



Report on Operations



Makuru

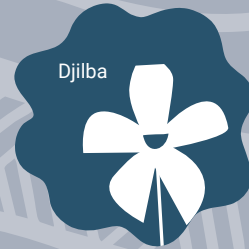
July 2023

Green light to WA's first green hydrogen facility given after comprehensive assessments were completed by our Dangerous Goods officers.



Meekatharra and Marble Bar mining registrar offices moved to Geraldton.

Information sessions held and Position Paper 14 *Marking out the land a precondition of certain tenement applications* released for open consultation.



Djilba

August–September 2023

Mining Industry Summit: Driving Respect held – 1 August 2023, see [page 23](#).



The Minister for Energy signed funding agreement with Australian Government for up to \$3 billion through concessional loans and equity investments to support new builds and major upgrades to transmission infrastructure in major electricity grids.



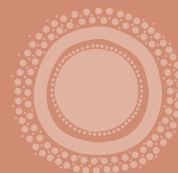
Kambarang

October–November 2023

Exploration Incentive Scheme round 28 grant winners announced by the then Minister for Mines and Petroleum the Hon. Bill Johnston MLA to the value of \$6 million to 36 applicants.

GSWA 25th Open Day held: Future focused geoscience.

Mining Rehabilitation Fund [annual report](#) released.



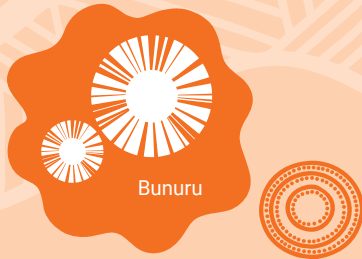
Birak

December 2023–January 2024

The department's name changed to become the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety.

The 'MyACL' project received special commendation at the 2023 Institute of Public Administration Association's Achievement Awards for Best Practices in Corporate Social Values.

WA Rent Relief Program announced to provide one off relief payments to help eligible tenants who are at risk of eviction because their rent is in arrears and to negotiate with their landlords to extend the tenancy.

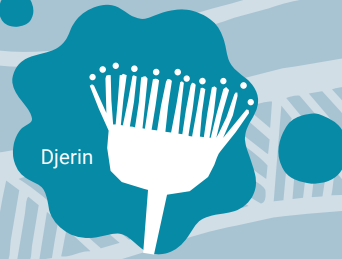


February–March 2024

The 20th Consumer Protection Awards held, celebrating individuals and groups dedicated to advancing and raising awareness for consumer rights in Western Australia.



Celebrated International Women’s Day with 47 staff taking part in an online and in-person Women in Leadership workshop designed to empower and equip female leaders with the knowledge, skills and support needed to develop their leadership capabilities.



April–May 2024

More than \$10 million in grants awarded for the Exploration Incentive Scheme round 29, Series 7 of the Energy Analysis Program and the inaugural Co-funded Geophysics Program announced by Minister for Mines and Petroleum the Hon. David Michael MLA, see [page 32](#).

BondsOnline transitioned to the State Government’s My Account program that incorporates security benefits such as passphrase capability and two step authentication, strengthening the protection of user accounts and sensitive data.



Held a strategic planning workshop for over 50 leaders across DEMIRS. Four stakeholders from key external agencies participated in a panel designed to provide our staff with constructive feedback instrumental in shaping our future priorities and approach.



June 2024

Manager Archean Geodynamics, Dr H. Smithies, received the 2024 Gibb-Maitland Medal from the Geological Society of Australia – WA Division for a lifetime of outstanding and substantial contributions to the field of geochemistry in WA.



Performance snapshot

225,085

calls managed by
our frontline customer
service teams.

3,944

Building painting, building
surveying, plumbing, electrical
and gas inspections conducted.

\$575,683

recovered in unpaid wages
and other entitlements
for workers.

251,285

transactions processed
related to tenancy bonds.
▲ 9.5% increase on last year.

65

submissions received for
the 2023, Work Health and
Safety Excellence Awards.



3,764

tenement applications
received with the majority
lodged online.

2,437

consumer products
inspected for safety
and compliance.

1,092

building disputes
finalised.

19

work, health and safety
industry awareness
events held.

691

tenement compliance
assessments undertaken.



Consumer Protection
negotiated
\$8,675,067

in redress for

3,165

WA consumers.

487,703

licences, certificates,
permits, and registrations
managed on behalf of

7

statutory authorities.



Finalised

20,739

dealings (includes transactions such
as transfers, caveats and mortgages)

affecting **33,310** tenements.

1,862

general land tenure
and planning proposals
assessed.

Performance snapshot

Feedback on our customer service

243

compliments, complaints and suggestions received.

Feedback received by DEMIRS during 2023–24

Compliments:	79
Complaints:	136
Suggestions:	28

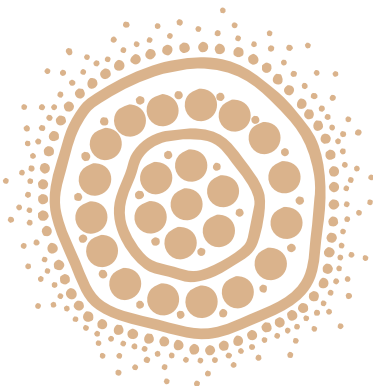
Suggestions for improving services are forwarded to the area supplying those services and responded to in a timely manner.

Financial targets

	Target \$000	Actual \$000	Variation \$000
Total cost of services (expense limit)	397,155	426,982	(29,827) (a)
Net cost of services	(223,402)	(163,117)	(60,285) (b)
Total equity	610,219	751,610	(141,391) (c)
Approved salary expense level	208,797	198,868	9,929 (d)
Approved Executive salary expense level	6,637	6,103	534

Working cash targets

	Agreed Limit \$000	Target/Actual \$000	Variation \$000
Agreed working cash limit (at Budget)	19,620	21,426	1,806
Agreed working cash limit (at Actuals)	19,620	19,536	(84)



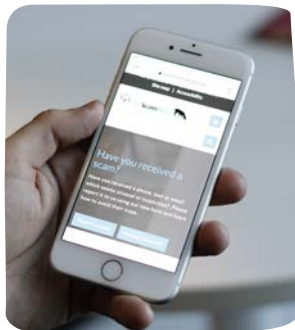
- (a) Total Cost of Services are over by \$29.827 million due to higher labour hire rates and reliance on contractors and consultants. Resources Advice and Regulation Services increased due to approved increases for the Abandoned Mines Program, including Ellendale mine and an expanded program of works on other abandoned legacy sites. In addition to these, the department has also commenced initiatives around Short-Term Rental Agreements and the Vacant Property Rental Incentive schemes in response to the constricted rental market.
- (b) Net Cost of Services under by \$42.76 million as a result of continued increased collections for the Mines Safety and Mining Rehabilitation Levies as a result of continued high levels of activity within the resource sector.
- (c) Total equity is higher by \$141.391 million as a result of continued increased revenue collections over a number of years, specifically from the Mines Safety and Inspection Levy and Mining Rehabilitation Fund. As a result of these increased revenue collections, this has seen the accumulated surplus for the department remain considerably higher than expected, which has seen significant increase in total equity.
- (d) Salary expenses are under target by \$9.929m as a result of a constricted employment market, seeing increased competition for the attraction and retention of staffing.

Emerging trends

Staying ahead of scammers

Western Australia experienced a record year for cybercrime in 2023, with the emergence of Facebook as the number one channel for how people were being targeted and falling victim to scams.

Each year the department releases a WA ScamNet Year in Review report, outlining the number of reports, victims and financial losses to scams being reported by the WA community. The data for 2023–24 showed that Facebook scams were up 15.7 per cent from the previous year, with scams including fake prizes and giveaways, phoney job offers, bogus shopping advertisements and hacked accounts promoting cryptocurrency schemes. The data also showed that WA buyers and sellers on classified sites and online marketplaces accounted for the highest number of victims across all scam types, with Facebook Marketplace used by perpetrators for their scams resulting in 373 victims and \$513,799 in losses for this financial year. The main way people lost money on this platform was through fake product and rental property listings.



Vacant land scam initiative

In December 2023, the department encountered four distinct instances of property scams, wherein the perpetrators falsely claimed ownership of vacant land in WA and enlisted real estate and settlement agents to facilitate the sale of the property.

The department investigated and subsequently presented its findings at a meeting, convened by the Commissioner for Consumer Protection, with relevant stakeholders including the Australian Institute of Conveyancers WA, Real Estate Institute of Western Australia, WA Police Force and Landgate. The outcome of the meeting was a mutual agreement among all parties to collaborate in identifying vulnerabilities within the land sale process that scammers exploit, and to propose effective measures to combat such activities.

Harmonised labour hire regulation

The department is working with the Australian Government and other states and territories to establish a nationally harmonised labour hire regulation framework with State based legislation and a single national regulator. Regulating labour hire providers reduces the risk of worker exploitation and unscrupulous business practices in the labour hire industry.

Number one scam for 2023 by

amount lost:
**investment
scams**

Number one scam for 2023 by

**number of
victims:**
**classified
scams**

Supporting Western Australia through housing, tenancy and accommodation reforms

The department has contributed to State Government strategies to help increase housing stock, regulate safer buildings, and provide financial relief to the WA community to address cost of living pressures.

WA Rent Relief Program expects to benefit almost **4,500** households.

Reforms to the building industry

Building fires are a major risk to property, as well as the lives and health of building occupants. Following on from the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire in London which resulted in 72 fatalities, governments across Australia conducted audits of the use of combustible cladding in high rise buildings. In 2018, the national report *Building Confidence: Improving the Effectiveness of Compliance and Enforcement Systems for the Building and Construction Industry Across Australia* made 22 principle based recommendations.

The first stage of recommendations implemented saw the introduction of the registration for building engineers, including fire safety building engineers. Registration is being phased in between July 2024 and July 2027. The registration scheme will improve the level of compliance with legislated building standards and is the first in a broader range of building industry reforms the State Government has committed to implementing.

The second stage will see the introduction of a suite of building control reforms detailed in the *Building Better: Reforms to WA's Building Regulatory Framework – Decision Regulatory Impact Statement* announced by Minister Ellery in December 2023.

This will see inspections to be carried out at key stages during the construction of apartments and most non-residential buildings. These inspections will allow building surveyors and engineers to verify that buildings, including their fire systems, have been constructed as per their approved designs.

Volume of building complaints

The department administers a dispute resolution process that provides a way for consumers and builders in WA to resolve disputes relating to the carrying out of regulated building services (workmanship issues) and home building work contracts (contractual issues). This process also covers the conduct of registered builders. Since December 2020, there has been a steady increase in the number of building complaints which is consistent with the increase in building activity and the challenges posed by labour and materials shortages.

WA Rent Relief Program

The WA Rent Relief Program coordinated between the State Government, Anglicare WA and Vinnies WA, is part of government reforms to increase housing supply and support private tenants. The distribution of rent relief funds began at the end of 2023 and will continue through to 2025.

Short-term rental accommodation

The *Short-Term Rental Accommodation Act 2024* (STRA) passed Parliament in April 2024. The Act implements a key recommendation made by the Economics and Industry Standing Committee to establish a registration scheme for residential premises used to provide short-term rental accommodation.

The department developed a STRA register with registrations to commence from 1 July 2024, that will provide state and local governments with data on premises used to supply short-term rental accommodation. It will also assist local governments in enforcing their regulatory requirements that apply. After a six month transition period, registration will become mandatory from 1 January 2025.

During 2023–24, the department also initiated the STRA Incentive Scheme which offers a \$10,000 payment to property owners who convert their premises from short-term accommodation into long-term rentals for at least 12 months. The aim of the scheme was to provide more long-term accommodation in the context of historical low rental vacancy rates across WA. The scheme was extended beyond the initial six month pilot to November 2024.

Leading grant management software (Good Grants) was introduced to facilitate an online application process including digital identification verification. In 2023–24 the scheme received 336 applications and paid 241 grants, placing an additional 241 properties into the long-term rental market.



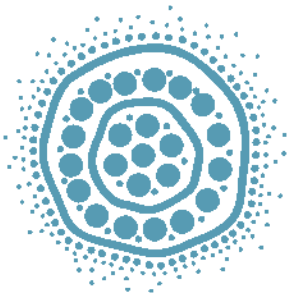
Engineered stone

The manufacture, supply, processing and installation of engineered stone benchtops, panels and slabs will be banned across Australia from 1 July 2024.

The decision follows extensive consultation and collaboration with work health and safety Ministers across most Australian jurisdictions. A transitional period of six months will apply for businesses and consumers who have a pre-2024 contract in place to obtain engineered stone products. Engineered stone benchtops already installed in homes do not pose a health hazard, as the finished product does not release dust. However, those working with already installed engineered stone, for example to remove it, need to notify WorkSafe.

The department developed an efficient notification system for WA businesses required to notify of minor works or removal of legacy engineered stone. Updates were made to the work health and safety regulations specifically for the engineered stone prohibition and the further regulation of work involving crystalline silica substances. Promotion and announcement activities to educate and advise workers, persons conducting a business or undertaking, industry participants and peak bodies are ongoing.

Driving improvements in the workplace management of hazardous dusts and protecting workers from harm is a priority focus for WorkSafe and forms part of *WorkSafe: The way forward strategy 2023–2026*. Refer to [page 34](#).



Mining Industry Summit

Almost 1,200 delegates from across the WA mining sector who could contribute to driving and influencing lasting cultural change attended the Mining Industry Summit: Driving Respect held on 1 August 2023.

The event program featured keynote speakers, panel discussions, and case studies from respected experts across government, industry, and academia.

The summit included the-then Minister for Industrial Relations the Hon. Bill Johnston MLA, and Minister for Women's Interests, the Hon. Sue Ellery MLC officially opened the summit. Premier Roger Cook MLA addressed the summit, emphasising the government's commitment to support key programs and working with industry to create workplace cultures free from violence, harassment and discrimination. Presentations and panel sessions were held, including:

- Preliminary findings from the Mental Awareness, Respect and Safety (MARS) Program Landmark Study involving 3,200 workers from 226 companies.
- A 'Fireside Chat' that focussed on how organisations were helping to drive cultural change in the mining industry and what more could be done to create a best practice culture.
- Lightning talks – five minute snapshots showcasing best practice examples of implemented systems and programs that have driven change.
- Updates comparing the 2023 'How Tough Are We Now?' regional roadshow workshops from the 2010 workshops.

Six panel sessions rounded out the morning before a presentation from Kate Jenkins AO, former Sex Discrimination Commissioner, providing a broad context on her work delivering the landmark *Respect@Work* report, the evolving workplace culture towards women, and the challenges ahead.

The summit was an important opportunity to connect with leaders at all levels continuing to build respectful workplaces and drive positive change. Feedback from the event was widely positive, while recognising the mining industry needs to improve to address the significant issues of sexual harassment in the workplace.



Gnalla Mia (Noongar for 'Our Place')

Completed in May 2024, Gnalla Mia is an activity-based working (ABW) environment study space designed with three aims to:

- test work settings;
- trial technology; and
- prepare people for change.

DEMIRS is working with the Department of Finance to secure a new building that will meet the current and future needs of our metropolitan staff.

To ensure a successful relocation to our new building, the department is working to identify some key aspects for the future environment, including the best work settings for an ABW fit-out, what technology will best support new ways of working and how to prepare people for change.

Consultation is at the heart of this major project with the department commissioning Gnalla Mia, an ABW fit-out in Mineral House to assist staff in the transition to the new working environment.

People will move from our five metropolitan office locations for temporary opportunities to develop and strengthen their skills to work in an ABW environment, while providing direct feedback to the furniture and technology design. Residencies in Gnalla Mia will run for four to six months at a time, bringing together various business areas, and will continue until the metropolitan office relocation.

Universal access design is at the forefront of this fit-out. Consultation with access and interior design experts has developed an inclusive workplace. Insight from staff will be used in the future design of the new office. Gnalla Mia includes sit to stand desks, assist open doors (via button and hand wave), colour contrast throughout, custom locker systems and tactile clear braille.

Artist Mel Spillman (Woods) was commissioned to provide artwork and consultancy to the project. The artwork has been interwoven into the workplace design and the naming of the place and dual naming of zones was based on consultation with the artist as well as input from the department's Gnalla Mila, Gnalla Wangkiny committee and Reconciliation Action Plan working group.



 "This change management program will help our staff adapt to our new activity-based working environment, ensuring they feel supported throughout the move to our new metro office location."

Richard Sellers, Director General

Enhancing our customer service

The department serves Western Australia by supporting and protecting the community, industry, workers and consumers. One way DEMIRS does this is by delivering front line customer services to our stakeholders and the WA community.

Upgrade of DEMIRS ticketing system

Continuing to support and enhance a positive customer experience, the department upgraded the customer counter ticketing system in December 2023, improving both staff and customer experiences at the Cannington site. The new system is more reliable, responsive, and gives greater control over queue options, leading to more meaningful data insights. Implementation helps to pave the way for modern metropolitan counter services as part of our strategic accommodation plan.

Expansion of customer experience technology

We expanded our Cloud CX telephony platform to other areas within the Service Delivery and Consumer Protection Divisions between November 2023 and March 2024. Along with enriching the user experience, having one platform with central administration support allows for growth in understanding customer experience technology requirements and capability. This understanding will strengthen the future selection of strategic customer experience technology partners as we continue modernising our service delivery.

Expansion of regional licensing hub

The department's Regional Licensing Hub in Collie expanded to 18 positions in October 2023. This expansion was announced by the State Government in June 2023 and followed the successful establishment of the Hub in August 2020 as part of the Collie Industry Attraction and Development Fund.

Occupational licensing services

DEMIRS administers over 100 diverse and complex occupational licence types. Online lodgement of new applications continued to be a success in 2023–24, proving a popular alternative to hardcopy paper and in-person applications. The roll out of the digital lodgement option that supports new applicants to apply and pay securely online was completed this year, with 29 per cent of applications for new licences now being lodged electronically. The department is now working to develop an online option for existing industry members to be able to lodge renewal applications electronically.

Customer service charter

The department launched a DEMIRS Customer Service Charter in October 2023, a first since the Machinery of Government changes in 2017. The Customer Service Charter is derived from our values and best practices in the public and private sector, guiding staff in engagement with customers and each other.

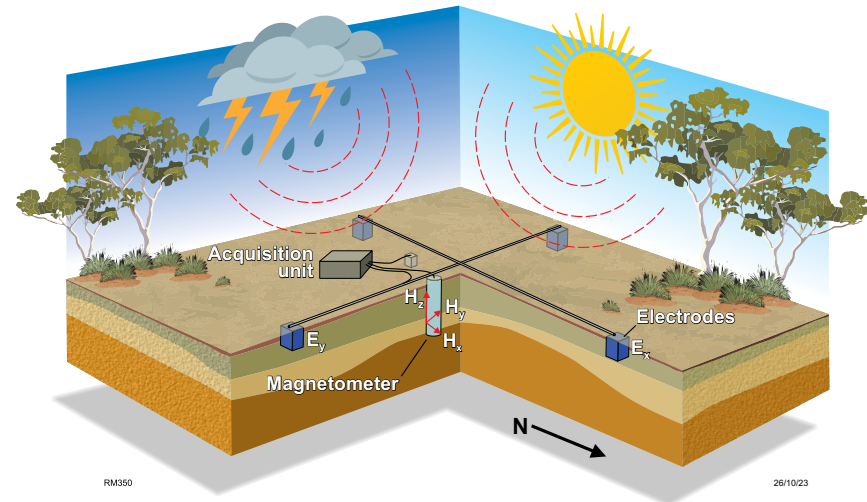
Magnetotelluric surveys

A method for measuring magnetic and electric waves that pass through the Earth is called magnetotellurics (MT). Specifically, MT methods measure the electric and magnetic fields associated with the interaction of the Earth's magnetic field with the Sun's solar activity.

The department commenced a new decade long project to collect MT data from across the state called WA-MT. The WA-MT project will contribute to a world leading dataset and provide pre-competitive data for geological interpretation of the sub-surface by the resource sector, pastoralists and land use policy decision makers. This new MT data will also be used to understand the Earth's conductivity linked to the ancient architecture of the Earth's lithosphere¹.

Understanding the conductivity of the state's land mass will impact future mineral exploration. Deep conductive features in the Earth can be used as proxies for mineral prospectivity. For example, fault pathways that contain minable minerals are imaged as conductors in 3D models created from MT data. With knowledge of the Earth's conductivity, mineral explorers can make informed decisions on procuring or retaining tenements prospective for mineral resources.

The dataset will enable better land use planning of electrical infrastructure, such as those used by renewable energy. Periods of intense solar activity can impact transformers and power transmission lines. By measuring the electromagnetic currents from solar activity, the impact of these currents to electrical infrastructure can be understood. While understanding these voltage variations from MT data is a new field of research, some studies have suggested that deep regions of conductivity are often linked to near surface conductors and can pose a risk to surface electrical infrastructure. It is anticipated that the new WA-MT dataset may be able to inform plans and standards for new electrical infrastructure sites in the future.



¹ The rigid outer part of the earth, consisting of the crust and upper mantle.



To obtain a comprehensive view of WA the aim is to collect data at MT stations located on a 40 km by 40 km spaced grid pattern. MT specialists will undertake field work, initial data quality assurance/ quality control and data processing. The department's project team will model and interpret the data in conjunction with the WA Array passive seismic project. To be cost effective and efficient WA-MT will use the same station locations as the WA Array project where land access agreements have been established and the use of helicopters can be shared.

This year's progress includes:

- the procuring of services to undertake the first phase of MT field acquisition and data processing work;
- developing in-house computing systems for analysing MT data;
- undertaking a review and collation of already available MT data across the state; and
- completing the initial phase of data collection in the Esperance and Eastern Goldfields regions.

So far data from 171 sites have been collected as part of this project and other MT programs such as those conducted by the University of Western Australia, University of Adelaide, and the national AusLAMP² program. Future work will focus on continued collection of MT data from approximately 100 to 160 sites per year and the creation of 3D conductivity models of the WA lithosphere.

The data collected will be made publicly available to explorers, pastoralists, and land use policy decision makers, and will encourage further investment from mineral explorers. With the findings to lead to further geophysical surveys and exploration drilling.

2 The Australian Lithospheric Architecture Magnetotelluric Project.



Our work as a regulator

Online licence search

The department has improved the existing occupational licence search available via the ServiceWA application which allows the public to easily verify the status of occupational licences, registrations, permits, certificates, approvals, and other such authorisations (collectively referred to as licences) administered by the following licensing authorities:

- Building Commissioner.
- Building Services Board.
- Commissioner for Consumer Protection.
- Director of Energy Safety.
- Electrical Licensing Board.
- Plumbers Licensing Board.
- WorkSafe Commissioner.

The new online service is easier to use and will allow new licences to be easily added to the service over time.

New compliance tool: iComply

DEMIRS staff are seeing data differently thanks to a pioneering location intelligence project, which was shortlisted for two accolades at the 2023 Institute of Public Administration Australia Achievement Awards – Best Practice in Innovation and Best Practice in Digital Transformation.

Officially launched on 28 September 2023, iComply is a geospatial application that provides increased capability to analyse data held within the department’s Compliance Management System to assist with inspection and investigation activities and allows for restricted data sharing. The application seamlessly integrates geolocated data sourced from existing databases with relevant external spatial datasets. This new tailored mapping system can be used to view data by location, create maps and discover insights. With multiple search methods, themes for different business areas, advanced query, as well as filters, heatmaps and reporting functions, iComply will enhance staff’s preknowledge prior to attending onsite when investigating incidents.

iComply draws on data from over 40 government departments through the State Government Shared Location Information Platform. Data is further enhanced by high resolution imaging via MetroMaps, with the added capability for historic imaging, providing the ability to review imaging that was relevant at a particular time.



“We have better regulatory oversight through data intelligence, increased efficiency in resource allocation and visual alternatives for planning and reporting activities.”

Chief Electrical Inspector Compliance

LP gas cylinder adaptor ban

Following a serious gas related incident, the Director of Energy Safety issued a prohibition order that prohibits the sale, hire and use of liquefied petroleum gas cylinder adaptors that took effect in December 2023. These adaptors override the improved safety feature of the newer cylinder valves and are considered a hazard due to the risk of gas leakage and inadvertent separation. WA’s prohibition has triggered other states to consider similar prohibitions.

Our work as a regulator

Ammonium Nitrate Emulsion incident response

Starting in October 2022, the department investigated an incident where a tanker trailer exploded in the eastern Goldfields region after ammonium nitrate emulsion (ANE) from the tanker detonated.

The blast happened on the Great Central Road approximately 440 kilometres northeast of Kalgoorlie after a tyre on the double road train caught fire and caused the tanker shell to melt. ANE spilled from the tanker and detonated two hours later after prolonged heating by the fire.

The incident investigation by DEMIRS found incidents of this type are rare, and that improvements are required to better prevent and respond to tyre fires on vehicles transporting ANE and similar products. The department's report on the incident contained 16 recommendations for industry.

The State Government directed the department to introduce legislative amendments and develop a new code of practice, which was released for public consultation, to ensure the risk of such incidents is minimal. For more detail on the [investigation](#) and [animated video](#) created, refer to the department's website.

Worst hazards in WA workplaces

Published in May 2024, the *Worst hazards in Western Australian workplaces 2012–13 to 2021–22* report analysed lost time due to workplace injuries and fatalities. Recent statistics show WA workers have a much lower chance of being fatally injured at work in 2024 than they did 34 years ago, when robust workplace safety and health legislation first came into effect. In WA, a worker's risk of being fatally injured fell by 83 per cent between 1988–89 and 2022–23.

A steady increase in awareness of workplace health and safety over recent decades, along with improved laws, lots of great work from employers, workers, health and safety representatives, unions and industry bodies; along with an improved understanding of risks and hazards and the maturing of the health and

safety profession, have all contributed to a fall in the relative number of deaths and injuries.

In the report, manual handling was identified as the worst hazard group by total time lost from work, accounting for 41 per cent of all lost time. The worst specific workplace hazard was trips on clear ground. Women were more likely to be harmed by psychosocial hazards and handling other people, while men were more likely to be harmed by falls and vehicle crashes.



Trips on clear ground

The number one hazard
in the workplace*

Years of lost shifts:

4,300

Claims lodged:

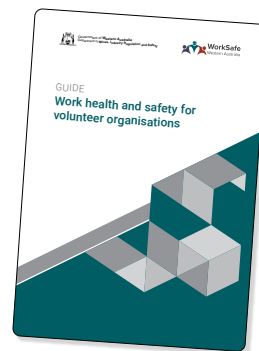
17,800

Estimated cost:

\$700 million

*Based on 2012–13 to 2021–22 figures

Our work as a policy maker



State award updating

The department worked with stakeholders to assist the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission in a significant update to the state award, the Shop and Warehouse (Wholesale and Retail) Establishments Award, that provides employment conditions for retail workers in the state industrial relations system.

Updates to the award ensure it better reflects contemporary retail trading arrangements and removed outdated and obsolete provisions to improve clarity and make it easier for employers and employees to understand and comply with its provisions. This change was part of a broader program of state award updating in which DEMIRS is working with industry stakeholders to contemporise state awards and increase award coverage to provide enhanced employment protections to employees.

The importance of volunteering

There are more than 1.5 million volunteers in Western Australia making a difference to local communities, and the ripple effect of volunteering can be vast. As part of our involvement and commitment to the WA Volunteering Strategy Action Plan 2023–2026, the department developed resources to help organisations support the work health and safety of volunteers. Information about the way work health and safety laws protect volunteers in workplaces is available on WorkSafe's volunteer organisations webpage.

NORM-II radiation management

Significant changes and advances in the management of naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM) was made during 2023–24.

The department regulates mineral sands mining, uranium exploration as well as lithium, rare earths and other critical mineral extraction and processing. The original NORM guidelines *Managing NORM In Mining and Mineral Processing* were produced in 2010 and have been embedded into mine operational procedures and adopted as a national and international example of best practice for many years. Recent changes in technology, dose effect factors and new radioactive mineral products being mined and processed resulted in some aspects of the NORM guidelines no longer being current. As a result, reviews were undertaken to update the various NORM guidelines to meet contemporary industry standards, work health and safety laws and increase competency requirements of Radiation Safety Officers.



Our work as a policy maker

Evolving the energy market

Renewable generation and energy storage investment will be required in the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) over the next decade to meet increased demand and to continue to deliver reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible electricity supply. During the year, the department conducted several Wholesale Electricity Market (WEM) evolution reviews, to help facilitate this investment. The most significant reviews were:

- Reserve capacity mechanism;
- WEM investment certainty; and
- Demand side response.

PoweringWA

The State's main electricity grid – the SWIS – needs to expand to accommodate the growth in demand for renewable energy. Upgrades will help deliver on the State's economic development and decarbonisation commitments as well as maintain system security and reliability.

PoweringWA was established to support this transition and to coordinate the delivery of new electricity infrastructure at the pace needed for economic development and decarbonisation. PoweringWA will work with Western Power, other government agencies, industry, community, and landowners to contribute to the transformation of the SWIS.

Early engagement with local stakeholders and First Nations people groups is key to ensuring that communities are part of this transition. PoweringWA will continue to engage closely with industry and communities across the SWIS to understand their needs and support them to navigate the energy transition.

Pilbara Energy Transition

The Pilbara Industry Roundtable established in 2022 has continued to progress discussions on the opportunities and challenges in decarbonising the Pilbara, acknowledging the multiple owners of existing energy infrastructure in the region.

The work and consensus generated by the Roundtable informed a Pilbara Energy Transition Plan and helped secure agreement for concessional financing from the Commonwealth's Rewiring the Nation program to support transmission investments in the Pilbara and South West regions of the State.

The department is currently scoping, priority common use transmission projects to support the connection of wind and solar resources through to the large users in the Pilbara. The Pilbara Energy Transition Traditional Owner Participation Support Fund is a pilot program established in response to feedback that State Government support was needed to enable Prescribed Body Corporate's to participate in the Pilbara energy transition on a more equal footing.

Our work as a service provider

Expanding the exploration incentive scheme funding

The Exploration Incentive Scheme (EIS) managed by the Geological Survey of Western Australia (GSWA) has responded to the State Government's Battery and Critical Mineral Strategy and focus of the net zero emissions target by expanding the government–industry exploration co-funding program from one to three programs.

The co-funded drilling program, initiated in 2009, has underpinned innovative greenfields mineral exploration and has led to discoveries such as Ni-Cu-Co Nova deposit. Now, an additional two co-funding programs have been added, the Energy Analysis Program (EAP) for geothermal and petroleum companies and the Co-funded Geophysics Program (CGP) for mineral exploration companies.

Both the EAP and CGP support the use of geophysical techniques in the very early phase of greenfields exploration. The emphasis in the extension of EIS co-funding will be on innovative projects characterising and seeing through the cover of soil, sand and sedimentary basins that obscures 80 per cent of WA's economic bedrock hosting precious and critical minerals. Delineated targets from geophysical studies would then, potentially, be followed up with co-funded drilling. Industry geologists and geologists from GSWA are using digital data from geophysical programs to use machine learning, artificial intelligence and analysis of sample material obtained through drilling to accelerate discovery rates.

Success story: Bellevue

The Bellevue Gold Project was successful in rounds 15 and 18 of the EIS for further drilling activities, and these results underpinned the mine's reopening in 2024. Other recent EIS success stories include Gateway Mining intersecting a significant new zone of gold mineralisation in the Murchison and Kalgoorlie Nickel confirmed nickel sulphide prospectivity and lithium-caesium-rubidium bearing intrusives³ at its Highway deposit.

Geoscience data transformation

The geoscience data transformation project has moved into the design and build phase after completing the analysis phase for an improved approach to data integration and internal management of geoscientific data. The digitisation of legacy geoscience data sets continues and is supported through the development of naming standards and a data ownership and quality governance framework.

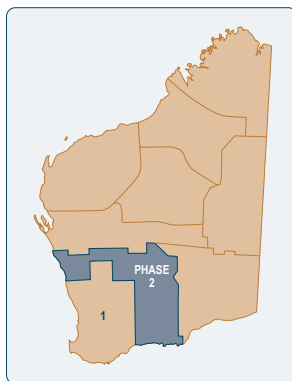
DEMIRS recently purchased two slide scanners through the program to digitise the department's collection of over 400,000 slides and mounts of minerals, fossils, and sedimentary samples and make them publicly accessible through an online platform. These samples are the key to understanding the State's geological history and resources, and the more they are handled, the more fragile they become. Explorers and the public will be able to examine these artifacts from their own devices by using a virtual microscope to zoom in and explore the intricate details contained within the samples. This initiative safeguards our geoscientific heritage and promotes WA as a hub for trustworthy scientific research and exploration.

³ Previously molten rock forced between pre-existing rocks or rock layers.

Our work as a service provider

WA Array

The WA Array project is designed to collect passive seismic imaging data across the State, that uses the naturally occurring vibrations in the Earth, such as those generated by earthquakes, ocean waves and anthropogenic activities i.e. agriculture and transportation, to pick out the layering, and the faults found near the surface to hundreds of kilometres deep. Phase one is complete and data processing is progressing with the report and tier one products to be released by the end of 2024. Phase two incorporating Esperance, Laverton and Geraldton has started with trial deployment by helicopter. The first WA-MT data collection also started in the same area (see [page 26](#) and [27](#) for further information).



Exploration databases

The WA resources industry is required to lodge drilling data and sampling results to the department for compliance and storage. These reports and datasets are entered into the department's databases and made available to the public. The Drillhole Database currently holds over four million drillhole records submitted by the mining industry, including over 13 million records of surface geochemical samples collected as well as other geochemistry and geological data. Approximately 4,000 company technical mining and exploration reports in the WAMEX database were released to the public during 2023–24 compared to 3,000 the previous year. More than 85 per cent of the 122,000 reports and associated data in the WAMEX database are now available to view and download via the GeoView application and the new one stop WAMEX search interface that that was released this year.

The WAPIMS database holds over 300,000 reports and datasets from activities conducted by the energy industry, including petroleum well drilling, seismic and geophysical surveys, as well as drill sample analyses and studies. Approximately 3,000 WAPIMS records were released to the public during 2023–24, including the Western Australia Carbon Dioxide Geological Storage Atlas datasets compiled by GSWA which was funded by the Ministerial Taskforce on Climate Action.

In addition to our geological databases, we also have two purpose-built core libraries, the Perth Core Library, located in Carlisle, and the Joe Lord Core Library in Kalgoorlie. The core libraries in combination served over 2,500 clients and visitors during 2023–24 and laid out around 225,000 metres of drill core for public viewing. Making all this information and samples available to the public, supports exploration of resources within the State to drive positive economic outcomes.

Tjiwarl Palyakuwa on Country

The department is a signatory to the 2023 compensation settlement between the State of Western Australia and the Tjiwarl Aboriginal Corporation called the Tjiwarl Palyakuwa (Agreement). Under the Agreement DEMIRS facilitates a mining business working group to foster open and regular communication and oversees implementation of an alternative future act⁴ regime. In April 2024, the department and other government agencies were invited onto Country to further develop relationships and allow participants to get a feel for Western Desert country and culture. During the visit the Tjiwarl native title holders accompanied attendees to several sites on Country including Logan Springs (named 'Tjiwarl') whilst sharing stories, history and culture.

Tjiwarl attendees voiced their concerns about the historical and ongoing impacts of mining on Country and discussed some of the issues being encountered such as water resources. Participants benefited from seeing and hearing about these issues first hand, in a culturally appropriate forum, and expressed their appreciation for the invitation and opportunity.

⁴ A proposal to deal with land in a way that affects native title rights and interests such as the grant of a mining tenement or compulsory acquisition of land.

Our work as a service provider

Updating ServiceWA

The department continues to modernise DEMIRS web applications – making some of them accessible through the ServiceWA application. Some of the key achievements for 2023–24 include:

- Improved security of the department's services access by using the WA Identity Exchange ecosystem. i.e. Bonds online.
- Provided a better digital platform for mobile applications to access information, grants, communication, and transactions with government.
- Increased the use of department digital services, by making them more accessible and easier to use.

The way forward 2023–24 to 2025–26

Following the introduction of new work health and safety laws, the department developed *WorkSafe: The Way Forward 2023–24 to 2025–26*, a high level three year rolling strategy guiding efforts to reduce work-related fatalities, injuries and illnesses that goes beyond day-to-day regulatory activities. The aim of the strategy is to drive workplace change through education, specialist advice and enforcement. It describes the goals, priority areas and measures of success for health and safety actions undertaken by WorkSafe to reduce work-related fatalities by 10 per cent and incidents of serious injuries and illness by seven per cent.

For the next three years, DEMIRS is focusing on four key priorities; repeat hazard exposures, psychosocial hazards, respiratory hazards, and consultation and representation.

The strategy also outlines the approach to ensure emerging challenges such as artificial intelligence, automation and related technologies, hybrid work, demographic shifts and climate related risks, recognised and addressed in a collaborative way.

Ellendale Bunuba trainee program

Through the Abandoned Mines Program, the department has been working towards making the former Ellendale mine site safe for incoming tenement holders and anyone who may access the area through a rehabilitation earthworks campaign.

Buru Rehab won the contract for this work and is delivering a training program on Country at the Ellendale site. Experienced local Bunuba operators and trainers are providing trainees valuable skills for a future career in the mining industry with a focus on industry standard safe operating procedures.

In September 2023, DEMIRS representatives met with representatives of the Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation and Buru Rehab directors and operational team on Country to review the progress. In the first seven months of the contract, 11 Aboriginal participants of the trainee program have received a combined 21 National Certificates of Attainment for a range of heavy vehicle skills. Eight of those who achieved certification are from the Kimberley and five are Bunuba, including the first three graduates of the trainee program.

With the second season of work underway during the 2024 Kimberley dry season, seven new Kimberley based trainees signed onto the Ellendale Bunuba Trainee Program.

Keeping industry and Western Australians informed through training and awareness



The department regularly takes part in the delivery of industry focused training, working with registered training organisations and industry associations; as well as directly providing education and awareness sessions and briefings across WA to businesses and consumers alike.

Raising awareness about gas and electricity safety

The department actively promotes the need to use gas and electricity safely. Throughout 2023–24 several new initiatives were developed, and consumer campaigns conducted to raise awareness.

Test your residual current devices

The widespread installation of residual current devices (RCD) safety switches has markedly reduced the incidence of shocks suffered by consumers in homes and businesses. While they have significantly reduced shocks, RCDs need to be regularly tested to ensure they are working effectively.

To encourage regular RCD testing an education [campaign](#) was run throughout April and May 2024. The campaign utilised a ‘handy’ animation which showed exactly how a consumer could perform the simple test.

Don't DIY – use licensed tradespeople

The department has always discouraged do-it-yourself (DIY) electrical and gas fitting work. Apart from being illegal, unlicensed and DIY electrical and gas fitting work is dangerous for the person doing the work and for anyone who may use or come into contact with the potentially unsafe electrical and gas installation or equipment.

A three month consumer education [campaign](#) was launched in June 2024 using social media, YouTube and commercial radio in metropolitan and regional areas. The same ‘handy’ animation from the RCD campaign show examples of electrical and gas work that should never be performed by an unlicensed person.

Reducing electric shock to apprentices

Electric shocks pose a significant risk, not only to the individual but also to the reputation and integrity of the industry. Between 2021 and 2023 there were reports of several apprentices receiving electric shocks at TAFE colleges.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD) is responsible for managing vocational education and training, and workforce services delivered by TAFE colleges, and other training / service providers. Working with DTWD, the department undertook consultation in early 2024 to set up a collaborative approach in creating prevention strategies to electric shock incidents. A key component of the consultation process was ensuring compliance with regulatory obligations, such as those related to working on or near an energised electrical installation and apprentice safety when carrying out electrical testing, and personal protective equipment guidance. The partnership demonstrated the importance of collaboration in enhancing safety standards and safeguarding the wellbeing of apprentices.

Keeping industry and Western Australians informed through training and awareness

First steps to farm safety

In March 2024, the department released the [First steps to farm safety](#) guide to assist farmers in establishing good safety practices on their farm. The guide simplifies the essential requirements for a farmer or farm owner to improve their work health and safety risk management.

Acknowledging that activities on farms differ, the hazard information and checklists have been developed as a foundation for identifying hazards and allowing farmers to customise their checklists to suit their specific activities. QR codes in the guide link to additional information relevant to the respective hazard. While the guide has been developed for farmers, it can be used for other industries that would like to seek guidance on safety compliance.



Exposing the rights of consumers

DEMIRS delivered several proactive media events in 2023–24, including a press event held at a private property in Herne Hill. The Commissioner for Consumer Protection met with a victim of travelling comen, known as ‘the bitumen bandits’, who charge exorbitant prices of up to \$50,000 and threaten to destroy work completed work if invoices are not paid.

The scam operates by people targeting individuals claiming to need to get rid of leftover bitumen and offering to complete works at their property such as driveway for cost price. In this case, they did not supply a quote and started the job the same day while the targeted person was not home. The homeowner aware of their consumer rights through previous awareness campaigns, then refused to pay an invoice of \$7,800 regardless of what was said to them over the phone by the comen. For more information about [consumer rights](#) refer to the department’s webpage.



Keeping industry and Western Australians informed through training and awareness

Navigate safety issues when buying and repairing motor vehicles

New regulations to protect consumers from making a purchase they may later regret came into effect on 7 June 2024, as part of the amendments to the Motor Vehicle Dealers (Sales) Regulations 1974. Under the new regulations motor vehicle dealers in WA must disclose to prospective buyers if a vehicle under 15 years old is a repairable write-off. While a vehicle may be repaired, buyers may find issues that emerge post purchase and struggle to get full insurance coverage and also discover it has a lower market value.

In partnership with the Motor Trade Association of WA (MTAWA), the department developed an easy to follow used car buyer's checklist. Consumers are encouraged to pay two dollars to check the Personal Property Securities Register which will confirm whether a vehicle under 15 years old is a repairable write-off, has been stolen and/or is free of outstanding debts. The buyer's checklist is a valuable tool to remind consumers of the important steps before taking possession of a new or used vehicle.

An odometer adjustment declaration form was created as a co-branded document, aiming to enhance transparency and accurate readings in odometers to ensure the mechanical safety of vehicles.

The department ran a campaign communicating key messages and tools to assist consumers make clear and safe decisions when buying a used vehicle and worked with MTAWA to communicate important statements in relation to motor vehicle safety to the industry.



“Information is key when it comes to making smart purchases. These new regulations will help consumers have access to more information and make smart decisions when buying used cars.”

Richard Sellers, Director General



Keeping industry and Western Australians informed through training and awareness

Decommissioning petroleum wells

DEMIRS released a finalised [policy](#) and [guideline](#) for the decommissioning of petroleum and geothermal energy property in Western Australian coastal waters and onshore areas in early 2024. Following public consultation these documents set expectations and assist registered holders to clearly understand their obligations relating to their operations, and any facilities, infrastructure, equipment, wells, and pipelines. Early engagement and the expectation to see a commitment towards full removal of all property, equipment and infrastructure as a base case is also included.

Mineralisation guidelines

The department assesses land use for possible inclusion into the State conservations estate as part of the Plan for Our Parks initiative. In the past year, DEMIRS published updated Mineralisation Report Guidelines to specify the format, content, and standards required in a mineralisation report, and the information required in the separate supporting statement, to comply with the *Mining Act 1978*.

Snapshot of industry training and awareness



1.3 million visits on average per month to FuelWatch website.

56 stakeholder committee and working groups meetings held, on energy sector evolution and rule changes.

3 sessions held for new recruits of the Amalgamated Prospectors and Leaseholders Association Perth Branch.



80 presentations were held during 2023–24 on scam prevention and awareness.

140 industry presentations and seminars held for electricity, gas, and plumbing.

10 videos produced on employment laws topics including how to find the right pay rate.



2,639 registrations for Safe Work month events.

WorkSafe presence at **10** career expos and agricultural field days.

Climate change actions

The department recognises that everyone has a part to play in reducing climate change impacts and that our department is in a position to support and guide some of the actions taken by industries, businesses, consumers and government agencies in WA.

Environmental, Social and Governance

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) is a set of criteria for evaluating organisational performance across environmental, social, and governance areas, such as energy consumption and carbon emissions, ethics and transparency and employee work health and safety. Recognising the importance of measuring and continuously improving ESG practices across all our business operations, this year DEMIRS initiated work to undertake our first ESG assessment with support from expert consultants. This work will assist to establish a baseline for DEMIRS performance in relation to the ESG topics most relevant to our operations, identify strengths and create a roadmap of actions to guide future improvements.

In the first half of 2024 the project included analysis of current and emerging ESG topics, issues and frameworks relevant to the public sector and our department; a series of interactive ESG risk workshops attended by the Executive Leadership Group and representatives from each of the department's Groups and a staff survey. This information has informed development of a list of ESG topics considered of high importance and impact to our staff, our stakeholders and our operations.

Using the internationally recognised Global Reporting Initiative Standards Framework as the tool to measure our ESG performance, work is continuing with a roadmap of actions to be finalised by the end of 2024.

Incorporating ESG expectations

In 2024, the department sought feedback from stakeholders on the draft [Mining Development and Closure Guideline](#). This guideline recognised that community expectations around the level and detail of stakeholder engagement undertaken by mining companies have increased over time and ESG has become a primary driver in managing risks and opportunities for mining operations.

For more on the department's [consultation](#) process refer to the DEMIRS website.

Legislative amendments

Refer to [page 54](#) for more on petroleum legislation updates and [page 45](#) on the carbon capture atlas that also support the State's environment and carbon capture and storage efforts.

Stakeholder engagement

For more on how we engage with First Nations people to improve outcomes for communities, knowledge sharing and looking after the environment through respecting the lands, caring for it and protecting it refer to [pages 33, 34](#) and [51](#).

Climate change actions

Safety focus

Safe EV charging

The Charge Up grants encourage the spread of electric vehicle chargers across WA. To support this change, the department's electrical inspectors have proactively carried out several electrical compliance inspections on installed EV chargers throughout the State. Generally, the installation of these chargers is not considered notifiable work to the network operator and as a result, these works are not sampled for inspection, which may lead to network issues in the future.

Future fuels project

The department is an active member of the national research Future Fuels Cooperative Research Centre. The centre's research aims to support the Australian energy sector transition to low carbon fuels in a collaborative effort with the industry, academia and government bodies, with the department's involvement focused on the safety and technical aspects of the research program, including:

- analysis of the impact of hydrogen on the performance of industrial gas turbines;
- assessment of the impact on end users of injecting biomethane into the existing natural gas distribution networks; and
- assessment of the performance of simple household gas appliances, designed to operate on natural gas, when hydrogen is blended into the supply.

Hydrogen safety strategy

The drive to decarbonise the energy sector has highlighted the potential of utilising renewable hydrogen use as an alternative environmentally friendly energy carrier, and as a result many pilot projects were started by industry. Therefore, the department reviewed its strategies to cater for the introduction of hydrogen with a focus on safety. The new hydrogen safety strategy focuses on three main elements:

- reviewing safety legislation to ensure that safety laws remain fit for purpose;
- achieving alignment with the State's Renewable Hydrogen Strategy Roadmap through provision of regulatory guidance and safety promotion in the areas of hydrogen blending in natural gas networks, transport and remote applications; and
- industry development through in kind contribution to the national industry research program Future Fuels Cooperative Research Centre, and the continuous contribution to Australian Standards development to include hydrogen and hydrogen blends.

The implementation of the strategy has guided ATCO's gas pilot project to blend low hydrogen concentration in a natural gas localised network. Since the pilot was commissioned in late 2022, the project has successfully and safely delivered two per cent hydrogen blend in natural gas to 2,700 consumers in the City of Cockburn during 2023. In February 2024, DEMIRS accepted amendments to increase the hydrogen blend in the pilot area to 10 per cent. The increase will be staged and is subject to satisfying gas quality and appliance safety requirements. The project is still progressing.

Climate change actions

Supporting energy
transformation**Energy ahead: small steps, big savings**

The department continues to partner with Synergy, Horizon Power, and community service organisations – Financial Wellbeing Collective and Nirrumbuk Environmental Health and Services, to deliver the State Government's Energy Ahead Program (formally Household Energy Efficiency Scheme). The program provides customers experiencing financial hardship with a hands-on solution to understand and reduce their energy use and bills through energy education, home energy audits and low cost energy efficiency items tailored to the needs of each household. During 2023–24 there were 1,332 households experiencing hardship who accessed the program.

Charge Up grants

The Charge Up Workplace EV Charger Grant Program continues to support the increasing availability of electric vehicle chargers.

Round one of the grant program closed on 31 July 2023 with \$2.4 million approved in grant funding and round two closed on 30 June 2024. Applicants were able to apply for up to four AC or DC chargers with the aim of increasing the provision of fast chargers at key locations connecting metropolitan and regional areas.

Renewables and electrical safety

The WA Electrical Requirements

prescribes technical safety requirements for all electrical installations at voltages up to 330 kilovolts, whether connected to networks or standalone electricity supplies. The August 2023 update caters for the increased use of renewable energy technologies to cover electrical safety compliance of large scale installations such as solar, battery and wind turbines that exceed the upper limits covered by Australian Standards. WA Electrical Requirements applies to all new electrical installation designs commenced after 1 February 2024.

A new Code of Practice for personnel electrical safety for vegetation control work near power lines was gazetted in August 2023 and incorporates references to work health and safety laws. It also includes updated registered training organisation training unit codes and course requirements for the vegetation worker qualification and competency assessment.

The Safe working guidelines for electrical

workers covers basic electrical safety practices for electrical workers. Critically, it provides guidelines on effective supervision of electrical workers with varying competencies, including apprentices. The guidelines have been updated to ensure they remain consistent with new legal amendments and cater for evolving practices in the industry. During 2024, updated draft versions of the two guidelines were sent to key industry stakeholders, including mining industry stakeholders, the National Electrical and Communications Association, TAFE and unions to review and provide feedback and advice on suggested further amendments. The department is currently working through the feedback received.



Climate change actions

The department contributes to the WA climate policy by assisting, supporting and leading various initiatives. DEMIRS assists the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation with the Clean Energy Future Fund as well as the Electric Vehicle Strategy – State Government fleet targets.

Below are some of the other initiatives that we actively work on.

Initiative	DEMIRS 2023–24 updates
<p>Energy Transformation Strategy</p> <p>The State Government’s work program to ensure the delivery of secure, reliable, sustainable and affordable electricity to Western Australians for years to come.</p> <p>There are many projects contained within this strategy, not all are updated here.</p>	<p>The scale and complexity of the energy transition requires new approaches to facilitating electricity infrastructure. As a result, the department is involved in many energy initiatives to guide and develop policy for future energy needs of the State.</p> <p>The commencement of the new Wholesale Electricity Market (WEM) on 1 October 2023 was a major milestone in the delivery of the strategy. The new WEM design is aimed to maintain security and market effectiveness through the energy transition.</p> <p>For more detail on energy transformation activities and market reforms the department has been involved in refer to page 31.</p> <p>The South West Interconnected System (SWIS) Demand Assessment 2023 to 2042 outlined the potential change in electricity demand over a 20 year horizon and identified that significant electricity infrastructure, including renewable generation, electricity storage and transmission networks will be required. DEMIRS has supported Western Power in the further refinement of the SWIS Demand Assessment vision, through the SWIS Transmission Planning Update, and in securing the commitment to progress Clean Energy Link – North, which is expected to unlock around one gigawatt of renewable generation to the north of Perth.</p> <p>The Energy and Governance Legislative Reform project is addressing limitations of existing governance arrangements to the flexibility of the power system in response to a changing energy system. See page 53 for regulatory reform efforts in 2023–24.</p>
<p>Distributed Energy Buyback Scheme</p> <p>As part of the annual State Budget process the department advises the Minister for Energy and Coordinator of Energy in their annual review of the Distributed Buyback Scheme rate and contract terms and conditions.</p>	<p>As part of the annual State Budget process the department advises the Minister for Energy and Coordinator of Energy in their annual review of the Distributed Buyback Scheme rate and contract terms and conditions.</p> <p>As of June 2024, there were 173,958 Distributed Energy Buyback Scheme customers, and 224,932 exempt customers on the now closed Renewable Energy Buyback Scheme. When systems are expanded or upgraded, customers on the grandfathered scheme can no longer remain on that scheme.</p>

Climate change actions

Initiative	DEMIRS 2023–24 updates
<p>Trial innovative technologies</p> <p>DEMIRS Energy Policy Group was the Chair of Project Symphony’s Steering Committee and provided energy policy advice and expertise throughout the project. Project Symphony was delivered in partnership with Western Power (lead organisation), the Australian Energy Market Operator, and Synergy. The project was part-funded by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency, which contributed \$8 million out of the project’s total cost of nearly \$37 million.</p>	<p>DEMIRS Energy Policy Group was the Chair of Project Symphony’s Steering Committee and provided energy policy advice and expertise throughout the project. Project Symphony was delivered in partnership with Western Power (lead organisation), the Australian Energy Market Operator, and Synergy. The project was part-funded by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency, which contributed \$8 million out of the project’s total cost of nearly \$37 million.</p> <p>The Project Symphony pilot was completed, and a final report published in June 2024. The report had 18 recommendations to progress commercialisation and scaling of virtual power plants across the SWIS. Recommendations span four core themes, focusing on the technical, customer, value, and policy and regulation initiatives needed to enable and demonstrate DER composition at scale.</p>



Assessed over **728,868** hectares of land being considered for investigatory licenses associated with renewable hydrogen projects.

Investigatory licences are granted by Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage under the *Land Administration Act 1997*.



3 public briefings held on PoweringWA attracting **1,057** participants.









Working collaboratively across government







The department contributes to the delivery of several whole of government and cross-agency initiatives, each of which had shared accountabilities for their successful implementation.



The following initiatives report our progress against the department’s 2023–24 Resource Agreement.

Initiative	Working together	2023–24 Results
<p>Decarbonisation</p>  <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business plan that provides advice to the State Government on the design, establishment, purpose and objectives of the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) Facilitation Vehicle. Investigate the commercial, legal and regulatory requirements to establish renewable generation hubs. Amend the regulatory framework to enable faster network investment. Maintain impetus with respect to early priority investments and coordinating early public engagement. 	<p>Western Power</p> <p>Department of the Premier and Cabinet</p>	<p>PoweringWA establishment was announced on 17 November 2023, refer to page 31.</p> <p>A broad project plan was developed for the development of Renewable Generation Hubs and the Goldfields Regional Network Project is being considered as one of the hubs.</p> <p>New arrangements were inserted into the regulatory framework on 12 September 2023 to allow the Minister for Energy to declare some transmission projects as ‘priority projects’.</p> <p>The SWIS Transmission Infrastructure Planning Update published on 9 May 2024 identified a series of potential new transmission investments to enable connection and delivery of new renewable generation and storage projects.</p>
<p>Green Energy Assessment</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Support the timely approval or resource related proposals.</p>	<p>Departments of:</p> <p>Water and Environmental Regulation</p> <p>Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation</p>	<p>During 2023–24 the department participated in the Green Energy Approvals Initiative and related working groups.</p>

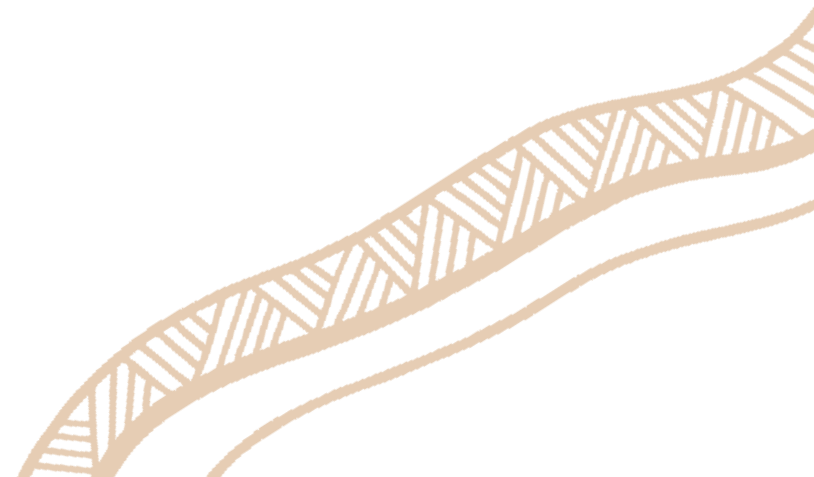
Initiative	Working together	2023–24 Results
<p>Climate Action</p>  <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and expand the WA Carbon Dioxide Geological Storage Atlas. Undertake an evaluation study of carbon offset technologies. 	<p>Department of Water and Environmental Regulation</p>	<p>The regional depth mapping and reservoir temperature modelling are completed for the Perth and Officer Basins and are continuing for the Carnarvon and Canning Basins. The reservoir quality assessment and regional well correlations are underway for all basins and expected to be completed by end of 2024. All maps, models and corrected well data that have been released to date are available for download through WAPIMS. Writing of the first report volume has commenced and the results of the northern Perth Basin work were presented at the Australian Energy Producers 2024 conference.</p> <p>The procurement for the evaluation study was put to open tender and the tender responses were significantly higher than the special appropriation provided for in the budget. Accordingly, DEMIRS elected not to proceed with the procurement. DEMIRS continues to provide geoscientific advice as to carbon capture and storage methods, such as the carbon dioxide storage atlas as outlined above.</p>
<p>Resourcing for Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategies (SERS)</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Coordinate advice, strategy development and complex energy related modelling across the electricity sector (and its subsectors within WA) as an input to the SERS process.</p>	<p>Department of Water and Environmental Regulation</p>	<p>The department undertook electricity modelling for the SWIS, the Pilbara, and the off grid subsectors to understand the scale of demand for renewable electricity and to inform the SERS, which outlines the pathways and priority actions for the State's transition to a decarbonised future.</p>
<p>Supporting agencies to achieve emissions reduction in line with Government targets</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>The new full time equivalent role will commence to coordinate and advise agencies on measures to reduce emissions from energy use to achieve 2030 emissions reduction goals.</p>	<p>Department of Water and Environmental Regulation</p> <p>Public Sector agencies</p>	<p>Support agencies to develop and implement energy related emission reduction activities. This work includes providing advice on energy efficiency and other decarbonisation investments and actions, to be delivered in alignment with broader government energy policies, including network security and reliability.</p>

Initiative	Working together	2023–24 Results
<p>Rental Accommodation Account – Tenancy Advice Education Service</p>  <p>Outcomes:</p> <p>Continue discussions on long term delivery and funding options.</p>	<p>Department of Justice</p>	<p>Consultation with stakeholders on future arrangements for the Tenancy Advice Education Service will need to continue into the following financial year. Long term funding from the Rental Accommodation Account has been confirmed.</p>
<p>Service Improvement – Second Perth Mining Warden</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Continue to ensure contested application cases will be processed in a timely and efficient manner.</p>	<p>Department of Justice</p>	<p>Since the appointment of the second Warden, the total outstanding objections has reduced. In the past 12 months the Perth Wardens have taken on additional courts, with the Mount Magnet and Meekatharra Courts now operating through the Perth team and the Wardens sitting regionally in Kalgoorlie, Southern Cross and Leonora. Despite this, the total matters collectively before the courts has steadily decreased over the past 12 months. Since the start of 2024, the department in consultation with the Wardens, has listed a monthly First Mentions list in the hearing calendar to ensure that new matters coming into the courts are appearing before a Warden much earlier than in previous years.</p>
<p>Review of Bushfire Safety Policy Framework</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Continue to work on strategies to deliver on the 2019 Action Plan for Bushfire Framework Review.</p>	<p>Departments of:</p> <p>Fire and Emergency Services</p> <p>Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions</p>	<p>Each year prior to the preceding bushfire season, the department holds a joint meeting to discuss any emerging trends and risks, and what measures can be put in place to best mitigate these risks. The meeting provides an opportunity for all agencies to establish a coordinated plan that ensures parties have a clear understanding of relevant department responsibilities, communication protocols and the possible impact the upcoming season will have on resources.</p> <p>Also working with the WA Police Force Arson Squad and Electrical Network Operators.</p>

Initiative	Working together	2023–24 Results
<p>ServiceWA App Program – Digital Capability Fund</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Continue to develop applications for the ServiceWA portal.</p>	<p>Small Business Development Corporation</p> <p>Departments of: the Premier and Cabinet Transport Primary Industries and Regional Development</p>	<p>Refer to page 34 for key achievements made on this initiative.</p>   
<p>Royalties Management System Transition</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Continue to support the Department of Finance with the collection of Royalties.</p>	<p>Department of Finance</p>	<p>Ongoing support provided regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collection of Royalties; • transactional/financial queries; and • records management functions, including transition of records and data. <p>The department has also worked on transitioning the following Royalties systems to the Department of Finance environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royalties online (public facing); and • Royalties Management System (internal). This system has various connectivity linking to DEMIRS systems. The project work is mainly around decoupling from DEMIRS systems and to go through application program interfaces.
<p>Fatigue and Isolated Drivers in the Commercial Vehicle Sector</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <p>250 proactive stops proposed.</p>	<p>WA Police Force Main Roads</p>	<p>While 250 stops or inspections were not conducted during 2023–24, resources have been allocated to increase the proactive work on this issue in 2024–25 to meet the target.</p>

Initiative	Working together	2023–24 Results
<p>Mental Awareness, Respect and Safety (MARS) Program </p> <p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure safe workplaces for all WA employees. • Implement the 12 Respect@Work report recommendations that apply to the State Government. • Develop whole of government sexual violence prevention strategy. 	<p>Minister for Women’s Interests</p> <p>Mental Health Commission</p>	<p>MARS Preliminary Report 2B was released in March 2024, and established a baseline of current practices and experiences to understand the lived experiences of workers in relation to workplace respect and safety. See pages 23, 60 and 62 for more detail on the department’s activities on the MARS Program.</p> <p>The Respect@Work <i>National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces Report 2020</i> had 18 recommendations that require collaboration across all Australian governments to ensure a nationally consistent approach. The State Government has implemented all 12 recommendations that apply to the State Government and is actively contributing to the national implementation of the remaining six recommendations through ministerial forums.</p> <p>DEMIRS continues to contribute to the whole of government sexual violence prevention strategy. A statewide consultation process will ensure the strategy continues to be informed by the voices and experiences of victim-survivors, the WA community and those working in the sector. The strategy is progressing well and anticipated to be finalised in 2025.</p>
<p>State-wide cladding audit </p> <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Monitor and report on the progress of remediation work on the buildings identified.</p>	<p>Public Sector agencies</p> <p>Public Universities</p>	<p>The department continues to assist public sector agencies and public universities as well as, publishing biannual updates on the progress of remediation of publicly and privately owned buildings. Throughout 2023–24 we have completed 46 enforcement actions for privately owned buildings. Two have remediation works in progress and the remaining four private buildings are progressing to remediation.</p> <p>Four state agencies with publicly owned buildings and one university have buildings still requiring remediation.</p>

Initiative	Working together	2023–24 Results
<p>Streamline WA</p>  <p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the interaction with private and community sectors. • Develop best practice principles for creating and applying regulation. 	<p>Departments of:</p> <p>Treasury</p> <p>Water and Environmental Regulation</p> <p>Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions</p> <p>Planning, Lands and Heritage</p>	<p>The <i>Mining Amendment Act 2022</i> will streamline decision-making and improve efficiency for the application and assessment of mining environmental approvals. To apply the Act, the department is consulting with private and community sectors as part of developing guidance and regulations.</p> <p>Streamline WA is a whole of government initiative to make it easier to do business in WA by improving regulation and regulatory practice. It aims to deliver better services and outcomes for Western Australians. Some of the key activities for 2023–24 include work on petroleum legislation amendments that introduced a framework for permanent geological storage and transport of greenhouse gases and provides for the exploration and production of naturally occurring hydrogen. These changes are important for the industry’s future and will allow the resources sector opportunities to decarbonise. DEMIRS also is commencing the secondary stage of legislative amendments that will be required to implement the framework for greenhouse gas storage and transport, and regulated substances, as well as all supporting guidelines.</p> <p>The Short-Term Rental Accommodation Registration Scheme – see page 22 and the Geoscience Data Transformation Program which aims to increase accessibility and usability of geoscientific data for all users and assist industry to maximise the untapped potential of Western Australia’s yet to be discovered natural resources were also part of Streamline WA.</p>



Collaboration with our stakeholders

Our stakeholders

-  Ministers, Federal, State and Local governments and agencies

-  Commissioners and organisational heads

-  Non-government organisations

-  Business owners and incorporated businesses

-  Industry and consumers

-  Workplaces, workers, unions and public sector employees

-  Professional associations and representative bodies

-  Traditional owners, landowners and pastoralists

-  Universities, research institutions and schools

-  All media forms including traditional and social media

-  Statutory authorities and bodies

- Engaged with school-based and university programs including AusEarthEd, GEOS Curtin, Woolnough Society, and Australian Society of Exploration Geophysicists Camp for Applied Geophysics Excellence program to promote learning with the next generation of geological sciences.

- Worked with national gas technical safety regulators and others to develop National Hydrogen Codes of Practice to address regulatory gaps and barriers impacting the safety and development of the hydrogen industry.

- Provided interagency support and advice to WorkSafe Tasmania on geotechnical and underground mining regulatory environment.

- Partnered with other agencies to deliver the Joint Agency National Reconciliation and National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance events.

- Delivered lectures to post-graduate students on the energy transition in WA and the role of government in regulating the reforming of the electricity industry.

- Joined six other agencies to come together to represent the public sector and display our support at the Perth Pride Parade – acknowledging diversity and inclusiveness.

- Collaborated with cultural awareness training providers to identify region specific Aboriginal businesses with whom we can partner to enhance the department's cultural capability.

- Engaged with Professor M Quinlan (University of New South Wales) to host a workshop series discussing the 10 pathways to death and disaster in August 2023.

- Collaborated with the Economic Regulation Authority on the South West and Mid-West regions' gas distribution systems access arrangements.

- Provided information to Austrade in relation to critical minerals projects within WA for the compilation of a [prospectus](#) to benefit economic development in WA.

Supporting Aboriginal empowerment

The Aboriginal Empowerment Unit (AEU) regularly engages with Gnaala Karla Booja Aboriginal Corporation to establish a strong and meaningful relationship. The relationship has had several positive outcomes including facilitating engagement with the department’s Abandoned Mines Program.

The department, with AEU leading the way, engaged with Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation heritage team to identify relevant knowledge holders with cultural authority to participate in monitoring of geological fieldwork.

Staff indicated that it was a fantastic two-way learning experience with the traditional owners showing our staff bush medicine and the geologists sharing knowledge on the age of rocks and how they were formed.

AEU has undertaken initial engagement work with several more Aboriginal Prescribed Body Corporates and hopes to build similar meaningful relationships and provide connections for teams across the department.

The engagement work will align with the AEU’s Aboriginal Engagement Framework, which is in its final stages of development. The framework will support staff to effectively engage with Aboriginal people, community, and businesses across the State, by providing practical guidance and examples on best practice engagement principles and processes. The framework will sit under the new DEMIRS Aboriginal Engagement Policy and be aligned with the department’s Aboriginal Engagement Initiative and the State Government Aboriginal Engagement Strategy. The framework will form part of a suite of resources coordinated by the AEU aimed at enhancing the department’s cultural knowledge and cultural competency.



Stakeholder survey

The DEMIRS Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey has been conducted annually since 2019. The 2023–24 results were positive overall, consistent with 2022–23 and form the basis for two of the department’s key effectiveness performance indicators. In 2024, 1,783 individuals who had dealt with the department in the past 12 months responded to the survey. Respondents represented stakeholders from the resources sector, other industries, government, community members and other key stakeholders.

Satisfaction with the department’s regulatory functions remained strong for 2024. Overall, (77 per cent) of stakeholders are satisfied with DEMIRS as an effective resources sector regulator, 80 per cent as a safety regulator, and 76 per cent as an industry regulator. Stakeholder satisfaction across all Key Performance Indicators was consistent with the strong results of the 2023 survey. Key findings from the current survey included:

- Satisfaction with DEMIRS as a regulator has stabilised at a four year high.
- Perceptions of DEMIRS on a range of performance indicators is high but still has room for growth. Each year we ask a range of key diagnostic questions about the department. Stakeholders rated DEMIRS very similarly across many outcomes related to the department’s processes, policies, and regulatory style. This is a strong validation of improvements within DEMIRS between 2022 and 2023.
- Satisfaction was once again lower for those who interacted with the department to:
 - a) query a ruling;
 - b) make a complaint/report an incident; and/or
 - c) seek assistance with consumer protection issues.

This finding has been consistent since 2019.

The key drivers that emerged as relative strengths to maintain were:

- being sufficiently responsive to enquiries;
- providing sufficient information for stakeholder needs; and
- being trusted to make fair and reasonable decisions.

Stakeholder perceptions on all three of these drivers were statistically consistent with the 2023 results.

77%



satisfied performance
as a **resource sector
regulator.**

76%



satisfied performance
as an **industry regulator.**

80%



satisfied performance
as a **safety regulator.**

Regulatory reform

The department implements various regulatory reforms, improves supporting processes and raises awareness to impacted parties and stakeholders.

Plumbing reforms

In February 2024, the first tranche of reforms from the 2019 *Decision Regulatory Impact Statement: Reforms to Plumbing Regulation in Western Australia* were implemented with amendments to the Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulations 2000. This included expansion of what is considered regulated water supply plumbing work. Historically, water supply plumbing work was only regulated where it was associated with a premises supplied through a mains supply source. The changes mean that water supply plumbing work now captures all sources of drinking water. This amendment will greatly improve the safety of drinking water in regional and remote areas of the State.

Legislative amendments to support Western Australia's energy transformation

The department has supported the State Government in passing two sets of legislative amendments to the *Electricity Industry Act 2004* to support energy transformation.

The *Electricity Industry Amendment (Distributed Energy Resources) Act 2024* is the first major reform of Western Australia's main electricity industry legislative and regulatory framework in nearly two decades. A critical enabler of the State's energy transformation, the Act provides for a new State Electricity Objective that decision makers under this Act (including the Minister for Energy and Coordinator of Energy) must consider. This includes the extent that decisions impact on the environment and emissions reduction. The Act will also enable the consolidation of multiple, outdated regulatory instruments within a single set of rules and the effective regulation of new

emerging technologies, such as rooftop solar, battery storage systems, and electric vehicles.

The *Electricity Industry Amendment (Alternative Electricity Services) Act 2024* established a new framework to extend enforceable protections, and access to independent dispute resolution, to customers receiving electricity and electricity services through new, emerging or atypical business models. It is flexible enough to apply fit for purpose customer protections to a broad range of electricity related activities, if and when a need for regulation arises.

In combination, these Acts modernise Western Australia's electricity legislation to provide a flexible, responsive and future focused regulatory framework that can support the uptake of new technologies on the State's path to net zero emissions.

Electricity Industry Amendment (Distributed Energy Resources) Act 2024 – Royal Assent on 7 March 2024
Electricity Industry Amendment (Alternative Electricity Services) Act 2024 – Royal Assent on 22 April 2024

Regulatory Reform

Petroleum legislation amendment

In support of the State Government's commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, the Petroleum Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, which strengthens petroleum legislation passed Parliament in May 2024. The amendments provide WA based industries with opportunities to decarbonise through a legislative framework for the transport and geological storage of greenhouse gases. Carbon capture and storage is a mechanism being used by industries across the world to decarbonise their operations.

The Bill also enables exploration for naturally occurring hydrogen through the concept of a regulated substance, which is an element that occurs naturally within a natural geological formation. Hydrogen offers a potentially low emission way to help WA decarbonise, and the State Government is aware that industry is interested in exploring for this alternative energy source. Further amendments support the insertion of polluter pays provisions, royalty metering, underground storage of petroleum and blending of additives in pipelines.

Mining legislation update

Marking out for conversions

In 2022, the State Government passed amendments to the *Mining Act 1978* allowing tenement holders adversely affected by events outside their control to lodge conversion applications without first having to mark out the land. The impetus for these amendments came from travel restrictions during the Covid-19 State of Emergency.

During the past year, the department engaged with members of the Resource Industry Consultative Committee, tenement management consultants and open public consultation opportunities on the drafted guidelines supporting the amendments. The published guidelines demonstrate the application for conversion applications lodged without first marking out the land in circumstances where it is not possible for the land to be accessed.

Implementing mining frameworks

Throughout the year, the department has been working on implementing frameworks and other changes introduced by the *Mining Amendment Act 2022* that modernise the mining approval process and allows for easier administration of compliance with conditions of approval. A key feature is the introduction of an Eligible Mining Activity framework, which is a new automated authorisation pathway for eligible mining activities that pose a low risk to the environment and do not occur in sensitive environments. Draft regulations to support the framework were released for stakeholder consultation in May 2024.

Mining tenements are administered under the *Mining Act 1978*

State petroleum titles are administered under three Acts:

- *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982* – generally applies to the State's territorial sea up to the three-nautical mile mark, including the territorial sea around state islands.
- *Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967* – generally covers all onshore areas of the State including its islands. Most areas under petroleum titles are covered under this Act.
- *Petroleum Pipelines Act 1969* – applies to petroleum pipelines on land within the State.

Legislative developments

DEMIRS administers and/or supports the Ministers for Mines and Petroleum; Energy; Industrial Relations; and Commerce with over 100 Acts and their subsidiary legislation. The department has a role in modernising legislation so that it remains contemporary and relevant for Western Australia. Below are some of the updates published during 2023–24, not mentioned elsewhere in the report.

Statutory reference	Purpose of the change	Effective date
Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022, and Work Health and Safety (Mines) Regulations 2022	Minor amendments to enhance the WHS regulations so that they are more consistent to the original drafting intent.	10 August 2023
Miscellaneous amendments to the Gas Standards (Gasfitting and Consumer Gas Installations) Regulations 1999	Clarify worker supervision requirements and harmonise the classification of small gas powered engines.	21 September 2023
Electricity Industry (Wholesale Electricity Market) Regulations 2004 (WEM Regulations)	Extend the Minister for Energy's rule making powers to provide for the continued implementation of Stage 1 Energy Transformation Strategy.	1 October 2023
National Gas Access (WA) Adoption of proposed new Statutes Amendment (National Gas Law) (Emissions Reduction Objectives) Regulations 2023	To adopt a nationally consistent civil penalties and enforcement regime for the gas industry in WA. Further work to broaden the scope of registration to other gasses (other than natural gas).	1 October 2023
Building Services (Registration) Regulations 2011	Update registration eligibility and continuous professional development requirements.	2 November 2023
Coal Miners' Welfare Regulations 1948	Add a representative of the proposed Mining and Energy Union as a member of the Coal Miners' Welfare Board. Federal Court Order dated 1 December 2023 – create new Mining and Energy Union consisting of members from the former Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union – Mining and Energy Division.	21 February 2024
Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill 2023	Amendments to the <i>Residential Tenancies Act 1987</i> and <i>Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006</i> to include a ban on landlords and agents encouraging a tenant to offer more money; and giving tenants a right to take action in the Magistrates Court if they believe that their landlord or agent is taking action against them for exercising their rental rights.	16 May 2024

Get to know us at DEMIRS

Introducing business areas that help us function and deliver outcomes throughout Western Australia.

Regional Services team

The department's senior regional officers are effectively Consumer Protection's 'eyes and ears' across the State. Working in close collaboration with Consumer Protection's other branches, the team offers a range of services and support to consumers and businesses located in WA's regional and remote areas as well as remotely serving the Indian Ocean Territories (Cocos/Keeling Islands and Christmas Island).

The team provides dispute resolution and conciliation, general information, education and advice for consumers relating to Australian Consumer Law, plus advice and support to regulate the motor vehicle industry, product safety, co-operatives, and the not for profit sectors.

Regional community groups are wide ranging, and often vulnerable due to their isolation. The team simplifies and translates campaign messages into local languages and works closely with local community groups and organisations, as well as community leaders, to successfully get the message out to this broad audience.

The strategies used are constantly evolving and include establishing and maintaining relationships with regional radio and media, having information booths and stalls in local shows and expos, presenting to community groups and organisations, and identifying the best ways to link in closely to all groups in regional and remote WA.

The Regional Services team aims to empower regional and remote communities to ensure that all consumers and businesses, no matter where they are located across WA and the Indian Ocean Territories, have the same access to the full range of Consumer Protection advice, education, and support services.



Get to know us at DEMIRS

Standards and Engineering

The Building and Energy Division's Standards and Engineering Directorate is responsible for the delivery of engineering and standards advice to the Director of Energy Safety, Building Commissioner, DEMIRS executive and the State Government.

The Engineering Branch helps industry to overcome non-compliance with the prescriptive requirements of the Australian Standards by facilitating performance based solutions, which often exceed the prescriptive provisions and provide flexible and project specific solutions.

The [Kwinana Waste to Energy](#) project is one example of a development where engineers from Building and Energy reviewed proposed performance based solutions, met with the proponents⁵ and carried out [site visits](#). This project was the first thermal utility scale waste to energy project in Australia.

The Standards Branch is actively involved in a joint effort between the Australian Government and states and territories to produce and maintain the National Construction Code, which sets out the minimum necessary standards for building and plumbing. This work is overseen by the Building Ministers across Australia with extensive input from the industry.



Home Buyers team

Located within the Registration and Monitoring Branch of Consumer Protection, the Home Buyers team administers the Home Buyers Assistance Account (HBAA) to support first time home buyers in Western Australia. The scheme is funded from interest paid on real estate agents' trust accounts. The HBAA aims to assist buyers by covering some costs of purchasing a first home in the form of a grant of up to \$2,000 for eligible candidates. To receive a grant, applicants must meet certain criteria, including buying a property priced at \$400,000 or less, that is a primary residence for a minimum of 12 months and applications are made through the purchaser's lending financial institution.

The scheme is regularly reviewed to support first time home buyers to ensure it remains a vital resource for first time home buyers in WA and provides essential financial support while adapting to the evolving housing market. The team assesses HBAA applications to ensure compliance with eligibility criteria, perform follow ups with applicants, and ensure grants are paid in a timely manner. The Home Buyers Team's hard work ensures that first home buyers receive financial assistance at a time where it will have an impact, while also ensuring the effective management and disbursement of public funds.

⁵ Supporters, advocates and/or person who proposes a theory, plan or project.

Significant reviews and Court outcomes

Agency Capability Review

A review of the (then) Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety under the trial of the Agency Capability Review Program was completed in June 2022. Since the release of the report by the Public Sector Commission, the department has been actively tracking and reporting on its progress against the recommendations. We are pleased to advise that at the end of the 2023–24 financial year, all actions and initiatives are either complete, or are being completed as part of other strategies and plans.

Mining Rehabilitation Fund Review

The Mining Rehabilitation Fund (MRF) helps to facilitate work being carried out by the department's Abandoned Mines Program that is essential for better environmental and community safety outcomes. All tenement holders operating on *Mining Act 1978* tenure are required to report disturbance data and contribute annually to the fund depending on their level of environmental disturbance on tenements.

Contributions to the MRF are used in circumstances where there are unsuccessful efforts to enforce the obligations of tenement holders/operators to rehabilitate mines. The recovery of costs may still be sought from any former holder/operator that fails to meet their obligations to rehabilitate. In addition, interest earned on the fund can be used to rehabilitate, to fund the administration of the MRF and to undertake rehabilitation work on legacy abandoned mines throughout the State.

An independent review of the *Mining Rehabilitation Fund Act 2012* undertaken during 2023–24, identified that the fund continues to function well as a targeted approach to minimising the environmental, social and financial risk of abandoned mines to the State. Stakeholders were generally supportive of the MRF Act, and that its objectives and purpose remain relevant. The department is reviewing the recommendations and investigating potential actions to improve the effectiveness of the MRF.



Photo credit: I. Zibra, GSWA 2024

Significant reviews and Court outcomes

Court outcomes

The department serves the Western Australian community by supporting and protecting industry, workers and consumers. One way in which the department does this is by establishing and enforcing legislation and standards including, where appropriate, pursuing outcomes in WA Courts and Tribunals by the department's Legal Services Branches.

Wickepin-Narrogin bushfire

On 6 February 2022, a bushfire started approximately 20 kilometres east of Narrogin that burned through 18,000 hectares of farm and bush land. The department's investigation team established that powerlines clashed and globules from the incident ignited the dry grass on the ground and also that the powerline bay which caused the fire did not comply with standards applicable at the time of construction, i.e. it exceeded the design limit. The responsible party was prosecuted for failing to ensure that its network was maintained in a manner that was safe.

This was the first successful prosecution by the Director of Energy Safety under regulation 5A that was introduced in December 2021. Additionally, the network operator was requested to remediate other powerline bays of shorter length and similar construction that pose a risk of conductors clashing.



“There is no place for racism in society – we will support any tenant who can provide evidence to help us shine a spotlight on hidden and often hard to prove racist behaviour in the industry.”

Commissioner for Consumer Protection

Campaign to call out real estate racism

In August 2023 the department successfully took action against a real estate agent for sending an email to former tenants regarding the disposal of their security bond, which used offensive language.

The decision to initiate disciplinary proceedings in the State Administrative Tribunal was taken in recognition of the fact that it was not the first complaint of a similar nature to originate from within the real estate industry and to serve as a warning that the department will take action to protect any tenant in the community that is subjected to this type of behaviour in the future.

Enforceable work health and safety undertaking

DEMIRS and a mining company agreed to an enforceable work health and safety (WHS) undertaking, to the value of \$1.47 million, as an alternative to prosecution in relation to the company failing to provide documents to WorkSafe. The *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* has this provision as an alternative to prosecution for a party alleged to have contravened the Act. It is not an admission or finding of guilt, but instead aims to deliver a workplace safety outcome instead of a fine. This is the first time WorkSafe has agreed to this alternative. The agreed WHS undertakings include:

- the development of a security and duress application;
- delivering education sessions for contractors and subcontractors; and
- funding research into strategies to prevent and respond to psychosocial hazards for use across the mining sector.

Further, these must be made available throughout the mining industry, and the benefits are expected to have widespread positive outcomes for WA workers.

Significant reviews and Court outcomes

Response to Parliamentary inquiry into Sexual Harassment in the mining sector

Since the release of the *'Enough is Enough' Sexual harassment against women in the Fly In Fly Out mining industry* report to Parliament in June 2022, the department has worked on implementing the recommendations under its responsibility.

As of 30 June 2024, the department has completed 10 recommendations with five in progress.

Legislative reform

Complementary to legislative reform, the department continues to provide [guidance material, codes of practice](#) and other information on the DEMIRS website to promote and inform the public. The department undertakes campaigns targeted to various stakeholders and uses audits and inspections to inform and educate industry and businesses across the State. These activities also include topics of gendered violence and the need to notify WorkSafe of any sexual harassment and assault that occurs in WA workplaces. In August 2023, the State Government hosted the Mining Industry Summit Driving Respect to establish respectful workplaces in the mining industry. Refer to [page 23](#).

Training and awareness

The department's 'Speak up, Report it' awareness campaign was part of WorkSafe's sexual harassment awareness reporting engagement strategy. The campaign was launched at the Mining Industry Summit and targeted persons conducting a business or undertaking, individuals impacted by harassment, witnesses, bystanders and senior mine site personnel. Information and guidance are continuing to be updated, developed and released to support the reporting and investigation of incidents.

Memorandum of Understanding

The memorandum of understanding between WorkSafe and the WA Police Force is undergoing further revision. It addresses a range of operational matters relating to workplace fatal incidents as well as information sharing provisions related to workplace sexual assault. Enhancements of WorkSafe's data management capabilities are progressing.

Supporting affected parties

The hearing of, and acknowledging of, the experiences of persons affected by sexual assault and harassment in the WA mining industry is being supported through \$335,000 in funding to Circle Green Community Legal to deliver the Mining Industry Respect Infoline.

This initiative is funded to 30 June 2025 through the Mental Awareness Respect and Safety (MARS) program. The online 'sexual harassment evaluation tool' for mine sites for affected persons and bystanders, developed with the University of Western Australia's McCusker Centre for Citizenship, was released in August 2023. The tool provides users with information about the investigation process, protections around anonymity and what is required by responding agencies when a report is made. The [tool](#) is available through the department's website and was accessed 2,662 times from the time of its publication until 30 June 2024.

Significant reviews and Court outcomes

Statistics on reports received

During 2023–24 the Mental Health and Wellbeing specialist team conducted 47 proactive psychosocial workplace inspections at mine sites, resulting in 33 improvement notices and 20 requests for historical data being issued. Inspections conducted and notices issued, are part of a proactive strategy for all psychosocial hazards including incidents of sexual harassment and assault.

The *Enough is Enough* report was tabled in the WA Parliament in June 2022, and as a result of the inquiry there is an increased awareness to report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault. DEMIRS has continued to embed new practices and tools which assist in identifying and combating such behaviour and has not discouraged historical reporting.

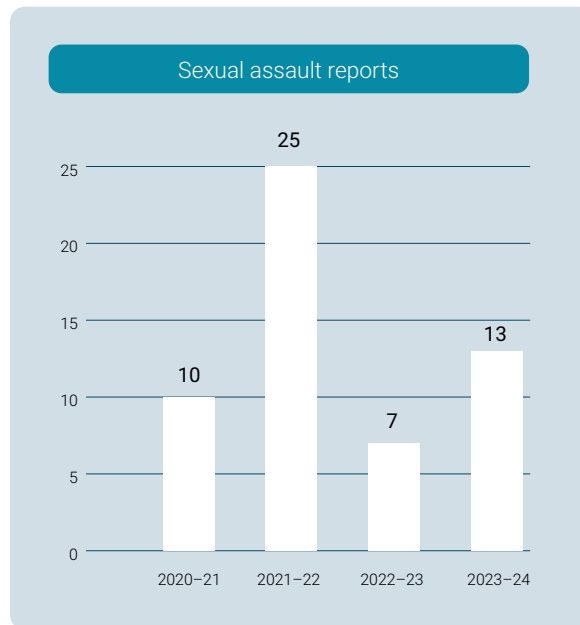
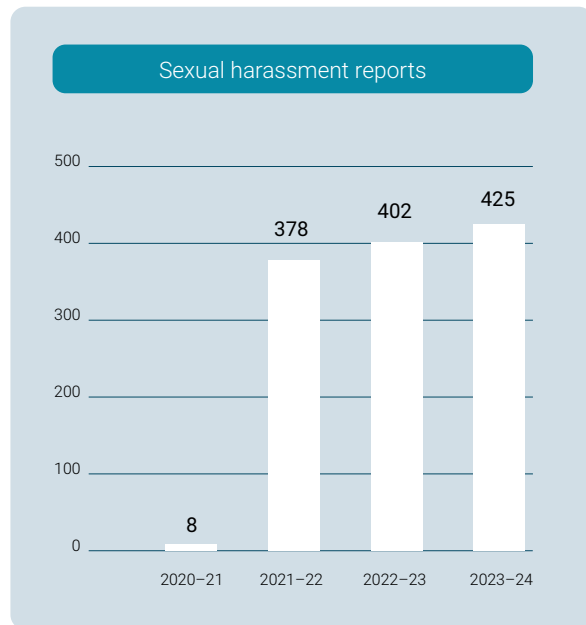
Surveys

Surveys continue to inform and have been incorporated into the department’s business practices such as the ‘People@Work’ surveys that commenced in August 2021. These surveys assist in identifying common psychosocial hazards and factors affecting personnel at a site. Anonymous surveys and audits to identify specific issues at mine sites have been incorporated into WorkSafe’s business processes.

The landmark study on mental health, sexual harassment and assault funded through the MARS program is continuing and is examining emerging mine safety issues and related workplace initiatives, including the use of surveys and audits. Final findings of the study are due in 2026.

System enhancements

Due to the department’s progress of replacing the existing WorkSafe business system, further enhancements are not being made, however improvements are being incorporated into the Compliance and Regulation System (CARS) design, due for release in 2026.



Significant reviews and Court outcomes

Encouraging industry

The Australian Human Rights Commission's *Guidelines on the use of confidentiality clauses in the resolution of workplace sexual harassment complaints 2022* are applied in Western Australia to address the use of non-disclosure agreements, and to assist persons making an allegation of sexual harassment, employers, alleged perpetrators, unions, lawyers, or anyone involved in resolving a workplace sexual harassment complaint.

The guidelines are being adapted for WA, with accessibility improved through development of concise guidance directed to assist affected workers. The State Government's Mentally Healthy Workplaces Grant Program is continuing to provide funding for mining industry initiatives to address work-related psychosocial hazards and associated risk and promote positive practices that support worker mental health and wellbeing. The program is funded through the MARS program to 2025.

Regulatory capability

A regulatory review of WorkSafe Mines Safety Division's capabilities to respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault in the Western Australian mining industry was undertaken in 2022, presenting 42 recommendations. The department continues to progress on the recommendations to improve its enforcement structure, services, workforce development, and systems to address sexual harassment and sexual assault as a workplace issue within its regulatory responsibilities.

WorkSafe has identified and delivered specialised staffing and training, improved current data and analysis while planning for better system technologies and engaged experts to conduct assessment of DEMIRS information materials for usability, trauma sensitivity, currency and accuracy. WorkSafe has strengthened its capacity to appropriately respond to reports and incidents of sexual harassment through the establishment of a dedicated wellbeing team of psychosocial specialists within the division in 2022–23. The team investigates reports of workplace sexual harassment and assault and provides advice and education to mining industry workplaces to ensure psychosocial risks are appropriately managed. The team will be further supported following the implementation of CARS, scheduled to roll out from 2026.