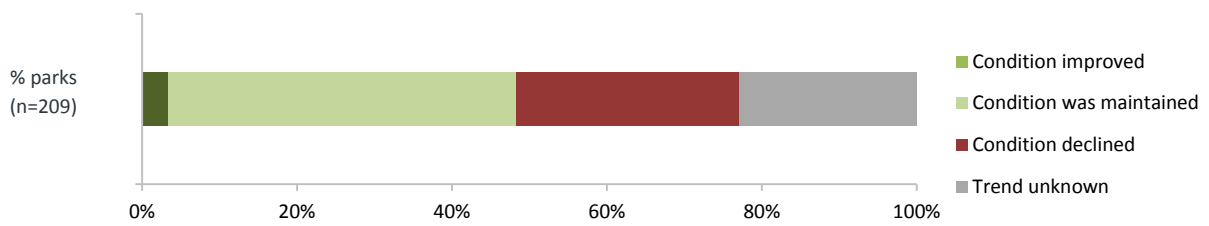


Figure 4.3.4 Condition of state heritage listed places

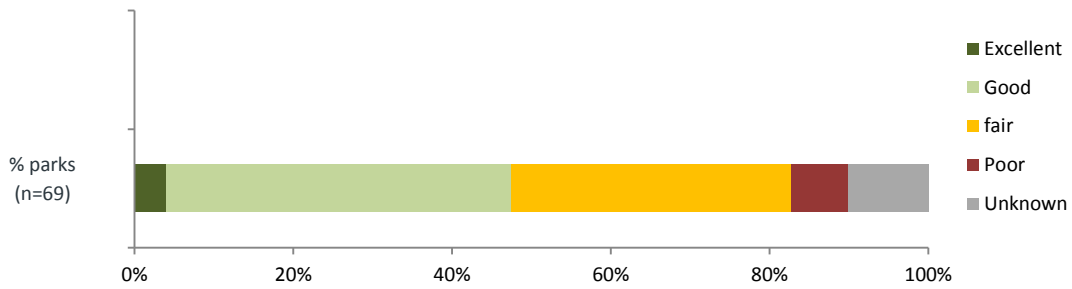


Figure 4.3.6 Trend in condition of state heritage listed paces

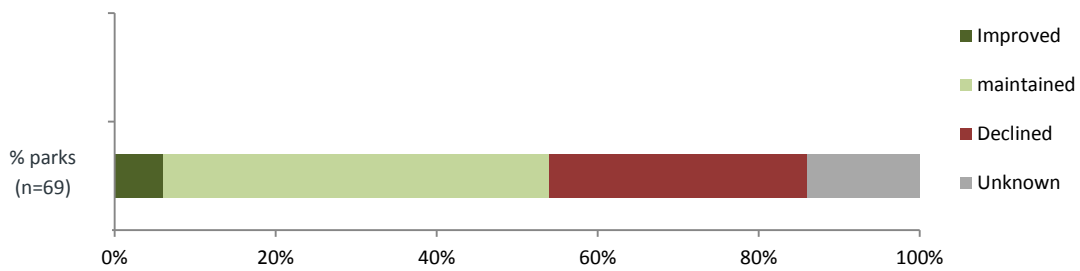


Figure 4.3.7 Condition of historic heritage places by place type

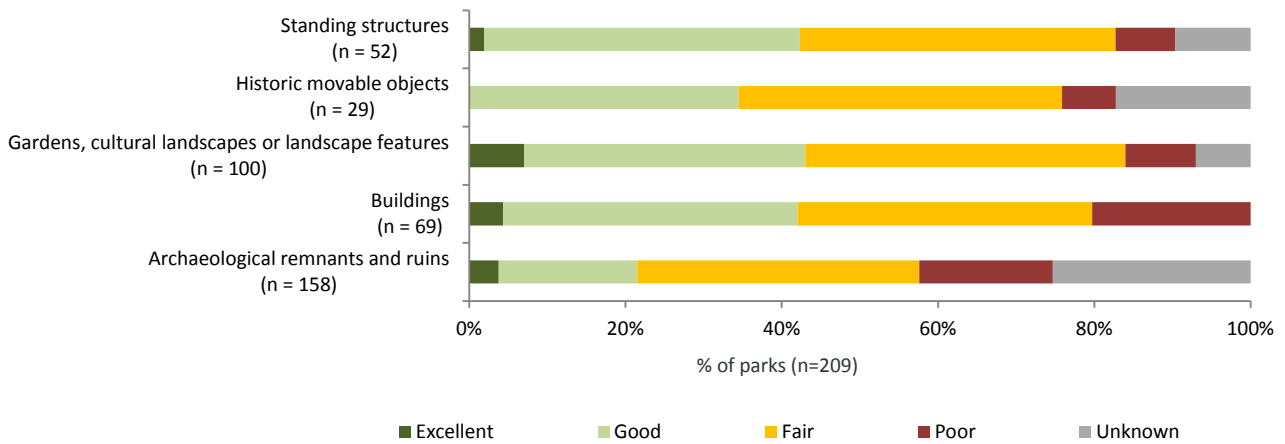


Figure 4.3.8 Trend in condition of historic heritage places by place type

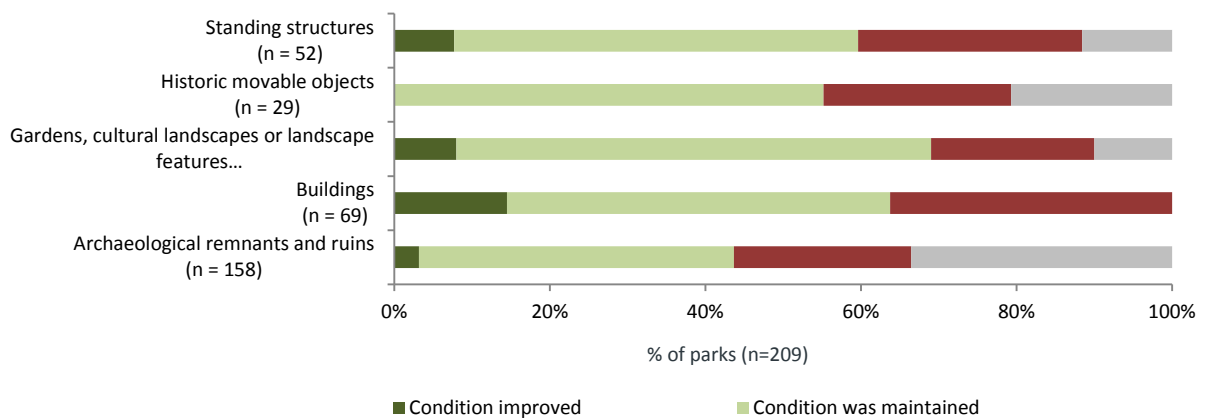
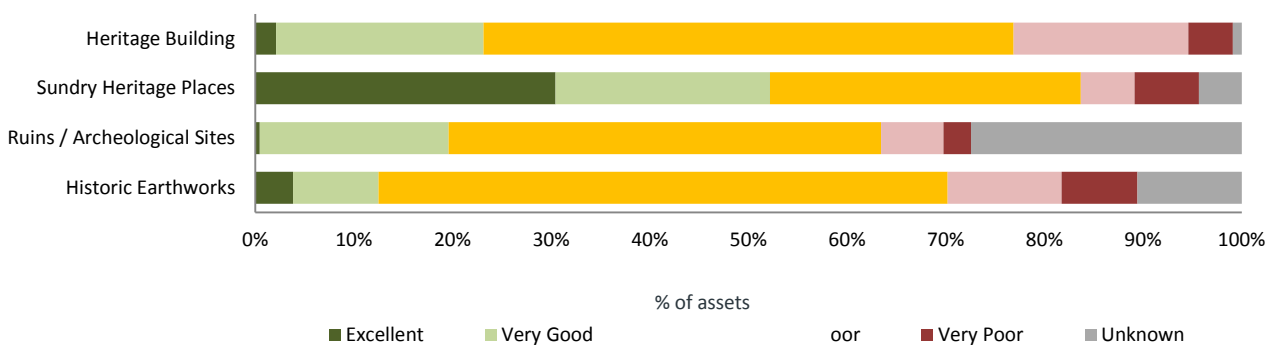


Figure 4.3.9 Condition of historic heritage by asset type

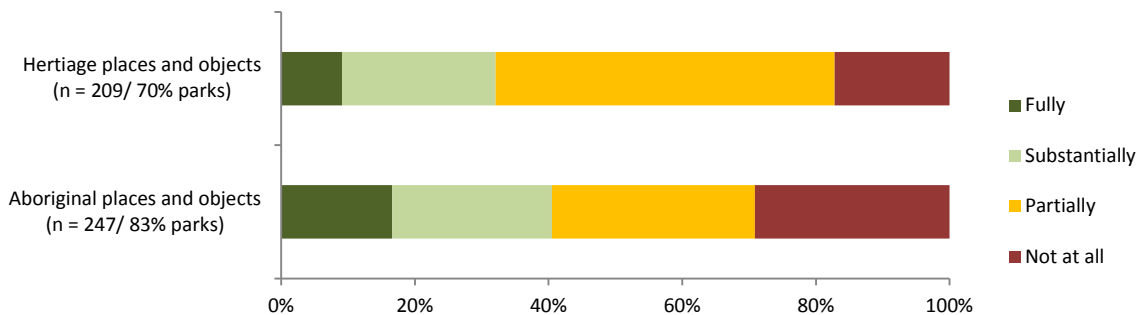


Source: Parks Victoria Asset Information System

Extent management objectives met for conservation of cultural and heritage places

Park staff reported that approximately 40% of parks with Aboriginal places and objects and 30% of parks with heritage places and objects fully or substantially met management objectives. More than half of the parks with these values reported that they partially met or did not at all meet management objectives for conservation of culture and heritage values. Appendix 4.4 and Appendix 4.5 provides further information on condition and trend across the parks network.

The extent to which management objectives for cultural and heritage values were met



Key factors influencing management effectiveness (other than resources)

Aboriginal heritage

Improved management actions

- Park manager awareness of the significance of Aboriginal places has increased, and Joint Management and Co-management agreements with Traditional Owners has increased..
- There has been some good progress made in partnership programs across a range of parks and there are many more opportunities for involvement in park management by Traditional Owners.
- Following severe weather and flooding, major rehabilitation works of significant sites were completed at locations such as the Grampians National Park.
- New programs with Traditional Owners to protect burial sites were implemented in Mallee parks in Victoria's north west which increased awareness of the significance of burials sites.

Challenges and future actions

- Fire and flood caused significant loss and damage to some Aboriginal places. The likely increases of extreme weather related to climate change occurring will need to be recognised in plans to conserve Aboriginal places.
- As Joint Management arrangements increase, more cultural awareness programs for park managers will be needed to improve conservation management practices.
- Contemporary strategies will need to be developed for managing Aboriginal cultural places in partnership with Traditional Owners.

- There are several widespread threats to Aboriginal cultural places, including site disturbance that will require additional action.
- New technology-based tools will help increase understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation and compliance requirements.
- Knowledge about the condition and trend in condition of Aboriginal cultural places is lacking in many parks. Knowledge could be further shared between park managers and Traditional Owners to assist in conserving Aboriginal places and intangible values.
- Historically, there has been limited monitoring of significant sites. There is a major opportunity to develop a systematic program of monitoring and assessing these sites in partnership with Traditional Owners.

Historic heritage

Improved management actions

- Several new partnerships developed to help restore, maintain and better present significant heritage assets.
- Data about heritage condition is progressively being validated across the state and is improving information about Victoria's heritage places.

Challenges and future actions

- Lack of knowledge has been identified as a key threat for some heritage places. However, initial steps are being taken to improve monitoring and assessment of priority heritage places.
- Limited resources available for conservation and presentation of historic heritage have focused management efforts on a small number of highest priority places such as Point Nepean.
- Further prioritisation and strategic planning of historic places and assets is required including a review of the most appropriate management arrangements for different types of historic places.
- Further review of partnership opportunities for heritage conservation and management is required.
- Cost effective contemporary heritage place management planning and information systems are required.
- There are opportunities to increase staff and community awareness and understanding of heritage conservation.