



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Water and Environmental Regulation**

*We're working for
Western Australia.*



Annual report

2020–21

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

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Statement of compliance

For the year ended 30 June 2020

Hon Dave Kelly MLA
Minister for Water

Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA
Minister for Environment; Climate Action

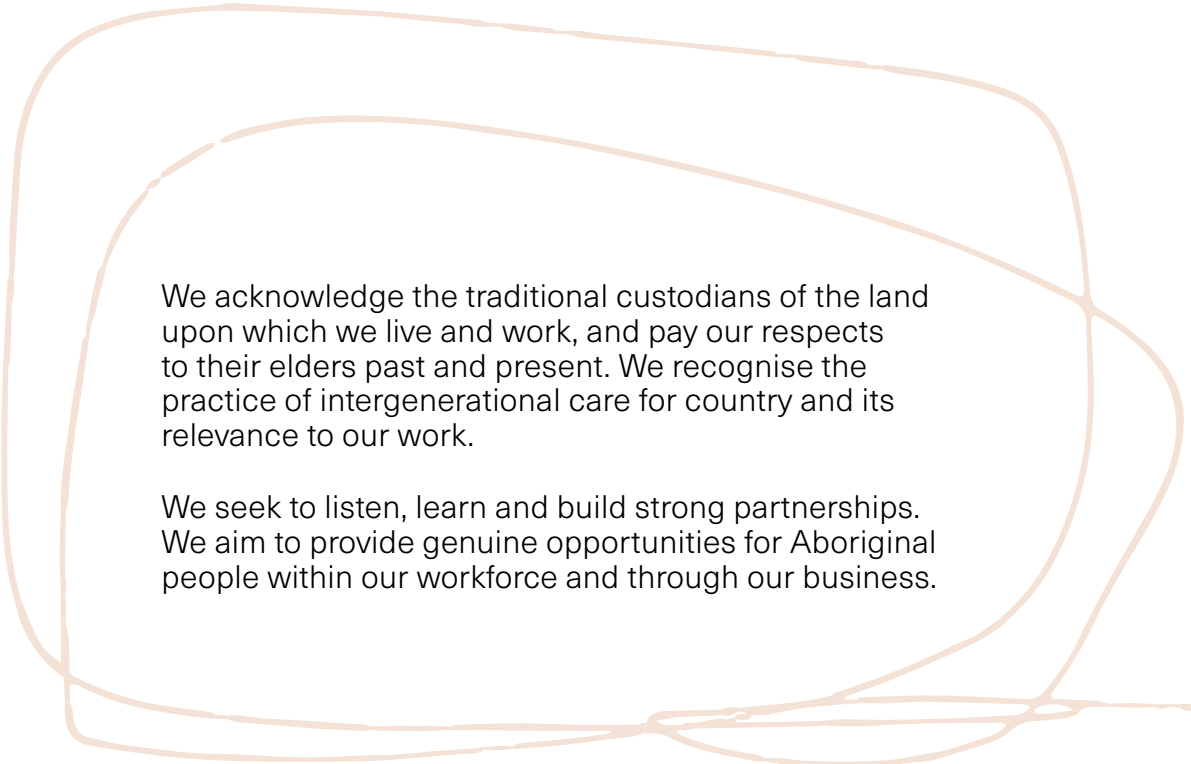
In accordance with section 63 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*,
I hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament the annual report for the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the financial year ended 30 June 2020.
The annual report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.



Michelle Andrews
Director General
12 October 2021

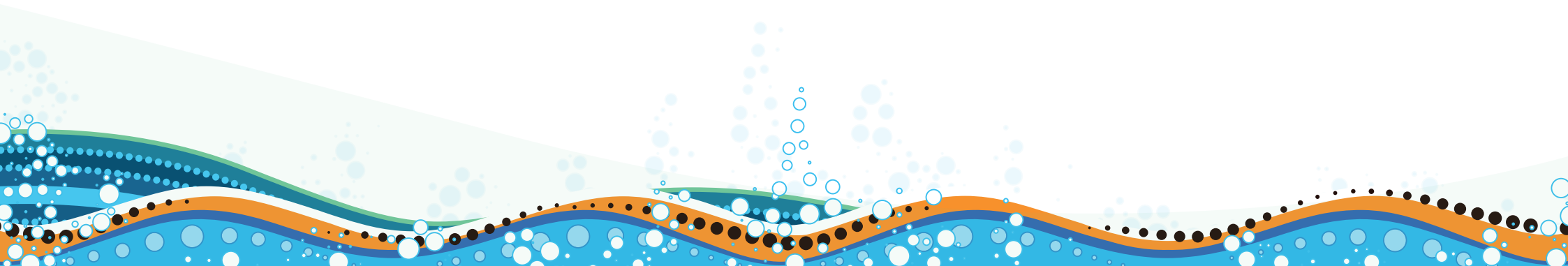


The cover artwork for this annual report was designed by Paige Corunna, a Whadjuk Noongar woman with Wajarri (Yamatji) and Palyku ancestral connections, who worked in our Corporate Communications branch as part of the WA Public Sector Commission's [Aboriginal Traineeship Program](#). The symbols represent water, air and land – all areas the department is charged with protecting – and the connections between them. Paige, 19, now works in Canberra after gaining a place on the Australian Government's Indigenous Apprenticeship Program.



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we live and work, and pay our respects to their elders past and present. We recognise the practice of intergenerational care for country and its relevance to our work.

We seek to listen, learn and build strong partnerships. We aim to provide genuine opportunities for Aboriginal people within our workforce and through our business.



From the Director General



I am delighted to present the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's 2020–21 annual report.

It reflects our work on the Government of Western Australia's priority areas of waste and recycling, climate change and liveability, while furthering its commitment to improved water and environmental regulation outcomes.

It is also a result of our staff maintaining their high standards under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. They transitioned seamlessly to working from home during three snap lockdowns in the Perth and Peel regions, adapted to wearing face masks and social distancing practices in our offices, and found new ways to engage with stakeholders, maintain service delivery and carry out fieldwork.

They ensured the department was open for business even if it was not quite business as usual, and I applaud their professionalism and commitment to public service.

You will find a thorough account of our operations in this report. However, I would like to highlight some achievements:

EP Amendment Act 2020

We are implementing the most significant reforms to the state's environmental legislation in more than 30 years through the *Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2020*, which received Royal Assent on 19 November 2020. The amendments include streamlining the environmental impact assessment process, improving the pathway for regulation of native vegetation clearing, improving the efficiency of regulating emissions and discharges, modernising and improving investigation and enforcement powers, and increasing penalties for certain environmental offences.

Climate Action

We took a lead role in the new Climate Action portfolio, which was announced in March 2021 as the State Government underlined its commitment to tackling climate change. This follows the department's release of the *Western Australian Climate Policy*, and the *State Electric Vehicle Strategy*.

WA Recovery Plan and Green Jobs

We played a vital part in the State Government's WA Recovery Plan to counter the effects of COVID-19. We delivered four of the seven programs under the \$60 million Green Jobs Plan, creating job opportunities while delivering environmental benefits. We were also an enabling agency for infrastructure initiatives such as road programs.

Cross-government initiatives

We supported important cross-government initiatives. We are leading the Wooroloo bushfires clean-up, and identified contamination risks as part of the Tropical Cyclone Seroja response. We are working with METRONET to support a sustainability approach, and on the Westport project we are leading the research planning to minimise the environmental impact on Cockburn Sound and surrounds. Through Streamline WA, meanwhile, we are making it easier to do business in our state by improving regulatory practice.

Containers for Change

We launched the state's container deposit scheme, Containers for Change, on 1 October 2020. With 205 refund points in place and more than 680 people employed, up to the end of June a staggering 535 million eligible beverage containers were recycled – each generating a 10-cent refund, with more than \$1.9 million donated to charities and community groups.

Plan for Plastics

We released the Plan for Plastics policy in November 2020, a project which was then fast-tracked in June 2021. The new timeframe will see many single-use plastics phased out by the end of 2022, four years earlier than planned. We established a working group of representatives from the disability, aged-care, medical, retail and environmental sectors to ensure people who require plastic straws to meet their life needs can be assured of a continued supply.

Waste Authority and KABC support

We supported the Waste Authority as, among many projects, it launched the 'Be a GREAT sort' behaviour change campaign to reduce landfill. We also supported the Keep Australia Beautiful Council as it released the *Litter Prevention Strategy for Western Australia 2020–2025*.

EPA support

Our officers prepared environmental impact assessments, cumulative impact studies, statutory policies and strategic advice to support the work of the independent Environmental Protection Authority, which received the highest number of referrals for development proposals in six years.

Water milestones

Our precious water resources are being impacted by climate change, particularly in the state's South West. But we marked a significant milestone with the completion of a five-year program to introduce water metering and measurement to water licences above 10,000 kilolitres. We also developed a code of practice requiring water service providers to support and protect customers affected by family violence.

Groundwater allocation plans

We developed groundwater allocation plans to ensure this resource is used sustainably by businesses and the public, releasing the final Cockburn groundwater area allocation plan, consulting on proposals for Derby and the Fitzroy River in the Kimberley, and preparing the next Gnangara plan.

Supporting regional areas

We helped regional areas better cope with reduced rainfall caused by climate change. Our total investment reached \$3.7 million as we carted water for emergency livestock needs in up to 12 water deficiency declared areas. We also invested \$915,902 through the Community Water Supply Program, and \$741,890 through the Rural Water Planning works program.

Waterwise Perth Action Plan

We influenced strategic land planning to avoid impacts on our vegetation, habitat and water resources. We are encouraging waterwise urban design, work that has been enhanced through the Waterwise Perth Action Plan.

Healthy Estuaries WA program

Our work as stewards of estuaries and inland waterways continued through the \$25 million Healthy Estuaries WA program. This will be extended through additional funding to implement the Peel-Harvey Estuary Protection Plan, or Bindjareb Djilba in the local Bindjareb Noongar language, a 2017 election commitment released in November 2020.

As you will read in the following pages, many of these achievements involved significant collaboration with other government agencies and I would like to highlight our work with the Department of Finance on two key contracts – system integrator and program management services – for our important Environment Online project.

I was also delighted to learn that our most recent research into community, customer and stakeholder perceptions shows the increased focus on meeting stakeholders' needs has coincided with improvements in the satisfaction rating for many areas of our business.

Meanwhile, our commitment to business excellence has seen our Finance team recognised by the Auditor General as a best-practice large entity for timeliness and quality of reporting, financial reporting and controls. The Keep Australia Beautiful Council, which our Finance team supports, received the same recognition in the small entity category. You can see their latest efforts in our financial statements, which start on page 82.

Most of these achievements were under the leadership of my predecessor as Director General, Mike Rowe. In taking over from Mike under the State Government's senior leadership renewal in May 2021, I appreciate the ground he covered over the past four years, particularly in merging three agencies into one.

I can assure you the department will continue with its commitment of service improvement and excellence, and we have been busy setting our directions for the next three years as we develop a new Strategic Plan.

I look forward to working with you in 2021–22.



Michelle Andrews
Director General



A giant Black Swan made from plastic bottles appeared in Perth promoting Containers for Change (© WARRRL)

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Overview

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At a glance



6,183

requests for water
information via the Water
Information Reporting portal



4,237 GL

of water licensed for use



100+

air quality technical reviews
completed



394

contaminated sites
classified under the
*Contaminated Sites
Act 2003*



30,000

tonnes of recycled C&D
waste used in our Roads
to Reuse program



\$126,321

in fines issued after
51 persons/entities were
prosecuted for illegal dumping



703

new controlled waste
licence applications
assessed



4,540

water incident reviews
undertaken



3,287

reports submitted to the
Pollution Watch Hotline



12,535

water licences managed
across Western Australia



358

native vegetation clearing
permit applications
received



535 million

containers returned through
Containers for Change

Who we are

Vision

A healthy environment and secure water resources, valued by all, to support a liveable and prosperous Western Australia (WA).

Mission

To lead and excel in the sustainable management and protection of Western Australia's water and environment.

Strategic directions

This was the third year of the department's inaugural Strategic Plan 2018–21.

Share responsibility for water and the environment

We support integrated environmental and water planning to deliver whole-of-government goals, involving the community and industry. By collaborating effectively and engaging openly, we establish partnerships with stakeholders and build a shared understanding of Western Australia's environmental and water issues.

Deliver effective legislation and policy

We deliver legislative reform to enhance collaborative cross-government outcomes and reduce unnecessary regulation. Our policy and legislative framework supports good performance and encourages continuous improvement.

Be a responsive and credible regulator

We streamline our approach to regulatory assessments and advice, to provide consistency and certainty for stakeholders. Our internal practices, online systems and resources deliver good customer service, and we apply regulatory best-practice principles. We ensure regulated stakeholders meet their commitments and we undertake appropriate compliance and enforcement.

Deliver trusted information, science and evidence-based advice

We are recognised as leaders and experts in water and environmental information, science and evidence-based advice, collaborating with trusted partners to create a shared science and knowledge base and to foster innovation. We communicate and share knowledge in a timely, transparent and stakeholder-focused way to build understanding and support for sound decision-making.

Build organisational excellence

We deliver integrated services and online systems that are easy to use. Our people are knowledgeable, flexible and focused on delivering the best-possible outcomes for WA's community, economy and environment.

Performance summary

Actual results versus budget targets

The department evaluates, measures and reports on the effectiveness of its services in achieving its desired agency-level outcomes through key performance indicators.

Key performance indicators comprise both effectiveness and efficiency indicators.

Effectiveness indicators show the extent to which the department achieved its department-level outcomes, while efficiency indicators show the cost of services delivered by the department, as summarised in the following tables.

Financial targets

	2019–20 Actual (\$'000)	2020–21 Budget (\$'000)	2020–21 Actual (\$'000)	2020–21 Variance (\$'000)
Total cost of services (that is endorsed expense limit)	182,634	206,274	183,143	23,131
Net cost of services (details in the income statement)	66,254	73,884	63,290	10,594
Total equity (details in the statement of financial position)	490,592	499,149	523,091	-23,942
Agreed salary expense level	93,496	94,993	90,312	4,681
Working cash limit	8,328	9,238	8,264	974

Performance summary

Summary of key effectiveness indicators

Outcome	Key effectiveness indicator	2019–20	2020–21		
		Actual %	Target %	Actual %	Variance %
1. Western Australia's growth and development is supported by the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state	Proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable, productive use	55	55	62	7 ↑
	Proportion of priority growth areas that have a water supply planning strategy	77	100	100	0 ↑
2. Emissions, discharges and clearing of native vegetation are effectively regulated to avoid unacceptable risks to public health and the environment	Percentage of regulatory compliance activities completed as planned	96	100	100	0 ↑
	Percentage of potential environmental risks identified during compliance monitoring program that are rectified within two months	43	40	20	-20 ↓
3. Development and implementation of strategic policy and legislation that promoted sustainable environmental outcomes	Percentage of advice and recommendations that met Ministerial approval, without the need for significant modification	86	95	92	-3 ↓
4. Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised	Percentage of municipal solid waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to waste strategy target in the Perth metropolitan region	34	40	31	-9 ↓
	Percentage of commercial and industrial waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the state-wide waste strategy target	51	45	44	-1 ↓
	Percentage of construction and demolition waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	81	75	81	6 ↑
5. Quality advice to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and Minister for Environment on significant proposals and environmental issues	The EPA's satisfaction with the department's environmental impact assessment (EIA) service, during the year, in line with best practice principles of EIA	97	80	96	16 ↑
	Percentage of project-specific conditions which did not require significant change following the appeal process	95	80	98	18 ↑
	Percentage of assessments that met agreed timelines	94	75	92	17 ↑
	The EPA's satisfaction with the department's provision of environmental management services during the year	95	80	94	14 ↑
6. Compliance with Ministerial statement implementation conditions are monitored effectively	The number of Ministerial statements audited compared to targets	73	100	98	-2 ↓

Performance summary

Summary of key efficiency indicators

Service		Key efficiency indicators	2019–20	2020–21			
			Actual %	Target %	Actual %	Variance %	
Service 1	Water information and advice	Proportion of statutory referrals from decision-making authorities where advice is provided within target timeframes	93%	95%	93%	-2%	↓
		Average cost per statutory referral assessment	\$7,182	\$6,126	\$5,125	-1,001	↑
		Average cost per water measurement site managed	\$9,437	\$12,027	\$7,437	-4,590	↑
Service 2	Water planning, allocation and optimisation	Average cost per plan, report or guidance document to support water planning, allocation and optimisation	\$348,488	\$241,146	\$233,709	-7,437	↑
		Average cost per hour of scientific support for water planning, allocation and optimisation	\$161	\$269	\$172	-97	↑
Service 3	Water regulation, licensing and industry governance	Average cost of assessing a water licence application by risk assessment category:					
		• Low-risk	\$3,284	\$3,390	\$3,412	22	↓
		• Medium-risk	\$4,378	\$4,520	\$4,549	29	↓
		• High-risk	\$5,473	\$5,650	\$5,686	36	↓
		Average time taken (days) to assess a licence application by risk assessment category:					
		• Low-risk	46	65	30	-35	↑
		• Medium-risk	85	75	39	-36	↑
		• High-risk	87	95	47	-48	↑
		Average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action	\$205	\$213	\$118	-95	↑
Service 4	Environmental regulation	Average cost per works approval and licence application	\$47,220	\$36,549	\$51,891	15,342	↓
		Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application	\$17,644	\$26,432	\$33,217	6,785	↓
Service 5	Environmental and water policy	Average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations	\$118	\$158	\$148	-10	↑
Service 6	Waste strategies	Cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected	1.94%	1.94%	1.60%	-0.34%	↑
Service 7	Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of assessment output	\$39,924	\$37,519	\$62,466	24,947	↓
Service 8	Environmental management services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output	\$34,793	\$27,279	\$34,572	7,293	↓
Service 9	Compliance monitoring services to the Minister	Average cost per environmental audit completed	\$65,666	\$40,407	\$56,117	15,710	↓



Our department in focus

Our priorities: A liveable environment

The Government of Western Australia is focused on building a waterwise METRONET that values the contribution of water resources to develop cool, liveable, green, safe and sustainable urban precincts, where people want to live, work and spend their time.

By 2031, the number of homes in the Perth and Peel regions near a public transport node will increase by 45 per cent compared with 2018.

By 2030, at least 75 per cent of waste generated in WA will be reused or recycled.

Waste reuse and recycling



The 2020–21 financial year saw the implementation of significant initiatives to increase reuse and recycling rates.

In October 2020, the State Government launched its container deposit scheme, [Containers for Change](#), operated by not-for-profit WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd. The scheme targets the estimated 1.3 billion drink containers bought by Western Australians each year, and the high litter rates of these containers. More than 535 million containers have been returned and recycled since the scheme began.

Under the [Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030](#) (waste strategy), we have been working to support local governments in the Perth and Peel regions to transition to food and organics kerbside collections or services by 2025.

The three-bin ‘food organics, garden organics’ ([FOGO](#)) kerbside collection system addresses waste separation at home and is recognised as a better-practice system by adding a separate FOGO bin. High-performing FOGO services can achieve household waste recovery rates of about 65 per cent and will make the single biggest contribution to achieving the waste strategy’s material recovery targets for municipal solid waste.

There are 11 local governments with FOGO in WA – five in Perth and six in the South West – and 16 local governments signed up for funding under the \$20 million [Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO](#) program during 2020–21.

Construction and demolition (C&D) waste represents a significant opportunity for waste avoidance and material recovery. It is a focus material of the waste strategy as it makes up



about half of WA's waste stream and about 45 per cent of material recovered for recycling.

Following the 2018 [Roads to Reuse \(RtR\)](#) pilot program, in which more than 30,000 tonnes of crushed recycled concrete was used in the Kwinana Freeway Northbound Widening and Murdoch Drive Connection projects, Main Roads WA (MRWA) used a further 30,000 tonnes for road base in 2020–21. This included waste from the Subiaco Oval demolition.

The department plays a key role in collaboration with the [Waste Authority](#), MRWA and the Waste and Recycling Industry Association WA to ensure recycled C&D products meet product specification to protect public health and the environment.

Greater uptake of recycled materials in civil construction will be instrumental in helping us reach the waste strategy targets.



C&D waste is used as road base (© Main Roads WA)

Plan for Plastics

In July 2021, the World Wide Fund for Nature Australia updated its plastics [scorecard](#) for Australia and hailed WA as a plastic-free national leader. This reflects State Government commitments made through its [Plan for Plastics](#), announced by the then Minister for Environment, Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, in November 2020.



The policy was developed following consultation on the [Let's not draw the short straw – reduce single-use plastics](#) issues paper, with more than 98 per cent of those surveyed supporting further action.

In June 2021, the new Minister for Environment, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, fast-tracked the Plan for Plastics by four years. Single-use plastic bowls, cups, plates, cutlery, stirrers, straws, polystyrene food containers, thick plastic bags and helium balloon releases will be phased out by the end of 2021.

The new timeframe will see WA's Plan for Plastics fully implemented by the end of 2022.

The move has been welcomed by the waste industry and recyclers because it supports greater material recovery rates, and single-use plastics contaminate waste streams and also create a large proportion of litter including items most harmful to wildlife.

Regulations will be implemented by the department for the statewide phase-out. This is another significant milestone in our work towards the waste strategy and a litter-free environment.

METRONET



[METRONET](#) is a cross-government initiative to build about 72 km of new passenger rail and up to 22 new stations. State Government investment so far is \$5.7 billion, and the project is a catalyst to turn over 8,000 hectares (ha) of land around the stations into desirable places for investment in housing, jobs and services for growing communities.

The department has proactively engaged with the [METRONET](#) program from its inception and planning stages to ensure environmental and water sustainability elements are introduced, maintained and implemented at the appropriate stages.

In September 2020, we worked with the METRONET office to refine and improve key performance indicators (KPIs) developed by NEWest Alliance for construction of the Yanchep Rail Extension and Thornlie-Cockburn Link. These align with outcomes in the key policy areas of water, native vegetation, climate change, emissions and waste.

This complements the department's work in supporting the [Environmental Protection Authority](#) (EPA) in assessing METRONET proposals, and in providing environment and water advice in land planning when considering METRONET projects.

The KPIs now form the basis of the METRONET [Sustainability Strategy](#) and criteria for quarterly program reporting. The department is a member of the Transport Infrastructure and Station Precincts Executive (TISPEX) Committee to support implementation of state environmental policy across METRONET projects.

Development of a precinct Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) has started. In supporting the [Waterwise Perth Action Plan](#), we are collaborating with the METRONET office,



An artist's impression of a METRONET green bridge (© Metronet)

Public Transport Authority (PTA) and Water Corporation to embed waterwise outcomes, including water sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles and approaches, into the planning, design and implementation of METRONET transport infrastructure, stations and station precincts.

In 2020–21, in collaboration with METRONET and the PTA, the department completed three new technical guidelines and specifications, and contributed to a technical specification for the PTA to help achieve waterwise outcomes through METRONET. The department also assessed the project planning and design reports of various projects associated with METRONET and provided waterwise and WSUD advice for on-ground implementation.

A guide to water sensitive urban design for public transport infrastructure in Western Australia, a collaborative internal guideline between the PTA, the department and the METRONET office, was released in June 2021. The guide intends to embed WSUD principles and approaches in every stage of the planning and development process, and retrofitting of all present and future public transport infrastructure projects, including the projects under the METRONET program. It directly aligns with Action 36 of the Waterwise Perth Action Plan which commits to embedding waterwise outcomes into the design of all METRONET precincts.

The department is a member of the Sustainability Reference Group to deliver the METRONET Sustainability Strategy and provide advice into the METRONET Resilience Framework for precinct and transport infrastructure.

Waterwise communities

The department is working with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) to strengthen waterwise outcomes in land planning and ensure planning policies and guidelines protect water resources, enhance

the urban green network, and use WSUD principles and approaches to build waterwise developments and cities in WA.

The state's recent [precinct planning policy](#), the lead policy to guide the preparation and evaluation of planning proposals for areas that require a high level of planning and design, was finalised last year and gazetted in February 2021. The policy strengthens waterwise outcomes in precinct-scale land use planning, making sure opportunities for WSUD are assessed early and align with biodiversity and local water management objectives.



Waterwise housing at East Village at Knutsford (© Development WA)

The department will continue to provide input into sustainable planning policies and guidelines through the DPLH-led [Design WA](#) initiative and review of the draft *State Planning Policy 2.9: Planning for Water*, including the associated guideline, and through the actions of the Waterwise Perth Action Plan.

Our dedicated land use planning program continues to support sustainable development by providing water and environmental data and expertise to inform the state's statutory and strategic land planning system.

Waterwise Council profile: New waterwise irrigation training program

Local governments in the Perth and Peel regions, where 80 per cent of the state's population lives, rely on groundwater as the primary source of irrigation for public parks and open space.

However, groundwater resources are coming under pressure through a combination of increasing demand and lower recharge because of climate change. Improving water efficiency is a cost-effective way to increase resilience to climate change and is important in creating waterwise communities.

Through the [Waterwise Council program](#), many local governments are already leading by example in the efficient and sustainable use

of precious groundwater to deliver aesthetic, functional public open spaces and sports grounds.

In May 2021, the Minister for Water, Hon Dave Kelly MLA, launched a new waterwise irrigation training program for Waterwise Councils.

The initiative is being introduced to encourage local governments to achieve and retain Gold endorsement under the existing Waterwise Council program.

The Waterwise Council irrigation training program will equip local government staff with the skills and knowledge to ensure best practice in efficient water use through improved irrigation design, installation and maintenance. It will initially run each year for the next three years and will be fully subsidised for participating local government parks and irrigation staff.

To be eligible for the training, a local government must either be endorsed or working towards achieving Gold status in the Waterwise Council program.

Delivered through a partnership between Irrigation Australia Limited WA, Water Corporation and the department, the program is fully subscribed for its first year and most participating councils are within the high-priority Gnamptarra groundwater area.

The program contributes to the delivery of the Waterwise Perth Action Plan through key action items which aim to extend and enhance the Waterwise Council program and recognise 100 per cent of metropolitan councils as Gold by 2030, as well as work towards achieving the 2030 target of 10 per cent less groundwater used across the Perth and Peel regions.



Our priorities: Climate Action

The new Climate Action portfolio was announced in March 2021. Its creation reflects the rapidly evolving science and policy of climate change both nationally and internationally, and underscores the State Government's commitment to action on climate.

The department's coordination of this new portfolio builds on the many years of good work delivered by our dedicated Climate Change unit.

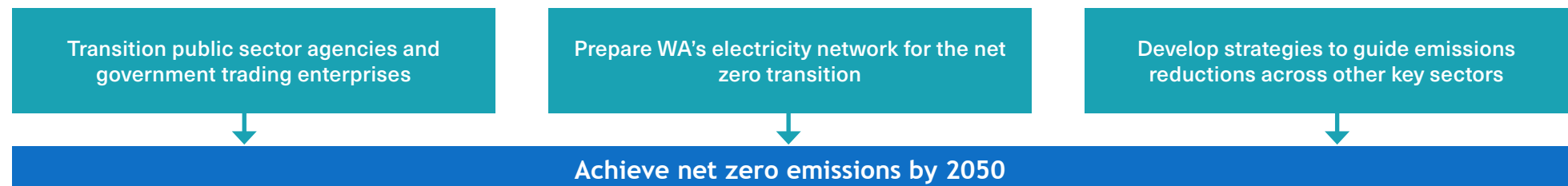
The new portfolio will oversee the implementation of the [Western Australian Climate Policy](#), which was released in November 2020. This policy commits to working with all sectors of the economy to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

This includes actions to:

- transition public sector agencies and government trading enterprises to net zero emissions
- prepare WA's electricity network for the net zero transition
- develop strategies to guide emissions reductions across other key sectors.

In May 2021, the inaugural Minister for Climate Action, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, launched WA's first [Regional Climate Alliance](#), an initiative to support regional local governments respond to climate change.

The alliance program is overseen by the department and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLSCI) in partnership with the Western



The department's coordination of this new portfolio builds on the many years of good work delivered by our dedicated Climate Change unit.

Australian Local Government Association (WALGA).

The alliance model has been successfully implemented in other Australian jurisdictions and improves knowledge sharing and collaborative responses to climate change on a regional scale. It will be set up next year with a State Government commitment of \$500,000 to support local government collaboration on climate change.

Funding will be used to support Regional Climate Alliance coordinators, and to deliver emissions-reducing and resilience-building projects demonstrating economic, environmental and social benefits within local government areas.



The department chairs the Western Australian Electric Vehicles Working Group, overseeing the implementation of the [State Electric Vehicle Strategy](#).

The delivery of actions under the strategy will support the State Government in the uptake of plug-in hybrid and battery electric vehicles in the State Government car fleet and installation of charging infrastructure in government office buildings.

Synergy and Horizon Power stepped up planning for the delivery of a statewide fast-charging network. The department is finalising an information resource to support the uptake of electric vehicles by fleet managers in WA.



Minister Dave Kelly inspects the department's electric vehicle with staff at Prime House.

The department also administers the [Clean Energy Future Fund](#), which supports the implementation of innovative clean energy projects in WA. These contribute to significant, cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, or are likely to deliver community benefits or lead to reduced emissions from broad adoption.



Our response to COVID-19

On 15 March 2020, a State of Emergency was declared in WA and measures were put in place to prevent the rapid escalation of COVID-19 cases in the community. The declaration of emergency continued through the 2020–21 year and various measures remain in place.

The department initiated an incident management team to coordinate its workplace response. It also participated in a whole-of-government program to coordinate delivery and engagement, and support WA's economic recovery from COVID-19 disruption.

Independent assessment by Edith Cowan University has shown the department was highly effective in transitioning to working from home during the May 2020 lockdown and subsequent phases of COVID-19 restrictions.

We responded to three lockdowns during 2020–21, maintaining a high level of service throughout these periods with most impacted staff mobilised and working from home within 24 hours. A refinement of services and regulatory timelines did not result in major issues with customers.



Staff adapted to working from home during lockdowns

Lessons learned from our response arrangements are being included in our emergency and continuity procedures.

WA Recovery Plan: Green Jobs

As part of the [WA Recovery Plan](#) for economic recovery from COVID-19, the State Government has invested \$60.3 million over three years in the [Green Jobs Plan](#), starting in 2020–21.

The department is coordinating the delivery of the Green Jobs Plan, which includes four department-managed initiatives and three projects managed by other State Government agencies.

The department-managed initiatives comprise:

- \$15 million to set up a Native Vegetation Rehabilitation Scheme
- \$8 million for the Offsets Funds for Recovery program from the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account, set up for the purposes of Part V Division 2 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) to establish native



Green Jobs initiatives managed by the department

\$15 million to set up a
Native Vegetation
Rehabilitation Scheme

\$8 million for the Offsets Funds
for Recovery program from the
Establishing and Maintaining
Vegetation Offsets Account

\$3.3 million from the
Pilbara Environmental Offsets
Fund for Aboriginal and
conservation groups

\$25 million for the Healthy
Estuaries WA program to
improve the condition of at-risk
estuaries in the South West

vegetation which restores the biodiversity values identified in the WA Environmental Offsets Register

- \$3.3 million from the [Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund](#) for Aboriginal and conservation groups to undertake conservation work in the Pilbara
- \$25 million for the [Healthy Estuaries WA](#) program to continue working with the community to improve the condition of at-risk regional estuaries in the South West.

Projects managed by other agencies have seen:

- \$2 million to extend fauna fencing around Whiteman Park, and the electrified feral animal exclusion fence around the Woodland Conservation Reserve inside Whiteman Park (DPLH)
- \$5 million to enhance roadside vegetation corridors, widen road reserves and replant vegetation through the Wheatbelt (MRWA)

- \$2 million to enhance foreshore protection measures in the Swan and Canning river systems (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions [DBCA]).

The Green Jobs Plan supports projects which protect the environment and create jobs, with more than 1,000 new conservation jobs expected over three years to June 2023.

WA Recovery Plan: Increasing waste recycling capacity

The State and Australian Governments are working together to transform the state's waste and recycling industry through the [Recycling Modernisation Fund](#).

In January 2021, joint funding of \$35 million was awarded subject to contract to eight infrastructure projects which will increase WA's capacity to process and recycle the state's plastics and tyres waste.

Government funding will leverage \$47 million of industry investment, and total combined investment in local processing of plastics and tyres is likely to be more than \$82 million.

Projects funded this year will create at least 200 new full-time jobs and provide the capacity to process 140,000 tonnes of WA plastic and tyre waste every year.

A further \$15 million from the national Recycling Modernisation Fund and \$15 million from the State Government will go towards a new \$86.6 million Suez Recycling and Recovery/ Auswaste Recycling pulp mill capable of processing 100,000 tonnes of wastepaper and cardboard. This will be operational before the 2024 export ban on mixed paper comes into effect.

This work supports the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) waste export ban.

Environment Online

Environment Online is a major project for the department, jointly funded by the Australian and State Governments, which builds on our legislative and regulatory capability reform program.

In conjunction with implementing the reforms of the EP Act, and the proposed reforms of our water resource management legislation, Environment Online will transform how we deliver our regulatory services, and how we interact with our regulatory stakeholders.

The State Government is contributing \$20.5 million to the project's total funding of \$28 million.

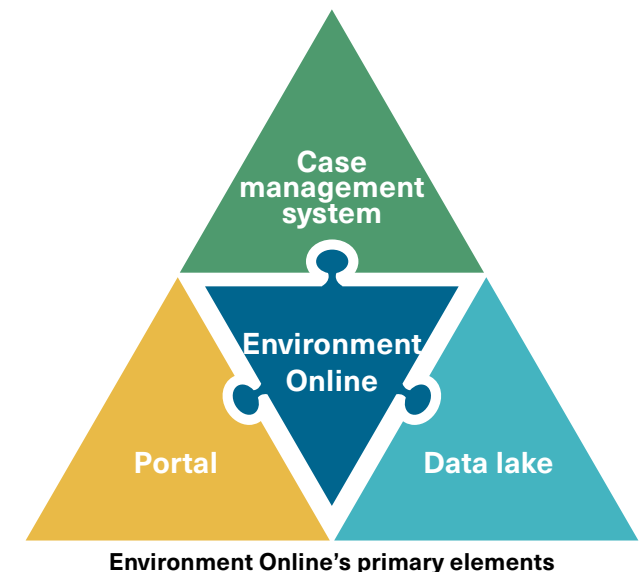
Environment Online will enable us to deliver faster, more consistent and better integrated data-driven services, and will be the department's digital 'one stop shop' platform for water and environmental regulation in WA.

It will significantly improve business connectivity by bringing together all water and environmental information, data and processes through a single online portal. This will enable simple and fast data and knowledge sharing between our department and other agencies, including Landgate, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS), DPLH, DBCA, and Geoscience Australia.

In 2020–21, we issued a tender for a technical platform and build partner, and as of 30 June 2021 were in the final stage of the procurement process, with a contract awarded in the first quarter of the new financial year.

Environment Online has continued to meet critical targets, including the need to ensure the business transformation is effectively implemented.

The build will start with environmental impact assessments under Part IV of the EP Act, which will be the first to go live in the first quarter of 2022.





Director General Michelle Andrews with the Environment Online team

The rest of the build involves increments of about five to eight months developing concurrently, building and bringing online seven business areas, and finishing in July 2024 with the integration of [Water Online](#).

Environment Online's primary elements are:

- a portal – a web-based interface which will be the single gateway to the department's regulatory functions
- a case management system – this will enable automated workflows for and across our regulatory activities
- a data lake – this brings together multiple environmental and water-resource, master (proponent, instrument, compliance) and transactional data, which is accessible to stakeholders and department staff.

Streamline WA

Environment Online supports Streamline WA, which is a flagship State Government project aimed at making it easier and quicker to do business in WA by improving regulation, systems, practice and culture. Mike Rowe, Director General of the department until May 2021, co-chaired the Government Streamline WA Steering Committee in 2020–21.

Following Cabinet endorsement of a series of initiatives to accelerate Streamline WA, the department:

- worked with other agencies to establish an approvals portal to simplify the entry point for proponents, such as the mining sector
- initiated the 'clear guidance' project to turn guidance material into plain English

- started scoping the 'reduced reporting burden' project to allow biennial reporting on a risk basis, with greater transparency
- participated in the first Common Understanding workshop on 1 June 2021, with DMIRS and other agencies, to strengthen cross-sector collaboration on assessments and approvals.

Under the broad banner of Streamline WA, we progressed the bilateral agreement on environmental assessment and approvals with the Australian Government, and started implementing amendments to the EP Act. We are also working with key partners to ensure the completed Environment Online system can be adopted by other agencies and easily modified for their use.



Artist Gloria Kearing and the department's Bronte Grant working together on the *Bindjareb Djilba – Peel-Harvey estuary protection plan*

Aboriginal engagement and advancement

The department aligns with the State Government's goal for social and economic advancement and empowerment of WA's Aboriginal communities and peoples. 2020–21 was the second year of our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group

A key action of the department's RAP 2019–21 was to establish an Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group (AWEAG).

The advisory group provides valuable insight on policy and key initiatives, ensuring Aboriginal interests and perspectives are considered in the things we do.

The four meetings of the advisory group in the last financial year contributed advice and analysis to several major initiatives. This includes advice on:

- engaging with remote communities to provide appropriate infrastructure as part of Containers for Change

- considering broader issues when establishing Strategic Aboriginal Water Reserves
- involving Aboriginal groups and communities in landscape restoration and rehabilitation as part of the Green Jobs Plan and consultations for the development of a statewide native vegetation policy.

Our Aboriginal Engagement Strategy

This year, we have furthered our commitments to meaningful engagement with Aboriginal people and traditional owners and custodians across the state.

As part of the RAP, the department is progressing the development of its first



The AWEAG group with Minister for Water Dave Kelly, third from right

Aboriginal Engagement Strategy (AES), which will provide a platform on which the agency interacts with Aboriginal people at all levels of policy and planning, and in its regulatory and science functions.

The advisory group has highlighted the importance of having a strong vision that acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of WA's First Nations people and how the department can support them to achieve their goals by:

- linking with existing programs
- building consideration of cultural protocols
- ensuring cultural safety in all areas
- reconsidering language and structure to ensure it acknowledges the goal of building mutual benefit and ensures free, prior and informed consent through engagement.

Improving Aboriginal inclusion in water planning

There is increasing recognition of the importance of including Aboriginal people in water management and planning and for ensuring current and future Aboriginal cultural, social and economic development opportunities are incorporated upfront in the department's water allocation planning activities.

Water allocation plans currently being developed in Derby and for the Fitzroy River have involved significant consultation with Registered Native Title Prescribed Bodies Corporate. The result of this will be water allocation plans that include greater recognition of traditional owners' connection to country and water, strong consultation requirements for any development and water licence applications, protection of the cultural values associated with water, and establishment of water reserves for Aboriginal peoples' economic use.

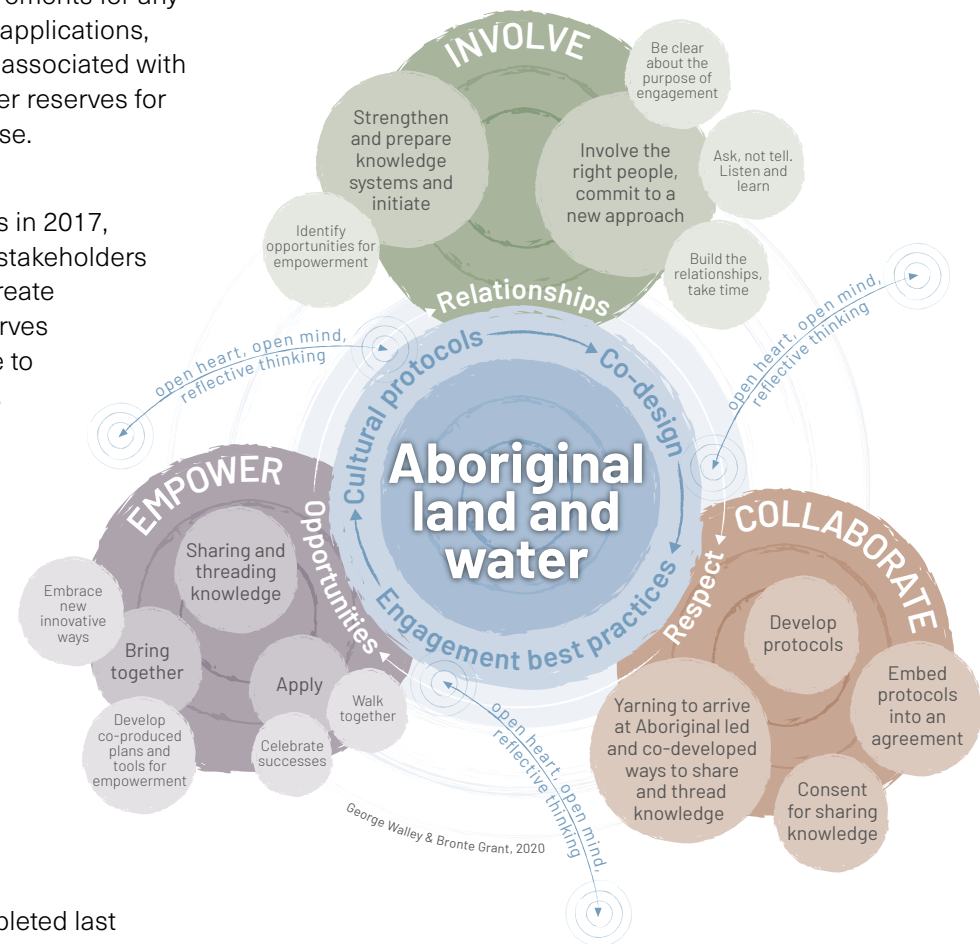
Following election commitments in 2017, the department is working with stakeholders to investigate opportunities to create Strategic Aboriginal Water Reserves in areas where water is available to access through a future licence.

Advisory group members identified that:

- water management must be sustainable
- those involved must be given the opportunity to be part of the consultation
- any decisions must include the right people speaking for the right areas.

The ground-breaking work completed last financial year on the water components of

the native title settlement in the Mid West, through the [Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement](#), was of particular significance. It recognised the importance of water to Aboriginal people, not only in practising culture but also as an economic opportunity.



Bring Together Walk Together Aboriginal Partnerships Framework

The advisory group is actively involved as new water resources reform legislation is drafted and progressed.

Bring Together Walk Together Aboriginal Partnerships Framework

Building on the partnership established for the [Peel-Harvey estuary protection plan \(Bindjareb Djilba\)](#), the department and Bindjareb elder George Walley have developed the [Bring Together Walk Together Aboriginal Partnerships Framework](#).

This framework communicates a pathway to build and maintain strong partnerships for Aboriginal land and water outcomes and has been endorsed by the advisory group as a method for partnership engagement in department-led projects.

The *Bring Together Walk Together Aboriginal Partnerships Framework* was shared and well received at the Danjoo Koorliny Kep Water Symposium and the Power to the People Conference in Mandurah in 2020.

Stakeholders in our community are adopting the framework as a tool to guide meaningful partnership engagement with Aboriginal people.

Wooroloo bushfire recovery work

The February 2021 Wooroloo bushfire burnt over 10,000 ha and caused extensive damage to properties, homes and buildings within the City of Swan and Shire of Mundaring.

The State Government is supporting local governments in the clean-up. Coordination of the [Wooroloo Bushfire Coordinated Residential Clean-up Program](#) is being managed by the department in collaboration with the City of Swan, the Shire of Mundaring and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

The program is part of the overall recovery plan for residents impacted by the Wooroloo



Removal of bushfire-damaged waste

bushfires and includes removal of fire-impacted hazardous materials such as asbestos, chemicals and copper chrome arsenic-treated timber, and removal of fire-destroyed buildings, structures, vehicles and ash.

Steady progress with the clearing of blocks saw 67 properties completed by 2 July. More than 2,200 tonnes of general waste has been removed in the clean-up. High recycling rates saw 5,525 cubic metres of rubble and 36.4 tonnes of steel recovered, removed and recycled up to 2 July.

Some properties contain fire-impacted asbestos needing specialist clean-up, with more than 2,330 tonnes (including soil) removed up to 2 July. The department's Pollution Response Unit and Air Quality staff also provided technical support to the Perth Hills bushfires response.

Stakeholder, customer and community insights

Social research provides insights that can inform us about reputation management, direction setting, risks and opportunities, priorities for work, the success of ongoing work and measurement of corporate key performance indicators.



Executive Director Strategy and Engagement Nygarie Goyal with the stakeholder engagement database

In 2020–21, our annual stakeholder, customer and community insight research was conducted by Metrix Consulting.

Stakeholder and customer priorities

Water security is still considered the key overall priority among stakeholders and customers, although recycling has increased in order of priority for stakeholders.

While the order of priority of specific water and environmental issues is the same at a community level, some issues were less of a 'major' concern this year.

Land and water pollution, how waste is managed, and water security remain key areas of concern and interest.

Strategic direction and initiatives

Research indicates our strategic directions, including our enhanced regulatory capability work, are responding to stakeholder, customer and community feedback.

Compared with last year, stakeholders were more likely to say they are satisfied with their relationship with the department because it is responsive to their queries.

Stakeholders were also more likely to cite the department being able to provide information and advice as a reason for positive overall sentiment this year and agree the department has adequate data and information about the state's water and environmental resources.

Stakeholders were more likely to say they are satisfied with their relationship with the department.

Water licensees also had a more positive overall impression of the department this year. They were more favourable about how the department makes its decisions, rating it higher in terms of having adequate data and information, considering current and emerging issues, being solutions focused, finding sustainable ways for development to progress and taking a long-term approach to planning.

Our water management KPI result has steadily increased in recent years, with 62 per cent of stakeholders in 2020–21 perceiving our management to be effective compared with 52 per cent in 2019.

This coincides with the completion last year of a 24-month program focusing on the water licensing process and backlogs.

Strategic direction profile: Deliver trusted information, science and evidence-based advice

Maintaining an excellent understanding of our environment and water resources and being able to analyse, model and share that information in ways that are clear, practical, useful and timely are critical foundations of what we do.



We have several specialist laboratories that provide valuable services to inform our programs and decisions, and support our system stewardship role.

Air quality science and monitoring

The department's experienced air-quality experts continue to develop new and innovative ways to track air pollution and expand our knowledge of air-quality science.

This includes technical input into surveillance monitoring campaigns in the vicinity of pollution sources and investigating the use of new technology such as electronic noses (or 'e-Noses') for odour field studies. We are also collaborating with local universities on the analysis of satellite imagery to better understand how bushfires can affect air quality, and on the use of low-cost sensors. Complex dispersion models have been developed with our scientific oversight for the Murujuga and Collie priority airsheds.

The Air Quality team has ensured the department has been able to better manage industry development applications by auditing scientific claims. It has provided more than 100 technical reviews for internal and external clients, including high-profile industry proposals in priority airsheds such as Port Hedland in the Pilbara.

WA is a signatory to the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure and is required to report annually on the results of air quality monitoring undertaken by the department. We have 10 metropolitan and six regional permanent monitoring stations feeding data into an extensive database; this is distilled to a live public air quality index which is updated hourly.

State governments are currently standardising and refining this index to provide simpler and clearer information when air quality is poor (such as during bushfire events) so members of the public can take appropriate action to minimise health effects.

The air monitoring network will be expanding to Port Hedland when the department takes over responsibility from industry for monitoring ambient air quality.

Noise

The department provides specialist environmental noise advice to key stakeholders including the EPA, local and State Government agencies, and the community.

Environmental noise expertise also supports the department's policy, regulatory, and compliance and enforcement functions.

The department responded to 74 requests for noise advice or support this year. Of these, in its role of supporting local government authorities (LGAs) to administer the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997, the department responded to 63 requests for environmental noise advice, technical support or laboratory analysis. Specialist environment noise advice was provided 25 times relating to matters under EPA consideration, and in response to 11 requests from other Australian and State Government agencies.

Further support was provided to LGAs in the form of two noise regulation training sessions.

This year the draft [Guideline: Assessment of environmental noise emissions](#) was published for public feedback.



Aquatic Science Phytoplankton Ecology Unit

The Phytoplankton Ecology Unit (PEU) is essential to our waterways management programs, and continues to provide great service to the Department of Health and local governments, processing 1,750 routine algal inspections and 120 response samples for fish kills and algal blooms during the year.

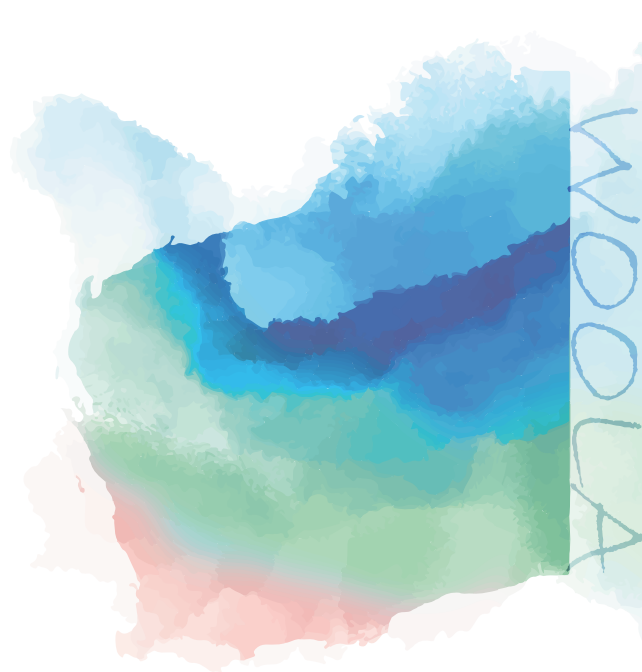
During COVID-19, PEU staff switched from working in the laboratory in Joondalup to working the microscopes at home, so there were no delays in our expected deliverables. Back in the specialty Joondalup facility, the PEU has established algal culture facilities to enable a shift to genomic sequencing through extracted DNA and rapid assessment of toxicity in those species considered harmful. In the coming year, the lab will be responsive to changes in algal species and associated health risks as the climate warms.

In December 2020 the PEU completed its final phytoplankton analysis for Swan and Canning after 25 years of weekly sampling. This work will now be conducted by DBCA in the Swan-Canning riverpark.

Next year will be a big one for the unit as it completes phytoplankton analysis for Healthy Estuaries WA projects and Cockburn Sound phytoplankton analysis for the Westport project's baseline data.

Woola! Our new awards program

We believe praise and recognition are fundamental to creating a thriving workplace. Following a survey of staff in 2020 and a 'sprint' design process in March 2021, the department held its inaugural Woola Awards and Recognition ceremony on 23 June 2021.



As our head office is in Joondalup, on Whadjuk Noongar Country, it was recommended we adopt a Noongar word for our awards. Woola, meaning 'shout of praise', was the most popular choice when tested with staff. Cultural advice from George Hayden, Manager of the Noongar Boodjar Language Cultural Aboriginal Corporation, confirmed the appropriateness of this word and gave us permission to use it.

United Nations Public Service Day on 23 June was chosen as the day to celebrate the value of public servants to their communities.

Following a nomination process, Bernard Ryan, Senior Manager Policy, was presented with our first Significant Achievement Award for his dedication in the areas of waste avoidance, resource recovery and environmental protection. Almost 140 staff received certificates for

reaching milestone lengths of 10, 15, 20, 25 and 35 years of continuous public service in 2021.

In 2022 the awards will be expanded to include a new Living Our Values award, with the winner voted by staff. The winner of the Significant Achievement Award will be decided by a panel representing a cross-section of our workforce.



Our performance





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Outcome one

Western Australia's growth and development is supported by the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state

Service one: Water information and advice

Water measurement

About 2,300 groundwater bores, 270 river gauging stations and 170 meteorological sites provide quality data which allows us to monitor the condition and status of the water resources in our rivers, streams and aquifers.

This information is provided free of charge to industry, members of the public and government. It has many uses including informing water allocation, water licensing, water quality management, flood risk assessment and the state's flood warning network.

Our staff can spend days or weeks at a time in remote and high-risk locations maintaining our groundwater bores and river gauging stations, checking instruments and taking measurements.

The Groundwater Asset Management program maintains and replaces the department's groundwater monitoring network of about 2,300 monitoring bores to enable the collection

of reliable and accurate groundwater information.

We are also trialling new technology to enable groundwater level information to be automatically transmitted by mobile and satellite 'telemetry' systems from our remote bores to our data store, where it will be instantly available to staff and the wider community.

Water information

Much of the water data we collect is made available through our online systems.

The Water Information Reporting portal (WIR) provides instant access to more than 133,000 water monitoring sites.

This data is used by consultants and researchers for environmental assessments, research and investigation, mining and minerals exploration, infrastructure and urban development, industry and commerce, and agriculture.

WIR is a great example of how we can transform and improve our business through online services, and how our stakeholders are benefitting from our efforts.

The 2020–21 year was the biggest ever for WIR data with 6,183 requests for water information. We continued to deliver automated information, meeting our KPI with an average turnaround time of 26 seconds.

Analysis of data use shows most of these requests relate to environmental assessment, and research and investigation. There was an increase in requests for mining and exploration and infrastructure during 2020–21 compared with the previous year (see table on page 38).

Water and land use planning

The department's land use planning program continues to support sustainable development by providing water and environmental data and expertise to inform the state's statutory and strategic land planning system.

As well as automated data provision, the department provides specialist technical advice to ensure water challenges and impacts on the environment are adequately identified and planned for. As the department has moved to greater integration of water and environmental management, so too has our advice expanded to better link risks and other requirements we regulate.

The consultation and formal advice we provide enables the Western Australian Planning Commission, LGAs and other decision-making agencies to make informed land use planning decisions which consider and respond to

impacts they may have on flooding and inundation, water quality, water environments and the health and sustainability of water resources.

This work supports the urban sector to deliver quality waterwise developments. For the Perth and Peel regions in particular, this information is vital as land development to meet population growth continues to expand in areas with complex environmental and water constraints. It also aligns with and helps deliver actions of the Waterwise Perth Action Plan and waterwise outcomes for METRONET.

In the last financial year, the department assessed and responded to:

- 1,582 requests for water advice from DPLH
- 850 requests from LGAs
- 217 requests from DMIRS
- 44 requests from the EPA
- 390 requests from other stakeholders, including other State Government agencies and utilities, and industry.

We also advised on 166 water management reports associated with land planning and mining activities.

Water Information Reporting data use

Purpose	17–18	18–19	19–20	20–21
Environmental assessment	2,603	2,117 ↓	2,670 ↑	2,467 ↓
Research and investigation	1,141	1,082 ↓	1,035 ↓	1,444 ↑
Other	281	289 ↑	505 ↑	393 ↓
Mining and exploration	288	382 ↑	435 ↑	495 ↑
Agriculture	311	260 ↓	309 ↑	286 ↓
Domestic supply	73	99 ↑	248 ↑	172 ↓
Water source protection	203	108 ↓	231 ↑	216 ↓
Infrastructure	238	275 ↑	226 ↓	350 ↑
Property dev./land use planning	310	259 ↓	212 ↓	187 ↓
Industry and commerce	55	45 ↓	39 ↓	92 ↑
Recreation	15	13 ↓	15 ↑	81 ↑

Floodplain mapping and advice

We provide advice to developers, insurance companies, local government and members of the public, mostly about new developments on floodplains. In the last financial year, the department responded to more than 550 requests for flood risk and floodplain management advice.

This year we also helped in the response to flooding in Carnarvon, Nullagine and Albany. A preliminary report on the February 2021 Gascoyne River flood at Carnarvon and the effectiveness of the town's existing flood mitigation measures was prepared.

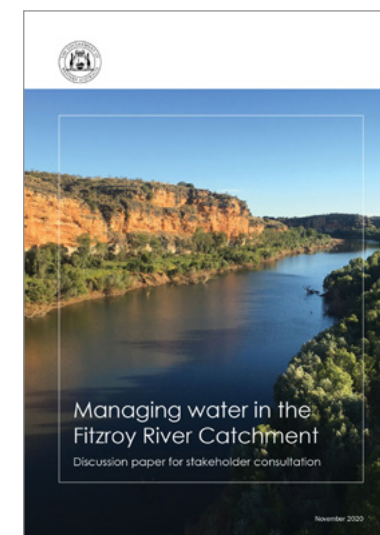
Service two: Water planning, allocation and optimisation

Water allocation plans

Water allocation plans are the department's key water documents to support our regulatory approach. They establish how much water is available from aquifers and rivers, how much water is set aside for the environment and public drinking water supply, and how much can be sustainably licensed to businesses and individuals.

In the Kwinana Peel region, the department released the final [Cockburn groundwater allocation plan](#) and associated technical documents in December 2020, as part of a review of groundwater allocation plans to deliver Action 14 of the Waterwise Perth Action Plan.

In the Kimberley, the department released the draft [Derby groundwater allocation plan](#) for public comment in November 2020. The comment period closed on 31 May 2021 and the department is in the process of collating and working through the public comments to finalise the plan.



The department also continued to work on the Fitzroy catchment in the Kimberley and published [Managing water in the Fitzroy River Catchment: Discussion paper for stakeholder consultation](#) in November 2020. Feedback on the discussion paper will inform development of the Fitzroy water allocation plan for public comment.

Perth groundwater remains a high priority and we have been working with water users and other stakeholders to prepare the next Gnamptara groundwater allocation plan, and implement the Waterwise Perth Action Plan's target to reduce groundwater abstraction by 10 per cent by 2030. Adjusting our water use to match the impacts of climate change is an important

measure to ensure groundwater remains a long-term and low-cost source of water for our growing city. The department expects to have the new Gngangara groundwater allocation plan ready for public comment later in 2021.

The department also completed its annual compliance report on environmental management of groundwater from Gngangara and its tri-annual compliance report for the Jandakot mound, fulfilling obligations under Ministerial Statement 819 for Gngangara and Ministerial Statement 688 for Jandakot.

We continue to evaluate our water allocation plans and consider changes to the resource, including impacts of climate on water availability.

Water investigations

The department investigates, measures and quantifies the state's surface water and groundwater resources. This scientific information enables robust planning, regulation and protection of our water resources and supports sustainable state development.

The State Groundwater Investigation Program installs groundwater monitoring infrastructure and collects, interprets and provides new water information to resource managers and the community. The program is aligned to the state's water demand and management needs, including State Government initiatives, and has more than 10 active investigation projects between Esperance and Broome.

Currently we are:

- investigating seawater intrusion in coastal aquifers in Esperance, Dunsborough to Bunbury, Myalup and Broome
- investigating groundwater-dependent ecosystems between Broome and 80 Mile Beach to ensure groundwater levels are maintained to support users, and the wetlands and ecosystems that rely on groundwater
- determining the hydrogeological characteristics that affect groundwater flow and salinity and their relationship with surface water systems between Perth and Moora
- assessing the potential for managed aquifer recharge as an alternative water supply in the Swan Valley and north-east growth corridor.

Current water investigations

Investigating seawater intrusion in coastal aquifers in Esperance, Dunsborough to Bunbury, Myalup and Broome

Investigating groundwater-dependent ecosystems between Broome and 80 Mile Beach

Determining the hydrogeological characteristics that affect groundwater flow and salinity and their relationship with surface water systems between Perth and Moora

Assessing the potential for managed aquifer recharge as an alternative water supply in the Swan Valley and north-east growth corridor

The department's water modelling program develops surface water and groundwater models to assess the availability and quality of water. These models are used to assist in decision-making to protect the environment and support sustainable productive use of water. The program is used to help set water allocation limits, inform water licence and water allocation planning decisions, underpin advice to decision-makers, inform policy development, evaluate the response of water resources to actual conditions, and defend appeals against the department's decisions.

During 2020–21, two significant numerical groundwater models were completed, and both will be presented to the Modelling Board for endorsement in the coming months. The South West Aquifer Modelling System (SWAMS numerical groundwater model) will be used in the department as a planning tool and will be provided to external proponents to help their modelling work.

Calibration of the Myalup Regional Groundwater Model was completed in-house and externally reviewed as fit for purpose. The predictive scenarios will be completed and used to inform the Myalup Allocation Plan. Five hydraulic models were completed, which improve data quality at streamflow gauges. One flood model was completed, which supports land use planning for the Perth Peel expansion.

Two estuary models were also completed. These assess the impacts of changes to surge barrier or sand bar management, catchment management, and climate and sea level to determine the potential impacts on estuary condition of different management regimes and future climate.



Information from gauging stations like this one at Manjimup Brook is used to develop surface water and groundwater models to assess the availability and quality of water

The department is responsible for protecting water quality in about 140 public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs) across the state.

Water source protection

Our work in water source protection helps maintain access to safe, reliable and affordable drinking water supplies. The department is responsible for protecting water quality in about 140 public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs) across the state.

In the areas where Water Corporation is the provider, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between our agencies formalises our working arrangements for source protection. The MoU is updated regularly to ensure it remains contemporary.

The department owns (or has vesting for) some land in PDWSAs, and Water Corporation regularly undertakes land management on our behalf. The agencies also work together to acquire land that is posing major risks to drinking water quality.

All active PDWSAs are covered by drinking water source protection reports, which are subject to ongoing review by the department in consultation with State and local government, traditional owners, landowners, industry and the community. We work closely with our stakeholders to implement recommendations in the report which address risks to water quality and help keep the source safe. The reports provide a boundary, priority areas and protection zones for each source and allow us to arrange constitution of those boundaries under legislation.

We provide technical advice on how to manage risks in PDWSAs to other agencies, local government, developers, industry and other stakeholders. Key projects this year included providing strategic advice on the [Perth and Peel @ 3.5million](#) frameworks and addressing risks from per-and-polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from firefighting foams in mining and landfill sites, and wastewater discharge areas.

We are also involved in the [South West Native Title Settlement](#) and providing advice on its implementation within PDWSAs.



Water supply planning

Our water supply planning function is focused on understanding the state's future water needs and promoting water demand management and supply options for sustainable development.

Preparing local government, industrial and agricultural groundwater users in the South West for a future with less groundwater and surface water is a main priority for the department's water supply planning function. The department works with local governments on solutions for irrigating parks and other public open spaces in new developments where groundwater is limited. This includes identifying potential shortfalls in groundwater availability, providing advice on maximising the use of available groundwater and developing approaches to selecting alternative or additional sources of water.

In February 2021, based on submissions by Water Corporation and the department, Infrastructure Australia added the Perth and south-western coast water security as a high-priority initiative to its national infrastructure priority listing. This listing highlights the need to plan and develop new water supply infrastructure and demand management initiatives to tackle the projected effects of climate change on groundwater supplies across the coastal aquifer systems from Geraldton to Augusta. Future submissions will present project proposals for further assessment by Infrastructure Australia in

support of potential joint funding of new water infrastructure projects by the State and Australian Governments.

We also work closely with Water Corporation and other water service providers such as Aqwest and Busselton Water to help with optimising planning for future public water supply and integrated water planning.

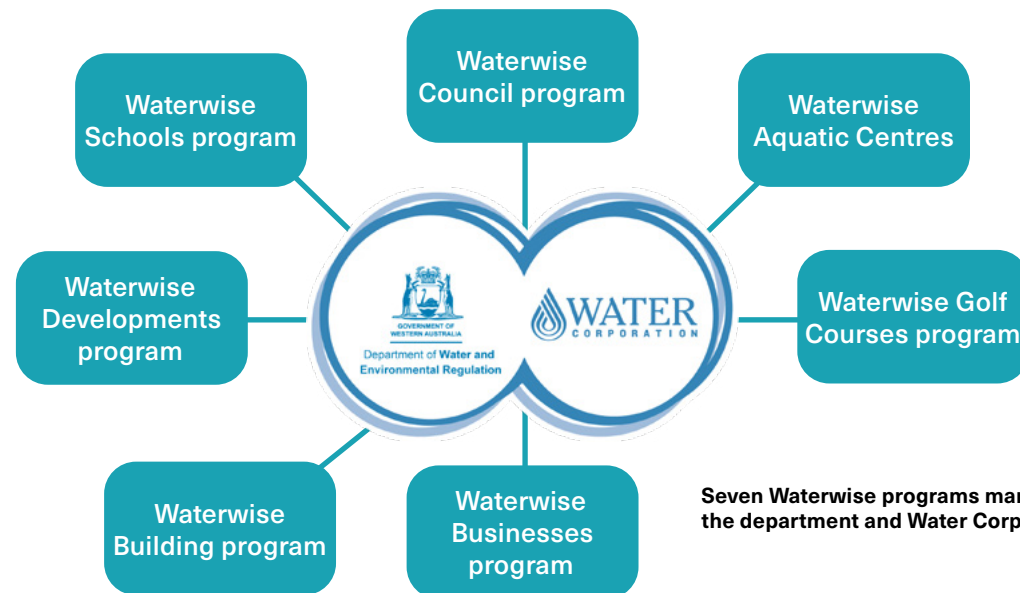
Waterwise

State Government Waterwise programs and initiatives build strong relationships with local governments, industry and the community to

improve water efficiency, climate resilience and liveability.

Seven Waterwise programs are jointly or individually managed by the department and Water Corporation:

- Waterwise Council program
- Waterwise Aquatic Centres
- Waterwise Golf Courses program
- Waterwise Businesses program
- Waterwise Building program
- Waterwise Developments program
- Waterwise Schools program.



Seven Waterwise programs managed by the department and Water Corporation



Examples of results under the Waterwise Perth Action Plan

Waterwise Perth Action Plan

The Waterwise Perth Action Plan was launched in October 2019 as part of the State Government's co-ordinated response to the impacts of climate change.

This plan is about stimulating change across a wide number of focus areas by engaging state agencies, local governments, the urban development industry and the wider community, and inviting them to help us transform Perth and Peel into leading waterwise regions by 2030.

Significant ground has been made under the plan across a wide number of areas.

Rural water planning

Climate change is creating long-term water security challenges for farmers in the dryland agricultural regions in the southern half of WA.

In response, the State Government has continued to support improved non-potable water supplies on and off farms, and carted

emergency livestock water to areas under a 'water deficiency declaration'. The year started with 12 declarations in place in shires in the southern and south-eastern dryland agricultural areas, but winter rains in 2020 enabled the Gairdner area declaration in the Shire of Jerramungup to be revoked in August 2020. Improved rainfall over summer and good follow-up rainfall in autumn recharged the majority of on-farm and off-farm dams to allow for a further nine declarations to be revoked in six shires in May 2021.

At 30 June 2021, two declarations remained in place in Salmon Gums and Grass Patch in the Shire of Esperance.

During the year, \$416,295 was spent on water carting, bringing the total cost of water carting to areas with water deficiency declarations in place to \$3.7 million.

Work to increase capacity to manage water scarcity in these dryland farming areas has also continued.

The State Government invested \$915,902 through the [Community Water Supply Program](#) in 2020–21, helping nine local governments deliver 10 projects which will improve their emergency community water capacity and reduce their future use of scheme water. The shires of Merredin, Mukinbudin, Wyalkatchem (two projects), Chapman Valley, Toodyay, Jerramungup, Plantagenet,

Gnowangerup and Lake Grace received grants to undertake works, including improving the stormwater reuse network, fitting new pump, pipe and tank facilities, and realigning catchment channels. This builds on works the government has previously undertaken on community water supplies, bringing the total to nearly \$1.5 million for 17 projects.

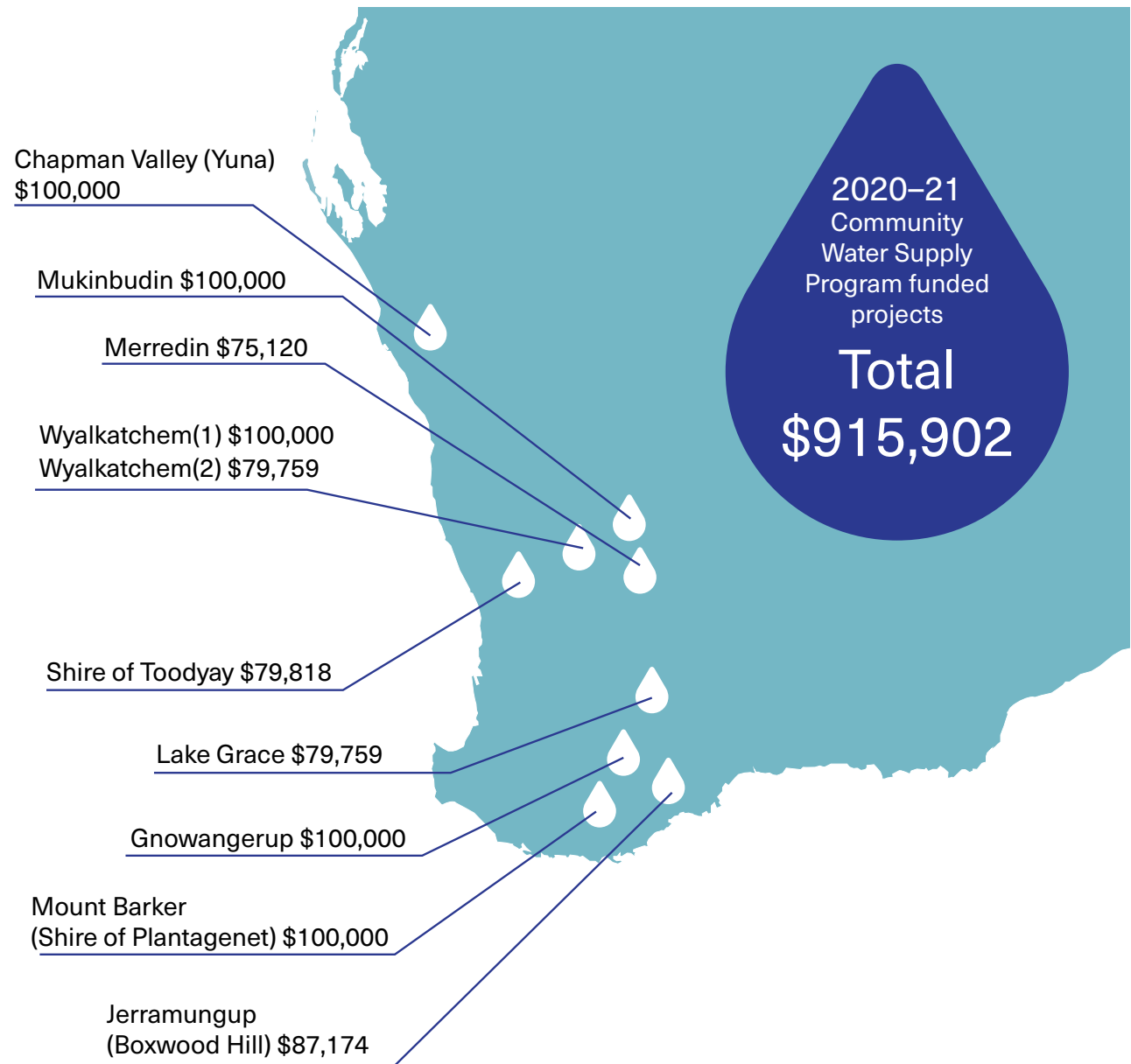
The [Rural Water Planning](#) works program also invested \$741,890 this year to upgrade 32 agriculture area dams vested with the department and in priority areas to continue to build on the strategic water supply network across the dryland agricultural area.

WA rivers and estuaries

We coordinate management actions to improve water quality in rivers and regional estuaries based on good science.

The department provides a centre of expertise in aquatic science to support management decisions relating to water quality in rivers, streams and other water bodies. This expertise in catchment and estuary numerical modelling, river and estuary science, remediation science and phytoplankton (microscopic algae) ecology supports all initiatives across our river and estuary programs.

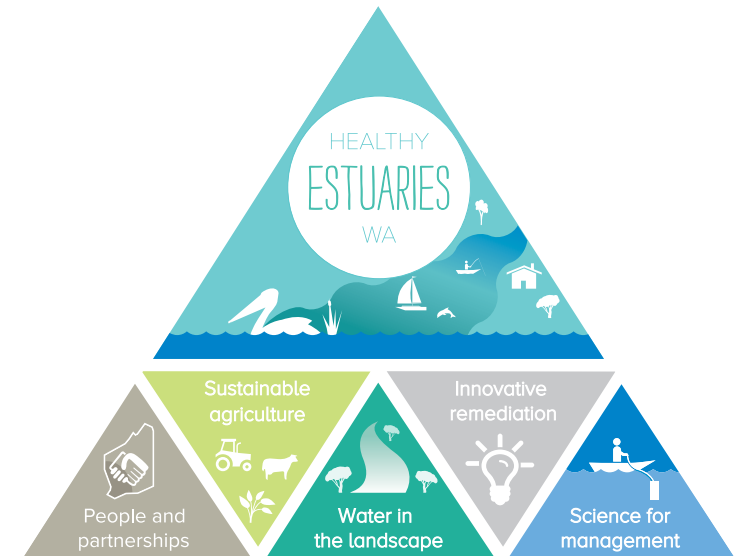
More than 80 per cent of Western Australians live around estuaries – they are central to



the WA way of life, supporting businesses, recreation and tourism. Because of population pressures and intensive agriculture in the catchments, water quality in many estuaries has deteriorated. Estuaries are where rivers meet the ocean, and their health is linked to conditions of the catchment land surrounding them, as well as conditions in the water itself. We combine the scientific understanding of how nutrient losses from catchments lead to poor water quality and the practical actions needed, such as water quality improvement plans.

For effective regional delivery, these plans rely on shared responsibility involving government agencies, LGAs, community, natural resource management groups and industry.

Our ability to coordinate partnerships and actions that drive sustainable water and environmental outcomes is showcased in our world-class estuaries work, which continues with [Healthy Estuaries WA](#). This program is part of the \$60 million Green Jobs Plan as part of the WA Recovery Plan.



[Healthy Estuaries WA](#) picks up on the work of the successful Regional Estuaries Initiative and award-winning [Revitalising Geographie Waterways](#) program. It builds collaboration between community, science, government and industry to improve water quality through developing and implementing best-practice fertiliser application to broadacre agriculture, dairy effluent management and large-scale trials of soil amendment. This reduces the amount of nutrients and organic matter entering waterways.

Healthy Estuaries WA continues work in the priority catchments of the South West land division comprising the Peel-Harvey estuary, Leschenault Estuary, Vasse-Geographie waterways, Hardy Inlet, Wilson Inlet, Torbay Inlet and Oyster Harbour.



Water Minister Dave Kelly, second left, launches Healthy Estuaries WA with department staff

Bindjareb Djlba: A plan for the protection of the Peel-Harvey estuary

The [plan](#) was launched in December 2020 and its implementation is a State Government election commitment.

It represents a whole-of-government approach to improving water quality in the Peel-Harvey estuary, with emphasis on the need to reduce nutrients from current catchment sources such as agriculture and minimise future nutrient enrichment through more effective land-use planning.

The plan represents three years of consultation and detailed scientific analysis and numerical modelling, building on the department and its predecessors' 20 years of experience working in the Peel-Harvey.

An important component is the extensive engagement with Bindjareb Noongar people, the traditional owners of the plan area, working towards a genuine partnership in the management of the estuary.

The plan's actions are supported through Healthy Estuaries WA and the contributions of all delivery partners.

Healthy Rivers program

This program collects, analyses and interprets data about our rivers and their catchments, and uses the knowledge gained to provide advice to support land use and water allocation planning, licensing and approvals, assessment of compliance, and management of environmental water releases. This includes determining the ecological requirements of our aquatic systems, assessing environmental risks and impacts, and evaluating waterway management activities.

Central to the program is long-term, standardised assessments of 150 strategic river health sites across the South West, as well as investigating emerging issues as required. About 700 individual site assessments have been completed through the program between Jurien Bay and Esperance since 2010.

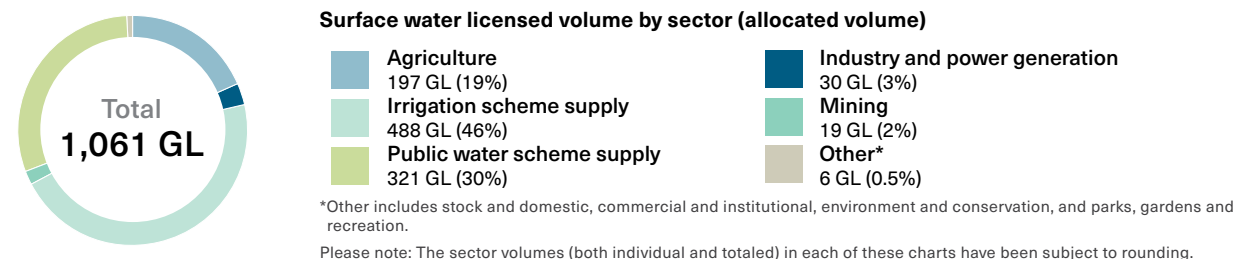
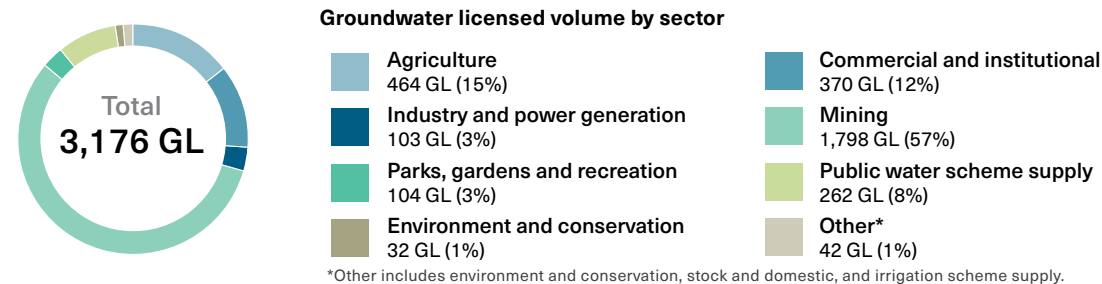
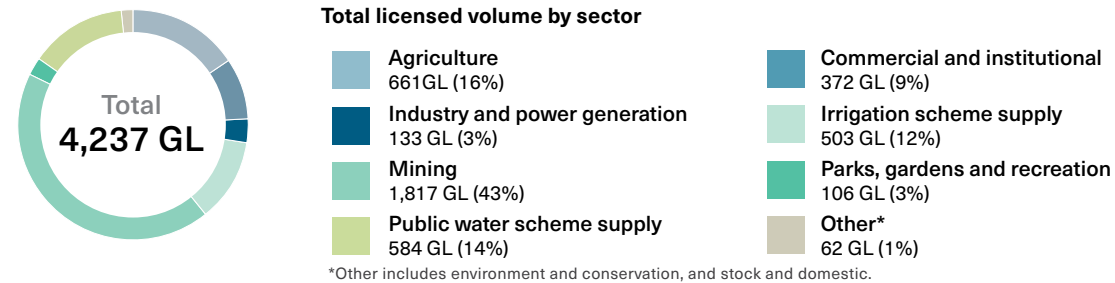


In 2020–21, assessments were conducted at 60 sites from Gingin Brook in the north through to the Donnelly and Warren rivers in the South West.

All river health information, as well as assessment methods and guidance, is made available to support others in assessing and managing rivers. A summary of data from river health assessments is freely available from the department's [Healthy Rivers website](#).

Service three: Water regulation, licensing and industry governance

Western Australia's water users by sector



Water licensing

Water is an especially precious resource in WA within the context of climate change, increasing population, and continued growth in the state's economy. Water resource management legislation, including the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act) provides the statutory basis on which water is allocated to users in certain areas and for certain water-use activities, through water licences that are granted by the department in the interests of the state.

Licensing is our principal regulatory tool for ensuring our water resources and dependent ecosystems are protected, and water use is productive and sustainable. Water licences stipulate how much water can be taken by the licence holder (or an approved third party), what resource it can be taken from, where it can be used, and for what purpose. They are generally issued for a term of 10 years and are subject to other terms, conditions and restrictions relevant to individual circumstances which must be complied with by the licence holder.

At 30 June, we managed about 12,535 water licences across 466 groundwater and 184 surface water resources. These licences authorise the taking of 4,237 gigalitres (GL) of water – 3,176 from groundwater resources and 1,061 from surface water resources. The licences are issued across a range of water-use sectors, including the mining, public water supply, agricultural and industrial sectors (see previous page graphs).

In certain areas, the construction of water-use infrastructure including bores and dams, and the disturbance or interference of the beds and banks of watercourses, are also subject to authorisations requiring licences and permits. As of 30 June 2021, there were 931 licences to construct and alter groundwater wells and 446 permits granted across the state.

In 2020–21, the water licensing target timeframes for average application processing (65 days low risk, 75 days medium risk and 95 days high risk) were achieved for all application risk categories. The average assessment timeliness performance for low-risk water licence applications was 30 days, representing our best performance in two years. The 39 and 47-day average performance for medium and

high-risk water licence applications respectively is also well under established timeliness targets.

Our Water Licensing Backlog Reduction program achieved its primary objective to reduce the water licensing backlog to 350 applications by 30 September 2019, and we continued to maintain the backlog below that target throughout 2020–21.

As of 30 June 2021, there were 229 water licence applications in the backlog. 2020–21 resulted in an additional 62 applications received compared with the previous year, representing a 2 per cent increase.

Water Online

The [Water Online](#) portal is available to licensed and prospective water users to lodge water licence and permit applications. The system also allows for licensees, and approved third parties acting on their behalf, to submit reports and meter readings electronically and in real time, in accordance with the conditions of their licences and permits.

In 2020–21, we continued to promote the uptake of the Water Online customer portal by licensees, with 1,882 new registered users from a total of 6,962 registered users, and 52 per cent of water licence applications submitted electronically during the last financial year. We also introduced several system

enhancements to strengthen the water licensing and compliance management functionality of the system, improving the overall user experience.

Water compliance and enforcement

To ensure the community makes best use of available water resources, the department administers a suite of water resource management legislation in a manner that is open, fair and reasonable. We also undertake compliance initiatives and programs aimed primarily at promoting and encouraging protection of water resources and the water-dependent environment. We provide a range of support mechanisms to licensees which promote self-regulation in complying with the terms, conditions and restrictions of their individual water licences, a key objective of our [Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#).

These important compliance activities are delivered by six regional offices and are tailored to ensure they reflect the water resource management context, objectives and challenges within these diverse regional water management areas.

In 2020–21, our compliance monitoring effort within individual water resources was proportionate to the current level of water use, the demand for new or increased water entitlements, and the likelihood of damage

Water licences administered 2020–21



12,535

licences and permits

to the water resource and water-dependent environment resulting from non-compliance with water licences or other breaches of water resource legislation.

Compliance with water metering requirements and licensed water entitlements was a key priority. Our 2020–21 compliance monitoring program consisted of on-ground and off-site monitoring activities, with 350 on-ground water licence compliance inspections and water meter audits conducted, and 1,343 off-site water use surveys and compliance report reviews finalised. We also processed 4,731 meter reading submissions.

As an outcome of these monitoring activities, 4,540 incident reviews and investigations were undertaken, and we responded to 338 confirmed incidents of non-compliance with a combination of statutory and non-statutory enforcement actions. We issued 193 letters of education, 77 warning notices and 47 infringement notices, and gave 21 statutory directions.

Measurement of licensed water take



The [Measuring the taking of water policy](#) (2016) sets out how licensed water users in WA are required to measure their water take. Under the policy, the measurement of licensed abstraction was significantly expanded through a model of self-supply metering, where licensees are responsible for meter installation, maintenance, reading and reporting. This requirement was introduced in a staged approach bringing the metering threshold down from 500 megalitres (ML) to 10 ML.

Since the gazettal of the Rights in Water and Irrigation Amendment Regulations 2018, we

have developed a range of communication and education tools to notify affected licensees of the amendments, inform them about potential impacts on them and their existing water-use measurement activities, and promote compliance with the regulations.

In 2020–21, the final stage of the implementation program started for licences with entitlements of 10 ML or more across the state, and there are now 6,405 licences, allocating 4,179 GL of water, that are subject to metering and alternative measurement requirements under the regulations.

As of 30 June 2021, 97 per cent of the total volume of water licensed for use in WA was required to pass through an approved measurement device.

While the policy recognises metering as the preferred mechanism for measurement of licensed abstraction, it also states metering will not be required in circumstances where it is impractical, or where there is minimal benefit to our water resource management actions. In these situations, the policy provides

Water compliance in 2020–21



4,540
incident reviews



193
letters of education



77
warning notices



47
infringement notices

Domestic garden bore restriction in 2020–21



194
warning notices



12
infringement

responsibilities for domestic garden bore watering restrictions.

During the last financial year, the department's Water Efficiency Measures program issued 194 warning notices and 12 infringements for breaches of domestic garden bore watering restrictions.

for alternative measurement systems to be approved by us for implementation by licensees or, in certain limited circumstances, exempt licensees from the requirement to measure their licensed abstraction.

Domestic garden bore restrictions



Perth metropolitan area garden bore users have been subject to a watering roster of three days a week since 2007 and garden bores are subject to statewide restrictions imposed under the Water Agencies (Water Use) By-laws 2010.

An MoU between the department and Water Corporation sets out a cooperative approach towards the compliance and enforcement

Water services

Government-owned water utilities Water Corporation, Busselton Water Corporation and Bunbury Water Corporation (Aqwest) are established under the *Water Corporations Act 1995*.

The *Water Services Act 2012* provides powers to enable licensed service providers such as Water Corporation to deliver water supply, irrigation, sewerage and drainage services.

Beyond the three utilities, there are 37 other water service providers in WA, including 16 local governments which are exempt, four irrigation cooperatives, mining companies and developers.

The Water Services (Water Corporations Charges) Regulations 2014 and the Water Services Regulations 2013 are amended annually to reflect the fees and charges for Aqwest, Busselton Water and Water Corporation. The department is responsible

for amending regulations in consultation with the three water corporations so that they can take effect from the beginning of the financial year.

Water service domestic violence code

As part of State Government initiatives to combat domestic violence, the department developed a domestic violence code under the *Water Services Act 2012*, which came into effect in December 2020. The code prescribes minimum requirements for water service providers to support residential customers who have been affected by family violence. Compliance with the code is a requirement of water service licences.

Managing public water supply abstraction

Groundwater licensed to Water Corporation forms an important part of Perth's public water supply, comprising up to 40 per cent of the water supplied through the Integrated Water Supply Scheme (IWSS).

As part of our adaptive management of Perth's groundwater resources in response to climate change, the department works with Water Corporation to ensure groundwater abstraction for the IWSS limits impacts

to the city's important wetlands and groundwater-dependent bushland.

This involves reducing groundwater abstraction in line with climate change and working with Water Corporation to bring climate-independent sources to the IWSS mix. We also work with Water Corporation to adjust the distribution of abstraction each year to help protect these ecosystems, with water level criteria set by the Minister for Environment.

Through this work, we have supported the development of Water Corporation's groundwater replenishment scheme, a climate-independent water source.

Groundwater replenishment involves treated wastewater being further treated to drinking water standards and then recharged into aquifers for later use as public water supply. Our Perth regional confined aquifer capacity study, *Studying Perth's deep aquifers to*

improve groundwater management, guided Water Corporation on suitable locations for recharge and abstraction for an expansion of the scheme. These locations support full recovery of the volume of water being recharged and provide improved water resource and environmental outcomes.

We are also helping Water Corporation to review the IWSS groundwater bore maintenance and replacement program to identify the best locations (and aquifers) for ongoing take of groundwater.

The department is preparing a draft Gngangara allocation plan for public comment. The draft plan will include measures to rebalance groundwater abstraction in line with the impacts of climate change.

The plan helps deliver Action 14 of the Waterwise Perth Action Plan: review groundwater allocation plans for Gngangara, Perth South and Jandakot, Cockburn and Serpentine to manage groundwater levels for wetlands, urban trees and irrigation of green spaces. It also contributes to achieving the 2030 target of 10 per cent less groundwater use across the region. This is factored into Water Corporation's future water supply planning.



Our Perth regional confined aquifer capacity studies have guided Water Corporation on suitable locations for groundwater replenishment

Water fees

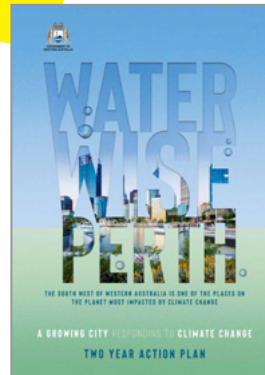
Most water licence and permit holders in WA do not pay a fee for service.

However, a water licence and permit application assessment fee is charged for applications from the mining and public water supply sectors. These sectors are among the largest water users by total volume, requiring significant departmental effort to assess the sectors' water licence and permit applications.

Fees for these two sectors recognise the need to meet the costs of assessing water licence and permit applications from which these industries derive significant commercial benefit.

During 2020–21, we spent \$14,015,324 on the assessment of all water licence and permit applications, and collected \$931,977 in fees from 159 licensees for 371 applications assessments.

Two key targets of Waterwise Perth Action Plan



Reduce groundwater use by 10 per cent across the Perth and Peel regions by 2030

Ensure recycled and alternative water supplies make up 45 per cent of the projected gap between future water demand and water supply

Water policy

A revised [Managed Aquifer Recharge \(MAR\) policy](#) and new accompanying guideline was released to facilitate the reuse of WA's valuable water resources.

The MAR policy and guideline were delivered as part of the State Government's Waterwise Perth Action Plan, contributing to achieving two key targets:

- reducing groundwater use by 10 per cent across the Perth and Peel regions by 2030

- ensuring recycled and alternative water supplies make up 45 per cent of the projected gap between future water demand and water supply.

The policy and guideline provide a management framework for MAR operations in WA. They include useful information to help with establishing a managed aquifer recharge project while safeguarding the environment, water users and public health. They also support proponents in investigating whether MAR is a viable and cost-effective solution to meet their water demands.

Outcome two

Emissions, discharges, and clearing of native vegetation are effectively regulated to avoid unacceptable risks to public health and the environment



Pollution Response team in action

Service four: Environmental regulation

Being a responsive and credible regulator

Much of our role involves discharging regulatory functions under the legislation we administer, primarily under the EP Act, the RIWI Act and the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* (Contaminated Sites Act).

In the past financial year, we have continued to assess and issue approvals or assessments under these acts, as well as conduct associated compliance activities.

Importantly, we have made efficiency and effectiveness improvements to the way in which we regulate, in terms of those with whom we communicate and what we expect from them.

Our regulatory approach

The department launched its new regulatory approach guidance at the Regulatory Stakeholders Reference Group meeting in November 2020.

This articulates how all the elements of the department fit together to achieve better water and environmental outcomes and provides clarity for stakeholders on what they can expect from us.

Our approach recognises that the environmental, waste management and water resource management challenges we face as a society require multifaceted interventions designed collaboratively and delivered collectively.

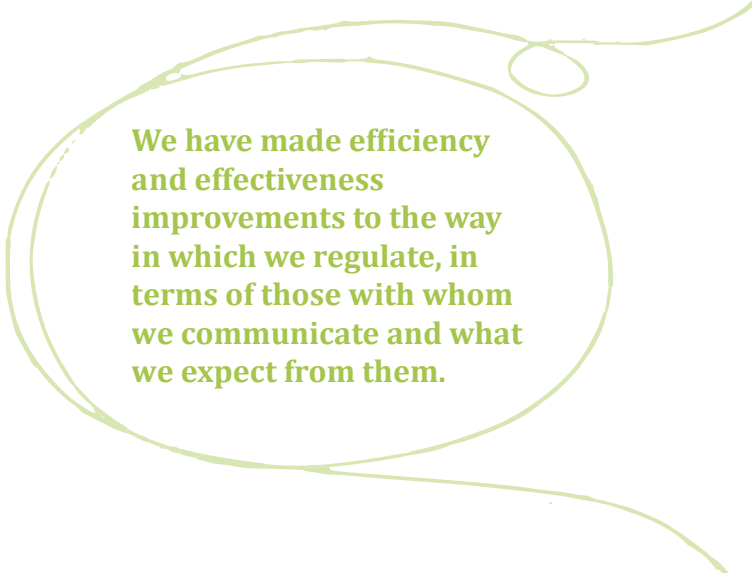
It also recognises that being a successful regulator depends on strong relationships, and that by collaborating with others, we achieve better outcomes.

Regulatory statistics performance and capability

The department had a busy year working with regulated stakeholders. This included engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic response over important issues such as delays

to fieldwork required for approvals, and potential compliance-related issues.

On top of the ongoing continuous improvement in this area of our business, this year required us to put in extra effort working with stakeholders to navigate advice, assessments and approvals, and compliance issues in the best and most efficient manner without compromising environmental protection or water resource management outcomes.



We have made efficiency and effectiveness improvements to the way in which we regulate, in terms of those with whom we communicate and what we expect from them.

Industry Regulation

Industry Regulation has continued to be extremely busy with the team receiving 643 applications, about 18 per cent more applications compared with the previous financial year. This continues the trend of increasing application numbers observed over recent years.

The second quarter of 2020–21 was the busiest quarter in the past three financial years with 182 applications received, and our licensing and works approvals processes are under test.

Applications from the resources sector increased substantially in the latter half of the year with a rise of 27 per cent compared with the previous financial year, demonstrating business confidence during the COVID-19 pandemic. New large-scale projects – including iron ore, salt, gold, nickel and rare earths among other commodities – have contributed to a

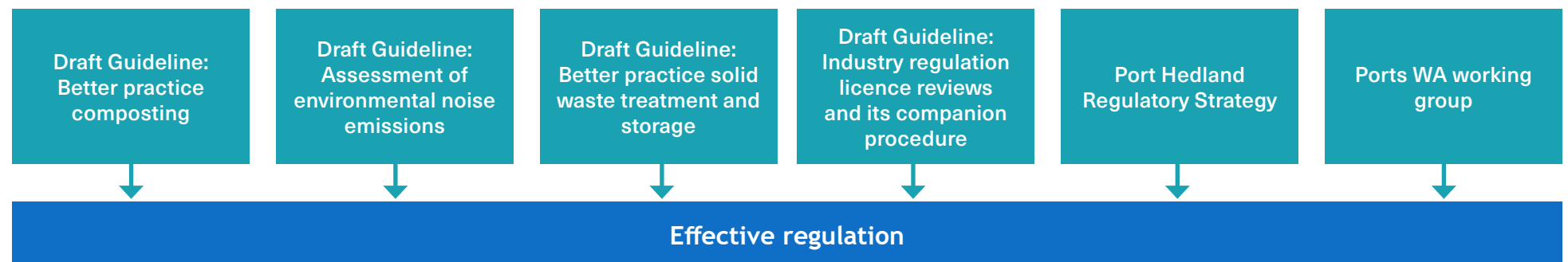
surge in applications. This trend is expected to continue into the 2021–22 financial year.

In the agribusiness sector, the department received high numbers of applications and inquiries in sectors including the red meat industry, intensive piggeries, sheep feedlot industry and downstream industries such as the animal feed manufacturing and meat processing industries. The increase has seen the department work collaboratively with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to support and service the needs of industry in a timely manner.

Our staff have continued to demonstrate resilience, finding systems and process efficiencies in response to demand, with 580 applications determined. This compares with 643 applications received for the 2020–21 financial year.

The average working-day time across all applications was 66 days, a significant achievement compared with the 81 days total average of the previous two financial years when taking into account the increase in applications this financial year. As of 30 June 2021, there were 283 open applications with the department.

One such efficiency within Industry Regulation has been the rollout of improvements to the department's public-facing decision reports which have helped staff reduce assessment workloads while improving the readability and conciseness of the reports. Industry Regulation has recently been allocated additional funding to respond to industry demand and to streamline approval processes in readiness for the Environment Online build. Recruitment processes are almost complete for a range of officer levels. Recruitment is not without challenges in a strong employee market with the mining industry also actively recruiting.



An important part of being an effective regulator is providing guidance and direction in key areas and specific projects. Industry Regulation, in conjunction with other directorates, has achieved this through:

- releasing the [Draft Guideline: Better practice composting](#)
- releasing the [Draft Guideline: Assessment of environmental noise emissions](#)
- developing the *Draft Guideline: Better practice solid waste treatment and storage*
- developing the *Draft Guideline: Industry regulation licence reviews* and its companion procedure
- releasing the [Port Hedland Regulatory Strategy](#)
- participating in the Ports WA working group.

Our waste sector team continued to help implement waste policy outcomes. This year the team performed a critical role in delivering licensing decisions which resolved the final hurdle for the container deposit scheme going live on 1 October 2020, as well as assessing and determining applications relating to the rollout of FOGO in support of the waste strategy.

Waste licensing was also involved in the development of the [Waste not, want not: Valuing waste as a resource discussion paper](#). This

sought feedback on the proposed legislative framework for waste-derived materials, which aims to provide certainty about when material is no longer waste, meaning licensing under the EP Act would not be required and waste levy requirements would not be triggered where relevant.

Native vegetation regulation

The Native Vegetation Regulation branch received 358 native vegetation clearing permit applications last financial year, about 7 per cent more than for 2019–20. This branch has continued to work on reducing the number of backlog applications and improving response timelines. The average number of working days spent on making a decision has improved – from 71 days in 2019–20 to 68.5 days in 2020–21. The percentage of applications decided within a timeframe of 60 working days also improved, from 50 per cent in 2019–20 to 57 per cent in 2020–21.

As of 30 June 2021, there were 197 open applications with the department. The number of applications has remained steady through the last and previous financial years.

The Native Vegetation Regulation branch, in collaboration with the Better Regulatory Practice branch in the Regulatory Capability division, has made progress in regulatory reform this year. Three new assessment pathways were

developed and new decision report templates, designed to communicate the key information supporting decisions more effectively and transparently, were created. One of these was a dedicated pathway for very low-impact clearing applications, developed in anticipation of the new clearing referral provisions that will soon be proclaimed in accordance with the *Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2020* (EP Amendment Act).

Other important ongoing work during the 2020–21 financial year included several projects in preparation for other changes arising from amendments to the EP Act, extensive involvement in the bilateral agreement negotiations with the Australian Government and supporting the Strategic Policy directorate in implementing the recommendations of the WA environmental offsets review.

Native Vegetation Regulation continued to work as part of the interagency Local Government Roadside Clearing Regulation Working Group, developing a strategy for setting out the key objectives, outcomes and priorities of the group. The target outcomes include improved local government understanding of the clearing permit process, improved assessment timeframes for local government clearing permit applications and more strategic planning for local government clearing activities, including delivery of strategically planned environmental offsets in highly cleared landscapes.

Environmental Compliance and Enforcement

As part of the [2020–21 Environmental Compliance program](#), more than

250 inspections were undertaken in the financial year. From these inspections, 77 sites were found to be non-compliant, with one or more non-compliances identified. A total of 249 non-compliances were identified across the 77 sites.

In partnership with LGAs, 284 inspections were conducted as part of the [Light Industry Program](#).

Investigations were also undertaken in response to pollution and intelligence reports and through information gained through our compliance programs. Investigations resulted in 58 successful convictions, and the issuing

of 93 infringements, 54 letters of warning and 14 statutory notices.

Within this, 51 persons/entities were prosecuted for illegal dumping, amounting to \$126,321.90 in fines and the payment of \$39,996.90 in costs.

Pollution Watch received 3,287 reports and our Pollution Response team responded to 237 incidents including chemical spills, fuel tanker rollovers and industrial, hazardous materials fires.

Growth in controlled waste transport continued to increase during the financial year with more than one million tonnes of controlled waste reported to the department on 97,385 controlled waste tracking forms. A total of 703 new controlled waste licence applications were also assessed.

There were also 133 known or suspected contaminated sites reported to us, and 394 sites classified during the period, with a total of 4,396 sites now classified under the Contaminated Sites Act.

Technical improvements

Satellite technology is improving the way we regulate, and we are now able to access higher-resolution imagery more frequently.

This year we entered into a new contract with Planet Labs, a company that offers the highest coverage capacity of any commercial satellite imagery provider. This increased our capacity to be more effective in our desktop compliance monitoring activities, including surveillance.

2020–21 Environment Compliance Program



250+
inspections



249
compliance issues



284
Light Industry Program inspections

Pollution and intelligence reports



58
successful convictions



93
infringements issued



54
letters of warning issued



51
prosecutions for illegal dumping



3,287
reports to Pollution Watch



237
incidents Pollution Response responded to



Outcome three

Development and implementation of strategic policy and legislation
that promoted sustainable environmental outcomes

Alkimos in the Northern corridor

Service five: Environmental and water policy

Environmental Protection Act amendments

The EP Act is WA's primary environmental protection legislation. It regulates emissions and discharges to the environment, and the clearing of native vegetation, and provides the legal framework for environmental impact assessments to be undertaken by the EPA.

The EP Amendment Act received Royal Assent on 19 November 2020. These amendments represent the most significant reform of WA's environmental legislation in more than 30 years.

The EP Amendment Act introduces a raft of amendments to modernise and streamline regulatory processes under the EP Act, while ensuring environmental protection standards are maintained.

Implementation of the EP Amendment Act is being undertaken in a staged approach working with industry, non-government organisations and the community. This process includes

the development of regulations, policies and processes to support the amendments.

The first stage of implementing the EP Amendment Act occurred in February 2021. These amendments included important administrative improvements, stronger

investigative powers for inspectors and new head powers to develop key regulations.

The department is progressing work to implement the second and third proclamation stages, which are anticipated in late 2021 and the end of 2022 respectively.

Major amendments to the EP Act

Improvements to the environmental impact assessment process under Part IV of the EP Act, including new cost-recovery provisions for Part IV

Changes to clearing provisions under Part V Division 2 of the EP Act to ensure they are efficient, targeted, flexible and transparent while ensuring the protection of native vegetation with important environmental values

The strengthening of the efficiency and effectiveness of the regulation of emissions and discharges under Part V Division 3 of the EP Act

The modernising of compliance and enforcement powers and providing for enhanced modified penalties

New provisions for establishing environmental monitoring programs

New provisions to facilitate implementation of the proposed bilateral agreements under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

Western Australian Climate Policy

In November 2020, the State Government released the [Western Australian Climate Policy](#), outlining actions to create a low-carbon future and create jobs in clean industries to support WA's economic recovery. Development and implementation of the policy is being led by our department.

The policy contains 64 actions and underscores the State Government's commitment to work with all sectors of the economy to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The policy will also ensure the state's environment, economy and community are more resilient and better prepared for the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

The department will coordinate key whole-of-government actions, including commitments for public sector agencies to transition to net zero emissions and the development of sectoral emissions reduction strategies and a Climate Resilience Strategy.

The department will deliver the \$3.1 million Climate Science Initiative to develop improved climate change projections and will collaborate with Treasury to deliver a Climate Risk Framework aimed at identifying and managing climate impacts to government assets and operations.



64 actions in WA Climate Policy



Net zero emissions by 2050

In April 2021, the State Government launched the department-led [Regional Climate Alliance](#) program, a \$500,000 investment to support collaboration between local governments to address regional climate change issues. This funding will enable the establishment of two alliances and will facilitate on-the-ground projects and resources to support coordination. The program is a collaboration between the department, DLSCI and WALGA.

Release of the policy also coincided with the launch of the \$21 million [Electric Vehicle Strategy](#), a new plan to support improved uptake of electric vehicles and facilitate a low-emissions transport sector. The department chairs the Western Australian Electric Vehicles Working Group which is responsible for coordinating implementation of the strategy.

Clean Energy Future Fund

The [Clean Energy Future Fund](#), a \$19 million initiative administered by the department, continued to support the implementation of innovative clean energy projects in the state. The fund supports projects that demonstrate cost-effective reduction in emissions, and which could lead to the broader adoption of innovative clean energy technologies.



Merredin Collgar Wind Farm (© Tourism WA)

In January 2021, two Goldfields-based projects were offered grants worth more than \$2.6 million in the first round of the fund.

- Nomadic Energy received \$1 million to install 5 megawatts (MW) of modular, re-deployable solar panels at Saracen's Carosue Dam gold mine. The flexibility to redeploy the solar panels removes a key barrier to using green energy at mine sites, where a mine may cease operating before the cost of the solar panels has been recovered.

The projects will create up to 400 jobs and generate 77,000 megawatt hours of electricity each year – enough to power 15,000 houses and save 53,000 tonnes of carbon emissions, which is equal to taking 17,000 cars off the road.

- ResourcesWA received \$1.6 million to install 30 MW of solar power at the Homestead mine site in the Goldfields, supplying power to the Paddington Mill and Mungari Mill sites and batteries to reduce the impact of outages and support Western Power's local substation.

The projects will create up to 400 jobs and generate 77,000 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity each year – enough to power 15,000 houses and save 53,000 tonnes of carbon emissions, which is equal to taking 17,000 cars off the road.

The Clean Energy Future Fund is an important part of the State Government's commitment to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and supporting our state's COVID-19 economic recovery plan.

Native vegetation policy

The department has been leading native vegetation reform, including undertaking public consultation on the [Native Vegetation in Western Australia](#) issues paper which proposed initiatives to improve native vegetation protection and management.

A draft state native vegetation policy has been prepared, taking into account submissions on the issues paper and extensive engagement across state agencies. The draft was planned to be released for public consultation in 2020 but this was delayed because of impacts from COVID-19.

This will be the first native vegetation policy for WA. It will promote a whole-of-government approach to protecting and managing the state's valuable native vegetation by improving

coordination across all relevant State Government functions.

The draft policy is now planned to be released for public consultation in 2021, so stakeholders are given an opportunity to provide input on how our native vegetation is protected and managed.

Cockburn Sound Management Council

The [Cockburn Sound Management Council](#), supported by the department, is an advisory council to the Minister for Environment established under section 25 the EP Act.

One of the council's roles is to oversee and coordinate environmental monitoring of the Cockburn Sound marine area, consistent with the [State Environmental \(Cockburn Sound\) Policy 2015](#). The department introduced continuous real-time water monitoring in

the Cockburn Sound marine area in November 2020. Eight real-time monitors complement an established monthly water sampling program which includes 14 additional sites.

The monitoring network will better enable the department to detect and understand environmental changes associated with algal blooms or pollution events which may result in fish kills. The baseline data from the network will inform the planning, decision-making and implementation of Westport – the State Government initiative to identify the necessary infrastructure for Perth's future freight needs.

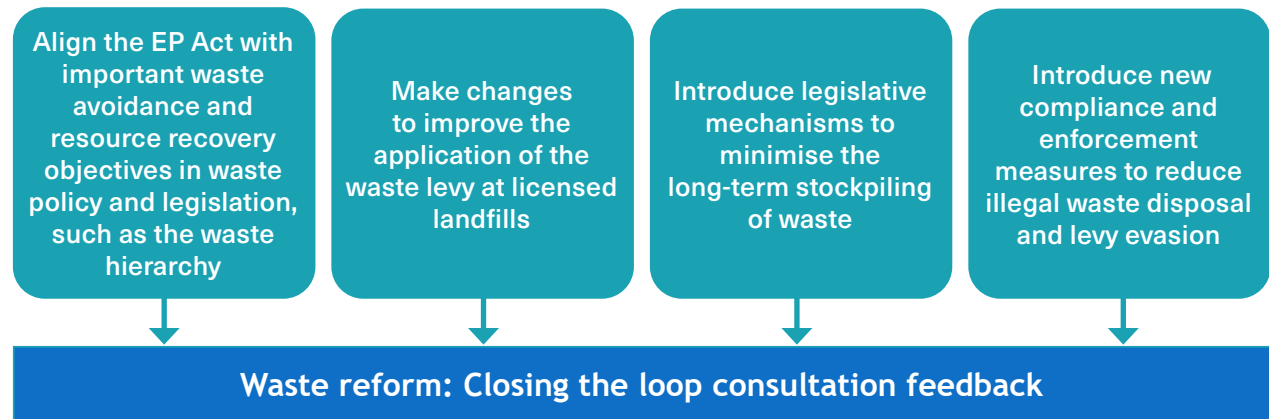
The Cockburn Sound Management Council met four times during the financial year.

Waste reform

The waste strategy sets clear objectives and performance targets for WA to improve waste management. This includes the goal to increase material recovery by 75 per cent by 2030.

To implement the waste strategy and deliver targets, we need the right legislative framework and levers to support the waste industry, local government and the community.

The State Government, through the department, is progressing a suite of legislative reform projects. Over the past year, four key consultation processes have been undertaken.



The [Closing the loop](#) consultation paper sought feedback on proposals for waste reform including:

- aligning the EP Act with important waste avoidance and resource recovery objectives in waste policy and legislation, such as the waste hierarchy
- making changes to improve the application of the waste levy at licensed landfills
- introducing legislative mechanisms to minimise the long-term stockpiling of waste
- introducing new compliance and enforcement measures to reduce illegal waste disposal and levy evasion.

Following a five-month public consultation period, extended because of COVID-19, 40 submissions were received from waste

industry members and the community. The department is now preparing a Decision Regulatory Impact Statement which will outline the final legislative proposals to be implemented.

In September 2020, the State Government released the waste reform consultation paper [Waste not want not: Valuing waste as a resource – Proposed legislative framework for waste-derived materials](#) for a 12-week public consultation period. The paper outlined the proposed framework for waste-derived materials and the legislative amendments required for implementation. The legislative amendments will provide certainty about when materials derived from waste are no longer considered waste, meaning that licensing under the EP Act would not be required and waste levy requirements would not be triggered where relevant.

The department received 44 submissions on the paper and a [Consultation summary report](#) was published in July 2021.

The [Review of the Waste Levy consultation paper](#) sought input to review the scope and application of the waste levy to ensure that it meets the objectives of the waste strategy, and to establish a schedule of future levy rates.

The consultation paper was also released for five months in 2020 because of COVID-19, with 41 submissions received. The findings of the review have been prepared for consideration by the State Government.

Also in September 2020, the department published a discussion paper seeking public

feedback on the second statutory review of the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007*. The review considered the effectiveness of the legislation in meeting its objectives for reducing waste and encouraging resource recovery, and its alignment with the waste strategy. The department has reviewed the 17 submissions received and is preparing a statutory report for State Government consideration.

These consultations have provided important feedback to improve the waste legislative framework in WA, which will support a shift to a sustainable low-waste circular economy. The department will continue its work on these important waste legislative reform projects during 2021–22.

Air Quality Coordinating Committee

The [Air Quality Coordinating Committee](#) comprises representatives from the State Government, industry, business and the community.

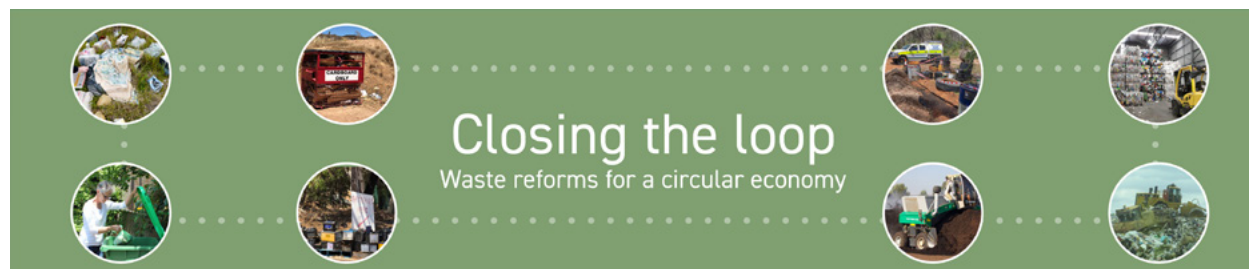
The committee oversees implementation of the [Perth Air Quality Management Plan](#) which aims to ensure clean air is achieved and maintained throughout the Perth metropolitan region to 2030 and beyond. The committee met twice between July 2020 and June 2021.

Murujuga Rock Art Strategy

The State Government is working in partnership with the [Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation](#) (MAC) to protect the ancient rock art of Murujuga, on the Dampier Archipelago and Burrup Peninsula.

Our work with MAC is another way in which the department is using its specialist skills to work with traditional owners and custodians to implement the [Murujuga Rock Art Strategy](#) and protect these culturally and spiritually important rock carvings, or petroglyphs.

This partnership reflects a shared commitment to a constructive long-term relationship to support the implementation of the strategy and includes funding to support MAC in its long-term endeavour to manage Murujuga.



The department has primary responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the strategy. Its purpose is to protect the rock art from the potential impacts of anthropogenic emissions.

The strategy establishes the framework for long-term monitoring and analysis of changes to the carvings to determine whether they are subject to accelerated change. The framework provides a transparent, risk-based and adaptive approach for the management of impacts to the rock art which is consistent with the State Government's responsibilities under the EP Act.

The Murujuga Rock Art Stakeholder Reference Group facilitates engagement between MAC and key government, industry and community representatives on the development and implementation of the rock art strategy.

Puliyapang Pty Ltd, a joint venture between Tocomwall and Calibre Ventures Pty Ltd, was engaged in February 2020 to implement a rock art monitoring program on Murujuga. The Puliyapang Pty Ltd contract was terminated on 30 April 2021 because of a breach of conditions.

Calibre Professional Services One Pty Ltd was appointed in June 2021 to continue the work previously performed through the Puliyapang Pty Ltd joint venture. In partnership with subject matter experts from Curtin University, Art Care and Chem Centre, it is leading the development

of the monitoring program, which will help determine if there are changes to the rock art over time, and what is causing the changes. This will help ensure the protection of the rock art into the future.

The monitoring program is underpinned by an independent peer review process to provide confidence in the scientific rigour and design of the monitoring program. Peer reviewers with national and international expertise in environmental quality management, statistical analysis, geochemistry, air quality and rock art monitoring and management are reviewing key aspects of the program.

Murujuga is undergoing a World Heritage listing process as part of the State Government's commitment to have the area's archaeological, cultural and spiritual values internationally recognised.

Our work helps to preserve those values at a technical level, as well as support co-existence between Aboriginal culture and heritage values and industry on Murujuga. The Murujuga Rock

The monitoring program will be guided by the cultural law, knowledge and practices of the Circle of Elders, traditional owners and custodians of Murujuga.

Art monitoring program supports the World Heritage nomination process and will inform future management of the rock art.

The monitoring program will be guided by the cultural law, knowledge and practices of the Circle of Elders, traditional owners and custodians of Murujuga. Murujuga rangers will be involved in all aspects of the monitoring program and trained by leading experts to monitor the rock art in the field.

Murujuga hosts multibillion-dollar industries which significantly contribute to the local, state and national economy, and provide employment in the area. Industry on the Burrup Peninsula includes Rio Tinto's Dampier Port operations, the North West Shelf Karratha gas plant, Woodside's Pluto liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant and Yara Pilbara's liquid ammonia fertiliser plant and technical ammonium nitrate production facility.

Further expansion and future developments are proposed. Some of these are being assessed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the EP Act.

The State Government considers that the unique Aboriginal cultural and heritage values of Murujuga can continue to coexist with well-regulated industry and new economic opportunities which deliver benefits to the local community.

Outcome four

Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised

Service six: Waste strategies

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030

In February 2019 the waste strategy was launched. Its accompanying action plan is reviewed annually.

The waste strategy and its action plan provide the State Government, Waste Authority, local government, industry and community with a clear picture of current waste issues and a roadmap for the future.

The aim of the strategy is for WA to become a sustainable, low-waste circular economy in which human health and the environment are protected from the impacts of waste.

The department is working with the Waste Authority and the Minister for Environment to implement the waste strategy and remains focused on its three key objectives: to avoid waste, recover more value and resources from waste, and protect the environment and human health from the impacts of waste.



In 2020-21, the department and the Waste Authority continued to work collaboratively

The WasteSorted 'Be a GREAT sort' behaviour change campaign was launched in August 2020, encouraging people to sort their waste correctly and reduce the volume of waste going to landfill

Funding and guidance supported the delivery of consistent three-bin kerbside collection systems which include FOGO

The Roads to Reuse program supported the increased use of recycled C&D materials in road base and other projects

There was support and assessment of local government waste plans

A waste infrastructure audit and needs analysis informed the basis of the state waste infrastructure plan

Waste Data Online was developed and implemented, enabling reporting under regulation 18C of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008

Waste projects

Behaviour change

The WasteSorted behaviour change campaign was launched in August 2020 to encourage people to more effectively sort their waste to reduce contamination and therefore reduce the volume of waste sent to landfill in WA.

The 'Be a GREAT sort' campaign promotes five priority behaviours:

- **G**ifting to charity
- **R**ecycling
- **E**arth-cycling organic waste
- **A**voiding waste generation
- **T**aking specific items to drop-off points.

The campaign is promoted on regional TV, metropolitan radio, video advertising (YouTube and social media) and in printed materials.

The WasteSorted communications toolkit was revised to ensure consistency with the behaviour change campaign and to promote waste sorting in households. The toolkit and the 'Be a GREAT sort' campaign materials are also available to stakeholders to amplify key messages. Local governments using the campaign materials over the past year include the cities of Albany, Armadale,

Swan, Kalamunda and Wanneroo, the shires of Augusta-Margaret River, East Pilbara and Esperance, the Town of Bassendean, the Bunbury Harvey Regional Council and the Eastern, Western and Southern Metropolitan regional councils.

We are continuing to ensure all programs delivered or funded by the Waste Authority are aligned with the behaviour change campaign, with work underway to transition the branding of the current Waste Wise Schools program to WasteSorted schools by early 2022.



'Be a GREAT sort' campaign



Greenbushes Primary School children with waste-free lunches



Waste Wise Schools highlights 2020–21

18 schools recognised for 10 consecutive years of WWS accreditation from a total of 254 accredited schools

\$132,025 awarded in grants to 45 accredited schools for projects such as paper and plastics recycling systems, composting and worm farming, waste wise vegetable gardens and reuse collection infrastructure

Waste-management curriculum materials developed and provided to schools to support teachers in the delivery of waste wise education

Educational waste audits run at 70 schools

A school waste system assessment tool developed

18 professional learning workshops and webinars delivered for metropolitan and regional teachers

An online learning module implemented to facilitate professional learning in regional areas

Waste Wise Schools

The [Waste Wise Schools](#) (WWS) program works with schools in WA to implement educational strategies for avoiding waste, recovering waste as a resource, and reducing waste sent to landfill, while developing positive environmental values in students and the wider school community.

Participating schools model responsible environmental behaviours through hands-on learning experiences linked to the WA curriculum.

Hazardous Household Waste program

The [Household Hazardous Waste](#) (HHW) program helps with the storage, transport, treatment and recovery of HHW collected by local governments and regional councils.

HHW refers to products used in and around the home that are flammable, toxic, explosive or corrosive. If not disposed of correctly, HHW can pose a threat to human health and the environment.

The HHW program has nine metropolitan and six regional permanent local government facilities where householders can drop off unwanted household chemicals at no charge. Temporary collection days were also run by various local governments throughout the year to provide facilities in areas with no nearby permanent collection site.

This year, two new facilities have come online with:

- funding of \$50,000 allocated to construct a new HHW collection site in the City of Karratha, which opened in March 2021
- a further \$50,000 allocated to provide a new HHW collection site in the City of Bayswater, with development underway.

Funding will be used to purchase equipment to enable staff to accept, handle and store dropped-off HHW materials safely.

In 2020–21, more than 520 tonnes of materials (including acids, batteries, flammable liquids, paint and cleaning products) were collected for safe recovery or disposal.

Better Bins and Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO



Work continued to support the original Better Bins program which helps local governments move towards three-bin collections (general waste, co-mingled recycling and mostly garden organics, with some instances of food organics being included). This helps residents improve waste separation at the source, thereby increasing recovery rates.

Better Bins opened in 2014 as a pilot and ran as a fully operational program from 2016 to 30 June 2019. During this time, the State Government provided more than \$14.6 million to 28 metropolitan local governments and regional councils. This helped local governments to provide better practice kerbside services to more than 550,000 households in WA.

Better Bins paved the way for the [Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO](#) program, which started in 2020 and is underpinned by the Waste Authority's approach to residential organics recycling of FOGO. The [Better practice FOGO kerbside collection guidelines](#) describe better practice three-bin kerbside collection services, including mobile kerbside bins, kitchen caddies and compostable liners, complementary educational measures, and action to support markets for FOGO-derived materials.

The Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO program has committed \$4.5 million in 2020–21 to further support local governments to make the transition to the better-practice three-bin FOGO service consisting of a red-lidded bin for general waste, a yellow-lidded bin for recycling, and a lime green-lidded bin for FOGO.

In 2020–21, a total of 16 local governments signed up to the program to receive funding of up to \$25 for each household receiving a three-bin FOGO collection service, with a coverage approaching 300,000 households.

Go FOGO program in 2020–21



16

local governments signed up



almost

300,000

households covered

Roads to Reuse



Environment Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson, second right, at the Princess Margaret Hospital demolition site

The RtR program encourages State Government agencies, local governments, regional councils and the private sector to use recycled C&D products in civil applications such as road construction.

C&D waste makes up about half of the state's waste stream and represents about half of material recovered from recycling. Work continues to increase the recovery of C&D waste to meet the state's target to recover 75 per cent of materials by 2030.

Funding for RtR is provided from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account and is made available for C&D recyclers through the RtR Product Testing Scheme.

Following the success of the [RtR pilot project](#), with MRWA utilising more than 30,000 tonnes of recycled C&D products in the Kwinana Freeway Widening and Murdoch Drive Connection project, the partnership has continued, with

MRWA using close to 30,000 tonnes more in WA roads in 2020–21.

RtR has also provided other organisations with opportunities to collaborate and use recycled material. Sustainability was at the forefront of the DevelopmentWA Subiaco Oval deconstruction, where materials were broken into large segments and transported to recycling facilities. This ensured maximum recycling opportunities and minimum impact on the environment and community. The material was recycled and used by MRWA in road construction projects.

Similar methods are being applied to the deconstruction of Princess Margaret Hospital in 2021, which has a target to recycle 96 per cent of its demolition materials. The intention is for concrete from the site to be processed into RtR material for use in road construction.

The department continues to work closely with MRWA, DevelopmentWA, InfrastructureWA and

the Department of Finance on more sustainable procurement decisions to encourage greater use of recycled materials.

Waste plans

Local government waste plans bring together the many different aspects of local government waste management and provide local governments with a mechanism to align their waste services with the waste strategy.

In 2019, 43 local governments in Perth, Peel, and regional cities and centres were notified they were required to prepare waste plans to demonstrate how the waste services they provide will be managed to achieve consistency with the waste strategy. The cities of Albany, Bunbury and Busselton, and the Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Greater Geraldton regional centres were required to provide these to the department for assessment and endorsement by 31 March 2021 under section 40(2) of the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007*.

As of 30 June 2021, 41 waste plans were submitted to the department for assessment, and two granted extensions for council approval. A total of 34 waste plans have been endorsed by the Director General, one waste plan was not endorsed, and the remainder are still under assessment.

Work continues to increase the recovery of C&D waste to meet the state's target to recover 75 per cent of materials by 2030.

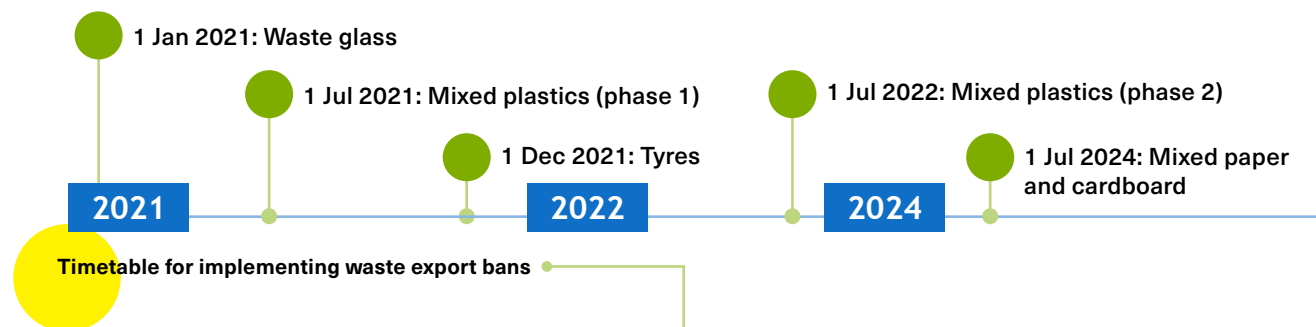
The waste plans identify a range of actions local governments are implementing which are consistent with and contribute towards the achievement of the waste strategy targets and objectives. These include changes and improvements to waste services and infrastructure, the development of policies and procedures, data enhancements and behaviour change programs.

Local governments are required to report annually to the department on the implementation of their waste plans, with the first annual report for the 2021–22 financial year due on 1 October 2022.

WasteSorted grant funding

The [2020–21 WasteSorted Grants – Infrastructure and Community Education program](#) was delivered on behalf of the Waste Authority. This replaced the Community and Industry Engagement program and supports investment in local recycling infrastructure with grants of up to \$250,000, or educational programs with grants of up to \$50,000.

In 2020–21, 13 WA businesses, not-for-profits, local governments and community groups received more than \$1.5 million in grants. This included funding for six infrastructure projects totalling \$1.24 million and eight community education projects receiving a total of more than \$300,000.



The COVID-19 pandemic impacted delivery of some projects and saw the department working closely with recipients to ensure valuable outcomes.

Since 2017, the department has administered waste grant funding programs which have provided \$6 million to WA projects to improve the recovery and reuse of focus materials including plastics, C&D waste, textiles and FOGO.

E-waste

A range of recycling services are provided across WA for electronic wastes (or 'e-waste') such as televisions, computers, mobile phones and batteries. However, more needs to be done to address this growing waste stream.

The department worked collaboratively with the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation to develop and run the 2020–21 [WasteSorted E-waste Grants program](#). In January 2021, the State Government announced funding of nine e-waste projects totalling \$1 million through the New Industries Fund:

WasteSorted e-waste grants for e-waste projects to improve innovation in processes and e-waste collection.

The State Government has committed to ban e-waste disposal to landfill by 2024, and to provide \$14 million to implement this ban, including supporting local recycling facility development. A material flow analysis was started to document the types, volumes and flows of e-waste generated in WA to further inform policy options. This work will be a key input into the State Government's e-waste commitments.

Australian Government waste export ban and recycling modernisation

The Australian Government's *Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020* regulates the export of certain types of processed waste while building Australia's capacity to generate high-value recycled commodities and associated demand. The timetable for implementing waste export bans began with waste glass from 1 January 2021 and continues with mixed plastics (phase 1) from 1 July 2021;

mixed plastics (phase 2) from 1 July 2022; tyres from 1 December 2021; and mixed paper and cardboard from 1 July 2024.

To support the development of local markets for materials impacted by the export ban, during the year the department ran two expression-of-interest processes for new recycling infrastructure: one for mixed paper and cardboard, and another covering tyres, plastics and regional infrastructure.

In February 2021, the State and Australian Governments announced \$70 million in joint funding to drive a total of \$174 million recycling investment in WA. \$20 million from the national Recycling Modernisation Fund and \$15 million from the State Government will leverage investments across eight new projects processing about 140,000 tonnes of WA plastic and tyre waste every year.

A further \$15 million from the national Recycling Modernisation Fund and \$15 million from the State Government will go towards a new \$86.6 million Suez Recycling and Recovery/ Auswaste Recycling pulp mill capable of processing 100,000 tonnes of waste paper and cardboard a year, to be operational before the export ban on mixed paper comes into effect.

The department will continue to work with the Australian Government and other states and territories to ensure WA's e-waste commitments complement work being undertaken at the national level.

Waste Reform Advisory Group

Following its establishment in March 2019, the Waste Reform Advisory Group has informed the development of waste and recycling policy and legislation in WA in support of the waste strategy and state waste targets.

The group includes representatives from the Waste Authority, local government, peak industry and resource bodies, community groups, non-government organisations and material recovery operators.

Throughout 2020–21, the group continued to provide input on policy and legislation focused on supporting the best waste outcomes for the community, industry and the state.

Container deposit scheme

[Containers for Change](#) started on 1 October 2020, paving the way for reduced litter, improved recycling rates and the creation of new businesses and employment opportunities across the state.

Containers for Change is run by WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd (WARRRL), a not-for-profit company responsible for establishing and managing the day-to-day operation of the scheme's collection network. The department provides regulatory oversight of the scheme.

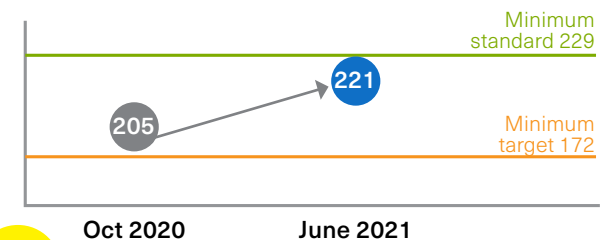


Premier Mark McGowan and former Environment Minister Stephen Dawson use a reverse vending machine

More than 535 million containers have been returned through Containers for Change, and more than \$1.9 million donated to charities and community groups.

The return rate for the period January to March 2021 was 59 per cent, according to the latest available figure. This compares with about 34 per cent of eligible beverage containers collected and recycled before the start of Containers for Change.

- Containers for Change opened with 205 refund points, exceeding the minimum target (172) for refund points at the scheme's start. This had increased to 221 refund points by June 2021, progressing towards the 229 required under the department's Minimum Network Standards.



Increased numbers of refund points

More than 730 jobs have been created by Containers for Change, with about 40 per cent of these going to people with disability, the long-term unemployed or Aboriginal Australians.

In 2020, the Minister for Environment approved 139 applications for community grants totalling more than \$210,000. These grants were used by a range of community groups to fund container donation and refund points.

40%

730+

jobs have been created
by Containers for
Change

The program has been a win for both the school and the environment. Students and the broader school community are engaging in the scheme and raising much needed funds for our P&C and of course these items are being kept from general waste and our environment. Very successful and beneficial program. (Spencer Park Primary School)

Some of the community feedbacks on CDS

We love it – we use the trailer we purchased every week and convert our used containers into much needed funds. It is a great fundraiser for Broome Surf Life Saving Club and it is wonderful not adding to the landfill. (Broome Surf Life Saving Club)

Operating a Refund Point at Wyalkatchem has been incredibly rewarding from a financial point of view, but more importantly, it has been rewarding with regard to the wellbeing and social interaction of the Men's Shed Members, both with each other and with the public. So far, we have received well over 550,000 containers. (Wyalkatchem Men's Shed)

Keep Australia Beautiful Council

The department provides executive and operational services to the [Keep Australia Beautiful Council](#) (KABC).

KABC's [Litter Prevention Strategy for Western Australia 2020–2025](#) was released on 21 August 2020 by the then Minister for Environment. This builds on the success of the previous strategy, which resulted in a 41 per cent reduction in litter since 2012–13, exceeding its target of a 25 per cent reduction.



A range of education, awareness and engagement programs continued such as the [Adopt-a-Spot](#), [Tidy Towns](#) and [Clean Schools](#) programs, the [Community Litter Grants](#) and the [Litter Reporting Scheme](#).

KABC's iconic Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities awards continued to draw a high number of strong applications. The well-attended awards ceremony was opened by the Governor of Western Australia, Hon Kim Beazley, KABC's patron.

The Clean Schools program engages large numbers of primary and secondary school students across the state. This year the [Australian Microplastics Assessment Project](#) (AUSMAP) program was introduced to students. Schools showed a high degree of interest in developing their students as citizen scientists to examine the level of microplastics in the marine environment.

KABC issued 1,104 infringements through the Litter Report Scheme, with a conversion rate of 95 per cent from reports of littering from vehicles.

Other significant projects started during the year included the development of a new litter audit methodology in collaboration with all states and territories and the development of a regional roadside litter campaign in partnership with and funded by MRWA.



Outcome five

Quality advice to the EPA and
Minister for Environment on
significant proposals, schemes
and environmental issues

Service seven: Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA

This year the EPA marks 50 years of protecting the WA environment, with Professor Matthew Tonts starting as EPA Chair in January 2021.

The EPA is an independent authority that provides advice on environmental matters directly to the WA Minister for Environment.

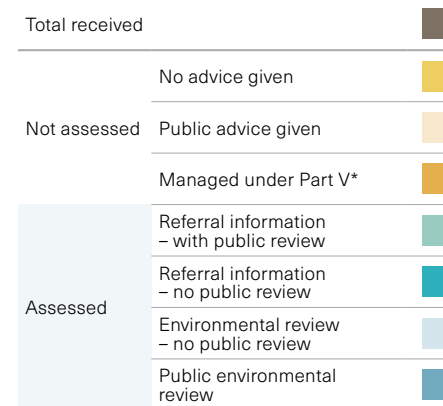
The department has continued to provide services to the EPA to conduct environmental impact assessment of significant development proposals and planning schemes.

Development proposals

During 2020–21, 58 development proposals were referred to the EPA. This is the highest number of referrals received in the past six years (see graph on right).

The EPA may not necessarily make a determination on whether to assess a referred proposal in the same year the proposal is referred. Only when the EPA has sufficient information about the referred proposal can it make a determination on whether formal assessment is required.

The EPA determined that 13 referred proposals did not require further assessment by the Authority, and 31 referred proposals required formal assessment. This is a substantial increase in the number of proposals to be assessed from the previous two years (see graph below).

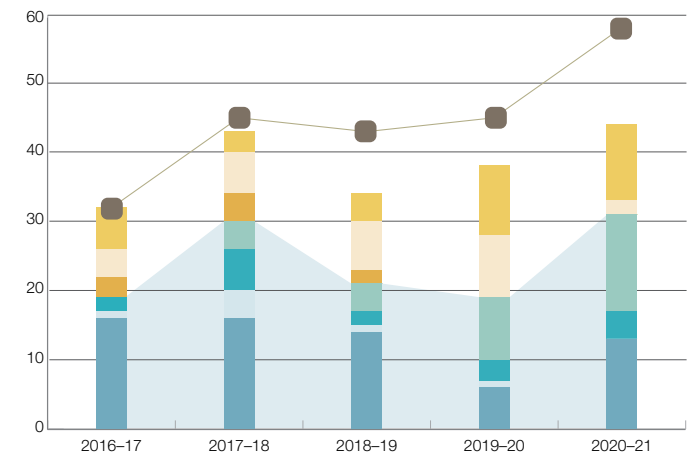


* Descriptor now considered under 'Not assessed: No advice given'

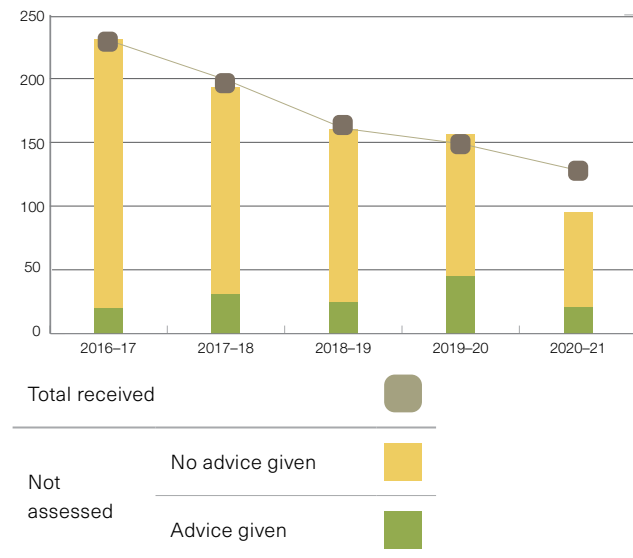
Total development proposals referred to the EPA and decisions

Planning schemes

During 2020–21, department staff dealt with 128 schemes which were referred to the EPA. The total number of schemes referred to the EPA continues to decline (see graph on the next page) because of planning reforms introduced in 2014–15.



The EPA determined three referred schemes required formal assessment and 98 did not require further assessment by the Authority. Of the 98 that did not require further assessment, the EPA provided advice and recommendations on environmental factors for 23 referred schemes.



Total schemes and scheme amendments referred to the EPA and 'not assessed' decisions

Completed assessments

In 2020-21, the department supported the EPA to complete 21 assessment reports to the Minister for Environment, which included 13 reports on the assessment of significant proposals and eight reports on changes to conditions of existing projects (see the table).

The map shows the location and type of all the proposals for which assessment reports were completed in 2020-21.

These included the first assessment under the EPA's new greenhouse gas emissions guidance. The EPA recommended implementation of Pilbara Energy Generation's 165 MW power station, subject to conditions supporting the proponent's commitment to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. The Minister for Environment issued approval of the power station in February 2021.

The EPA also recommended implementation of stage 2 of the Waitsia Gas Project, which was the second assessment completed under the greenhouse gas emissions guidance.

Location and type of all proposals for which assessment reports were completed in 2020-21



Assessment reports completed

Type of assessment	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Formal assessments				
Public environmental review	5	10	7	5
Environmental review (no public review)	-	2	1	1
Assessment on referral information (no public review)	5	2	3	5
Assessment on referral information (with public review)	1	1	5	2
Strategic proposal	1	-	-	-
Subtotal	12	15	16	13
Changes to conditions				
s. 46 inquiry	7	9	24	8
Total	19	24	40	21



In 2020–21, the EPA also completed its assessment of the northern and central sections of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road. The EPA's recommended implementation of this 19 km freeway came with a significant offsets strategy to counterbalance impacts to the western ringtail possum, black cockatoo and threatened ecological communities.

METRONET continues to be one of the State Government's most significant and ambitious infrastructure projects. This year, department staff undertook post-assessment work on METRONET proposals, including the Thornlie-Cockburn Link and Yanchep Rail Extension.

The EPA also completed its assessment of the Malaga to Ellenbrook Rail Line in 2020–21 and is currently assessing the Byford Rail Extension.

Other assessment work

The statement issued by the Minister for Environment may include conditions for the preparation and approval of environmental management plans. During 2020–21, the department completed the assessment of 96 environmental management plans, with 104 still under assessment.

Any changes to a proposal once a statement has been issued must be approved under section 45C of the EP Act. The EPA Chair is delegated to make decisions under section 45C on behalf of the Minister for Environment. During 2020–21, the department provided support to the EPA Chair to complete 35 changes to existing proposals under section 45C of the EP Act, with 36 proposed changes still under assessment.

The overall existing workload for development proposals is 272. This is an increase from last year and includes assessment of environmental management plans; requested changes to conditions and proposals in Ministerial



Statements; referrals yet to be determined; and significant development proposals undergoing formal assessment.

Consultation

Members of the public are encouraged to participate in consultation opportunities during the environmental impact assessment process by offering advice, identifying omitted relevant information, providing local knowledge and proposing alternatives. The department facilitated opportunities for public involvement in the assessment process by:

- publishing the referral information for all referred proposals on the EPA website for seven-day public comment
- publishing relevant proponent information (such as environmental review documents) during the assessment on the EPA website for public review.

Environmental management plans in 2020–21



96

completed the assessment



104

still under assessment

Service eight: Environmental management services to the EPA

The department provided services to the EPA to develop guidelines and strategic advice to manage environmental impacts and protect the environment.

In August 2020, the then Minister for Environment requested the EPA provide advice on the potential cumulative impacts of proposed activities and developments on the values of Exmouth Gulf. The department helped the EPA with extensive consultation, including:

- a community meeting in Exmouth to identify the opportunities for the future of the environment, people and places in and around the gulf
- a three-week public consultation on current and proposed pressures facing the gulf and how they impact the area's environment, and social and cultural values.

This strategic advice will be a significant tool for future decision-making in the region. It will also improve how the EPA addresses cumulative impacts in environmental impact assessment.

The department also continued to support the EPA in regular consultation with its Stakeholder Reference Group. The group consists of key external stakeholders and peak industry bodies

who provide input directly to the EPA on its guidelines, processes and performance. The group met quarterly in 2020–21.

This year, the department also helped the EPA in its extensive consultation program on the changes to the environmental impact assessment procedures suite. The revised procedures are required to implement the amendments to the EP Act, which are expected to come into force later in 2021.

This included a five-week public consultation, targeted industry briefings and direct engagement with the EPA's Stakeholder Reference Group.

This financial year the EPA also updated its [*Technical Guidance – Terrestrial vertebrate fauna surveys for environmental impact assessment*](#). The updated guidance replaces two former guidance documents: *Technical Guidance – Sampling methods for terrestrial vertebrate fauna* and *Technical Guidance – Terrestrial fauna surveys*.

In addition, the department continued to facilitate opportunities for public involvement in the development of guidelines and advice by publishing the following on the EPA's online consultation hub:

- draft *Technical Guidance – Subterranean fauna surveys for environmental impact assessment*
- draft revised environmental impact assessment procedures required to implement amendments to the EP Act
- strategic advice for the Exmouth Gulf fact sheet.

DRAFT Technical Guidance

Subterranean fauna surveys for
environmental impact assessment





Peel Inlet from the Murray Serpentine Delta

Service nine: Compliance monitoring services to the Minister for Environment

Part IV of the EP Act

In accordance with section 48(1) of the EP Act, the department may monitor proposals approved by the Minister for Environment, for the purpose of determining whether the implementation conditions set out in the Ministerial Statement are being complied with.

If a proponent does not ensure implementation of the proposal is in accordance with the implementation conditions, the proponent commits an offence.

When non-compliance with an implementation condition or proponent commitment in a Ministerial Statement is identified, the proponent is issued with a 'notice of non-compliance', detailing actions required to rectify the issue and regain compliance.

The Minister for Environment is informed of each non-compliance.

As outlined in Service four: environmental regulation – compliance, the department undertakes its environmental compliance activities through a structured annual program. The program incorporates a variety of proactive and reactive methods to monitor compliance including audits of proposals, reviews of compliance assessment reports, onsite inspections and stakeholder engagement.

The annual program enables resources to be effectively managed and achieve better environmental outcomes. The results from the compliance audits identify areas for improving proponents' compliance and inform future annual programs and the environmental impact assessment process.

Compliance and audit activity

Under our 2020–21 program, we continued to monitor significant proposals authorised under Ministerial Statements, completing 59 audits including iron ore mining activities, oil and gas facilities and large infrastructure projects. A total of 216 compliance assessment reports were reviewed and 33 notices of non-compliance were reported.



Disclosures and legal compliance



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Auditor General independent auditor's report



Auditor General

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S OPINION 2021

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

To the Parliament of Western Australia

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (Department) which comprise:

- the Statement of Financial Position at 30 June 2021, and the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, and Summary of Consolidated Account Appropriations for the year then ended
- Notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, including administered transactions and balances.

In my opinion, the financial statements are:

- based on proper accounts and present fairly, in all material respects, the operating results and cash flows of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the year ended 30 June 2021 and the financial position at the end of that period
- in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my report.

I am independent of the Department in accordance with the *Auditor General Act 2006* and the relevant ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Responsibilities of the Director General for the financial statements

The Director General is responsible for:

- keeping proper accounts
- preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions
- such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Director General is responsible for:

- assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern
- disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern
- using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Western Australian Government has made policy or funding decisions affecting the continued existence of the Department.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements. The objectives of my audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal control.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website. This description forms part of my auditor's report and can be found at https://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf.

Report on the audit of controls

Opinion

I have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement on the design and implementation of controls exercised by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation. The controls exercised by the Department are those policies and procedures established by the Director General to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property, and the incurring of liabilities have been in accordance with legislative provisions (the overall control objectives).

My opinion has been formed on the basis of the matters outlined in this report.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the controls exercised by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation are sufficiently adequate to provide reasonable assurance that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property and the incurring of liabilities have been in accordance with legislative provisions during the year ended 30 June 2021.

The Director General's responsibilities

The Director General is responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining controls to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property and the incurring of liabilities are in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006*, the Treasurer's Instructions and other relevant written law.

Auditor General's responsibilities

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility as an assurance practitioner is to express an opinion on the suitability of the design of the controls to achieve the overall control objectives and the implementation of the controls as designed. I conducted my engagement in accordance with Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3150 *Assurance Engagements on Controls* issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. That standard requires that I comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform my procedures to obtain reasonable assurance about whether, in all material respects, the controls are suitably designed to achieve the overall control objectives and were implemented as designed.

An assurance engagement involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the suitability of the controls design to achieve the overall control objectives and the implementation of those controls. The procedures selected depend on my judgement, including an assessment of the risks that controls are not suitably designed or implemented as designed. My procedures included testing the implementation of those controls that I consider necessary to achieve the overall control objectives.

I believe that the evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Limitations of controls

Because of the inherent limitations of any internal control structure, it is possible that, even if the controls are suitably designed and implemented as designed, once in operation, the overall control objectives may not be achieved so that fraud, error or non-compliance with laws and regulations may occur and not be detected. Any projection of the outcome of the evaluation of the suitability of the design of controls to future periods is subject to the risk that the controls may become unsuitable because of changes in conditions.

Report on the audit of the key performance indicators

Opinion

I have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement on the key performance indicators of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the year ended 30 June 2021. The key performance indicators are the Under Treasurer-approved key effectiveness indicators and key efficiency indicators that provide performance information about achieving outcomes and delivering services.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the key performance indicators of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the Department's performance and fairly represent indicated performance for the year ended 30 June 2021.

The Director General's responsibilities for the key performance indicators

The Director General is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the key performance indicators in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions and for such internal control as the Director General determines necessary to enable the preparation of key performance indicators that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the key performance indicators, the Director General is responsible for identifying key performance indicators that are relevant and appropriate, having regard to their purpose in accordance with Treasurer's Instruction 904 *Key Performance Indicators*.

Auditor General's responsibilities

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility as an assurance practitioner is to express an opinion on the key performance indicators. The objectives of my engagement are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the key performance indicators are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the entity's performance and whether the key performance indicators are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. I conducted my engagement in accordance with Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3000 *Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information* issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. That standard requires that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements.

An assurance engagement involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the key performance indicators. It also involves evaluating the relevance and appropriateness of the key performance indicators against the criteria and guidance in Treasurer's Instruction 904 for measuring the extent of outcome achievement and the efficiency of service delivery. The procedures selected depend on my judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the key performance indicators. In making these risk assessments I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the engagement in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances.

I believe that the evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

My independence and quality control relating to the reports on controls and key performance indicators

I have complied with the independence requirements of the *Auditor General Act 2006* and the relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements. In accordance with ASQC 1 *Quality Control for Firms that Perform Audits and Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, and Other Assurance Engagements*, the Office of the Auditor General maintains a comprehensive system of quality control including documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Other information

The Director General is responsible for the other information. The other information is the information in the entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2021, but not the financial statements, key performance indicators and my auditor's report.

My opinions do not cover the other information and, accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Matters relating to the electronic publication of the audited financial statements and key performance indicators

This auditor's report relates to the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the year ended 30 June 2021 included on the Department's website. The Department's management is responsible for the integrity of the Department's website. This audit does not provide assurance on the integrity of the Department's website. The auditor's report refers only to the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators described above. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from these financial statements, controls or key performance indicators. If users of the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators are concerned with the inherent risks arising from publication on a website, they are advised to contact the entity to confirm the information contained in the website version of the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators.



Caroline Spencer
Auditor General for Western Australia
Perth, Western Australia
23 September 2021

Financial statements

Certification of financial statements

For the reporting period ended 30 June 2021

The accompanying financial statements of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation have been prepared in compliance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006* from proper accounts and records to present fairly the financial transactions for the reporting period ended 30 June 2021 and the financial position as at 30 June 2021.

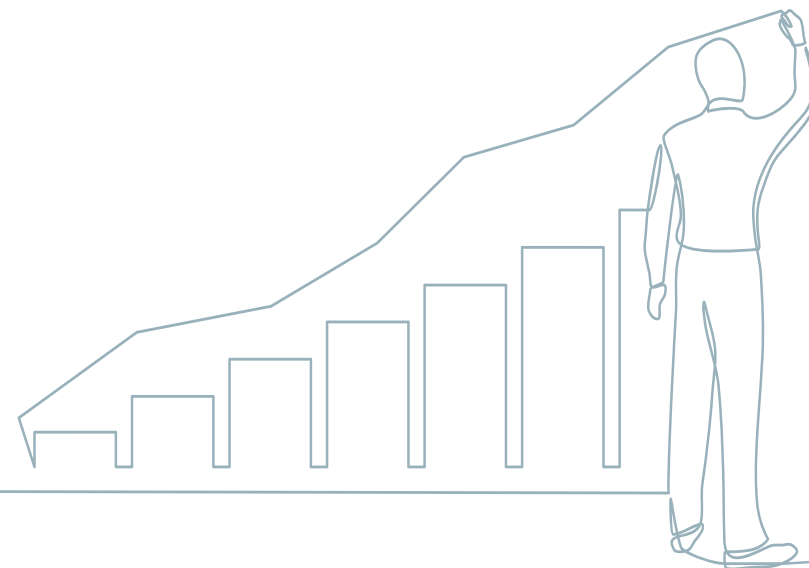
At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.



Hilary Manderson
Chief Finance Officer
21 September 2021



Michelle Andrews
Director General
21 September 2021



Statement of comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Cost of services			
Expenses			
Employee benefits expense	2.1(a)	100,218	102,849
Supplies and services	2.3	32,532	37,013
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4.1.1, 4.2, 4.3.1	11,995	13,123
Finance costs	6.3	81	84
Accommodation expenses	2.3	8,915	8,566
Grants and subsidies	2.2	21,997	15,317
Other expenses	2.3	6,198	4,988
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	2.4	1,207	694
Total cost of services		183,143	182,634
Income			
User charges and fees	3.2	29,864	29,523
Commonwealth grants	3.3	4,854	4,971
Waste Levy	3.4	78,781	79,639
Interest revenue		913	-
Other income	3.5	5,441	2,247
Total income		119,853	116,380
Net cost of services		63,290	66,254

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Income from State Government			
Service appropriation	3.1	104,478	81,890
Income from other public sector entities	3.1	3,095	2,700
Resources received	3.1	3,055	2,789
Royalties for Regions fund	3.1	4,699	4,797
Total income from State Government		115,327	92,176
Surplus for the period		52,037	25,922
Other comprehensive income			
Items not reclassified subsequently to profit or loss			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus	8.10	6,964	3,880
Total other comprehensive income		6,964	3,880
Total comprehensive income for the period		59,001	29,802

The Statement of comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2021

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6.4	21,555	9,348
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	6.4	49,289	64,402
Receivables	5.1	38,600	22,667
Amounts receivable for services	5.2	6,338	6,057
Other assets	5.3	2,145	2,161
Total current assets		117,927	104,635
Non-current assets			
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	6.4	1,833	1,488
Receivables	5.1	-	563
Amounts receivable for services	5.2	66,712	52,545
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	4.1	356,624	350,377
Right-of-use assets	4.2	2,175	3,137
Intangible assets	4.3	18,704	17,582
Other assets	5.3	23	56
Total non-current assets		446,071	425,748
Total assets		563,998	530,383

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Payables	5.4	4,702	4,699
Lease liabilities	6.1	900	1,143
Contract liabilities	5.5	2,940	1,749
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	24,822	24,174
Other current liabilities	5.6	4	4
Total current liabilities		33,368	31,769
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	6.1	1,344	2,020
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	6,195	6,002
Total non-current liabilities		7,539	8,022
Total liabilities		40,907	39,791
Net assets		523,091	490,592
Equity			
Contributed equity	8.10	325,128	351,630
Reserves	8.10	24,984	18,020
Accumulated surplus		172,979	120,942
Total equity		523,091	490,592

The Statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Notes	Contributed equity \$'000	Reserves \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Total equity \$'000
Balance at 1 July 2019		373,945	14,140	95,020	483,105
Surplus		-	-	25,922	25,922
Other comprehensive income	8.10	-	3,880	-	3,880
Total comprehensive income for the period		-	3,880	25,922	29,802
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:					
Capital appropriations	8.10	6,007	-	-	6,007
Distribution to owners	8.10	(28,322)	-	-	(28,322)
Total		(22,315)	-	-	(22,315)
Balance at 30 June 2020		351,630	18,020	120,942	490,592
Balance at 1 July 2020		351,630	18,020	120,942	490,592
Surplus		-	-	52,037	52,037
Other comprehensive income	8.10	-	6,964	-	6,964
Total comprehensive income for the period		-	6,964	52,037	59,001
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:					
Capital appropriations	8.10	7,855	-	-	7,855
Distribution to owners	8.10	(34,357)	-	-	(34,357)
Total		(26,502)	-	-	(26,502)
Balance at 30 June 2021		325,128	24,984	172,979	523,091

The Statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Cash flows from State Government			
Service appropriation		83,973	63,925
Capital contributions		7,855	6,007
Holding account drawdown		6,057	5,994
Distributions to owner		(32,730)	(24,159)
Net proceeds on sale of land remitted to consolidated account		(160)	-
Royalties for Regions fund		4,699	4,797
Funds from other public sector entities		775	3,777
Net cash provided by State Government		70,469	60,341

Utilised as follows:

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Payments			
Employee benefits		(98,635)	(98,896)
Supplies and services		(29,239)	(36,030)
Finance costs		(81)	(83)
Accommodation		(8,747)	(8,476)
Grants and subsidies		(20,712)	(19,390)
GST payments on purchases		(7,145)	(7,667)
Other payments		(6,540)	(3,762)
Receipts			
User charges and fees		29,779	30,791
Commonwealth grants		4,854	6,221
Interest received		40	-
Waste Levy		78,561	78,012
GST receipts on sales		315	357
GST receipts from taxation authority		6,728	8,049
Other receipts		3,714	1,767
Net cash used in operating activities		(47,108)	(49,107)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments			
Purchase of non-current assets		(13,959)	(12,133)
Loan payments to WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd		(16,042)	(750)
Receipts			
Receipts from sale of non-current assets		80	105
Loan repayments from WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd		5,167	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(24,754)	(12,778)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Payments			
Principal elements of lease payments		(1,168)	(1,300)
Net cash used in financing activities		(1,168)	(1,300)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(2,561)	(2,844)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		75,238	78,082
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	6.4	72,677	75,238

The Statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Summary of consolidated account appropriations

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 Budget estimate \$'000	2021 Supplementary funding \$'000	Revised budget \$'000	2021 Actual \$'000	2021 Variance \$'000
Delivery of services					
Item 84 Net amount appropriated to deliver services	105,223	-	105,223	104,076	(1,147)
Amount authorised by other statutes					
- <i>Salaries and Allowances Act 1975</i>	402	-	402	402	-
Total appropriations provided to deliver services	105,625	-	105,625	104,478	(1,147)
Capital					
Item 144 Capital appropriation	7,855	-	7,855	7,855	-
Administered transactions					
Administered grants, subsidies and other transfer payments	155	-	155	33	(122)
Total administered transactions	155	-	155	33	(122)
Grand total	113,635	-	113,635	112,366	(1,269)

No supplementary income was received by the department.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2021

1 Basis of preparation

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (the department) is a Western Australian Government (State Government) entity and is controlled by the State of Western Australia (WA) which is the ultimate parent. The department is a not-for-profit entity (as profit is not its principal objective).

A description of the nature of its operations and its principal activities have been included in the 'Our Performance' section, which does not form part of these financial statements.

These annual financial statements were authorised for issue by the Director General of the department on 21 September 2021.

(a) Statement of compliance

These general-purpose financial statements are prepared in accordance with:

- 1) The *Financial Management Act 2006* (FMA)
- 2) The Treasurer's Instructions (TIs)
- 3) Australian Accounting Standards (AAS) – Reduced Disclosure Requirements
- 4) Where appropriate, those AAS paragraphs applicable for not-for-profit entities have been applied.

The FMA and the TIs take precedence over AAS. Several AAS are modified by TIs to vary application, disclosure format and wording. Where modification is required and has had a material or significant financial effect upon the reported results, details of that modification and the resulting financial effect are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

(b) Basis of preparation

These financial statements are presented in Australian dollars applying the accrual basis of accounting and using the historical cost convention. Certain balances will apply a different measurement basis (such as the fair value basis). Where this is the case the different measurement basis is disclosed in the associated note. All values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$'000).

(c) Judgements and estimates

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about financial information being presented. The significant judgements and estimates made in the preparation of these financial statements are disclosed in the notes where amounts affected by those judgements and/or estimates are disclosed. Estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

(d) Contributed equity

AASB Interpretation 1038 *Contributions by Owners Made to Wholly-Owned Public Sector Entities* requires transfers in the nature of equity contributions, other than as a result of a restructure of administrative arrangements, to be designated as contributions by owners (at the time of, or prior to, transfer) before such transfers can be recognised as equity contributions.

Capital appropriations have been designated as contributions by owners by TI 955 *Contributions by Owners made to Wholly-Owned Public Sector Entities* and have been credited directly to contributed equity.

(e) Comparative figures

Comparative figures are, where appropriate, reclassified to be comparable with the figures presented in the current reporting period.

2 Use of our funding

Expenses incurred in the delivery of services

This section provides additional information about how the department's funding is applied and the accounting policies that are relevant for an understanding of the items recognised in the financial statements. The primary expenses incurred by the department in achieving its objectives and the relevant notes are:

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Employee benefits expense	2.1(a)	100,218	102,849
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	31,017	30,176
Grants and subsidies	2.2	21,997	15,317
Other expenditure	2.3	47,645	50,567
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	2.4	1,207	694

2.1 (a) Employee benefits expense

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Employee benefits	91,130	94,073
Superannuation – defined contribution plans	9,088	8,776
Total employee benefits expenses	100,218	102,849
Add: AASB 16 Non-monetary benefits	840	969
Less: Employee contributions	(136)	(140)
Net employee benefits	100,922	103,678

► Employee benefits

Include wages and salaries, accrued and paid leave entitlements and paid sick leave; and non-monetary benefits (such as cars, housing and free or subsidised goods or services) for employees.

► Superannuation

The amount recognised in profit or loss of the Statement of comprehensive income comprises employer contributions paid to the GSS (concurrent contributions), the WSS, the GESBs or other superannuation funds.

► AASB 16 Non-monetary benefits

Non-monetary employee benefits, that are employee benefits expenses, predominantly relate to the provision of vehicle and housing benefits are measured at the cost incurred by the department.

► Employee contributions

This line item includes contributions made to the department by employees towards employee benefit that have been provided by the department. This includes both AASB 16 and non-AASB 16 employee contributions.

2.1 (b) Employee related provisions

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Current		
Employee benefits provisions		
Annual leave ^(a)	10,364	9,939
Long service leave ^(b)	13,299	13,081
Purchased annual leave	73	152
Deferred salary scheme ^(c)	170	132
	23,906	23,304
Other provisions		
Employment on-costs ^(d)	916	870
Total current employee related provisions	24,822	24,174
Non-current		
Employee benefits provision		
Long service leave ^(b)	5,965	5,785
Other provisions		
Employment on-costs ^(d)	230	217
Total non-current employee related provisions	6,195	6,002
Total employee related provisions	31,017	30,176

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees, in respect of annual leave and long service leave for services rendered up to the reporting date and recorded as an expense during the period the services are delivered.

► (a) Annual leave liabilities

Classified as current as there is no unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

The provision for annual leave is calculated at the present value of expected payments to be made in relation to services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

► (b) Long service leave liabilities

Unconditional long service leave provisions are classified as current liabilities as the department does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

Pre-conditional and conditional long service leave provisions are classified as non-current liabilities because the department has an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the liability until the employee has completed the requisite years of service.

The provision for long service leave liabilities is calculated at present value as the department does not expect to wholly settle the amounts within 12 months. The present value is measured taking into account the present value of expected future payments to be made in relation to services provided by employees up to the reporting date. These payments are estimated using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement and discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

► (c) Deferred salary scheme liabilities

Classified as current where there is no unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

► (d) Employment on-costs

The settlement of annual and long service leave liabilities gives rise to the payment of employment on-costs including workers' compensation insurance. The provision is the present value of expected future payments.

Employment on-costs, including workers' compensation insurance, are not employee benefits and are recognised separately as liabilities and expenses when the employment to which they relate has occurred. Employment on-costs are included as part of Other expenses, note 2.3 (apart from the unwinding of the discount [finance cost]) and are not included as part of the department's Employee benefits expense. The related liability is included in Employment on-costs provision.

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Employment on-costs provision		
Carrying amount at start of period	1,087	227
Additional/(reversals of) provisions recognised	59	860
Carrying amount at end of period	1,146	1,087

► Key sources of estimation uncertainty – long service leave

Key estimates and assumptions concerning the future are based on historical experience and various other factors that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Several estimates and assumptions are used in calculating the department's long service leave provision. These include:

- expected future salary rates
- discount rates
- employee retention rates
- expected future payments.

Changes in these estimations and assumptions may impact on the carrying amount of the long service leave provision. Any gain or loss following revaluation of the present value of long service leave liabilities is recognised as employee benefits expense.

2.2 Grants and subsidies

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Recurrent			
Clean Energy Future Fund – Western Australia Recovery Program		108	-
Commonwealth Grants – National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme ^(a)		3,969	3,783
Commonwealth Grants – Smart Farming Partnerships ^(b)		529	525
Container Deposit Scheme		63	126
Contaminated Sites Management Account Grants		243	246
Grants Other		117	65
Keep Australia Beautiful Council (WA)		112	112
Royalties for Regions – Healthy Estuaries Western Australia		25	-
Royalties for Regions – Revitalising Waterways of Geographe Bay #1		-	64
Royalties for Regions – Revitalising Waterways of Geographe Bay #2		100	170
Royalties for Regions – Watering Western Australia		-	150
Rural Water Deficiency and Community Water Supply		366	-
Rural Water Grants		-	207
State-wide Water Efficiency Measures		187	225
Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account	3.4	10,443	9,107
Water Innovation Partnership		194	252
Water Sensitive Cities Australia		150	180
Western Australian Climate Policy		97	-

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Non-recurrent			
WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd ^(c)		1,224	-
Capital			
Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account		-	105
Native Vegetation Rehabilitation Scheme ^(d)		2,968	-
Offset Fund for Recovery Program ^(e)		1,102	-
Total grants and subsidies		21,997	15,317

Transactions in which the department provides goods, services, assets (or extinguishes a liability) or labour to another party without receiving approximately equal value in return are categorised as Grant expenses. Grants can either be operating or capital in nature.

Grants can be paid as general-purpose grants which refer to grants that are not subject to conditions regarding their use. Alternatively, they may be paid as specific purpose grants which are paid for a particular purpose and/or have conditions attached regarding their use.

Grants and other transfers to third parties (other than contribution to owners) are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are paid or payable. They include transactions such as: grants, subsidies, personal benefit payments made in cash to individuals, other transfer payments made to public sector agencies, local government, non-government schools, and community groups.

- (a) The State and Commonwealth Governments entered into a project agreement from 1 July 2018 for Commonwealth funding of approximately \$4.620 million for National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme for farmers for emergency water supply for livestock. The scheme supported a range of infrastructure works that delivered water for livestock, including installing pumps and pipes for water supply and cleaning out farm dams. The Scheme closed in Western Australia on 20 January 2021.

Additional funding of \$3.620 million in 2020–21 revised the total budget to \$8.240 million.

- (b) The State and Commonwealth Governments entered into a project agreement signed by the department in October 2018 for Commonwealth funding of approximately \$2.365 million for Smart Farming Partnerships – National Landcare Program scheduled to conclude by 30 June 2022. The purpose of the Smart Farming Partnerships is to develop, trial and implement new and innovative tools and farm practices that support industry practice changes that will deliver more productive and profitable agriculture, fishing, aquaculture, and farm industries; protect Australia's biodiversity; protect and improve the condition of natural resources (in particular soils and vegetation); and assist Australia to meet its obligations under relevant international treaties.

The National Landcare program aims to protect, conserve, and provide for the productive use of Australia's water, soil, plants and animals and the ecosystems in which they live and interact.

- (c) The department advanced loan monies from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account (refer to note 8.7) to WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd to fund the initial cash flow needs of the container deposit scheme. The difference between the cash advanced and the fair value of these loans has been accounted for as a grant expense when the funds were advanced. For additional information please refer to note 5.1 Receivables.

- (d) The Native Vegetation Rehabilitation Scheme program is a part of the COVID-19 recovery initiatives which will deliver environmental rehabilitation and revegetation projects across the South West land division. Conservation groups will work to improve vegetation condition and build on vegetation corridors through a range of work including fencing, seeding, planting, and managing threats to native vegetation. This will contribute to improving habitat for Western Australia's unique and important flora and fauna species, especially black cockatoos.

This program has a budget of \$14.022 million with scheduled conclusion by 30 June 2023.

- (e) The Offsets Fund for Recovery program is a part of the COVID-19 recovery plan that will support the demographic whose employment is most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic while achieving the environmental values.

This program will contribute to improving habitat for Western Australia's unique and important flora and fauna species, especially black cockatoos, and remnant vegetation in highly cleared landscapes. This broader revegetation scheme will contribute to the ecosystem services provided by functioning vegetation communities. This program will provide jobs suitable for exactly the demographic whose employment is most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic including the young, unskilled, and under-employed people, and a high proportion of women and other vulnerable people in regional towns with economies heavily reliant on tourism and hospitality.

This program has a budget of \$8.0 million with scheduled conclusion by 30 June 2023 funded by the Establishing and Maintaining Native Vegetation Offsets Account.

- The requirement for an offset counterbalances the loss of native vegetation as a condition of a native vegetation clearing permit, after steps have been taken to avoid, minimise and mitigate the impacts of clearing.

- The Establishing and Maintaining Native Vegetation Offsets Account established under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* allows for a more strategic approach to offsets. Land purchased or revegetation undertaken using contributions made to the offsets account are published on the Environmental Offsets Register website.
- The department liaises with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions to identify and acquire appropriate areas of native vegetation for addition to the conservation estate.

2.3 Other expenditure

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Supplies and services		
Communications	1,966	2,009
Consultants and contractors	23,806	24,846
Consumables	619	535
Materials	161	296
Travel	636	872
Vehicle expenses	333	260
Minor plant, machinery and equipment	758	289
Plant, machinery and equipment hire	234	322
Chemical analysis expense	800	1,032
Water carting and drought relief	343	2,985
Other supplies and services	2,876	3,567
Total supplies and services expenses	32,532	37,013
Accommodation expenses		
Rental ^(a)	6,927	6,840
Electricity and water	506	626
Rates and taxes	27	64
Security	35	42
Repairs and maintenance	748	521
Cleaning	672	473
Total accommodation expenses	8,915	8,566

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Other expenses		
Audit fees	314	308
Bad debts written off	3	-
Equipment repairs and maintenance	1,261	1,229
Expected credit losses – (reversed)/expense	(5)	1
Employment on-costs	2,486	1,036
Insurance	707	477
Other operating expenses	1,432	1,937
Total other expenses	6,198	4,988
Total other expenditure	47,645	50,567

- (a) Included within rental costs are short-term leases with a lease term of 12 months or less and low value leases of up to \$5,000. This excludes leases with another wholly owned public sector entity lessor agency. Refer to note 4.2 for aggregate short-term and low value leases expense.

► Supplies and services

Supplies and services are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred. The carrying amounts of any materials held for distribution are expensed when the materials are distributed.

► Accommodation expenses

Repairs, maintenance, cleaning, security, electricity, water, rates and taxes costs are recognised as expenses as incurred.

► Rental expenses include:

- (i) short-term leases with a lease term of 12 months or less
- (ii) low-value leases with an underlying value of \$5,000 or less
- (iii) variable lease payments recognised in the period in which the event or condition that triggers those payments occurs.

► Other operating expenses

Other operating expenses generally represent the day-to-day running costs incurred in normal operations.

► Equipment repairs and maintenance

Repairs and maintenance costs are recognised as expenses as incurred, except where they relate to the replacement of a significant component of an asset. In that case, the costs are capitalised and depreciated.

► Expected credit losses

The allowance for expected credit losses of trade receivables is measured at the lifetime expected credit losses at each reporting date. The department has established a provision matrix that is based on its historical credit loss experience, adjusted for forward-looking factors specific to the debtors and the economic environment.

► Employment on-cost

Employment on-cost includes workers' compensation insurance and other employment on-costs. The on-costs' liability associated with the recognition of annual and long service leave liabilities is included at note 2.1(b) Employee related provisions. Superannuation contributions accrued as part of the provision for leave are employee benefits and are not included in employment on-costs.

2.4 Loss on disposal of non-current assets

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Proceeds from disposal of non-current assets		
Land	(80)	(81)
Plant, equipment and vehicles	-	(23)
Carrying amount of non-current assets disposed		
Land	35	184
Buildings	-	75
Measurement sites	1,252	375
Plant, equipment and vehicles	-	155
Computer equipment	-	2
Works of art	-	5
Intangibles	-	2
Loss	1,207	694

Realised and unrealised gains are usually recognised on a net basis. These include gains arising on the disposal of non-current assets and some revaluations of non-current assets.

Gains and losses on the disposal of non-current assets are presented by deducting from the proceeds on disposal the carrying amount of the asset and related selling expenses. Gains and losses are recognised in profit or loss in the Statement of comprehensive income (from the proceeds of sale).

3 Our funding services

How we obtain our funding

This section provides additional information about how the department obtains its funding and the relevant accounting policy notes that govern the recognition and measurement of this funding. The primary income received by the department and the relevant notes are:

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Income from State Government	3.1	115,327	92,176
User charges and fees	3.2	29,864	29,523
Commonwealth grants	3.3	4,854	4,971
Waste levy	3.4	78,781	79,639
Other income	3.5	5,441	2,247

3.1 Income from State Government

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Appropriation received during the period^(a):		
Service appropriation	104,478	81,890
Total appropriation received	104,478	81,890
Income received from other public sector entities during the period^(b):		
Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account	746	137
Grants	502	2,167
Interest revenue	86	396
Wooroloo Bushfire Coordinated Residential Clean-up Program	1,761	-
Total income received from other public sector entities	3,095	2,700

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Resources received from other public sector entities during the period^(c):		
Services received free of charge		
Department of Finance – Accommodation lease	151	123
Department of Health – Water source and contaminated sites assessment	195	195
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage – Spatial data	5	3
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Digital map	16	50
Department of Transport – Environmental assessment	31	-
Landgate – Land information services	55	373
Main Roads Western Australia – Clearing permit assessment	651	250
State Solicitor's Office – Legal services	1,951	1,795
Total services received free of charge	3,055	2,789
Royalties for Regions fund^(d):		
Regional Infrastructure and Headworks Account	4,210	3,593
Regional Community Services Account	489	1,204
Total Royalties for Regions Fund	4,699	4,797
Total income from State Government	115,327	92,176

► (a) Service appropriation

Service appropriations are recognised as income at the fair value of consideration received in the period in which the department gains control of the appropriated funds. The department gains control of appropriated funds at the time those funds are deposited in the bank account or credited to the Amounts receivable for services (holding account) held at Treasury.

Service appropriations fund the net cost of services delivered. Appropriation revenue comprises the following:

- cash component
- a receivable (asset).

The receivable (holding account – note 5.2) comprises the following:

- the budgeted depreciation expense for the year
- any agreed increase in leave liabilities during the year.

► (b) Income from other public service entities

Income from other public service entities is recognised as income when the department has satisfied its performance obligations under the funding agreement. If there is no performance obligation, income will be recognised when the department receives the funds.

► (c) Resources received from other public sector entities

Resources received from other public sector entities are recognised as income (and assets or expenses) equivalent to the fair value of the assets, or the fair value of those services that can be reliably determined and which would have been purchased if not donated.

► (d) Royalties for Regions fund

The Regional Infrastructure and Headworks Account and Regional Community Services Account are sub-funds within the overarching Royalties for Regions fund. The recurrent funds are committed to projects and programs in WA regional areas and are recognised as income when the department receives the funds.

3.2 User charges and fees

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Industry fees ^(a)	24,069	24,278
Controlled waste ^(b)	4,965	4,625
Contaminated sites	283	135
Clearing regulations	464	403
Water regulatory fees	73	70
Other charges and fees	10	12
Total user charges and fees	29,864	29,523

User charges and fees revenue are recognised at the transaction price when the department transfers control of the services to customers. Revenue is recognised for the major activities as follows:

Revenue is recognised at a point-in-time for licences, works approvals and tracking forms. The performance obligations for these user fees and charges are satisfied when the licence, works approval or tracking form is issued to the customer.

- Licensing and registration fees relating to prescribed premises under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.
- Fees for the licensing of vehicles transporting controlled public waste as per the Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004.

3.3 Commonwealth grants

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Commonwealth grants – recurrent	4,854	4,971

Recurrent grants are recognised as income when the grants are receivable.

Capital grants are recognised as income when the department achieves milestones specified in the grant agreement.

Details of the department's Commonwealth grants are as follows:

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Environment Online	2,250	-
Indian Ocean Territories Account	450	393
National Pollutant Inventory	83	83
Smart Farming Partnerships – National Landcare Program	721	725
National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme	1,350	3,770
Total Commonwealth grants	4,854	4,971

3.4 Waste levy

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Waste levy	78,781	79,639

The Waste levy transaction price is determined by legislation. The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account (WARR Account) was established in 2008 under section 79 of the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007* (WARR Act). Under the Act, licensed metropolitan landfill operators are required to fund the operations of the WARR Account. The WARR Account holds revenue allocated from the levy to fund waste management programs.

The Waste levy income is recognised and accrued quarterly by the department based on estimated waste volumes and is subsequently adjusted to actual based on actual waste volume determined from the quarterly return submitted by the licensed landfill operators the following month. At the end of the financial year the waste levy is adjusted to actual before the department's financial statements are signed.

3.5 Other income

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Services rendered		
Establishing and maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account ^(a)	468	55
Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund ^(b)	4,402	685
Lease rentals – land and buildings	193	315
Gain on disposal of lease arrangement	-	1
Tree annuity	174	58
Tree harvest	62	67
Recoup – expense overpaid prior year	-	21
Insurance recovery – workers compensation prior year	-	95
Reversal of impairment losses on plant and equipment	-	69
Asset revenue ^(c)	-	65
Other revenue	142	816
Total other income	5,441	2,247

- (a) The department administers the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* which regulates the clearing of native vegetation. Clearing of native vegetation requires the authority of a clearing permit unless it is of an exempt kind.

Clearing permits may include conditions requiring an offset to counterbalance the impacts of clearing. Offsets requirements are imposed in accordance with the WA Environmental Offsets Policy (2011) and the WA Environmental Offsets Guidelines (2014). Some offset requirements involve payment of a monetary contribution into the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account, which is an account managed by the department.

Contributions into the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account are made following the grant of the associated clearing permit, and after any related appeals have been received and determined. Revenue from the offsets are recognised at a point-in-time, i.e. when the department issues an invoice to the permit holder requesting payment of the contribution into the fund.

- (b) In 2012, the WA Minister for Environment mandated that proponents in the Pilbara region pay their environmental offsets into a strategic fund for conservation. In the same year, the Federal Minister for Environment gave proponents the option of doing so. This led to the establishment of the Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund. The fund combines money from individual offset payments required under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and may combine contributions required under part 9 or 10 of the *Commonwealth Environmental and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The establishment of the fund enables the State Government to combine offset money and partner with regional land management organisations to deliver projects that achieve better and more connected biodiversity conservation outcomes. The department is responsible for managing the fund to ensure that offset payments directly benefit vegetation and habitat impacted by mining.

Despite conditions being included in Ministerial Statements from 2012, the Pilbara Environmental Offset Fund was only established on 18 April 2018. The Ministerial Statements define the proponents of the fund. Implementation conditions within these Ministerial Statements require the preparation of an Impact Reconciliation Report in order to determine the quantum of money owed to the fund by proponents.

Revenue from Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund is recognised at a point-in-time, i.e. recognised when the department has the right to invoice the proponent. The department has the right to invoice the proponent following submission and acceptance of the proponent's Impact Reconciliation Report.

- (c) Asset revenue is a result of an increment in the value of building assets after revaluation. It is recognised as other revenue to the extent it reverses the loss on revaluation recognised as other expenses in previous years.

4 Key assets

Assets the department utilises for economic benefit or service potential

This section includes information regarding the key assets the department utilises to gain economic benefits or provide service potential. The section sets out both the key accounting policies and financial information about the performance of these assets:

		2021	2020
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	4.1	356,624	350,377
Right-of-use assets	4.2	2,175	3,137
Intangible assets	4.3	18,704	17,582
Total key assets		377,503	371,096

4.1 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

	Capital works in progress	Works of art	Computer equipment	Vehicles and boating	Infrastructure	Plant and equipment	Measurement sites	Leasehold improvements	Buildings	Land	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Year ended 30 June 2021											
1 July 2020											
Gross carrying amount	7,490	103	784	223	1,335	6,759	177,101	229	4,562	154,251	352,837
Accumulated depreciation	-	-	(384)	(93)	(105)	(1,867)	-	(11)	-	-	(2,460)
Carrying amount at start of period	7,490	103	400	130	1,230	4,892	177,101	218	4,562	154,251	350,377
Additions	7,551	8	32	8	-	123	-	-	36	29	7,787
Transfers in/(out) ^(a)	(4,360)	-	101	-	-	527	3,732	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other agencies ^(b)	-	-	-	-	-	(1,326)	-	-	(105)	(113)	(1,544)
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,252)	-	-	(35)	(1,287)
Expensed during the year	-	-	-	-	-	(13)	-	-	-	-	(13)
Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,786	-	5	5,173	6,964
Depreciation	-	-	(218)	(34)	(66)	(724)	(4,494)	(13)	(111)	-	(5,660)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2021	10,681	111	315	104	1,164	3,479	176,873	205	4,387	159,305	356,624
Gross carrying amount	10,681	111	917	231	1,335	5,719	176,873	229	4,387	159,305	359,788
Accumulated depreciation	-	-	(602)	(127)	(171)	(2,240)	-	(24)	-	-	(3,164)
Accumulated impairment losses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(a) Transfers in/(out) from tangible capital works in progress to completed assets.

(b) The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) is the only department with the power to sell crown land. The land is transferred to DPLH for sale and the department accounts for the transfer as a distribution to owner.

► Initial recognition

Items of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment costing \$5,000 or more are measured initially at cost. Where an asset is acquired for no cost or significantly less than fair value, the cost is valued at its fair value at the date of acquisition. Items of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment costing less than \$5,000 are immediately expensed to the Statement of comprehensive income (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The cost of a leasehold improvement is capitalised and depreciated over the shorter of the remaining term of the lease or the estimated useful life of the leasehold improvement.

► Subsequent measurement

Subsequent to initial recognition of an asset, the revaluation model is used for the measurement of:

- land
- buildings
- measurement sites.

Land is carried at fair value.

Buildings and measurement sites are carried at fair value less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

All other property, plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

Land and buildings are independently valued annually by the WA Land Information Authority (Landgate) and recognised annually to ensure that the carrying amount does not differ materially from the asset's fair value at the end of the reporting period.

Land and buildings were revalued as at 1 July 2020 by Landgate. The valuations were performed during the year ended 30 June 2021 and recognised at 30 June 2021. In undertaking the revaluation, fair value was determined by reference to market values for land: \$42,899,450 (2020: \$40,540,100) and buildings: \$2,605,000 (2020: \$2,631,500). For the remaining balance, the fair value of buildings was determined on the basis of current replacement cost and the fair value of land was determined on the comparison utility basis with market evidence for land with low-level utility (high restricted use land).

Revaluation model:

Where the fair value of building is determined on the current replacement cost basis, the accumulated depreciation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount restated to the revalued amount.

Measurement sites are independently valued every five years by an external services valuer. In the intervening years, the measurement sites are revalued internally by use of other heavy and civil engineering construction building cost index provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Groundwater measurement sites were independently revalued by Aquenta Consulting as at 30 June 2017. Fair value for measurement sites is determined by reference to the cost of replacing the remaining future economic benefits embodied in the asset, i.e. the current replacement cost.

Revaluation model:

Where the fair value of measurement sites is determined on the current replacement cost basis, the accumulated depreciation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount restated to the revalued amount.

Significant assumptions and judgements: The most significant assumptions and judgements in estimating fair value are made in assessing whether to apply the existing use basis and in determining estimated economic life to assets. Professional judgement by the valuer is required where the evidence does not provide a clear distinction between market type assets and existing use assets.

► 4.1.1 Depreciation and impairment

Charge for the period

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Depreciation		
Buildings	111	116
Infrastructure	66	113
Plant and equipment	724	702
Vehicles and boating	34	42
Computer equipment	218	215
Leasehold improvements	13	10
Measurement sites	4,494	4,503
Total depreciation for the period	5,660	5,701

As at 30 June 2021, there were no indications of impairment on infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (2020: \$0).

Finite useful lives

All infrastructure, property, plant and equipment having a limited useful life are systematically depreciated over their estimated useful lives

in a manner that reflects the consumption of their future economic benefits. The exceptions to this rule include assets held for sale, land and investment properties.

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life. Typical estimated useful lives for the different asset classes for current and prior years are included in the table below:

Asset	Useful Life: Years
Buildings	20–40 years
Leasehold improvement ^(b)	20 years
Measurement sites	40 years
Plant and equipment	5–20 years
Computer equipment (hardware and software ^(a))	3–5 years
Infrastructure	20–50 years
Vehicles and boating	5–6 years

(a) Software that is integral to the operation of related hardware.

(b) Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful lives.

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation method are reviewed at the end of each annual reporting period, and adjustments are made where appropriate.

Land and works of art, which are considered to have an indefinite life, are not depreciated. Depreciation is not recognised in respect of these assets because their service potential has not, in any material sense, been consumed during the reporting period.

Impairment

Non-financial assets, including items of infrastructure, plant and equipment, are tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset may be impaired. Where there is an indication of impairment, the recoverable amount is estimated. Where the recoverable amount is less than the carrying amount, the asset is considered impaired and is written down to the recoverable amount and an impairment loss is recognised.

Where an asset is measured at cost is written down to its recoverable amount, an impairment loss is recognised through profit and loss.

Where a previously revalued asset is written down to its recoverable amount, the loss is recognised as a revaluation decrement through other comprehensive income.

As the department is a not-for-profit agency, the recoverable amount of regularly revalued specialised assets is anticipated to be materially the same as fair value.

If there is an indication that there has been a reversal in impairment, the carrying amount shall be increased to its recoverable amount. However, this reversal should not increase the asset's carrying amount above what would have been determined, net of depreciation or amortisation, if no impairment loss had been recognised in prior years.

The risk of impairment is generally limited to circumstances where an asset's depreciation is materially understated, where the replacement cost is falling or where there is a significant change in useful life. Each relevant class of assets is reviewed annually to verify that the accumulated depreciation/ amortisation reflects the level of consumption or expiration of the asset's future economic benefits and to evaluate any impairment risk from declining replacement costs.

4.2 Right-of-use assets

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Right-of-use assets		
Buildings	439	613
Computer equipment	180	395
Motor vehicles	1,556	2,024
Plant and equipment	-	105
Net carrying amount	2,175	3,137

Additions to right-of-use assets during the 2021 financial year were \$0.33 million (2020: \$1 million).

► Initial recognition

Right-of-use assets are measured at cost including the following:

- the amount of the initial measurement of lease liability
- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received
- any initial direct costs
- restoration costs, including dismantling and removing the underlying asset.

This includes all leased assets other than investment property right-of-use assets, which are measured in accordance with AASB 140 *Investment Property*.

The department has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases (with a lease term of 12 months or less) and low-value leases (with an underlying value of \$5,000 or less). Lease payments associated with these leases are expensed over a straight-line basis over the lease term.

► Subsequent measurement

The cost model is applied for subsequent measurement of right-of-use assets, requiring the asset to be carried at cost less any accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses and adjusted for any remeasurement of lease liability.

► Depreciation and impairment of right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the shorter of the lease term and the estimated useful lives of the underlying assets.

If ownership of the leased asset transfers to the department at the end of the lease term or the cost reflects the exercise of a purchase option, depreciation is calculated using the estimated useful life of the asset.

Right-of-use assets are tested for impairment when an indication of impairment is identified. The policy in connection with testing for impairment is outlined in note 4.1.1.

The following amounts relating to leases have been recognised in the statement of comprehensive income:

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Buildings	251	223
Computer equipment	216	216
Motor vehicles	705	801
Plant and equipment	-	209
Total right-of-use assets depreciation for the period	1,172	1,449
Lease interest expense	81	84
Short-term leases	43	88

The total cash outflow for leases in financial year 2021 was \$1.2 million (2020: \$1.4 million).

The department's leasing activities and how these are accounted for:

The department has leases for vehicles, plant and equipment, computer equipment, office and residential accommodations.

The department has also entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements with the Department of Finance for the leasing of office accommodation. These are not recognised under AASB 16 because of substitution rights held by the Department of Finance and are accounted for as an expense as incurred.

The department recognises leases as right-of-use assets and associated lease liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position.

The corresponding lease liabilities in relation to these right-of-use assets have been disclosed in note 6.1.

4.3 Intangible assets

	Capital Works in Progress	Analytical Products	Licences	Computer Software	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Year ended 30 June 2021					
1 July 2020					
Gross carrying amount	4,878	8,857	50	20,590	34,375
Accumulated amortisation	-	(2,610)	(14)	(14,169)	(16,793)
Opening amount at start of period	4,878	6,247	36	6,421	17,582
Additions	6,112	-	-	173	6,285
Transfers in/(out) ^(a)	(1,743)	65	-	1,678	-
Disposal	-	-	-	-	-
Amortisation expense	-	(886)	(18)	(4,259)	(5,163)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2021	9,247	5,426	18	4,013	18,704
Gross carrying amount	9,247	8,922	50	22,441	40,660
Accumulated amortisation	-	(3,496)	(32)	(18,428)	(21,956)

(a) Transfer in/(out) from capital works in progress to completed assets.

► Initial recognition

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. For assets acquired at no cost or for nominal cost, the cost is their fair value at the date of acquisition.

An internally generated intangible asset arising from development (or from the development phase of an internal project) is recognised if, and only if, all of the following are demonstrated:

- the technical feasibility of completing the intangible asset so that it will be available for use or sale
- an intention to complete the intangible asset and use or sell it
- the ability to use or sell the intangible asset
- the intangible asset will generate future economic benefit
- the availability of adequate technical, financial and other resources to complete the development and to use or sell the intangible asset
- the ability to measure reliably the expenditure directly attributable to the intangible asset during its development.

Acquisitions of intangible assets costing \$5,000 or more and internally generated intangible assets costing \$5,000 or more that comply with the recognition criteria as per AASB 138.57 (as noted above) are capitalised.

Costs incurred below these thresholds are immediately expensed directly to the Statement of comprehensive income.

Costs incurred in the research phase of a project are immediately expensed.

► Subsequent measurement

The cost model is applied for subsequent measurement of intangible assets requiring the asset to be carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

► 4.3.1 Amortisation and impairment

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Charge for the period		
Analytical products	886	886
Computing software	4,259	5,076
Licences	18	11
Total amortisation for the period	5,163	5,973

As at 30 June 2021 there were no indications of impairment to intangible assets.

The department held no goodwill or intangible assets with an indefinite useful life during the reporting period. At the end of the reporting period there were no intangible assets not yet available for use.

Amortisation of finite life intangible assets is calculated on a straight-line basis at rates that allocate the asset's value over its estimated useful life. All intangible assets controlled by the department have a finite useful life and zero residual value. Estimated useful lives are reviewed annually.

The estimated useful lives for each class of intangible asset are:

Licences	3 years
Software ^(a)	3–5 years
Analytical products ^(b)	10 years

(a) Software that is not integral to the operation of related hardware.

(b) Analytical products are intangible assets such as geophysical datasets and surveys which are usually produced as part of project work. These products are used by the department to improve its understanding and management of water resources.

Impairment of intangible assets

Intangible assets with finite useful lives are tested for impairment annually or when an indication of impairment is identified.

The policy in connection with testing for impairment is outlined in note 4.1.1.

5 Other assets and liabilities

This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from the department's controlled operations and includes other assets utilised for economic benefits and liabilities incurred during normal operations:

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Receivables	5.1	38,600	23,230
Amounts receivable for services	5.2	73,050	58,602
Other assets	5.3	2,168	2,217
Payables	5.4	4,702	4,699
Contract liabilities	5.5	2,940	1,749
Other current liabilities	5.6	4	4

5.1 Receivables

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Current		
Trade receivables	6,078	1,386
Allowance for impairment of trade receivables	(163)	(168)
Accrued revenue	20,398	20,148
GST receivable	1,013	1,113
Loans and advances:		
Loan to WARRRL – Facility A ^(a)	10,743	-
Loan to WARRRL – Facility B ^(a)	531	188
Total current	38,600	22,667
Non-Current		
Loans and advances:		
Loan to WARRRL – Facility B ^(a)	-	563
Total non-current	-	563
Total receivables	38,600	23,230

The department does not hold any collateral or other credit enhancements as security for trade receivables.

Trade receivables are recognised at the original invoice amount less any allowances for uncollectible amounts (i.e. impairment). The carrying amount of net trade receivables is equivalent to fair value as it is due for settlement within 30 days.

- (a) On 1 October 2020, Containers for Change commenced in WA. Containers for Change is the statewide container deposit scheme and is run by WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd (WARRRL); a not-for-profit company responsible for establishing the collection network and managing the day-to-day scheme operations.

On 11 June 2020, the state – represented by the department acting for the Waste Authority – entered into a loan agreement with WARRRL to fund the initial cash flow needs of the container deposit scheme. The funds for the loan to WARRRL will be paid out of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account (for additional information please refer to note 8.7 Special purpose accounts).

The loan agreement has two distinct facilities:

Facility A – An interest-bearing loan with a maximum commitment of \$16 million

The purpose of the loan is to fund payments by the scheme coordinator (WARRRL) to scheme counterparties (such as refund point operators and logistics and processing service providers), payment of other costs reasonably incurred in the implementation of the scheme and other costs approved in writing by the state during the loan period.

The loan commitment period commenced on 11 June 2020 (the commencement date of the loan agreement) and ends on the maturity date; being 18 calendar months after the scheme commencement date (1 October 2020).

Interest is payable at an interest rate applicable to the Public Bank Account on the first day of the interest period. The interest period will be

one month, and the first interest period is the period commencing on the drawdown date for the loan.

Loan repayments commence six months after the scheme commencement date and thereafter on the last business day of each subsequent calendar month. For Facility A, i.e. the amount to be repaid is equal to the amount of the principal outstanding under Facility A on that repayment date divided by the number of periods remaining until maturity date.

Interest repayments commence six months after the scheme commencement date and for each subsequent interest payment the last day of each month.

As the interest payable on Facility A is at a below-market rate of interest, the loan advances have been initially measured at fair value with the difference between the cash advanced and the fair value of the anticipated interest payments and loan repayments recognised as a grant expense in the statement of comprehensive income when the funds were advanced. Over time, interest income (in addition to the cash interest received from WARRRL) is recognised to accrete the loan to face value.

Facility B – An interest-free loan with a maximum commitment of \$3.5 million

The purpose of the loan is to fund payments by the scheme coordinator (WARRRL) to network participants approved by the state as eligible recipients whose anticipated revenue was delayed during the loan period due to the scheme's deferral because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The costs that could be met through the loan were limited to commercial property leases, lease outgoings, property utilities costs (for example water services charges and rates); bank loans to secure property; and bank loans to fund construction and collection network employees.

The loan commitment period commenced on 11 June 2020 (the commencement date of the loan agreement) and ends 20 business days after the scheme commencement date (1 October 2020).

Loan repayments commence six months after the scheme commencement date and thereafter on the last business day of each subsequent calendar month. For Facility B, i.e. the amount to be repaid is equal to the amount of the principal outstanding under Facility B on that repayment date divided by the number of periods remaining until maturity date.

As no interest is payable on Facility B, the loan has been initially measured at fair value with the difference between the cash advanced and the fair value of the anticipated loan repayments recognised as a grant expense in the statement of comprehensive income when the funds were advanced. Over time, interest income is recognised to accrete the loan to face value.

Both the loans facilities are secured by a charge over present and after acquired property, interests, rights and proceeds of WARRRL.

5.2 Amounts receivable for services (holding account)

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Current	6,338	6,057
Non-current	66,712	52,545
Balance at end of period	73,050	58,602

Amounts receivable for services represent the non-cash component of service appropriations. It is restricted in that it can only be used for asset replacement or payment of leave liability.

Amounts receivable for services are considered not impaired (i.e. there is no expected credit loss of the holding accounts).

5.3 Other assets

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Current		
Prepayments	2,145	2,161
Total current	2,145	2,161
Non-current		
Prepayments	23	56
Total non-current	23	56
Balance at end of period	2,168	2,217

Other non-financial assets include prepayments which represent payments in advance of receipt of goods or services or that part of expenditure made in one accounting period covering a term extending beyond that period.

5.4 Payables

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Current		
Trade payables ^(a)	245	1,236
Other payables ^(a)	557	1,194
Accrued expenses	2,434	1,134
Accrued salaries ^(b)	1,466	1,135
Balance at end of period	4,702	4,699

- (a) Payables are recognised at the amounts payable when the department becomes obliged to make future payments as a result of a purchase of assets or services. The carrying amount is equivalent to fair value, as settlement is generally within 30 days.
- (b) Accrued salaries represent the amount due to staff but unpaid at the end of the reporting period. Accrued salaries are settled within a fortnight of the reporting period end. The department considers the carrying amount of accrued salaries to be equivalent to its fair value.

The accrued salaries suspense account (see note 6.4 Restricted cash and cash equivalents) consists of amounts paid annually, from department appropriations for salaries expense, into a Treasury suspense account to meet the additional cash outflow for employee salary payments in reporting periods with 27 pay days instead of the normal 26. No interest is received on this account.

5.5 Contract liabilities

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Reconciliation of changes in contract liabilities		
Opening balance	1,749	516
Additions	2,940	1,749
Revenue recognised in the period	(1,749)	(516)
Balance at end of period	2,940	1,749
Current	2,940	1,749
Non-current	-	-

The department's contract liabilities primarily relate to user charges and fees yet to be performed as the licence, works approval or tracking form has not been issued to the customer.

5.6 Other current liabilities

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Stale cheque holding account	4	4
Total current liabilities	4	4

6 Financing

This section sets out the material balances and disclosures associated with the financing and cash flows of the department.

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Lease liabilities	6.1	2,244	3,163
Assets pledged as security	6.2	2,175	3,137
Finance costs	6.3	81	84
Cash and cash equivalents	6.4	72,677	75,238
Capital commitments	6.5	8,540	8,137

6.1 Lease liabilities

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Current	900	1,143
Non-current	1,344	2,020
Balance at end of period	2,244	3,163

► Initial measurement

The department measures a lease liability, at the commencement date, at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at that date. The lease payments are discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease. If that rate cannot be readily determined, the department uses the incremental borrowing rate provided by the WA Treasury Corporation.

Lease payments included by the department as part of the present value calculation of lease liability include:

- fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments), less any lease incentives receivable
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date
- amounts expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees
- the exercise price of purchase options (where these are reasonably certain to be exercised)
- payments for penalties for terminating a lease, where the lease term reflects the department exercising an option to terminate the lease.

The interest on the lease liability is recognised in profit or loss over the lease term to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability for each period. Lease liabilities do not include any future changes in variable lease payments (that depend on an index or rate) until they take effect, in which case the lease liability is reassessed and adjusted against the right-of-use asset.

Periods covered by extension or termination options are only included in the lease term by the department if the lease is reasonably certain to be extended (or not terminated).

Variable lease payments, not included in the measurement of lease liability, that are dependent on sales are recognised by the department in profit or loss in the period in which the condition that triggers those payments occurs. This section should be read in conjunction with note 4.2.

► Subsequent measurement

Lease liabilities are measured by increasing the carrying amount to reflect interest on the lease liabilities; reducing the carrying amount to reflect the lease payments made; and remeasuring the carrying amount at amortised cost, subject to adjustments to reflect any reassessment or lease modifications.

6.2 Assets pledged as security

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
The carrying amounts of non-current assets pledged as security are:		
Right-of-use asset vehicles	1,556	2,024
Right-of-use asset plant and equipment	-	105
Right-of-use asset computer equipment	180	395
Right-of-use asset buildings	439	613
Total assets pledged as security	2,175	3,137

The department has secured the right-of-use assets against related lease liabilities. In the event of default, the rights to the leased assets will revert to the lessor.

6.3 Finance costs

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Lease interest expense	81	84

Finance cost includes the interest component of lease liability repayments.

6.4 Cash and cash equivalents

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Current		
Cash and cash equivalents	21,555	9,348
Restricted cash and cash equivalents ^(a)	49,289	64,402
Total current	70,844	73,750
Non-current		
Restricted cash and cash equivalents ^(b)	1,833	1,488
Total non-current	1,833	1,488
Balance at end of period	72,677	75,238

- (a) Composed of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account (\$29.3 million), Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account (\$10.8 million), Clean Energy Future Fund (\$9.1 million), and other funds (\$0.1 million) that are restricted in their purpose and cannot be used in general operations.
- (b) Funds are held in the accrued salaries suspense account for the purpose of meeting the 27th pay in a reporting period that occurs every 11th year. This account is classified as non-current for 10 out of 11 years.

For the purpose of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents (and restricted cash and cash equivalent) assets comprise of cash on hand and short-term deposits with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in value and the funds held in the suspense account for the purpose of meeting the 27th pay.

6.5 Capital commitments

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Capital expenditure commitments, being contracted capital expenditure additional to the amounts reported in the financial statements, are payable as follows:		
Within 1 year	5,386	3,541
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	3,154	4,596
Total capital commitments	8,540	8,137

7 Financial instruments and contingencies

This note sets out the key risks management policies and measurement techniques of the department.

	Notes
Financial instruments	7.1
Contingent assets and liabilities	7.2

7.1 Financial instruments

The carrying amounts of each of the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities at the end of the reporting period are:

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Financial assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	72,677	75,238
Financial liabilities at amortised cost ^(a)	110,637	80,719
Total financial assets	183,314	155,957
Financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities at amortised cost ^(b)	6,946	7,862
Total financial liabilities	6,946	7,862

(a) The amount of Financial assets at amortised cost excludes the GST recoverable from the ATO (statutory receivable).

(b) The amount of Financial liabilities at amortised cost excludes GST payable to the ATO (statutory payable).

7.2 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the statement of financial position but are disclosed and, if quantifiable, are measured at the best estimate.

Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

► 7.2.1 Contingent assets

The following contingent assets are excluded from the assets included in the financial statements:

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Benefit potentially receivable in relation to legal action taken against a Ministerial Body concerning land leased.	-	180
Benefit potentially receivable in relation to the prosecution of an individual for unauthorised clearing of native vegetation.	250	-
Benefit potentially receivable in relation to a Supreme Court action involving a former tenant relating to rent recovery.	120	-
Benefit potentially receivable in relation to the prosecution of a company for breaches of the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> .	225	-
Total contingent assets	595	180

► 7.2.2 Contingent liabilities

The following contingent liabilities are excluded from the liabilities included in the financial statements:

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Costs potentially payable in relation to Supreme Court action involving a former tenant relating to rent recovery.	500	-
Costs potentially payable in relation to legal action taken against a Ministerial Body concerning land leased.	-	200
Potential exposure in relation to current litigation with a former employee. The matter is on-going, and a further conciliation conference is about to proceed in the Equal Opportunity Commission.	-	75
Contaminated sites		
Under the <i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003</i> , state agencies are required to report known and suspected contaminated sites to the department. In accordance with the Act, the department classifies these sites on the basis of risk to human health, the environment and environmental values. Where sites are classified as <i>contaminated – remediation required</i> or <i>possibly contaminated – investigation required</i> , the department may have a liability in respect of investigation or remediation expenses.		
There is an outstanding contingent liability in relation to the remediation of a liquid waste treatment facility in agreement with the Water Corporation.	200	400
Total contingent liabilities	700	675

8 Other disclosures

This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or other pronouncements for the understanding of this financial report.

	Notes
Events occurring after the end of the reporting period	8.1
Initial application of Australian Accounting Standards	8.2
Key management personnel	8.3
Related party transactions	8.4
Related bodies	8.5
Affiliated bodies	8.6
Special purpose accounts	8.7
Indian Ocean Territories Account	8.8
Remuneration of auditors	8.9
Equity	8.10
Supplementary financial information	8.11
Explanatory statement (controlled operations)	8.12

8.1 Events occurring after the end of the reporting period

There are no significant events that occurred after the end of the reporting period.

8.2 Initial application of Australian Accounting Standards

► AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors

AASB 1059 applies to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2020 and introduces the accounting treatment for assets in service concession arrangements from the perspective of public sector grantors.

A service concession arrangement is a contract effective during the reporting period between a grantor and an operator in which:

- (a) the operator has the right of access to the service concession asset (or assets) to provide public services on behalf of the grantor for a specified period of time;
- (b) the operator is responsible for at least some of the management of the public services provided through the asset and does not act merely as an agent on behalf of the grantor; and
- (c) the operator is compensated for its services over the period of the service concession arrangement.

The department has assessed the standard and considers the abovementioned standard does not have any material impact on the department.

8.3 Key management personnel

The department has determined key management personnel to include Cabinet Ministers and senior officers of the department. The department does not incur expenditures to compensate Ministers and those disclosures may be found in the *Annual Report on State Finances*.

The total fees, salaries, superannuation, non-monetary benefits and other benefits for senior officers of the department for the reporting period are presented within the following bands:

	2021	2020
Compensation band (\$)		
\$350,001 – \$360,000	-	1
\$330,001 – \$340,000	1	-
\$250,001 – \$260,000	1	1
\$240,001 – \$250,000	1	-
\$230,001 – \$240,000	1	-
\$220,001 – \$230,000	-	1
\$210,001 – \$220,000	2	2
\$200,001 – \$210,000	1	2
\$190,001 – \$200,000	-	1
\$140,001 – \$150,000	1	-
\$110,001 – \$120,000	1	1
\$100,001 – \$110,000	1	-
\$ 60,001 – \$ 70,000	-	1
\$ 20,001 – \$30,000	1	-
	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Total compensation of senior officers	2,096	2,050

Total compensation includes the superannuation expense incurred by the department in respect of senior officers.

8.4 Related party transactions

The department is a wholly owned public sector entity that is controlled by the State of Western Australia.

Related parties of the department include:

- all Cabinet Ministers and their close family members and their controlled or jointly controlled entities
- all senior officers and their close family members and their controlled or jointly controlled entities
- other departments and statutory authorities including related bodies that are included in the whole-of-government consolidated financial statements (i.e. wholly owned public sector entities)
- associates and joint ventures of a wholly owned public sector entity
- the Government Employees Superannuation Board.

► Material transactions with other related parties

Outside of normal citizen type transactions with the department, there were no other related party transactions that involved key management personnel and/or their close family members and/or their controlled (or jointly controlled) entities.

8.5 Related bodies

The department currently does not provide any assistance to other agencies which would deem it to be regarded as related bodies under the definitions included in TI 951 Related and Affiliated Bodies.

8.6 Affiliated bodies

The following bodies receive more than half its funding and resources from the department, but is not subject to operational control by the department and is therefore considered to be affiliated bodies under the *Financial Management Act 2006*:

	2021 \$'000			2020 \$'000		
	Funding	Services free of charge	Total assistance	Funding	Services free of charge	Total assistance ²
Government organisations:						
Cockburn Sound Management Council	213	-	213	345	-	345
Contaminated Sites Committee	329	-	329	348	-	348
Environmental Protection Authority	8,245	-	8,245	8,150	-	8,150
Keep Australia Beautiful Council	988	227	1,215	973	227	1,200
Office of the Appeals Convenor	1,166	-	1,166	1,151	-	1,151
Warren Donnelly Water Advisory Committee	4	-	4	18	-	18
Waste Authority	20,922	-	20,922	21,276	-	21,276
Non-government organisations:						
Geographe Catchment Council ¹	742	-	742	669	-	669

¹ The department and Geographe Catchment Council entered into a partnership agreement whereby Geographe Catchment Council provides governance and management support to the department and the department provides support and links to the community and on-ground outcomes to achieve water quality improvements in the catchment area.

² Financial year 2020 figures have been restated.

8.7 Special purpose accounts

► Contaminated sites management account (i)

The purpose of the account is to enable investigation or remediation of any site where the state or a public authority (excluding local government) is responsible for remediation. The account also funds the department's costs of investigation and ensuring compliance with notices.

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Balance at start of period	346	557
Receipts	285	135
Payments	(251)	(346)
Balance at end of period	380	346

► Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account (i)

The purpose of the account is to encourage the conservation of resources and energy through waste reduction and recycling; to promote support and encourage viable alternatives to landfill disposal of waste; and to encourage applied research and the development of appropriate waste management, waste reduction, recycling infrastructure and markets. The account is used to fund nominated programs and other waste management initiatives approved by the Minister for the Environment on the advice of the Waste Authority of Western Australia.

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at start of period	39,795	39,980
Receipts – Repayments of loan to WARRRL ^(a)	5,167	-
Receipts	20,922	21,276
Payments – Loan to WARRRL ^(a)	(16,042)	(750)
Payments	(20,518)	(20,711)
Balance at end of period	29,324	39,795

(a) For additional information please refer to note 5.1 Receivables.

► Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund (ii)

The purpose of the account is to deliver environmental offset projects in the Pilbara bioregion of WA in partnership with traditional owners, conservation agencies, industry and government.

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at start of period	496	-
Receipts	947	684
Payments	(352)	(188)
Balance at end of period	1,091	496

(i) Established under section 16(1)(b) of the Financial Management Act 2006

(ii) Established under section 16(1)(d) of the Financial Management Act 2006

8.8 Indian Ocean Territories Account

► Indian Ocean Territories Account

The purpose of the account is to account for Commonwealth funds for service delivery arrangements by the department to the Indian Ocean Territories.

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at start of period	47	(12)
Receipts	491	435
Payments	(368)	(376)
Balance at end of period ^(a)	170	47

(a) Under the terms of the Service Delivery Arrangement, the department is to provide a statement of operating and capital expenditure and revenue for the previous financial year to the Commonwealth by 31 August each year.

This notification enables adjustments to biannual payments to be made early in the financial year to take into account any under or overspends against budget estimates from the previous financial year.

8.9 Remuneration of auditors

Remuneration paid or payable to the Auditor General in respect of the audit for the current financial year is as follows:

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Auditing the accounts, financial statements, controls and key performance indicators	289	302

8.10 Equity

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Contributed equity		
Balance at start of period	351,630	373,945
Contributions by owners		
Capital appropriation	7,855	6,007
Total contributions by owners	359,485	379,952
Distributions to owners		
Transfer to consolidated account	(32,813)	(24,236)
Transfer to other agencies:		
Land transferred to Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	(123)	(432)
Infrastructure and land transferred to Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions	(1,421)	(3,654)
Total distributions to owners	(34,357)	(28,322)
Balance at end of period	325,128	351,630
Asset revaluation surplus		
Balance at start of period	18,020	14,140
Net revaluation increment:		
Land	5,173	840
Buildings	5	11
Measurement sites	1,786	3,029
Total net revaluation increment	6,964	3,880
Balance at end of period	24,984	18,020

8.11 Supplementary financial information

► (a) Write-offs

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
The accountable authority	3	86
The Minister	-	-
Executive Council	-	-
Total write-offs	3	86

► (b) Losses through theft, defaults and other causes

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Losses of public money and property through theft or default	-	-
Amounts recovered	-	-
Total losses	-	-

► (c) Gifts of public property

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Gifts of public property provided by the department ^(a)	3	-
Total gifts	3	-

(a) On the 12 April 2021, the department gifted a work of art to WA Country Health Service Great Southern. The work of art is to be displayed at the Denmark Hospital.

8.12 Explanatory statement (controlled operations)

All variances between annual estimates (original budget) and actual results for 2021, and between the actual results for 2021 and 2020, are shown below. Narratives are provided for key major variances which are greater than 10% and greater than 1% of Total Cost of Services for the Statements of Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Cash Flows i.e., \$1,826,340 (1% of \$182,634,000), and are greater than 10% and greater than 1% of Total Assets for the Statement of Financial Position i.e., \$5,303,830 (1% of \$530,383,000).

► 8.12.1 Statement of comprehensive income variances

	Variance note	Estimate 2021 \$'000	Actual 2021 \$'000	Actual 2020 \$'000	Variance between estimate and actual \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2021 and 2020 \$'000
Expenses						
Employee benefits expense		102,974	100,218	102,849	(2,756)	(2,631)
Supplies and services	a	35,973	32,532	37,013	(3,441)	(4,481)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	1	20,505	11,995	13,123	(8,510)	(1,128)
Finance costs		151	81	84	(70)	(3)
Accommodation expenses		7,822	8,915	8,566	1,093	349
Grants and subsidies	2,b	32,641	21,997	15,317	(10,644)	6,680
Other expenses		6,208	6,198	4,988	(10)	1,210
Loss on disposal of non-current assets		-	1,207	694	1,207	513
Total cost of services		206,274	183,143	182,634	(23,131)	509
Income						
User charges and fees	3	33,762	29,864	29,523	(3,898)	341
Commonwealth grants	4	7,259	4,854	4,971	(2,405)	(117)
Waste levy		83,000	78,781	79,639	(4,219)	(858)
Interest revenue		850	913	-	63	913
Other Income	5,c	7,519	5,441	2,247	(2,078)	3,194
Total income		132,390	119,853	116,380	(12,537)	3,473
Net cost of services		73,884	63,290	66,254	(10,594)	(2,964)

► 8.12.1 Statement of comprehensive income variances (cont'd)

	Variance note	Estimate 2021 \$'000	Actual 2021 \$'000	Actual 2020 \$'000	Variance between estimate and actual \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2021 and 2020 \$'000
Income from State Government						
Service appropriation	d	105,625	104,478	81,890	(1,147)	22,588
Income from other public sector entities		2,747	3,095	2,700	348	395
Resources received		1,743	3,055	2,789	1,312	266
Royalties for Regions fund	6	8,746	4,699	4,797	(4,047)	(98)
Total income from State Government		118,861	115,327	92,176	(3,534)	23,151
Surplus for the period						
		44,977	52,037	25,922	7,060	26,115
Other comprehensive income						
Items not reclassified subsequently to profit or loss						
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		-	6,964	3,880	6,964	3,084
Total other comprehensive income		-	6,964	3,880	6,964	3,084
Total comprehensive income for the period						
		44,977	59,001	29,802	14,024	29,199

► Major estimate and actual (2021) variance narratives

1. Depreciation and amortisation expense decreased by \$8.5 million (41.5%) mainly due to a deferment of Environment Online and other asset investment programs resulting in a lower than estimated depreciation and amortisation expense.
2. Grants and subsidies decreased by \$10.6 million (32.6%) mainly due to a deferment of grant payments for Clean Western Australia Waste Paper and Cardboard Processing and other grant programs into 2021–22; and a reduction in spending on Clean Energy Future Fund and Offset Fund for Recovery Program in 2020–21.
3. User charges and fees decreased by \$3.9 million (11.6%) mainly due to lower than estimated Waste Licence fees and Clearing Regulation fees.
4. Commonwealth grants decreased by \$2.4 million (33.1%) mainly due to a delay in funding for Environment Online.
5. Other income decreased by \$2.1 million (27.6%) mainly due to a reallocation of previously classified other income to income received from other public sector entities in terms of the requirements of Treasurer's Instruction 1102.
6. Royalties for Regions fund decreased by \$4.0 million (46.3%) mainly due to a deferment of programs relating to Healthy Estuaries Western Australia and Watering Western Australia.

► Major actual (2021) and comparative (2020) variance narratives

- (a) Supplies and services decreased by \$4.5 million (12.1%) mainly due to a decrease in consultants and contractors, water carting and drought relief expenditure.
- (b) Grants and subsidies increased by \$6.7 million (43.6%) mainly due to additional grant expenditure for the Western Australia Recovery Plan and the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account.
- (c) Other income increased by \$3.2 million (142.2%) mainly due to an increase in offset revenue from the Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund and from the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account.
- (d) Service appropriation increased by \$22.6 million (27.6%) mainly due to an increase in funding for Western Australia Recovery Plan programs, Rural Water Deficiency and Community Water Supply.

► 8.12.2 Statement of financial position variances

Variance note	Estimate 2021 \$'000	Actual 2021 \$'000	Actual 2020 \$'000	Variance between estimate and actual \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2021 and 2020 \$'000
Assets					
Current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	8,271	21,555	9,348	13,284	12,207
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	42,641	49,289	64,402	6,648	(15,113)
Receivables	30,667	38,600	22,667	7,933	15,933
Amounts receivable for services	5,535	6,338	6,057	803	281
Other assets	2,161	2,145	2,161	(16)	(16)
Total current assets	89,275	117,927	104,635	28,652	13,292
Non-current assets					
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	1,864	1,833	1,488	(31)	345
Receivables	2,916	-	563	(2,916)	(563)
Amounts receivable for services	67,516	66,712	52,545	(804)	14,167
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	353,972	356,624	350,377	2,652	6,247
Right-of-use assets	2,985	2,175	3,137	(810)	(962)
Intangible assets	20,287	18,704	17,582	(1,583)	1,122
Other assets	56	23	56	(33)	(33)
Total non-current assets	449,596	446,071	425,748	(3,525)	20,323
Total assets	538,871	563,998	530,383	25,127	33,615

► 8.12.2 Statement of financial position variances (cont'd)

Variance note	Estimate 2021 \$'000	Actual 2021 \$'000	Actual 2020 \$'000	Variance between estimate and actual \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2021 and 2020 \$'000
Liabilities					
Current liabilities					
Payables	4,860	4,702	4,699	(158)	3
Lease liabilities	1,143	900	1,143	(243)	(243)
Contract liabilities	1,754	2,940	1,749	1,186	1,191
Employee related provisions	24,063	24,822	24,174	759	648
Other current liabilities	-	4	4	4	-
Total current liabilities	31,820	33,368	31,769	1,548	1,599
Non-current liabilities					
Lease liabilities	1,900	1,344	2,020	(556)	(676)
Employee related provisions	6,002	6,195	6,002	193	193
Total non-current liabilities	7,902	7,539	8,022	(363)	(483)
Total liabilities	39,722	40,907	39,791	1,185	1,116
Net assets	499,149	523,091	490,592	23,942	32,499
Equity					
Contributed equity	315,208	325,128	351,630	9,920	(26,502)
Reserves	18,020	24,984	18,020	6,964	6,964
Accumulated surplus	165,921	172,979	120,942	7,058	52,037
Total equity	499,149	523,091	490,592	23,942	32,499

► Major estimate and actual (2021) variance narratives

Nil

► Major actual (2021) and comparative (2020) variance narratives

Nil

► 8.12.3 Statement of cash flows variances

	Variance note	Estimate 2021 \$'000	Actual 2021 \$'000	Actual 2020 \$'000	Variance between estimate and actual \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2021 and 2020 \$'000
Cash flows from State Government						
Service appropriation	a	85,119	83,973	63,925	(1,146)	20,048
Capital appropriations	b	7,855	7,855	6,007	-	1,848
Holding account drawdown		6,057	6,057	5,994	-	63
Distributions to owner	1,c	(44,276)	(32,730)	(24,159)	11,546	(8,571)
Net proceeds on sale of land remitted to consolidated account		-	(160)	-	(160)	(160)
Royalties for Regions fund	2	8,746	4,699	4,797	(4,047)	(98)
Funds from other public sector entities	3,d	2,747	775	3,777	(1,972)	(3,002)
Net cash provided by State Government		66,248	70,469	60,341	4,221	10,128
Cash flows from operating activities						
Payments						
Employee benefits		(102,924)	(98,635)	(98,896)	4,289	261
Supplies and services	4,e	(34,990)	(29,239)	(36,030)	5,751	6,791
Finance costs		(150)	(81)	(83)	69	2
Accommodation		(7,832)	(8,747)	(8,476)	(915)	(271)
Grants and subsidies	5	(32,641)	(20,712)	(19,390)	11,929	(1,322)
GST payments on purchases		(5,929)	(7,145)	(7,667)	(1,216)	522
Other payments	f	(5,448)	(6,540)	(3,762)	(1,092)	(2,778)

► 8.12.3 Statement of cash flows variances (cont'd)

	Variance note	Estimate 2021 \$'000	Actual 2021 \$'000	Actual 2020 \$'000	Variance between estimate and actual \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2021 and 2020 \$'000
Receipts						
User charges and fees	6	33,762	29,779	30,791	(3,983)	(1,012)
Commonwealth grants	7	7,259	4,854	6,221	(2,405)	(1,367)
Interest received		850	40	-	(810)	40
Waste levy		83,000	78,561	78,012	(4,439)	549
GST receipts on sales		634	315	357	(319)	(42)
GST receipts from taxation authority		5,305	6,728	8,049	1,423	(1,321)
Other receipts	8,g	7,519	3,714	1,767	(3,805)	1,947
Net cash used in operating activities		(51,585)	(47,108)	(49,107)	4,477	1,999
Cash flows from investing activities						
Payments						
Purchase of non-current assets	9,h	(26,001)	(13,959)	(12,133)	12,042	(1,826)
Loan payments to WARRRL	10,i	(18,954)	(16,042)	(750)	2,912	(15,292)
Receipts						
Proceeds from sale of non-current assets		-	80	105	80	(25)
Loan repayments from WARRRL	11,j	8,600	5,167	-	(3,433)	5,167
Net cash used in investing activities		(36,355)	(24,754)	(12,778)	11,601	(11,976)
Cash flows from financing activities						
Payments						
Principal elements of lease payments		(770)	(1,168)	(1,300)	(398)	132
Net cash used in financing activities		(770)	(1,168)	(1,300)	(398)	132
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(22,462)	(2,561)	(2,844)	19,901	283
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		75,238	75,238	78,082	-	(2,844)
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period		52,776	72,677	75,238	19,901	(2,561)

► Major estimate and actual (2021) variance narratives

1. Distributions to owner decreased by \$11.6 million (26.1%) mainly due to the retention of adequate restricted and working cash.
2. Royalties for Regions fund decreased by \$4.0 million (46.3%) mainly due to a deferment of programs relating to Healthy Estuaries Western Australia and Watering Western Australia.
3. Funds from other public sector entities decreased by \$2.0 million (71.8%) mainly due to the transfer of water monitoring of the Swan and Canning rivers to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, and lower than budgeted revenue from other public sector entities.
4. Supplies and services decreased by \$5.8 million (16.4%) mainly due to less spend than estimated on consultants and contractor costs.
5. Grants and subsidies decreased by \$11.9 million (36.6%) mainly due to a deferment of grant payments for Clean Western Australia Waste Paper and Cardboard Processing and other grant programs into 2021–22; and a reduction in spending on Clean Energy Future Fund and Offset Fund for Recovery Program in 2020–21.
6. User charges and fees decreased by \$4.0 million (11.8%) mainly due to lower than estimated Waste Licence fees and Clearing Regulation fees.
7. Commonwealth grants decreased by \$2.4 million (33.1%) mainly due to a delay in funding for Environment Online.
8. Other receipts decreased by \$3.8 million (50.6%) mainly due a lower than estimated receipt of funds for the Contaminated Sites Management Account and Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund.
9. Purchase of non-current assets were lower by \$12.0 million (46.3%) mainly due to deferred acquisitions of land and other fixed assets.

10. Loan payments to WARRRL were lower by \$2.9 million (15.4%) mainly due to a lower drawdown than estimated.

11. Loan repayments from WARRRL were lower by \$3.4 million (39.9%) mainly due to the repayment of a lower drawdown than estimated.

Major actual (2021) and comparative (2020) variance narratives

- (a) Service appropriation increased by \$20.0 million (31.4%) mainly due to an increase in funding for Western Australia Recovery Plan programs, Rural Water Deficiency and Community Water Supply.
- (b) Capital appropriations increased by \$1.8 million (30.8%) mainly due to a deferral of capital appropriation for Land Acquisition in Priority 1 Areas from 2019–20 to 2020–21.
- (c) Distributions to owner increased by \$8.6 million (35.5%) mainly because the department retained more working cash in financial year 2020 than financial year 2021.
- (d) Funds from other public sector entities decreased by \$3.0 million (79.5%) mainly due to the transfer of water monitoring of the Swan and Canning rivers to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, and lower than budgeted revenue from other public sector entities.
- (e) Supplies and services decreased by \$6.8 million (18.9%) mainly due to a decrease in consultants and contractors, water carting and drought relief expenditure.
- (f) Other payments were higher by \$2.8 million (73.8%) mainly due to the payment of payroll tax in 2020–21.

- (g) Other receipts increased by \$1.9 million (110.2%) mainly due to an increase in receipts from proponents of the Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program.
- (h) Purchases of non-current assets were higher by \$1.8 million (15.1%) mainly due to the capitalisation of the Environment Online project and other intangible asset projects.
- (i) Loan payments to WARRRL increased by \$15.3 million (2,038.9%) mainly due to the drawdown on the Facility A loan in 2020–21.
- (j) Loan repayments from WARRRL increased by \$5.2 million (100%) as no loan repayments had to be made in the prior financial year.

9 Administered disclosures

This section sets out all the statutory disclosures regarding the financial performance of the department.

	Notes
Administered income and expenses	9.1
Explanatory statement for administered items	9.2
Administered assets and liabilities	9.3

9.1 Administered income and expenses

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Income		
For transfer:		
Regulatory fees and other charges ^(a)	33	89
Total administered income	33	89
Expenses		
Payments into the consolidated account ^(a)	33	88
Total administered expenses	33	88

- (a) Payments into the consolidated account included water fines collected on behalf of the Water Corporation, and environmental infringement regulatory fees and fines collected on behalf of the State Government.

9.2 Explanatory statement for administered items

All variances between annual estimates and actual results for 2021, and between the actual results for 2021 and 2020 are shown below. Narratives are provided for key major variances, which are greater than 10% and greater 1% of Total Administered Income i.e., \$890 (1% of \$89,000).

	Variance note	Estimate 2021 \$'000	Actual 2021 \$'000	Actual 2020 \$'000	Variance between estimate and actual \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2021 and 2020 \$'000
Income from administered items						
Income						
For transfer:						
Regulatory fees and other charges ^(a)	1	155	33	89	(122)	(56)
Total administered income		155	33	89	(122)	(56)
Expenses						
Payments into the consolidated account ^(a)	2	155	33	88	(122)	(55)
Total administered expenses		155	33	88	(122)	(55)

(a) Payments into the consolidated account included water fines collected on behalf of the Water Corporation, and environmental infringement regulatory fees and fines collected on behalf of State Government.

► Variance narratives

- The variance between the estimate and the actual results for 2021 and the variance between the actual results for 2021 and 2020 are explained by the following reasons:
 - In April 2020, the Water Corporation informed the department that due to COVID-19 it is reducing sprinkler restriction monitoring and adopting a compassionate enforcement approach by only issuing letters of warning for proven breaches of scheme water restrictions, rather than infringements. For consistency, the department's Executive Director, Regional Delivery supported the Water Corporation's compassionate approach and warning notices rather than infringements were issued to proven first-time offenders. This is the reason for the decrease in number of infringements for breaches of garden bore restrictions under the Water Agencies (Water Use) By-laws 2010 and;
 - The bulk of the infringement value comes from modified penalty notices which attract a penalty of upwards of \$6,250 per notice. To be eligible for a modified penalty notice one must meet certain legislative requirements under section 99A of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. During financial year 21, the department did not issue any modified penalty notices for any of the matters that were investigated. The department does issue infringement notices that are set at \$250 or \$500 but these are not issued in large volumes and thus these infringements would not have had an impact on the actual results.
- The variance between the estimate and the actual results for 2021 and the variance between the actual results for 2021 and 2020 are explained in the abovementioned number 1.

9.3 Administered assets and liabilities

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1	1
Total administered current assets	1	1
Total administered assets	1	1
Liability		
Current liability		
Payables	-	-
Total administered current liabilities	-	-
Total administered liabilities	-	-

Outcome-based management framework

Certification of key performance indicators

I hereby certify that the key performance indicators are based on proper records, are relevant and appropriate for assisting users to assess the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's performance, and fairly represent the performance of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.



Michelle Andrews
Director General
21 September 2021



Government goal – Better places: A quality environment with liveable and affordable communities and vibrant

Agency outcome		Key effectiveness indicators	Page	Agency services	Key efficiency indicators	Page
Outcome 1	Western Australia's growth and development is supported by the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state	1 Proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable, productive use	144	1. Water information and advice	Proportion of statutory referrals from decision-making authorities where advice is provided within target timeframes	150
					Average cost per statutory referral assessment	151
					Average cost per water measurement site managed	151
		2 Proportion of priority growth areas that have a water supply planning strategy	144	2. Water planning, allocation and optimisation	Average cost per plan, report or guidance document to support water planning, allocation and optimisation	152
					Average cost per hour of scientific support for water planning, allocation and optimisation	153
				3. Water regulation, licensing and industry governance	Average cost of assessing a water licence application by risk assessment category	154
Outcome 2	Emissions, discharges and clearing of native vegetation are effectively regulated to avoid unacceptable risks to public health and the environment	3 Percentage of regulatory compliance activities completed as planned	145	4. Environmental regulation	Average cost per works approval and licence application	157
		4 Percentage of potential environmental risks identified during compliance monitoring program that are rectified within two months	146		Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application	157
Outcome 3	Development and implementation of strategic policy and legislation that promoted sustainable environmental outcomes	5 Percentage of advice and recommendations that met Ministerial approval, without the need for significant modification	146	5. Environmental and water policy	Average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations	159

Agency outcome		Key effectiveness indicators	Page	Agency services	Key efficiency indicators	Page
Outcome 4	Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised	6 Percentage of municipal solid waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to waste strategy target in the Perth metropolitan region	146	6. Waste strategies	Cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected	160
		7 Percentage of commercial and industrial waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	147			
		8 Percentage of construction and demolition waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	147			
Outcome 5	Quality advice to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and Minister for Environment on significant proposals and environmental issues	9 The EPA's satisfaction with the department's environmental impact assessment (EIA) service, during the year, in line with best practice principles of EIA	148	7. Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of assessment output	161
		10 Percentage of project-specific conditions which did not require significant change following the appeal process	148	8. Environmental management services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output	162
		11 Percentage of assessments that met agreed timelines	149			
		12 The EPA's satisfaction with the department's provision of environmental management services during the year	149			
Outcome 6	Compliance with Ministerial Statement implementation conditions are monitored effectively	13 The number of Ministerial Statements audited compared to targets	149	9. Compliance monitoring services to the Minister for Environment	Average cost per environmental audit completed	163

Following the machinery of government changes, the Department of Water, the Department of Environment Regulation and the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority were amalgamated and formed the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (the department) on 1 July 2017. This is the fourth reporting period for the department post amalgamation.

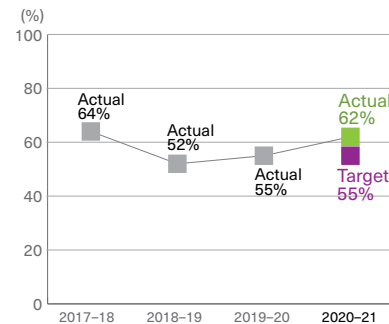
Results with significant variances of 10% or more compared with the Target and prior year results are explained. The majority of the movements between the 2020–21 Target and the 2020–21 Actual are due to changes in resource cost allocations.

Key effectiveness indicators

1 Proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable, productive use^(a)

(a) The 2020–21 survey results have a confidence interval of $\pm 4.29\%$ at 95% confidence level. Other survey statistics include:

- population size: 1,218 stakeholders
- population character: stakeholder contacts provided by the department
- stakeholders invited to participate: 1,218 stakeholders
- number of respondents: 365
- response rate: 30%
- how sample was selected: Total population as provided by the department contacted by email or mail (for those without email contact details). The initial contact sought assistance with an online survey. Phone follow-up interviews were sought with stakeholders who did not respond to the online self-completion invitation.



The management of the state's water resources to enable growth and development is a core objective for the department, and this occurs within the context of ensuring the sustainability of the resources and their dependent environments.

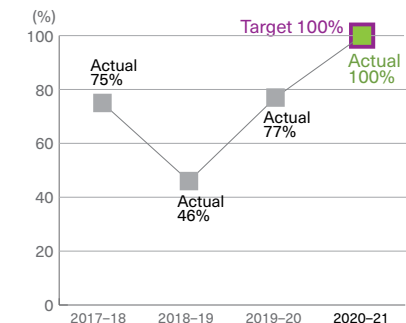
The department has many stakeholders with competing interests, including those from industry, investment, community and environmental sectors.

A survey was conducted between 16 November 2020 and 20 December 2020 with the intent to determine the extent to which stakeholders perceive the department to be effectively fulfilling the statutory and other obligations that form its core role rather than satisfaction with a particular decision or handling of a specific issue.

The indicator is based on feedback received from the stakeholders through the survey. It is calculated as a percentage of respondents answering 'very effective' or 'quite effective' to a question in the survey about their perception of the department effectively managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable productive use. The other options for selection included 'neither one nor the other', 'quite ineffective', 'very ineffective' or 'don't know'.

2 Proportion of priority growth areas that have a water supply planning strategy

'Priority growth areas' refers to a list of significant projects and water resources areas. For each priority growth area the department, or key stakeholders in collaboration with the department, develops a water supply plan or strategy to identify current and future water resource and supply options to meet demand for industry and population growth over the long-term. This supports the timely development of resource and supply options to meet demand in areas of state priority.



Projects included in the priority growth areas have strategic significance for the state; and include areas identified through the Water Supply-Demand Model as having a gap between future water demand and water availability.

The indicator is calculated as a percentage of the priority growth areas with a water supply planning strategy (or advisory report for key stakeholders) out of the total priority growth areas that the department is currently working on.

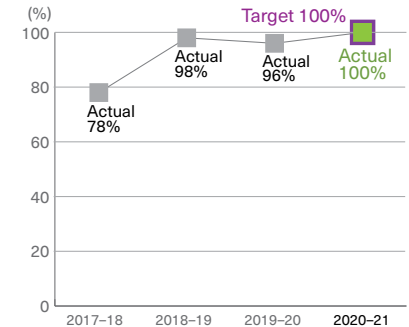
► Variance analysis

Before 2018–19, the proportion of priority growth areas with implemented water supply planning strategy was based on the five-year water supply strategic plan for the period 2013–14 to 2017–18. The five-year plan ended in 2017–18. The approach for establishing the total priority growth areas has changed since 2018–19, where a list of total priority growth areas will be reset every three years so that the Target and Actual percentage of priority growth areas with a water supply planning strategy or advisory report will be reported on the cumulative number of areas that have a water supply planning strategy over a three-year period.

A list of 13 new priority growth areas were established for the period covering 2018–19 to 2020–21, of which six (46%) outputs were completed in 2018–19 and four (31%) outputs were completed during 2019–20 with a cumulative 10 (77%) outputs completed during the period 2018–19 to 2019–20. The remaining three (23%) outputs were completed during the period 2020–21 for the three-year cycle ending 2020–21.

3 Percentage of regulatory compliance activities completed as planned

Compliance activities are an integral part of the department's regulatory work and include promotion, monitoring and enforcement. Information gathered and assessed through compliance activities is also used to inform and revise both regulation and policy frameworks as well as to inform legislative reform programs.



The department is a risk-based regulator that focuses its resources to address the areas of greatest risks to public health, the environment and water resources and is responsive to emerging risks and issues.

The prescribed premises compliance monitoring program is focused on the assessment of emissions and discharges from premises to ensure they are managed appropriately by the current instrument and relevant legislation. The program identifies premises and targets activities based on a risk assessment informed by environmental and operational risk including type of activity, compliance history and intelligence gathered, including from complaints and incidents.

The waste sector compliance monitoring program assesses compliance at landfills and associated industries with the requirements of the landfill levy.

► Variance analysis

The department conducted 200 of the 200 planned inspections in 2020–21. In addition, a further 44 unplanned inspections were completed for the levy compliance monitoring program.

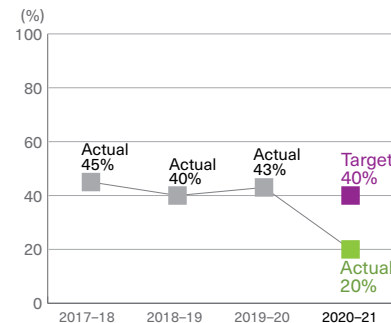
4 Percentage of potential environmental risks identified during compliance monitoring program that are rectified within two months

Non-compliances identified through inspections undertaken as part of the prescribed premises compliance monitoring program and the waste sector compliance monitoring program are recorded and the length of time taken for these non-compliances to be rectified is tracked.

Non-compliances vary in nature, they may be administrative, technical, or operational. Administrative and technical non-compliances generally pose a low risk to public health, the environment or water resources, whereas operational non-compliances and emissions may pose a higher risk.

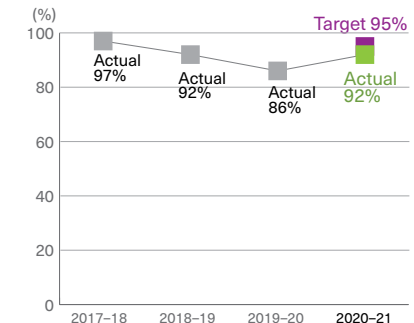
► Variance analysis

During 2020–21, a total of 249 non-compliances were identified from inspections under the waste sector and the prescribed premises compliance monitoring programs. The target of 40% of non-compliances being closed within two calendar months was not achieved because of the compliance monitoring programs targeting inspections at areas of greatest risk; 20% of non-compliances were closed within the specified timeframe. A further 53% were closed in the reporting period; however, not within the target timeframe. The resolution of the identified non-compliances is often protracted, particularly if capital works are involved, and also due to work undertaken by third parties requiring longer than the two-calendar-month target timeframe.



5 Percentage of advice and recommendations that met Ministerial approval, without the need for significant modification

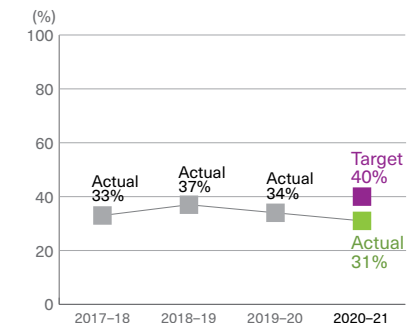
This indicator seeks to ensure that the advice provided by the department is consistent with the State Government's policy direction by measuring how well it meets the Minister for Environment's expectations.



6 Percentage of municipal solid waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to waste strategy target in the Perth metropolitan region

The indicator is a direct measure of the effectiveness of the State Government's waste management goal of diverting waste from landfill and reflects the target in the waste strategy.

Due to the significant time required to gather the relevant information, 2019–20 data, as reported in *Waste and recycling in Western Australia 2019–20*, was used to calculate this indicator for 2020–21. From 2021 the data is derived from annual returns submitted under regulation 18C of the amended Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008 and composition data submitted with waste levy returns. Data was previously sourced from voluntary surveys.



► Variance analysis

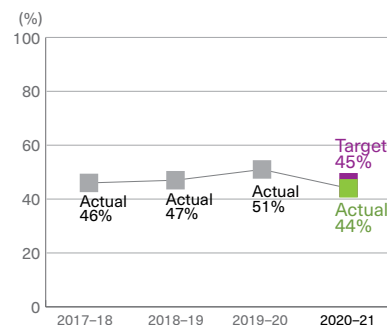
Two-bin kerbside waste services typically only divert about 20% of waste from landfill. The State Government has promoted adoption of a three-bin model which can deliver MSW diversion rates greater than 50%. In 2019–20, only 16 Perth local governments reported providing a three-bin waste collection service. The 2020–21 target could not be met due to lower-than-expected three-bin services offered by local governments. The headline strategy in the Waste Strategy 2030 is a three bin kerbside collection system in the Perth and Peel Region by 2025. Roll-out of the Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) bin services is ongoing and requires the development of FOGO-derived products and the development of processing capacity to support local governments in adopting these systems. More recently the State Government has set a goal for all local governments in the Perth metropolitan and Peel regions to introduce FOGO services by 2025. These services can recover 65% or more of kerbside collections.

The overall diversion rate has decreased by 3% from 2019–20 to 2020–21. This may be partly due to better data quality received through mandatory reporting requirements. Lower recovery rates were also reported at some material recovery facilities compared to the previous year.

7 Percentage of commercial and industrial waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target

The indicator is a direct measure of the effectiveness of the State Government's waste management goal of diverting waste from landfill and reflects the target in the waste strategy.

Due to the significant time required to gather the relevant information, 2019–20 data, as reported in the *Waste and recycling in Western Australia 2019–20*,



was used to calculate this indicator for 2020–21. From 2021 the data is derived from annual returns submitted under regulation 18C of the amended Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008 and composition data submitted with waste levy returns. Data was previously sourced from voluntary surveys.

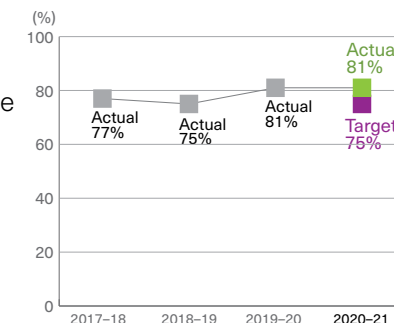
► Variance analysis

Increases in the waste levy rate since 2015 have increased the cost of landfilling but led to a more limited response from the industry than expected. Although organic waste already represents a significant proportion of recovered materials from the C&I stream, there are likely to be significant opportunities to improve performance against this target with increased recovery of this material type. C&I diversion is also strongly influenced by international markets for waste materials, which have been increasingly uncertain.

8 Percentage of construction and demolition waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target

The indicator is a direct measure of the effectiveness of the State Government's waste management goal of diverting waste from landfill and reflects the target in the waste strategy.

Due to the significant time required to gather the relevant information, 2019–20 data, as reported in *Waste and recycling in Western Australia 2019–20*, was used to calculate this indicator for 2020–21. From 2021 the data is derived from annual returns submitted under regulation 18C of the amended Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008 and composition data submitted with waste levy returns. Data was previously sourced from voluntary surveys.



► Variance analysis

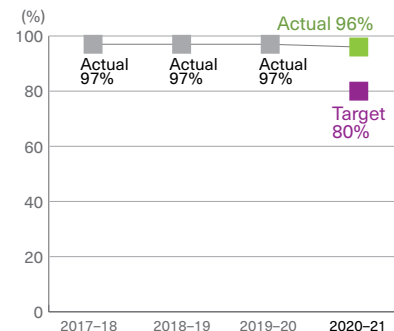
Scheduled increases in the waste levy since 2015 have made C&D waste landfilling more cost-prohibitive. The variance between the 2020–21 Target and the 2020–21 Actual is most likely due to the stockpiling of C&D waste in lieu of disposal which has contributed to the decrease in the quantity of C&D disposed to landfill, thus increasing the overall diversion rate. Waste levy avoidance may also contribute to the reported diversion rate.

9 The EPA's satisfaction with the department's environmental impact assessment (EIA) service, during the year, in line with best practice principles of EIA

The indicator is determined through surveys of the EPA's members (service recipients) who rate the quality of each service against best practice principles (currently, the International Association for Impact Assessment's Principles of EIA Best Practice).

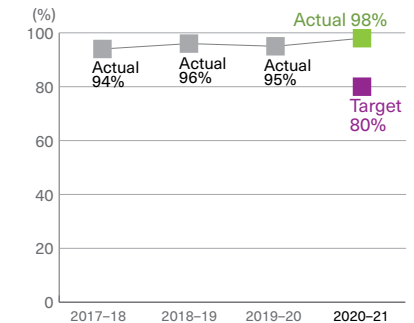
► Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure that all advice provided to the EPA is as practical, efficient, rigorous, participative and fit-for-purpose as possible. In line with this goal, this year the EPA considered the EIA services provided by the department were of a very high standard, which resulted in the KPI Target being exceeded by more than 10%.



10 Percentage of project-specific conditions which did not require significant change following the appeal process

The indicator assists stakeholders in ascertaining the quality of conditions recommended by the department's EIA services. The department provides periodic reports to the EPA outlining the results of the appeals process and drawing attention to significant changes to the recommended conditions. This provides an important part of the State Government's expectation of a 'continuous improvement loop' in the appeals process.



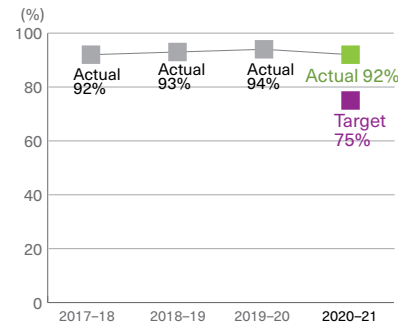
A significant change can be deemed as a substantial change to the form of a condition, the deletion or addition of a new condition, or a substantial change to the outcome or objective specified in a condition. A substantial change to the specified requirements of an environmental management plan or environmental monitoring plan and a change to a prescribed action are determined on a case-by-case basis.

► Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure the conditions recommended to the EPA are as robust and comprehensive as the project requires and therefore does not require substantial change by the Office of the Appeals Convenor. In line with this goal, this year the department's recommended conditions required minimal substantial changes and therefore exceeded the KPI Target by more than 10%.

11 Percentage of assessments that met agreed timelines

The agreed timeline is stated in the EPA's report and recommendations and refers to the time between the endorsement of the final assessment document and the release of the report and recommendations. The timeline for an assessment may vary according to the complexity of the project and is usually agreed with the proponent soon after the level of assessment is determined.



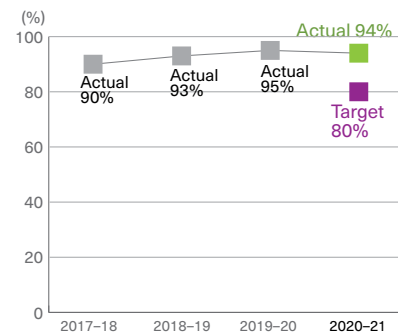
► Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure that assessments are completed in a timely manner and within the timelines published in EPA guidelines. In line with this goal, this year the department exceed the KPI Target by more than 10%.

12 The EPA's satisfaction with the department's provision of environmental management services during the year

The level of quality is determined by the EPA with reference to the desirable underlying qualities of good environmental management advice. The EPA rates the quality of advice on strategic advice, statutory policies or guidelines provided by the department.

Each of the EPA members who participate in a decision rates the product on a scale of one to five (poor to excellent) and the scores of each member are averaged, combined, and proportionally adjusted to a percentage. The final indicator is the average



rating awarded to all environment management services endorsed by the EPA during the period.

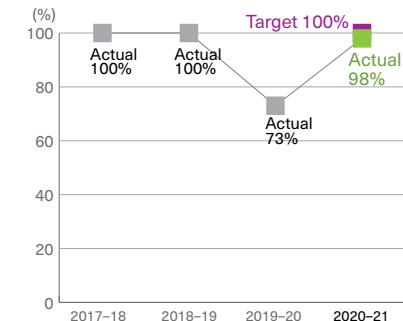
► Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure that all environmental management services provided to the EPA have a clear purpose, are rigorous, readable, applicable and consistent, and informed by stakeholder input as possible. In line with this goal, this year the EPA considered the EIA services provided by the department were of a very high standard, which resulted in the KPI Target being exceeded by more than 10%.

13 The number of Ministerial Statements audited compared to targets

Compliance monitoring is managed through a structured annual compliance management program. The annual program sets out the number of audits to be undertaken and, using a priority matrix, identifies the Ministerial Statements to be audited.

The Minister imposes conditions on proposals to ensure they are managed in an environmentally acceptable manner.



► Variance analysis

The variance from the 2019-20 Actual to 2020-21 Actual is due to reallocation of compliance resources to priority areas of achieving assessment performance.

Key efficiency indicators

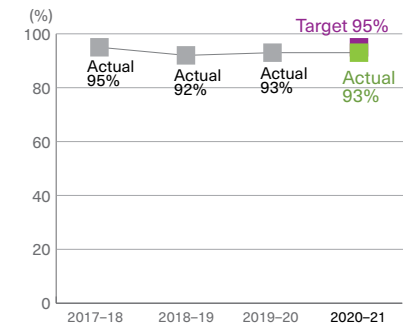
Service 1: Water information and advice

The department enables investment decisions of regional and state significance through the provision of data and information on the quantity, quality, location of, and demand for, water across the state. The information also underpins policy advice for consideration by State Government and supports other government agencies and stakeholders in their planning for future economic growth, and urban and rural development.

Proportion of statutory referrals from decision-making authorities where advice is provided within target timeframes

Technically proficient, reliable, and timely advice on the state's water resources enables effective decision-making by decision-making authorities (DMAs) that directly supports growth, development and investment for the long-term benefit of the state. DMAs include the:

- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
- Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.



This includes advice about water availability; the avoidance, management, and mitigation of impacts on water resources; and the protection of public drinking water sources.

This indicator represents a measure of the department's timeliness with respect to the provision of advice on various statutory referrals from DMAs. It demonstrates the efficiency with which the department is meeting statutory timeframes in providing water information and advice.

A statutory referral is a formal request for water advice from a DMA that has a statutory timeframe associated with the provision of that water advice. This indicator is calculated as a percentage of the total number of statutory referrals from DMAs to the department for advice that met the 35-business-day timeframe within the period.

Average cost per statutory referral assessment

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
13,072	11,442	7,182	6,126	5,125

This measure provides information on the amount of operational expenditure being used for statutory referrals that enable decisions on proposals that support the state's growth and development.

The indicator is relevant to the service because it is a directly attributable operational cost incurred in service delivery to meet the desired outcome.

An assessment is generated from both a formal request for water advice from a DMA or proponent such as under the Better Urban Water Management Framework. The indicator is calculated using the total cost of the water information and advice service divided by the total number of assessments conducted within the period.

► Variance analysis

With the volume of statutory referral assessments resulting in advice remaining relatively stable year on year, the significant reduction in the 'average cost per statutory assessment' in 2020–21 (from the 2019–20 Actual and the 2020–21 Target) was driven by a reduction in the total costs of service resulting from changes in resource cost allocations.

Average cost per water measurement site managed

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
8,754	7,118	9,437	12,027	7,437

Access to reliable and current information about water resources – quantity and quality – is a core input to decision-making by State Government and water-dependent businesses that enables growth and development of the state.

Stakeholders access water information and data to support investment and business decisions. It also supports accurate water resource management decisions and advice. To service this need, the department measures or holds water data for more than 116,000 groundwater and surface water field sites, verifies and stores the data and makes it available as water information.

Regular or periodic field measurements are essential to maintain up-to-date data, and verification, storage and accessibility are essential to make data available as reliable information.

This indicator is calculated by dividing the annual cost of water measurement and water information functions by the number of active operational sites.

► Variance analysis

The decrease in the Actual for 2020–21 from the 2019–20 Actual and the 2020–21 Target resulted from a decrease in the total cost for measurement sites managed due to changes in resource cost allocations to allocate cost to this service, with the volume of sites managed remaining relatively consistent.

Service 2: Water planning, allocation and optimisation

The department undertakes and facilitates water planning, allocation, and optimisation to ensure the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state, which relies on good science. This includes planning and allocating water for sustainable productive use, protecting public drinking water sources, and ensuring the sustainability of water resources and their dependent ecosystems.

Average cost per plan, report or guidance document to support water planning, allocation and optimisation

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
417,794	431,338	348,488	241,146	233,709

Water resources need to be sustainably managed to achieve sufficient water quantity and quality for current and future needs. Increasingly precise, systematic, and transparent management is produced in science-based water allocation and optimisation plans, reports and guidance documents. They guide and define management decisions to meet demand and avoid, mitigate, or minimise unsustainable impacts on resources. With this in place sufficient good-quality surface and groundwater will remain an ongoing part of future water supply for economic and population growth, and the liveability of towns and cities.

Average cost is calculated by dividing the cost of the services by the total number of the following types of documents or advice produced:

1. Plans

- Water allocation plan
- Drinking water source protection plan
- Statement of response to public submissions

2. Plans for public comment

- Water allocation plan for public comment
- Water source protection plan for public comment

3. Technical reports

- Drinking water source protection area assessments
- Environmental water requirements report, or provisions report
- Allocation limits methods report

4. Guidance documents

- Water quality protection notes and information sheets
- Local water licensing strategy (e.g. Indigenous Land Use Agreement, allocation statement)

5. Status reports including:

- Annual or tri-annual compliance Jandakot, and Gnangara compliance reports
- Water allocation plan evaluations
- Drinking water source protection reviews
- Statewide planning reports (e.g. water resources inventory)
- Pre-planning or implementation phase status reports (e.g. discussion paper, review of allocation limits or components)
- Communication products (or sets of communication products) (e.g. water availability outlooks, website text, fact sheets)

► Variance analysis

The decrease in the Actual for 2020–21 from the 2019–20 Actual and 2020–21 Target is mainly due to a reduction in total costs resulting from changes in resource cost allocations to allocate cost to this service, with the number of documents remaining relatively consistent.

Average cost per hour of scientific support for water planning, allocation and optimisation

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
196	145	161	269	172

The sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state relies on quality and contemporary water science. The indicator will enable judgement about the efficient application of the department's science capacity.

This indicator shows the average cost of providing scientific support for the achievement of water planning, allocation and optimisation outcomes.

This indicator is calculated by dividing annual cost of full-time equivalent (FTE) and operational expenses by total hours worked by employees directly supporting scientific outcomes for this service.

► Variance analysis

The decrease in the Actual for 2020–21 from the 2020–21 Target is due to an increase in the number of hours of scientific support for water planning, allocation and optimisation and changes in resource cost allocations resulting in lower cost allocations to this service. The increase in the 2020–21 Actual from the 2019–20 Actual is due to changes in resource cost allocations, resulting in higher cost allocations to this service more than offset by an increase in the number of hours of scientific support for water planning, allocation and optimisation.

Service 3: Water regulation, licensing, and industry governance

Responsible, proportional regulation ensures investment, growth and development is underpinned by sustainable management of the state's water resources for the long-term benefit of the state. This service includes the management of water licensing. It also includes the management of the legislation governing the operations of water service providers.

Average cost of assessing a water licence application by risk assessment category

Risk assessment category	Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
Low	3,400	3,788	3,284	3,390	3,412
Medium	4,534	5,051	4,378	4,520	4,549
High	5,667	6,313	5,473	5,650	5,686

Responsible, proportional regulation gives confidence that Western Australia's water resources are being sustainably managed for the long-term benefit of the state.

Water licensing is the main tool for sharing and allocating the state's water resources. A licence to take water authorises a licensee to take a specified volume of water from a particular water resource and is the principal tool for ensuring sustainable productive use of water in Western Australia. Other licences and permits administered by the department authorise the construction and alteration of water access infrastructure, such as wells and dams, as well as activities that interfere with the beds and banks of watercourses.

This indicator enables judgement about the costs of the department's water licence application assessments, within a risk-based assessment framework.

The indicator shows the average cost to assess a licence or permit application by risk category grouping. The indicator includes applications for permits to interfere with bed and banks, licences to construct a well, licences to access water, and renewal of and amendments to existing licences to access water, trades, transfers and agreements.

The indicator is calculated by dividing the departmental cost of providing the water licencing service per application risk category, by the total number of

licence and permit applications assessed within each risk category, within the period.

Average time taken (days) to assess a licence application by risk assessment category

Risk assessment category	Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
Low	73	57	46	65	30
Medium	134	133	85	75	39
High	158	213	87	95	47

Water licences are one of the fundamental assets that support investment decisions in water-dependent industries. Investment decisions by licensees, existing and prospective, are also time-bound and require that applications for access to water are dealt with by the department in a timely manner.

The department ensures that the level of assessment effort applied to a water licence application is proportionate to the risk posed should a licence be granted, for example higher-risk licence applications are generally more complex and require more time to assess.

Risk categories for water licence or permit applications guide the level of assessment that is carried out by the department based on the risk should a licence or permit be granted. Risk categories are defined as low, medium or high. Primary factors considered when assigning an assessment risk category are the volume of water being requested, how much water is available in the resource where the water is being requested, and potential impact of the proposed water use on other water users and/or the environment, including cumulative impacts.

This indicator enables judgement about the department's efficiency in decision-making for water licence and permit applications within this risk-based assessment framework.

The indicator shows the average time taken to assess a water licence or permit application by risk category. The indicator includes applications for permits to interfere with bed and banks, licences to construct a well, licences to take water, and renewal of and amendments to existing licences to take water, trades, transfers and agreements.

The indicator is calculated by dividing the total time taken to assess all water licence and permit applications within each risk category, by the total number of licence and permit applications assessed within each risk category, within the period.

The measurement of assessment timeframes includes 'stop the clock'. When a water licence application assessment process is outside of the department's control, the time taken during this assessment process is not included when calculating application assessment times. The assessment clock is 'stopped' in these instances.

► Variance analysis

The average time taken to process a water licence application has been significantly reduced in 2020–21 across all water licence application risk categories, driven by the successful implementation of the water licensing backlog action plan and several other water licensing business performance initiatives. The 2020–21 Targets were outperformed across all risk categories (average 49% reduction).

Importantly, it should be noted that the average processing duration for low-risk applications, which represented more than 75% of the total water licence applications processed in 2020–21, is 35 days (or 54%) less than the target of 65 days.

Average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
743	608	205	213	118

The department relies on water usage information for accurate water resource management advice and decisions. The department's compliance monitoring of licensed use provides accurate information on actual licensed water use to ensure the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state.

The department undertakes compliance monitoring and, where appropriate, enforcement action when licensed water use is found to be not in accordance with terms, restrictions, and conditions. Compliance monitoring within a risk-based framework ensures the department fulfils its legislative requirements, while ensuring efficient and sustainable productive water use.

Investment decisions by licensees, existing and prospective, are time-bound and require that applications for access to water are dealt with by the department in a timely manner. Water licenses are one of the fundamental assets that support investment decisions.

This indicator is calculated using the departmental cost of compliance and enforcement activities divided by the number of compliance and enforcement actions undertaken by the department during the year.

The enforcement actions include the following activities undertaken by the department when licenced water use is found to be inconsistent with the licencing terms, restrictions and conditions:

- incidents of suspected non-compliance identified
- educational letters
- licence amendments
- warnings, infringements, or direction notices
- prosecutions.

► Variance analysis

The significant reduction in the average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action for the 2020–21 Actual from the 2020–21 Target and 2019–20 Actual reflects a significant increase in compliance monitoring events and incidents in 2020–21 as an outcome of compliance monitoring event backlog reduction initiatives and expanded regional compliance monitoring scheduling. This was driven by the commencement of stage three of the water metering regulations, and a reduction in the actual costs of service (driven by changes in the resource cost allocations to allocate costs to this service).

Service 4: Environmental regulation

The department seeks to prevent, control and abate activities with the potential to cause pollution or environmental harm. It has adopted a risk-based approach to delivering its regulatory role, which broadly fits into three main functions:

- approvals and licensing
- monitoring, audit and compliance inspections
- enforcement, including complaint and incident investigation.

Average cost per works approval and licence application. Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application

Efficiency indicator	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
Average cost per works approval and licence application	47,505	47,220	36,549	51,891
Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application	29,865	17,644	26,432	33,217

These measures of efficiency were established to reflect the costs per regulatory action for an instrument for the department's industry regulation and native vegetation regulation functions. These are considered relevant efficiency indicators as they:

- capture the primary regulatory functions of the department
- measure the amount of resources required to assess and determine an industry regulation instrument and native vegetation instrument
- are of interest to parties paying regulatory fees
- are relevant to the review and determination of the department's regulatory fees and charges.

The indicators are considered relevant to the service as they can track the efficiency of the assessment of regulatory instruments over time and provide a simple metric for users of the department's budget statements and annual report.

The indicator is calculated by dividing the total group costs deemed relevant to the agency activity of carrying out and administering the function of works approvals and licences – being applications assessment and

decision-making on works approval and licence applications under Part V Division 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* – by the number of work approvals, licences, licence renewals and amendments assessed to provide the average cost.

► Variance analysis

The increase in average cost per works approval and licence application from the 2019–20 Actual and the 2020–21 Target to the 2020–21 Actual is largely due to changes in resource cost allocations resulting in higher cost allocations to this service partially offset by lower number of works approval and licence applications decided.

The increase in average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application from the 2019–20 Actual and 2020–21 Target to the 2020–21 Actual is due to changes in resource cost allocations resulting in higher cost allocations to this service, with the number of native vegetation clearing permit applications decided remaining relatively consistent.

Service 5: Environmental and water policy

Develop and implement policies and strategies that promote environmental outcomes.

Average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
89	84	118	158	148

This measure of efficiency was established to reflect the cost per hour of policy advice. This is considered a relevant efficiency indicator as it:

- captures a significant function of the department
- measures the amount of resources required to develop and implement policies and strategies
- is of interest as it shows the cost of policy development
- is relevant to the use of funds being expended to develop and implement strategic policy and legislation that promotes sustainable environmental outcomes.

The indicator is relevant to this service as they can track the efficiency of the policy development and implementation over time and provide a simple metric for users of the department's budget statements and annual report.

The indicator is calculated by totalling the functional group costs associated with agency activity of carrying out and administering the

function of providing policy advice and recommendations. The advice and recommendations mainly relate to the development, review and amendment of environmental policy, national policy, primary and subsidiary legislation, and environmental programs, providing advice to the Minister and the State Government in relation to legislation administration. The total number of available FTE hours for the services is divided into the costs to provide an average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations.

► Variance analysis

The increase in average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations from the 2019–20 Actual to the 2020–21 Actual is largely due to changes in resource cost allocations, further impacted by lower FTEs allocations. The decrease in average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations from the 2020–21 Target to the 2020–21 Actual is largely due to changes in resource cost allocations and deferral of grants and subsidies for the Clean Energy Future Fund from 2020–21 to 2021–22, further impacted by lower FTEs allocations, resulting in lower average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations.

Service 6 Waste strategies

Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised.

Cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected

Actual 2017–18 %	Actual 2018–19 %	Actual 2019–20 %	Target 2020–21 %	Actual 2020–21 %
1.31	2.10	1.94	1.94	1.60

This measure of efficiency was established to reflect the cost of levy compliance as a percentage of the landfill levy income collected. This is considered a relevant efficiency indicator as it:

- measures the amount of resources applied to the waste avoidance strategies and landfill diversion strategies
- is of interest as it shows the cost of managing the waste strategies
- is relevant to the use of funds being expended to develop and implement strategic policy and legislation that promotes sustainable environmental outcomes.

The indicator is relevant to the service as it can track the efficiency of managing waste strategies and provides a simple metric for users of the department's budget statements and annual report.

The cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected is determined by totalling those functional group costs deemed relevant to the department's activity of carrying out and administering the function of providing landfill levy compliance – being the administration of the landfill levy returns, auditing of those returns, processing of exemptions and undertaking inspections at a range of waste facilities, and carrying out unauthorised waste activity investigations. The indicator is calculated by dividing the cost of levy compliance by the amount of landfill levy income collected for the year.

► Variance analysis

The decrease in the cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected from the 2019–20 Actual and the 2020–21 Target to the 2020–21 Actual is due to reductions in dedicated resources monitoring and enforcing landfill levy compliance activities.

Service 7: Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA

Conduct, for the EPA, environmental impact assessments of significant proposals and schemes.

Cost per standardised unit of assessment output

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
34,681	33,082	39,924	37,519	62,466

While the variation in assessment complexity is reflected in the level of assessment set, several other factors affect how complex a proposal is to assess. To account for this range in difficulty, each assessment completed is assigned a weighting.

The difficulty often influences the amount of time spent dealing with a proposal, how the complexity weightings were allocated and trialled, in consultation with experienced officers, according to inherent proposal characteristics that cause a proposal to be more difficult rather than what causes an assessment to take more time to complete. This ensures that the indicator measures the efficiency of the department's provision of EIA advice to the EPA rather than the department's cost per hour. The total complexity is calculated by summing the individual complexities allocated to each assessment according to their inherent characteristics.

The cost per standardised unit of assessment output is calculated by dividing the total cost of assessments (including an allocation of post-approval costs

and a portion of costs for policy and administrative support) by the total complexity weighting of assessments completed during the financial year.

► Variance analysis

The increase in cost per standardised unit of assessment output from the 2019–20 Actual and the 2020–21 Target to the 2020–21 Actual is due to changes in resource cost allocations to allocate cost to this service.

Service 8: Environmental management services to the EPA

Develop, for the EPA, statutory policies, guidelines, and strategic advice to manage environmental impacts and protect the environment.

Cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
31,377	21,049	34,793	27,279	34,572

Due to the variation in complexity of environmental management services provided, an average cost per piece of advice provided would not fairly represent the department's efficiency in providing such advice to the EPA. In fact, such a measure could provide a perverse incentive to produce many straightforward pieces of advice rather than tackling more complex issues that are more difficult to investigate. To account for this range in difficulty, each assessment completed is assigned a weighting.

The difficulty often influences the amount of time spent investigating a matter, how the complexity weightings were allocated, in consultation with experienced officers, according to inherent characteristics that cause a piece of environmental management advice to be more difficult rather than what causes it to take more time to complete. This ensures that the indicator measures the efficiency of the department's provision of environmental management advice to the EPA rather than the department's cost per hour.

The cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output is calculated by dividing the total cost of environmental management services (including an allocation of administrative support) by the total complexity weighting of environmental management services endorsed during the period.

► Variance analysis

Strategic advice and support for environmental management services to the EPA is provided by a dedicated EPA services directorate within the department with support from other functions of the department for specialist environmental services. The cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output is higher than the 2020–21 Target due to changes in resource cost allocations to allocate higher costs to this service more than offset by an increase in the number of environmental management services outputs. Additional advice and support were provided by the department in 2020–21.

Service 9: Compliance monitoring services to the Minister

Audit the compliance with conditions set under Ministerial approvals and undertake enforcement action as appropriate.

Average cost per environmental audit completed

Actual 2017–18 \$	Actual 2018–19 \$	Actual 2019–20 \$	Target 2020–21 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$
18,069	31,719	65,666	40,407	56,117

The indicator is calculated by dividing the total cost (including an allocation of administrative overheads) allocated to compliance monitoring services by the total number of audits (not including desktop scans) completed during the period.

► Variance analysis

Compliance monitoring services to the Minister for Environment are provided by a dedicated compliance and enforcement directorate within the department with support from other functions of the department. The actual average cost per environmental audit completed in 2020–21 is higher than the 2020–21 Target due to changes in resource cost allocations to allocate costs to this service and reallocation of staff to priority areas, than previously predicted. The decrease in the average cost per environmental audit completed from 2019–20 Actual to 2020–21 Actual is due to changes in resource cost allocations to allocate costs to this service.

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The department's Prime House head office in Joondalup

Other legal requirements

Expenditure on advertising, market research, polling and direct mail

In accordance with section 175ZE of the *Electoral Act 1907*, the department incurred the below expenditure in advertising, market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising. Total expenditure for 2020–21 was \$393,311.55 (excluding GST).

Expenditure	Total	Expenditure paid to	Amount
Advertising agencies	Nil		Nil
Market research organisations	Nil		Nil
Polling organisations	Nil		Nil
Direct mail organisation	Nil		Nil
Media advertising organisations	\$390,980.37	Carat	\$268,793.78
		Facebook	\$13,114.27
		Google	\$27,244.69
		Initiative Media Australia	\$77,958.03
		Independent & general media	\$1,341.36
		State Law Publisher	\$2,331.18
		Tribe Digital	\$2,528.24
		TOTAL	\$393,311.55

Unauthorised use of purchasing cards

During 2020–21, there were 40 instances where a State Government purchasing card was used for personal use. The aggregate amount of personal use expenditure was \$1,750. All expenditure was recovered by 30 June 2021. No disciplinary actions were instigated by the notifiable authority during the reporting period.

Public sector standards and ethical codes

In accordance with section 21 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, the department complies with standards of merit, equity and probity in relation to human resources activities.

No breaches of the Western Australian Public Sector Standards in Human Resources (Employment Standard) were lodged in the fiscal year. One breach of the Public Sector Standards in Human Resources (Grievance Standard) was lodged in the fiscal year.

Recordkeeping

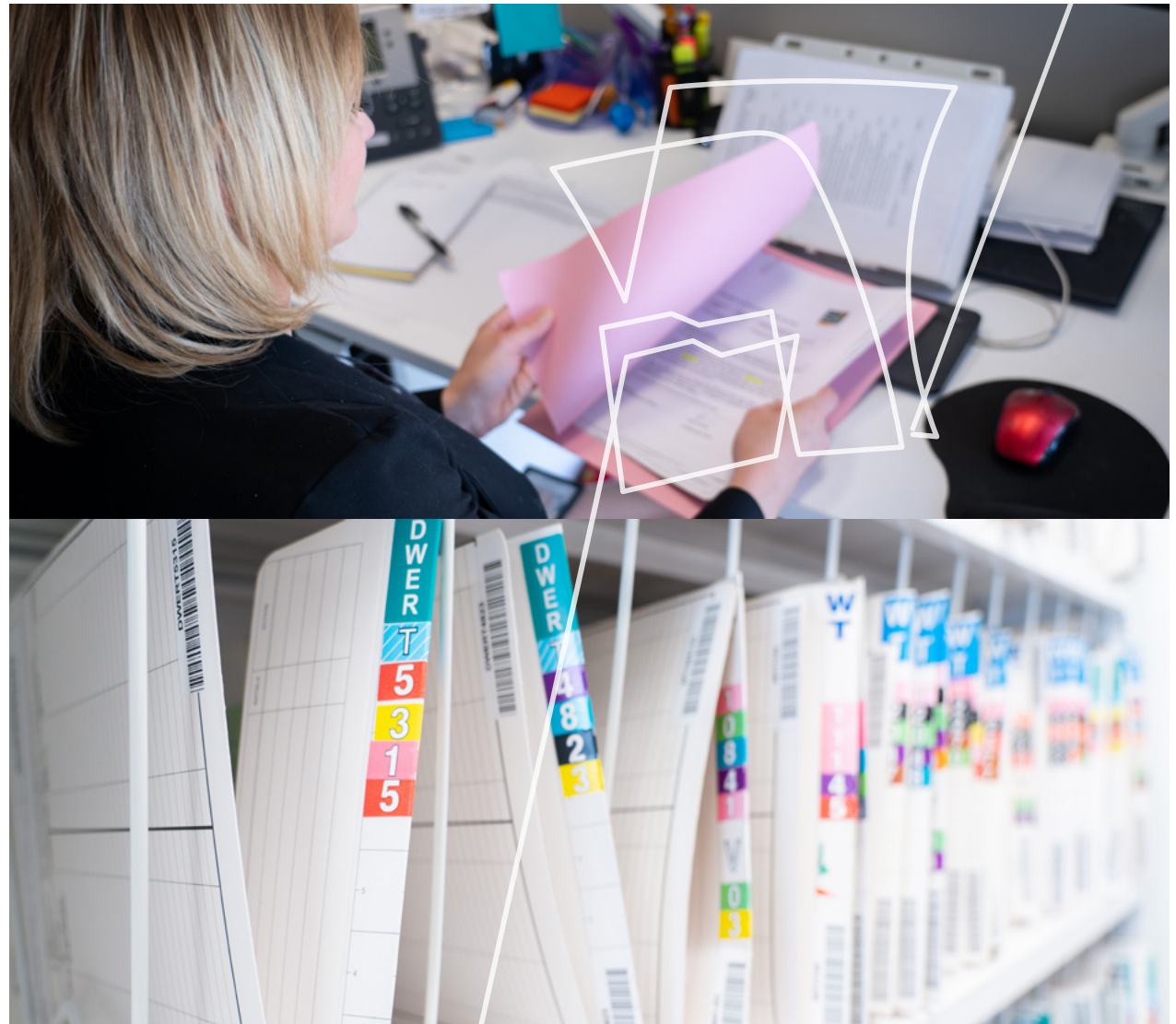
We are committed to continuously improving our recordkeeping culture, tools and practices to ensure compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* and best business outcomes for the department. In line with the State Records Commission (SRC) Standard 2, Principle 6, the following information is provided.

Our recordkeeping manual covers the broad range of recordkeeping requirements necessary to ensure staff create, manage and maintain departmental records, regardless of format, to support the business needs and ensure the department and its staff meet the legislative requirements.

In 2020–21, record-awareness training across the department was completed by 577 staff, resulting in 758 department employees successfully completing this training to date.

These figures include regional staff and staff of the Office of the Appeals Convenor.

A records awareness refresher training module is now available. Once users have successfully completed record-keeping awareness training, they will be required to complete the refresher module every two years. So far, 137 staff have completed this training.



Government policy requirements

Substantive equality

We are committed to implementing substantive equality measures and strive to make our services available to all Western Australians in a form that meets individual needs.

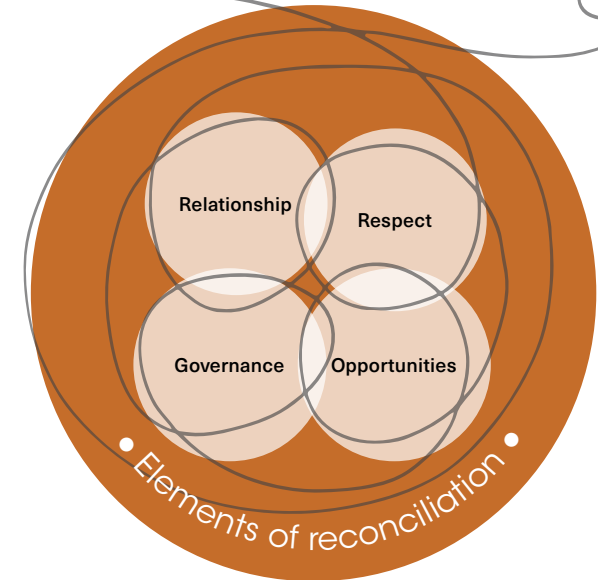


We deliver this by ensuring our processes associated with water and environmental management and planning practices are developed with input from members of the public and stakeholders as well as broad public invitations to comment on draft documents.

Our equity and diversity panel has oversight of the development and implementation of an equity framework which integrates substantive equality strategies.

Importantly, we seek to listen, learn and build strong partnerships with the traditional custodians of the land. We aim to provide genuine opportunities for Aboriginal people within our workforce and through our business, and we are continuing to build sustainable relationships with the Aboriginal community.

Our reconciliation commitment is to incorporate and consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' social and cultural wellbeing as well as rights when working on Country with traditional custodians. The department incorporates Acknowledgement of Country protocols into all official meetings and events to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' spiritual and cultural connection to lands and waters.



This promotes an awareness consistent with the actions and commitments of the department's [Reconciliation Action Plan 2020–21](#) (RAP).

The department is scheduled to release its second RAP in late 2021, in collaboration with Reconciliation Australia. This will be built around the elements of reconciliation: relationship, respect, opportunities and governance.

The department recognises the importance of land and waters in Aboriginal culture, while understanding its own regulatory function to deliver sustainable water and environmental



outcomes to the communities of WA. Using this understanding and knowledge, the department is committed to bringing its most vulnerable and influential community, Aboriginal people, on board to participate and co-design engagement and decisions. This will be done by implementing the department's commitments in the RAP and the Aboriginal Engagement Strategy (AES).

We have taken a proactive approach in developing the RAP and AES to create opportunities for Aboriginal people in our workforce and decision-making processes, and to value and recognise Aboriginal cultural protocols, histories, knowledge and rights in water and environmental matters. The department is committed to incorporating Aboriginal views, knowledge and understanding in the workplace by developing tools and processes to empower Aboriginal people.



Diversity and inclusion

Inclusive access

Our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) affirms the department's commitment to inclusive public service and recognises the rights of all employees to access services, information and facilities, and to participate in community consultation.

This five-year plan champions initiatives that positively address the challenges faced by some employees.

Our Corporate Executive is committed to monitoring the plan to ensure it continues to meet the needs of employees and those in the wider community who engage with the department.

Staff have embraced our mission to create sustainable change so everyone within the business benefits, not only the intended targets of diversity and inclusion strategies and initiatives.

Workforce diversity



The department's Workforce and Diversity Plan affirms that every day we support and inspire each other to be our whole and best selves to thrive and reach our full potential.

We celebrate, acknowledge, respect and embrace differences, because we know when people from different backgrounds and with different points of view work together, we create the most value and better reflect the community that we serve.

During 2020–21, we worked closely with Edith Cowan University to run our first 'DIVERSITY Census' aimed at helping us better understand our diverse workforce and their experiences of inclusion.

Some 650 staff participated in the survey and the results painted a picture of a team largely reflecting the broader community:

- 35.1% of sampled employees were born overseas
- 13.1% had a first language other than English
- 1.3% identified as Aboriginal
- 11.1% had ongoing disability
- 48.9% had caring responsibilities.

The survey results also highlight areas for attention, particularly in regard to Aboriginal staff, staff with disability, and our LGBTQI+ staff. Human Resources will continue to work closely with our Equity and Diversity Panel and our DAIP and RAP working groups, to identify initiatives that build greater inclusivity.



Occupational health, safety and injury management

Providing safe spaces

We understand that family and domestic violence is a complex issue. We also recognise the adverse impact it can have on our employees and fully support the State Government's Safe Spaces initiative.

Flexible work arrangements and leave are available for employees experiencing family and/or domestic violence to enable them to deal with health, legal, court, caring, counselling, relocation, safety and financial matters.

Occupational safety and health and injury management

As a department, we recognise that our strength is in the work of our dedicated employees, and we are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all.

We take the health and safety of all our staff seriously, both onsite and in the office.

We have established an occupational safety and health (OSH) consultation system which includes a Health and Safety Steering Committee (meets quarterly) and a Sub-Health and Safety Committee (meets quarterly), which comprise safety and health representatives, employee representatives and management representatives.

These groups focus on the continuous improvement of our OSH systems, processes and performance, workplace safety, and risk and hazard awareness.

Our Steering Committee is also responsible for ensuring that our department-wide OSH Action Plan is implemented and meets its targets.

The OSH committees, which include employee representatives, are integral to effective OSH consultation within our department. The locations and details of our safety and health representatives, as well as associated documents and forms, are available to all staff through our intranet.

Mechanisms for consultation with employees

The primary mechanism for consultation with employees is through our OSH committees and representatives.

We also have an incident management reporting system in place which clearly articulates notification protocols and escalation points.

Our online platforms are further means to ensure effective and inclusive engagement with our staff for their feedback on department policy and procedures, as well as to update and announce events occurring in our safety and wellbeing space.

Commitment to return employees back to work after injury

We have a workers' compensation and injury management policy and guidelines to help injured employees to return to work as soon as medically appropriate.

This system ensures we can intervene promptly and effectively in injury management, enabling injured employees to remain at work or return to work at the earliest possible time.

This system and our return-to-work programs are compliant with the requirements of the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981* and have been reviewed and approved by RiskCover, our department's insurer.

Performance

In managing the health and safety of our people, our obligations are primarily set out under the Public Sector Commissioner's Circular – Code of Practice: Occupational Safety and Health in the Western Australian Public Sector, as well as the requirements of the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* and the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981*. The department complies with the code and the requirements of the acts.

Our performance against the targets set in the code is demonstrated in the table on right.

Injury performance

Measures	Results 2018–2019	Results 2019–2020	Results 2020–2021	Targets	Comments towards targets
Number of fatalities	0	0	0	0	The department has had 0 fatalities.
Lost time injury and disease incidence rate	0.5	0.3	0.3	0	While the number of lost time injuries is low, we are continuously reviewing better and more efficient ways of managing risk and injuries in the workplace to reach our target of zero time lost to injuries.
Lost time injury and severity rate	0	0	0	0	Severe claims are measured against those which have lost 60 days or more.
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 13 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	Injured employees must return to work in some capacity before 13 weeks, with restrictions on work in the original area of employment or other meaningful work.
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 26 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	We have put strategies in place to ensure all claimants return to work within 13 weeks, as guided by the clinical advice.
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health and injury management responsibilities, including refresher training within three years	60%	Injury management training 77% Online training modules for managers 79%	Online training modules for managers 75%	100%	We will continue to provide injury management training, with all managers required to complete this. Refresher training will occur for online modules every two years.

Manager and supervisor training in OHS and injury management

To maintain the highest safety standards, the department has appointed OSH representatives to work closely with management teams.

These voluntary roles include work site inspections for potential hazards, incident investigation, and communications with the department, staff or directly through the OSH committee.

All our managers and employees are required to undertake annual OSH training, made available and easily accessible through the department's online learning system. Training modules cover OSH legal framework, duty of care, hazard and risk management, incident management, OSH training and injury management, and return-to-work programs.

We require all our managers and supervisors to complete this training every two years, achieving a pass mark of at least 80 per cent. In 2020–21, we achieved a guide success rate of 75 per cent, with further training scheduled to occur in the 2021–22 financial year.

The department also organised onsite work health and safety training with 407 staff completing it. Further training will occur in the 2021–22 financial year.

Complaints procedure

We welcome feedback on our service delivery because it helps us improve or adjust our services to ensure the highest quality service.

We have a dedicated [feedback and complaints portal](#), and we encourage our stakeholders to use this to bring matters to our attention.

If a matter relates to a complaint, we will protect the complainant's confidentiality and privacy and offer whatever assistance they need to lodge their complaint, recognising their right to be heard without fear of retribution and at no charge.

We will also ensure that customers who need to contact us are not disadvantaged because of language barriers. Interpreters can be organised on behalf of customers and documents can be translated into an appropriate language upon request.

Complaints made through the feedback and complaints portal are recorded and can be monitored.

We aim to respond to general complaints within 10 business days. Complainants who feel the department's response is unsatisfactory can contact us again, and if after further discussion they remain dissatisfied, they may refer the matter to the [Ombudsman Western Australia](#).



We aim to respond to general complaints within 10 business days.

Freedom of information

It is our commitment to make information available as soon as possible and at the least possible cost.

In accordance with section 10 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (FOI Act), a person has a right to be given access to documents of an agency subject to and in accordance with the FOI Act.

For the 2020–21 period, we received 237 FOI applications. One of these applications progressed to an internal review and none were reviewed externally by the Office of the Information Commissioner.

This financial year:

- the average time taken to process FOI applications was 38 days*
- we received three applications for personal information

- we received 234 applications for non-personal information
- in addition to the 237 FOI applications received by the department, we handled a further 40 consultations from other agencies.

* The mandatory requirement under the FOI Act is 45 days

Appendices

Appendix A: Legislation

Legislation administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2021

- *Carbon Rights Act 2003*
- *Contaminated Sites Act 2003*
- *Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1986*
- *Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2020*
- *Environmental Protection (Landfill) Levy Act 1998*
- *Litter Act 1979* (The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Keep Australia Beautiful Council [Western Australia])
- *Metropolitan Arterial Drainage Act 1982*
- *Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act 1909*
- *National Environmental Protection Council (Western Australia) Act 1996*
- *Plumbers Licensing Act 1995* (except part 5A which is administered by the Minister for Commerce principally assisted by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) – alternative citations are *Water Services Coordination Act 1995* and *Water Licensing Act 1995*
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914*
- *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007* (The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Waste Authority)
- *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Act 2007* (The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Waste Authority)
- *Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984*
- *Water Agencies Restructure (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 1995*
- *Water Corporations Act 1995*
- *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2006*
- *Water Resources Legislation Amendment Act 2007*
- *Water Services Act 2012*
- *Water Services Coordination Act 1995*
- *Water Services Licensing Act 1995*
- *Waterways Conservation Act 1976*

Regulations administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2021

- Clean Air (Determination of Air Impurities in Gases Discharged to the Atmosphere) Regulations 1983
- Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006
- Country Areas Water Supply (Clearing Licence) Regulations 1981
- Environmental Protection (Abattoirs) Regulations 2001
- Environmental Protection (Abrasive Blasting) Regulations 1998
- Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004
- Environmental Protection (Concrete Batching and Cement Product Manufacturing) Regulations 1998
- Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004
- Environmental Protection (Fibre Reinforced Plastics) Regulations 1998
- Environmental Protection (Goldfields Residential Areas) (Sulfur Dioxide) Regulations 2003
- Environmental Protection (Kwinana) (Atmospheric Wastes) Regulations 1992
- Environmental Protection (Metal Coating) Regulations 2001
- Environmental Protection (NEPM-NPI) Regulations 1998
- Environmental Protection (NEPM-UPM) Regulations 2013
- Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997
- Environmental Protection (Packaged Fertiliser) Regulations 2010
- Environmental Protection (Petrol) Regulations 1999
- Environmental Protection (Plastic Bag) Regulations 2018
- Environmental Protection (Recovery of Vapours from the Transfer of Organic Liquids) Regulations 1995
- Environmental Protection (Rural Landfill) Regulations 2002
- Environmental Protection (Solid Fuel Burning Appliances and Firewood Supply) Regulations 1998
- Environmental Protection (Unauthorised Discharges) Regulations 2004
- Environmental Protection Regulations 1987
- Litter Regulations 1981
- Noise Abatement (Noise Labelling of Equipment) Regulations (No. 2) 1985
- Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulations 2000
- Rights in Water and Irrigation Regulations 2000
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Regulations 2019
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Amendment Regulations 2019
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Regulations 2008
- Water Agencies (Entry Warrant) Regulations 1985
- Water Agencies (Infringements) Regulations 1994
- Water Corporations (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2013
- Water Services Regulations 2013
- Water Services Coordination Regulations 1996
- Water Services (Water Corporations Charges) Regulations 2014
- Waterways Conservation Regulations 1981

Other subsidiary legislation affecting our activities

For all other subsidiary legislation including by-laws, notices, declarations, proclamations, approvals, exemptions, orders, policy, pollution control areas, vesting orders, irrigation districts, standards and guidelines, please visit www.legislation.wa.gov.au.

Other key legislation affecting our activities

In the performance of our functions, the department complied with the following laws:

- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*
- *Auditor General Act 2006*
- *Corruption and Crime Commission Act 2003*
- *Disability Services Act 1993*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*
- *Financial Management Act 2006*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Government Employees Housing Act 1964*
- *Industrial Relations Act 1979*
- *National Environmental Protection Council Act 1997 (Cwlth)*
- *Long Service Leave Act 1958*
- *Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993*
- *Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)*
- *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003*
- *Public Sector Management Act 1994*
- *Salaries and Allowances Act 1975*
- *State Records Act 2000*
- *State Supply Commission Act 1991*
- *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981*

Appendix B: Shortened forms

Term	Definition
AES	Aboriginal Engagement Strategy
AWEAG	Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group
C&D	Construction and demolition
DAIP	Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
DLSCI	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
DMIRS	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
DPLH	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
FOGO	Food organics, garden organics
FOI	Freedom of Information
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HHW	Household hazardous waste
IWSS	Integrated Water Supply Scheme
KABC	Keep Australia Beautiful Council
KPI	Key performance indicators
LGA	Local government authority

Term	Definition
MAC	Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation
MAR	Managed Aquifer Recharge
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRWA	Main Roads WA
OSH	Occupational safety and health
PDWSA	Public drinking water source areas
PEU	Phytoplankton Ecology Unit
PTA	Public Transport Authority
RAP	Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan
RtR	Roads to Reuse
WA	Western Australia
WALGA	Western Australian Local Government Association
WARRRL	WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd
WIR	Water information reporting
WSUD	Water sensitive urban design
WWS	Waste Wise Schools

Contact us

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Feedback form

Your feedback on our 2020–21 annual report would be greatly appreciated. We will use your comments to help improve the clarity and presentation of our publications. Thank you for your input.

- Did the report help you understand the department, its purpose, services and performance?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
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- Did you find the design and presentation functional and effective?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
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- Was the report clear, concise and easy to read?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
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- Did you find the structural format of the report simple and logical?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
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Please return completed feedback forms to:

Corporate Communications

Email: dwer.publishing@dwer.wa.gov.au

or

Mail to:

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
Locked Bag 10, Joondalup DC WA 6919

Please send your comments by 5pm, Friday 3 December 2021



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