



Department of **Water and  
Environmental Regulation**

*Annual report*  
**2021-22**  
**Overview**

## Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Prime House  
8 Davidson Terrace  
Joondalup  
Western Australia 6027

Locked Bag 10 Joondalup DC WA 6919

Phone: 08 6364 7000  
Fax: 08 6364 7001  
National Relay Service 13 36 77

[dwer.wa.gov.au](http://dwer.wa.gov.au)

© Government of Western Australia  
October 2022

This work is copyright. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form only (retaining this notice) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, all other rights are reserved. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

ISSN 2209-6329 (online)  
FIRST 115979

### Disclaimer

This document has been published by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation. Any representation, statement, opinion or advice expressed or implied in this publication is made in good faith and on the basis that the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and its employees are not liable for any damage or loss whatsoever which may occur as a result of action taken or not taken, as the case may be in respect of any representation, statement, opinion or advice referred to herein. Professional advice should be obtained before applying the information contained in this document to particular circumstances.

This publication is available at our website [www.dwer.wa.gov.au](http://www.dwer.wa.gov.au) or at [www.gov.au](http://www.gov.au). For those with special needs it can be made available in alternative formats such as audio, large print, or Braille.

## Statement of compliance

For the year ended 30 June 2022

Hon Dave Kelly MLA  
**Minister for Water**

Hon Reece Whitby 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 2022.

The annual report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.



Michelle Andrews  
Director General  
22 October 2022





The department's Prime House head office. Picture: Davin Storey

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation 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 bringing it to life on Whadjuk Noongar Boodja\*. We seek to listen, learn and genuinely engage and build strong partnerships. We aim to provide sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal people within our workforce and through our business.

Country is a term used by Aboriginal people to describe the lands, waterways and seas to which they are intrinsically linked. The wellbeing, law, place, custom, language, spiritual belief, cultural practice, material sustenance, family and identity are all interwoven as one.

Working with the community, we move forward with a shared commitment to protect and conserve Country for our future generations.

\*The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's head office, Prime House, is located in Joondalup, on Whadjuk Noongar Boodja. The above Acknowledgement of Country was endorsed by the department's Aboriginal Water and Environmental Advisory Group.



## From the Director General

Thank you for taking the time to read the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's annual report for 2021–22.

Our department is now five years old, and for two-and-a-half of those years we have been faced with a global pandemic. COVID-19 has posed unprecedented challenges to our state over this period. I am very proud that we have continued to deliver on our core promise to support Western Australia's community, economy and environment by managing and regulating the state's environment and water resources.

We are recognised for our professionalism and scientific expertise and we must nurture this because it will be essential to inform our response to the environmental challenges our state faces.

No project better exemplifies this than the *Gnangara groundwater allocation plan*, which the Minister for Water launched in June 2022. The plan outlines the changes which need to be made to adjust the taking of groundwater to climate change and better match the groundwater recharge from rainfall.

Work to develop a new Gnangara groundwater allocation plan involved detailed scientific assessments and advanced groundwater modelling of recharge and abstraction. This included a four-year, \$7 million investigation into the Perth region's deep aquifers, local groundwater studies, and development of options to achieve sustainable management by sharing the required reductions to groundwater abstraction across water users and groundwater resources. Working with licensees, including local governments, to give effect to this new allocation plan will be a significant focus over the years ahead.

Beyond our commitment to science, we are honest in our reflections as an agency and because of this continue to strive to be better, together. It is for this reason that this past financial year has been – and the year ahead will be – one of reform.

Reform of our processes and business practices is central to every division and every business unit. It is the primary way to manage workload and to deliver higher-quality services to people within and outside the department.

We are leading in the delivery of Streamline WA initiatives, and it is the Streamline principles that we will be applying to everything we do: reduce duplication and overlap, make timely and transparent decisions, apply regulation that is proportionate to the risk, and improve our online service delivery.

Environment Online is our flagship business transformation project and one that will become a vehicle for integration that benefits all business areas.

In December 2021 we hosted Streamline WA's second Common Understanding Workshop. More than 180 people attended the event, which explored challenges faced by frontline approvals and assessment officers across the mining and environment sectors, and provided opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing.

Reform of  
our processes and business  
practices are central to every  
division and every business unit.

These workshops are important tools in creating a whole-of-government approach to regulatory practice and a contemporary regulatory culture. More than 80 per cent of attendees reported being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' – with many speaking positively about the event's ability to 'build relationships across agencies' and 'effectiveness in identifying ways to streamline processes'.

In April, the department launched the Reduced Reporting Burden Pilot, which has stopped or halved the environmental reporting requirements for lower-risk industry licences. The changes are expected to benefit more than 60 per cent of about 1,000 licences granted under Part V, Division 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* relating to industrial premises that can cause emissions and discharges to air, land or water. This will save significant time and cost for licence holders and reduce the administrative load for departmental officers who can then concentrate on higher-risk matters.

The Reduced Reporting Burden Pilot is just one of many projects we are leading that will make it easier to do business in WA.

We are aware that there are opportunities to further integrate our business. This will be an important objective – not only to reduce duplication and overlap but to ensure our Ministers and our boards and committees receive integrated, big-picture advice. Ultimately, our structure must support our services. We are at our best when we are outward looking and think and operate as one department with a one-government mindset.

Another vital vehicle in our reform mindset is the Public Sector Commission's Agency Capability Review Program, something I have embraced as the Director General.

Our department, along with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, has been chosen to take part in this program trial. The reviews consider if the departments have the right structures, processes, use of resources, systems and governance in place, and how well they are working. It will drive continuous improvement and high performance to deliver even better services to Western Australians now and into the future.

Our new *Strategic plan 2022–26* is our blueprint for high performance, continued reform and exemplary service delivery. We recently finalised the plan, after considering the priorities of the State Government, the input of our officers and stakeholders, the issues on the horizon and the needs of our organisation.

It is affirmation of our strategic goals to:

- lift our performance as a regulator
- better manage our environment
- pursue strategic solutions to big environmental challenges.

Speaking of goals and big environmental challenges, on 24 June 2022 the Premier announced a 2030 target for the State Government to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent of 2020 levels.

The State Government will deliver a range of initiatives to reduce its net emissions, including energy-efficiency measures, procurement of renewable energy, reduced emissions in the government vehicle fleet and the use of local offsets.

Action on climate change is crucial to diversifying the WA economy, creating long-term jobs, managing environmental impacts, and protecting the health and wellbeing of Western Australians. As the agency leading the State Government's response to climate change, we will be at the forefront of this. Indeed, the response to climate change touches every aspect of the department's operations.

This emissions target is ambitious and it matches our ambition as an agency.

We look forward to what the year ahead will bring.



Michelle Andrews  
Director General





Our Frankland-Denmark team meet with Mount Barker Elders

# Contents

From the Director General . . . .4

Appendices . . . . .180

Contact us . . . . .184

Feedback form . . . . .185

## Overview 8

Our 2021–22 at a glance . . . . .9

Who we are . . . . .10

Our evolving department . . .14

Our performance summary . .19

Our priorities . . . . .22

## Our performance 37

Outcome one . . . . .39

Service one . . . . .40

Service two . . . . .43

Service three . . . . .53

Outcome two . . . . .58

Service Four . . . . .59

Outcome three . . . . .65

Service five . . . . .66

Outcome four . . . . .74

Service six . . . . .75

Outcome five . . . . .84

Service seven . . . . .85

Service eight . . . . .88

Outcome six . . . . .89

Service nine . . . . .90

## Disclosures and legal compliance 91

Auditor General independent auditor's report . . . . .93

Financial statements . . . . .96

Certification of financial statements . . .96

Statement of comprehensive income . .97

Statement of financial position . . .98

Statement of changes in equity . . .99

Statement of cash flows . . .100

Administered schedules . . .101

Notes to the financial statements . . .102

Certification of . . . . .102

key performance indicators . . .149

Outcome-based management framework . .150

Key effectiveness indicators . . .152

Key efficiency indicators . . .158

## Other requirements 171

Other legal requirements . . .172

Special purpose statement . . .173

Recordkeeping . . . . .174

Government policy requirements . . .175

Substantive equality . . . . .175

Inclusive access . . . . .176

Occupational health, safety and injury management . . .177

Complaints procedure . . .178

Freedom of information . . .179

Recognising our staff: Woola Awards . .179



# Overview

Our 2021–22 at a glance	9
-------------------------	---

Who we are	10
------------	----

Our vision	10
------------	----

Our mission	10
-------------	----

Our new strategic plan	11
------------------------	----

Our structure	13
---------------	----

Our evolving department	14
-------------------------	----

Inclusive employer recognition	14
--------------------------------	----

Our refreshed values	15
----------------------	----

Our Graduate Program	16
----------------------	----

Our Agency Capability Review	16
------------------------------	----

Stakeholder, customer and community insights	17
---	----

Our performance summary	19
-------------------------	----

Actual results versus budget targets	19
--------------------------------------	----

Summary of key effectiveness indicators	20
---	----

Summary of key efficiency indicators	21
--------------------------------------	----

Our priorities	22
----------------	----

Environment Online	22
--------------------	----

Streamline WA	23
---------------	----

Climate Action	24
----------------	----

Rebalancing our precious groundwater systems	26
---	----

Plan for Plastics	28
-------------------	----

E-waste and material recovery	29
-------------------------------	----

Aboriginal engagement and partnerships	30
---	----

Green Jobs	33
------------	----

Bindjareb Djilba: A plan for the protection of the Peel-Harvey estuary	34
---	----

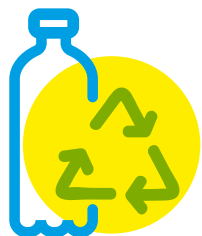
Murujuga rock art	35
-------------------	----

COVID-19 response	36
-------------------	----





## Our 2021–22 at a glance

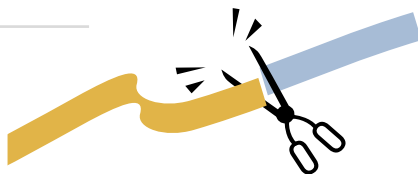


**1.47 billion**

containers now recovered since the start of Containers for Change

**300**

Industry Regulation licence holders no longer required to submit annual environmental reports under Streamline WA



**\$3.1 mil**

Climate Science Initiative being delivered by the department



**298**

native vegetation clearing permit applications received



**45**

illegal dumpers prosecuted

**84,000**



waterwise plants planted under the Waterwise Perth Action Plan



**54 GL**

of groundwater will be saved each year under the Gnamptara groundwater allocation plan



**7,146**

requests for water information via the Water Information Reporting portal

**1.2 million+**

tonnes of controlled waste tracked on WA roads



**700+**

requests for floodplain management advice



**\$126,967**

in grants awarded to 41 WasteSorted schools



**9 categories**

of plastic phased out under Stage 1 of the WA Plan for Plastics



**\$1,263,059**

allocated for 18 Community Water Supply Partnership Program projects started in 2022



**12,677**

water licences managed across 486 groundwater and 216 surface water resources

**\$11.3 mil+**

in grants to seven projects in round two of the Clean Energy Future Fund

**CleanEnergy  
FutureFund**

# Who we are

As Western Australia's primary water and environmental regulator, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has a responsibility to be an influential and future-focused organisation.

## Our vision

Our vision is for a low-carbon Western Australia with a healthy environment and secure water resources for future generations.

## Our mission

**Environment:** We act to make sure that environmental values are protected, and that development is sustainable.

**Water:** We act to ensure our water resources meet the needs of the community, ecosystems and economic development.

**Waste:** We act to reduce the harmful impact of waste and create a low-waste circular economy.

**Climate:** We act to reduce emissions, mitigate climate change impacts and build greater environmental and community resilience.





## Our new strategic plan

Our new [Strategic plan 2022–26](#) reflects how we have matured as an agency and sets our direction to meet the challenges of managing the environment of Western Australia (WA) and our water resources for the next four years.



The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (the department) was formed in 2017 with the merging of three agencies – the Department of Water, the Department of Environment Regulation and the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority. We were made responsible for ensuring

the state's water resources and environment are healthy, and able to support a strong economy and thriving communities.

This challenged us to develop new ways of working internally, and externally, with government, industry and community stakeholders. We chose the concept of system stewardship which brought together the functions of science, advice, assessment, regulation, policy and engagement. This was the drive behind our first [Strategic plan 2018–21](#).

This approach recognised that the department plays an important role in not only understanding the environment, but having oversight of the system and how it is used, managed and protected.

Our second strategic plan was 18 months in the making. It was informed by:

- State Government priorities from the Minister for Environment; Climate Action, and the Minister for Water
- the work we have undertaken as part of our participation in the Public Sector Commission's Agency Capability Review Program
- the cross-government Streamline WA reform initiative
- extensive internal and external consultation.

Use of consultation work from major initiatives such as water allocation planning, the Plan for Plastics, waste reform, native vegetation policy and regulatory strategy has also helped in mapping out themes for the new strategic directions.

In this process we identified the major trends informing our plan. These are:

- population growth
- urbanisation and densification
- climate change and extreme weather events
- loss of biodiversity and ecosystem damage

- sustainability, waste and pollution
- social attitudes.

These combined pressures demand a strong commitment to sustainable development principles, effective regulatory practice and long-term strategic approaches.

### 3 Strategic goals in next 4 years

**The department has decided to focus its efforts into achieving three strategic goals over the next four years:**

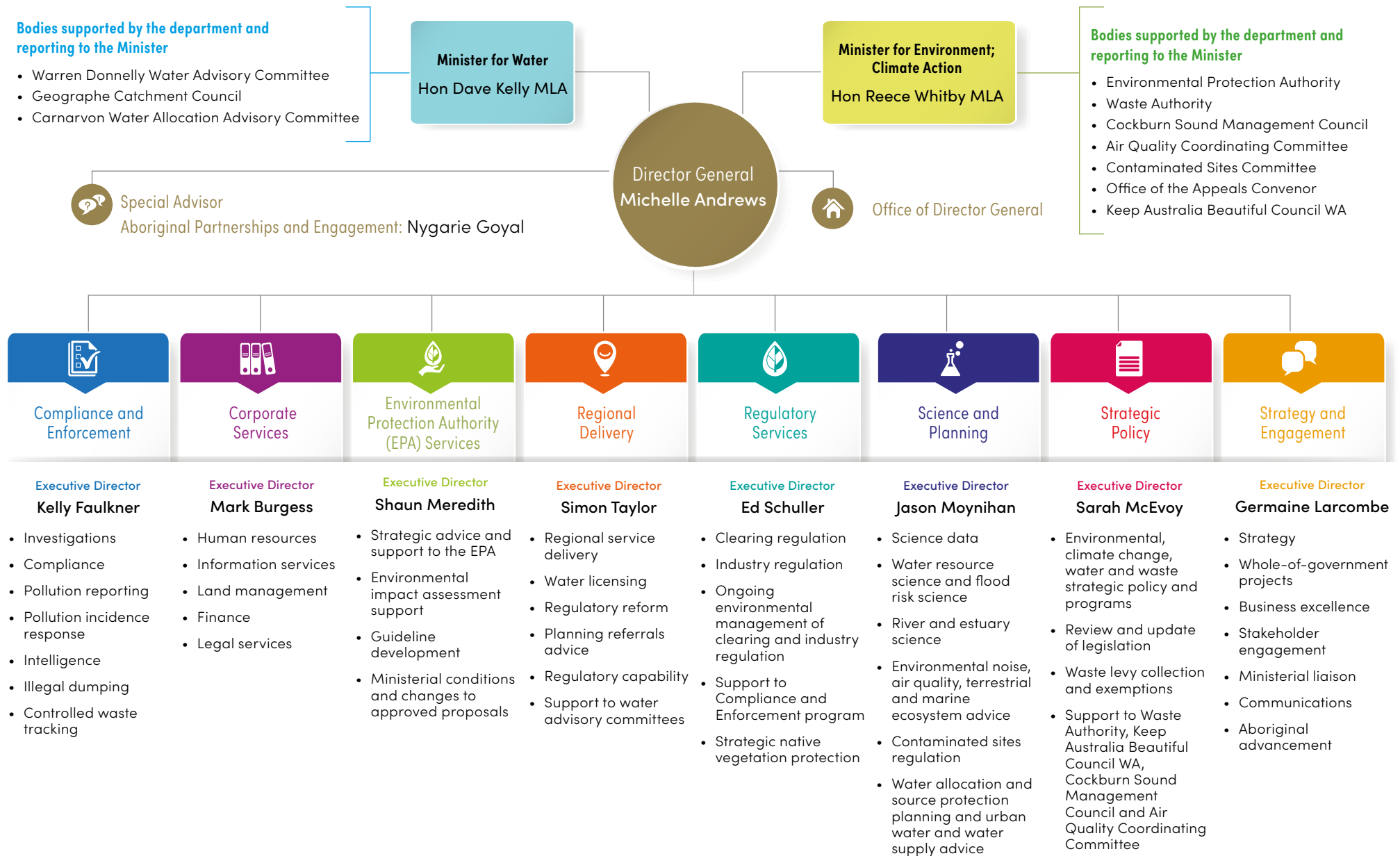
- 1. Improve our regulatory capability.**
- 2. Better manage the environment.**
- 3. Pursue strategic solutions to our big environmental challenges.**



Director General Michelle Andrews, left, with members of our Corporate Executive on a visit to the Pilbara



## Our structure



# Our evolving department

## Inclusive employer recognition

We are proud to have been named an Inclusive Employer for 2021–2022. This achievement recognises that we are active and committed to inclusion.

Our Workforce and Diversity Plan affirms that by bringing together people from different backgrounds and with different points of view, we create the most value and better reflect the community that we serve.






As part of this commitment, in October 2021 staff were invited to participate in the Diversity Council of Australia's [Inclusion@Work Index](#) to measure and track our progress in creating a diverse and inclusive workplace. We were assessed as an Inclusive Employer, based on exceeding the National Index Benchmark on at least five out of six of the following measures:

1. Awareness
2. Engagement
3. Inclusive organisation
4. Inclusive leadership
5. Inclusive team
6. Exclusion.




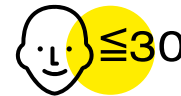



The survey also provided a snapshot of our workforce diversity, based on responses from 438 staff.

### ► Snapshot of our diversity

					
Our Result	0.9%	52%	32%	68%	11%
DCA* members	2.4%	44%	33%	66%	9%
Australian workforce	1.7%	38%	38%	62%	9%

					
Our Result	62%	26%	5%	7%	17%
DCA* members	59%	24%	9%	14%	18%
Australian workforce	47%	30%	11%	24%	20%

\*Diversity Council of Australia

Responding to this, and as part of our commitment under our first [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP) 2019–2021, we commissioned the preparation of the Aboriginal Employment Recruitment and Retention Strategy – 2022–2027. The review of recruitment and retention processes was carried out by an Indigenous consultant and resulted in a number of suggestions and recommendations now under consideration.



## Our refreshed values

Our values have been central to helping build and improve our department's culture and identity since its establishment in 2017. We try to live our values in our day-to-day work and how we interact with each other.

In October 2021 the Our People Program team held an online Yammer event to review our values and seek contributions from staff.

There was broad support to retain our five values, given their acceptance across the department. Ideas were also shared on refining and developing our behaviours to ensure staff know how they can live our values.

A survey of staff and further engagement followed before the updated behaviours within each value were endorsed by our Corporate Executive and launched on 24 June 2022.

They complement our new Strategic Plan and play an important role in developing the capability and effectiveness of the department.

### ► Our refreshed values



#### WE SERVE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- We are professionals who deliver sustainable outcomes for current and future generations
- We align our work with the department's priorities and government's direction
- We continue to improve our engagement with Aboriginal people for everyone's prosperity
- We recognise the practice of intergenerational care for Country by Traditional Custodians
- We plan with the future in mind, regularly reviewing our efforts to focus on the right priorities at the right time



#### WE BUILD TRUST

- We engage early, listen to understand, and respond consistently
- We ensure our work is transparent, evidence-based, and accountable
- We are respectful, honest and kind, and demonstrate empathy
- We operate with the highest levels of integrity
- We hold ourselves and each other to account



#### WE CARE

- We work as a team, valuing the expertise of each other
- We take time to build capability and contribute to the development of our people
- We contribute to an inclusive, safe and healthy workplace
- We are upstanders and support one another to respectfully challenge inappropriate behaviour



#### OPEN MINDS

- We embrace new ideas and innovation
- We are mindful of both the big picture and local place-based information in our work
- We are flexible and seek better ways to do our work, and we learn from our mistakes
- We are adaptable and resilient in the face of change



#### BETTER TOGETHER

- We work inclusively and collaboratively and have a 'one Government' mindset
- We value our differences and use them to expand our thinking
- We actively share knowledge and information
- We engage in a practical and courteous way with those affected by our work
- We lead at all levels and empower our people to make decisions

## Our Graduate Program

The department launched its new Graduate Program on 19 November 2021. The program supports youth targets in alignment with the [Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025](#). This plan aims to increase the representation of youth in the public sector to 5.8 per cent and supports inclusive work environments.

It is also intended that our Graduate Program will foster Environment Online capability, identifying a pipeline of talent that brings an ‘ability to learn’, currency in technology and an adaptability to support our transformative digital-driven initiatives.

Our social media and radio advertising campaign targeted graduates across Australia. We also sought to engage with Aboriginal talent through regional advertising and Facebook messages. We received 114 applications to participate in the program and nine graduates, including an Aboriginal graduate, were selected.

Our graduates are now completing a 12-month rotational development program designed to introduce them to a variety of work across the department and build their [carbon literacy](#) and leadership skills. Once they have successfully completed the program they will transfer to a permanent position.

## Our Agency Capability Review

The department has been participating in the Public Sector Commission’s Agency Capability Review Program trial since August 2021.

Led by an independent reviewer appointed by the Public Sector Commission, the review aims to drive excellence and continuous improvement in agencies by identifying areas of good performance and areas for improvement. We were among the first three of eight departments selected in the first sector-wide approach to identify the capabilities needed to be a high-performing public sector agency in WA.

Each review covers the breadth of the agency capability framework with documentary evidence and robust analysis complemented by interviews and focus groups with agency staff and stakeholders. Self-reflection and assessment by the agency on its own capabilities are features of the review.

As part of the review our staff participated in an agency-specific iThink Challenge where 139 ideas were received. Over a third of staff also completed a staff capability questionnaire, with 321 responses received. The department’s stakeholders were consulted, and they provided six written submissions and participated in 33 interviews.

The review team has been working with our Corporate Executive and stakeholders on the final stages of the review, and developing a report from which the department will make commitments.



Director General Michelle Andrews and Minister Reece Whitby with some of our 2022 graduates

## Stakeholder, customer and community insights

Stakeholder research is required to fulfil our key performance indicator (KPI) reporting requirement about the proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable productive use.

This year's key effectiveness indicator is statistically on par with last year's result, with six in 10 stakeholders rating us as effective in this.

In addition to the long-running KPI research about the perceptions of our key stakeholders, we recently conducted research about the perceptions of our customers and the community.

The research provides:

- long-term trends to help adapt our business strategically to better meet stakeholder, customer and community needs over time
- medium-term trends to inform the success and delivery of our Strategic Plan priorities
- snapshot information about topical areas.

This year's results show our increased focus on stakeholders is having a positive impact.

Top Priority and Key Stakeholders are those we have identified for active stakeholder management to build relationships with, under our Stakeholder Management Framework. There was an improvement in the ratings from these groups this year, with nearly 70 per cent rating the department as effective. This response is driven by our engagement and ability to provide information and advice.

Our stakeholders were also more positive about the department's water management and the balance it achieves between environmental management and development. The research also showed an improvement in the perception of how the department is managing waste.

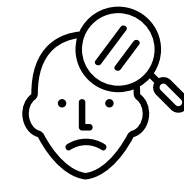
There is also continued interest in approved timeliness of decision-making and improvement of our e-business capabilities, matters which are being addressed through Streamline WA and Environment Online.

The research provides a sampling accuracy of +/- 4.07 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level, which exceeds the requirements of the Auditor General.



### ► What our stakeholders want to see more of:

- Long-term water planning.
- More support and regulations for waste recovery and recycling.
- A more strategic approach to land clearing.



### ► What our stakeholders are increasingly concerned about:

- Climate change.
- Waste generation and air pollution.





The environment of Western Australia is under pressure from climate change, development and people. These combined pressures demand a strong commitment to sustainable development principles, effective regulatory practice and long-term strategic approaches.

# Our 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

	2020–21 Actual (\$'000)	2021–22 Budget (\$'000)	2021–22 Actual (\$'000)	2021–22 Variance (\$'000)
Total cost of services (that is endorsed expense limit)	183,694	254,636	182,373	72,263
Net cost of services (details in the income statement)	63,290	109,595	45,369	64,226
Total equity (details in the statement of financial position)	523,091	509,801	566,945	-57,144
Agreed salary expense level	90,312	100,414	92,872	7,542
Working cash limit	8,264	11,688	8,376	3,312

## Summary of key effectiveness indicators

Outcome	Key effectiveness indicator	2020–21	2021–22		
		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	62	62	59	-3 ↓
	Proportion of priority growth areas that have a water supply planning strategy	100	14	10	-4 ↓
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	100	100	87	-13 ↓
	Percentage of potential environmental risks identified during compliance monitoring program that are rectified within two months	20	40	34	-6 ↓
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	92	95	99	4 ↑
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	31	65	32	-33 ↓
	Percentage of commercial and industrial waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	44	70	40	-30 ↓
	Percentage of construction and demolition waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	81	75	84	9 ↑
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	96	80	95	15 ↑
	Percentage of project-specific conditions which did not require significant change following the appeal process	98	80	89	9 ↑
	Percentage of assessments that met agreed timelines	92	75	79	4 ↑
	The EPA's satisfaction with the department's provision of environmental management services during the year	94	80	97	17 ↑
6. Compliance with Ministerial statement implementation conditions are monitored effectively	The number of Ministerial statements audited compared to targets	98	100	57	-43 ↓



## Summary of key efficiency indicators

Service	Key efficiency indicators	2020–21	2021–22				
		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%	92%	-3%	↓
		Average cost per statutory referral assessment	\$5,125	\$8,073	\$5,418	-2,655	↑
		Average cost per water measurement site managed	\$7,437	\$9,741	\$5,944	-3,797	↑
Service 2	Water planning, allocation and optimisation	Average cost per plan, report or guidance document to support water planning, allocation and optimisation	\$233,709	\$212,216	\$268,753	56,537	↓
		Average cost per hour of scientific support for water planning, allocation and optimisation	\$172	\$196	\$185	-11	↑
Service 3	Water regulation, licensing and industry governance	Average cost of assessing a water licence application by risk assessment category:					
		• Low-risk	\$3,412	\$3,203	\$3,348	145	↓
		• Medium-risk	\$4,549	\$4,271	\$4,464	193	↓
		• High-risk	\$5,686	\$5,339	\$5,580	241	↓
		Average time taken (days) to assess a licence application by risk assessment category:					
		• Low-risk	30	65	35	-30	↑
		• Medium-risk	39	75	52	-23	↑
		• High-risk	47	95	65	-30	↑
		Average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action	\$118	\$173	\$130	-43	↑
Service 4	Environmental regulation	Average cost per works approval and licence application	\$51,891	\$59,155	\$55,425	-3,730	↑
		Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application	\$33,217	\$53,613	\$30,353	-23,260	↑
Service 5	Environmental and water policy	Average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations	\$148	\$295	\$273	-22	↑
Service 6	Waste strategies	Cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected	1.60%	1.50%	1.87%	0.37%	↓
Service 7	Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of assessment output	\$62,466	\$54,409	\$45,444	-8,965	↑
Service 8	Environmental management services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output	\$34,572	\$49,963	\$26,706	-23,257	↑
Service 9	Compliance monitoring services to the Minister	Average cost per environmental audit completed	\$56,117	\$60,013	\$51,684	-8,329	↑

# Our priorities

Our department is responsible for ensuring the state's water resources and environment are healthy and able to support a strong economy and thriving communities. This section reflects our work delivering on the priorities of the State Government.

## Environment Online

Environment Online will be our digital, customer-focused 'one stop shop' platform for water and environmental regulation in WA, bringing the department's assessment and regulated activities into one online platform.

This \$28 million project – funded by the State Government and Australian Government – will transform our business and introduce greater efficiency in assessments and approvals.

Technology company Insight was awarded the \$23 million build contract in August 2021 and has been working with department business areas and subject matter experts to integrate our processes into the technical build.

Program presentations, common process workshops and design workshops with external stakeholders have been held to assist co-design of actions and functions.

More than 200 stakeholders attended the first Environment Online showcase on 15 December 2021 for a look at the online platform, including examples of how Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) referrals will move through the system. In February 2022 the department unveiled Environment Online to a group of stakeholders who were given the opportunity to road-test the system.

The project was subject to small delays as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but Release 1 – environmental impact assessment and approvals functions under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) – was scheduled for launch in August 2022. The full functionality of the program is set for completion in 2024.



## Streamline WA

The department is a partner agency to Streamline WA, a whole-of-government initiative to make it easier to do business in our state by improving regulation and regulatory practice.

In July 2021, the State Government announced a \$120 million investment in Streamline WA to improve WA's approvals system, allocating additional frontline approvals and reform officers.

In December 2021, the department hosted a Common Understanding Workshop for frontline officers involved in mining and environmental approvals, to increase collaboration and information sharing, and identify opportunities for process or system enhancements. The workshop resulted in 16 ideas for improvement, including development

of a shared communication platform for frontline officers, delivering coordinated training and improving information available to proponents to enable high-quality applications.

Reducing the reporting burden on licensees is a key initiative of Streamline WA. As a pilot project, the department reviewed all Industry Regulation licences and identified about 60 per cent could have reporting requirements reduced. As a result, about 300 licence holders are no longer required to submit annual environmental reports, and a similar number are now reporting biennially instead of annually.

Reducing the reporting burden on licensees is a key initiative of Streamline WA.

We have started drafting a Transparency First policy, to make regulatory information more transparent and accessible for the benefit of our stakeholders and the WA community, and to build public confidence in the compliance performance of our regulated proponents.

We are leading the development of a Compliance and Enforcement Compact between seven regulatory agencies. This will empower the sharing of data, intelligence, people and equipment between these agencies to maximise their regulatory capabilities and achieve more effective outcomes, for example when building a prosecution case.



The department hosted a Common Understanding Workshop in December 2021

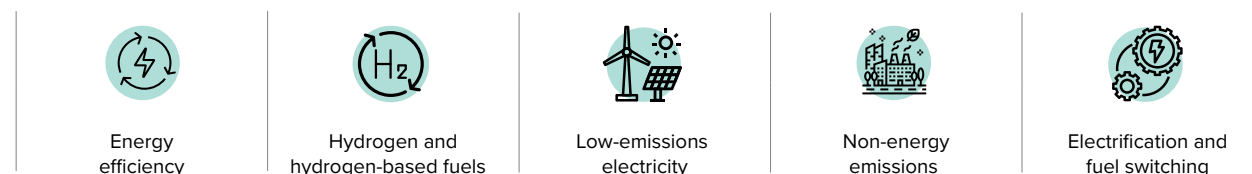




## Climate Action

The department coordinates the implementation of the [Western Australian Climate Policy](#) and the [State Electric Vehicle Strategy](#), and leads development of the State Government's response to climate change.

Core initiatives to be progressed under the WA Climate Policy over 2022–23 include the development of the Climate Adaptation Strategy to enhance climate resilience, and development of the [Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategies](#) (SERS) to support transition of WA's economy to net zero emissions by 2050. The department is also delivering the \$3.1 million Climate Science initiative to enhance understanding of our future climate.



Key pillars of decarbonisation ([Shaping Western Australia's low-carbon future](#), 2021)

We are now working with other agencies to help the State Government reduce 2030 greenhouse gas emissions to 80 per cent below 2020 levels.

The target was announced by the Premier, Hon Mark McGowan MLA, and the Minister for Environment; Climate Action, Hon Reece Whitby MLA, on 23 June 2022. It applies to emissions from all State Government agencies, including Transport, Health and Education, and emissions generated by Government Trading Enterprises.

To help achieve the 80 per cent target the State Government will deliver a range of initiatives, including energy-efficiency measures, procurement of renewable energy, reduced emissions in the government vehicle fleet and the use of local offsets.

The commitment builds on the announcement that Synergy, the State Government-owned energy provider, will transition out of coal-fired power generation by 2030. An estimated \$3.8 billion will be invested, through Synergy, in new green power infrastructure in the South West Interconnected System (SWIS), including wind generation and storage, to ensure emissions reduction, continued stability and affordability. The State Government has also committed to not building any new natural gas-fired power stations on the SWIS after 2030.

The Water Corporation, the water utility owned by the State Government, has also secured up to 400 megawatts (MW) of additional renewable wind energy to power its two existing desalination plants and another planned for 2028.

The Water Corporation has also committed to achieving net zero emissions across all operations by 2035.

## Climate Science Initiative

The Climate Science Initiative will provide the most up-to-date assessment of how WA's climate may change over the next century.

By understanding the changing climate and the impact on our communities, industries and environment, we can better prepare and adapt for the future.

This year the department joined two new partnerships to help implement the Climate Science Initiative and boost climate science capability in WA.

By understanding  
the changing climate  
and the impact on our  
communities, industries  
and environment, we can  
better prepare and adapt  
for the future.

In January 2022, we joined the next generation of the New South Wales and Australian Regional Climate Modelling Project (NARClIM 2.0) to ensure projections produced by the Climate Science Initiative are consistent and comparable with projections across the country.

The New South Wales Government leads NARClIM 2.0 in partnership with the Australian Capital Territory, South Australian and WA governments, and with contributions from the University of New South Wales and Murdoch University.

NARClIM 2.0 brings together a team of data specialists, climate scientists, modellers and science communicators to help governments, business, scientists and the community better anticipate, manage and act on climate risks.

The second partnership will see the department team up with Murdoch University to produce detailed climate change projections for WA. It will co-fund two new research scholarships to advance scientific knowledge of our state's climate and build local climate expertise.

The Climate Science Initiative will be the first project to translate the latest findings from the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) into projections for WA. The new climate projections are expected to be delivered in 2024.

## Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategies

The development of the SERS is a core commitment of the WA Climate Policy.

It will deliver robust and credible emissions reduction pathways for WA with tangible actions for reducing emissions consistent with the State Government's target of net zero emissions by 2050. The strategies will recognise the importance of significant action this decade to reduce emissions, transition emissions-intensive industries, and protect WA's economy from carbon transition risks.

The department is leading the development of the strategies during 2022 and 2023 in collaboration with key State Government agencies including the Departments of the Premier and Cabinet; Treasury; Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS); Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI); Transport; Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD); and Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH).

The department is developing the SERS in consultation with business, industry associations, research institutions, the community and environmental organisations. The SERS will align to strategic objectives for effectiveness, resilience, fairness, business certainty, prosperity and collaboration.

## Rebalancing our precious groundwater systems

### Gnangara groundwater allocation plan

The Gnangara groundwater system – Perth’s largest, most accessible, lowest-cost source of fresh water – has become out of balance through less rainfall because of climate change and continued groundwater use.

On 3 June 2022 the Minister for Water, Hon Dave Kelly MLA, launched the [Gnangara groundwater allocation plan](#), which aims to rebalance the amount of water we take from our aquifers with the amount recharged by rainfall. The new plan will reduce groundwater abstraction from the Gnangara system,

to secure long-term use and significantly improve the protection of its important environmental values.

Climate change has reduced Perth’s long-term average rainfall by about 15 per cent since 1975. This combined with groundwater abstraction is having a measurable and visible impact on the water balance of the Gnangara groundwater system and significantly affecting its long-term sustainability as a natural, good quality source of water.

The aquifers of the Gnangara groundwater system provide about 40 per cent of Perth’s drinking water and almost all the water used north of the Swan

River to Gingin for parks, sports grounds and other green spaces, industry, horticulture and gardens watered with bore water.

The Gnangara system also provides social, environmental and cultural value and amenity to Perth, supporting our natural environment, including wetlands, banksia woodlands and cave systems.

Developed following extensive consultation with stakeholders and based on robust scientific research and modelling, the 10-year plan sets a pathway to reduce the volume of water taken from the Gnangara groundwater system.



Department staff celebrate the release of the Gnangara groundwater allocation plan with Minister Dave Kelly



Once fully implemented, the plan will save 54 gigalitres (GL) of groundwater per year – the equivalent to 54 Optus Stadiums full of water.

Under the plan, groundwater abstraction by the Water Corporation and commercial and local government water licence holders will be reduced.

Most licensed groundwater users will need to reduce their use by 10 per cent from 2028. This will allow water users time to transition their operations, such as through increased water use efficiency or securing additional water through water trading.

This relatively small reduction is possible because the plan includes a 27 per cent reduction in water taken by the Water Corporation for Perth's drinking water supplies. The State Government has provided \$1.4 billion in funding to the Water Corporation for [Perth's next desalination plant](#). The plant is expected to be operational by 2028 and it will provide a long-term, climate-independent drinking water source for Perth.

## Changes to the garden bore sprinkler roster

As part of the Gnangara groundwater allocation plan, the domestic garden bore sprinkler roster was changed to two days per week in the Perth and Mandurah area from 1 September 2022.

Most (70 per cent) households in Perth and Mandurah that do not have access to a garden bore have adapted their lawns and gardens to watering twice a week using scheme water.

Domestic garden bores are not licensed and there is no limit to the volume of water able to be taken collectively. Various studies on residential water use over the past two decades have found that, on average, households with domestic garden bores use significantly more water on their gardens than scheme water users.

By reducing the garden bore sprinkler roster to two days per week, up to 30 GL of groundwater can be saved every year across the Perth and Mandurah area. These savings will mean that more groundwater is retained in the Superficial aquifer and we will see watertables rise or stabilise, particularly in urban areas. This will help increase the climate resilience of street trees and our important urban wetlands.

To support this change the State Government, through the Water Corporation, is committing \$6.5 million to assist householders with making their gardens more water efficient. Funded programs will include waterwise offers such as rebates on smart irrigation technology and spring sprinkler system checks, and waterwise garden workshops.



## Plan for Plastics

The department implements the [WA Plan for Plastics](#), which sets out a roadmap to address the impacts posed by single-use plastics on the environment, waste streams and human health. Western Australians use hundreds of millions of disposable plastic items each year. The Plan for Plastics aims to avoid unnecessary plastic consumption.

The first stage of regulations phases out disposable plastic straws, cutlery, stirrers, thick plastic bags, bowls and containers without lids, plates, cups for cold drinks, expanded polystyrene food containers and helium balloon releases. They were gazetted on 17 December 2021 and enforcement of these bans started on 1 July 2022 for all items other than cups, which starts on 1 October 2022.

The Stage 1 regulations were developed in consultation with businesses and the Single-Use Plastic Working Group. This working group was an expansion of the Plastic Straws Working Group which informed development of exemption provisions to ensure plastic straws would remain available to people who require them to maintain their quality of life.

The Plan for Plastics aims to avoid unnecessary plastic consumption.

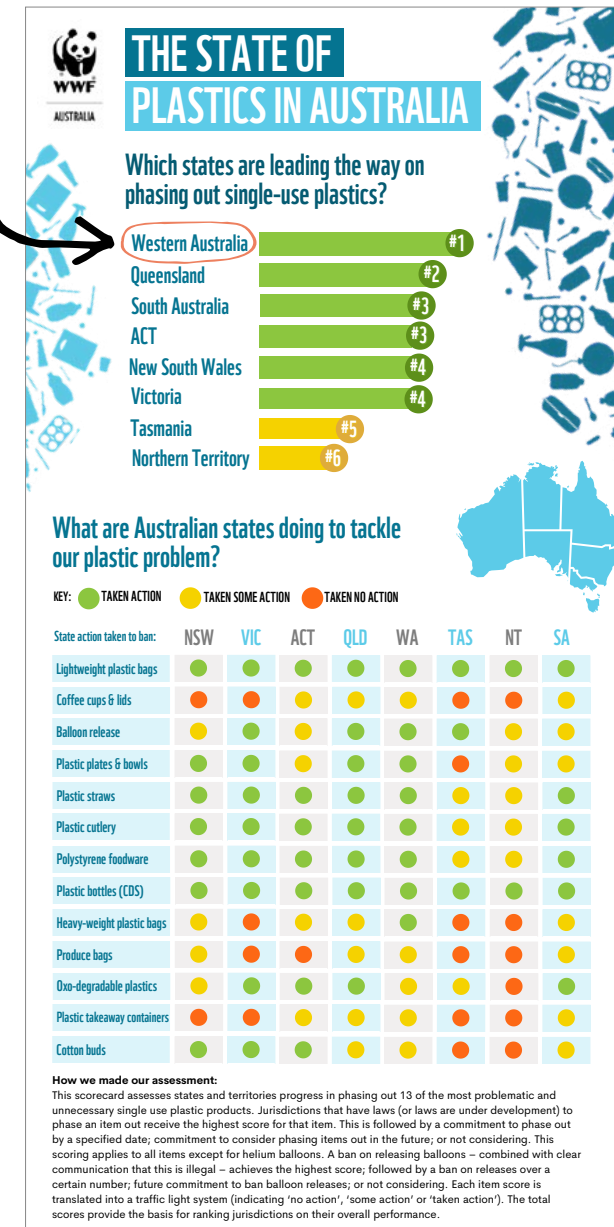


A department survey of plastics at the Canning River

The department engaged the National Retail Association to provide businesses with support and education for their transition away from banned items in Stage 1 regulations. Support for community-focused behaviour and social change saw preliminary information material launched in December 2021 and a targeted campaign in the lead-up to July 2022.

The Plastic Free Places program is a key strategy in the plan and was launched on 14 April 2022 by the Minister for Environment; Climate Change. The program, led by the Boomerang Alliance in partnership with the department, will support hospitality businesses and the events sector to

WA is the leading state!



## E-waste and material recovery

transition away from plastic and ultimately adopt alternatives with better environmental outcomes, such as reusable cups.

The department also administers the [Premier's Circular – reducing the use of disposable plastic 2021/13](#). The Circular provides instruction for State Government agencies to reduce the use of disposable plastic through improved procurement processes and support. This includes replacing commonly purchased single-use plastic items with reusable, compostable or recyclable alternatives and reviewing existing contracts to achieve improved pricing and integration of environmentally friendly options.

Recent actions have included development of an inter-agency guidance toolkit to reduce plastic purchased across the public sector. The program has also been working with the Department of Finance to amend common use agreements so suppliers provide suitable plastic-free alternatives for government purchase, such as for stationery and cleaning products.

On 1 July 2022, WWF-Australia updated its plastics scorecard and hailed WA as a plastic-free leader for the second year in a row.

The State Government has committed to ban the disposal to landfill of waste electrical or electronic equipment (e-waste) by 2024. This will help protect the environment and recover more value from e-waste.

E-waste is one of the fastest-growing waste streams worldwide. In WA, according to the [Western Australian Material Flows Analysis Report](#), 853,000 tonnes of e-waste will be generated from 2020 to 2030, with 240,000 tonnes of this recycled, based on current recovery rates.

The potential value of all Australian e-waste material in 2019 was about \$820 million, with the recovered value estimated at \$145 million (only 18 per cent of the total potential value) according to the Australian Government report [E-product stewardship in Australia](#).

E-waste also contains a wide range of potentially hazardous substances, from lead contained in cathode-ray tube glass, to mercury in fluorescent lamps.

The ban on e-waste to landfill by 2024 will be supported by policy and regulatory changes, and a new grants program for e-waste collection and recycling infrastructure.

### New Industries Fund: WasteSorted E-waste Grants

Work on recovering values from e-waste has started. Grants to support the collection of e-waste and development of innovative processes for e-waste recycling saw \$1 million invested in nine initiatives.

The grants complement the [WA Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030](#) (waste strategy) and provide support for accelerating new and emerging businesses. They were funded by the New Industries Fund and administered by JTSI in partnership with our department.

Three recipients each received \$200,000 for research projects on recovering metals and useful end products from e-waste, under a stream of grants funding for innovative processes.

A further six recipients received a total of \$400,000 for projects to increase the volume of e-waste collected in WA. Regional projects included recycling stations in the Pilbara, a permanent e-waste drop-off facility in Bunbury and eight e-waste drop-off day events. In the metropolitan area, a recycling and collection program was funded, as was the development of a portable data destruction and reuse solution, for use at collection events statewide.



## Aboriginal engagement and partnerships



Our staff out on Country with Karajarri Elders

Our department was proud to achieve 84 per cent of its commitments in our first RAP, which ran from 2019–2021. This was a result of the efforts of our RAP Working Group and other departmental staff who have a passion for reconciliation and empowerment of Aboriginal people.

The other 16 per cent of commitments centred around improving employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in our workforce. To address this consultant Christine Ross, an Arrernte-Eastern Arrernte-Kaytetye woman, has been working with us to develop our Aboriginal recruitment, employment and retention strategy.

Our efforts in this area were boosted in 2022 with three appointments. Jillian Collard, a Noongar leader with connections to the Whadjuk, Ballardong and Wilman groups, joined as Senior Manager Aboriginal Engagement and Partnerships, while Badimia-Yamatji woman Humera Rind moved internally to become Aboriginal Affairs Coordinator. Furthermore, Kamilaroi woman Nygarie Goyal moved from the role of Executive Director Strategy and Engagement to the new position of Special Advisor Aboriginal Partnerships and Engagement.



Our first RAP focused on the key elements of building ‘relationships’, creating ‘opportunities’ and fostering mutual ‘respect’ with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. One major commitment was to create our first Aboriginal Engagement Strategy, and it was launched internally on 9 December 2021.

Many of our RAP commitments are now embedded in the way we work, such as:

- the establishment and ongoing advice of the Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group
- inclusion of the State Government’s [Aboriginal Procurement Policy](#) into our processes
- supporting the Public Sector Commission Aboriginal Traineeship program
- the practice of Acknowledgement of Country at department meetings and external meetings hosted by the department
- encouraging our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to celebrate their heritage each year through NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week.

Our commitments to increase engagement and participation of Aboriginal peoples into stewardship of land and water are manifest in work such as:

**the Bindjareb Djlba  
(Peel-Harvey estuary)  
Protection Plan**

**development of water  
allocation plans in the  
Fitzroy and Derby areas**

**delivery on the water  
components of the  
Southern Yamatji native  
title settlement**

**Green Jobs  
projects and  
working collaboratively  
with Ranger groups,  
including our work in the  
La Grange groundwater  
area on water  
management and  
science**

**the Pilbara  
Environmental Offsets  
Fund management and  
delivery**

**Murujuga Rock Art  
Strategy implementation  
and partnership with the  
Murujuga Aboriginal  
Corporation**

Our second RAP, which is being launched in the second half of 2022, will build on our four-year reconciliation journey. This will focus on the key principles of the Uluru Statement – race relations, historical acceptance, institutional integrity, equality and equity – to strengthen partnerships, collaboration and understanding, and empower our directorates to deliver on our commitments.



## Yamatji settlement

We are committed to including Aboriginal people in water policy and water management processes, thereby protecting Indigenous cultural, social and economic values, and strengthening opportunities.

In an historic first, the 2020 [Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement](#) (ILUA) provides members of the Yamatji Nation with access to and rights to trade the use of 25.8 GL of groundwater under the Yamatji Strategic Aboriginal Water Reserve, across a range of aquifers in the Arrowsmith groundwater area 200 km north of Perth.

In November 2021 the Minister for Water announced the first lease agreement for access to water from the Yamatji Strategic Aboriginal Water Reserve had been executed between Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation (YSRC) and Perpetual Resources Limited.

The agreement provides Perpetual Resources Limited access to a 560,000 kilolitres per annum water allocation from the Yamatji Strategic Aboriginal Water Reserve to support its proposed Beharra silica sands project near Dongara.

The landmark lease agreement creates an opportunity for the YSRC to generate economic revenue from the reserve and will support the

implementation of its strategic plan and water business through Yamatji Enterprises Limited. Perpetual Resources Limited's Beharra project will require environmental approvals before it starts.

This agreement is an important step for Yamatji people as it represents the first water lease in the Yamatji Strategic Aboriginal Water Reserve. The Yamatji Nation is also receiving \$2 million per year for 10 years, to help develop water resources under the reserve for use or trade.

The department has project agreements in place for the delivery and management of the below water projects, totalling \$2.54 million

over nine years, with two ILUA implementation support staff. A Yamatji water monitoring trainee started employment in March 2022, hosted by the department at our Geraldton regional office. We have also directly employed a part-time program manager and Aboriginal liaison officer to support the department-coordinated projects.

The YSRC recently formalised cultural committees for the Traditional Owner groups in the settlement area. It is anticipated that these committees will be in a position to engage with us in the near future to start negotiations on delivery of activities associated with the Aboriginal Water Sites Restoration Project.

### ► Two key projects

The department is involved in the coordination and delivery of two key projects as an outcome of the ILUA:



#### Water Monitoring Training Project

This aims to provide an opportunity for Yamatji Nation Traditional Owners to develop accredited monitoring skills and deliver monitoring services to the department, other government agencies and the private sector. A total of \$455,000 of funding is allocated to this project, with additional funding of \$900,000 to employ qualified Yamatji water monitors in service contracts with the department for a period of up to seven years starting from year three of the ILUA.



#### Aboriginal Water Sites Restoration Project

The department is working with the Yamatji Nation people to identify water sites of cultural significance and to develop plans to protect and restore these sites for ongoing cultural benefit. Project delivery details are to be developed through a working group, established with the Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation and other key stakeholders, with \$311,840 of funding for operational activities over five years.



## Green Jobs

Green Jobs is a flagship program as part of the WA Recovery Plan to support the state's economic recovery from COVID-19.

The [Green Jobs Plan](#) is a \$60.3 million commitment to create jobs in revegetation and conservation. It uses funds from the native vegetation clearing permit offsets fund to undertake on-ground works in areas where clearing has previously occurred. The on-ground works are designed to maximise opportunities for people who face barriers to employment, including youth, Aboriginal people, residents in regional areas and people with disability.

There is a focus on skills development across projects. This includes safe work practices, plant identification, seed collection, drying and cleaning, brush mulching, horticultural practices, propagation, retail nursery operations, installation of nesting boxes, fire training and trade tickets in chainsaw use and tractor driving.

The projects have a strong emphasis on incorporating local Aboriginal knowledge into the process and supporting Aboriginal communities in maintaining connection to Country. The initiative also forms effective Aboriginal on-ground partnerships, with TAFEs and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) delivering training and supporting attainment of qualifications for the Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management, ongoing studies and continued employment for participants.

Seed collection for propagation and revegetation is central to the success of these projects. During the year 153 kg of seed was collected across seven projects and 60 hectares (ha) of land was revegetated across two projects.

### ► Supporting Aboriginal employment across the regions

More than 90 people have been employed and received training in projects delivered throughout WA.

#### Wheatbelt

The Noongar Boodjar Ranger team has been able to purchase equipment needed to provide a commercial seed collection and propagation service to the market, and contribute to state native vegetation restoration goals.

#### Perth NRM

A total of 60 kg of native seed suitable for Carnaby's cockatoo habitat was collected with the assistance of 43 participants who were recruited, employed and given industry experience. Some 67 people have been provided short-term employment and/or partially funded employment in the environmental sector, and 40 per cent of the recruited participants gained ongoing employment beyond the life of the project.

#### Peel-Harvey

The department worked with the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council to engage with local Aboriginal service providers. This has resulted in 45 per cent of participants now engaged in ongoing education and/or employment. This work has been highlighted by enthusiasm and commitment by local business, private landholders and agencies to provide sites for seed collection. The knowledge of local Bindjareb Elders has been significant in helping identify sensitive sites in the work areas and appropriate work protocols.

#### South West

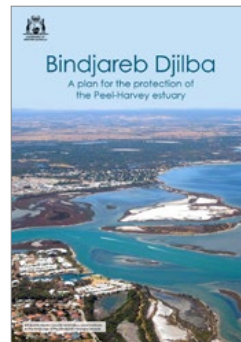
Five Wadandi Aboriginal people have been trained at the Leschenault Community Nursery in propagation and maintenance of native plants, as well as the management of orders, quality control, retail nursery operations, general nursery maintenance and industry-specific health and safety awareness. Two of the participants have now become permanent staff and other participants continue to work as volunteers.

#### South Coast

Work with Mount Barker Rangers included seed collection, tree planting and fire training in the Monjebup area, east of the Stirling Range National Park.



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



The [Bindjareb Djilba Protection Plan](#) is a whole-of-government plan to protect the Peel-Harvey estuary and its internationally recognised values. The plan collates actions and asks for many groups to work together to 2030 to improve the estuary's water quality. The

actions focus on reducing nutrients from catchment sources such as agriculture and minimising future nutrient enrichment through more effective land-use planning.

Implementation of the protection plan is a State Government election commitment and is supported by \$5 million in funding over four years. This has allowed the department to expand Healthy Estuaries WA projects and its partnerships with Bindjareb Noongar Traditional Owners, DPIRD, and the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council in fertiliser management, riverbank revegetation and related actions to reduce nutrients and restore waterway health.

A major milestone this year was our establishment of a cross-agency Policy and Planning Coordinating Committee chaired by the Member for Mandurah, Hon David Templeman MLA, and Member for Dawesville, Lisa Munday MLA. This brings together government agencies and partners to share development information, collaborate and coordinate work across the complex regulatory, policy and planning reform actions that are required to safeguard the future health of the estuary.

The Policy and Planning Coordinating Committee is supported by an Aboriginal-led yarning circle (Bindjareb Djilba Kaadadjan Bidi) to voice Bindjareb perspectives and work towards a genuine partnership in the management of the estuary. The aspiration is that custodial responsibilities, and spiritual and cultural knowledge is preserved, and Noongar values are considered in planning decisions.

The protection plan was launched in 2020 and was developed with key stakeholders. It builds on the extensive research and work carried out over the past two decades in managing the estuary as part of the Water Quality Improvement Plan.

Above: The Aboriginal-led yarning circle (Bindjareb Djilba Kaadadjan Bidi)

Below: The Bindjareb Djilba Protection Plan committee

## Murujuga rock art

The [Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program](#) reached an important milestone with publication in April 2022 of the [Monitoring studies data collection and analysis plan](#). Development of the plan was undertaken with significant stakeholder engagement and a comprehensive peer review by national and international experts.



Minister Reece Whitby (back row second left) and (back row from third right) MAC Chief Executive Officer Peter Jeffries, Member for the Pilbara Kevin Michel MLA and Director General Michelle Andrews with MAC staff at the first monitoring station

Murujuga comprises the Burrup Peninsula and surrounding islands 25 km west of Karratha, and is home to one of the largest and most diverse collections of rock art in the world. The petroglyphs are of immense cultural and spiritual significance to Aboriginal people, and are of state, national and international importance.

The Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) and the department have worked together to finalise the new monitoring studies plan. It details the scope of the scientific studies and monitoring required to understand any potential changes to the rock art.

The plan was reviewed by the Murujuga Circle of Elders to ensure sites were culturally appropriate. MAC Rangers are working alongside scientists on Country to undertake monitoring. This will help MAC transition to a central role in managing the Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program and support local jobs for Aboriginal people.

The monitoring program covers an area of more than 50,000 ha, including islands of the Dampier Archipelago. It is funded by industry operating on Murujuga – Rio Tinto, Woodside Energy and Yara Pilbara – through a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Government.



Curtin University scientists engage with Aboriginal Elders as they select rock art to monitor



## COVID-19 response



The department started 2021–22 with a campaign to increase staff vaccination rates aligned with the State Government's [Roll Up for WA](#) campaign. The COVID-19 Incident Management Team was also reconvened in October 2021 to develop

an implementation plan in response to the State Government's COVID-19 mandatory vaccination policy.

The policy primarily impacted staff who conduct functions at workplaces or sites where access is restricted to vaccinated people under the Public Health Act.

As part of this work the department asked staff to voluntarily provide vaccination status information to support workforce planning. We created secure systems for verification of evidence of vaccination status for roles required to be vaccinated under the government mandate.

Through the second half of 2021–22 the department had a consistent fully vaccinated rate of more than 90 per cent and was fully compliant with Public Health Act Directions.

### COVID-19 Business Continuity Plan

The department developed a COVID-19 Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in early 2022 in preparation for the State Government's Safe Transition Plan.

It ensured risks to our workforce were identified, mitigated and managed, so we could continue to serve the WA community, and set out how we would respond to escalating levels of community transmission, and any resultant risk to our workforce and service delivery.

Our four response levels were informed by guidance from the Public Sector Commission and independent of the State Government's levels of public health and social measures. Decisions to enact changes in response levels were informed by ongoing risk assessments and government advice, and made by the Crisis Management Team with guidance from the Incident Controller, in line with the BCP governance arrangements.

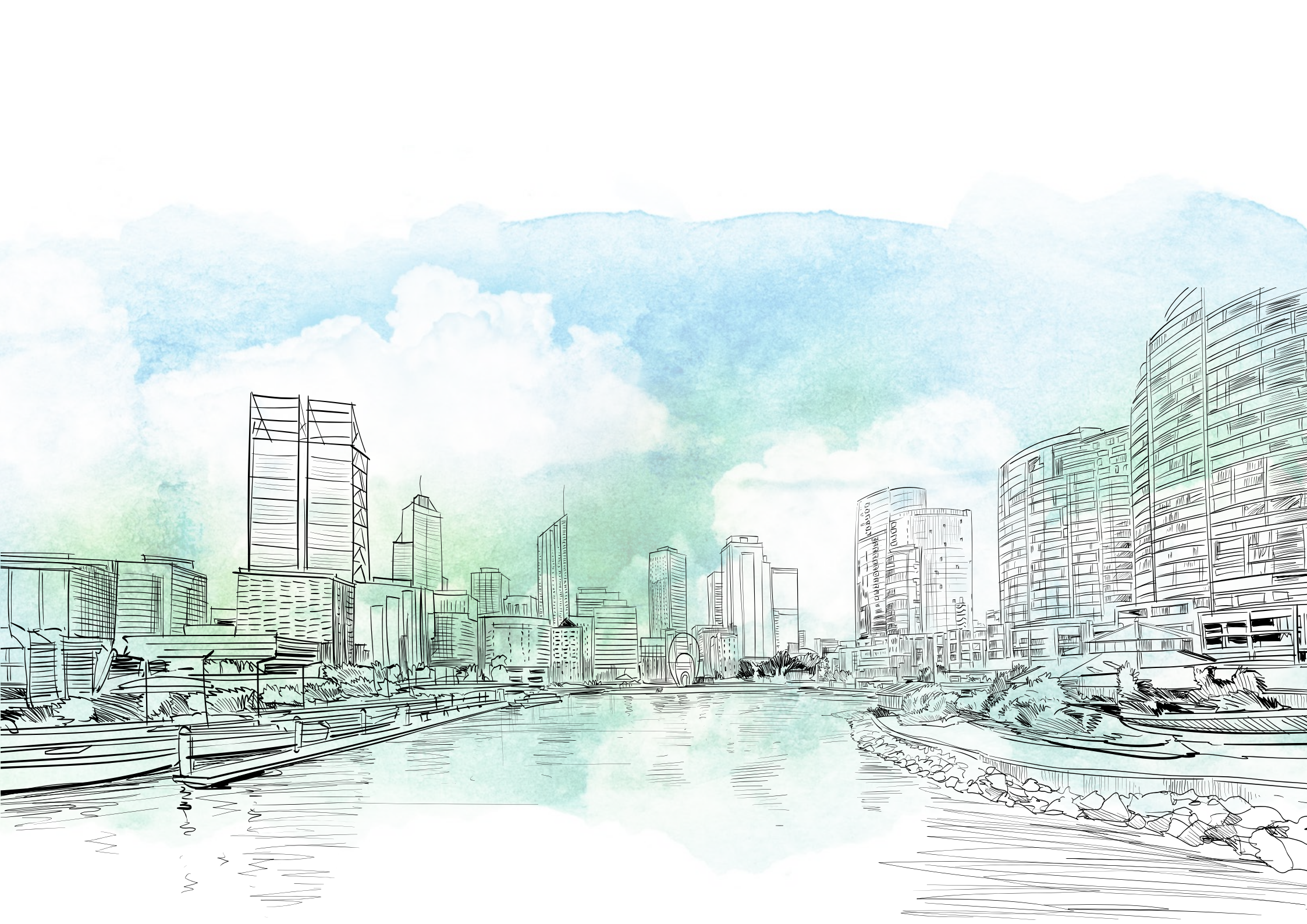


### Managing COVID-19 cases in the workplace

The department put in place a response framework for managing confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in our workplaces.

These processes were rolled out in workshops across the department and supported by documents providing guidance on how to respond to COVID-19 contact or confirmed cases.

Central to our successful management of COVID-19 cases and business continuity at the department was the development of the 'Away from the workplace app', a secure platform that helped us remain agile and adapt to changing circumstances when employees were away from work whether isolating, quarantining, or caring for others because of COVID-19. The app allowed the department to monitor and support our people in various situations, and to monitor workforce impacts in real time.





# Appendices

## Appendix A: Legislation

### Legislation administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2022

- *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 Authority 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* (also called *Plumbers Licensing Act 1995*) (except part 5A, which the Department of Commerce administers)
- *Waterways Conservation Act 1976*



## Regulations administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2022

- 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 (NEPMNPI) Regulations 1998
- Environmental Protection (NEPMUPM) 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 Amendment Regulations 2019
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Regulations 2019
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Amendment Regulations 2019
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Amendment Regulations 2020
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Regulations 2008
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery 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](http://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 (Commonwealth)*
- *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*
- *Long Service Leave Act 1958*
- *Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993*
- *Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)*
- *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*
- *Work Health Safety Act 2020* (from 31 March 2022)

## Appendix B: Shortened forms

Term	Definition
AA	Agricultural Area
AQMP	Perth Air Quality Management Plan
AUSMAP	Australian Microplastics Assessment Project
AWEAG	Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
C&D	Construction and demolition
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
DMIRS	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
DPLH	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
FOGO	Food organics and garden organics
FOI	Freedom of information
HHW	Household hazardous waste
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
IPWEA	Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia
JTSI	Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
KABC	Keep Australia Beautiful Council

Term	Definition
KPI	Key performance indicator
LGA	Local government authority
MAC	Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NARClIM 2.0	New South Wales and Australian Regional Climate Modelling Project
PDWSA	Public drinking water source areas
PHIC	Port Hedland Industries Council
SERS	Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategies
SGIP	State Groundwater Investigations Program
SWIS	South West Interconnected System
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RtR	Roads to Reuse
WA	Western Australia
WAPC	Western Australian Planning Commission
WHS	Work Health Safety
WIR	Water Information Reporting
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
YSRC	Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation

# Contact us



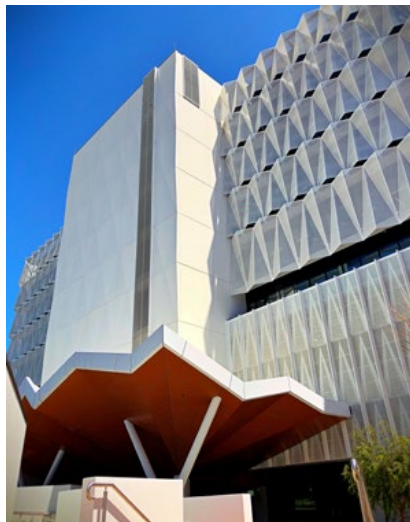
## Head office

### Prime House

8 Davidson Terrace  
Joondalup WA 6027

Locked Bag 10  
Joondalup DC WA 6919

Ph: 08 6364 7000  
Fax: 08 6364 7001  
[info@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@dwer.wa.gov.au)  
[dwer.wa.gov.au](http://dwer.wa.gov.au)



## Regional offices

### Swan Avon region

#### ► Victoria Park regional office

7 Ellam Street  
Victoria Park WA 6100

Ph: 08 6250 8000  
[ellamreception@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:ellamreception@dwer.wa.gov.au)

#### ► Swan measurement office

105 Kew Street  
Welshpool WA 6106

Phone: 08 9355 6241

### Kwinana Peel region

#### ► Kwinana Peel regional office

107 Breakwater Parade  
Mandurah WA 6210

PO Box 332  
Mandurah WA 6210

Ph: 08 9550 4222  
[peel@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:peel@dwer.wa.gov.au)

### South West region

#### ► Bunbury regional office

35–39 McCombe Road  
Bunbury WA 6230

PO Box 261  
Bunbury WA 6231  
Ph: 08 9726 4111  
[bunbury.admin@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:bunbury.admin@dwer.wa.gov.au)

#### ► Geographe Capes district office

Suite 1A/72 Duchess Street  
Busselton WA 6280

PO Box 269  
Busselton WA 6280  
Ph: 08 9781 0111  
[busselton.admin@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:busselton.admin@dwer.wa.gov.au)

#### ► Warren Blackwood district office

c/o Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions  
Brain Street  
Manjimup WA 6258

Ph: 08 9726 4111  
[bunbury.admin@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:bunbury.admin@dwer.wa.gov.au)

### Goldfields region

#### ► Kalgoorlie regional office

32 Brookman Street Kalgoorlie  
WA 6430

Locked Bag 10  
Joondalup DC WA 6919  
Ph: 08 9000 1806  
[info@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@dwer.wa.gov.au)

### Mid West Gascoyne region

#### ► Geraldton regional office

20 Gregory Street  
Geraldton WA 6530

PO Box 73  
Geraldton WA 6531

Ph: 08 9965 7400  
[midwestgascoyne@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:midwestgascoyne@dwer.wa.gov.au)

#### ► Carnarvon regional office

211 Robinson Street  
Carnarvon WA 6701

PO Box 81  
Carnarvon WA 6701

Ph: 08 9941 6100  
[midwestgascoyne@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:midwestgascoyne@dwer.wa.gov.au)



## North West region

### ► Broome regional office

111 Herbert Street  
Broome WA 6725

PO Box 65  
Broome, WA 6725

Ph: 08 9157 9810  
[info@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@dwer.wa.gov.au)

### ► Karratha regional office

The Quarter  
Level 2, 25 Sharpe Avenue  
Karratha WA 6714

Locked Bag 10  
Joondalup DC WA 6919

Ph: 08 9144 0200  
[northwest@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:northwest@dwer.wa.gov.au)

### ► Kununurra regional office

27 Victoria Highway  
Kununurra WA 6743

PO Box 625  
Kununurra WA 6743

Ph: 08 9166 4100  
[kunadmin@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:kunadmin@dwer.wa.gov.au)

## South Coast region

### ► Esperance regional office

92 Dempster Street  
Esperance WA 6450

PO Box 234  
Esperance WA 6450

[info@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@dwer.wa.gov.au)

### ► Albany regional office

5 Bevan Street  
Albany WA 6331

PO Box 525  
Albany WA 6331

Ph: 08 9841 0100  
[southcoast@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:southcoast@dwer.wa.gov.au)

# Feedback form

Your feedback on our 2021–22 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
------------	------------	----------	-----	------------

- Did you find the design and presentation functional and effective?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
------------	------------	----------	-----	------------

- Was the report clear, concise and easy to read?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
------------	------------	----------	-----	------------

- Did you find the structural format of the report simple and logical?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
------------	------------	----------	-----	------------

Please return completed feedback forms to:

**Corporate Communications**

Email: [dwer.publishing@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:dwer.publishing@dwer.wa.gov.au)

or

Mail to:

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation  
Locked Bag 10, Joondalup DC WA 6919



