



Department of Water and
Environmental Regulation



2022-23

ANNUAL REPORT

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

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Front cover: Department staff Elke Reichwaldt (middle) and Charlie Jones (far right) with Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee members Tim Gamblin, Alan Bewsher and Shaun Ossinger (left to right).

Inside cover: Students' excitement at the 'Fish Olympics' conducted by Alisia Lampropoulos at the annual Children's Ghangara Groundwater Festival.

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This publication is available at our website wa.gov.au/dwer or for those with special needs it can be made available in alternative formats such as audio, large print, or Braille.

Statement of compliance

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Hon Simone McGurk MLA

Minister for Water

Hon Reece Whitby MLA

Minister for Environment;
Climate Action

In accordance with section 63 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, I hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament the annual report for the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

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



Alistair Jones
Director General
7 October 2024







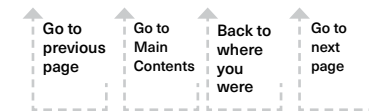
Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we live and work throughout Western Australia, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We recognise the practice of intergenerational care for Country and its relevance to our work as water and environmental managers.

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

Working with the community, we move forward with a shared commitment to protect and conserve Country for future generations, recognising Country is a term used by Aboriginal people to describe the lands, waterways and seas to which they are intrinsically linked, and to which their wellbeing, law, place, custom, language, spiritual belief, cultural practice, material sustenance, family and identity belong.



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From the Director General

I am pleased to present the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's annual report for 2023–24, the first to be delivered since I joined the department as Director General.

The past financial year saw the greatest transformation of the department's operating structure since it was formed in 2017, with the introduction of a new portfolio operating model in August 2023. This has been created to enable us to focus our efforts in three key areas: Climate and Sustainability, Approvals, and Strategy and Performance.

The new operating model, developed in response to the Public Sector Commission's Agency Capability Review, recognised the need for a better way of organising ourselves, to enable us to maximise resources, deliver better outcomes, streamline existing processes and improve customer and stakeholder experiences.

Guided by a streamlined Corporate Executive, our new operating model will help ensure we are positioned to respond swiftly to government priorities and better support the vision of a prosperous, resilient and low-carbon state in which our environment and water resources are protected for future generations.

Since December 2023, there has been considerable focus on implementing changes to streamline our environmental approvals system, to make investment in Western Australia more attractive, while continuing to protect our environment. These efforts follow a review by former Environmental Protection Authority Chair Dr Paul Vogel and planning expert David McFerran.

As part of its reform agenda, the State Government will be investing \$36.4 million to expedite approvals.

Our strategic overhaul and repositioning are supported by our flagship digital project, Environment Online. A further \$10.6 million will be spent in 2024–25 to continue the build and expansion of Environment Online, providing a single system for approvals across government.

Key functions of importance to our users, such as Environmental Protection Authority services, are already operational and other business areas are progressively being added to our online systems, with native vegetation clearing permit application lodgement added in early 2024. The integration of our Water Online, Planning Advice, and Industry Regulation processes and systems is next in line for 2024–25.

The funding of our priority projects as part of the 2024–25 State Budget reflects the State Government's commitment to improving water and environmental regulation and furthering our work in climate action.

As part of this, the State Government has allocated \$21.2 million to the department to bolster our environmental monitoring, compliance and enforcement activities, including for high-priority projects such as Alcoa's mining operations in the Darling Ranges.

Other initiatives funded in the State Budget that reflect the department's focus to deliver on sustainability and biodiversity included:

- \$3.1 million to continue the implementation of the native vegetation policy
- \$3.1 million to support the protection of Cockburn Sound
- \$2.7 million to further understanding of the impact of climate change on the state's water resources
- \$1.2 million in boosted resourcing to support the Kimberley flood response and repairs to river monitoring stations caused by ex-tropical cyclone Ellie.

We have also been liaising with the Australian Government and Western Australian organisations to strengthen water security and develop water infrastructure projects for regional and remote communities, including safe and reliable water for Aboriginal communities. More than \$265 million in funding from the State Government and Australian Government will be available for these projects from 2024–25.

In keeping with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the state's *Closing the Gap*

Jurisdictional Implementation Plan 2023–2025 and *Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy*, a key focus of the department is ensuring that co-delivery involves economic benefits as well as social and cultural benefits. You will read in this report some great examples of our progress with Western Australia's Aboriginal corporations and communities in skills development, capacity building and enterprises in work such as waterways management, environmental monitoring, cultural mapping and climate adaptation.

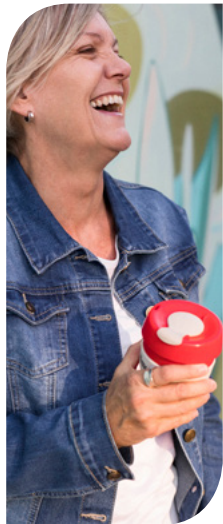
I thank the department's talented staff for their work throughout the year. We look forward to progressing the important work expected in ensuring the state's water resources and environment are managed sustainably now and in the future.

I would also like to praise the efforts of my predecessor Michelle Andrews, who served as the Director General of the department for more than two-and-a-half years. Michelle led the organisation through the Agency Capability Review and the creation of the new portfolio operating model, and made significant strides in engagement and collaboration with Western Australia's First Nations people.



Alistair Jones
Director General

Our 2023–24 at a glance



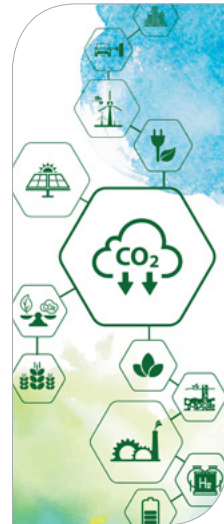
**154
million**

single-use coffee cups saved from landfill through the Plan for Plastics



**\$22.5
million**

allocated to drive delivery of green energy solutions for Western Australia



**\$16.24
million**

in grant funding for innovative industrial decarbonisation programs



**\$12.5
million**

donated to charities and community organisations through Containers for Change



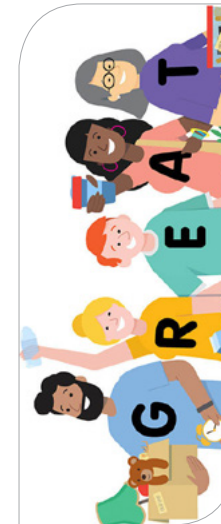
**7
million+**

online impressions gained by our Be Groundwater Wise awareness campaigns



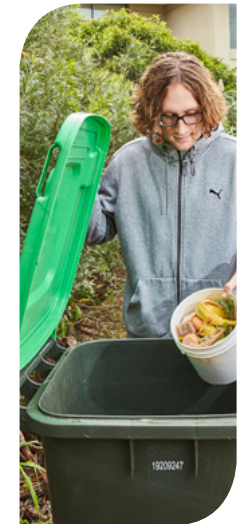
**668,000
kilograms**

of phosphorus could be saved from being applied across 257 farms in the Healthy Estuaries WA fertiliser management program



**2.3
million**

users reached by the Be a GREAT Sort social media campaign



**215,000
households**

receiving three-bin food organics and garden organics (FOGO) services



12,634
water licences

across
773 groundwater
and 427 surface
water resources



22,770
million

litres of water
saved by
business
and industry
under our two
Waterwise Perth
action plans



503
tonnes

of household
hazardous
waste materials
collected for
safe recovery or
disposal



93
infringements

issued in
relation to
illegal dumping
and littering



8,160
requests

for water
information
on our Water
Information
Reporting portal



9,736
reports

to our
Environment
Watch service



1.57
million

tonnes of
controlled
waste tracked



\$14
million

committed to
implementing
the e-waste to
landfill ban from
1 July 2024

Who we are

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

Overview

Environmental Officers Adriana Monroy Olaya and Diane Austin-Blaine



Our vision

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

Our mission



Waste

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



Climate

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



Water

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



Environment

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

Our values



We serve to make a difference

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



We build trust

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



We care

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



Open minds

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

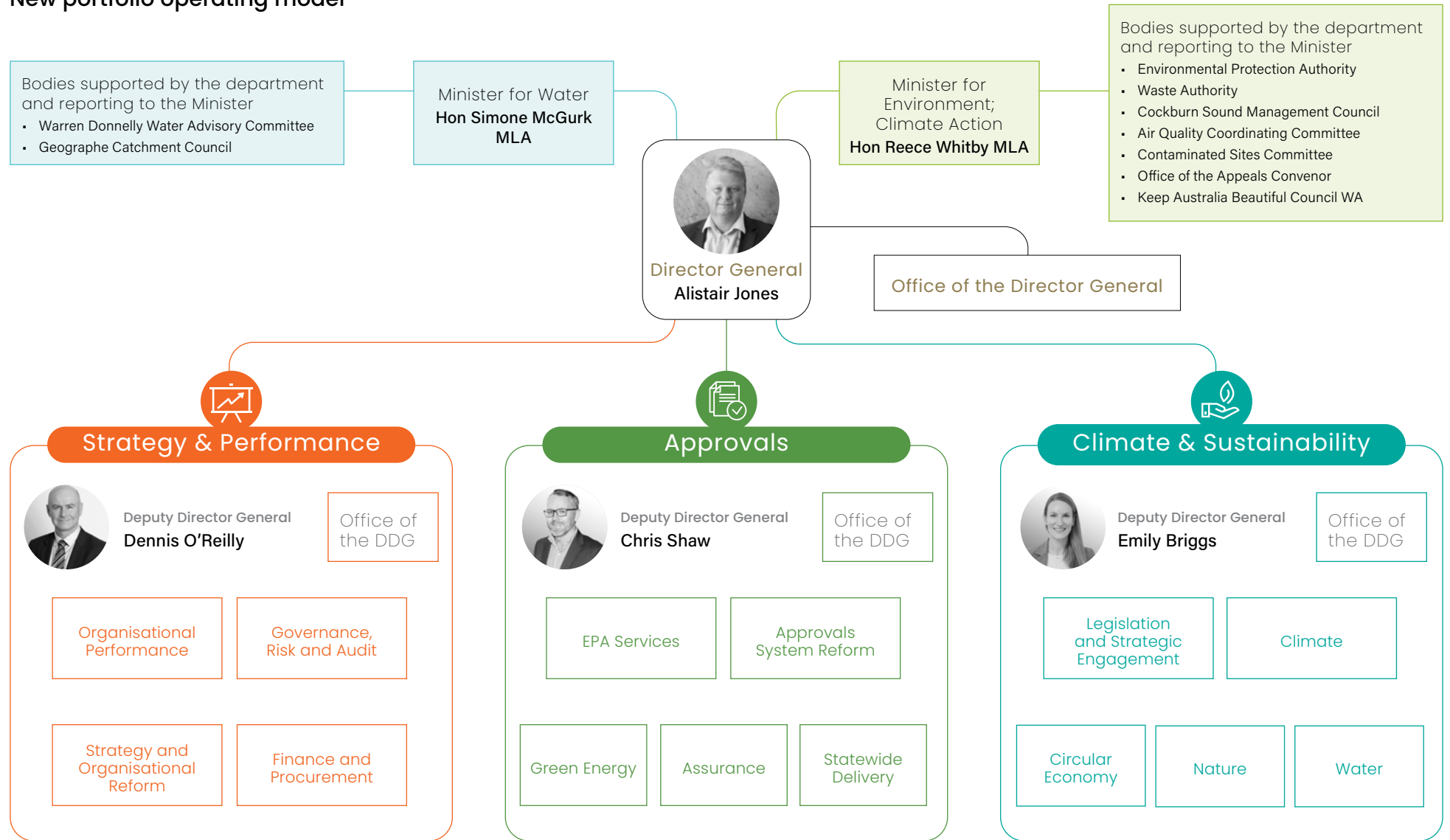


Better together

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

Our 2023–24 structure

New portfolio operating model





Alistair Jones

Director General

Alistair joined the department as Director General in January 2024. He is dedicated to protecting Western Australia’s environment and water resources and is excited to be leading the department through the major reform of the state’s environmental approvals system.

Alistair arrived from the Department of Treasury, where he was Assistant Under Treasurer of the Economic Business Unit and, before that, Assistant Under Treasurer of Strategic Policy and Evaluation. With more than 15 years in State Government, his leadership roles include Acting Director General of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation in 2023.



Dennis O’Reilly

**Deputy Director General
Strategy and Performance**

With more than 20 years of public sector experience, Dennis joined the department in January 2023, leading corporate services, strategy and engagement. He has driven the department’s response to the Public Sector Commission’s Agency Capability Review, introducing initiatives to enhance integrity, program planning, and customer and stakeholder experiences.

Dennis is committed to the agency’s regional work and partnerships with First Nations people. Previously, he served as Executive Director Regional Services at the Department of Transport, delivering services to regional and remote communities, and transforming Corporate Services into a high-performing, customer-focused team.



Chris Shaw

**Deputy Director General
Approvals**

Chris joined the department in November 2023, bringing extensive experience in regulatory decision-making, strategic policy and major reforms. He previously served as Deputy Director General at Queensland’s Department of Energy and Public Works where he led the formation of a division for future industries.

With a strong track record in cross-government reforms in environmental and natural resource management, Chris has overseen the establishment of the Approvals portfolio which integrates all regulatory functions. He is dedicated to advancing the State Government’s environmental approvals reform agenda and supporting key areas such as housing, green energy and critical minerals.



Emily Briggs

**Deputy Director General
Climate and Sustainability**

Emily became the inaugural Deputy Director General Climate and Sustainability in April 2023, bringing international experience in decarbonisation and economic development across government and the private sector. Emily began her career at BP Australia and has held senior roles in the UK Government, focusing on renewable energy, Brexit and the COVID Green Economic Recovery.

Passionate about climate action and ensuring the long-term prosperity of Western Australia, Emily has overseen the establishment of the Climate and Sustainability portfolio which is delivering key policies to support the state’s transition to net zero emissions.













Our people

Our department grew to 1,173 employees in 2023–24. Our *Workforce and Diversity Plan* affirms that by bringing together people from different backgrounds and with different points of view, we create the most value and better reflect the community that we serve.

Inclusive employer 2023–24

As members of the Diversity Council of Australia, we participated for the second time in their Inclusion@Work Index. This is a workforce inclusion survey that captures broader diversity data and inclusion experiences of employees within the workplace, measured against national employment benchmarks. We were once again recognised as a 'Top Inclusive Employer', with the reported employee experience in working for our agency exceeding all five benchmarks.

Snapshot of our diversity

	 Women in Senior Executive Services	 Youth	 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	 Culturally and linguistically diverse people	 People with disability
Aspirational targets	50.0%	5.8%	3.7%	15.5%	5.0%
Number of staff	19	32	11	161	40
Change from last year	 up from 13	 up from 29	 up from 10	 down from 164	 down from 43
Representation	52.8%	2.7%	0.9%	13.7%	3.4%
Gap to meet target	Met target	36	32	20	18

Performance summary

Actual results versus budget targets

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

KPIs comprise both effectiveness and efficiency indicators.

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

You will find more detail in our Disclosures section, which starts on [page 105](#).

Financial targets	2022–23 Actual (\$'000)	2023–24 Budget (\$'000)	2023–24 Actual (\$'000)	2023–24 Variance (\$'000)
Total cost of services (i.e. endorsed expense limit)	211,497	269,619	240,581	29,038
Net cost services (details in the income statement)	52,256	112,327	72,784	39,543
Total equity (details in the statement of financial position)	655,670	631,388	735,261	-103,873
Agreed salary expense level	109,702	120,191	116,624	3,567
Working cash limit	9,656	12,335	11,196	1,139

Summary of key effectiveness indicators

Outcome	Key effectiveness indicator	2022-23	2023-24		
		Actual %	Target %	Actual %	Variance %
1. Western Australia's growth and development is supported by the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state	Proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable, productive use	58	55	63	8
	Proportion of priority growth areas that have a water supply planning strategy	57	100	100	0
2. Emissions, discharges and clearing of native vegetation are effectively regulated to avoid unacceptable risks to public health and the environment	Percentage of regulatory compliance activities completed as planned	100	100	81	-19
	Percentage of potential environmental risks identified during compliance monitoring program that are rectified within two months	22	40	19	-21
3. Development and implementation of strategic policy and legislation that promoted sustainable environmental outcomes	Percentage of advice and recommendations that met Ministerial approval, without the need for significant modification	99	95	99	4
4. Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised	Percentage of municipal solid waste (MSW) reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to waste strategy target in the Perth metropolitan region	36	65	36	-29
	Percentage of commercial and industrial (C&I) waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	45	70	46	-24
	Percentage of construction and demolition (C&D) waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	85	75	85	10
5. Quality advice to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the Minister for Environment on significant proposals and environmental issues	The EPA's satisfaction with the department's environmental impact assessment (EIA) service during the year, in line with best practice principles of EIA	96	82	93	11
	Percentage of project-specific conditions which did not require significant change following the appeal process	98	82	89	7
	Percentage of assessments that met agreed timelines	80	75	88	13
	The EPA's satisfaction with the department's provision of environmental management services during the year	97	82	73	-9
6. Compliance with Ministerial Statement implementation conditions are monitored effectively	The number of Ministerial Statements audited compared to targets	42	90	23	-67

Summary of key efficiency indicators

Service	Key efficiency indicators	2022-23	2023-24				
		Actual	Target	Actual	Variance		
Service 1	Water information and advice	Proportion of statutory referrals from decision-making authorities (DMAs) where advice is provided within target timeframes	89%	95%	92%	-3%	↓
		Average cost per referral assessment	\$4,332	\$7,371	\$4,259	-3,112	↑
		Average cost per water measurement site managed	\$7,414	\$7,414	\$8,285	871	↓
Service 2	Water planning, allocation and optimisation	Average cost per plan, report or guidance document to support water planning, allocation and optimisation	\$243,074	\$409,599	\$194,137	-215,462	↑
		Average cost per hour of scientific support for water planning, allocation and optimisation	\$197	\$198	\$199	1	↓
Service 3	Water regulation, licensing and industry governance	Average cost of assessing a water licence application by risk assessment category:					
		• Low risk	\$4,018	\$4,242	\$4,182	-60	↑
		• Medium risk	\$5,357	\$5,656	\$5,577	-79	↑
		• High risk	\$6,697	\$7,070	\$6,971	-99	↑
		Average time taken (days) to assess a licence application by risk assessment category:					
		• Low risk	43	65	58	-7	↑
		• Medium risk	57	75	84	9	↓
		• High risk	85	95	92	-3	↑
	Average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action	\$206	\$177	\$344	167	↓	
Service 4	Environmental regulation	Average cost per works approval and licence application	\$73,244	\$56,014	\$77,628	21,614	↓
		Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application	\$33,764	\$60,594	\$38,428	-22,166	↑
Service 5	Water and environment policy	Average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations	\$328	\$489	\$325	-164	↑
Service 6	Waste strategies	Cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected	1.64%	1.50%	1.55%	0.05%	↓
Service 7	Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of assessment output	\$79,177	\$69,506	\$102,998	33,492	↓
Service 8	Environmental management services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output	\$26,151	\$53,838	\$53,172	-666	↑
Service 9	Compliance monitoring services to the Minister	Average cost per environmental audit completed	\$148,276	\$37,574	\$336,373	298,799	↓



Our priorities

We are responsible for ensuring the state's water resources and environment are healthy and able to support a strong economy and thriving communities. This section reflects our work delivering on the strategic directions of the Government of Western Australia.

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Previous page: Tony Falkland, Aaron Gwynn-Thomas, Judith Le Gresley and Andrew Stevenson on Cocos (Keeling) Islands investigating and installing groundwater telemetry equipment

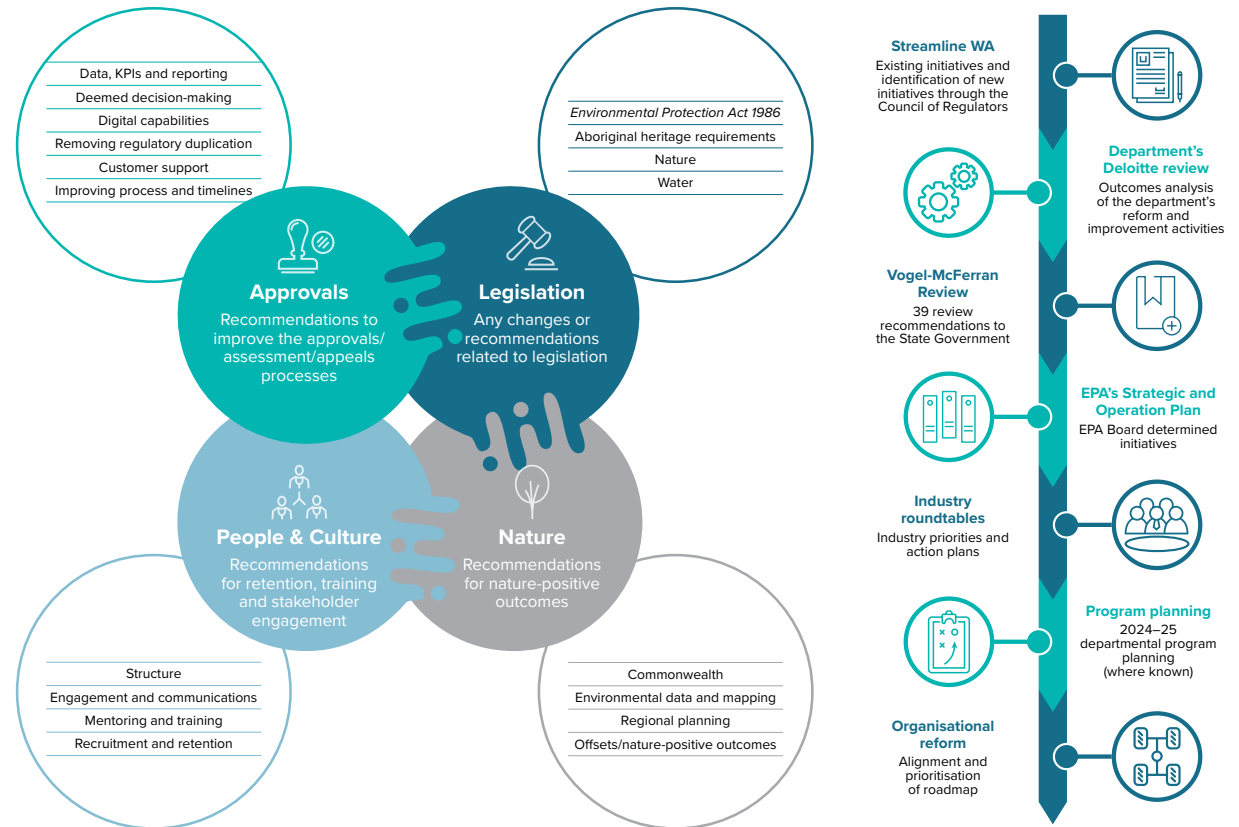
Approvals system reform

The 2023–24 year saw significant progress in the reform of our environmental approvals system, which was established to reduce timeframes and better address stakeholder priorities, while ensuring the state’s unique environment is protected.

This followed a review, commissioned by the State Government in October 2023, which found approvals processes had become overly complex and lengthy. The review, led by former EPA chair Dr Paul Vogel and planning expert David McFerran, delivered 39 recommendations to the State Government which were all accepted or noted.

As a result, the State Government announced a major overhaul of Western Australia’s environmental approvals system in December 2023 and committed to an additional 13 approval initiatives recommended by the Council of Regulators as part of Streamline WA – a whole-of-government initiative to improve regulation and regulatory practice.

Key elements of these reforms and how they fit together are represented below.



The department is focused on implementing these reforms with highlights of progress to date as follows.

Attraction and retention of staff

A significant focus of the recommendations related to people and culture, with the review identifying the need to improve staff attraction and retention.

We developed attraction and retention packages for key qualified staff in 2024. This includes the roles of Appeals Convenor and our new Director Major Projects Approval within the EPA Services team.

Another new arrangement will see graduates starting in July 2024 join a cross-government program offered by the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI) and the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS), giving our young staff the opportunity to learn how approvals processes are managed in different agencies. This experience means they will be well placed to inform future approvals streamlining efforts.

We are also continuing the delivery of a mentoring program, launched in March 2024, pairing young approvals professionals with experienced staff to build confidence and skills.

Legislative changes

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has been working closely with us to develop the Environmental Protection Act Amendment Bill 2024, which proposes significant reforms to support the streamlining of the state's environmental approvals system.

The most significant amendment will enable parallel decision-making for projects, allowing other government regulators to issue their own approvals ahead of the EPA issuing an environmental impact assessment. This change could see project timelines reduce significantly.

As part of the amendments, the Minister for Environment will be able to provide the EPA with a Statement of Expectation, helping it to better understand the State Government's priorities including the green energy transition, housing delivery, job creation and protection of the state's unique environment.

The membership of the EPA board will also be expanded to between five and nine members, who will be required to have skills or experience in specific disciplines important to the functions of the EPA.

In related reforms, regulation changes in March 2024 mean that minor planning scheme changes that have no impact to the environment or are of low risk to the environment no longer need to be referred to the EPA. These changes, introduced as part of the Environmental Protection Amendment Regulations 2024, reduce administrative burden and better focus assessment resources.

New EPA office

In April 2024, a new office was established for the EPA in the Perth CBD, enabling EPA Services staff and EPA members to hold in-person meetings with stakeholders, proponents and other government agencies in a convenient, central location.



Minister for Environment; Climate Action Reece Whitby opens the EPA office

Environment Online

[Environment Online](#) is a digital platform that will provide a single gateway for regulatory activities, automated case management, and an integrated data management system. It continues to develop as a key enabler of the State Government's overhaul of environmental approvals processes in Western Australia.

During the year, Environment Online completed a migration of data from all EPA systems, including all proposals under referral and assessment as well as more than 30 years of historical data. A major program of work also introduced a range of new functionality and enhancements.

One of the key changes included additional ways to log in to Environment Online for both employees within organisations and individuals.

The ability to apply for native vegetation clearing permit applications was also added, providing a streamlined process to apply to amend, transfer and surrender clearing permits as well as a dashboard to track and view associated records.

As part of the 2024–25 State Budget, the State Government committed \$10.6 million to expedite the delivery of Environment Online, aligned to the recommendations of the review into the state's environmental approvals process. The funding will allow the transition of Water Online, Planning Advice and Industry Regulation processes and systems into Environment Online.

Stakeholder roundtables

Between November 2023 and March 2024, the department held a series of roundtable meetings as part of a commitment to engage better with external stakeholders. These were attended by 46 local governments, five peak bodies, six State Government departments and representatives from more than 40 major companies and businesses.

These stakeholders collectively represented a range of sectors with primarily urban, mining and industrial development interests, which intersect with our water and environment approvals work.

Much of the feedback by stakeholders during these meetings related to the state's environmental approvals processes and will be addressed through the approvals system reform.

Environment Online completed a migration of data from all EPA systems, including more than 30 years of historical data.



New portfolio operating model

As part of the department's reform program, we began the implementation of a new portfolio operating model in August 2023, which saw us shift from nine directorates to three portfolios as displayed right.

Our focus for the final phase will be on establishing the Statewide Delivery directorate to ensure we leverage our significant regional presence to its fullest extent for regulatory decision-making and policy setting across the department.



Strategy & Performance

- Strategy
- Organisational and business systems
- Corporate services
- Human resources and workplace culture
- Corporate communications
- Stakeholder engagement
- Performance evaluation



Approvals

Integration of all the regulatory functions of the department, including:

- EPA Services
- Green Energy
- Assurance (formerly Compliance and Enforcement and including Environmental Sciences)
- Statewide Delivery (incorporating the former Regulatory Services and Regional Delivery directorates)
- Approvals System Reform



Climate & Sustainability

- Whole-of-government climate action agenda
- Statewide policy and programs across water, nature and circular economy
- Partnerships with key business, community and Aboriginal stakeholders
- Legislative agenda and working with the Australian Government on national reforms

Our changing climate

...the science is clear



Hottest

Western Australian summer recorded in 2023–24, with many areas recording their highest summer temperatures (BoM 2024a)



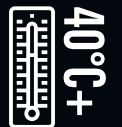
1.4°C

average increase in temperature in Australia since 1910, with most warming occurring since 1950 (CSIRO and BoM 2022)



Below

average annual rainfall in western and far-southern areas of the state in 2023 (BoM 2024b)



>40°C

days becoming more frequent across Australia (NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information 2024)



Rise

in dangerous fire weather days and a longer fire season for southern Australia (CSIRO and BoM 2022)



Increasing sea surface temperatures

on average, affecting our marine environment and fisheries and causing marine heatwaves (CSIRO and BoM 2022; Caputi et al. 2016; Le Nohaïc et al. 2017)



Driest

year on record in the Gascoyne and Central West regions in 2023 (BoM 2024b)



Accelerating

global mean sea level rise will amplify the risks of coastal inundation, storm surge and erosion (CSIRO and BoM 2022)



Increased and longer-lasting marine heatwaves

and increasing ocean acidification that will affect marine environments (CSIRO and BoM 2022)

Climate action

The department is leading the implementation of the [Western Australian Climate Policy](#). This year was a significant year for climate action in Western Australia with the:

- release of the [Climate Adaptation Strategy](#) to ensure our communities, environment and economy are resilient to future climate change
- release of the [Sectoral emissions reduction strategy for Western Australia](#) (SERS), setting out pathways and priority actions for the state's transition to net zero emissions
- introduction of the state's first climate legislation into Parliament, which seeks to establish the framework for government action on climate, including commitments to set targets and report annually.



Climate change legislation

The [Climate Change Bill 2023](#), introduced to Parliament in November, will provide the framework for State Government action on climate. Once enacted, the legislation will contribute to national and global goals for decarbonisation, provide certainty for businesses, and attract the investment required to transition to net zero emissions.

Climate Adaptation Strategy

The *Climate Adaptation Strategy*, released in July 2023, lays out the steps the State Government will take to ensure it is addressing climate change in its own operations and to support all Western Australians to adapt.

It was developed through targeted consultation with State Government agencies, local governments, Aboriginal and environmental groups, and peak industry bodies. It reflects the significant and unique perspectives of those stakeholders in relation to climate change.

The strategy acknowledges that effective climate response requires energised and empowered communities to contribute to tangible adaptation action. Businesses and industry need to manage their climate risks, and all levels of government will continue to play a role in delivering services and setting policy frameworks to advance climate action and support other stakeholders in their adaptation efforts.

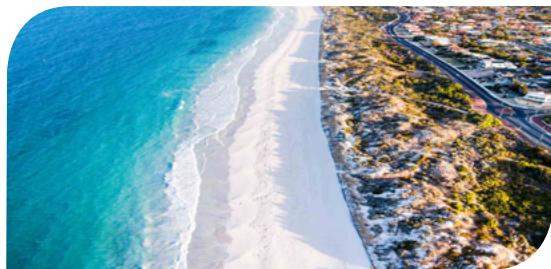
We have also been developing the *Guide to future climate projections for water management in Western Australia*, which will provide a modernised framework for using climate change projections to help scientists, planners and decision-makers assess impacts and risks to our water resources. The guide is due for release in September 2024.

► West Kimberley climate adaptation strategy

Empowering the climate resilience of Aboriginal people is a key direction of the state's *Climate Adaptation Strategy*.

In 2023–24 the department began developing a [co-designed climate adaptation strategy for the West Kimberley](#) in partnership with the Nulungu Research Institute at the University of Notre Dame Australia. As part of this, traditional knowledge and stories will be used to identify the impacts of climate change on the Fitzroy River and surrounds.

A new monitoring framework will be established through partnerships with local communities and the Martuwarra River Keepers, incorporating conventional and traditional knowledge. This framework will measure the effects and impacts of climate change on the people, biodiversity, rivers, floodplains and wetlands of the area.



► Creating Climate Resilient Rivers

We are leading a new \$1.5 million program to enhance the resilience of rivers across south-west Western Australia to address the impacts of climate change.

Funded under the *Climate Adaptation Strategy*, the Creating Climate Resilient Rivers program will identify priority locations for protection and enhancement and deliver on-ground initiatives to help improve river health and climate resilience.

The program will run for four years and deliver a range of projects, including the creation of climate refuges, enhancement of instream habitat and revegetation of banks, and restoration of fish passage through dams and weirs.

The program will also map biodiversity and habitat values across the state's south-west rivers and identify areas of permanent water with intact streamside vegetation that support aquatic and terrestrial species during the dry season.

► Harvey River fish hotels

An innovative habitat creation project was the first to be delivered as part of the new Creating Climate Resilient Rivers program.

This year, nine 'fish hotels' were established in a section of the Harvey River that was historically de-snagged (had woody debris removed) to increase drainage. The hotels, which look like small wooden pyramids, sit on the riverbed and serve as a perfect location to attract and retain aquatic wildlife.

Species that will benefit include freshwater catfish, nightfish, pygmy perch, western minnow and blue spot goby, as well as crustaceans such as marron, shrimp and gilgie. They will also boost habitat for turtles, rakali (water rats) and water birds.

The purpose-built 'hotels' were constructed by Waroona Men's Shed and students from the Western Australian College of Agriculture in Harvey using locally sourced timber.

The project design was a joint effort with the Harvey River Restoration Taskforce, Water Corporation, Murdoch University, OzFish, the Harvey Aboriginal Corporation, Shire of Harvey and Shire of Waroona.



Transition to net zero emissions

► Sectoral emissions reduction strategy

In December 2023, the State Government released the SERS, which sets out actions for reducing emissions to support the State Government's target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The department developed the SERS in collaboration with key State Government agencies and with oversight by the Ministerial Taskforce on Climate Action. Its development followed an extensive engagement process, which included consultation with businesses and industry and with research, environment and community organisations.

The SERS addresses key sectors of the economy, covering all major sources of emissions including from electricity, industry transport, agriculture and land use, buildings and waste. It builds on action already underway in these sectors and supports the collective actions of households, business and industry.

SERS initiatives will drive innovation, provide incentives for clean energy investment, build social licence for key technologies and facilitate infrastructure critical for Western Australia's transition to net zero emissions.

► Electric vehicles

The department is leading the stimulation of electric vehicle (EV) uptake in Western Australia as part of the [State Electric Vehicle Strategy for Western Australia](#). Battery EVs provide a transformational pathway to cut emissions from road transport, while improving air quality and reducing the state's reliance on imported fuels.

Coordinated actions of our department and other State Government agencies – including the Department of Transport, DEMIRS, Synergy, and Horizon – are bringing to life the [WA EV Network](#), the longest such network in Australia.

During 2023–24 the WA EV network build reached more than 60 per cent of its planned locations throughout the state. The network, which is part of the *Western Australian Climate Policy*, is scheduled to be finished by late 2024. On completion it will span 7,000 km from Kununurra in the north, to Walpole in the south and Eucla to the east.

Local governments and other entities, including small and medium-sized enterprises and non-government organisations, are our partners in supporting the uptake of EVs and the increasing delivery of infrastructure required to support them.



► Green Energy Approvals Initiative

In July 2023 the department established a Green Energy directorate to support the cross-government [Green Energy Approvals Initiative](#), which is driving the delivery of green energy solutions for Western Australia.

As part of this, we are working with other State Government agencies to develop clear assessment pathways and provide high-quality, timely support for proponents and investors.

More than 30 green energy projects are currently being assessed or regulated by the department, with a further 50-plus proposals expected to be referred for assessment over the next 12 months.

During the year we also worked to build new processes, forms and templates for green energy-specific proposals within our 'one stop shop' for business, Environment Online.



First green energy project approved



In June 2024 a proposal by Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation – a partnership between Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation and international renewable energy company ACEN Corporation – was the [first to receive approval](#) through the Green Energy Approvals Initiative.

Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation received environmental approval for its first solar project of up to 150 megawatts, to be developed within a 13,000 km² area in the Pilbara covered by the Yindjibarndi Native Title Determination Area.

In total, Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation's projects will deliver up to 3 gigawatts of solar, wind and storage capacity and, if successful, could become one of Australia's largest renewable energy developments.

The projects could also play a significant role in decarbonising the state, creating sustainable training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, and supporting renewable energy uptake by industry in the Pilbara.

Biodiversity conservation

Australia's Strategy for Nature

Western Australia signed on to *Australia's Strategy for Nature 2019–2030* on 10 November 2023, on six priority areas for national targets:



protecting and conserving 30 per cent of Australia's land and 30 per cent of Australia's oceans by 2030	effective restoration of degraded terrestrial, inland water, marine and coastal ecosystems
tackling the impact of invasive feral species	working towards zero new extinctions
minimising the impact of climate change on nature	building a circular economy and reducing the impact of plastics on nature

Nature repair legislation

We are assisting the establishment of the Australian Government's Nature Repair legislation in Western Australia by providing input into its measurement protocols and operational design.

The *Nature Repair Act 2023* (Cth) came into effect on 15 December 2023. The Act establishes the framework for a world-first national voluntary biodiversity market.

The Nature Repair Market scheme will make it easier for organisations and businesses to voluntarily invest in nature repair projects across Australia. Landholders, including First Nations people and organisations, conservation groups and farmers, will be eligible to participate in the scheme.



Regional planning

Regional planning for native vegetation is underway in the Perth, Peel and Wheatbelt regions. The State Government will produce maps and guidance to bring more certainty, clarity and consistency within the existing approvals framework, while balancing development and conservation. This includes information on cumulative impacts and guidance on where conservation and restoration investment should be made, such as offsets.

Urban Greening Grants Program

We are delivering the Urban Greening Grants Program in partnership with the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) to increase canopy and vegetative cover across the state.

In March 2024, 12 local governments were awarded a share of more than \$591,000 through the first round of the program to

support the planting of more than 9,400 trees and 29,000 understorey species in winter 2024.

Applications for the program's second round opened in May 2024, through which local governments were able to apply for a share of \$2.8 million to provide more canopy cover for cooling, shade and habitat for wildlife.

The program requires the selection of waterwise and local species to maximise the benefits of urban greening.



Protecting our water

South West dry season response 2023–24

The [Community Water Supplies Partnership \(CWSP\) program](#) was extended to the South West and Great Southern to help more regional communities manage the impacts of the dry conditions in 2023 and the summer of 2024.

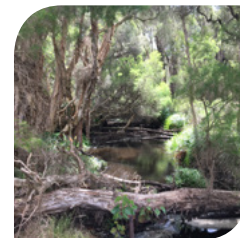
The \$1.5 million expansion is part of the State Government's \$8.6 million support package for agricultural industries impacted by drought conditions, which includes a raft of measures such as hardship grants and interest-free loans.

Local government authorities (LGAs) and community groups can apply for grants of up to \$100,000 to contribute to new water security projects, which help fortify regional towns and communities suffering low rainfall.

Since 2021, 59 projects have been funded under the program. Regional communities use the funds to develop supplies that optimise and upgrade existing assets to improve water capture, storage and distribution for purposes such as urban greening, watering sports and recreation turf, and providing emergency stock and firefighting supplies.



Minister for Water Simone McGurk with Shire of Brookton community members. With the help of State Government CWSP funding in 2023 the Shire of Brookton devised the community water supply at Happy Valley to reduce reliance on valuable drinking water, using a licensed non-potable bore



Water allocation planning

Water allocation plans outline how much water can be taken from groundwater and surface water resources, while safeguarding the sustainability of the resource and protecting the water-dependent environment in the face of climate change. We set water allocation limits for most of the water resources in Western Australia.

Further details about water allocation plans can be found under [Service 2](#).

► Gngangara

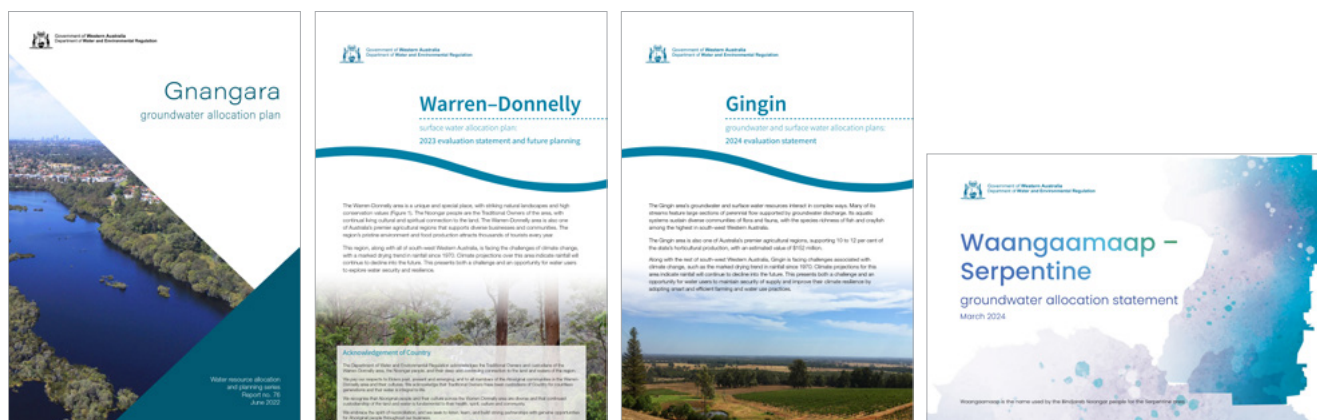
In July 2023, \$4 million in funding was made available to local governments through the Gngangara Waterwise Councils Grants Program – a joint initiative of the department and Water Corporation. The program, which supports the [Gngangara groundwater allocation plan](#), aims to reduce groundwater use in local government areas most affected by the urban heat island effect. The funding will be provided over four years.

► Serpentine (Waangaamaap)

We released the [Waangaamaap – Serpentine groundwater allocation statement](#) in March 2024. This set new allocation limits to improve the security of the groundwater supply for existing users over the next decade and to reduce the risks of impacts to groundwater-dependent ecosystems and cultural values from over-abstraction.

► Gingin

In June 2024, we released the [Gingin groundwater and surface water allocation plans: 2024 evaluation statement](#), which evaluated the performance of the 2015 *Gingin groundwater allocation plan* and 2011 *Gingin surface water allocation plan*. It found several ongoing risks to groundwater and surface water resources in the southern part of the region where climate change and abstraction has led to long-term declines in groundwater levels and streamflow.



► Warren-Donnelly

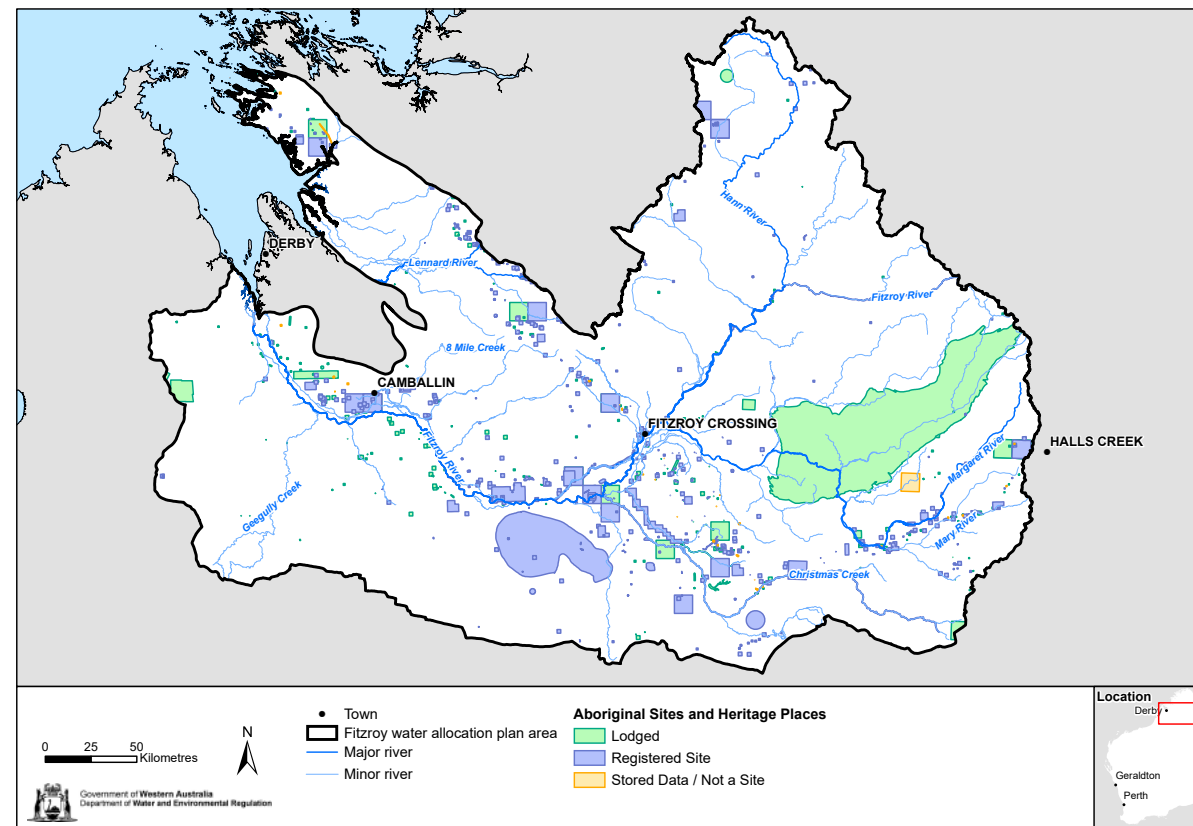
In October 2023, we released the [Warren-Donnelly surface water allocation plan: 2023 evaluation statement and future planning](#), which found the current allocation plan was still appropriate to support the region's horticultural industry and natural environments. The department is now developing the next water allocation plan for the Warren-Donnelly area, to guide future water management in this region and address climate change impacts.

► Fitzroy and Derby

We published [five technical reports](#) relating to the Fitzroy water planning area in October 2023. These reports will inform future water allocation planning and support the State Government's [Water allocation planning in the Fitzroy – Policy position paper](#), also released in October.

Water allocation planning work for the Fitzroy River catchment and Derby peninsula will continue through 2024–25. Following through feedback on [Derby water allocation planning](#) and ongoing conversations with Traditional

Owners, a revised draft Derby plan will be released together with a future draft Fitzroy water allocation plan for further public comment.

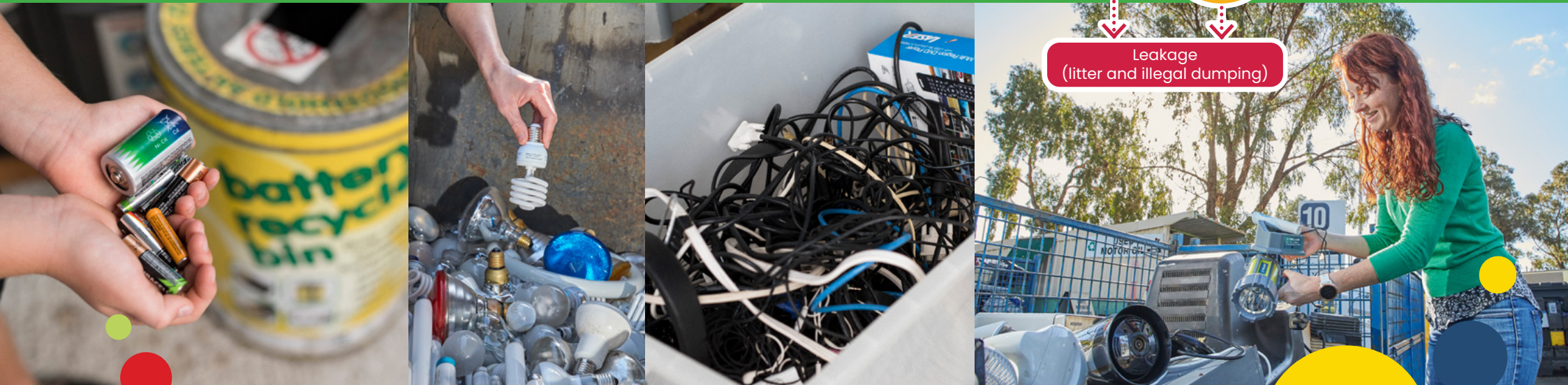


Listed Aboriginal sites and heritage places in the Fitzroy planning area

Circular economy

Western Australia is transitioning to a circular economy – where products and materials are kept in circulation through repair, reuse, recycling, recovery and redesign rather than disposal. Materials are used again and again, minimising waste and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources.

The department's work is guided by the state's [Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030](#) (waste strategy), which sets targets relating to waste avoidance, resource recovery and protection of health and the environment. Now in its fifth year, a review of the strategy is underway to evaluate its performance and determine improvements that could be made to ensure it stays current and relevant.



Leakage (litter and illegal dumping)

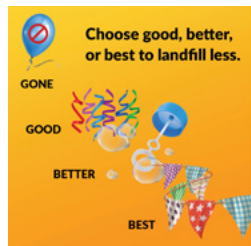
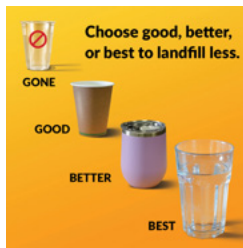
WA Plan for Plastics single-use plastic bans 2022–25

In WWF-Australia's *The State of Plastics in Australia* scorecard for 2023, Western Australia was shown to be leading the way nationally on phasing out single-use plastics. This is a result of the ban on single-use plastic bowls, plates, cutlery, coffee cups and lids, straws, and takeaway food containers.

Western Australia's [Plan for Plastics](#) is being implemented in a staged approach.

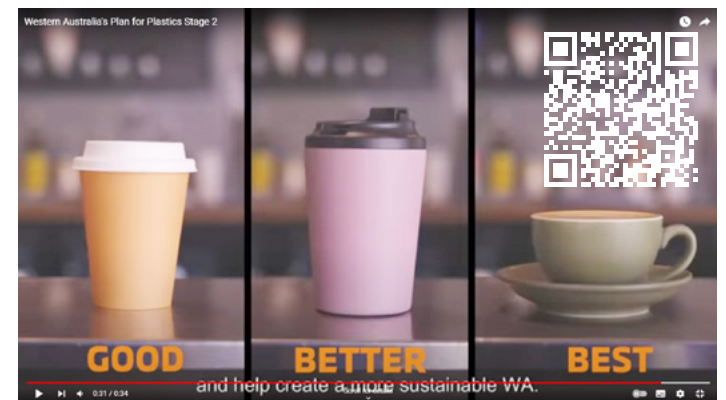
Stage 2 began in February 2023, with items to be phased out between September 2023 and July 2025.

From 1 September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded plastic packaging (loose fill) Expanded polystyrene cups and trays for meat and seafood Degradable plastics Disposable cotton buds with plastic stems Microbeads in rinse-off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products
From 1 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposable plastic cups for hot drinks Disposable plastic cup lids (for hot and cold drinks) Disposable plastic trays for takeaway or eat-in food
From 1 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-use plastic promotional film for outdoor applications
From 1 September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic produce bags for fruit and vegetables Plastic takeaway containers for fresh food



Transition periods will allow businesses to run down their supplies and make plans for alternative processes and packaging. The rollout of the Plan for Plastics has been supported with targeted community education, and retail and supplier engagement.

The Environmental Protection (Prohibited Plastics and Balloons) Regulations 2018 will be amended to ensure produce bags supplied after the enforcement date of 1 September 2024 are certified as compostable in line with Australian composting standards (AS4736:2006 or AS5810:2010). Plastic takeaway containers for fresh food will also be banned.



Watch our Plan for Plastics Stage 2 campaign on [YouTube](#)



E-waste to landfill ban

On 1 July 2024, the department implemented the ban on e-waste to landfill, fulfilling the State Government's election commitment and helping Western Australia move towards its goal of becoming a low-waste, circular economy.

The ban includes e-waste items such as batteries, mobile phones, televisions, computers, light globes and fluorescent tubes, large white goods and professional medical devices.

Funding of \$14 million has been committed to implementation, which includes support for policy and regulatory changes, infrastructure grants for new e-waste collection and recycling infrastructure, and community education.

The ban is aimed at industry rather than households, with banned items having recovery pathways in place to ensure a smooth transition, aligning with national product stewardship arrangements, and supporting local industry capacity.

End-of-life tyres

In 2023–24 Western Australia led collaborative work on the development of national principles to inform future action on end-of-life tyres. This included investigation of key issues relating to end-of-life tyres and a high-level assessment of reuse options, such as for 'off-the-road' tyres used in mining and agriculture.

This project was part of an agreement with federal, state and territorial governments following the inclusion of waste tyres in the federal Minister's Product Stewardship Priority List. The findings are expected to be delivered to Environment Ministers in late 2024.

► New tyre recycling infrastructure

In May 2024, Western Australia's most advanced tyre recycling infrastructure opened, supported by an Australian Government and State Government co-investment of \$5.2 million, with Tyrecycle contributing \$9.6 million. Tyrecycle's new recycling plant in East Rockingham will have the capacity to process 42,000 tonnes of tyres every year and support 10 new jobs.

Funded through the Recycling Modernisation Fund, this project and others are expected to add 1.3 million tonnes of processing capacity every year across all national jurisdictions, diverting valuable materials from landfill for reuse and supporting new jobs in the circular economy.

We are administering the [Recycling Modernisation Fund](#) for Western Australian projects.

Visit site!





Aboriginal
Engagement
and
Partnerships

Deanne Fitzgerald, Senior Manager
Strategy and Planning

Aboriginal engagement and advancement

Closing the Gap

The department is committed to delivering its projects and services in alignment with the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#) and the state's [Closing the Gap Jurisdictional Implementation Plan 2023–2025](#) and [Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy](#).

We maintain a commitment to increase engagement and participation of Aboriginal people in the stewardship of Western Australia's land and water. This is reflected in our [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) and programs of work including:



Water is critical to improving economic and social outcomes for First Nations peoples. Closing the Gap aims to redress this through the development of a new inland waters target.

We have also been working with the State Government to increase Aboriginal inclusion in the water industry, through water allocation planning and licensing processes.



Then AWEAG co-Chair Jason Barrow (right) conducts a smoking ceremony to farewell outgoing Director General Michelle Andrews and welcome Alistair Jones into the role



► Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group

Recognising the profound cultural knowledge and connection to Country and living waters of First Nations people, the AWEAG provides strategic counsel to the department. The AWEAG meets quarterly to ensure that Aboriginal knowledge, values and needs are considered and appropriately addressed in the way the department manages and regulates Western Australia’s environment and water resources.



Our staff meet with our AWEAG and the Committee of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Water Interests

► Aboriginal Empowerment Board

Established in 2022, the Aboriginal Empowerment Board leads and guides the department’s commitment and vision for ongoing reconciliation and the engagement and empowerment of Aboriginal peoples and communities through our business activities.

The Board meets quarterly and is made up of our Corporate Executive and Aboriginal staff.

► Yamatji Water Company

The department has engaged the newly established Yamatji Water Company to provide [water monitoring services](#) as part of the state’s Yamatji Nation Southern Regional Agreement native title extinguishment settlement package.

The services will be provided by Yamatji people who have been trained in an arrangement between Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation, ATC Work Smart and Central Regional TAFE, with support from the department. This comprehensive training included a work placement at our Geraldton office and rotations with ILUKA Resources, 29 Metals, Water Corporation and Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation.



Yamatji Water Company and department staff presented to Yamatji Cultural Groups



Beachpit sampling

This collaboration aims to enhance the economic independence and self-determination of the Yamatji people through the sustainable development and management of water resources within the region.

► La Grange collaboration agreements

As part of the [La Grange Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems Investigation](#) project, the department has signed collaboration agreements with Nyamba Buru Yawuru and Karajarri Traditional Lands Association. These agreements detail how we work together and how we can use the knowledge that is shared.



Through this project, Yawuru Country Managers and Karajarri Rangers worked with our scientists on eight field trips on Country in 2023–24. This involved:

- ecohydrological, vegetation and water monitoring
- bilby surveys
- cultural mapping
- heritage surveys.

A unique aspect of this project is the investigation into the role that groundwater may play in the health of the nearshore marine environment.

We also worked with North Regional TAFE to develop a Certificate II course in Sampling and Measurement, which had its first intake in May 2024. This offers Country Managers and Rangers from Traditional Owner groups a formal qualification in environmental monitoring relevant to their region.

The ability of Aboriginal Ranger groups to gain formal qualifications in groundwater sampling, measurement techniques and equipment operation means they are better able to undertake fee-for-service work for other organisations.

► Indigenous Land Use Agreements

The State Government has committed to resolving native title compensation matters through agreement with native title parties. The department plays a pivotal role in progressing commitments under three native title settlements and is represented on the steering and implementation committees overseeing delivery of Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

South West Native Title Settlement

The department is working in partnership with South West Regional Corporations to facilitate access to public drinking water source areas for some customary activities. Work is progressing through the South West Public Drinking Water Source Working Group, co-chaired by the department and Water Corporation.

Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement

We support the Yamatji Nation with key components of the Indigenous land use agreement. This includes the use or trade of a 25-gigalitre-per-year groundwater reserve, funding for groundwater investigations to

explore viable water resources within the reserve and accredited water monitoring training and employment. Support for managing these commitments is also provided by an Aboriginal Liaison Officer funded through the settlement.

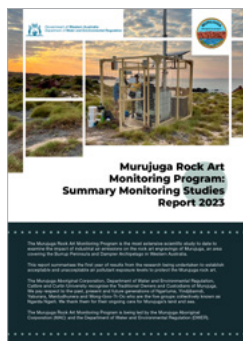
Tjiwarl Palyakuwa Indigenous Land Use Agreement

The Tjiwarl Agreement recognises the spiritual relationship of Tjiwarl people to water, the importance of access to water resources and the need for input into the management of water on Tjiwarl Country.

Through the Tjiwarl Water Working Group, we are supporting Tjiwarl people to undertake a study of water resources on Country and to identify and protect their cultural, economic and environmental values. We also support them to access information related to water licensing and permitting as well as early engagement with water licence and permit applicants.

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

The department is committed to the ongoing protection of Murujuga's rock art by working in partnership with the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC). MAC represents five language groups who come together to care for Murujuga land and sea Country, known collectively as Ngarda Ngarli.



In recognition of MAC's ongoing leadership, we renewed our longstanding partnership with MAC in October 2023. As part of this, funding was extended to support MAC's involvement in and oversight of the Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program.

In December 2023, the department and MAC jointly released the [first-year results](#) from the Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program, the most extensive scientific study to date to examine the impact of industrial air emissions on the rock art engravings of Murujuga.

This year, MAC Rangers Glen Aubry and Kasziem Bin Sali and our Aboriginal Project Officer Matt Palfrey completed the first of five university-level micro-credentials on air quality monitoring, which are essential to support ongoing implementation of the monitoring program.

► Jillian Collard: Executive leadership experience

Our Director Aboriginal Engagement and Partnerships, Jillian Collard, is a Noongar leader with connections to the Whadjuk, Ballardong and Wilman groups.

In 2023–24 Jillian joined our Corporate Executive for 12 months as part of the Public Sector Commission's Women in Executive Leadership

Development Experience Initiative. This enabled her to gain executive leadership experience and expand her impact across the agency.

► Danjoo Koorliny

Danjoo Koorliny is a large-scale, long-term, systems-change movement designed and led by Aboriginal people to help us all walk together towards 2029 (200 years of colonisation in Perth/Boorloo) and beyond. We continue to strengthen our connection with Danjoo Koorliny, an initiative that focuses on improving the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Western Australia.



“Continuing to build on my leadership journey gave me the courage to take that next step and take part in this initiative to expand my skills at the executive level. It's been an exciting opportunity that gave me the confidence to elevate, and contribute to the executive, the department and the sector. I've enjoyed my experience on the initiative and look forward to the future and continuing my leadership opportunities.”

– Jillian

A place of opportunity!



Our capabilities

Graduate program

Our recruitment drive for our 2025 Graduate Program and Aboriginal Graduate Program was again supported by the Public Sector Commission's 'A place of opportunity' initiative.

We built on the success of earlier recruitment campaigns to attract university graduates committed to positive environmental change by offering well-rounded professional, personal and peer-led development.

Incorporating a specialised Aboriginal graduate program highlights our commitment to valuing Aboriginal knowledge and cultural advice as set out in our [Strategic plan 2022–26](#).

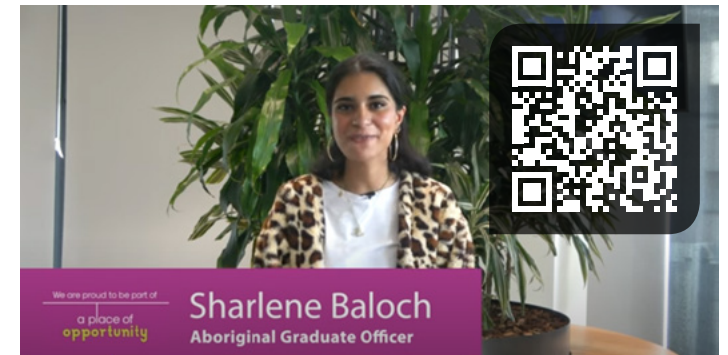
Our Aboriginal graduates bring valuable cultural perspectives to decision-making processes, which will lead to more enriched, informed and diverse outcomes.

Previous page: Minister for Environment; Climate Action Reece Whitby and Minister for Water Simone McGurk with previous graduate program participants

All graduates are supported through further education, mentoring, networking and the chance to rotate placements across our portfolios. Our Youth Outreach Understanding and Networking Group (YOUNG) is a platform for staff aged 30 and under to voice their opinions and concerns. The group's objective is to link members with intergenerational connections, knowledge-sharing, upskilling and volunteering.

Graduates also learn new skills to combat climate change at an individual and professional level through carbon literacy training run in collaboration with Edith Cowan University's School of Business and Law.

We were delighted to be included as a Top Graduate Employer in 2023 by the Australian Association of Graduate Employers.



Watch program testimonial by Sharlene Baloch on [YouTube](#)



2024 Graduate Officers Rebecca Wei, Brianne Robinson-Ellis, Rachel Padden, Lucinta Holmes and Sharlene Baloch

Building leadership capabilities

A key component of our portfolio operating model is the Building Leadership Impact initiative.

This was formally released across the Western Australia public sector in February 2023 and offers a new and comprehensive approach to strengthening the leadership behaviours of all public sector employees.

We are investing in our staff, no matter their level, qualification, age, role, or experience, to build capability and develop strong leadership. This will enable the department to meet challenging and complex business needs and to create high-performing teams.

Our new, best-practice MyLearning online training portal supports this initiative. Staff can build their leadership capability through the wide range of training topics such as career development, change management, critical thinking, goal setting, project management, emotional intelligence and building resilience.

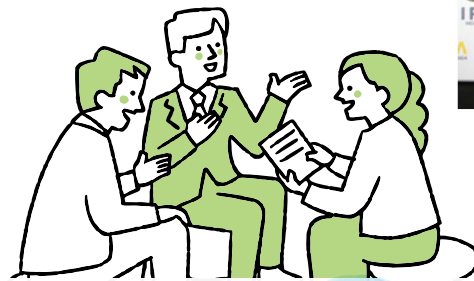
Staff reunion

On 5 June 2024, World Environment Day, we held our inaugural staff reunion at Perth City Farm.

Fifty-four former staff members attended, reconnecting and sharing memories. The positive feedback sparked a conversation about establishing an alumni group.

A department alumni group would offer an enduring sense of community and provide collaborative networking opportunities. It would also create a platform for mentoring and professional development, ensuring that the department's evolving environmental priorities continue to support a strong economy and thriving communities.

Post-event survey data highlighted the enduring bonds and shared commitment to the environment among past and present staff. The establishment of an alumni group will be explored in the coming year.



W.S. Lonnie Awards

The Institute of Public Administration Australia WA's W.S. Lonnie Awards are held each year for excellence and accountability in annual reporting.

Our [2022–23 annual report](#) claimed the Silver Award in the General Government Sector – Agencies with 101–1,000 full-time equivalent staff. In the Major Awards section, it won the Margaret McAleer Special Commendation, shared with Western Australia Police Force.

The recognition follows a Bronze Award for our [2021–22 report](#) and a Gold Award for our [2020–21 report](#).



Governance

Agency Capability Review outcomes reporting

A review of the department was carried out between November 2021 and June 2022 as part of the Public Sector Commission's sector-wide Agency Capability Review Program.

The [review](#), published in September 2022, acknowledged our committed and values-based workforce with strong science knowledge and policy skills, and our effective relationships across government and with our statutory boards and committees.

► Our response

The department began the implementation of a new portfolio operating model in August 2023, which saw us shift from nine directorates to three portfolios: Climate and Sustainability, Approvals, and Strategy and Performance.

In November 2023, Chris Shaw was appointed Deputy Director General Approvals following the appointments of Dennis O'Reilly as Deputy Director General Strategy and Performance in January 2023, and Emily Briggs as Deputy Director General Climate and Sustainability in April 2023.

Implementation of the new structure is nearly complete. Our focus for the final phase will be on establishing the Statewide Delivery directorate to ensure we leverage our significant regional presence to its fullest extent for regulatory decision-making and policy setting across the department.

Work to reform our approvals system has also begun and we have accelerated the delivery of Environment Online.

Another new arrangement will see graduates starting in July 2024 join a cross-government graduate program offered by JTSI and DEMIRS.

The review findings

Improvements were suggested for us to:



Stakeholder, customer and community insights

Key findings from this year's stakeholder research:

- The proportion of key stakeholders who feel positive towards the department strengthened to 84 per cent.
- The majority (87%) of stakeholders believe their interactions with the department are the same as, or better than, their dealings with other government organisations.

Perceptions of the department's leadership, ability to address queries and provision of services needed to manage water and environmental resources have improved. Similarly, perceptions of the department considering the needs of stakeholders and the community, and considering current and emerging issues, have improved.



Slow response and approval times continue to be the key reasons for negative sentiment. Other weaker aspects of the customer service experience are the ease of accessing department services, ease of knowing who to contact, accessibility of appropriate people, and timeliness of communications.

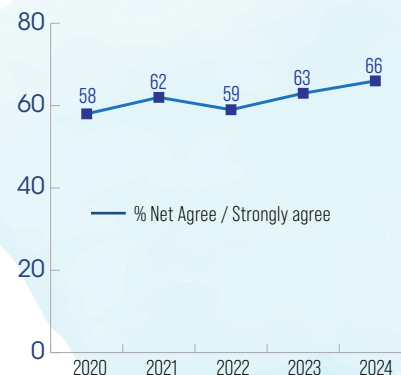
Customer ratings continue to vary according to the reason for the customer interaction.

Half of the stakeholders and customers who have used Environment Online feel it has improved their interactions.

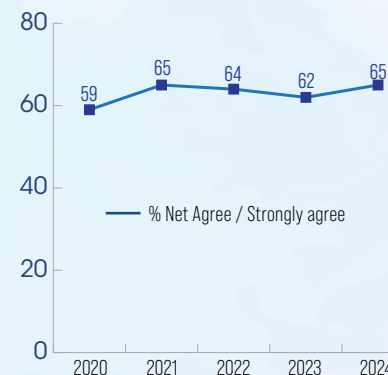
In response to this feedback, we are exploring customer service options across all work areas to deliver a better, and more consistent, customer experience.

Our department:

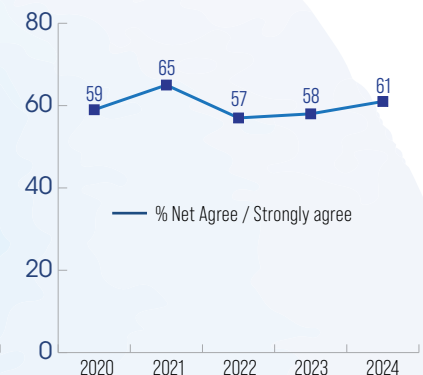
Is a strong leader in the management of Western Australia's water and environmental resources



Is able to address all your environmental and water regulation queries



Provides the services needed to manage the state's water and environmental resources



Agency performance

Outcome-based management framework

Outcome 1	48	Outcome 2	70	Outcome 4	86
Service 1 – Water information and advice	49	Service 4 – Environmental regulation	71	Service 6 – Waste strategies	87
Water measurement and monitoring	49	Industry regulation	71	Strategies and plans	87
River gauging assets	49	Native vegetation regulation	71	Waste levy and funding	89
Groundwater monitoring network	50	Environmental compliance and enforcement	72	Waste data reporting and plans	89
Water and environment planning advice	50	Promoting and monitoring compliance	73	Waste projects	90
Water information	51	Controlled waste	74	Waste priorities	92
Drainage planning and floodplain modelling	51	Environment Watch	74		
Service 2 – Water planning, allocation and optimisation	52	Responding to non-compliance	74	Outcome 5	97
Water allocation plans	52	Assurance reform	75	Service 7 – Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA	98
Water investigations	56	Environmental noise	75	Development proposals	98
Drinking water source protection	56	Contaminated sites	75	Planning schemes and scheme amendments	98
Water supply planning	57	Air quality	76	Consultation	100
Waterwise	58	Particle sensors deployed to the regions	77	Service 8 – Environmental management services to the EPA	100
Be Groundwater Wise	60	High-resolution datasets to assess urban heat island effect in Perth	77	Regional-scale environmental offsets public advice	100
Drainage for liveability	60	Air quality technical advice	77	Greenhouse gas guidance	101
Rural water planning	61			Stakeholder Reference Group	101
Rivers and estuaries	63	Outcome 3	78	Outcome 6	102
Healthy Rivers program	64	Service 5 – Environmental and water policy	79	Service 9 – Compliance monitoring services to the Minister for Environment	103
Service 3 – Water regulation, licensing and industry governance	66	EP Act amendments	79	Ministerial Statements	103
Water licensing	66	Native vegetation policy	80	Annual compliance fees	103
Water Online	67	Reform of environmental offsets	80		
Water compliance and enforcement	67	Nature programs	80		
Garden bore watering restrictions	68	Climate	81		
Water services	68	Advisory groups	84		
Managing public water supply	69				
Water fees	69				
Water policy	69				



Outcome 1

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

Service 1 – Water information and advice

Water measurement and monitoring

Our statewide hydrological data measurement and monitoring network is critical for water supply and allocation planning regimes, water licensing and regulation decisions, water resource development options, water quality improvement planning and floodplain management advice. Our river level data is the backbone of the state emergency flood warning service.

The network is a combination of about 2,800 groundwater monitoring bores, 280 river gauging stations, 170 meteorological sites and 20 continuous water quality monitoring buoys and installations.

This year we completed a \$3.52 million upgrade to our streamflow, meteorological and water quality site Internet Protocol (IP) telemetry systems, required because of the closure of the Globalstar satellite network in 2023 and the Telstra 3G mobile network in 2024.

The new systems use contemporary Narrowband Internet of Things mobile or Inmarsat geostationary satellite and Iridium Low Earth Orbit satellite communication networks. It provides more on-site data, remote monitoring of equipment health and analysis of river flow rates.

This year we completed a \$3.52 million upgrade to our streamflow, meteorological and water quality site Internet Protocol (IP) telemetry systems, required because of the closure of the Globalstar satellite network in 2023 and the Telstra 3G mobile network in 2024.



River gauging assets

The Replace and Maintain River Gauging Stations capital asset investment program is maintaining and upgrading our surface water and meteorological assets, and enables us to respond to altered hydrological conditions.

A review of the Fitzroy River catchment monitoring infrastructure and systems across the network was completed following the record-breaking 2022–23 flood which caused significant damage to infrastructure and communities in the Fitzroy Valley. It highlighted the need for innovation in creating robust and reliable remote gauging, with the floodwaters destroying two critical gauges and exceeding the capacity of others.

Our hydrographers responded by undertaking temporary repairs to key sites and building an entirely new gauge upstream of Fitzroy Crossing in collaboration with Main Roads Western Australia to provide the essential data needed to enable the new bridge construction. A permanent, state-of-the-art radar river gauge was established on the new bridge in June 2024.

Groundwater monitoring network

We are modernising the way we collect and provide groundwater monitoring data by installing mobile and satellite network telemetry systems to 1,400 of the highest-priority bores across Western Australia.

Data will be freely available for our scientists and planners, along with the community, to view and download via an update to our [Water Information Reporting](#) (WIR) portal.

We manage more than 6,700 groundwater monitoring bores worth about \$166 million, which we oversee under the Replace and Maintain Monitoring Bores program, the largest in our Asset Investment Program. This program manages contracts to drill and construct monitoring bores up to 1,000 m deep and ensures our infrastructure is suitable for gathering accurate groundwater data. In 2023–24 we invested about \$2.5 million, drilling nearly 3,000 m in total to replace eight deep monitoring wells, and we conducted more than 2,000 maintenance visits to bores across the state.

We plan to invest more than \$4 million annually over the next decade, continuing to establish and maintain crucial groundwater monitoring infrastructure. The Replace and Maintain Monitoring Bores program will focus on areas in the Mid West and South West where water demand is high.

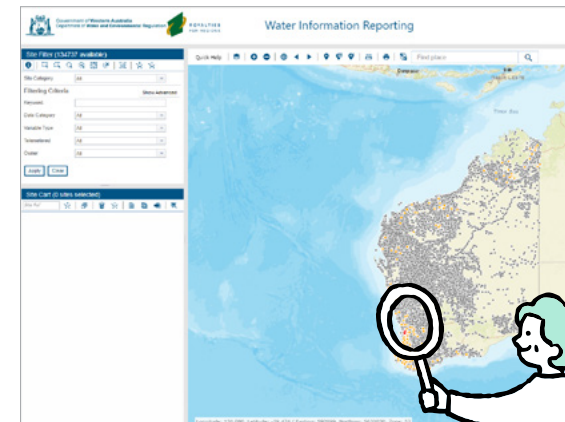
Water and environment planning advice

The department provides advice to local governments and land planning agencies on water and environmental regulation and water resource management in urban areas, to protect our natural systems and support sustainable development. This role extends to pre-emptively scoping regulatory processes under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) and *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* (Contaminated Sites Act) to ensure development proponents are informed of other legislative requirements.

In 2023–24 we assessed and responded to 2,636 requests for water and environment advice. Of these:

- 1,531 requests were from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
- 707 requests were from LGAs
- 128 requests were from DEMIRS
- 55 requests were from the EPA
- 215 requests were from other stakeholders, including other State Government agencies and utilities, and industry.

This also included advice on 133 water management reports associated with land planning.



Water Information Reporting portal

Water information

Our WIR portal provides instant access to more than 150,000 water monitoring sites. The 2023–24 year was slightly down on last year, with 8,160 requests for water information and an average turnaround time of less than five minutes. Analysis of data use shows most of these requests relate to environmental assessment, research and investigation.

Drainage planning and floodplain modelling

We produce catchment-scale flood models for priority development areas and major state projects, and deliver guidance on stormwater and shallow groundwater management.

We also provide strategic flood risk management and land capability advice for development areas identified in the Western Australian Planning Commission's Perth and Peel @ 3.5 million frameworks. A total of 107 enquiries were resolved, with advice provided to members of the public, industry and government on water resources and flood risk management and modelling as part of the land planning process.

Requests for floodplain development advice remain strong. Over the past 12 months we provided more than 830 responses to support decision-making and help the community understand flood risk.

Water Information Reporting data use

Purpose	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	
Environmental assessment	2,467	2,547	3,051	2,713	↓
Research and investigation	1,444	2,242	2,622	2,880	↑
Other	393	364	435	462	↑
Mining and exploration	495	573	653	644	↓
Agriculture	286	269	430	316	↓
Domestic supply	172	194	153	134	↓
Water source protection	216	292	551	493	↓
Infrastructure	350	335	382	384	↑
Property development/land use planning	187	223	249	16	↓
Industry and commerce	92	78	99	91	↓
Recreation	81	29	32	27	↓

We also used remote sensing and field work to update our floodplain mapping datasets to include data from the February 2024 flood mapping of the Fortescue River at Newman.



Western Australia floodplain mapping site

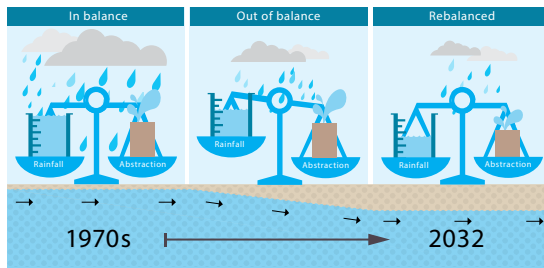
We provided more than 830 responses to support decision-making and help the community understand flood risk.



Service 2 – Water planning, allocation and optimisation

Water allocation plans

Water allocation plans remain the department's key water policy documents and essential tools in the response to climate change. Using the latest science and water data, these plans establish how much water is available from rivers and aquifers in a designated area, how much is set aside for the environment and public drinking supply, and how much can be licensed sustainably to businesses and individuals.



The *Gngangara groundwater allocation plan* aims to rebalance the amount of groundwater we take from the system

► Gngangara

The Gngangara groundwater system is Perth's largest natural water source for drinking water and private supply, and it supports our wetlands, bushland and large urban trees. Monitoring data shows that average groundwater levels in the Superficial aquifer of the Gngangara groundwater system dropped to the lowest level in eight years in autumn 2024.

The [Gngangara groundwater allocation plan](#) was launched in June 2022 and continues to be implemented. Its aim to rebalance the amount of water we take from the Gngangara groundwater system will be achieved by Water Corporation reducing its baseline abstraction by 27 per cent and most other licensed groundwater users reducing their take by 10 per cent (from 1 July 2028).



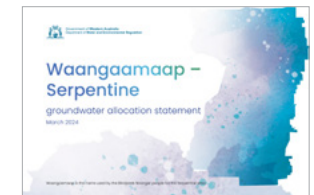
Learn more about the *Gngangara groundwater allocation plan* on [YouTube](#)

All 16 metropolitan councils in the plan area are part of the Waterwise Councils Program, a joint initiative of Water Corporation and the department, to help improve the way they use water and build waterwise communities.

Increases to the Gngangara Horticulture Water Use Efficiency Grants Program were announced in May 2024, with the size of grants doubled for horticulture and viticulture growers who rely on the Gngangara groundwater system. Up to \$100,000 is now available to implement water use efficiency infrastructure and soil amelioration activities.

► Waangaamaap – Serpentine

The [Waangaamaap – Serpentine groundwater allocation statement](#) was released in March 2024. It describes our review of allocation limits in the Serpentine groundwater area and the Keysbrook subarea of the Stakehill groundwater area in the context of past and projected changes in rainfall caused by climate change.



The Waangaamaap – Serpentine groundwater statement area is about 30 km south of Boorloo (Perth) and covers 430 km². Groundwater in the area provides base flow for streams and rivers, including the Waangaamaap Bilya (Serpentine River).

Most of the licensed groundwater use in the area is for agricultural purposes and irrigation of parks, ovals and other public open spaces by developers and local governments. Groundwater is also used for small-scale stock and domestic and garden bore uses that may be exempt from licensing.

The statement set new allocation limits that will improve the security of supply of existing groundwater users over the coming decade and reduce the risk of impacts to groundwater-dependent ecosystems and cultural values from over-abstraction.

Information considered in the review included technical studies completed as part of the Peel Integrated Water Initiative, which found climate change had already affected the availability of surface and groundwater resources in the area.

► Gingin

The [Gingin groundwater and surface water allocation plans: 2024 evaluation statement](#) was released in June 2024. It is the first published assessment of the 2015 [Gingin groundwater allocation plan](#) and the second for the 2011 [Gingin surface water allocation plan](#).



The evaluation found several ongoing risks to groundwater and surface water resources in the southern part of the region where climate change and abstraction has led to long-term declines in groundwater levels and streamflow.

Updated management arrangements were established in the evaluation statement, which will be implemented while a new combined (groundwater and surface water) allocation plan is developed for the area.

To help prevent further declines and to reduce the risk of impacts on water users and the environment, the evaluation:

- caps the allocation limits of surficial aquifer resources in the Gingin groundwater plan area at current licensed entitlements
- updates the Gingin groundwater allocation plan's licensing and trading policy for

Gingin watercourses and the trading rules for the Cowalla groundwater subarea

- includes revised low-flow thresholds for Gingin Brook and Lennard Brook.

These are important interim steps while a new combined Gingin water allocation plan is developed.

► Warren-Donnelly

The Warren-Donnelly area is one of Australia's premier agricultural regions that supports diverse businesses and communities. The region's pristine environment and food production attracts thousands of tourists every year.



In October 2023 we released the [Warren-Donnelly surface water allocation plan: 2023 evaluation statement and future planning](#), which outlines that the current water allocation plan is still appropriate to support the region's horticultural industry and natural environments.

However, under a drying climate, the available water in this region is expected to reduce. We have begun developing a new Warren-Donnelly surface water allocation plan.



Maria Melero Lopez, Hydrogeologist, pre-drilling site preparation, Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area, La Grange

► Fitzroy and Derby

In October 2023 the State Government released key policy positions that will form the basis for [Fitzroy water allocation planning](#), as part of its ongoing commitment to protecting the Fitzroy River while supporting economic development. The [Water allocation planning in the Fitzroy – Policy position paper](#) includes 10 key policy positions developed following extensive consultation and scientific studies.

We also published [five technical reports](#) informed by scientific studies, which will guide future water allocation planning.

Following thorough feedback on [Derby water allocation planning](#) and ongoing conversations

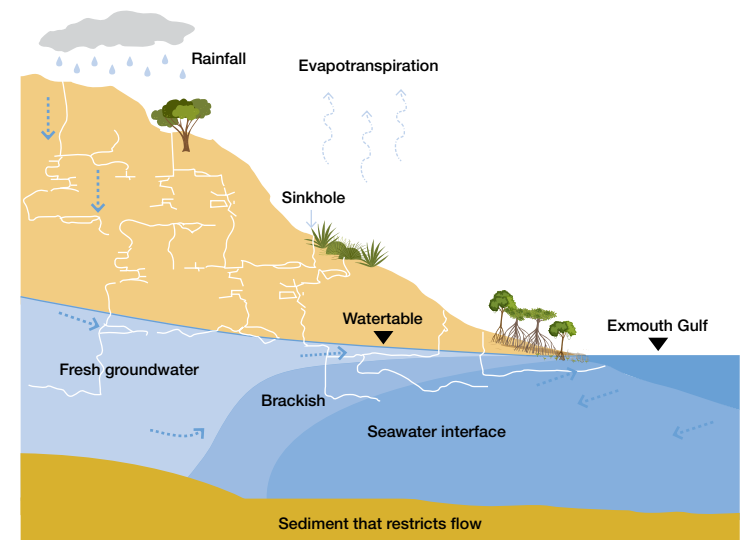
with Traditional Owners, a revised draft Derby plan will be released together with a future draft Fitzroy water allocation plan for further public comment.

► Exmouth

The department is reviewing water allocation limits for the Exmouth groundwater subareas of the North West Cape. The [Exmouth groundwater allocation planning](#) will help inform the work of the Minister for Environment's [Exmouth Gulf Taskforce](#) in providing recommendations on the conservation and enhancement of the key values of the Gulf and its surrounds.

Through the Taskforce we are consulting with the Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation to improve our understanding of the Cape Range subterranean waterways and help identify key groundwater-dependent ecological, cultural and social values.

Our review will also guide [Water Corporation's future water source planning](#) for Exmouth town's drinking water supply. We are actively working with Water Corporation as it develops options to meet drinking water supply demands for Exmouth, with a focus on options that are sustainable and consider future climate.



A conceptual cross-section of the Cape Range limestone groundwater system of the Exmouth peninsula, from Cape Range east to the Exmouth Gulf

Water investigations

The State Groundwater Investigations Program undertakes targeted groundwater investigations to ensure government and industry have timely and accurate knowledge of water resources suitable for drinking, agriculture, horticulture, mining and industry. In 2023–24 it spent \$3.75 million of capital funding supporting 13 active groundwater investigation projects.

The department receives capital funding to develop numerical models used to support water management, planning, licensing and measurement activities.

Water investigations highlights

Swan Valley program

Completion of drilling, resulting in 19 monitoring bores installed at 12 sites, with a total of 4,417 m drilled in the City of Swan, about 15 km north-east of the Perth CBD.

Data collected from the monitoring of these bores will assist with future resource management decisions.

Recharge Estimation Collaboration project

Development of a high-quality network for monitoring groundwater recharge on the Swan Coastal Plain. The project also investigated methods to estimate and predict recharge under a range of future climate conditions. We will use the findings to increase the reliability of recharge estimates, enabling us to make more informed decisions about water management.

Highlights from the 2023–24 Water Modelling Program include:

- finalising a regional groundwater model for Myalup, which predicts saltwater movement under various scenarios
- completing the Perth Regional Aquifer Modelling System (PRAMS 3.6) using supercomputing to improve planning for Perth and Gnangara
- finalising a water quality model for the Nullaki (Wilson Inlet) catchment, aiding decisions on artificial sandbar breaches.

Drinking water source protection

To support Western Australia's growth and development, the department protects public drinking water source areas using the Australian drinking water guidelines. Our efforts focus on legislative and policy frameworks to maintain the integrity of these water sources.



Public drinking water source area [mapping tool](#)

Water supply planning

During 2023–24 we completed an assessment of groundwater available for urban and industry development in Perth and Peel, which estimated the volume of water needed to irrigate new public open space and for industrial areas planned in the Perth and Peel @ 3.5 million frameworks. The assessment identified the processes to secure each water supply option at the appropriate stage of land use planning and will be used to inform regional licensing and planning advice.

Our regional strategy program in 2023–24 included an evaluation of the *Great Southern regional water supply strategy* published by the former Department of Water in 2014. The evaluation found that most of the actions from the 2014 strategy are progressed or completed, including:

- groundwater investigations in the Albany hinterlands area
- source development planning for potable schemes
- Waterwise programs
- upgrades to community and emergency water supply infrastructure.



Waterwise



The Waterwise program conserves our water resources and supports urban greening, biodiversity, tree canopy and urban cooling to create climate-resilient communities.



The second Waterwise action plan, [Kep Katitjin – Gabi Kaadadjan Waterwise Perth action plan 2](#), was launched in 2022. It is led by the department and has 41 actions across 11 state agencies:

- the departments of Communities; Finance; Planning, Lands and Heritage; Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries; Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions; Primary Industries and Regional Development; Education
- DevelopmentWA
- METRONET
- Water Corporation.

The program achievements since the launch of the first Waterwise action plan in 2019 are listed on the next page.

These efforts were recognised in November 2023 when the first action plan, *Waterwise Perth Action Plan 2019*, won the Australian Water Association WA Award for Organisational Excellence, and in May 2024 when it won the national award from the same body.

The third Waterwise action plan is in development and expected to be launched in 2024–25.



The *Waterwise Perth Action Plan 2019* received the Organisational Excellence Award at the state and national Australian Water Association Awards



Designer Darryl Bellotti



Listen to Darryl's story behind the artwork





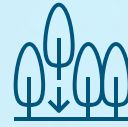
295,400
waterwise plantings

creating biodiversity and cooling our suburbs



24
feasibility studies

completed to identify appropriate water supplies for urban green space in areas with limited or no groundwater availability



10,110
trees planted

reducing urban heat in our suburbs



38 Water Corporation assets

and surrounding land transformed into neighbourhood green spaces, such as living streams, wetlands, community gardens, nature corridors or parkland



100%
Boorloo and Bindjareb councils

endorsed as Waterwise and 88% recognised as Gold Waterwise Councils; 9 councils have achieved Platinum status



ACHIEVEMENTS 2019 – 2024



**WATER
WISE
PERTH**
Action Plan



152,000
students

participated in the Waterwise Schools program



9
strategic documents/projects

influenced as partner agencies proactively incorporate Aboriginal values and knowledge into their actions



47
community partnerships

to raise awareness of water's importance and strengthen community connection to local water stories and environment



water saved

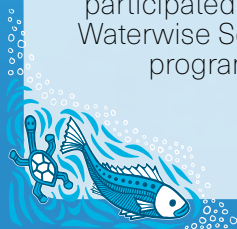
- ▶ **492 million litres** saved by retrofitting social housing with water-efficient fixtures
- ▶ **1,024 million litres** saved through programs to help households adapt to climate change
- ▶ **22,770 million litres** saved by business and industry by improving their water use practices



This plan includes

41 actions
being delivered

through the collaborative efforts of 11 agencies that are **actively addressing the impacts of climate change** through their actions



Be Groundwater Wise

Our Be Groundwater Wise behavioural change campaign is part of the Waterwise program. It shows how far we have come as a community and the inroads we have made in conserving groundwater resources.

In 2023–24 our Perth spring and autumn awareness campaigns gained more than 7 million online impressions, reaching more than 1.5 million users across Facebook and Instagram.



Watch Sabrina Hahn discuss our precious groundwater on [YouTube](#)

Drainage for liveability

The [Drainage for Liveability program](#) is a joint initiative with Water Corporation that creates more sustainable, productive, resilient and liveable – that is, waterwise – communities. Working with interested community groups, local government and the development industry, we are improving stormwater drains and basins to increase the social and environmental value of these spaces in our urban environment.

We seek to provide advice, in consultation with Water Corporation, to stakeholders and develop agreed recommendations for technical and policy-related aspects of drainage management. The Drainage for Liveability guidance note series provides an integrated approach to drainage management, focusing on opportunities to maximise community and environmental benefits and manage risks from flooding and inundation.



Rural water planning

Ensuring rural communities are resilient to climate change remains a major priority. Our suite of programs is focused on providing secure and reliable emergency non-potable off-farm supplies for regional townscapes and emergency firefighting in the dryland agricultural region of Western Australia.

We provide assistance through the following programs.

► Community Water Supplies Partnership program

The CWSP program provides grants of up to \$100,000 to local governments or community groups for projects that improve non-potable water supplies in dryland agricultural areas that receive less than 600 mm average annual rainfall, and for use in times of emergency for stock and firefighting.

The CWSP program is supported by \$6.2 million in funding over four years by the Australian Government's National Water Grid Fund and the State Government.

In May 2024, the State Government provided \$1.5 million in additional funding to extend the CWSP program to the South West and Great Southern to help more communities manage the impacts of the dry conditions in 2023 and the summer of 2024.

The State Government approved 18 CWSP grants in 2023–24, totalling \$1,187,449 in funding for regional communities. Contributions from LGAs amounted to \$887,309 for total funding of \$2,074,758.

Esperance Community Water Supplies Partnership program

The Esperance CWSP program was a partnership project between the department, Shire of Esperance, South East Premium Wheat Growers Association and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD). The project lined two small, farm-scale water catchments with tarps. This has led to increased run-off into dams, resulting in the storage of significantly more water.

It was estimated that the catchments lined with tarps would have a run-off efficiency of 98 per cent and be able to capture more than 3 megalitres of water per year at each catchment site. The project also included sourcing and repurposing used CBH tarps, leading to waste minimisation and a reduced total project cost.



► Strategic and Agricultural Area dams

This program upgraded and developed a network of strategic community water supplies across dryland agricultural areas. The aim was to provide emergency water supplies for farmers and firefighting and to build water security for rural communities and towns to combat climate change. The \$7.3 million program was supported by joint funding from the State Government and the Australian Government's National Water Grid Fund and was completed in June 2024.



► Strategic Community Water Supply plans

Strategic Community Water Supply (SCWS) plans provide information for local governments and farmers on the location of SCWS sites and how to access non-potable water for emergency stock watering and firefighting purposes. This includes details on what other facilities or water supplies are available at each site. The SCWS site supplies are for emergency use in times when low rainfall causes on-farm supplies to become depleted and farmers need to travel to access water for livestock and essential farming purposes. Ten SCWS plans were finalised in 2023–24.



► Water deficiency declarations

Water deficiency declarations are implemented by the State Government during dry periods in our agricultural regions to address emergency animal welfare needs. Under a declaration, the State Government will provide water for livestock needs at a central storage point, within a 40 km radius of the farms impacted.

During the year, there were two water deficiencies declared in the Shire of Esperance, at Salmon Gums and Grass Patch. Water is still being carted to these sites.

Rivers and estuaries

► Healthy Estuaries WA

Our work to improve the health of estuaries across south-west Western Australia continues through [Healthy Estuaries WA](#), [Revitalising Geographe Waterways](#) and the [Bindjareb Djiilba \(Peel-Harvey estuary\) Protection Plan](#). These programs work in seven priority estuaries and their catchments: the Peel-Harvey estuary, Leschenault Estuary, Vasse-Geographe waterways, Hardy Inlet, Wilson Inlet, Torbay Inlet and Oyster Harbour. We monitor their water quality regularly at 176 locations.

In 2023–24 we completed seagrass surveys of Wilson Inlet, Hardy Inlet and Leschenault Estuary, taking 670 observations. Along with catchment and estuary numerical modelling and ecological expertise, this monitoring effort



Learn about farmer Zoe Johnson's fencing and revegetation project on [YouTube](#)

directly informs management actions that reduce nutrient inputs to our waterways.

Innovative trials were held near Mandurah to test a phosphorus-binding clay (HT-clay). The clay binds phosphorus from the water, making it unavailable for algae growth. The trials required the production of 35 tonnes of clay – the largest amount of HT-clay ever produced. In some cases, testing showed a 96 per cent decrease in phosphorus.

Farmers have fenced 160 km of waterways and revegetated 82 ha since the program launched in 2020, preventing nutrients and organic matter from livestock entering waterways.

The Healthy Estuaries WA fertiliser management program, part of the Sustainable Agriculture Strategy, was announced in April as a finalist in the Premier's Science Awards: Science Engagement Initiative of the Year 2023.

A record 257 farms participated in this year's annual fertiliser management program. It is estimated the farms could collectively reduce

the amount of phosphorus applied to their farms by 668,000 kg while saving a total of \$3,084,000 if they applied fertiliser based on their soil test results.

There has been an estimated 46 per cent reduction in the amount of phosphorus (a nutrient of major concern) applied on participating farms since 2020.



Healthy Estuaries WA team completed seagrass surveys, taking **670 observations**



Healthy Rivers program

Our [Healthy Rivers program](#) monitors almost 200 river and stream sites across south-west Western Australia and undertakes additional assessments as required. This work helps us to identify the ecosystem values that need protection, monitor threats and impacts, and evaluate ecosystem responses.

In 2023–24 the Healthy Rivers team undertook assessments at 69 sites across the south-west from Gingin Brook in the north, through the Avon River and down to the Goodga River east of Albany.



Watch Kelli O'Neill share her passion for healthy rivers on [Facebook](#)

► Fish kill response

The department's officers are part of the state's integrated response to fish deaths in Western Australian waters, working cooperatively with DPIRD, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the Department of Health and local governments. We are the lead response agency for inland waters, which includes collection and analysis of water, phytoplankton and fish samples, gathering information from the public, and notifying the community about causes and any public safety risks.

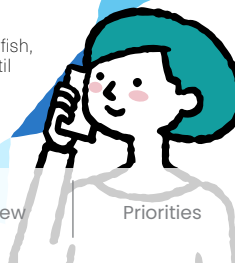
In 2023–24 we responded to 25 fish kill reports within inland waters and supported DPIRD with several other events recorded in marine waters.

Reporting a fish kill

If you see a fish kill, please report it immediately to:

- the DPIRD Fisheries [FishWatch hotline](#) 1800 815 507 (24 hour service)
- your nearest [Department of Water and Environmental Regulation](#) or [DPIRD](#) office
- within the Swan Canning Riverpark, contact [DBCA](#) on 9278 0900 or after hours on 9278 0981

For your safety please do not touch dead or dying fish, and avoid contact with the water in the area until our officers can assess the risk. This includes not using fish in the area of a fish kill event as bait, in case there is risk of transferring disease or contaminants.



Most fish deaths were attributed to poor water quality occurring through the unprecedented dry season, typically because of low dissolved oxygen. Dry season rainfall events, which wash organic material and nutrients into systems and stir up sediments, were a common trigger of the recorded fish kills.

► Bindjareb Džilba (Peel-Harvey estuary) Protection Plan

The [Bindjareb Džilba \(Peel-Harvey estuary\) Protection Plan](#) is in its third year of implementation, with strong positive engagement from key stakeholders and funding support from a State Government election commitment. The Policy and Planning Committee – co-chaired by Hon David Templeman MLA, Member for Mandurah, and Lisa Munday MLA, Member for Dawesville – meets regularly to progress priority actions to protect the estuary.

The Protection Plan supports a partnership with PHCC to expand the impact of fertiliser management and river restoration activities implemented through Healthy Estuaries WA. It also supports partnerships with local Aboriginal corporations to increase Traditional Owner involvement through Bindjareb-led yarning circles and cultural mapping.



Environmental Officers
Kelli O'Neill and
Gina Marino

Service 3 – Water regulation, licensing and industry governance

Water licensing

Administering the sustainable and equitable take of water through the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* ensures our water resources are protected. Water licences issued by the department set the volume of water that can be taken, what water resource it can be taken from, where it can be used and for what purpose.

As at 30 June 2024, we managed 12,634 water licences across 773 groundwater and 427 surface water resources. These licences authorise the taking of 4,306 gigalitres (GL) of water – 3,302 GL from groundwater resources and 1,004 GL from surface water resources.

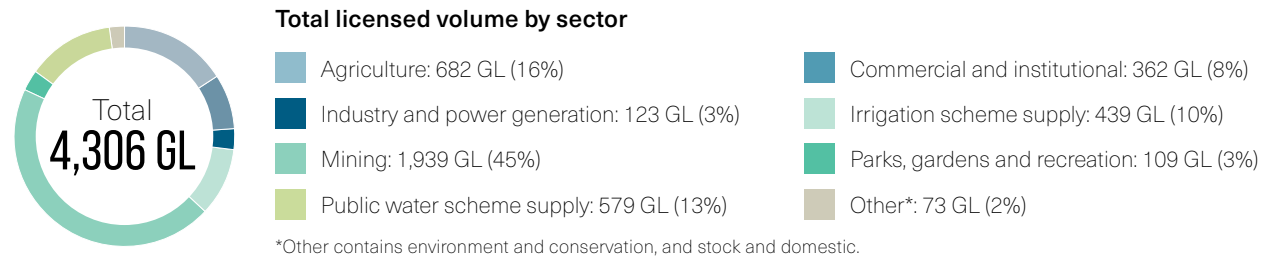
In certain areas, the construction of water-use infrastructure including bores and dams, and the disturbance or interference of the beds and banks of watercourses, are also subject to authorisations. As at 30 June 2024, there were 916 licences to construct and alter groundwater wells and 446 permits to interfere with beds and banks granted across the state.

916
licences to
construct and alter
groundwater wells

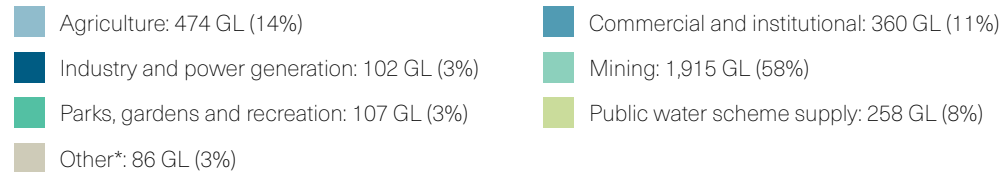
446
permits to
interfere with
beds and banks

Western Australia's water users by sector (allocated volume)

Please note: The sector volumes (both individual and totalled) in each of these charts have been subject to rounding.

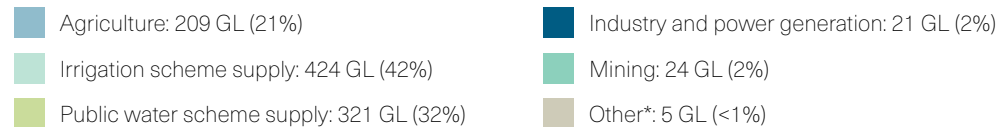


Groundwater licensed volume by sector



*Other contains irrigation scheme supply, environment and conservation, and stock and domestic.

Surface water licensed volume by sector



*Other includes stock and domestic, commercial and institutional, environment and conservation, and parks, gardens and recreation.

In 2023–24 the water licensing targets for average application processing times (65 days low risk, 75 days medium risk and 95 days high risk) were met for the low- and high-risk licence applications, and the timeframe was exceeded for medium-risk licence applications. The average assessment timeliness performances for low-, medium- and high-risk water licence applications were 58 days, 84 days and 92 days, respectively.

As at 30 June 2024, there were 543 water licence applications in backlog, which is a 49 per cent increase on the previous year. The number of licence applications received across 2023–24 was significantly higher than in previous years, which has contributed to the backlog growth.

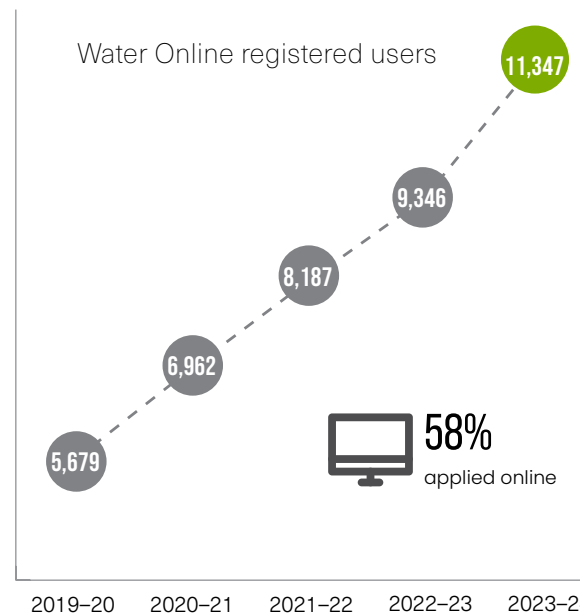
These increases reflect the growing complexity of water resource management in a changing climate where water resources are in high demand. We are enhancing the capacity and capability of regulatory teams in our Statewide Delivery directorate with the aim of stabilising and improving assessment timeframes.

We have also implemented a statewide water licensing backlog program, which includes longer-term approaches to maintaining the backlog within a target threshold of fewer than 350 applications.

Water Online

[Water Online](#) is one of our pioneer digital systems and remains a highly successful one-stop portal for water licensing. It allows water users to lodge water licence and permit applications, and licensees and permit holders to submit reports and meter readings.

The percentage of portal users continues to rise. In 2023–24, 58 per cent of applications were submitted online, with 2,021 new users registering for a total of 11,347 users. Water Online will be transitioned into Environment Online in 2024–25 as part of the integration and improvement in online services.



Water compliance and enforcement

As at 30 June 2024, 5,404 water licences representing 4,181 GL of water were subject to metering and alternative measurement requirements under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Regulations 2000.


 **5,404**
water licences

Our regulatory work includes educational and behavioural support as well as compliance and enforcement activities that ensure legal requirements are being followed. When necessary, formal action is taken for breaches of these requirements.


Support mechanisms are made available to licensees which promote self-regulation of the terms and conditions of water licences. For example, by using Water Online, licensees can receive reminder notices of due dates for report submissions and input meter details to keep track of monthly and annual water use.

Compliance monitoring consists of on-site visits and remote monitoring activities. In 2023–24 we undertook 151 compliance inspections and water meter audits, conducted 864 desktop water use surveys and completed 324 reviews of submitted compliance reports. We also processed 2,052 abstraction volume submissions and meter reading submissions.

 **864**
desktop water use surveys

 **324**
reviews of reports

As an outcome of these monitoring activities, 1,357 incident reviews and investigations were undertaken, and we responded to 130 confirmed incidents of non-compliance with a combination of statutory and non-statutory enforcement actions. We issued 58 letters of education, 51 warning notices and 17 infringement notices, and gave four statutory directions.

 **1,357**
incident reviews and investigations


 **58**
letters of education

 **51**
warning notices

 **17**
infringement notices

For alleged garden bore watering restriction offences during the past financial year, the department issued 291 warning notices and 337 infringements.

 **291**
warning notices

 **337**
infringement notices



Garden bore watering restrictions

Most garden bores in Western Australia are not licensed but are subject to sprinkler restrictions under the Water Agencies (Water Use) By-laws 2010. The department, in partnership with Water Corporation, regulates domestic garden bore sprinkler restrictions.

In Perth and Mandurah, domestic garden bore sprinkler restrictions align with scheme water users, allowing watering on two rostered days a week. Elsewhere in the state, garden bore owners can water once a day between 6pm and 9am.

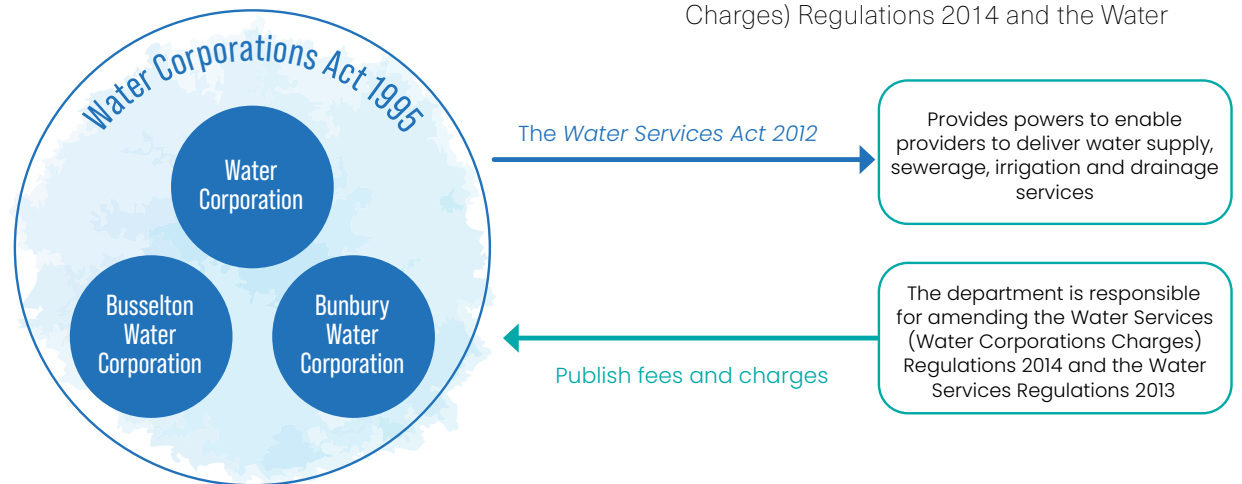
Water services

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

The *Water Services Act 2012* provides powers to enable licensed service providers including the water corporations to deliver water supply, sewerage, irrigation and drainage services, including establishing areas of operation.

There are 18 other licensed water service providers in Western Australia, comprising local governments, irrigation cooperatives, mining companies, developers and the Rottnest Island Authority.

The Water Services (Water Corporations Charges) Regulations 2014 and the Water



Services Regulations 2013 are amended annually to publish customer fees and charges for Aqwest, Busselton Water and Water Corporation. The department makes the amendments in consultation with the corporations, to take effect in the following financial year.

We continue to work with Water Corporation as required to support the improvement of water services to regional Aboriginal communities. This includes support in licensing, permits and public drinking water source protection.

Managing public water supply

The department manages surface water and groundwater used by the State Government's water corporations for public water supply through water licences issued under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914*.

We continue to work with Water Corporation and other providers to ensure abstraction is sustainable and protects the health and integrity of the resource. The work on abstraction to support resource health has been particularly active and ongoing for the Gngangara groundwater resource.

We also ensure that sources of drinking water are protected from potential contamination risks through the Water Source Protection program.

We are working with Water Corporation on planning for Exmouth and Albany's next drinking water sources and Perth's next major water source, the Alkimos seawater desalination plant. From 2028, this plant will supply 50 billion litres of clean, safe drinking water to millions of Western Australians each year. During 2023–24 we also worked with Water Corporation on source development planning for Esperance and the Warren-Blackwood regional water supply scheme, and with Busselton Water for the Busselton scheme.

Water fees

Fees for water licence and permit applications have been in place for the mining and public water supply sectors since 2018. In 2023–24, we spent \$17,471,511 on the assessment of all water licence and permit applications and collected \$1,377,576 in fees from 64 licensees for 516 application assessments.

Water policy

In December 2023, the Minister for Water announced State Government plans for a new Water Resource Management Bill would not proceed, following feedback from water users and stakeholders.

The plan was to consolidate six pieces of legislation governing Western Australia's water resources management system to simplify water management; however, feedback indicated that many of the existing and long-standing arrangements remain suitable.

To ensure community needs are met, priority will be given to supporting timely processing of licence applications and investigations.

At a national level, the department has been working with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions to develop a new National Water Agreement to replace the existing National Water Initiative. The new agreement is being developed to provide a nationally consistent framework for water reform and policy.





Outcome 2

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

Service 4 – Environmental regulation

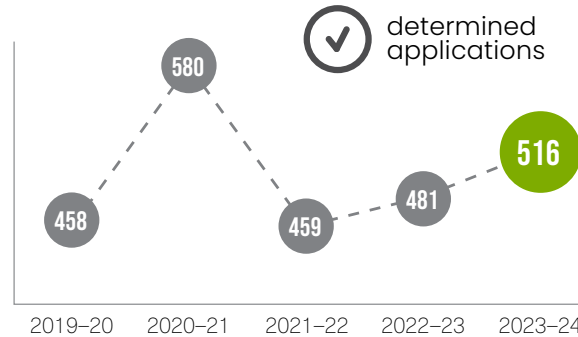
Industry regulation

In 2023–24 the department received 637 applications for licences, works approvals and amendments, similar to the previous year (630). Growth in the state's mining, oil and gas, industrial, renewable, intensive agriculture, and food and beverage sectors continued to drive this high application workload, a trend also observed across the three preceding financial years.

The number of applications determined this year (516) also rose compared with the previous year (481). Open applications under assessment remained steady, with 294 as at 30 June 2024, the same as last year. Despite the 7.3 per cent increase in the number of applications determined this year, backlog applications increased to 96 in 2023–24, up 20 since the same time last year.

 **294**
open applications under assessment

 **96**
backlog applications



The average processing timeframe for the year was 78 working days, the same as last year. Opportunities to improve performance are being developed through the approvals system reform, such as parallel processing of multiple approvals and opportunities for deemed decision-making.

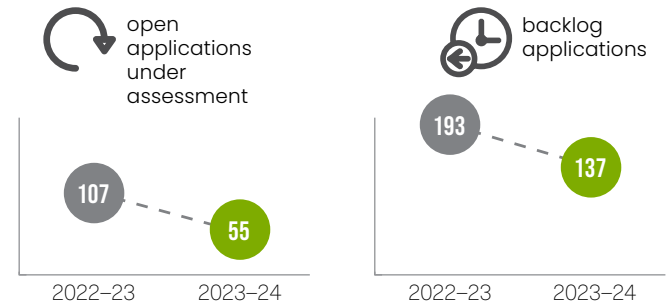


Native vegetation regulation

► Clearing permits

The department received 226 native vegetation clearing permit applications in 2023–24, about 13 per cent fewer than in 2022–23. Through intensive focus on backlog applications, we reduced the number of open backlog applications from 107 at the end of last year to 55 as at 30 June 2024 – a 49 per cent reduction. The total number of open applications reduced to 137, down from 193 last year.

As many of the finalised backlog applications had been with the department for a protracted period, the average number of working days



taken to make a decision increased to 119 days, up from 71 days in 2022–23. The percentage of applications decided within a timeframe of 60 working days also reduced to 41 per cent in 2023–24, down from 53 per cent in 2022–23. We expect improved timeliness of decisions in 2024–25 now that many protracted backlog applications have been finalised.

Clearing permit applications in the South West, Perth-Peel and Wheatbelt regions made up 71 per cent of decisions made in 2023–24. Applications in these regions fall within the intensive land use zone, where historic clearing has been extensive, resulting in increasingly complex assessments because of the high environmental value of remnant vegetation. The department is placing greater scrutiny on the need for clearing and the types of environmental offsets proposed for clearing permit applications in these areas, in consideration of new and improved science and ongoing change in the environmental context.

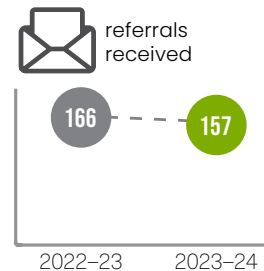
To assist in navigating these complexities, this year the department updated its clearing permit application form to encourage applicants with proposals on the Swan Coastal Plain or in the Wheatbelt to meet with the

department before submitting an application and identify issues and solutions early.

The average time applications are in ‘stop the clock’ has again increased, up from an average of 110 business days in 2022–23 to 138 in 2023–24. This reflects the need for applicants to spend additional time completing information gaps in their applications, such as further detail on avoidance, minimisation and mitigation measures, conducting biological surveys and identifying suitable environmental offsets.

► Clearing referrals

Stakeholders continue to make use of the clearing referral process, introduced in 2021–22, with 157 referrals received this year. This is a slight reduction from the previous year (166). Clearing referrals now make up 41 per cent of all requests for clearing approvals submitted to the department under Part V of the EP Act.



Performance outcomes for the clearing referrals process are consistent with its function as a streamlined approval pathway for clearing with very low environmental impacts. On average, the department finalised clearing referrals within 23 working days this year. In 2023–24, 54 referrals were determined to not require a clearing permit for the proposed clearing, equating to cumulative total proposed clearing of about 11.40 ha.

Environmental compliance and enforcement

The department has wide-ranging statutory and regulatory responsibilities directed at achieving improved outcomes for public health, the environment and our water resources. We are committed to being a responsive and credible regulator by consistently applying and enforcing the legislation we administer. We use a range of regulatory tools to promote, monitor and enforce compliance and respond to breaches of the law.

Our 2023–24 compliance program continued to build on a more integrated approach to our service delivery by including proactive, responsive and intelligence-based targeted components.

► Alcoa assurance program

On 7 December 2023 the Minister for Environment issued the Environmental Protection (Darling Range Bauxite Mining Proposals) Exemption Order 2023 under s.6 of the EP Act.

The order exempts Alcoa of Australia Limited (Alcoa) from compliance with s.41A of the EP Act, allowing Alcoa to continue implementing its mining operations under its five-year Mining and Management Programs. It also allows decision-making authorities to approve limited mining activities and operations without waiting for the outcome of the EPA assessment.

In January 2024, the department rapidly established a team under the new Water Assurance Division in the Assurance portfolio to intensively monitor Alcoa's operations to ensure compliance with the conditions of the exemption order. This is managed as part of an [initial assurance program](#).

By June the department had undertaken 160 inspections across Alcoa's Huntly and Willowdale mine sites – five to six per week. These were supported by site monitoring undertaken through a combination of desktop data reviews, satellite imagery and interviews with site personnel.


Promoting and monitoring compliance

The department conducted 88 inspections during the financial year to assess compliance with statutory instruments such as licences, works approvals, permits and notices, and regulatory requirements such as payment of the waste levy. We identified 75 non-compliances from these inspections and worked with industry to ensure identified issues were rectified in a timely manner.

 **88**
inspections

Through the light industry and minor pollutant programs, we worked with local governments to undertake 157 inspections focused on

educating light industry operators on how to reduce the environmental impact of their activities to minimise discharges of minor pollutants into the environment.

 **75**
non-compliances identified

Demolition waste is frequently at risk of being contaminated with asbestos, and asbestos is often dumped illegally. In 2023–24 we undertook compliance monitoring of waste operators that received asbestos or processed waste that is at high risk of being contaminated with asbestos. This involved 79 inspections to assess compliance with asbestos management plans, asbestos guidelines and licence conditions pertaining to asbestos at licensed waste facilities.



The department has responsibility for investigating waste-related offences under the EP Act and the *Litter Act 1979*. Illegal dumping and littering continue to be common problems and are committed by a wide range of people within the community. In 2023–24 we focused on the reduction of illegal dumping through the promotion of legal alternatives, the reduction of opportunities to dump waste, and education of local governments on the importance of supporting the department in the prosecution of identified illegal dumpers. We investigated reports of illegal dumping and littering, and implemented initiatives such as surveillance of common illegal dumping locations.

Controlled waste


We regulate the transportation of controlled waste in Western Australia through the Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004 (Controlled Waste Regulations) and the National Environmental Protection (Movement of Controlled waste between States and Territories) Measure. We license controlled waste carriers, drivers and vehicles transporting controlled wastes on roads and track controlled waste from waste holders to transit and waste facilities. During the year just less than 131,000 controlled waste tracking forms were used to track more than 1.57 million tonnes of controlled waste. A total of 758 new licences were assessed, all within the 30-day statutory timeframe.

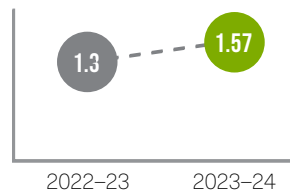
The drafting of amendments to the Controlled Waste Regulations to streamline processes, reduce administrative burden for stakeholders and improve environmental outcomes is continuing.


Environment Watch

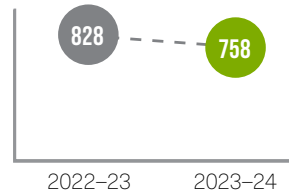
In 2023–24 our [Environment Watch](#) service (formerly Pollution Watch) received 9,736 reports, the highest on record. The department is committed to ensuring the community, industry and other parties are aware they can report pollution and a range of other environmental matters to Environment Watch. The service operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Reports to Environment Watch provide significant intelligence to the department and enable us to identify and respond to emerging issues.



 controlled waste tracked (million tonnes)



 new controlled waste licence applications assessed



Responding to non-compliance

Our Environment Response unit responded to 373 incidents in 2023–24, including incidents of emissions and discharges to the environment such as hazardous material waste fires, fuel tanker rollovers, chemical spills and impacts to wildlife. Our priority response to these incidents mitigates further damage to the environment and leads to better environmental outcomes. We also work closely with other State Government agencies to provide support to emergency management arrangements across the state.

In February 2024, the department was part of a whole-of-government response to potential



Environment Watch

You can report pollution, illegal dumping and other environmental matters using our online form or by calling our Environment Watch hotline on

1300 784 782.

Call 000 to report a life-threatening incident or emergency



contamination concerns at East Kalgoorlie Primary School caused by a gold processing operation identified nearby. Our officers provided critical support to this response through the provision of environmental sampling and air monitoring to identify any areas of concern.

Investigations undertaken in response to pollution and intelligence reports and information gained through our compliance subprograms resulted in seven successful convictions, 18 infringements and 21 letters of warning. Fines from prosecutions and modified penalties totalled \$132,000, along with \$31,451 in other costs.

In 2023–24, investigations into illegal dumping and littering resulted in nine people prosecuted for illegal dumping and littering, totalling \$28,100 in fines and \$6,769 in other costs. A total of 93 infringements and three letters of warning in relation to illegal dumping and littering were issued.

Seven Environmental Protection Notices and six Prevention Notices were issued in 2023–24 to address identified issues and mitigate environmental impacts. Twelve Vegetation Conservation Notices were given under s.70 of the EP Act where it was suspected that unlawful clearing of native vegetation was likely to occur, was occurring or had occurred.


The intent of a Vegetation Conservation Notice is to restore any environmental values lost. It requires the revegetation of cleared areas so native vegetation will recover to a condition as near as possible to the condition before the clearing occurred.

Assurance reform

Through 2023–24 the department continued to progress reforms to address the findings and recommendations of the Auditor General's Report 11: 2022–2023 [Compliance with Mining Environmental Conditions](#) (Auditor General's Report).

Environmental noise

The department responded to 150 requests for noise advice or support this year. Of these, in its role of supporting LGAs to administer the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997, the department responded to 106 requests for environmental noise advice, technical support or laboratory analysis.

 **150**
requests for
noise advice
or support

Specialist environment noise advice was provided nine times relating to matters under EPA consideration, and in response to 16 requests from other Australian Government and State Government agencies.

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

Contaminated sites

Contaminated land and water created by past industrial activities is managed under the Contaminated Sites Act and Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006.

The department is managing an increasing number of reported and classified sites each year, prompted by a better understanding of contaminants and the expansion of residential, commercial and industrial development.



In 2023–24 the department aimed to classify reported sites within 45 days, as required by s.14 of the Contaminated Sites Act. It has generally achieved this objective.

About 60 per cent of Mandatory Auditor's Reports (MARs) processed in 2023–24 that did not require referral to other agencies were processed within the target timeframe of 21 days. The shortfall reflects staff shortages in 2023–24. As staffing pressures continue to ease, processing times for MARs are expected to improve in 2024–25.

Sites classified as 'contaminated – remediation required' (251 at 30 June 2024) or high-priority 'possibly contaminated – investigation required' (289 at 30 June 2024) need ongoing review to establish whether the actions specified in the site classification are being implemented and the risk, or potential risk, to human health or the environment is being mitigated. Where appropriate action has not been taken, the department may serve statutory notices on relevant parties to complete the necessary actions.

As at 30 June 2024, there were 1,591 sites classified as 'possibly contaminated – investigation required' and 4,744 sites classified overall. There are also about 500 grace period sites (sites reported in the first six months following the Contaminated Sites Act commencement but not yet

classified) which remain dormant on the department's records.

The present housing shortage and the resulting prioritisation of residential development has placed additional pressure on the department to provide statutory planning advice and respond to MARs submitted to fulfil planning conditions for development sites (some with complex contamination issues) in shortened timeframes.

We prioritised processing within statutory timeframes (including Form 1 reports of a known or suspected contaminated site) and MARs submitted to report on compliance with regulatory notices (served under Part 4 of the Contaminated Sites Act) or submitted to clear planning conditions. MARs for high-risk sites, or changed site conditions, were also prioritised.

Air quality

Western Australia is a signatory to the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure and is required to report annually on the results of air quality monitoring undertaken by the department.



1,591
possibly
contaminated
– investigation
required sites



4,744
total sites
classified

The department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of 15 permanent air quality monitoring stations in Western Australia. Nine of these sites – Armadale, Caversham, Duncraig, Mandurah, Quinns Rocks, Rolling Green, Rockingham, South Lake and Swanbourne – are within the Greater Perth region. There are six regional sites in Albany, Bunbury, Busselton, Collie, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie.

Results are publicly available via the department's [Air Quality Index](#) and are updated hourly. This webpage also provides advice about actions the public can take for various levels of smoke (displayed as 'PM_{2.5}').

Since 2022, the department has operated an air quality monitoring network in Port Hedland, where dust levels can be higher than other areas in the state. Reporting for the first two years of operation is currently being finalised.



Particle sensors deployed to the regions

The department has deployed low-cost air quality monitoring sensors to regional areas that do not have permanent monitoring stations. The network currently includes eight regional towns and cities, with sensors installed at local government offices.

The regional sensor network provides timely assessment of smoke levels to enable people in those communities to better understand their potential exposure and manage their activities to minimise the impacts of smoke.

The regional towns and cities included in the program have been selected based on population density. The data from these instruments can be viewed on sensor manufacturer [PurpleAir's website](#).

Recommendation 14.1 of the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements Report* released in 2020 emphasised the need for increased air quality information and health advice to communities, including vulnerable groups such as asthmatics. The recommendation also highlighted the use of low-cost sensors to accomplish this outcome.

High-resolution datasets to assess urban heat island effect in Perth

The urban heat island effect occurs in Perth and is caused by increasing urbanisation and motor vehicle use. It leads to increased temperatures that result in a range of negative impacts, including increased heatwave risk and higher air pollution levels.

The department has received funding from the Climate Action Fund for a scientific program that will develop high-resolution datasets for Perth to enable assessment of the urban heat island effect.

Substantial progress has been made in the areas of stakeholder engagement/collaboration, supercomputing resource planning, input data identification and environmental monitoring. A recruitment process is underway for a technical specialist to continue the work.

Air quality technical advice

We continue to provide strategic, technical and policy advice on air quality matters such as ambient air quality, industrial emissions, odour modelling, meteorology, health standards and air toxics. In 2023–24, we undertook more than 120 technical reviews and provided scientific advice for high-profile projects.

These included a site audit of the 22 air quality monitoring stations in operation for the Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program, and site visits to Christmas Island (north-west) and Greenbushes (south-west) to inspect the monitoring of emission sources and ambient air quality undertaken by local industrial operations.



Air monitoring on Enderby Island



Outcome 3

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

Service 5 – Environmental and water policy

EP Act amendments

During the year, work to implement the *Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2020* continued. The Amendment Act is the most significant reform of Western Australia's environmental legislation in more than 30 years. It introduces a raft of amendments to Western Australia's primary environmental legislation – the EP Act.

The reforms are significant, so the amendments are being introduced through a staged approach.

The department is developing regulations and guidance that will support the effective implementation of amendments being proclaimed under each stage. The third and final stage is planned for the second half of 2024.

Stage 1: February 2021

Stage 1 started in February 2021 and included:

- modernising and streamlining provisions
- creating various head powers
- expanding enforcement and evidence-gathering powers
- implementing flexibility in serving infringement notices.

Stage 2: October 2021

Stage 2 started in October 2021 and included:

- facilitating the implementation of bilateral agreements with the Australian Government
- enabling regulations to declare Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- modernising, streamlining and creating more flexibility for referral, amendment and implementation of significant and strategic proposals under Part IV of the EP Act
- creating a new process for referrals of native vegetation clearing.

Stage 3: Late 2024

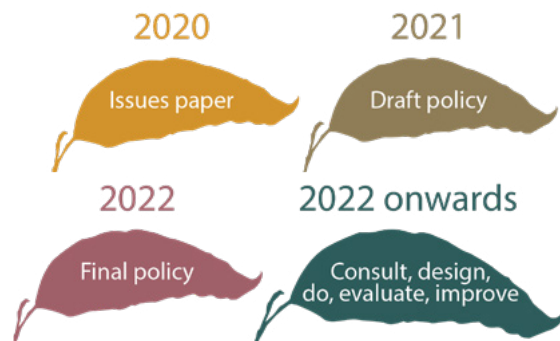
Stage 3 amendments will:

- implement the 'prescribed activity' regime under the new Part V Division 3, including reviewing and replacing Schedule 1 licensing categories
- create head powers for establishing environmental monitoring programs in regulations
- include provisions for the management of offset funds.

Native vegetation policy

Implementation of the [Native Vegetation Policy for Western Australia](#) began in 2023. The first year of implementation has seen the department facilitate broad economic and public policy thinking among agencies on solutions for efficient, strategic native vegetation outcomes.

With this foundational work done, in the coming year we will engage with other government agencies and stakeholders on individual actions within the [native vegetation policy implementation roadmap](#) to apply and expand the native vegetation knowledge base, improve mapping and monitoring of native vegetation status and values, and broaden the availability of spatial data. Some of these actions are aligned with recommendations from the review into the state's environmental approvals process and support the State Government's response on proposed Australian environmental law reforms.



Reform of environmental offsets

A program of reform is underway to address concerns about the scarcity of supply of environmental offsets and the deliverability of offsets projects.

Offsets play an important role in the environmental approvals system as they are often applied in the highest-impact proposals, where avoidance and mitigation has been factored into project design and there remains residual impact. As it has become increasingly difficult for proponents to provide suitable offsets under the current policy settings, the timelines for approvals and environmental outcomes are both compromised.

The reform program includes priority actions to help manage demand for environmental offsets, such as guidance on avoidance and offsets requirements. The department has worked with stakeholders to reveal exactly how the current policy approach affects their decision-making and will test potential changes before implementing to ensure any new approach improves both assessments and environmental outcomes.

The reform program is progressing, with changes to practice and policy expected in the coming year.

Nature programs

► Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund

In 2023–24 the [Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund](#) received offset fund contributions representing 11 environmental values, indicative of significant residual impacts across the Pilbara region.

We continued to work with three existing projects in collaboration with four Pilbara-based delivery partners and Aboriginal Ranger groups. One new project was approved for funding, with a further three detailed project plans and four project business cases under development.

We commissioned an independent evaluation of the fund during the year. A series of immediate and future actions has been developed through the lens of the evaluation's findings and recommendations. Implementing these recommendations will allow the fund to accelerate on-ground project delivery and achieve positive environmental outcomes.



► Environmental Revegetation and Rehabilitation Fund

The [Environmental Revegetation and Rehabilitation Fund](#) (ERRF) is a continuation of the Offsets Funds for Recovery and Native Vegetation Rehabilitation Scheme (part of the WA Recovery Plan's Green Jobs initiative, which has now finished). The ERRF Environmental Offset Design Project was completed this year, resulting in the development of works projects. These have been designed to deliver environmental offsets, job creation and training.

In 2023–24 a total of eight revegetation and rehabilitation works projects started in the Perth metropolitan area, and in the South West and South Coast regions. They are estimated to deliver a total of 486 ha of revegetation, along with training to 27 participants and the engagement of 38 Aboriginal employees over two years.

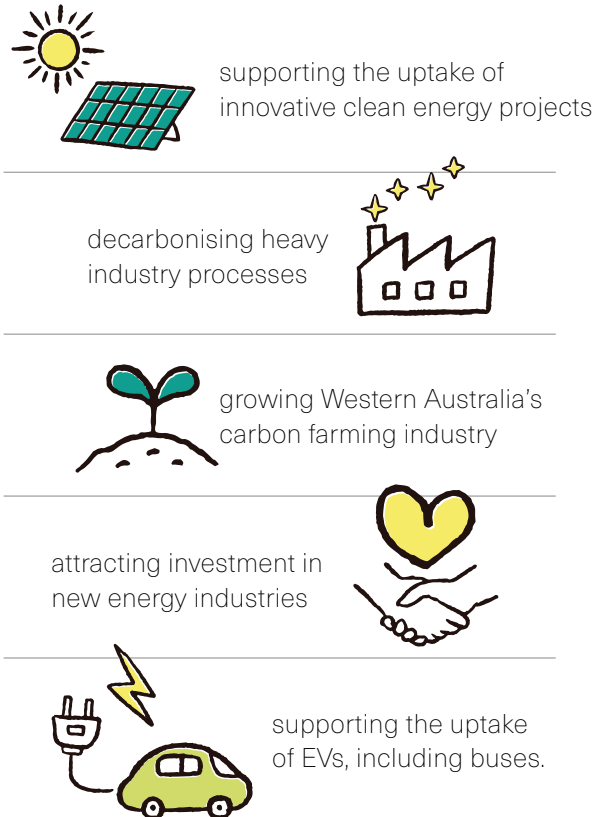


The Mt Barker Aboriginal Ranger team with Greening Australia staff at a revegetation project site near Cranbrook

Climate

► Sectoral emissions reduction strategy

The department led the development of the [SERS](#), released in December 2023, which provides robust and credible pathways for transitioning to net zero emissions by 2050. The SERS outlines new initiatives and significant investment to reduce emissions across the economy, including:



► Climate Adaptation Strategy

The department coordinated development of the state's first [Climate Adaptation Strategy](#), released in July 2023, which outlines 37 priority actions to ensure our communities and economy are resilient to risks posed by climate change. The actions are being led by seven State Government agencies and three Government Trading Enterprises, with \$39 million in new funding allocated through the 2023–24 State Budget.

The strategy sets out four key directions:



► Climate Science Initiative

The department is leading the Climate Science Initiative, in partnership with the New South Wales and Australian Regional Climate Program, Murdoch University and the Pawsey Supercomputing Centre, to produce Western Australia's most comprehensive climate science projections.

The projections will provide decision-makers with high-resolution data on key climate variables such as air temperature, evapotranspiration, humidity and precipitation under three emissions scenarios. Data is benchmarked against global best practice and will provide a strong foundation for state climate science research and climate risk modelling across all sectors.

► Clean Energy Future Fund

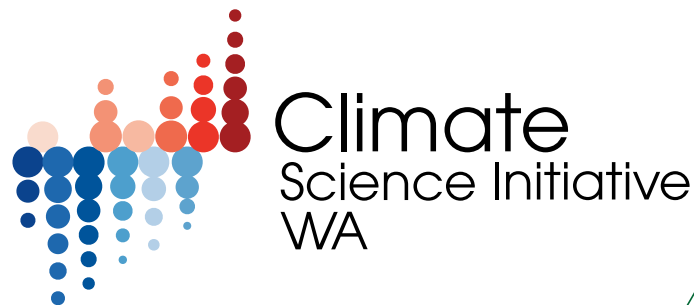
The [Clean Energy Future Fund](#) received an additional \$18 million of funding as part of the SERS. The fund continues to support projects that demonstrate significant, cost-effective emissions reductions that can be commercialised and lead to broader adoption.

Round 3 funding applications closed in June. Successful applicants and projects will be announced in late 2024.

► Carbon Innovation Grants Program

The \$15 million [Carbon Innovation Grants Program](#) is supporting feasibility studies and pilot projects that focus on innovative technologies to remove, reduce or offset hard-to-abate emissions from industrial processes.

The Minister for Climate Action announced the results of Round 1 of the grant program in October 2023. Grants totalling \$4.24 million were awarded to nine organisations to progress technologies to market readiness and commercialisation.




► State Electric Vehicle Strategy

The department coordinates the implementation of the [State Electric Vehicle Strategy for Western Australia](#) (EV Strategy) to facilitate increased adoption of EVs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve urban air quality. The EV Strategy is supporting the delivery of the WA EV Network led by Synergy and Horizon Power, which will extend more than 6,600 km, supplying 98 chargers across 49 locations.

The WA EV Network was substantially completed throughout 2023–24. This included 35 charging locations being operational between Kununurra in the north and Esperance in the south-east by 30 June 2024.

With EV sales continuing to increase, we have started development of a statewide strategy for future electric road transport charging infrastructure to support the transition to net zero. This initiative was announced as part of the SERS.

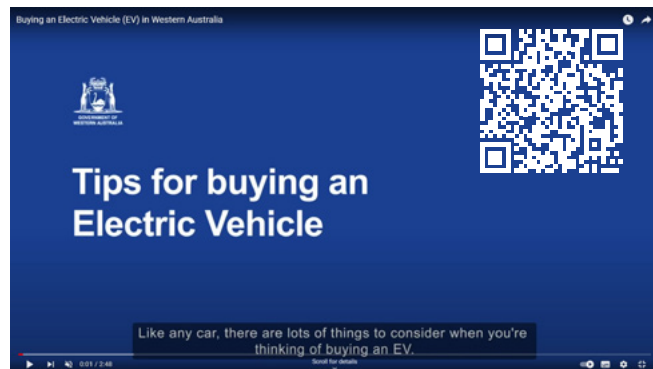
We supported the Australian Electric Vehicle Association’s annual EV Expo and conference in November 2023. This enabled about 10,000 Western Australians to experience an EV firsthand, helping to demystify EV purchase decisions.

 **98** chargers planned across 49 locations



Western Australia Electric Vehicle Charger Map

Intended charging station locations for the State Government’s EV charging network.



Interested in buying an EV? Scan the QR codes to watch our videos for helpful information

[WA Electric Vehicle Charger Map](#)
(as at 30 June 2024)
© Synergy WA EV Network

► Regional climate alliances

Regional local governments are at the forefront of climate change. The Regional Climate Alliance pilot program established two local government partnerships for regional climate action: the South Coast Alliance and the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils. The program funded coordinators and four climate resilience projects with oversight from the department, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries and WALGA.

An evaluation found the program increased connectivity and capacity between councils to address climate change at a regional scale. It also highlighted the contribution of foundational projects to developing a deeper understanding of emissions reduction and adaptation.

► Policy development

The [Climate Change Bill 2023](#) was tabled in Parliament in November 2023 and will ensure State Government accountability on climate action. The legislation will formalise the target of net zero emissions by 2050 and require interim targets to be set for both the State Government and for Western Australia.

Consultation on the legislation was undertaken with a diverse cross-section of the community.

This included:

- First Nations people
- peak representative bodies from industry
- the agriculture, water and conservation sectors
- Australian and State government agencies
- local governments
- Government Trading Enterprises
- universities
- advocacy groups
- non-government organisations.

A total of 260 submissions were considered in developing the final Bill.

► Climate Risk Capability Initiative

The department-led Climate Risk Capability Initiative aligns with the whole-of-government approach to enhancing climate resilience. The initiative is being delivered in partnership with the Department of Treasury to develop a governance and reporting framework to manage climate risks facing the Western Australian public sector.

The initiative has been helping to build knowledge of climate risk, adaptation planning and reporting within the public sector through capacity-building workshops held from July 2023 to June 2024. Further workshops are planned in the next financial year.

Advisory groups

► Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group

Recognising the profound cultural knowledge and connection to Country and living waters of First Nations people, the AWEAG provides strategic counsel to the department. The AWEAG meets quarterly to ensure that Aboriginal knowledge, values and needs are considered and appropriately addressed in the way we manage and regulate Western Australia's environment and water resources.

We continue to support the AWEAG to strengthen its governance by providing regular briefings on the department's strategies, policies, programs and planning.

The AWEAG refreshes its membership bi-annually and we seek expressions of interest from community members through the [department's website](#).



► Air Quality Coordinating Committee

The [Air Quality Coordinating Committee](#) comprises representatives from the State Government, industry, business and the community. The committee oversees the implementation of the Perth Air Quality Management Plan, which aims to ensure clean air is achieved and maintained throughout the Perth metropolitan region to 2030 and beyond. The committee met twice between July 2023 and June 2024.

► Cockburn Sound Management Council

The [Cockburn Sound Management Council](#) is an advisory council to the Minister for Environment established under s.25 of the EP Act. The scope of the council includes oversight and coordination of environmental monitoring of the Cockburn Sound marine area, consistent with the [State Environmental \(Cockburn Sound\) Policy 2015](#) published by the EPA.

Annual monitoring in the Cockburn Sound marine area includes monthly water quality sampling, real-time water monitoring and seagrass surveys. The Council consists of representatives of the community, conservation interests, recreational interests and industry, as well as Australian, State and local government representatives.

The Council met quarterly in 2023–24.

► Exmouth Gulf Taskforce

The [Exmouth Gulf Taskforce](#) was established in July 2022 under the EP Act as the coordinating body to assist the State Government in considering strategic conservation, planning and management issues relating to the Exmouth Gulf. This was in response to the EPA's 2021 [s.16\(e\) strategic advice on Exmouth Gulf](#).

The Taskforce's members include representatives from:

- Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation – the Prescribed Body Corporate for the Exmouth Gulf, representing the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Gulf
- Australian Government
- State Government
- local government
- conservation groups
- industry
- Exmouth Gulf users
- the Exmouth community.

The inaugural Exmouth Gulf Taskforce Chair, Ms Laine Ashforth-McDonald, resigned in September 2023 and the State Government appointed David McFerran as the new Chair on 11 March 2024. The Taskforce met five times in 2023–24, with two meetings held in Exmouth.

The [Exmouth Gulf Taskforce – Interim Report to the Minister for Environment](#) was delivered in September 2023. This interim report provided options for long-term integrated management of the land and sea, with advice on the establishment of a secure, jointly managed marine reserve over the wider Gulf.

The Taskforce will provide a final report to the Minister for Environment in 2025 that addresses future protections and integrated management of the Exmouth Gulf and its surrounds.





Outcome 4

Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised

Service 6 – Waste strategies

Strategies and plans

The *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007* sets out requirements for the [Waste Authority](#) to develop a waste strategy for Western Australia. Since the release of the waste strategy in 2019, there has been solid progress towards achieving the five- and 10-year targets relating to waste avoidance, resource recovery and protection of health and the environment.

As five years approaches, a review of the waste strategy is underway to ensure it stays current and relevant, and to reflect on performance to determine what is working and what could be done differently.

The Waste Authority sought feedback in mid-2023 on a directions paper, which sets out key areas it proposed to focus on in the review. This informed the development of the revised waste strategy, which was released on 29 May 2024 for 12 weeks of public consultation. The updated waste strategy and roadmap is anticipated to be released in mid-2025.

In May 2024, the [State waste infrastructure plan](#) was published. This resource will guide decision-making for the planning and development of waste infrastructure in Western Australia.



[Waste data reporting and plans](#)

[P89](#)



[Community education and engagement](#)

[P90](#)



[WasteSorted Schools](#)

[P91](#)



[WasteSorted Awards](#)

[P91](#)



[Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO](#)

[P92](#)



[WasteSorted grants](#)

[P92](#)



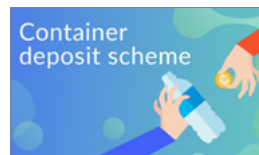
[Household Hazardous Waste program](#)

[P92](#)



[E-waste](#)

[P93](#)



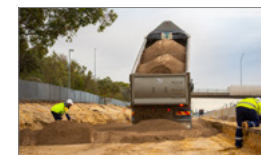
[Container deposit scheme](#)

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[Plan for Plastics](#)

[P94](#)



[Roads to Reuse](#)

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[Recovered materials framework](#)

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[Recycling Modernisation Fund](#)

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[Food Waste for Healthy Soils](#)

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[Western Australian litter strategy](#)

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Waste levy and funding

The waste levy is an economic instrument to influence waste management practices, including reducing waste to landfill, by increasing the price of landfill disposal. It also raises funds to support waste-related programs that reduce waste to landfill. In 2023–24 the levy was paid in respect to 16 landfill premises, eight of which were in the Perth metropolitan region and eight in regional areas.

The waste levy was increased in 2023–24 to \$85 per tonne for putrescible landfills and \$129 per cubic metre at inert landfills (from \$70 and \$105 respectively), effective from 1 July 2024 to maintain its value against inflation. The department also published a five-year projection of the expected increases to the waste levy to offset inflation.

In 2023–24, \$94.35 million in waste levy funds was collected and used to deliver important programs such as:

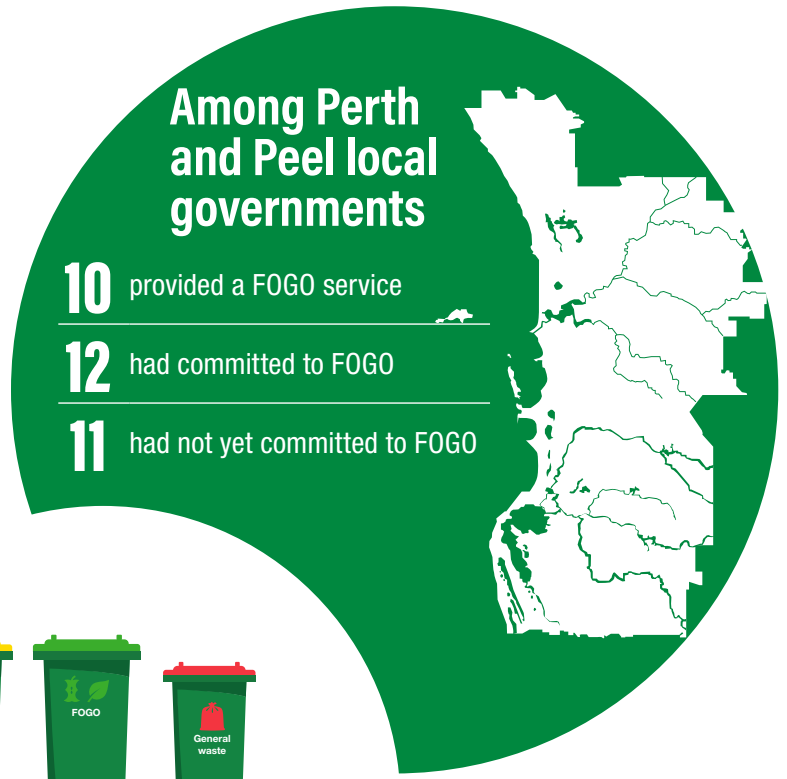
- Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO
- Household Hazardous Waste
- Roads to Reuse
- behaviour change
- WasteSorted Schools
- grants for education and infrastructure.

Funding was also allocated to waste data collection, waste policy, compliance and enforcement, the Plan for Plastics, e-waste and implementation of the litter strategy.

Waste data reporting and plans

Local governments in Perth, Peel and major regional centres are required to report annually to the department on the implementation of the actions in their waste plans and on any new actions implemented since their waste plans were submitted. The department uses the reports to assess whether the local governments are delivering their waste services consistent with the waste strategy and making progress towards waste strategy targets.

Under r.18C of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008, waste and recycling data must be reported to the department each year. This year, 257 annual returns were lodged. Data collected through the annual returns are published on the Waste Authority website annually. Data products published include a report, data downloads and interactive dashboards. Data can also be found at [Data WA](#).



Waste projects

► Community education and engagement

[Be a GREAT Sort](#), a campaign under the [WasteSorted](#) behaviour change program, was launched in August 2020 to help local governments and the community improve waste sorting. The campaign uses behaviour-change principles and asks the community to choose simple actions to make 'landfill the last resort' and 'do better than the bin'.

Western Australians increasingly believe their waste sorting makes a difference. This year, the campaign brought the GREAT Sort characters to life by using real people to model behaviours. It reached more than 2.1 million people through social media, YouTube and broadcast video on demand, and about 407,000 listeners on metropolitan and regional radio.

Each year, a survey of 1,000 households, media reach statistics and bin tagging data are used to evaluate the effectiveness of key messages in changing behaviour. In 2024, the evaluation showed the sorting of household e-waste was



Find out about WasteSorted on [YouTube](#)

improving, especially the correct disposal of batteries and e-waste, which need to be taken to a drop-off location. The campaign has been successful in reaching people, with almost half of those surveyed now recognising the GREAT Sorts campaign. Survey participants have also reported that they see recycling correctly, avoiding single-use items and donating/upcycling, to be the most sustainable waste management solutions.

The [WasteSorted toolkit](#) continues to provide valuable resources to local governments, industry and community to convey clear and consistent messaging to reduce contamination in kerbside bins and increase materials recovery and recycling. In 2023–24, the toolkit was updated to include flyers in 13 languages for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, along with flyers for those living in multi-unit developments such as flats and apartments. More than 30 local governments and regional councils are using these toolkits and campaign materials.

Households are encouraged to adopt five priority GREAT waste behaviours:

Gifting
Gift stuff to charity, swap or sell

Recycling
Recycle plastic, glass, cans, paper and cardboard

Earth-cycling
Food scraps into compost and cardboard

Avoiding
Avoid excess packaging and disposables

Taking
Take special waste to drop-offs



► WasteSorted Schools

The [WasteSorted Schools](#) program continues to support Western Australian schools by engaging students through curriculum-aligned education resources and meaningful, hands-on learning activities. Initiatives for the year included the production of the Primary Food Waste Curriculum for Year 5 teachers and a waste station fact sheet.

The program also partnered with organisations to support schools in the Kimberley and Kalgoorlie–Boulder regions and Perth’s southern suburbs, as well as to deliver workshops to early years learning services. In the past year, accreditations increased from 94 to 213 for primary schools, 10 to 32 for secondary schools, and 15 to 31 for combined primary and secondary (K–12) schools. Of these, 59 were regional schools (up from 30).

In 2023–24, the WasteSorted Schools grants program awarded \$234,057 (excluding GST) to 86 schools for projects that avoid and recover school waste.

WasteSorted Schools highlights

July 2023 to June 2024



4 sustainability

fairs/assemblies were attended by WasteSorted Schools staff



20 professional

workshops were held for teachers



21 schools

were provided project support



276 schools

achieved accreditation

► WasteSorted Awards

By recognising projects that avoid waste, recover value from waste streams and protect the environment, the [WasteSorted Awards](#) celebrate the outstanding achievements of Western Australians working towards a low-waste and circular economy future. A total of 108 nominations were received in 2023 across 11 categories, including the new ‘Closing the Loop’ category to celebrate initiatives that promote a circular economy.

The awards event was held in September 2023 to coincide with the Waste and Recycle Conference, which was jointly hosted by the department, the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association of Australia and WALGA.



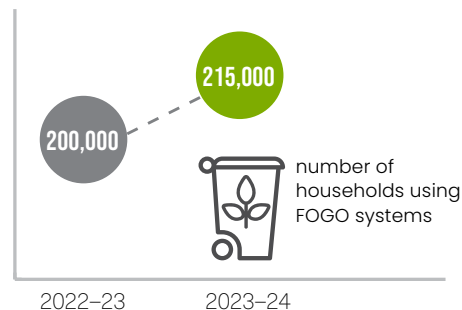
Find out about the Community Waste Award winner on [YouTube](#)

► Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO

[Through Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO](#) we continue to support the waste strategy target to roll out better practice three-bin FOGO services across Perth and Peel local governments by 2025. This means a red-lidded bin for general waste, a yellow-lidded bin for recycling and a lime green-lidded bin for FOGO.

In 2023–24, four local governments applied for grants totalling \$3.278 million to support the delivery of better practice three-bin FOGO services. As at 30 June, funding has been committed to two of these local governments to introduce FOGO to more than 65,000 households. FOGO systems have now been rolled out to close to 215,000 households throughout the Perth, South West and South Coast regions.

Bin tagging provides feedback to households on individual kerbside bin contents to help educate residents and reduce contamination in the bins. This initiative was delivered to about



13,000 households this year with the support of six local governments and two regional councils. WALGA received \$120,000 for these program activities in 2023–24 as part of a four-year grant (2020–24) to deliver the bin tagging program.

► WasteSorted grants

Since 2017–18 the department has administered waste grant funding programs, awarding more than \$9.5 million to Western Australian projects to improve the recovery and reuse of focus materials, including plastics, construction and demolition waste, textiles and organics.

The 2023–24 funding round of the [WasteSorted Infrastructure Grants](#) program saw \$1.983 million awarded to 11 waste infrastructure projects. Priority was given to projects that supported recovery and reprocessing of the prioritised focus materials: food and garden organics, and textiles.

Under the community education grants program, 18 projects were funded to a total of \$249,710. Fifteen education projects are progressing across the Perth metropolitan area and in regional locations. Projects include clothes swaps, textile waste campaigns, community events and workshops, resource packs, tours for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and signage.

Waste priorities

► Household Hazardous Waste program

The [Household Hazardous Waste](#) program funds local governments and regional councils to collect, store, recover and dispose of flammable, toxic, explosive or corrosive hazardous waste generated by households. If not treated or disposed of correctly, these products can pose a threat to public health and the environment. There are currently 15 sites – nine metropolitan and six regional – where people can drop off their household hazardous waste at no charge.

In 2023–24, 503 tonnes of material was collected for safe recovery or disposal, including gas bottles, batteries, flammable liquids and cleaning products.

The Waste Authority entered into a new five-year agreement with WALGA that commits more than \$10.255 million to support the continuing success of the household hazardous waste service through to 2028.



► E-waste

Waste electrical or electronic equipment (e-waste) is one of the fastest-growing waste streams. It can contain valuable materials including gold and silver, as well as substances that are hazardous to the environment.

Following a 2021 election commitment, the State Government has delivered a [ban on e-waste disposal to landfill](#). The ban is applied under the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (e-waste) Regulations 2024, which came into effect on 1 July 2024. The first phase of the ban includes televisions, mobile phones, computers, screens, data storage, white goods, batteries, medical devices, lighting and lamps. Photovoltaics, small household items and monitoring and control equipment are being considered for future phases of the ban.

Funding of \$14 million has been committed to the implementation of the ban, to be used for stakeholder consultation and guidance, grants and a community education campaign.

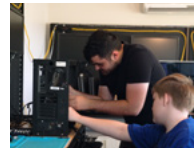


Be inspired: Learn how Sam's Spares saves unwanted IT e-waste from landfill on [YouTube](#)

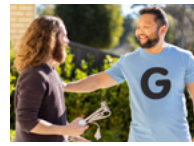
Target behaviours include:



sorting e-waste at home and taking it to drop-off points so materials can be recovered, recycled and reused



repairing broken e-waste items




gifting items that are no longer needed.

The campaign 'call to action' directs community members to Recycle Right's [Find My Nearest](#) search engine, where they can find their local drop-off locations.

In July 2023, more than \$6.5 million was awarded to 21 projects to boost Western Australia's recycling capacity for e-waste. This forms part of a two-year, \$10.1 million grant program to develop e-waste recycling infrastructure to support the e-waste ban. The second e-waste infrastructure grant round opened for applications in February 2024, with further funding to be distributed in 2024–25.

► Container deposit scheme

[Containers for Change](#), Western Australia's container deposit scheme, continues to reduce litter and increase recycling while creating new business opportunities across the state. By 30 June 2024, more than 3.39 billion containers had been recovered for recycling and more than \$12.5 million was donated to charities, schools and community groups through the scheme.

 **3.39**
billion
containers
recovered

 **\$12.5**
million
donated

The recycling rate for drink containers has increased from 34 per cent at the start of the scheme in October 2020 to 63 per cent in 2022–23. More than 41,000 tonnes of glass has been sold to Orora Glass in South Australia, where it is recycled into new glass bottles.

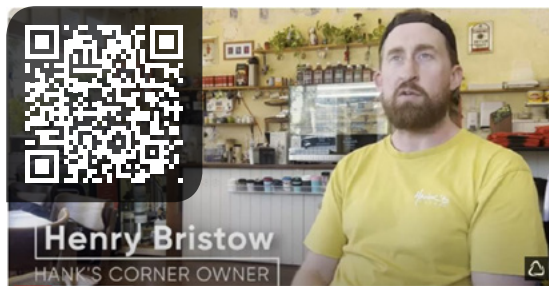


► Plan for Plastics

Western Australia's nation-leading [Plan for Plastics](#) has completed its third year of implementation as part of global efforts to reduce problematic and unnecessary single-use plastics and protect the environment. Stage 1 of the Plan has saved 430 million single-use plastics from either the landfill or litter stream each year and Stage 2, which is now in progress, will see an additional 700 million items saved per annum.

Stage 2 of the Plan has staggered enforcement dates to provide time for businesses to comply with the bans. An education campaign for businesses is being implemented to support the transition.

Western Australia has provided leadership in this area, as it is the only jurisdiction in the country to have banned plastic lids for takeaway cups.



Be inspired: Find out how Hank's Corner created a community around reusables on [YouTube](#) (video created by Boomerang Alliance)

► Roads to Reuse

The [Roads to Reuse](#) (RtR) program continues to encourage State Government agencies, local governments, regional councils and the private sector to use recycled construction and demolition products in civil applications such as road construction. It does this by supporting the supply to market of recycled construction and demolition products that meet a product specification, to protect human health and the environment. Three accredited RtR recyclers were operating at four sites in the Perth and Peel regions in 2023–24.

The department and the Waste Authority have worked closely with the transport portfolio to increase the use of RtR material in road and transport projects. Main Roads Western Australia has now used more than 220,000 tonnes of RtR products since 2019 and aims to work with the Office of Major Transport Infrastructure Delivery to double the 2021–22 targets, to use more than 200,000 tonnes of crushed recycled concrete on selected projects.



RtR also delivers an independent audit of construction and demolition waste recyclers' processes and products to ensure recycled products meet the RtR product specification. Four independent audits were conducted throughout the year.

► Recovered materials framework

In 2023, the State Government approved the development of a legislated recovered materials framework which aims to overcome barriers to the reuse of materials by providing guidance and legal certainty on the circumstances in which recovered materials would no longer be considered waste. The department is working on the detailed design of the legislative amendments and supporting regulations as well as processes and systems to implement a future recovered materials framework.

The proposed amendments will improve the current regulatory framework by:

- establishing the capacity for the department's CEO to make declarations in relation to recovered materials, setting out the product specifications, production and management requirements and acceptable uses for the relevant material
- providing certainty that recovered materials produced, managed and used in accordance with such a declaration (declared recovered materials) are not 'waste' for the purposes of the relevant legislation and therefore will not trigger licensing and levy requirements (where applicable).

The proposed recovered materials framework would support other waste policy and initiatives – including the national waste export



ban and the state's waste strategy – while ensuring the objectives of the environmental protection and waste management legislative frameworks are upheld.

► Recycling Modernisation Fund

In January 2021, the export of waste plastic, tyres, glass, paper and cardboard was banned through the Australian Government's *Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020*. The state continues to work with the Australian Government and industry to build local infrastructure and create markets for recycled resources and products, and to become more resilient to fluctuating international markets and trends.

In February 2021, \$70 million in joint Australian and State government funding was announced to transform Western Australia's waste and recycling industry through the [Recycling Modernisation Fund](#). The funding helps Western Australian industry proponents to build infrastructure to reprocess waste materials onshore and meet the waste export ban requirements.

Three recycling infrastructure projects (two tyre and one plastic) supported through the first Recycling Modernisation Fund funding round are operational or nearing completion, with a further three projects (two tyre and one plastic) progressing well. A second funding round has identified eight additional tyre, plastic, paper and cardboard projects that are yet to be announced for funding.

► Food Waste for Healthy Soils

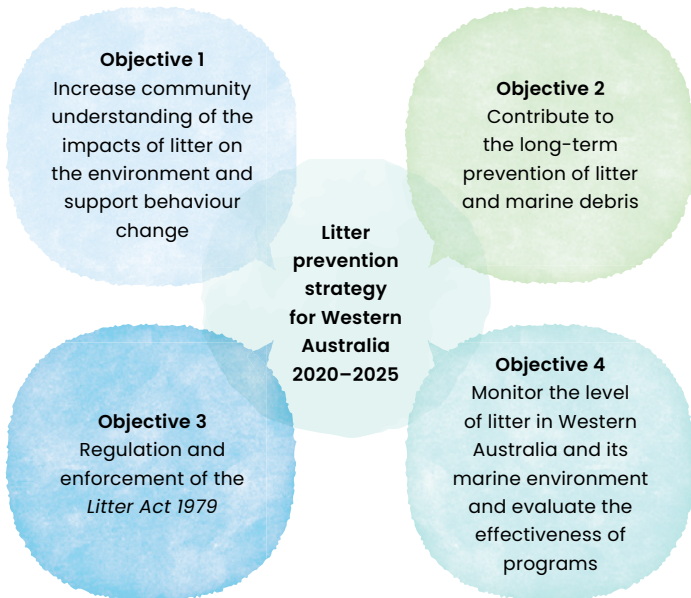
The [Food Waste for Healthy Soils Fund](#) is a partnership between the Australian Government and State Government and industry to support upgrades to existing organics recycling infrastructure. It aims to increase the quantity and improve the quality of recycled organic products for use, especially on agricultural soils.

In May 2023, the Australian Government and State Government announced a co-investment totalling \$11.25 million for three new organic recycling infrastructure projects. These will divert up to 275,000 tonnes of Western Australia's FOGO waste from landfill each year and convert it into compost and other soil products. The three projects are collectively valued at \$65 million and located to the north, east and south of Perth, and are expected to be completed by June 2026.

Three new organic recycling infrastructure projects will provide Western Australian farmers with a reliable source of high-quality compost and support **146 construction jobs** and **98 ongoing positions**.

► Western Australian litter strategy








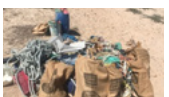

The [Keep Australia Beautiful Council WA](#) (KABC), whose vision is for a litter-free Western Australia, received grant funding of \$987,000 from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account towards the implementation of the [Litter prevention strategy for Western Australia 2020–2025](#). The strategy has four strategic objectives:

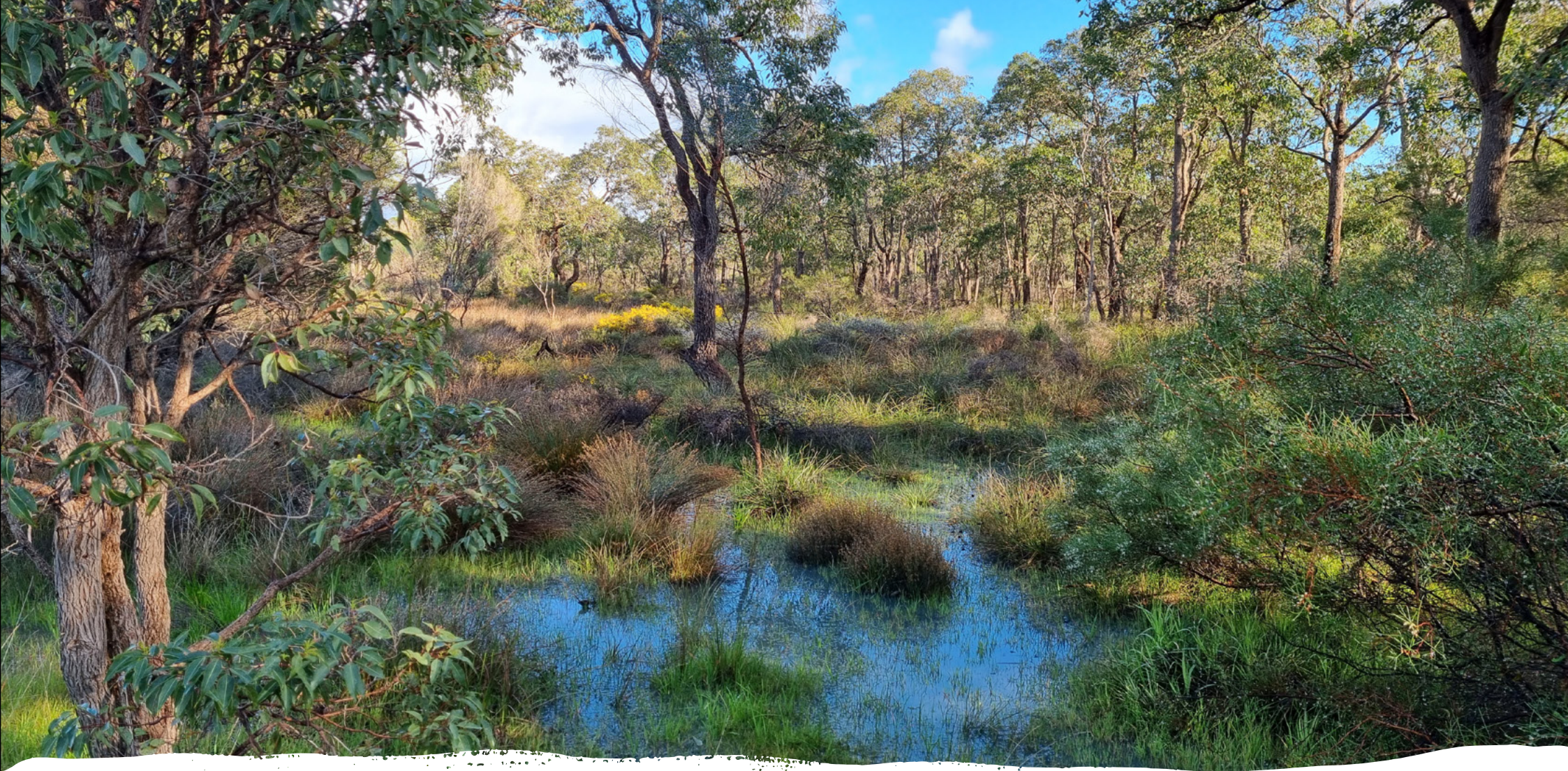


Make a difference! Register as a Litter Reporter, become an Unseen Hero. Find out on [YouTube](#)

KABC highlights

July 2023 to June 2024

	Litter surveys	Two full litter surveys were conducted, surveying more than 57 sites in 10 local government areas across Perth.
	Tidy Towns	Entries from 33 communities were received for the 2023 Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities Awards . Pingelly was named the 2023 state winner and went on to represent Western Australia in the National Tidy Towns Awards, winning the Community Health and Wellbeing Award. More than 54,030 hours of volunteer participation was recorded in the submitted projects.
	Adopt-a-Spot	The Adopt-a-Spot program was expanded by 172 to 2,279 registered groups, equalling more than 59,000 volunteers.
	Litter Grants	A total of \$47,808 of funding was provided to 10 recipients through the Community Litter Grants for action and education on litter prevention projects.
	Clean Schools	Six Clean Schools workshops were held, including four in partnership with WasteSorted Schools. A total of 790 schools, early learning centres, out-of-school hours programs and local governments are registered in the Clean Schools program.
	New campaigns	Promotion of the Unseen Heroes campaign continued, which aims to increase community involvement in the Litter Reporter Scheme .
	36 events attended	Thirty-six events were attended. Regional events included the Martu Youth Festival in Punmu, the Busselton Jetty Swim and the Flotsam and Jetsam clean-up on the Abrolhos Islands. Key metropolitan events included the Leighton Beach Clean Up Australia Day event, Lilac Hill Avon Descent festival and the River Guardians Festival at Sir James Mitchell Park.
	WA Beach Clean-ups	KABC partnered with Tangaroa Blue for WA Beach Clean-up activities, including visits to Busselton, Augusta, Walpole, Denmark and Albany to support local schools and community groups with beach clean-ups and audits. All data gathered was added to the Australian Marine Debris Initiative database. Over five days, 3,300 items were removed from the environment, weighing 39.5 kg in total.
	Outback Packs	KABC's Outback Packs were updated with information and design to target specific regional areas including the Mid West and Pilbara.



Outcome 5

Quality advice to Environmental Protection Authority and Minister for Environment on significant proposals and environmental issues

Service 7 – Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA

The [EPA](#) is an independent authority that provides advice on environmental matters to the Minister for Environment. The department has continued to provide services to the EPA to conduct environmental impact assessments of significant development proposals and planning schemes.

Development proposals

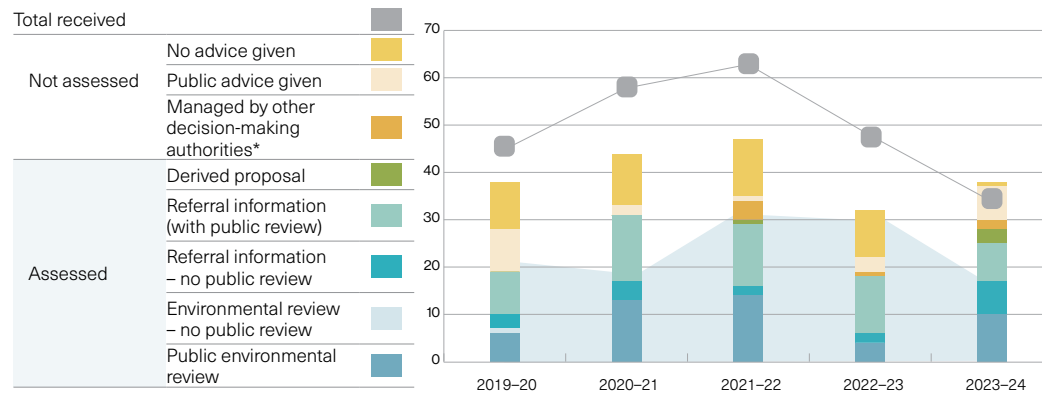
In 2023–24 there were 34 proposals referred to the EPA. The EPA may not necessarily make a determination on whether to assess a referred proposal in the same year the proposal is referred. Only when the EPA has sufficient information about the referred proposal can it make a determination on whether formal assessment is required.

The EPA determined eight proposals did not require further assessment, and 24 proposals required formal assessment.

Planning schemes and scheme amendments

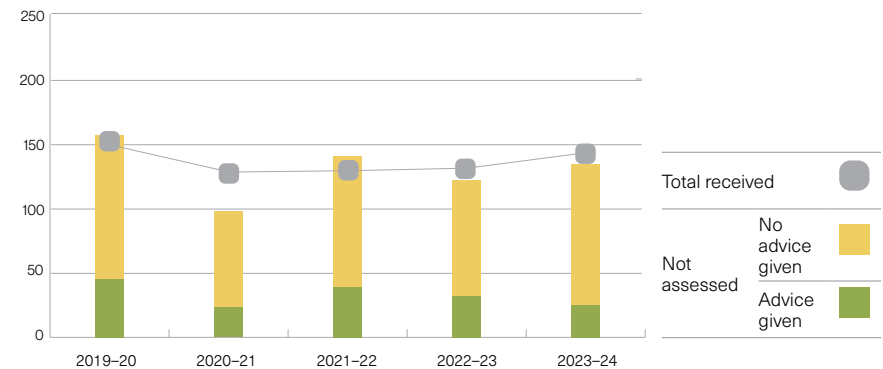
In 2023–24 the EPA received 143 schemes. It determined one required formal assessment and 134 did not require further assessments. The EPA provided advice and recommendations to the responsible authority on the environmental issues raised by 25 of the referred schemes that did not require further assessment.

Total development proposals referred to the EPA and decisions



* Previously managed under Part V only

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



► Completed assessments

In 2023–24 the department supported the EPA to complete 20 reports to the Minister for Environment, of which 16 report on the assessment of new referrals (see table below).

Assessment reports completed

Type of assessment	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Formal assessments				
Public environmental review	5	5	4	9
Environmental review (no public review)	1	0	0	0
Assessment on referral information (no public review)	5	2	1	2
Assessment on referral information (with public review)	2	7	5	5
Strategic proposal	-	-	0	0
Subtotal	13	14	10	16
Changes to conditions				
s.46 inquiry	8	9	7	4
Total	21	23	17	20

Under s.46 of the EP Act, a further four inquiries into changes to conditions of existing projects were also completed.

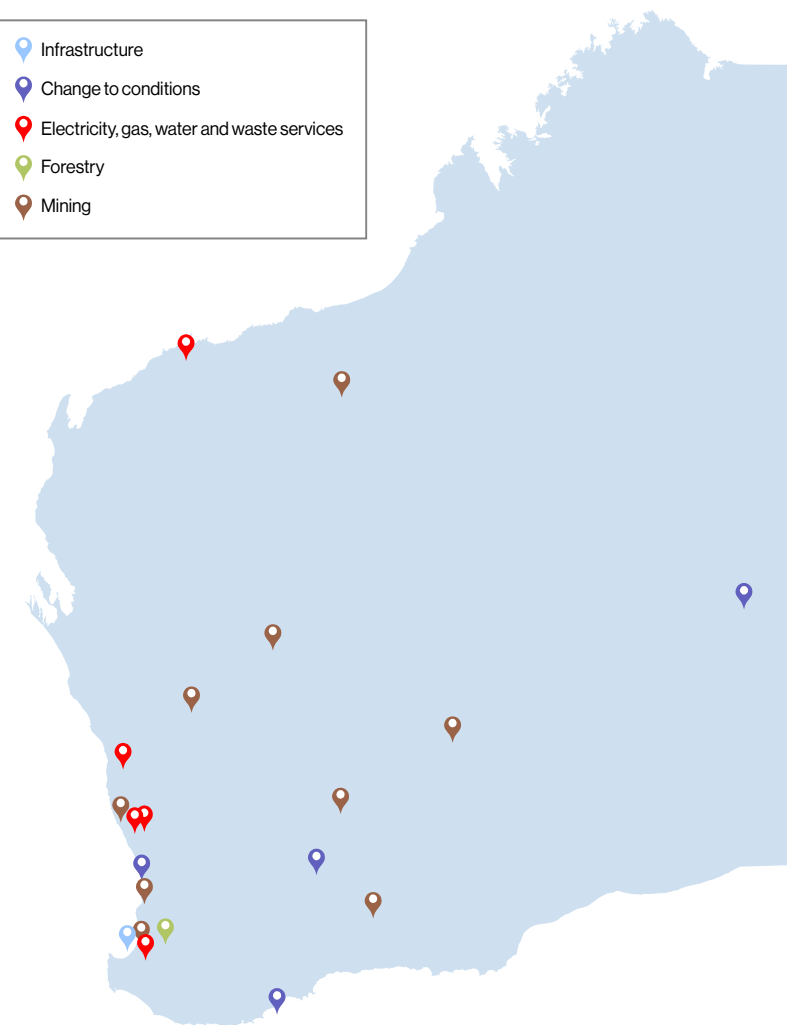
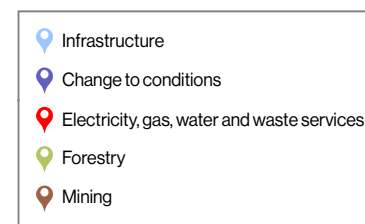
These inquiries included Beenyup Wastewater Ocean Outlets into Marmion Marine Park (EPA Report 1751), Wingellina Nickel Project (EPA Report 1762), Parker Range (Mount Caudan) Iron Ore Project (EPA Report 1763) and Cape Riche Seawater Desalination Plant (EPA Report 1764).

There were three other assessments of scheme amendments. These included the City of Gosnells Town Planning Scheme 6 Amendment 166, City of Gosnells Town Planning Scheme 6 Amendment 169 (EPA Report 1757) and the Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1344/57 – Maida Vale Urban Precinct (EPA Report 1766).

The map (right) shows the location and type of all the proposals for which assessment reports were completed in 2023–24.

Assessments this year included the Kwinana Renewable Fuels Project, Mt Weld Rare Earths Project and the Woodside Solar Facility.

The EPA completed its assessment of the *Forest Management Plan 2024–2033*, which considered the unique biodiversity of the South West's forests and the range of environmental, cultural and social values they held. The EPA recommended the plan be approved subject to conditions.



Consultation

Providing opportunities for genuine public consultation is an important part of the EPA's environmental impact assessments. Members of the public are invited to offer advice, identify omitted relevant information, provide local knowledge and propose alternatives during several stages.

The first opportunity for the community to engage is when the EPA initially publishes the details of a significant proposal at the referral stage, which allows a seven-day public comment period. After this, the EPA considers submissions and advice obtained and makes a determination on whether to assess the proposal and, if so, the level of assessment required.

Relevant proponent information, such as environmental review documents, may then be published during the assessment on the EPA website for public review, through which submissions and feedback can be made.

During the 2023–24 financial year, there were almost 5,000 submissions relating to 46 proposals via the EPA Consultation Hub.

Service 8 – Environmental management services to the EPA

Regional-scale environmental offsets public advice

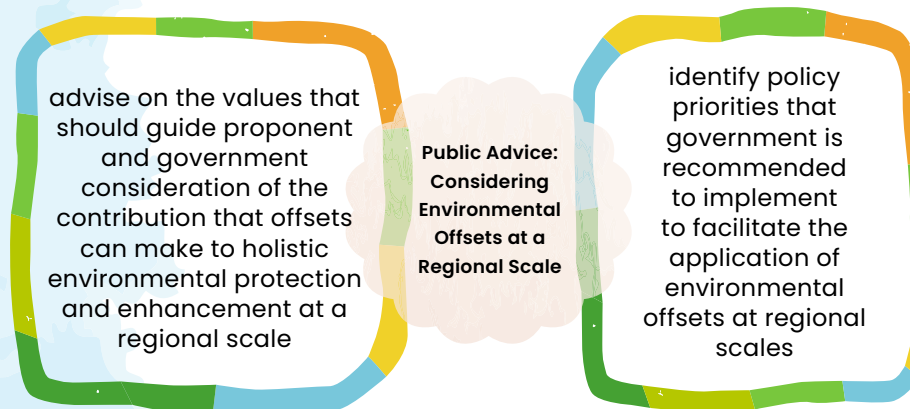
The EPA published [Public Advice: Considering Environmental Offsets at a Regional Scale](#) in March 2024. This aligned with its [Strategic Plan 2023–26](#) to establish an EPA position on the application of offsets at a regional scale to ensure intergenerational environmental protection and enhancement.



The EPA recognises the importance of publishing a position that sets out its expectations of environmental offset proposals from a regional perspective.

The EPA is increasingly being asked to consider the application of offsets only at a local scale and for averted biodiversity loss; however, such an approach does not consider regional scale or broader environmental protection and enhancement needs. The EPA observes that through consideration of the regional scale, there is opportunity to allow offsets and other enhancement measures to contribute to delivering nature-positive outcomes by enhancing the resilience, connectedness and quality of environmental values.

In releasing this public advice, the EPA aimed to:



Since being released, the public advice has been applied to deliver a regional offset approach within the Great Western Woodland Region. The Medcalf Vanadium Project was recommended for approval by the EPA in May 2024, and involved a large regional offset package.

Greenhouse gas guidance

A range of projects spanning industry, mining and the oil and gas sectors across Western Australia have received updated and contemporary greenhouse gas conditions over the past 12 months. This followed the publication of the EPA's revised greenhouse gas guidelines in April 2023.

The revised guidelines considered up-to-date climate science, law and policy and reflected the EPA's objective to minimise the risk of environmental harm associated with climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions as far as practicable.

During 2023–24, the EPA assessed and recommended contemporary conditions for projects including McPhee Creek, the West Erregulla Processing Plant and Pipeline (assessed with the West Erregulla Field Development Program – split proposal), the Gabanintha Vanadium Project, the Yogi Magnetite Project, the Wingellina Nickel Project (s.46) and Great Southern Landfill.

The EPA's expectation is that there should be deep, substantial and sustained emissions reductions this decade, and a linear trajectory towards net zero from 2030 to 2050. The EPA will consider practicable measures to reduce overlap and avoid duplication with existing frameworks such as the Australian

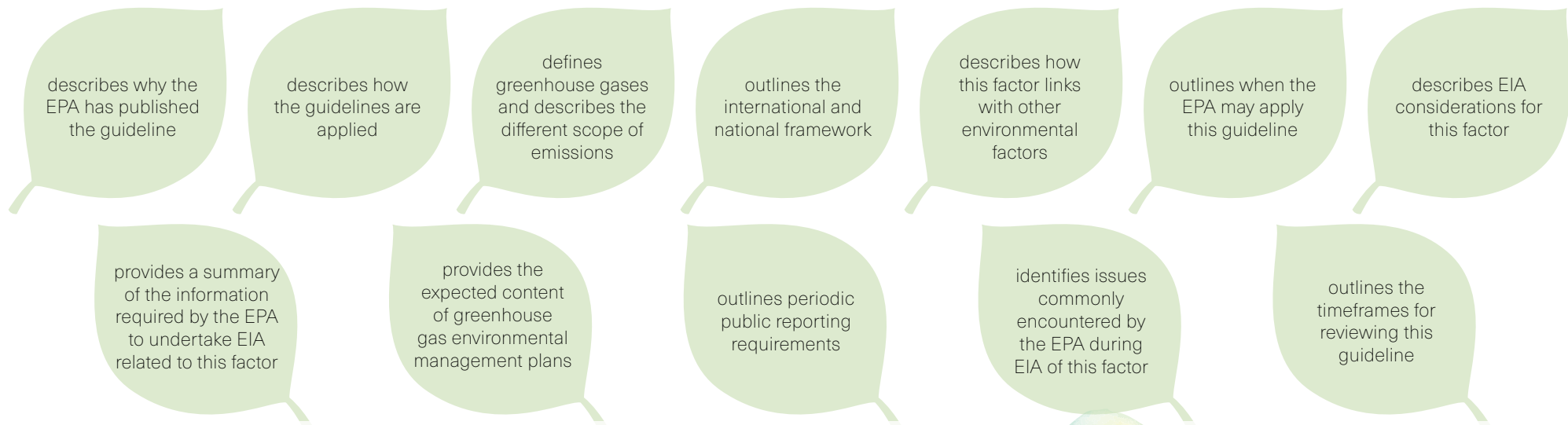
Government's Safeguard Mechanism and the federal legislative reduction target of 43 per cent by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

Stakeholder Reference Group

The department supported the EPA's Stakeholder Reference Group, which invites representation from key external stakeholders and peak industry bodies. Members can provide input to guidelines, processes and performance. During the year, the group met quarterly.

Revised Environmental Factor Guideline – Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The current guideline (April 2023):





Outcome 6

Compliance with Ministerial Statement implementation conditions is monitored effectively

Service 9 – Compliance monitoring services to the Minister for Environment

Ministerial Statements

Ministerial Statements are issued under Part IV of the EP Act and outline how a proposal is to be implemented and, if applicable, what conditions and procedures that implementation is subject to. If a proponent does not ensure implementation of the proposal is in accordance with the implementation conditions, the proponent commits an offence. When non-compliance with an implementation condition or proponent commitment in a Ministerial Statement is identified, the proponent is issued with a 'notice of non-compliance' and the Minister for Environment is informed.

Under our 2023–24 compliance priorities, we continued to monitor significant proposals authorised under Ministerial Statements using a variety of methods including audits, inspections and stakeholder engagement. In 2023–24 we completed nine audits including iron ore mining, major road projects and fertiliser manufacturing. Additionally,

25 compliance assessment reports were reviewed and eight notices of non-compliance were issued.

The purpose of these notices is to resolve any non-compliances and identified environmental impacts and to determine what steps have been or are planned to be taken to prevent a recurrence.

The results from the compliance activities identify areas for improving proponents' compliance and inform future annual programs and the environmental impact assessment process.

Annual compliance fees

In 2021 the Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021 were introduced. These included a fee which is payable each financial year for each approval proposal when a Ministerial Statement is issued under s.45(8) of the EP Act.

The application of these fees started on 1 July 2023 and the department has invoiced more than 350 proponents with the applicable fee required.

The department is continuing to investigate a large number of historical proposals to assess their applicability for the requirement to pay a fee under these new regulations.





Say
YES to
reusable
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Auditor General independent auditor's report



Auditor General

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

2024

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

To the Parliament of Western Australia

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

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

- the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended
- administered schedules comprising the administered assets and liabilities as at 30 June 2024 and administered income and expenses by service for the year then ended
- notes comprising a summary of material accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In my opinion, the financial statements are:

- based on proper accounts and present fairly, in all material respects, the operating results and cash flows of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the year ended 30 June 2024 and the financial position as at the end of that period
- in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (applicable to Tier 2 Entities), the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions.

Basis for opinion

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

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

Responsibilities of the Director General for the financial statements

The Director General is responsible for:

- keeping proper accounts
- preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (applicable to Tier 2 Entities), the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions

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- such internal control as they determine necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

Report on the audit of controls

Opinion

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

In my opinion, in all material respects, the controls exercised by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation are sufficiently adequate to provide reasonable assurance that the controls within the system were suitably designed to achieve the overall control objectives identified as at 30 June 2024, and the controls were implemented as designed as at 30 June 2024.

The Director General's responsibilities

The Director General is responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining controls to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of

Page 2 of 5

property and the incurring of liabilities are in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006*, the Treasurer's Instructions and other relevant written law.

Auditor General's responsibilities

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

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

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

Limitations of controls

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

Report on the audit of the key performance indicators

Opinion

I have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement on the key performance indicators of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the year ended 30 June 2024 reported in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions (legislative requirements). The key performance indicators are the Under Treasurer-approved key effectiveness indicators and key efficiency indicators that provide performance information about achieving outcomes and delivering services.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the key performance indicators report of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the year ended 30 June 2024 is in accordance with the legislative requirements, and the key performance indicators are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the Department's performance and fairly represent indicated performance for the year ended 30 June 2024.

The Director General's responsibilities for the key performance indicators

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

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

Auditor General's responsibilities

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

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

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

My independence and quality management relating to the report on financial statements, controls and key performance indicators

I have complied with the independence requirements of the *Auditor General Act 2006* and the relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements. In accordance with ASQM 1 Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements, the Office of the Auditor General maintains a comprehensive system of quality management including

documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Other information

The Director General is responsible for the other information. The other information is the information in the entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024, but not the financial statements, key performance indicators and my auditor's report.

My opinions on the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators do not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements and key performance indicators or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I did not receive the other information prior to the date of this auditor's report. When I do receive it, I will read it and if I conclude that there is a material misstatement in this information, I am required to communicate the matter to those charged with governance and request them to correct the misstated information. If the misstated information is not corrected, I may need to retract this auditor's report and re-issue an amended report.

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

This auditor's report relates to the financial statements and key performance indicators of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the year ended 30 June 2024 included in the annual report on the Department's website. The Department's management is responsible for the integrity of the Department's website. This audit does not provide assurance on the integrity of the Department's website. The auditor's report refers only to the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators described above. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the annual report. If users of the financial statements and key performance indicators are concerned with the inherent risks arising from publication on a website, they are advised to contact the entity to confirm the information contained in the website version.



Grant Robinson
Assistant Auditor General Financial Audit
Delegate of the Auditor General for Western Australia
Perth, Western Australia
1 October 2024

Certification of financial statements

For the reporting period ended 30 June 2024

The accompanying financial statements of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation have been prepared in compliance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006* from proper accounts and records to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 and the financial position as at 30 June 2024.

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



Hilary Manderson
Chief Finance Officer
1 October 2024



Alistair Jones
Director General
1 October 2024

Statement of comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Cost of services			
Expenses			
Employee benefits expense	2.1(a)	131,145	120,752
Supplies and services	2.3	57,734	41,790
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4.1.1, 4.2, 4.3.1	11,019	9,880
Finance costs	6.3	170	90
Accommodation expenses	2.3	10,515	9,938
Grants and subsidies	2.2	22,451	21,384
Other expenses	2.3	7,407	6,904
Net loss on disposal of non-current assets	2.4	140	759
Total cost of services		240,581	211,497
Income			
User charges and fees	3.2	52,777	48,719
Commonwealth grants	3.3	3,031	7,639
Waste Levy	3.4	96,488	91,490
Other income	3.5	15,501	11,393
Total income		167,797	159,241
Net cost of services		72,784	52,256

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Income from State Government			
Service appropriation	3.1	104,760	110,666
Income from other public sector entities	3.1	5,850	3,526
Resources received	3.1	2,644	3,256
Royalties for Regions fund	3.1	8,973	7,990
Total income from State Government		122,227	125,438
Surplus for the period		49,443	73,182
Other comprehensive income			
Items not reclassified subsequently to profit or loss			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus	8.10	39,145	61,434
Total other comprehensive income		39,145	61,434
Total comprehensive income for the period		88,588	134,616

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

Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6.4	23,487	11,448
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	6.4	96,184	94,440
Receivables	5.1	46,454	38,989
Amounts receivable for services	5.2	7,753	7,043
Other assets	5.3	4,900	3,151
Total current assets		178,778	155,071
Non-current assets			
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	6.4	-	3,308
Receivables	5.1	4,253	-
Amounts receivable for services	5.2	89,803	81,852
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	4.1	474,559	429,961
Right-of-use assets	4.2	2,995	2,076
Intangible assets	4.3	33,643	31,482
Other assets	5.3	121	3
Total non-current assets		605,374	548,682
Total assets		784,152	703,753

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Payables	5.4	8,880	7,616
Lease liabilities	6.1	891	867
Contract liabilities	5.5	2,382	5,403
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	27,248	26,714
Other current liabilities	5.6	1	2
Total current liabilities		39,402	40,602
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	6.1	2,194	1,274
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	7,295	6,207
Total non-current liabilities		9,489	7,481
Total liabilities		48,891	48,083
Net assets		735,261	655,670
Equity			
Contributed equity	8.10	226,243	235,240
Reserves	8.10	137,075	97,930
Accumulated surplus		371,943	322,500
Total equity		735,261	655,670

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

Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	Contributed equity \$'000	Reserves \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Total equity \$'000
Balance at 1 July 2022		285,681	36,496	249,318	571,495
Surplus		-	-	73,182	73,182
Other comprehensive income	8.10	-	61,434	-	61,434
Total comprehensive income for the period		-	61,434	73,182	134,616
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:					
Capital appropriations	8.10	12,316	-	-	12,316
Distribution to owners	8.10	(62,757)	-	-	(62,757)
Total		(50,441)	-	-	(50,441)
Balance at 30 June 2023		235,240	97,930	322,500	655,670
Balance at 1 July 2023		235,240	97,930	322,500	655,670
Surplus		-	-	49,443	49,443
Other comprehensive income	8.10	-	39,145	-	39,145
Total comprehensive income for the period		-	39,145	49,443	88,588
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:					
Capital appropriations	8.10	11,046	-	-	11,046
Distribution to owners	8.10	(20,043)	-	-	(20,043)
Total		(8,997)	-	-	(8,997)
Balance at 30 June 2024		226,243	137,075	371,943	735,261

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

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Cash flows from State Government		
Service appropriation	89,806	95,931
Capital contributions	11,048	12,316
Holding account drawdown	6,293	7,918
Distributions to owner	(19,328)	(60,456)
Net proceeds on sale of land remitted to consolidated account	(229)	-
Royalties for Regions fund	8,973	7,990
Funds from other public sector entities	5,581	2,531
Net cash provided by State Government	102,144	66,230

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Utilised as follows:			
Cash flows from operating activities			
Payments			
Employee benefits		(128,968)	(117,287)
Supplies and services		(55,146)	(41,329)
Finance costs		(167)	(90)
Accommodation		(10,397)	(9,637)
Grants and subsidies		(23,385)	(19,368)
GST payments on purchases		(10,315)	(8,610)
Other payments		(5,694)	(3,909)
Receipts			
User charges and fees		50,049	44,533
Commonwealth grants		3,031	7,639
Waste Levy		94,359	84,105
GST receipts on sales		548	1,352
GST receipts from taxation authority		9,867	6,895
Other receipts		9,910	14,829
Net cash used in operating activities		(66,308)	(40,877)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments			
Purchase of non-current assets		(19,756)	(18,260)
Receipts			
Proceeds from sale of non-current assets		29	200
Net cash used in investing activities		(19,727)	(18,060)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Payments			
Principal elements of lease payments		(1,382)	(1,257)
Payments to accrued salaries account		(944)	-
Net cash used in financing activities		(2,326)	(1,257)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		13,783	6,036
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		109,196	103,160
Adjustment for the reclassification of accrued salaries account		(3,308)	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	6.4	119,671	109,196

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

Administered schedules

For the year ended 30 June 2024

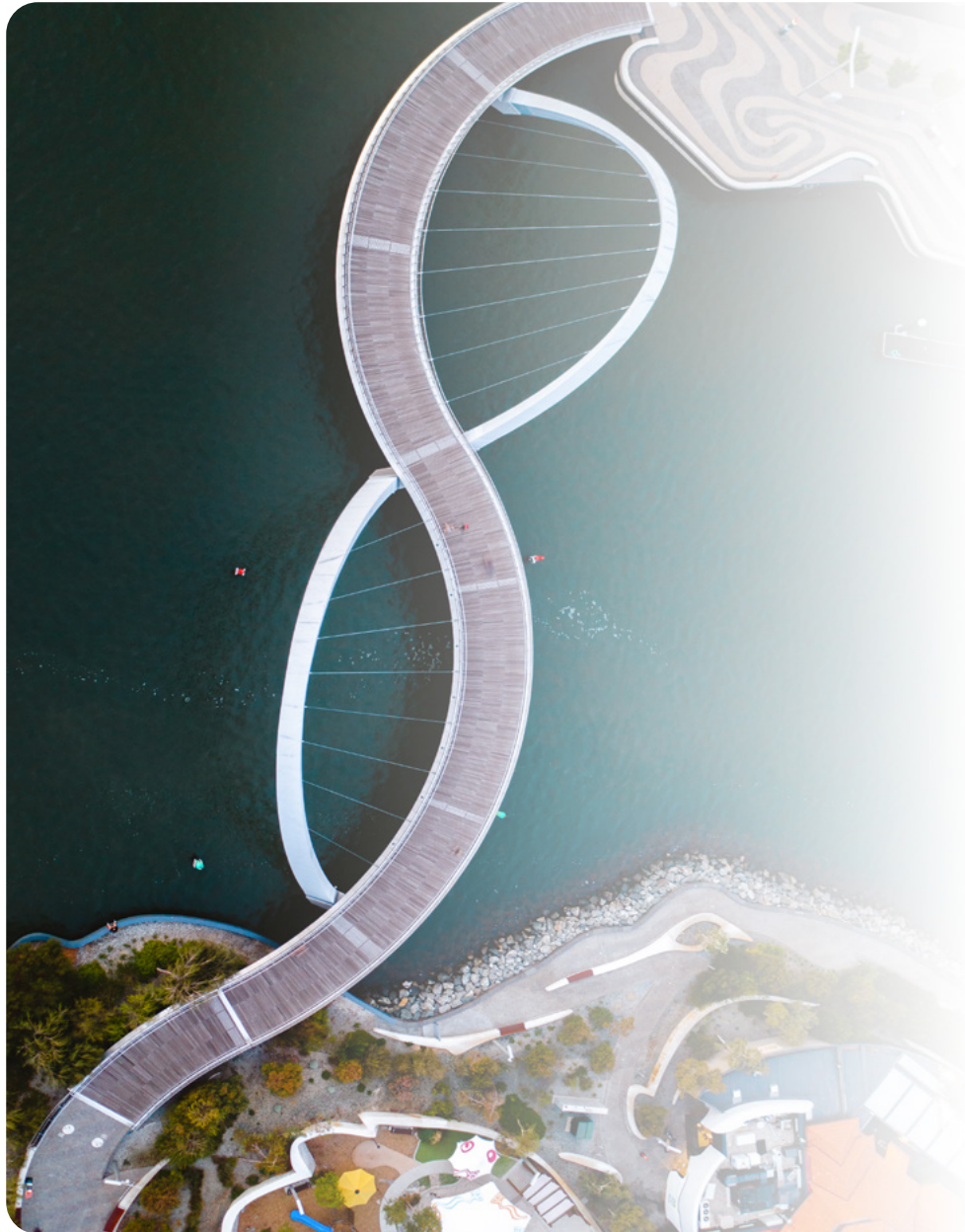
	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Administered income and expenses		
Income		
For transfer:		
Regulatory fees and other charges ^(a)	94	46
Total administered income	94	46
Expenses		
Payments into the consolidated account ^(b)	94	46
Total administered expenses	94	46

(a) Payments into the consolidated account include water fines collected on behalf of the Water Corporation, and environmental infringement regulatory fees and fines collected on behalf of the State Government.

(b) Further explanations of variances are contained in [note 9.2](#) 'Explanatory statement for administered items'.

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Administered assets and liabilities		
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1	1
Total administered current assets	1	1
Total administered assets	1	1
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Payables	-	-
Total administered current liabilities	-	-
Total administered liabilities	-	-





Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

1. Basis of preparation

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

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

These annual financial statements were authorised for issue by the Director General of the department on 1 October 2024.

(a) Statement of compliance

These general purpose financial statements comply with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures. The general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the Framework, Statement of Accounting Concepts and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board as applied by Treasurer's instructions. Several of these are modified by Treasurer's instructions to vary application, disclosure, format and wording. The Act and Treasurer's instructions are legislative provisions governing the preparation of financial statements and take precedence over Australian Accounting Standards, the Framework, Statement of Accounting Concepts and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. Where modification is required and has had a material or significant financial effect upon the reported results, details of that modification and the resulting financial effect are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

(b) Basis of preparation

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

(c) Judgements and estimates

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

(d) Accounting for Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except that the:

- (a) amount of GST incurred by the department as a purchaser that is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is recognised as part of an asset's cost of acquisition or as part of an item of expense; and
- (b) receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included.

Cash flows are included in the Statement of cash flows on a gross basis. However, the GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows.

(e) Contributed equity

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

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

(f) Comparative figures and information

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

Except when an Australian Accounting Standard permits or requires otherwise, comparative information is presented in respect of the previous period for all amounts reported in the financial statements. AASB 1060 provides relief from presenting comparatives for:

- Property, Plant and Equipment reconciliations;
- Intangible Asset reconciliations; and
- Right-of-Use Asset reconciliations.

(g) Administered items

The department administers, but does not control, certain activities and functions for and on behalf of Government that do not contribute to the department's services or objectives. It does not have discretion over how it utilises the transactions in pursuing its own objectives.

Transactions relating to the administered activities are not recognised as the department's income, expenses, assets and liabilities, but are disclosed in the accompanying schedules as 'Administered income and expenses', and 'Administered assets and liabilities'.

The accrual basis of accounting and applicable Australian Accounting Standards have been adopted.

2. Use of our funding

Expenses incurred in the delivery of services

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

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Employee benefits expense	2.1(a)	131,145	120,752
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	34,543	32,921
Grants and subsidies	2.2	22,451	21,384
Other expenditure	2.3	75,656	58,632
Net loss on disposal of non-current assets	2.4	140	759

2.1(a) Employee benefits expense

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Employee benefits	117,930	109,175
Superannuation - defined contribution plans	12,959	11,577
Termination benefits	256	-
Total employee benefits expenses	131,145	120,752
Add: AASB 16 Non-monetary benefits (not included in employee benefit expense)	1,211	936
Less: Employee contributions (refer to note 3.5 Other income)	(183)	(131)
Total employee benefits provided	132,173	121,557

Employee benefits include wages and salaries, accrued and paid leave entitlements and paid sick leave; and non-monetary benefits recognised under accounting standards other than AASB 16 (such as cars, housing and free or subsidised goods or services) for employees.

Termination benefits are payable when employment is terminated before normal retirement date, or when an employee accepts an offer of benefits in exchange for the termination of employment. Termination benefits are recognised when the department is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of current employees according to a detailed formal plan without possibility of withdrawal or providing termination benefits as a result of an offer of voluntary redundancy. Benefits falling due more than 12 months after the end of the reporting period are discounted to present value.

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

AASB 16 Non-monetary benefits are non-monetary employee benefits, relating to the provision of vehicle and housing benefits that are recognised under AASB 16 and are excluded from the employee benefit expense.

Employee contributions are contributions made to the department by employees towards employee benefits that have been provided by the department. This includes both AASB 16 and non-AASB 16 employee contributions.



2.1(b) Employee related provisions

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Current		
Employee benefits provisions		
Annual leave ^(a)	11,897	11,241
Long service leave ^(b)	14,111	14,264
Purchased annual leave	151	151
Deferred salary scheme ^(c)	412	265
	26,571	25,921
Other provisions		
Employment on-costs ^(d)	677	793
Total current employee related provisions	27,248	26,714
Non-current		
Employee benefits provision		
Long service leave ^(b)	7,109	6,021
Other provisions		
Employment on-costs ^(d)	186	186
Total non-current employee related provisions	7,295	6,207
Total employee related provisions	34,543	32,921

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

(a) Annual leave liabilities are classified as current as there is no unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

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

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

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

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

(c) Deferred salary scheme liabilities are classified as current where there is no unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

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

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

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Employment on-costs provision		
Carrying amount at start of period	979	1,015
Additional/(reversals of) provisions recognised	341	358
Payments / other sacrifices of economic benefits	(494)	(406)
Unwinding of the discount	37	12
Carrying amount at end of period	863	979

Key sources of estimation uncertainty – long service leave

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

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

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

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

2.2 Grants and subsidies

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Recurrent			
Carbon Innovation Grants Program		58	-
Clean Energy Future Fund - Western Australia Recovery Program ^(a)		-	2,813
Commonwealth Grants - Rural Water Planning Program ^(b)		-	47
Contaminated Sites Management Account Grants		260	255
Grants Other		300	101
Keep Australia Beautiful Council (W.A.)		166	177
Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation Resourcing		193	95
Royalties for Regions - Healthy Estuaries Western Australia		-	25
Rural Water Planning Program ^(b)		-	45
Small Grants Program - Greening our Community		-	169
Statewide Water Efficiency Measures		143	47
Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account	3.4	7,347	5,933
Water Innovation Partnership		48	200
Water Sensitive Cities Australia		-	150
Western Australian Climate Policy		210	383
Water Sensitive Cities Australia			
Western Australian Climate Policy			

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Capital			
Climate Action Fund - Urban Greening Grants		592	-
Commonwealth Grants - Food Waste for Healthy Soils Fund		-	750
Commonwealth Grants - National Partnership on Recycling Infrastructure ^(c)		2,007	3,499
Commonwealth Grants - Rural Water Planning Program ^(b)		501	900
Clean Energy Future Fund - Western Australia Recovery Program ^(a)		1,106	-
Clean Western Australia - Waste Paper and Cardboard Processing		22	-
Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account ^(d)		-	231
E-Waste to Landfill Ban ^(e)		3,652	-
Native Vegetation Rehabilitation Scheme ^(f)		1,137	981
Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund		200	16
Rural Water Planning Program ^(b)		959	318
Small Grants Program - Greening our Community		546	-
Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account - Food Waste for Healthy Soils Fund	3.4	-	750
Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account - Waste Export Ban	3.4	2,004	3,499
Water Efficiency Scheme - Ghangara Groundwater Allocation Plan ^(g)		1,000	-
Total grants and subsidies		22,451	21,384

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

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

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

- (a) The Clean Energy Future Fund – Western Australia Recovery Program supports the development of clean energy projects under a framework agreed by the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Energy, accelerating deployment of a broad range of clean energy solutions to decarbonise Western Australia's regions and the mining sector. Investment is expected to drive the installation of clean energy infrastructure in regional and remote areas, increasing economic activity and employment.
- (b) The program changed its name in 2022 from the Rural Water Deficiency and Community Water Supply grant to the Rural Water Planning Program. The Western Australian Government recognises the serious impact climate change is having on regional farming communities and continues its commitment to assist Local Government Authorities and farmers to address immediate water needs as well as building resilience into the future.

This program also supports the delivery of the Community Water Supplies Program (CWSP). The CWSP provides larger-scale grant co-funding to allow rural communities in dryland farming regions of Western Australia to adapt to changing rainfall patterns by establishing infrastructure that maximises the efficient use of all available water resources.

- (c) The Western Australian and Australian Governments announced their joint commitment to improve recycling capacity in Western Australia through a joint commitment in funding. The Commonwealth contribution is through the Recycling Modernisation Fund to fund the Commonwealth Grants - National Partnership on Recycling Infrastructure. This funding was in response to the former Council of Australian Governments' decision to ban the export of waste glass, tyres, plastics and paper/cardboard. The funding supports private investment in recycling infrastructure through grants administered by the department.
- (d) The Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account (Offsets Account) is a fund established for the purpose of establishing or maintaining native vegetation (also known as an offset) as a condition of a permit to clear native vegetation, granted under Part V Division 2 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Conditions on granted clearing permits can include a requirement to make monetary contributions to a fund maintained by the department for the purpose of establishing or maintaining native vegetation. The department has an obligation to spend the funds available in the Establishing and Maintaining Native Vegetation Offsets Account (Offsets Account) in a manner which counterbalances the impacts of clearing authorised through clearing permits.
- (e) The State Government is delivering an E-Waste to Landfill Ban in Western Australia, which will help recover valuable materials from waste that would otherwise be lost. The scope of e-waste items banned focuses on those with material recovery pathways, such as product stewardship schemes, in place to limit the risks of unwanted outcomes. The categories of e-waste in the initial ban, which comes into effect this year, includes televisions, computers, large household goods like dishwashers, fridges, large medical equipment, lighting, lamps and all batteries. E-waste service providers, the waste industry and significant-sized entities will have obligations to ensure e-waste is managed responsibly.

- (f) The Native Vegetation Rehabilitation Scheme program will contribute to improving habitat for Western Australia's unique and important flora and fauna species, especially black cockatoos, and remnant vegetation in highly cleared landscapes. This broader revegetation scheme will contribute to the ecosystem services provided by functioning vegetation communities.
- (g) The Water Efficiency Scheme - Gngangara Groundwater Allocation Plan is to ensure there is a productive and sustainable groundwater supply.

The 2009 *Gngangara groundwater areas allocation plan* provided initial strategies to manage sustainable groundwater abstraction and the first steps to returning the over-allocated system to balance, after years of declining rainfall and recharge to groundwater. It was a strong first step in adjusting our groundwater management in the context of a drier climate.

The Department developed the 2022 *Gngangara groundwater allocation plan* to ensure there is a productive and sustainable groundwater supply, and healthy environment under a drying climate. To develop the Gngangara allocation plan, the department consulted with water users to find ways to adjust and to bring our Gngangara groundwater system back into balance.



2.3 Other expenditure

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Supplies and services		
Communications	1,761	1,916
Consultants and contractors	43,187	30,317
Consumables	471	386
Materials	483	288
Travel	1,519	1,214
Vehicle expenses	683	593
Minor plant, machinery and equipment	2,478	1,809
Plant, machinery and equipment hire	48	162
Chemical analysis expense	1,160	888
Water carting and drought relief	595	-
Other supplies and services	5,349	4,217
Total supplies and services expenses	57,734	41,790
Accommodation expenses		
Rental	8,440	8,127
Electricity and water	525	493
Rates and taxes	26	44
Security	55	76
Repairs and maintenance	765	503
Cleaning	704	695
Total accommodation expenses	10,515	9,938

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Other expenses		
Audit fees	361	328
Bad debts	1	186
Equipment repairs and maintenance	595	513
Expected credit losses expense	729	508
Employment on-costs	3,209	3,043
Impairment losses on measurement sites ^(a)	1,008	1,129
Insurance	538	802
Other operating expenses	966	395
Total other expenses	7,407	6,904
Total other expenditure	75,656	58,632

(a) Refer to [note 4.1.1](#) for details regarding impairment losses on measurement sites.

Supplies and services

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

Accommodation expenses

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

Rental expenses include:

- (i) Included in rental expenses are Office rental costs of \$8.4 million (2023: \$7.7 million). Office rental is expensed as incurred as Memorandum of Understanding Agreements between the department and the Department of Finance for the leasing of office accommodation contain significant substitution rights.
- (ii) short-term leases with a lease term of 12 months or less.
- (iii) low-value leases with an underlying value of \$5,000 or less.

Other operating expenses

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

Equipment repairs and maintenance

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

Expected credit losses

The allowance for expected credit losses of trade receivables and accrued revenue is measured at the lifetime expected credit losses at each reporting date. The department has established a provision matrix that is based on its historical credit loss experience, adjusted for forward-looking factors specific to the receivables and the economic environment. Please refer to [note 5.1](#) Receivables for more details.

Employment on-cost

Employment on-cost includes workers' compensation insurance and other employment on-costs. The on-costs' liability associated with the recognition of annual and long service leave liabilities is included at [note 2.1\(b\)](#) Employee

related provisions. Superannuation contributions accrued as part of the provision for leave are employee benefits and are not included in employment on-costs.

2.4 Net loss on disposal of non-current assets

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Proceeds from disposal of non-current assets		
Land	(29)	(202)
Plant, equipment and vehicles	(6)	-
Carrying amount of non-current assets disposed		
Infrastructure	-	11
Land	20	56
Leasehold improvements	-	8
Licences	-	1
Measurement sites	137	863
Plant, equipment and vehicles	18	22
Net loss on disposal of non-current assets	140	759

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

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

3. Our funding services

How we obtain our funding

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

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Income from State Government	3.1	122,227	125,438
User charges and fees	3.2	52,777	48,719
Commonwealth grants	3.3	3,031	7,639
Waste levy	3.4	96,488	91,490
Other income	3.5	15,501	11,393

3.1 Income from State Government

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Appropriation received during the period^(a):		
Service appropriation	104,760	110,666
Total appropriation received	104,760	110,666
Income from other public sector entities during the period^(b):		
Environmental Protection Part IV Cost Recovery Account	2,829	1,296
Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account	361	317
Grants	511	521
Interest revenue	1,735	1,131
Pilbara Environmental Offsets Account	-	175
Other	414	86
Total income from other public sector entities	5,850	3,526



	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Resources received from other public sector entities during the period^(a):		
Services received free of charge		
Department of Finance - Accommodation lease and depreciation	160	159
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage – Spatial data	-	1
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Digital map	7	11
Landgate - Land information services	697	535
Main Roads Western Australia - Clearing permit assessment	234	190
State Solicitor's Office - Legal services	1,546	2,231
Water Corporation - Environmental Services	-	129
Total services received free of charge	2,644	3,256
Royalties for Regions fund^(a):		
Regional Infrastructure and Headworks Account	6,597	6,342
Regional Community Services Account	2,376	1,648
Total Royalties for Regions Fund	8,973	7,990
Total income from State Government	122,227	125,438

(a) Service appropriation

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

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

- cash component
- a receivable (asset).

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

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

(b) Income from other public service entities

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

(c) Resources received from other public sector entities

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

(d) Royalties for Regions fund

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

Summary of consolidated account appropriations For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 Budget	Section 25 transfers	2024 Additional funding*	2024 Revised budget	2024 Actual	2024 Variance
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Delivery of services						
Item 84 Net amount appropriated to deliver services	126,655	(109)	-	126,546	103,788	(22,758)
Amount authorised by other statutes						
- Salaries and Allowances Act 1975	404	-	568	972	972	-
Total appropriations provided to deliver services	127,059	(109)	568	127,518	104,760	(22,758)
Capital						
Item 150 Capital appropriation	10,440	-	-	10,440	11,046	606
Administered transactions						
Administered grants, subsidies and other transfer payments	100	-	-	100	94	(6)
Total administered transactions	100	-	-	100	94	(6)
Total consolidated account appropriations	137,599	(109)	568	138,058	115,900	(22,158)

* Additional funding includes supplementary funding and new funding authorised under section 27 of the Act and amendments to standing appropriations.

3.2 User charges and fees

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Industry fees ^(a)	27,656	28,236
Controlled waste ^(b)	6,420	5,910
Contaminated sites	331	193
Clearing regulations	299	292
Water licences and regulatory fees ^(c)	1,480	1,754
Noise regulations	-	30
Environmental Protection Part IV Cost Recovery Account ^(d)	16,582	12,285
Other charges and fees	9	19
Total user charges and fees	52,777	48,719

User charges and fees revenue are recognised at the transaction price when the department transfers control of the services to customers.

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

- (a) Licensing and registration fees relating to prescribed premises under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.
- (b) Fees for the licensing of vehicles transporting controlled public waste as per the Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004.
- (c) Water licences and regulatory fees under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914*.

Revenue is recognised at a point in time being the earlier of cash receipt or when the department's right to receive consideration is established with regards to environmental impact assessments (EIA).

- (d) Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* states that the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) will conduct EIA in WA.

The Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021 (Regulations) were developed to prescribe or provide for the determination of the fees and charges for the EIA processes under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. The Regulations were gazetted on 17 December 2021 and came into operation on 1 January 2022. A special purpose account was established to manage the funds recovered under the Regulations to be used for defraying the costs incurred by the department in receiving and assessing proposals and monitoring the implementation of proposals under Part IV (division 1 or 2) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Refer to [note 8.7](#) for additional information.

3.3 Commonwealth grants

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Commonwealth grants – recurrent	3,031	7,639

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

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

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

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Food Waste for Healthy Soils Fund	-	1,125
Indian Ocean Territories Account	1,457	1,180
National Pollutant Inventory	107	107
Smart Farms Small Grants - National Landcare Program	-	875
National Partnership on Recycling Infrastructure	1,467	1,727
National Water Grid - Community Water Supply Program	-	800
National Water Grid - Agricultural Areas Dams	-	1,825
Total Commonwealth grants	3,031	7,639

3.4 Waste levy

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Waste levy	96,488	91,490

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

Waste levies give rise to variable consideration as the transaction price is dependent on waste quantities. Further, variable consideration may arise where exemptions apply to certain types of waste or where the licensed landfill operator is subject to an investigation.

The Waste levy income relating to licensed landfill operators is recognised when control of the license is transferred to the licensed landfill operator i.e. at the date of issue of the license. Where the transaction price is subject to variable consideration, the variable consideration is estimated at contract inception and constrained until it is highly probable that a significant revenue reversal in the amount of cumulative revenue recognised will not occur when the associated uncertainty with the variable consideration is subsequently resolved.

The department may also receive waste levy income from non-licensed landfill operators in relation to breaches of the WARR Act. Such amounts are recognised at the earlier of when the department's right to receive consideration is established or when cash is received.

3.5 Other income

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Services rendered		
Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account ^(a)	111	868
Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund ^(b)	8,019	3,295
Employee contributions ^(c)	183	131
Lease rentals - land and buildings	253	223
Tree annuity	94	98
Tree harvest	19	49
Recoupment of expenses	522	620
Recoupment of grant funds	49	19
Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program - industry funding ^(d)	6,124	5,994
Other revenue	127	96
Total other income	15,501	11,393

(a) The department administers the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* which regulates the clearing of native vegetation. Clearing of native vegetation requires the authority of a clearing permit unless it is of an exempt kind. Clearing permits may include conditions requiring an offset to counterbalance the impacts of clearing. Offsets requirements are imposed in accordance with the WA Environmental Offsets Policy (2011) and the WA Environmental Offsets Guidelines (2014). Certain offset requirements involve payment of a monetary contribution into the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account, which is an account managed by the department.

Contributions into the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account are made following the grant of the associated clearing permit, and after any related appeals have been received and determined. Revenue from the offsets is recognised at a point-in-time i.e. when the

department issues an invoice to the permit holder requesting payment of the contribution into the fund.

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

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

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

(c) Income received by the department from sub-leasing of right-of-use assets to lease payments from operating leases. The department has leased several right-of-use asset from the Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH) and State Fleet (SF), which it subleases out to employees at a subsidised rate. Information on the department's leasing arrangements with GROH and SF can be found in [note 2.1\(a\)](#).

(d) In terms of the Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program memorandum of understanding (MoU) dated 7 February 2020, industry participants have agreed to contribute to the estimated costs associated with the program until the earlier of five years from the MoU date of execution; the parties ending the relationship by mutual consent or any statutory obligations that come into effect by an amendment to the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

4 Key assets

Assets the department utilises for economic benefit or service potential

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

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	4.1	474,559	429,961
Right-of-use assets	4.2	2,995	2,076
Intangible assets	4.3	33,643	31,482
Total key assets		511,197	463,519



4.1 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

	Capital works in progress	Works of Art	Computer equipment	Vehicles and Boating	Infrastructure	Plant and equipment	Measurement sites	Leasehold improvements	Buildings	Land	Total
Year ended 30 June 2024	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1 July 2023											
Gross carrying amount	21,628	116	1,010	231	1,393	6,059	207,814	1,019	4,972	191,896	436,138
Accumulated depreciation	-	-	(885)	(191)	(306)	(2,816)	-	(70)	-	-	(4,268)
Accumulated impairment losses	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,909)	-	-	-	(1,909)
Carrying amount at start of period	21,628	116	125	40	1,087	3,243	205,905	949	4,972	191,896	429,961
Additions	12,925	34	192	-	-	16	-	391	177	30	13,765
Transfers in/(out) ^(a)	(11,625)	-	162	57	2,739	47	8,620	-	-	-	-
Transfer as distribution to owner ^(b)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(686)	(686)
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	(18)	(137)	-	-	(20)	(175)
Revaluation increments	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,392	-	776	31,459	39,627
Impairment losses ^(c)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,490)	-	-	-	(1,490)
Depreciation	-	-	(70)	(25)	(71)	(609)	(5,483)	(61)	(124)	-	(6,443)
Carrying amount at end of period 2024	22,928	150	409	72	3,755	2,679	214,807	1,279	5,801	222,679	474,559
Gross carrying amount	22,928	150	1,251	290	4,132	6,060	218,282	1,410	5,801	222,679	482,983
Accumulated depreciation	-	-	(842)	(218)	(377)	(3,381)	(76)	(131)	-	-	(5,025)
Accumulated impairment losses	-	-	-	-	-	-	(3,399)	-	-	-	(3,399)

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

(b) Refer to [note 8.10](#), land transferred to Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

(c) Refer to [note 4.1.1](#) for details regarding impairment losses.

Initial recognition

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

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

Subsequent measurement

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

- land
- buildings
- measurement sites.

Land is carried at fair value.

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

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

Measurement sites are independently valued every five years by an external services valuer. In the intervening years, the measurement sites are revalued internally by use of other heavy and civil engineering construction building cost index provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The last time groundwater measurement sites were independently valued was by Ernst & Young for the 30 June 2023 financial year end. Fair value for measurement

sites is determined by reference to the cost of replacing the remaining future economic benefits embodied in the asset, i.e. the current replacement cost.

Revaluation model:

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

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

Land and buildings were revalued as at 1 July 2023 by Landgate. The valuations were performed during the year ended 30 June 2024 and recognised at 30 June 2024. In undertaking the revaluation, fair value was determined by reference to market values for land: \$61,956,600 (2023: \$52,284,100) and buildings: \$2,490,000 (2023: \$2,823,500). For the remaining balance, unobservable (level 3) inputs were used to determine the fair value.

Revaluation model:

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

Unobservable (level 3) inputs used to determine fair values of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment are:

Land	Fair value for restricted use land is determined by comparison with market evidence for land with low level utility. Relevant comparators of land with low level utility are selected by the Landgate (Valuation Services).
Buildings	<p>Historical cost per square metre floor area</p> <p>The costs of constructing specialised buildings with similar utility are extracted from financial records of the department, then indexed by movements in consumer price index.</p> <p>Consumed economic benefit/obsolescence of asset</p> <p>Landgate (Valuation Services) estimate these</p>
Measurement sites	<p>Historical cost of the assets</p> <p>The costs of construction of the measurement sites are extracted from the financial records of the department and indexed by movement in construction costs by valuers.</p>

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

4.1.1 Depreciation and impairment

Charge for the period

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Depreciation		
Buildings	124	118
Infrastructure	71	70
Plant and equipment	609	583
Vehicles and boating	25	32
Computer equipment	70	89
Leasehold improvements	61	34
Measurement sites	5,483	4,380
Total depreciation for the period	6,443	5,306

At 30 June 2024, the department recognised \$1.490 (2023: \$1.909) million impairment loss on measurement sites. \$0.482 (2023: \$0.78) million was recognised in the revaluation reserve and \$1.008 (2023: \$1.129) million recognised in profit and loss to ensure that the impairment loss did not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for this class of assets.

Useful lives

All infrastructure, property, plant and equipment having a limited useful life are systematically depreciated over their estimated useful lives in a manner that reflects the consumption of their future economic benefits. The exceptions to this rule include assets held for sale, land and investment properties.

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life.

Typical estimated useful lives for the different asset classes for current and prior years are included in the table below:

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

- (a) Software that is integral to the operation of related hardware.
- (b) Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful lives.

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

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

Impairment

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

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

Where a previously revalued asset is written down to its recoverable amount, the loss is recognised as a revaluation decrement through other comprehensive income to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset.

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

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

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

4.2 Right-of-use assets

Year ended 30 June 2024	Buildings	Computer and office equipment	Motor Vehicles	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Net carrying amount at beginning of period	333	329	1,414	2,076
Additions	273	209	2,025	2,507
Disposals	(31)	-	(130)	(161)
Depreciation	(342)	(271)	(814)	(1,427)
Net carrying amount at end of period	233	267	2,495	2,995

The department has leases for vehicles, computer equipment, office and residential accommodations. The lease contracts are typically made for fixed periods of 1–6 years with an option to renew the lease after that date. Lease payments for buildings not leased through the Department of Finance are renegotiated when appropriate to reflect market rentals.

The department subleases residential housing to employees at a subsidised rate. The department recognises lease payments from operating leases as income on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

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

Initial recognition

At the commencement date of the lease, the department recognises right-of-use assets and a corresponding lease liability for most leases. The right-of-use assets are measured at cost comprising of:

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

The corresponding lease liabilities in relation to these right-of-use assets have been disclosed in [note 6.1](#).

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

Subsequent measurement

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

Depreciation and impairment of right-of-use assets

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

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

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

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

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Buildings	342	368
Computer and office equipment	271	206
Motor vehicles	814	695
Total right-of-use assets depreciation for the period	1,427	1,269

The total cash outflow for leases in the 2024 financial year was \$1.4 million (2023: \$1.3 million).



4.3 Intangible assets

	Capital Works in Progress	Analytical Products	Licences	Computer Software	Total
Year ended 30 June 2024	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1 July 2023					
Gross carrying amount	13,346	10,044	181	36,819	60,390
Accumulated amortisation	-	(5,399)	(86)	(23,423)	(28,908)
Carrying amount at start of period	13,346	4,645	95	13,396	31,482
Additions	5,055	-	-	255	5,310
Transfers in/(out) ^(a)	(9,206)	-	-	9,206	-
Disposal	-	-	-	-	-
Amortisation expense	-	(1,011)	(50)	(2,088)	(3,149)
Carrying amount at end of period	9,195	3,634	45	20,769	33,643
Gross carrying amount	9,195	10,044	181	46,280	65,700
Accumulated amortisation	-	(6,410)	(136)	(25,511)	(32,057)

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

Initial recognition

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. For assets acquired at significantly less than fair value, the cost is their fair value at the date of acquisition. An internally generated intangible asset arising from development (or from the development phase of an internal project) is recognised if, and only if, all of the following are demonstrated:

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

Acquisitions of intangible assets costing \$5,000 or more and internally generated intangible assets costing \$5,000 or more that comply with the recognition criteria as per AASB 138 (as noted above), are capitalised. Costs incurred below these thresholds are immediately expensed directly to the Statement of comprehensive income. Costs incurred in the research phase of a project are immediately expensed.

Subsequent measurement

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

4.3.1 Amortisation and impairment

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Charge for the period		
Analytical products	1,011	983
Computing software	2,088	2,288
Licences	50	34
Total amortisation for the period	3,149	3,305

Useful lives

The department held no goodwill or intangible assets with an indefinite useful life during the reporting period. At the end of the reporting period there were no intangible assets not yet available for use.

Amortisation of finite life intangible assets is calculated on a straight-line basis at rates that allocate the asset's value over its estimated useful life. All intangible assets controlled by the department have a finite useful life and zero residual value. Estimated useful lives are reviewed annually. The estimated useful lives for each class of intangible asset are:

Licences	3 years
Software (a)	3–10 years
Analytical products (b)	10 years

- (a) Software that is not integral to the operation of related hardware.
- (b) Analytical products are intangible assets such as geophysical datasets and surveys which are usually produced as part of project work. These products are used by the department to improve its understanding and management of water resources.

Impairment of intangible assets

Intangible assets with finite useful lives are tested for impairment annually or when an indication of impairment is identified. The policy in connection with testing for impairment is outlined in [note 4.1.1](#). As at 30 June 2024 there were no indications of impairment to intangible assets.

5. Other assets and liabilities

This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from the department's controlled operations and includes other assets utilised for economic benefits and liabilities incurred during normal operations:

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Receivables	5.1	50,707	38,989
Amounts receivable for services	5.2	97,556	88,895
Other assets	5.3	5,021	3,154
Payables	5.4	8,880	7,616
Contract liabilities	5.5	2,382	5,403
Other current liabilities	5.6	1	2

5.1 Receivables

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Current		
Trade receivables	13,416	10,864
Allowance for impairment of trade receivables	(1,276)	(497)
Accrued revenue	33,230	27,537
Allowance for impairment of accrued revenue	(436)	(486)
GST receivable	1,520	1,571
Total current	46,454	38,989
Non-current		
Accrued salaries suspense account ^(a)	4,253	-
Total non-current	4,253	-
Total receivables	50,707	38,989

(a) Funds transferred to Treasury for the purpose of meeting the 27th pay in a reporting period that generally occurs every 11th year. This account is classified as non-current except for the year before the 27th pay year.

Trade receivables are initially recognised at their transaction price or, for those receivables that contain a significant financing component, at fair value. The department holds the receivables with the objective to collect the contractual cash flows and therefore subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less an allowance for impairment.

The department recognises a loss allowance for expected credit losses (ECLs) on a receivable not held at fair value through profit and loss. The ECLs based on the difference between the contractual cash flows and the cash flows that the entity expects to receive, discounted at the original effective interest rate. Individual receivables are written off when the department has no reasonable expectations of recovering the contractual cash flows.

For trade receivables, the department recognises an allowance for ECLs measured at the lifetime expected credit losses at each reporting date. The department has established a provision matrix that is based on its historical credit loss experience, and adjusted for forward-looking factors specific to the debtors and the economic environment. Please refer to [note 2.3](#) for the amount of ECLs expensed in this financial year.

The accrued salaries suspense account consists of amounts paid annually into a Treasurer's special purpose account to meet the additional cash outflow for employee salary payments in reporting periods with 27 pay days instead of the normal 26. No interest is received on this account.

The account has been reclassified from 'Cash and cash equivalents' to 'Receivables' as it is considered that funds in the account are not cash but a right to receive the cash in future. Comparative amounts are not restated.

5.2 Amounts receivable for services (holding account)

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Current	7,753	7,043
Non-current	89,803	81,852
Total amounts receivable for services at end of period	97,556	88,895

Amounts receivable for services represent the non-cash component of service appropriations. It is restricted in that it can only be used for asset replacement or payment of leave liability.

The amounts receivable for services are financial assets at amortised cost and are not considered impaired (i.e. there is no expected credit loss of the holding account).

5.3 Other assets

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Current		
Prepayments	4,900	3,151
Total current	4,900	3,151
Non-current		
Prepayments	121	3
Total non-current	121	3
Total other assets at end of period	5,021	3,154

Other non-financial assets include prepayments which represent payments in advance of receipt of goods or services or that part of expenditure made in one accounting period covering a term extending beyond that period.

5.4 Payables

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Current		
Trade payables ^(a)	538	541
Other payables ^(a)	67	6
Accrued expenses	5,294	4,422
Accrued salaries ^(b)	2,981	2,647
Total payables at end of period	8,880	7,616

(a) Payables are recognised at the amounts payable when the department becomes obliged to make future payments as a result of a purchase of assets or services. The carrying amount is equivalent to fair value, as settlement is generally within 15–30 days.

(b) Accrued salaries represent the amount due to staff but unpaid at the end of the reporting period. Accrued salaries are settled within a fortnight of the reporting period end. The department considers the carrying amount of accrued salaries to be equivalent to its fair value.

5.5 Contract liabilities

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Reconciliation of changes in contract liabilities		
Opening balance	5,403	2,447
Additions	2,382	5,093
Revenue recognised in the period	(5,403)	(2,137)
Total contract liabilities at end of period	2,382	5,403
Current	2,382	5,403
Non-current	-	-

The department's contract liabilities primarily relate to user charges and fees yet to be performed as the licence, works approval or tracking form has not been issued to the customer.

5.6 Other current liabilities

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Stale cheque holding account	1	2
Total current liabilities at end of period	1	2



6 Financing

This section sets out the material balances and disclosures associated with the financing and cash flows of the department.

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Lease liabilities	6.1	3,085	2,141
Assets pledged as security	6.2	2,995	2,076
Finance costs	6.3	170	90
Cash and cash equivalents	6.4	119,671	109,196
Capital commitments	6.5	17,212	9,012

6.1 Lease liabilities

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
No later than one year	891	867
Later than on year and not later than five years	2,049	1,226
Later than 5 years	145	48
	3,085	2,141
Current	891	867
Non-current	2,194	1,274
Balance at end of period	3,085	2,141

Initial measurement

At the commencement date of the lease, the department recognises lease liabilities measured at the present value of the lease payments to be made over the lease term. The lease payments are discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease. If that rate cannot be readily determined, the department uses the incremental borrowing rate provided by the Western Australian Treasury Corporation.

Lease payments included by the department as part of the present value calculation of lease liability include:

- fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments), less any lease incentives receivable
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date
- amounts expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees
- the exercise price of purchase options (where these are reasonably certain to be exercised)

- payments for penalties for terminating a lease, where the lease term reflects the department exercising an option to terminate the lease
- periods covered by extension or termination options are only included in the lease term by the department if the lease is reasonably certain to be extended (or not terminated).

The interest on the lease liability is recognised in profit or loss over the lease term so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability for each period. Lease liabilities do not include any future changes in variable lease payments (that depend on an index or rate) until they take effect, in which case the lease liability is reassessed and adjusted against the right-of-use asset.

Variable lease payments, not included in the measurement of lease liability, which are dependent on sales, an index or rate are recognised by the department in profit or loss in the period in which the condition that triggers those payments occurs.

Subsequent measurement

Lease liabilities are measured by increasing the carrying amount to reflect interest on the lease liabilities; reducing the carrying amount to reflect the lease payments made; and remeasuring the carrying amount at amortised cost, subject to adjustments to reflect any reassessment or lease modifications.

This section should be read in conjunction with [note 4.2](#).

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Lease expenses recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income		
Lease interest expense	170	90
Short-term leases	91	87
Low-value leases	3	1
Net loss on disposal of lease arrangement	4	2

Short-term leases are recognised on a straight-line basis with a lease term of 12 months or less.

Low-value leases with an underlying value of \$5,000 or less are recognised on a straight-line basis.

6.2 Assets pledged as security

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
The carrying amounts of non-current assets pledged as security are:		
Right-of-use asset vehicles	2,495	1,414
Right-of-use asset computer and office equipment	267	329
Right-of-use asset buildings	233	333
Total assets pledged as security	2,995	2,076

The department has secured the right-of-use assets against related lease liabilities. In the event of default, the rights to the leased assets will revert to the lessor.

6.3 Finance costs

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Lease interest expense	170	90

Finance cost includes the interest component of lease liability repayments.

6.4 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Current		
Cash and cash equivalents	23,487	11,448
Restricted cash and cash equivalents ^(a)	96,184	94,440
Total current	119,671	105,888
Non-current		
Restricted cash and cash equivalents ^(b)	-	3,308
	-	3,308
Balance at end of period	119,671	109,196

(a) Comprised of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account (\$41.4 million), Environmental Protection Part IV Cost Recovery Account (\$13.7 million), Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account (\$12.2 million), Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund (\$12.1 million), Clean Energy Future Fund (\$8.6 million), Royalties for Regions (\$3.4 million), Agricultural Areas Dams (\$1.4 million), and other funds (\$3.4 million) that are restricted in their purpose and cannot be used in general operations.

(b) Funds held in the account for the purpose of meeting the 27th pay. The account has been reclassified to Receivables in the current year.

For the purpose of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents (and restricted cash and cash equivalent) assets comprise of short-term deposits with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

6.5 Capital commitments

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Capital expenditure commitments, being contracted capital expenditure additional to the amounts reported in the financial statements, are payable as follows:		
Within 1 year	3,724	2,529
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	13,488	6,483
Total capital commitments	17,212	9,012



7 Financial instruments and contingencies

This note sets out the key risk management policies and measurement techniques of the department.

	Notes
Financial instruments	7.1
Contingent assets and liabilities	7.2

7.1 Financial instruments

The carrying amounts of each of the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities at the end of the reporting period are:

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Financial assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	119,671	109,196
Financial assets at amortised cost ^(a)	146,354	126,162
Total financial assets	266,025	235,358
Financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities at amortised cost ^(b)	11,966	9,759
Total financial liabilities	11,966	9,759

(a) The amount of Financial assets at amortised cost excludes the GST recoverable from the ATO (statutory receivable).

(b) The amount of Financial liabilities at amortised cost excludes GST payable to the ATO (statutory payable).

Measurement

All financial assets and liabilities are carried without subsequent remeasurement.

7.2 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Statement of financial position but are disclosed and, if quantifiable, are measured at the best estimate.

Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

7.2.1 Contingent assets

The following contingent assets are excluded from the assets included in the financial statements:

The department is responsible for administering and regulating Waste Levy in Western Australia. Liability for Waste Levy is legislated through the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007* and the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Act 2007* and regulated through the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008 and the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Regulations 2008. The department conducts investigations on licensed and unlicensed landfill premises and the outcome of such investigations may be that the operator of the premises is liable for the payment of waste levy and applicable penalties. The department has determined that it is not practicable to estimate the financial effect of these investigations at the end of the reporting period, due to the complex nature of the investigations and the lengthy period of time that may be taken to finalise the investigations.

7.2.2 Contingent liabilities

The following contingent liabilities are excluded from the liabilities included in the financial statements:

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Costs potentially payable in relation to Supreme Court action commenced by the plaintiffs against the Department's Vegetation Conservation Notices	200	-
Costs potentially payable in relation to legal action taken against an entity relating to odour pollution	-	50
Costs potentially payable in relation to flood damage compensation	-	4,000

Contaminated sites

Under the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003*, state agencies are required to report known and suspected contaminated sites to the department. In accordance with the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003*, the department classifies these sites on the basis of risk to human health, the environment and environmental values. Where sites are classified as *contaminated - remediation required* or possibly *contaminated - investigation required*, the department may have a liability in respect of investigation or remediation expenses.

There is an outstanding contingent liability in relation to the remediation of a liquid waste treatment facility in agreement with Water Corporation.	660	150
Total contingent liabilities	860	4,200

8 Other disclosures

This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or other pronouncements for the understanding of this financial report.

	Notes
Events occurring after the end of the reporting period	8.1
Initial application of Australian Accounting Standards	8.2
Key management personnel	8.3
Related party transactions	8.4
Related bodies	8.5
Affiliated bodies	8.6
Special purpose accounts	8.7
Indian Ocean Territories Account	8.8
Remuneration of auditors	8.9
Contributed equity and reserves	8.10
Supplementary financial information	8.11

8.1 Events occurring after the end of the reporting period

Forgiveness of debts – Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021 (Regulations):

(i) Fees charged for proposals – Part 2 – Division 4 – Regulation 15: Interest

As per [note 8.11\(d\)](#), on 2 July 2024 the Director General approved waiving interest fees on outstanding amounts relating to proposals under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

(ii) Fees charged for annual compliance fees – Part 2 – Division 4 – Regulation 15: Interest

As per [note 8.11\(d\)](#), on 27 August 2024 the Director General approved waiving interest fees on outstanding amounts relating to Annual Compliance Fees (ACF) in accordance with Part 2 – Division 3 – Regulation 11 of the Regulations 2011.

8.2 Initial application of Australian Accounting Standards

The following standards are operative for reporting periods ended on or after 30 June 2024:

- AASB 2021-2 – Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure of Accounting Policies and Definition of Accounting Estimates
- AASB 2021-6 – Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure of Accounting Policies: Tier 2 and Other Australian Accounting Standards

There is no financial impact.

8.3 Key management personnel

The department has determined key management personnel to include Cabinet Ministers and senior officers of the department. The department does not incur expenditures to compensate Ministers and those disclosures may be found in the *Annual Report on State Finances*.

The total fees, salaries, superannuation, non-monetary benefits and other benefits for senior officers of the department for the reporting period are presented within the following bands:

Compensation band (\$)	2024	2023
\$500,001 – \$550,000	-	1
\$300,001 – \$350,000	1	-
\$250,001 – \$300,000	1	-
\$200,001 – \$250,000	2	5
\$150,001 – \$200,000	2	3
\$100,001 – \$150,000	2	-
\$50,001 – \$100,000	-	3
\$0 – \$50,000	8	1
	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Total compensation of senior officers	1,999	2,385

8.4 Related party transactions

The department is a wholly owned public sector entity that is controlled by the State of Western Australia.

Related parties of the department include:

- all Cabinet Ministers and their close family members and their controlled or jointly controlled entities
- all senior officers and their close family members and their controlled or jointly controlled entities
- other departments and statutory authorities including related bodies that are included in the whole-of-government consolidated financial statements (i.e. wholly owned public sector entities)
- associates and joint ventures of a wholly owned public sector entity
- the Government Employees Superannuation Board.

Material transactions with other related parties

Outside of normal citizen type transactions with the department, there were no other related party transactions that involved key management personnel and/or their close family members and/or their controlled (or jointly controlled) entities.

8.5 Related bodies

The department currently does not provide any assistance to other agencies which would deem it to be regarded as related bodies under the definitions included in TI 951 Related and Affiliated Bodies.

8.6 Affiliated bodies

The following bodies receive more than half its funding and resources from the department, but are not subject to operational control by the department and are therefore considered to be affiliated bodies under the *Financial Management Act 2006*:

	2024 \$'000			2023 \$'000		
	Funding	Services free of charge	Total assistance	Funding	Services free of charge	Total assistance
Government organisations:						
Cockburn Sound Management Council	457	-	457	488	-	488
Contaminated Sites Committee	347	-	347	311	-	311
Environmental Protection Authority	10,114	-	10,114	9,795	-	9,795
Exmouth Gulf Coordinating Body	727	-	727	293	-	293
Keep Australia Beautiful Council (W.A.)	1,276	601	1,877	1,138	230	1,368
Office of the Appeals Convenor	1,896	-	1,896	1,493	-	1,493
Warren Donnelly Water Advisory Committee	7	-	7	4	-	4
Waste Authority	22,491	-	22,491	21,662	-	21,662
Non-government organisations:						
Geographe Catchment Council ¹	626	-	626	621	-	621

- 1 The department and Geographe Catchment Council entered into a partnership agreement whereby Geographe Catchment Council provides governance and management support to the department and the department provides support and links to the community and on-ground outcomes to achieve water quality improvements in the catchment area.

8.7 Special purpose accounts

Contaminated Sites Management Account⁽ⁱ⁾

The purpose of the account is to enable investigation or remediation of any site where the state or a public authority (excluding local government) is responsible for remediation. The account also funds the department's costs of investigation and ensuring compliance with notices.

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Balance at start of period	423	467
Receipts	361	211
Payments	(260)	(255)
Balance at end of period	524	423

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account⁽ⁱ⁾

The purpose of the account is to encourage the conservation of resources and energy through waste reduction and recycling; to promote support and encourage viable alternatives to landfill disposal of waste; and to encourage applied research and the development of appropriate waste management, waste reduction, recycling infrastructure and markets. The account is used to fund nominated programs and other waste management initiatives approved by the Minister for Environment on the advice of the Waste Authority of Western Australia.

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Balance at start of period	41,918	40,604
Receipts	22,491	21,662
Payments	(23,057)	(20,348)
Balance at end of period	41,352	41,918

Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The purpose of the account is to deliver environmental offset projects in the Pilbara bioregion of WA in partnership with Traditional Owners, conservation agencies, industry and government.

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Balance at start of period	7,865	5,424
Receipts	5,397	3,448
Payments	(1,165)	(1,007)
Balance at end of period	12,097	7,865

Environmental Protection Part IV Cost Recovery Account⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

The purpose of this account is to manage funds recovered under the Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021. The funds in this account are to be used for defraying the costs incurred by the department in receiving and assessing proposals and monitoring the implementation of proposals under Part IV Division 1 or 2 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Balance at start of period	10,714	1,475
Receipts	16,275	9,239
Payments	(13,282)	-
Balance at end of period	13,707	10,714

(i) Established under section 16(1)(b) of the *Financial Management Act 2006*

(ii) Established under section 16(1)(d) of the *Financial Management Act 2006*

8.8 Indian Ocean Territories Account

The purpose of the account is to account for Commonwealth funds for service delivery arrangements by the department to the Indian Ocean Territories.

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Balance at start of period	172	163
Receipts	1,501	1,230
Payments	(1,553)	(1,221)
Balance at end of period^(a)	120	172

(a) Under the terms of the Service Delivery Arrangement, the department is to provide a statement of operating and capital expenditure and revenue for the previous financial year to the Commonwealth by 31 August each year.

This notification enables adjustments to biannual payments to be made early in the financial year to take into account any under or overspends against budget estimates from the previous financial year.

8.9 Remuneration of auditors

Remuneration paid or payable to the Auditor General in respect of the audit for the current financial year is as follows:

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Auditing the accounts, financial statements, controls and key performance indicators	415	361

8.10 Contributed equity and reserves

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Contributed equity		
Balance at start of period	235,240	285,681
Contributions by owners		
Capital appropriation	11,046	12,316
Total contributions by owners	246,286	297,997
Distributions to owners		
Transfer to consolidated account	(19,357)	(60,656)
Transfer to other agencies:		
Land transferred to Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	(450)	(2,101)
Land transferred to Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	(236)	-
Total distributions to owners	(20,043)	(62,757)
Balance at end of period	226,243	235,240
Asset revaluation surplus		
Balance at start of period	97,930	36,496
Net revaluation increment:		
Land	31,459	24,635
Buildings	776	292
Measurement sites	6,910	36,507
Total net revaluation increment	39,145	61,434
Balance at end of period	137,075	97,930

8.11 Supplementary financial information

(a) Write-offs

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
The accountable authority	1	43
The Minister	-	143
The Treasurer	-	-
Total write-offs	1	186

(b) Losses through theft, defaults and other causes

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Losses of public money, other money and other property through theft or default	7	9
Amounts recovered	(2)	(7)
Total losses	5	2

(c) Gifts of public property

During the financial year under review there were no gifts of public property provided by the department (2023: Nil).

(d) Forgiveness of debts

1. Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021 (Regulations)

(i) Fees charged for proposals – Part 2 - Division 4 - Regulation 15: Interest

On 1 January 2022, the department commenced charging proponents fees for proposals assessed under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* in accordance with the Regulations. Part 2 – Division 4 – Regulation 15 provides for a fee to be charged for interest on outstanding amounts payable at the prescribed

interest rate, being 3% higher than the cash rate target, as determined and published by the Reserve Bank of Australia, in effect on the 1st day the amount became outstanding.

The department currently does not have the resource capacity to determine the complex interest on the outstanding amounts payable for all invoices issued, which impacts the 2022–23 and 2023–24 financial years. Additionally, issuing an invoice to proponents charging interest after such a long delay could potentially put the department's reputation at risk.

In accordance with the Regulations, Part 2 – Division 4 – Regulation 13, the Chief Executive Officer (i.e. the Director General) may, on a case by case basis, refund, reduce or waive, in whole or in part, a fee paid or payable under this part if considered appropriate to do so.

On 2 July 2024, the Director General approved the waiving of interest fees on the outstanding amounts.

(ii) Fees charged for annual compliance fees – Part 2 – Division 4 – Regulation 15: Interest

On 1 July 2023, the department commenced charging Annual Compliance Fees (ACF) in accordance with Part 2 – Division 3 – Regulation 11 of the Regulations 2021. Part 2 – Division 4 – Regulation 15 provides for a fee to be charged for interest on outstanding amounts payable at the prescribed interest rate, being 3% higher than the cash rate target, as determined and published by the Reserve Bank of Australia, in effect on the 1st day the amount became outstanding.

The department currently does not have the capacity to determine the complex interest on the outstanding amounts payable for all invoices issued, which impacts the 2023–24 financial year. Additionally, issuing an invoice to proponents charging interest after such a long delay could potentially put the department's reputation at risk.

In accordance with the Regulations Part 2 – Division 4 – Regulation 13, the Chief Executive Officer (i.e. the Director General) may, on a case by case basis, refund, reduce or waive, in whole or in part, a fee paid or payable under this part if considered appropriate to do so.

On 27 August 2024, the Director General approved the waiving of interest fees on the outstanding amounts.

2. Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997 (Regulations)

On 5 December 2013, the Regulations were amended. Regulation 18G introduced an annual noise monitoring fee of \$5,000 for a person granted an approval under Regulation 18B(1). Regulation 18G states that if a noise monitoring fee is not paid within a specific period the approval is suspended and of no effect until the fee is paid. Additionally, the regulation states that the Chief Executive Officer (i.e. the Director General), may waive or reduce a fee payable under this regulation.

The department has not invoiced annual noise monitoring fees to approval holders since introduction of the fee. The total sum of uncollected fees is approximately \$500,000 up to 30 June 2024. There are currently ten approvals in effect.

An implementation strategy for the collection of noise monitoring fees was approved by the Director General on 21 March 2024. Included in the strategy was the waiving of the annual noise monitoring fees for the period from 5 December 2013 to 30 June 2024. The department will commence invoicing the annual noise monitoring fees from 1 July 2024 and invoicing will occur annually for the life of the approval.

9. Explanatory statements

This section explains variations in the financial performance of the department.

	Notes
Explanatory statement for controlled operations	9.1
Explanatory statement for administered items	9.2

9.1 Explanatory statements for controlled operations

This explanatory section explains variations in the financial performance of the department undertaking transactions under its own control, as represented by the primary financial statements.

All variances between annual estimates (original budget) and actual results for 2024, and between the actual results for 2024 and 2023 are shown below. Narratives are provided for key major variances which vary more than 10% from their comparative and that the variation is more than 1% of the following variance analyses for the:

1. Estimate and actual results for the current year:
 - Total Cost of Services of the estimate for the Statement of comprehensive income and Statement of cash flows (i.e. 1% of \$292,924,000), and
 - Total Assets of the estimate for the Statement of financial position (i.e. 1% of \$573,706,000).
2. Actual results for the current year and the prior year actual:
 - Total Cost of Services for the previous year for the Statements of comprehensive income and Statement of cash flows (i.e. 1% of \$211,497,000); and
 - Total Assets for the previous year for the Statement of financial position (i.e. 1% of \$703,753,000).

9.1.1 Statement of comprehensive income variances

	Variance note	Estimate 2024 \$'000	Actual 2024 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance between actual and estimate \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2024 and 2023 \$'000
Expenses						
Employee benefits expense		134,455	131,145	120,752	(3,310)	10,393
Supplies and services	1, a	45,137	57,734	41,790	12,597	15,944
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	2	14,738	11,019	9,880	(3,719)	1,139
Finance costs		163	170	90	7	80
Accommodation expenses		11,584	10,515	9,938	(1,069)	577
Grants and subsidies	3	77,782	22,451	21,384	(55,331)	1,067
Other expenses		6,565	7,407	6,904	842	503
Net loss on disposal of non-current assets		2,500	140	759	(2,360)	(619)
Total cost of services		292,924	240,581	211,497	(52,343)	29,084
Income						
User charges and fees	4	43,568	52,777	48,719	9,209	4,058
Commonwealth grants	b	5,530	3,031	7,639	(2,499)	(4,608)
Waste levy	5	77,600	96,488	91,490	18,888	4,998
Other Income	c	13,117	15,501	11,393	2,384	4,108
Total income		139,815	167,797	159,241	27,982	8,556
Net cost of services		153,109	72,784	52,256	(80,325)	20,528
Income from State Government						
Service appropriation	6	127,059	104,760	110,666	(22,299)	(5,906)
Income from other public sector entities	7, d	1,445	5,850	3,526	4,405	2,324
Resources received		3,055	2,644	3,256	(411)	(612)
Royalties for Regions fund		9,128	8,973	7,990	(155)	983
Total income from State Government		140,687	122,227	125,438	(18,460)	(3,211)
Surplus for the period		(12,422)	49,443	73,182	61,865	(23,739)
Other comprehensive income						
Items not reclassified subsequently to profit or loss						
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		-	39,145	61,434	39,145	(22,289)
Total other comprehensive income		-	39,145	61,434	39,145	(22,289)
Total comprehensive income for the period		(12,422)	88,588	134,616	101,010	(46,028)

Major estimate and actual (2024) variance narratives

1. Supplies and services increased by \$12.6 million (27.9%) mainly due to higher environmental contracting services, consultancy, temporary labour hire and software licence costs.
2. Depreciation and amortisation expenses decreased by \$3.7 million (25.2%) mainly due to lower than estimated additions from capital work in progress programs.
3. Grants and subsidies decreased by \$55.3 million (71.1%) mainly due to grant deferrals relating to State and Commonwealth funding for the National Partnership on Recycling Infrastructure, Clean Western Australia – Waste Paper and Cardboard Processing, Waste Export Ban, the Ban on E-waste to Landfill, Clean Energy Future Fund and delays in spending of the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account, as well as the deferral of Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account grants.
4. User charges and fees increased by \$9.2 million (21.1%) mainly due to higher than estimated Part IV *Environmental Protection Act 1986* applications, compliance and assessment fees; higher than estimated Part V *Environment Protection Act 1986* licence applications and renewals and higher than estimated Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) tracking fees and licence renewals.
5. Waste Levy increased by \$18.9 million (24.3%) mainly due to a higher than anticipated waste levy volume.
6. Service appropriation decreased by \$22.3 million (17.6%) mainly due to reflow of funds from 2024 to 2025 and/or 2026 for National Partnership on Recycling Infrastructure, Ban on E-waste to Landfill, Clean Energy Future Fund and Carbon Innovation Grant Program, which was partially offset by funding for Rapid Assessment Approvals Reform and Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Appropriation baseline updates.
7. Income from other public sector entities increased by \$4.4 million (304.8%) mainly due to higher than estimated Part IV *Environmental Protection Act 1986* applications, compliance and assessment fees and higher than estimated interest revenue from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account.

Major actual (2024) and comparative (2023) variance narratives

- a. Supplies and services increased by \$15.9 million (38.2%) mainly due to an increase in consultants and contractor costs, minor plant, machinery and equipment hire costs, water carting and drought relief costs, travel costs and other supplies and services costs.
- b. Commonwealth grants decreased by \$4.6 million (60.3%) mainly due to delay in funding for National Water Grid Agricultural Areas Dams and Community Water Supply Program, Food Waste for Heathy Soils Fund and completion of the Smart Farms Small Grants Program in 2023.
- c. Other income increased by \$4.1 million (36.1%) mainly due to increase in income from Pilbara Environmental Offset Fund.
- d. Income from other public sector entities increased by \$2.3 million (65.9%) mainly due to increased Part IV *Environmental Protection Act 1986* income from applications, compliance and assessment fees and increased interest revenue from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account.

9.1.2 Statement of financial position variances

	Variance note	Estimate 2024 \$'000	Actual 2024 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance between actual and estimate \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2024 and 2023 \$'000
Assets						
Current assets						
Cash and cash equivalents		17,343	23,487	11,448	6,144	12,039
Restricted cash and cash equivalents		39,183	96,184	94,440	57,001	1,744
Receivables		25,945	46,454	38,989	20,509	7,465
Amounts receivable for services		9,238	7,753	7,043	(1,485)	710
Other assets		1,907	4,900	3,151	2,993	1,749
Total current assets		93,616	178,778	155,071	85,162	23,707
Non-current assets						
Restricted cash and cash equivalents		-	-	3,308	-	(3,308)
Receivables		3,393	4,253	-	860	4,253
Amounts receivable for services		87,352	89,803	81,852	2,451	7,951
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	1, a	336,591	474,559	429,961	137,968	44,598
Right-of-use assets		3,215	2,995	2,076	(220)	919
Intangible assets	2	49,537	33,643	31,482	(15,894)	2,161
Other assets		2	121	3	119	118
Total non-current assets		480,090	605,374	548,682	125,284	56,692
Total assets		573,706	784,152	703,753	210,446	80,399
Liabilities						
Current liabilities						
Payables		7,119	8,880	7,616	1,761	1,264
Lease liabilities		1,236	891	867	(345)	24
Contract liabilities		2,448	2,382	5,403	(66)	(3,021)
Employee related provisions		25,118	27,248	26,714	2,130	534
Other current liabilities		-	1	2	1	(1)
Total current liabilities		35,921	39,402	40,602	3,481	(1,200)

	Variance note	Estimate 2024 \$'000	Actual 2024 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance between actual and estimate \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2024 and 2023 \$'000
Non-current liabilities						
Lease liabilities		5,793	2,194	1,274	(3,599)	920
Employee related provisions		5,511	7,295	6,207	1,784	1,088
Total non-current liabilities		11,304	9,489	7,481	(1,815)	2,008
Total liabilities		47,225	48,891	48,083	1,666	808
Net assets		526,481	735,261	655,670	208,780	79,591
Equity						
Contributed equity		220,726	226,243	235,240	5,517	(8,997)
Reserves		36,502	137,075	97,930	100,573	39,145
Accumulated surplus		269,253	371,943	322,500	102,690	49,443
Total equity		526,481	735,261	655,670	208,780	79,591

Major estimate and actual (2024) variance narratives

1. Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment increased by \$138 million (41%) mainly due to an increase in revaluation increments of land, buildings and measurement sites and additions to capital work in progress programs.
2. Intangible assets decreased by \$15.9 million (32.1%) mainly due to lower spend on software.

Major actual (2024) and comparative (2023) variance narratives

- a. Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment increased by \$44.6 million (10.4%) mainly due to an increase in revaluation increments of land, buildings and measurement sites and additions to capital work in progress programs.

9.1.3 Statement of cash flows variances

	Variance note	Estimate 2024 \$'000	Actual 2024 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance between actual and estimate \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2024 and 2023 \$'000
Cash flows from State Government						
Service appropriation	1	112,321	89,806	95,931	(22,515)	(6,125)
Capital appropriations	2	22,353	11,048	12,316	(11,305)	(1,268)
Holding account drawdown		7,043	6,293	7,918	(750)	(1,625)
Distributions to owner	3, a	(32,911)	(19,328)	(60,456)	13,583	41,128
Net proceeds on sale of land remitted to consolidated account		-	(229)	-	(229)	(229)
Royalties for Regions fund		11,858	8,973	7,990	(2,885)	983
Funds from other public sector entities	4, b	1,445	5,581	2,531	4,136	3,050
Net cash provided by State Government		122,109	102,144	66,230	(19,965)	35,914
Cash flows from operating activities						
Payments						
Employee benefits		(134,405)	(128,968)	(117,287)	5,437	(11,681)
Supplies and services	5, c	(42,072)	(55,146)	(41,329)	(13,074)	(13,817)
Finance costs		(163)	(167)	(90)	(4)	(77)
Accommodation		(11,664)	(10,397)	(9,637)	1,267	(760)
Grants and subsidies	6, d	(77,782)	(23,385)	(19,368)	54,397	(4,017)
GST payments on purchases	7	(5,710)	(10,315)	(8,610)	(4,605)	(1,705)
Other payments		(6,505)	(5,694)	(3,909)	811	(1,785)
Receipts						
User charges and fees	8, e	43,568	50,049	44,533	6,481	5,516
Commonwealth grants	f	5,530	3,031	7,639	(2,499)	(4,608)
Waste levy	9, g	77,600	94,359	84,105	16,759	10,254
GST receipts on sales		634	548	1,352	(86)	(804)
GST receipts from taxation authority	10, h	5,086	9,867	6,895	4,781	2,972
Other receipts	11, i	13,117	9,910	14,829	(3,207)	(4,919)
Net cash used in operating activities		(132,766)	(66,308)	(40,877)	66,458	(25,431)

	Variance note	Estimate 2024 \$'000	Actual 2024 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance between actual and estimate \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2024 and 2023 \$'000
Cash flows from investing activities						
Payments						
Purchase of non-current assets	12	(28,570)	(19,756)	(18,260)	8,814	(1,496)
Receipts						
Proceeds from sale of non-current assets		-	29	200	29	(171)
Net cash used in investing activities		(28,570)	(19,727)	(18,060)	8,843	(1,667)
Cash flows from financing activities						
Payments						
Principal elements of lease payments		(816)	(1,382)	(1,257)	(566)	(125)
Payments to accrued salaries account		-	(944)	-	(944)	(944)
Net cash used in financing activities		(816)	(2,326)	(1,257)	(1,510)	(1,069)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(40,043)	13,783	6,036	53,826	7,747
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		99,962	109,196	103,160	9,234	6,036
Adjustment for the reclassification of accrued salaries account		-	(3,308)	-	(3,308)	(3,308)
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period		59,919	119,671	109,196	59,752	10,475

Major estimate and actual (2024) variance narratives

1. Service appropriation decreased by \$22.5 million (20.0%) mainly due to reflow of funds from 2024 to 2025 and/or 2026 for National Partnership on Recycling Infrastructure, Ban on E-waste to Landfill, Clean Energy Future Fund and Carbon Innovation Grants Program, which was partially offset by funding for Rapid Assessment Approvals Reform and Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Appropriation baseline updates.
2. Capital appropriations decreased by \$11.3 million (50.6%) mainly due to delay in receipt of climate action initiatives.
3. Distributions to owner decreased by \$13.6 million (41.3%) due to retention of adequate working cash available for committed programs of work in accordance with the Cash Management Policy.

4. Funds from other public sector entities increased by \$4.1 million (286.2%) mainly due to higher than estimated Part IV *Environmental Protection Act 1986* applications, compliance and assessment fees and higher than estimated interest revenue from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account.
5. Supplies and services increased by \$13.1 million (31.1%) mainly due to an increase in consultants and contractor costs, minor plant, machinery and equipment hire costs, water carting and drought relief costs, travel costs and other supplies and services costs.
6. Grants and subsidies decreased by \$54.4 million (69.9%) mainly due to a deferral of State and Commonwealth funding for the National Partnership on Recycling Infrastructure, Clean Western Australia – Waste Paper and Cardboard Processing, Waste Export Ban, the Ban on E-waste to Landfill, Clean Energy Future Fund and delays in spending of the Establishing and Maintaining Vegetation Offsets Account, as well as the deferral of Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account grants.
7. GST payments on purchases increased by \$4.6 million (80.6%) mainly due to higher than estimated goods and services tax paid to suppliers for goods and services rendered.
8. User charges and fees increased by \$6.5 million (14.9%) mainly due to higher than estimated Part IV *Environmental Protection Act 1986* applications, compliance and assessment fees; higher than estimated Part V *Environment Protection Act 1986* licence applications and renewals and higher than estimated Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) tracking fees and licence renewals.
9. Waste levy increased by \$16.8 million (21.6%) mainly due to higher than anticipated leviable waste volume.
10. GST receipts from taxation authority increased by \$4.8 million (94%) mainly due to higher than estimated goods and services tax paid to suppliers for goods and services rendered.
11. Other receipts decreased by \$3.2 million (24.5%) mainly due to a decrease in funding from Murujuga Rock Art Strategy, Port Hedland Ambient Air Quality Monitoring and miscellaneous income.
12. Purchase of non-current assets decreased by \$8.8 million (30.9%) due to lower spend in Replace and Maintain Monitoring Bores, State Groundwater

Investigation Program, Rural Water Planning Program and Environment Online.

Major actual (2024) and comparative (2023) variance narratives

- a. Distributions to owner decreased by \$41.1 million (68%) due to retention of adequate working cash available for committed programs of work in accordance with the Cash Management Policy.
- b. Funds from other public sector entities increased by \$3.1 million (120.5%) mainly due to increased Part IV *Environmental Protection Act 1986* income from applications, compliance and assessment fees and increased interest revenue from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account.
- c. Supplies and services increased by \$13.8 million (33.4%) mainly due to an increase in consultants and contractor costs, minor plant, machinery and equipment hire costs, water carting and drought relief costs, travel costs and other supplies and services costs.
- d. Grants and subsidies increased by \$4 million (20.7%) mainly due to increase in infrastructure grant expenditure for E-Waste Ban.
- e. User charges and fees increased by \$5.5 million (12.4%) mainly due to an increase in Part IV *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) income.
- f. Commonwealth grants decreased by \$4.6 million (60.3%) because no funding was received in the 2024 financial year for Food Waste for Healthy Soils, National Water Grid Agricultural Areas Dams and Community Water Supply Program and additionally, the Smart Farms small grants program was completed in 2023.
- g. Waste levy increased by \$10.3 million (12.2%) due to increases in leviable waste volume.
- h. GST receipts from taxation authority increased by \$3 million (43.1%) mainly due to higher goods and services tax paid to suppliers for goods and services rendered and grant payments and additionally, a decrease in goods and services tax on sales.
- i. Other receipts decreased by \$4.9 million (33.2%) mainly due to decrease in cash received relating to Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring and the Port Hedland Ambient Air Quality Monitoring programs.

9.2 Explanatory statement for administered items

This explanatory section explains variations in the financial performance of the department undertaking transactions that it does not control but has responsibility to the government for, as detailed in the administered schedules.

All variances between annual estimates and actual results for 2024, and between the actual results for 2024 and 2023 are shown below. Narratives are provided for key major variances which are more than 10% from their comparative and that variation is more than 1% of Total Administered Income for the following variance analyses for the:

1. Estimate and actual results for the current year (i.e. \$100,000).
2. Actual results for the current year and the prior year actual (i.e. \$46,000).

	Variance note	Estimate 2024 \$'000	Actual 2024 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance between actual and estimate \$'000	Variance between actual results for 2024 and 2023 \$'000
Income from administered items						
Income						
For transfer:						
Regulatory fees and other charges ^(a)	1	100	94	46	(6)	48
Total administered income		100	94	46	(6)	48
Expenses						
Payments into the consolidated account ^(a)	2	100	94	46	(6)	48
Total administered expenses		100	94	46	(6)	48

- (a) Payments into the consolidated account included water fines collected on behalf of Water Corporation, and environmental infringement regulatory fees and fines collected on behalf of the State Government.

Variance narratives

1. The variance between the actual results for 2024 and 2023 are explained below:

Major actual (2024) and comparative (2023) variance narratives

- The variance is mainly due an increase in court imposed penalties \$47,192 (2023: \$10,312) during the financial year under review.
2. The variance is explained in the abovementioned number 1.



Certification of key performance indicators

I hereby certify that the key performance indicators are based on proper records, are relevant and appropriate for assisting users to assess the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's performance, and fairly represent the performance of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

Alistair Jones
Director General
1 October 2024

Outcome-based management framework

Government goal – Investing in WA's future: Taking climate action and supporting the arts, culture and sporting sectors to promote vibrant communities.

	Agency outcome	Key effectiveness indicators	Page	Agency services	Key efficiency indicators	Page
Outcome 1	Western Australia's growth and development is supported by the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state	Proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable, productive use	162	1. Water information and advice	Proportion of statutory referrals from DMAs where advice is provided within target timeframes	169
					Average cost per referral assessment	169
					Average cost per water measurement site managed	170
		Proportion of priority growth areas that have a water supply planning strategy	163	2. Water planning, allocation, and optimisation	Average cost per plan, report, or guidance document to support water planning, allocation, and optimisation	171
					Average cost per hour of scientific support for water planning, allocation, and optimisation	172
					3. Water regulation, licensing, and industry governance	Average cost of assessing a water licence application by risk assessment category
Average time taken (days) to assess a licence application by risk assessment category	173					
Average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action	174					
Outcome 2	Emissions, discharges and clearing of native vegetation are effectively regulated to avoid unacceptable risks to public health and the environment	Percentage of regulatory compliance activities completed as planned	163	4. Environmental regulation	Average cost per works approval and licence application	175
		Percentage of potential environmental risks identified during compliance monitoring program that are rectified within two months	164		Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application	175
Outcome 3	Development and implementation of strategic policy and legislation that promotes sustainable environmental outcomes	Percentage of advice and recommendations that met Ministerial approval, without the need for significant modification	164	5. Environmental and water policy	Average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations	177

	Agency outcome	Key effectiveness indicators	Page	Agency services	Key efficiency indicators	Page
Outcome 4	Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised	Percentage of MSW reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to waste strategy target in the Perth metropolitan region	165	6. Waste strategies	Cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected	178
		Percentage of C&I waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	165			
		Percentage of C&D waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target	166			
Outcome 5	Quality advice to the EPA and Minister for Environment on significant proposals and environmental issues	The EPA's satisfaction with the department's EIA service during the year, in line with best practice principles of EIA	166	7. Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of assessment output	179
		Percentage of project-specific conditions which did not require significant change following the appeal process	167	8. Environmental management services to the EPA	Cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output	180
		Percentage of assessments that met agreed timelines	167			
		The EPA's satisfaction with the department's provision of environmental management services during the year	168			
Outcome 6	Compliance with Ministerial Statement implementation conditions are monitored effectively	The number of Ministerial Statements audited compared to targets	168	9. Compliance monitoring services to the Minister for Environment	Average cost per environmental audit completed	181

Following the machinery of government changes, the Department of Water, the Department of Environment Regulation, and the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority were amalgamated and formed the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (the department) on 1 July 2017. This is the seventh reporting period for the department post amalgamation.

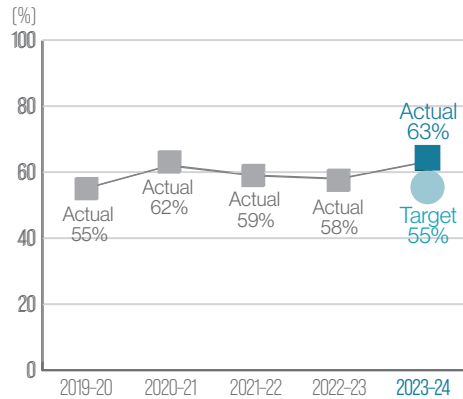
Results with significant variances of 10% or more compared with the Target and prior year results are explained.

Key effectiveness indicators

Proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state’s water as a resource for sustainable, productive use^(a)

(a) The 2023–24 survey results have a confidence interval of +/-4.01% at 95% confidence level. Other survey statistics include:

- population size: 1,351 stakeholders
- population character: stakeholder contacts provided by the department
- stakeholders invited to participate: 1,351 stakeholders
- number of respondents: 414
- response rate: 31%
- how sample was selected: Total population as provided by the department contacted by email or mail (for those without email contact details). The initial contact sought assistance with an online survey. Phone follow-up interviews were sought with stakeholders who did not respond to the online self-completion invitation



The management of the state’s water resources to enable growth and development is a core objective for the department, and this occurs within the context of ensuring the sustainability of the resources and their dependent environments.

The department has many stakeholders with competing interests, including those from industry, investment, community, and environmental sectors.

A survey was conducted between 5 October 2023 and 19 December 2023 with the intent to determine the extent to which stakeholders perceive the

department to be effectively fulfilling the statutory and other obligations that form its core role rather than satisfaction with a particular decision or handling of a specific issue.

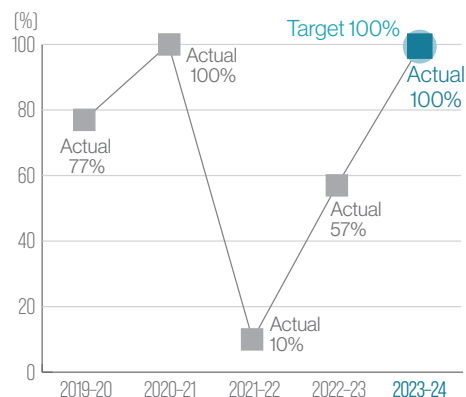
The indicator is based on feedback received from the stakeholders through the survey. It is calculated as a percentage of respondents answering 'very effective' or 'quite effective' to a question in the survey about their perception of the department effectively managing the state’s water as a resource for sustainable productive use. The other options for selection included 'neither one nor the other', 'quite ineffective', 'very ineffective' or 'don't know'.

Variance analysis

The increase in the proportion of stakeholders who perceive the department to be effectively managing the state’s water as a resource for sustainable, productive use from 2023–24 Target to 2023–24 Actual is due to ongoing reforms through the department’s portfolio operating model. This is driving business improvement, transformational initiatives and a range of senior appointments, alongside the department’s focus on Approvals Reform, Climate Change, Green Energy, Waste and stakeholder engagement.

Proportion of priority growth areas that have a water supply planning strategy

'Priority growth areas' refers to a list of significant projects and water resources areas. For each priority growth area, the department, or key stakeholders in collaboration with the department, develops a water supply plan or strategy to identify current and future water resource and supply options to meet demand for industry and population growth over the long term. This supports the timely development of resource and supply options to meet demand in areas of state priority.



Projects included in the priority growth areas have strategic significance for the state and include areas identified through the Water Supply-Demand Model as having a gap between future water demand and water availability.

The indicator is calculated as a percentage of the priority growth areas with a water supply planning strategy (or advisory report for key stakeholders) out of the total priority growth areas that the department is currently working on. Following the completion of the planned program of projects in 2020–21, the indicator was reset to zero in 2021–22 with a 100% completion target set for 2023–24 based on delivery of seven water supply planning projects, over three years ending 2023–24.

Variance analysis

2023–24 budget target of 100% relates to delivery of a total of three water supply planning strategies in 2023–24, making it seven outputs from a total of seven over three years ending 2023–24.

Percentage of regulatory compliance activities completed as planned

Compliance activities are an integral part of the department's regulatory work and include promotion, monitoring, and enforcement. Information gathered and assessed through compliance activities is also used to inform and revise both regulation and policy frameworks as well as to inform legislative reform programs.

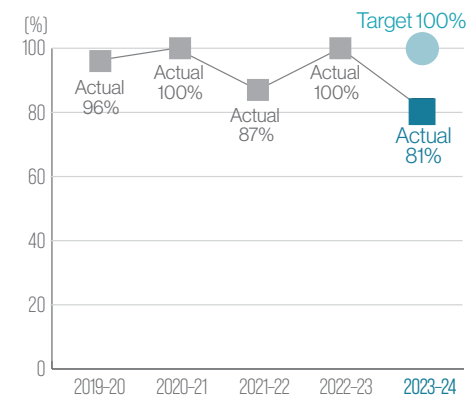
The department is a risk-based regulator that focuses its resources to address the areas of greatest risks to public health, the environment and water resources, and is responsive to emerging risks and issues.

The prescribed premises compliance monitoring program is focused on the assessment of emissions and discharges from premises to ensure they are managed appropriately by the current instrument and relevant legislation. The program identifies premises and targets activities based on a risk assessment informed by environmental and operational risk including type of activity, compliance history and intelligence gathered, including from complaints and incidents.

The waste sector compliance monitoring program assesses compliance at landfills and associated industries with the requirements of the landfill levy.

Variance analysis

The department conducted 114 of the 140 planned inspections for the Waste and Industry Compliance Program in 2023–24 with the reduced number a result of a major waste compliance issue taking resources from the annual compliance program. Regulatory resources were diverted to deliver a compliance and enforcement assurance program of works for six months of the year.

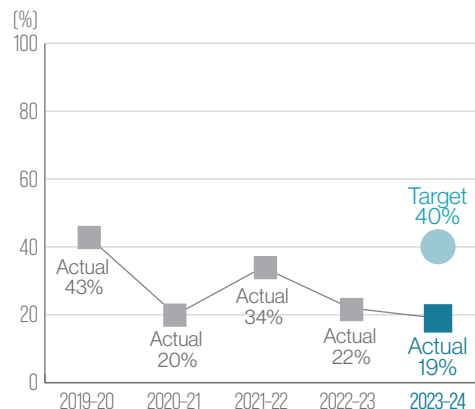


Percentage of potential environmental risks identified during compliance monitoring program that are rectified within two months

Non-compliances identified through inspections undertaken as part of the prescribed premises compliance monitoring program and the waste sector compliance monitoring program are recorded and the length of time taken for these non-compliances to be rectified is tracked.

Non-compliances vary in nature; they may be administrative, technical, or operational.

Administrative and technical non-compliances generally pose a low risk to public health, the environment or water resources, whereas operational non-compliances and emissions may pose a higher risk.



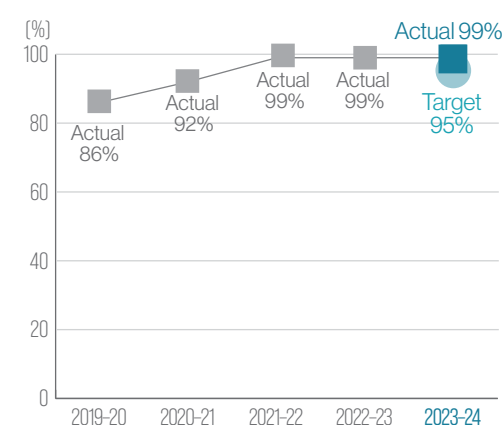
Variance analysis

During 2023–24, a total of 75 non-compliances were identified to 30 June 2024 from inspections under the waste sector and the prescribed premises compliance monitoring programs, including 38 non-compliances carried over from 2022–23 to allow for calculation against the two-month timeframe.

The target of 40% of non-compliances being closed within two calendar months was not achieved, with only 19% of non-compliances being closed within the specified timeframe. The resolution of the identified non-compliances is often protracted depending upon the complexity of the non-compliance identified and can take longer than the two-calendar-month target timeframe to resolve. Resources have been diverted through the year to deliver a compliance and enforcement assurance program of works.

Percentage of advice and recommendations that met Ministerial approval, without the need for significant modification

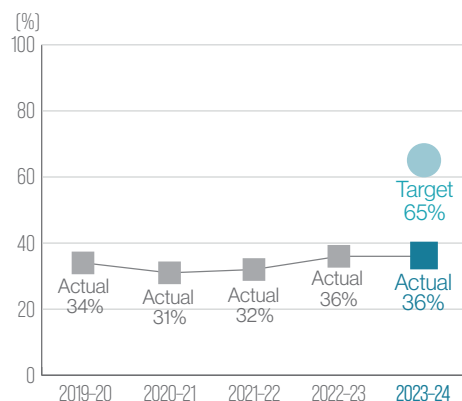
This indicator seeks to ensure that the advice provided by the department is consistent with the State Government's policy direction by measuring how well it meets the Minister for Environment's expectations.



Percentage of municipal solid waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to waste strategy target in the Perth metropolitan region

The indicator relates to the State Government's waste management target of recovering 67% of MSW by 2025, as described in the waste strategy.

Due to the significant time required to gather the relevant information, 2022–23 data, as reported in *Waste and recycling in Western Australia 2022–23*, was used to calculate this indicator for 2023–24. From 2021, the data is derived from annual returns submitted under regulation 18C of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008 and composition data submitted with waste levy returns. Data was sourced from voluntary surveys prior to 2019–20.



Variance analysis

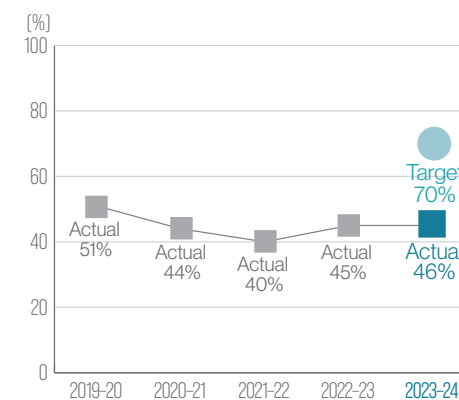
While substantial improvements are being observed in individual local government performance following the introduction of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) services, the overall waste recovery rate has remained the same as 2022–23 actuals. Several factors have influenced this outcome, including disruptions to material recovery facility operations, market-related pressures on processors and lower availability of supplies and services (for example, specialist technical staff). The majority of Perth and Peel local governments have now committed to implementing FOGO and this will continue to have a positive effect on waste recovery rates as these services are fully delivered.

The waste strategy 2030 sets a target for three-bin FOGO (food organics garden organics) services in the Perth and Peel regions by 2025. These services can recover 65% or more of kerbside waste collections. Increased adoption of FOGO services is expected to lead to increased recovery rates.

Percentage of commercial and industrial waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target

The indicator relates to the State Government's waste management target of recovering 75% of C&I waste by 2025, as described in the waste strategy.

Due to the significant time required to gather the relevant information, 2022–23 data, as reported in *Waste and recycling in Western Australia 2022–23*, was used to calculate this indicator for 2023–24. From 2021, the data is derived from annual returns submitted under regulation 18C of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008 and composition data submitted with waste levy returns. Data was sourced from voluntary surveys prior to 2019–20.



Variance analysis

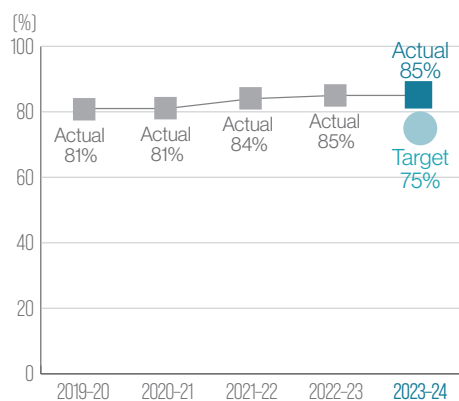
Waste recovery in the C&I sector has improved marginally compared to 2022–23. Recent and future investments in recycling infrastructure by the State and Federal governments will help to minimise reliance on international markets. A review of the Waste Avoidance and *Resource Recovery Strategy 2030* is currently underway to identify further actions to improve the recovery rates in the C&I waste sector.

There are likely to be significant opportunities to improve performance against the recovery rate target with increased recovery of organics through better practices of waste minimisation, increased resource recovery and reduced contamination of recyclables and organics.

Percentage of construction and demolition waste reported as diverted from landfill through recycling compared to the statewide waste strategy target

The indicator relates to the State Government’s waste management target of recovering 77% of C&D waste by 2025, as described in the waste strategy.

Due to the significant time required to gather the relevant information, 2022–23 data, as reported in *Waste and recycling in Western Australia 2022–23*, was used to calculate this indicator for 2023–24. From 2021, the data is derived from annual returns submitted under regulation 18C of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008 and composition data submitted with waste levy returns. Data was sourced from voluntary surveys prior to 2019–20.



Variance analysis

Relatively higher scheduled increases in the waste levy, compared to those that applied to the MSW and C&I streams since 2015, have made C&D waste landfilling more cost prohibitive.

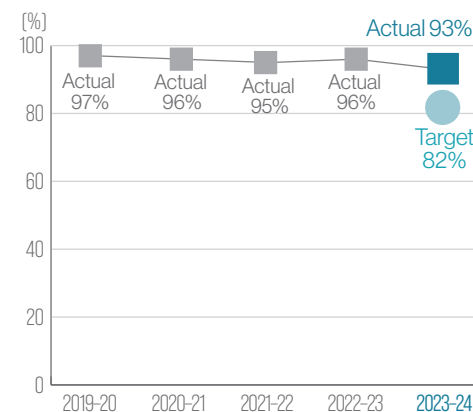
The variance between the 2023–24 Target and the 2023–24 Actual is most likely due to the ongoing stockpiling of C&D waste in lieu of disposal, which acts to inflate the reported recovery rate. Waste levy avoidance may also contribute to the reported diversion rate.

The EPA’s satisfaction with the department’s environmental impact assessment (EIA) service during the year, in line with best practice principles of EIA

The indicator is determined through surveys of the EPA’s members (service recipients) who rate the quality of each service against best practice principles (currently, the International Association for Impact Assessment’s Principles of EIA Best Practice).

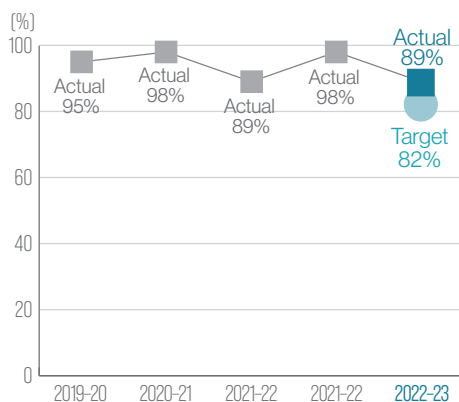
Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure that all advice provided to the EPA is as practical, efficient, rigorous, participative and fit-for-purpose as possible. In line with this goal, this year the EPA considered the EIA services provided by the department were of a very high standard, which resulted in the KPI Target being exceeded by more than 10%.



Percentage of project-specific conditions which did not require significant change following the appeal process

The indicator assists stakeholders in ascertaining the quality of conditions recommended by the department's EIA services. The department provides periodic reports to the EPA outlining the results of the appeals process and drawing attention to significant changes to the recommended conditions. This provides an important part of the State Government's expectation of a 'continuous improvement loop' in the appeals process.



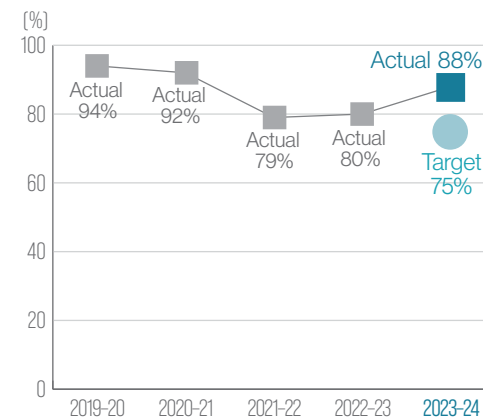
A significant change can be deemed as a substantial change to the form of a condition, the deletion or addition of a new condition, or a substantial change to the outcome or objective specified in a condition. A substantial change to the specified requirements of an environmental management plan or environmental monitoring plan and a change to a prescribed action are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure the conditions recommended to the EPA are as robust and comprehensive as the project requires and therefore does not require substantial change by the Office of the Appeals Convenor. In line with this goal, this year the department's recommended conditions required minimal substantial changes and therefore exceeded the KPI Target.

Percentage of assessments that met agreed timelines

This indicator measures the department's effectiveness in completing the assessment and providing the assessment report to the Minister in a timely manner. The timeline for an assessment may vary according to the complexity of the project and is usually agreed with the proponent soon after the level of assessment is determined. The assessment timeline is stated in the EPA's report. The timeline refers to the time between the receipt of the final information (that has been endorsed by the EPA) for the assessment and providing the assessment report to the Minister (12 weeks).



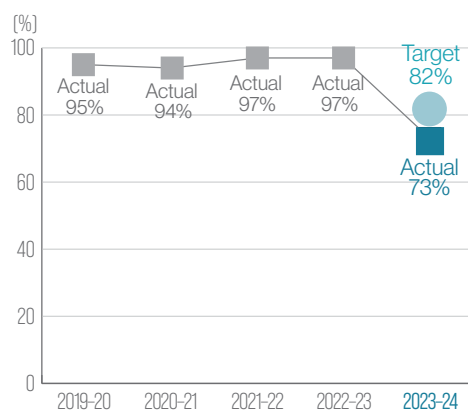
Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure assessments meet agreed timelines. In line with this goal, this year the department exceeded the KPI Target by more than 10%, following EPA Services implementing a new short report format which expedited the development and completion of EPA assessment reports in the 2023–24 financial year which have had a positive impact on meeting agreed timelines.

The EPA's satisfaction with the department's provision of environmental management services during the year

The level of quality is determined by the EPA with reference to the desirable underlying qualities of good environmental management (EM) advice. The EPA rates the quality of advice on strategic advice, statutory policies or guidelines provided by the department.

Each of the EPA members who participate in a decision rates the product on a scale of one to five (poor to excellent) and the scores of each member are averaged, combined, and proportionally adjusted to a percentage. The final indicator is the average rating awarded to all environment management services endorsed by the EPA during the period.



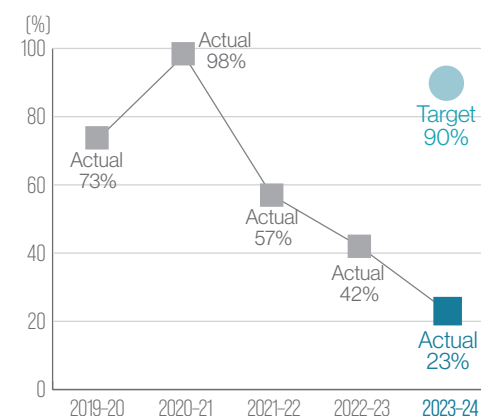
Variance analysis

The department strives to ensure that all environmental management services provided to the EPA have a clear purpose, are as rigorous, readable, applicable, consistent, and informed by stakeholder input as possible. In line with this goal, this year the EPA considered the EM services provided by the department were of a very high standard. However, this target was not met for the financial year due to the low number of items presented to the board resulting from significant change and loss of staff impacting the business operations.

The number of Ministerial Statements audited compared to targets

Compliance monitoring is managed through a structured annual compliance management program. The annual program sets out the number of audits to be undertaken and, using a priority matrix, identifies the Ministerial Statements to be audited.

The Minister imposes conditions on proposals to ensure that they are managed in an environmentally acceptable manner.



Variance analysis

The variance from the 2022-23 Actual and 2023-24 Target to the 2023-24 Actual is due to some compliance resources being refocused on high-risk compliance matters which resulted in several complete audit reports not being approved prior to the end of 2023-24.

Resources diverted to deliver compliance and enforcement Assurance Program, at the request of the Minister for Environment, have significantly impacted achievement. Backfills required on-boarding and audit training which delayed the audit process and completion. Several audits are close to completion and will now be completed in 2024-25.

Key efficiency indicators

Service 1: Water information and advice

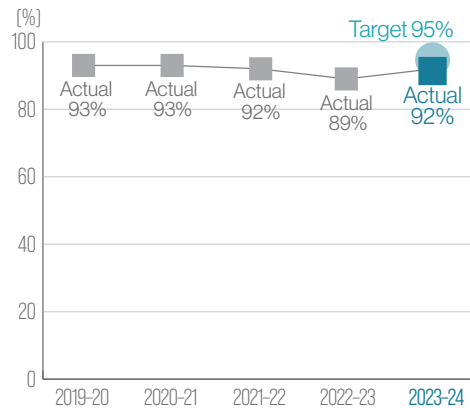
The department enables investment decisions of regional and state significance through the provision of data and information on the quantity, quality, location of, and demand for, water across the state. The information also underpins policy advice for consideration by State Government and supports other government agencies and stakeholders in their planning for future economic growth, and urban and rural development.

► Proportion of statutory referrals from DMAs where advice is provided within target timeframes

Technically proficient, reliable, and timely advice on the state's water resources enables effective decision-making by DMAs that directly supports growth, development, and investment for the long-term benefit of the state. DMAs include the:

- Environmental Protection Authority
- Other State Government agencies
- Local government authorities

This includes advice about water availability; the avoidance, management, and mitigation of impacts on water resources; and the protection of public drinking water sources.



This indicator represents a measure of the department's timeliness with respect to the provision of advice on various statutory referrals from DMAs. It demonstrates the efficiency with which the department is meeting statutory timeframes in providing water information and advice.

A statutory referral is a formal request for water advice from a DMA that has a statutory timeframe associated with the provision of that water advice. This indicator is calculated as a percentage of the total number of statutory referrals from DMAs to the department for advice that met the 35-business-day timeframe within the period.

► Average cost per referral assessment^(a)

Actual 2019-20 \$	Actual 2020-21 \$	Actual 2021-22 \$	Actual 2022-23 \$	Target 2023-24 \$	Actual 2023-24 \$
5,536	3,517	3,716	4,332	7,371	4,259

(a) The 2019-20 to 2022-23 audited figures were previously reported as \$7,182, \$5,125, \$5,418 and \$6,046. These have been restated to allow realignment with the depreciation cost allocations methodology relating to measurement sites. The average cost per referral assessment previously included 50% depreciation cost allocations for measurement sites. Depreciation costs for measurement sites have now been excluded from this service and redirected to key performance indicator – Average cost per water measurement site managed.

This measure provides information on the amount of operational expenditure being used for referrals that enable decisions on proposals that support the state's growth and development.

The indicator is relevant to the service because it is a directly attributable operational cost incurred in service delivery to meet the desired outcome.

An assessment is generated from both a formal request for water advice from a DMA or proponent such as under the Better Urban Water Management Framework. The indicator is calculated using the total cost of the water information and advice service divided by the total number of assessments conducted within the period.

Variance analysis

The reduction in the average cost per referral assessment in 2023–24 from the 2023–24 Target is mainly due to lower cost allocation resulting from revised cost allocations relating to depreciation for measurement sites to more accurately reflect the incidence of costs supporting this service.

► Average cost per water measurement site managed^(a)

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
10,216	8,232	6,764	7,414	7,414	8,285

(a) The 2019–20 to 2022–23 audited figures were previously reported as \$9,437, \$7,437, \$5,944 and \$6,638. These have been restated to allow realignment with the depreciation cost allocations methodology relating to measurement sites. The average cost per water measurement site managed previously included 50% depreciation cost allocations for measurement sites. Depreciation costs for measurement sites have now been 100% included in this service and removed from key performance indicator – Average cost per referral assessment.

Access to reliable and current information about water resources – quantity and quality – is a core input to decision-making by State Government and water-dependent businesses that enables growth and development of the state.

Stakeholders access water information and data to support investment and business decisions. It also supports accurate water resource management decisions and advice. To service this need, the department measures or holds water data for more than 116,000 groundwater and surface water field sites, verifies and stores the data, and makes it available as water information.

Regular or periodic field measurements are essential to maintain up-to-date data, and verification, storage and accessibility are essential to make data available as reliable information.

This indicator is calculated by dividing the annual cost of water measurement and water information functions by the number of active operational sites.

Variance analysis

The increase in the average cost per water measurement site managed from the 2023–24 Target to 2023–24 Actual is mainly due to higher cost allocation resulting from revised cost allocations relating to depreciation for measurement sites to more accurately reflect the incidence of costs supporting this service as well as a lower number of water measurement sites managed during the year.

The increase in the average cost per water measurement site managed from the 2022–23 Actual to the 2023–24 Actual is mainly due to an increase in depreciation relating to measurement sites in 2023–24 compared to 2022–23.

The department undertakes and facilitates water planning, allocation, and optimisation to ensure the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state, which relies on good science. This includes planning and allocating water for sustainable productive use, protecting public drinking water sources, and ensuring the sustainability of water resources and their dependent ecosystems.

► Average cost per plan, report, or guidance document to support water planning, allocation, and optimisation

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
348,488	233,709	268,753	243,074	409,599	194,137

Water resources need to be sustainably managed to achieve sufficient water quantity and quality for current and future needs. Increasingly precise, systematic, and transparent management is produced in science-based water allocation and optimisation plans, reports, and guidance documents. They guide and define management decisions to meet demand and avoid, mitigate, or minimise unsustainable impacts on resources. With this in place, sufficient good-quality surface water and groundwater will remain an ongoing part of future water supply for economic and population growth and the liveability of towns and cities.

Average cost is calculated by dividing the cost of the services by the total number of the following types of documents or advice produced:

1. Plans

- Water allocation plan
- Drinking water source protection plan
- Statement of response to public submissions

2. Plans for public comment

- Water allocation plan for public comment
- Water source protection plan for public comment

3. Technical reports

- Drinking water source protection area assessments
- Environmental water requirements report, or provisions report
- Allocation limits methods report

4. Guidance documents

- Water quality protection notes and information sheets
- Local water licensing strategy (e.g. Indigenous Land Use Agreement, allocation statement)

5. Status reports including:

- Annual or tri-annual compliance Jandakot and Gnamgara compliance reports
- Water allocation plan evaluations
- Drinking water source protection reviews
- Statewide planning reports (e.g. water resources inventory)
- Pre-planning or implementation phase status reports (e.g. discussion paper, review of allocation limits or components)
- Communication products (or sets of communication products) (e.g. water availability outlooks, website text, fact sheets)

Variance analysis

The decrease in the average cost from the 2023–24 Target to 2023–24 Actual is mainly due to lower cost allocations and a relatively small increase in the total number of documents to support water planning, allocation, and optimisation.

Service 3: Water regulation, licensing, and industry governance

The decrease in the average cost from the 2022–23 Actual to 2023–24 Actual is mainly due to lower cost allocations to support water planning, allocation and optimisation with the total number of documents supporting water planning, allocation and optimisation remaining the same.

► Average cost per hour of scientific support for water planning, allocation, and optimisation

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
161	172	185	197	198	199

The sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state relies on quality and contemporary water science. The indicator will enable judgement about the efficient application of the department's science capacity.

This indicator shows the average cost of providing scientific support for the achievement of water planning, allocation, and optimisation outcomes.

This indicator is calculated by dividing annual cost of full-time equivalent (FTE) and operational expenses by total hours worked by employees directly supporting scientific outcomes for this service.

Responsible, proportional regulation ensures investment, growth and development is underpinned by sustainable management of the state's water resources for the long-term benefit of the state. This service includes the management of water licensing. It also includes the management of the legislation governing the operations of water service providers.

► Average cost of assessing a water licence application by risk assessment category

Risk assessment category	Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
Low risk	3,284	3,412	3,348	4,018	4,242	4,182
Medium risk	4,378	4,549	4,464	5,357	5,656	5,577
High risk	5,473	5,686	5,580	6,697	7,070	6,971

Responsible, proportional regulation gives confidence that Western Australia's water resources are being sustainably managed for the long-term benefit of the state.

Water licensing is the main tool for sharing and allocating the state's water resources. A licence to take water authorises a licensee to take a specified volume of water from a particular water resource and is the principal tool for ensuring sustainable productive use of water in Western Australia. Other licences and permits administered by the department authorise the construction and alteration of water access infrastructure, such as wells and dams, as well as activities that interfere with the beds and banks of watercourses.

This indicator enables judgement about the costs of the department's water licence application assessments, within a risk-based assessment framework.

The indicator shows the average cost to assess a licence or permit application by risk category grouping. The indicator includes applications for permits to interfere with bed and banks, licences to construct a well, licences to access water, and renewal of and amendments to existing licences to access water, trades, transfers, and agreements.

The indicator is calculated by dividing the departmental cost of providing the water licensing service per application risk category, by the total number of licence and permit applications assessed within each risk category, within the period.

Variance analysis

The decrease in the average cost of assessing a water licence application across all water licence application risk categories from the 2023–24 Target to the 2023–24 Actual is mainly due to higher volumes of water licence applications assessed more than offset by higher cost allocations allocated to this service.

► Average time taken (days) to assess a licence application by risk assessment category

Risk assessment category	Actual 2019–20 (Days)	Actual 2020–21 (Days)	Actual 2021–22 (Days)	Actual 2022–23 (Days)	Target 2023–24 (Days)	Actual 2023–24 (Days)
Low risk	46	30	35	43	65	58
Medium risk	85	39	52	57	75	84
High risk	87	47	65	85	95	92

Water licences are one of the fundamental assets that support investment decisions in water-dependent industries. Investment decisions by licensees, existing and prospective, are also time-bound and require that applications for access to water are dealt with by the department in a timely manner.

The department ensures that the level of assessment effort applied to a water licence application is proportionate to the risk posed should a licence be granted, for example higher-risk licence applications are generally more complex and require more time to assess.

Risk categories for water licence or permit applications guide the level of assessment that is carried out by the department based on the risk should a licence or permit be granted. Risk categories are defined as low, medium, or high. Primary factors considered when assigning an assessment risk category are the volume of water being requested, how much water is available in the resource where the water is being requested, and potential impact of the proposed water use on other water users and/or the environment, including cumulative impacts.

This indicator enables judgement about the department's efficiency in decision-making for water licence and permit applications within this risk-based assessment framework.

The indicator shows the average time taken to assess a water licence or permit application by risk category. The indicator includes applications for permits to interfere with bed and banks, licences to construct a well, licences to take water, and renewal of and amendments to existing licences to take water, trades, transfers, and agreements.

The indicator is calculated by dividing the total time taken to assess all water licence and permit applications within each risk category, by the total number of licence and permit applications assessed within each risk category, within the period.

The measurement of assessment timeframes includes 'stop the clock'. When a water licence application assessment process is outside of the department's control, the time taken during this assessment process is not included when calculating application assessment times. The assessment clock is 'stopped' in these instances.

Variance analysis

The average time taken to process a water licence application has been significantly reduced in 2023–24 over the 2023–24 Targets across low and high water licence application risk categories, driven by the successful implementation of the water licensing backlog action plan.

Importantly, it should be noted that the average processing duration for low-risk applications, which represented more than 60% of the total water licence applications processed in 2023–24, is 7 days (or 11%) less than the target of 65 days.

The higher than Target average time taken to process a water licence application by medium risk category is due to the finalisation of applications that have had significantly protracted assessment timeframes. Removing the top 5% outlier applications (25 applications out of a total of 515 applications) reduces the average assessment timeframe for medium-risk applications to 72 days.

The increase in average time taken to process a licence application by risk assessment category from the 2022–23 Actual to the 2023–24 Actual is due to complexity and variability of a range of factors including compliance monitoring and enforcement activities, and complexity of licence assessment processes undertaken for each application.

► Average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
205	118	130	206	177	344

The department relies on water usage information for accurate water resource management advice and decisions. The department's compliance monitoring of licensed use provides accurate information on actual licensed water use to ensure the sustainable management of water resources for the long-term benefit of the state.

The department undertakes compliance monitoring and, where appropriate, enforcement action when licensed water use is found to be not in accordance with terms, restrictions, and conditions. Compliance monitoring within a risk-based framework ensures the department fulfils its legislative requirements, while ensuring efficient and sustainable productive water use.

Service 4: Environmental regulation

Investment decisions by licensees, existing and prospective, are time-bound and require that applications for access to water are dealt with by the department in a timely manner. Water licences are one of the fundamental assets that support investment decisions.

This indicator is calculated using the departmental cost of compliance and enforcement activities divided by the number of compliance and enforcement actions undertaken by the department during the year.

The enforcement actions include the following activities undertaken by the department when licensed water use is found to be inconsistent with the licence terms, restrictions, and conditions:

- educational letters
- licence amendments
- warnings, infringements, or direction notices
- prosecutions.

Variance analysis

The increase in the average cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement action from the 2022–23 Actual and the 2023–24 Target to 2023–24 Actual is mainly due to a significant reduction in the number of compliance monitoring and enforcement actions associated with water metering regulations implementation stabilised, and an associated reduction in metering related monitoring events and incidents of non-compliance, more than offset by the decrease in the cost of service.

The department seeks to prevent, control, and abate activities with the potential to cause pollution or environmental harm. It has adopted a risk-based approach to delivering its regulatory role, which broadly fits into three main functions:

1. approvals and licensing
2. monitoring, audit, and compliance inspections
3. enforcement, including complaint and incident investigation.

► Average cost per works approval and licence application

► Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application

Efficiency indicator	Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
Average cost per works approval and licence application	47,220	51,891	55,425	73,244	56,014	77,628
Average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application	17,644	33,217	30,353	33,764	60,594	38,428

These measures of efficiency were established to reflect the costs per regulatory action for an instrument for the department's industry regulation and

native vegetation regulation functions. These are considered relevant efficiency indicators as they:

- capture the primary regulatory functions of the department
- measure the amount of resources required to assess and determine an industry regulation instrument and native vegetation instrument
- are of interest to parties paying regulatory fees
- are relevant to the review and determination of the department's regulatory fees and charges.

The indicators are considered relevant to the service as they can track the efficiency of the assessment of regulatory instruments over time and provide a simple metric for users of the department's budget statements and annual report.

For works approvals and licences, the indicator is calculated by dividing the total group costs deemed relevant to the agency activity of carrying out and administering the function of works approvals and licences – being applications assessment and decision-making on works approval and licence applications under Part V Division 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* – by the number of work approvals, licences, licence renewals and amendments assessed to provide the average cost.

For clearing permit applications, the indicator is calculated using the same method, by dividing the total group costs deemed relevant to the agency activity of carrying out and administering the function of clearing permit applications – being assessment and decision-making on clearing permit applications and amendments to clearing permit applications under Part V Division 2 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* – by the number of clearing permit applications and amendment applications assessed, to provide the average cost.

Variance analysis

The increase in average cost per Works Approval and Licence Application from the 2023–24 Target to 2023–24 Actuals is mainly due to a reduction of 84 Works Approval and Licence Applications decided during the year, compared to the target of 600 Works Approval and Licence Applications planned to be decided during the year.

The increase in average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application from the 2022–23 Actual to the 2023–24 Actual is due to higher cost allocations more than offset by a relatively small increase in the number of native vegetation clearing permit applications decided during 2023–24.

The decrease in average cost per native vegetation clearing permit application from the 2023–24 Target to the 2023–24 Actual is due to an increase in the number of native vegetation clearing permit applications decided from 274 in 2022–23 to 285 in 2023–24.

Service 5: Environmental and water policy

Develop and implement policies and strategies that promote environmental outcomes.

► Average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
118	148	273	328	489	325

This measure of efficiency was established to reflect the cost per hour of policy advice. This is considered a relevant efficiency indicator as it:

- captures a significant function of the department
- measures the amount of resources required to develop and implement policies and strategies
- is of interest as it shows the cost of policy development
- is relevant to the use of funds being expended to develop and implement strategic policy and legislation that promotes sustainable environmental outcomes.

The indicator is relevant to this service as they can track the efficiency of the policy development and implementation over time and provide a simple metric for users of the department's budget statements and annual report.

The indicator is calculated by totalling the functional group costs associated with agency activity of carrying out and administering the function of providing policy advice and recommendations. The advice and recommendations relate to the development, review and amendment of environmental policy, national policy, primary and subsidiary legislation, and environmental programs,

providing advice to the Minister and the State Government in relation to legislation administration. The total number of available FTE hours for the services is divided into the costs to provide an average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations.

Variance analysis

The decrease in average cost per hour of policy advice and recommendations from the 2023–24 Target and 2022–23 Actuals is due to an increase in the number of hours of policy advice and recommendations delivered during 2023–24 (114,072 hours) compared to 2022–23 (86,541 hours).



Service 6: Waste strategies

Waste avoided and the recovery of materials from landfill maximised.

► Cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected

Actual 2019–20 %	Actual 2020–21 %	Actual 2021–22 %	Actual 2022–23 %	Target 2023–24 %	Actual 2023–24 %
1.94	1.60	1.87	1.64	1.50	1.55

This measure of efficiency was established to reflect the cost of levy compliance as a percentage of the landfill levy income collected. This is considered a relevant efficiency indicator as it:

- measures the number of resources applied to the waste avoidance strategies and landfill diversion strategies
- is of interest as it shows the cost of managing the waste strategies
- is relevant to the use of funds being expended to develop and implement strategic policy and legislation that promotes sustainable environmental outcomes.

The indicator is relevant to the service as it can track the efficiency of managing waste strategies and provides a simple metric for users of the department's budget statements and annual report.

The cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected is determined by totalling those functional group costs deemed relevant to the department's activity of carrying out and administering the function of providing landfill levy compliance – being the administration of the landfill levy returns, auditing of those returns, processing of exemptions and undertaking inspections at a range of waste facilities, and carrying out

unauthorised waste activity investigations. The indicator is calculated by dividing the cost of levy compliance by the amount of landfill levy income collected for the year.

Variance analysis

The minor increase in the cost of landfill levy compliance as a percentage of landfill levy income collected from the 2023–24 Target to 2023–24 Actual is due to a relatively small increase in dedicated resource monitoring and enforcing landfill levy compliance activities more than offset by an increase in landfill levy income resulting from greater than anticipated waste volumes.

Service 7: Environmental impact assessment services to the EPA

Conduct, for the EPA, environmental impact assessments of significant proposals and schemes.

► Cost per standardised unit of assessment output

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
39,924	62,466	45,444	79,177	69,506	102,998

While the variation in assessment complexity is reflected in the level of assessment set, several other factors affect how complex a proposal is to assess. To account for this range in difficulty, each assessment completed is assigned a weighting.

The difficulty often influences the amount of time spent dealing with a proposal, how the complexity weightings were allocated and trialled, in consultation with experienced officers, according to inherent proposal characteristics that cause a proposal to be more difficult rather than what causes an assessment to take more time to complete. This ensures that the indicator measures the efficiency of the department's provision of EIA advice to the EPA rather than the department's cost per hour. The total complexity is calculated by summing the individual complexities allocated to each assessment according to their inherent characteristics.

The cost per standardised unit of assessment output is calculated by dividing the total cost of assessments (including an allocation of post-approval costs and a portion of costs for policy and administrative support) by the total complexity weighting of assessments completed during the budget year.

Variance analysis

The increase in cost per standardised unit of assessment output from the 2022–23 Actual and 2023–24 Target to 2023–24 Actual is due to higher cost allocations to allocate costs to this service as well as lower number of standardised units of assessment outputs delivered. Key reasons for lower assessment outputs include the increased complexity of proposals, the allocation of some experienced assessment staff to the development and implementation of Environment Online and delivery of *Environmental Protection Act 1986* Amendments, and the ongoing training and development of new assessment staff because of high staff turnover rates.

Service 8: Environmental management services to the EPA

Develop, for the EPA, statutory policies, guidelines, and strategic advice to manage environmental impacts and protect the environment.

► Cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
34,793	34,572	26,706	26,151	53,838	53,172

Due to the variation in complexity of environmental management services provided, an average cost per piece of advice provided would not fairly represent the department's efficiency in providing such advice to the EPA. In fact, such a measure could provide a perverse incentive to produce many straightforward pieces of advice rather than tackling more complex issues that are more difficult to investigate. To account for this range in difficulty, each assessment completed is assigned a weighting.

The difficulty often influences the amount of time spent investigating a matter, how the complexity weightings were allocated, in consultation with experienced officers, according to inherent characteristics that cause a piece of environmental management advice to be more difficult rather than what causes it to take more time to complete. This ensures that the indicator measures the efficiency of the department's provision of environmental management advice to the EPA rather than the department's cost per hour.

The cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output is calculated by dividing the total cost of environmental management services (including an allocation of administrative support) by the total complexity weighting of environmental management services endorsed during the period.

Variance analysis

Strategic advice and support for environmental management services to the EPA is provided by a dedicated EPA services directorate within the department with support from other functions of the department for specialist environmental services. The cost per standardised unit of environmental management services output is higher than the 2022–23 Actual due to the lower number of environmental management services outputs to deliver the amendments to the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and the EPA procedure suite as well as higher cost allocations supporting this work.

Service 9: Compliance monitoring services to the Minister

Audit the compliance with conditions set under Ministerial approvals and undertake enforcement action as appropriate.

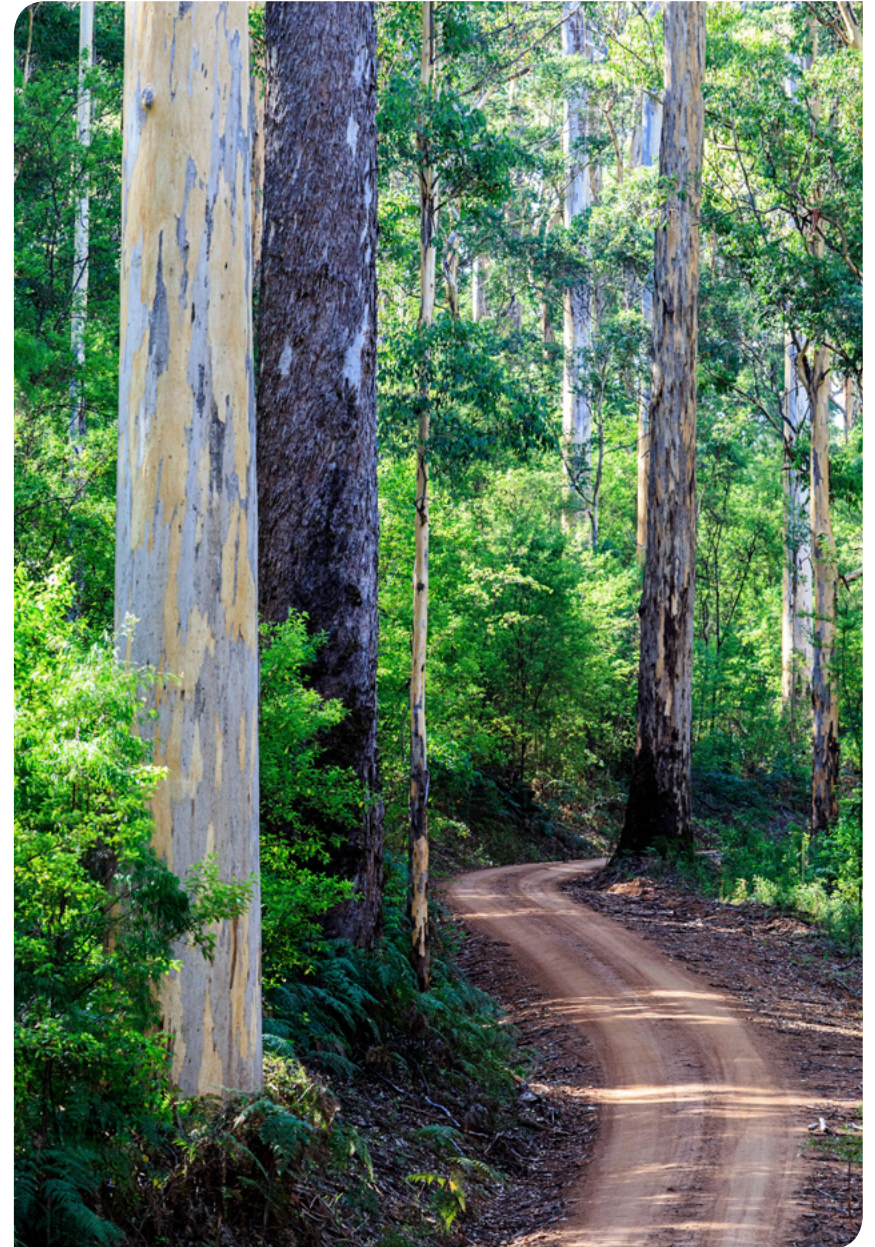
► Average cost per environmental audit completed

Actual 2019–20 \$	Actual 2020–21 \$	Actual 2021–22 \$	Actual 2022–23 \$	Target 2023–24 \$	Actual 2023–24 \$
65,666	56,117	51,684	148,276	37,574	336,373

The indicator is calculated by dividing the total cost (including an allocation of administrative overheads) allocated to compliance monitoring services by the total number of audits (not including desktop scans) completed during the period.

Variance analysis

Compliance monitoring services to the Minister for Environment are provided by a dedicated compliance and enforcement directorate within the department with support from other functions of the department. The actual average cost per environmental audit completed in 2023–24 is higher than the 2022–23 Actuals and the 2023–24 Target due to only 15% of the Target number (60) of environmental audits completed. This was due to delays in receiving information from proponents to validate compliance and staff movement throughout the year, which resulted in significant numbers of new staff commencing and the associated lead-in time to onboard and train them to be effectively supporting the audit program. Whilst the number of completed audits was below target, 23 additional environmental audits (22 environmental audits commenced but not completed in time for reporting in 2022–23) were substantially progressed during the year but not fully completed in time for reporting in 2023–24.



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Other requirements

Other legal requirements

Expenditure on advertising, market research, polling, direct mail and media

In accordance with s.175ZE of the *Electoral Act 1907*, the department incurred this expenditure in advertising, market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising. Total expenditure for 2023–24 was \$1,835,762.75 (excluding GST).

Unauthorised use of purchasing cards

In 2023–24, there were 65 instances where a State Government purchasing card was used for personal use. The aggregate amount of personal use expenditure was \$3,716.24. All expenditure was recovered by 30 June 2024. No disciplinary actions were instigated by the notifiable authority during the reporting period.

Act of grace payments

No act of grace payments were made in 2023–24.

Ministerial directives

There were no Ministerial directives in 2023–24.

Expenditure	Total	Expenditure paid to	Amount
Advertising agencies	Nil		Nil
Market research organisations	Nil		Nil
Polling organisations	Nil		Nil
Direct mail organisations	Nil		Nil
		Carat	\$1,225,986.67
		LinkedIn	\$16,167.97
		Facebook	\$96,993.00
		Google	\$70,872.25
		Initiative Media Australia	\$73,014.17
		Seek Limited	\$10,044.05
		State Law Publisher	\$241.09
		Independent and general media	\$28,610.86
		Department of the Premier and Cabinet	\$93.60
		National Retail Association	\$313,739.09
		TOTAL	\$1,835,762.75
Media advertising organisations	\$1,835,762.75		

Public sector standards and ethical codes

In accordance with s.21 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, the department complies with standards of merit, equity, and probity in relation to human resources activities. No breaches of the Western Australian Public Sector Standards in Human Resources (Employment Standard, Grievance Standard or Discipline Standard) were lodged in 2023–24.



Recordkeeping

We are committed to fostering a robust recordkeeping culture and continually enhancing our tools and practices. This commitment ensures our compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* and drives optimal business outcomes. In accordance with State Records Commission Standard 2, Principle 6, the following information is provided.

Our recordkeeping manual covers the broad range of recordkeeping requirements needed to ensure staff create, manage and maintain departmental records across all formats. This resource supports our business needs and ensures adherence to the legislative requirements outlined in our *Recordkeeping Plan*.



In 2023–24, we achieved significant progress in records management training, with 1,112 employees (88%), including regional staff and those from the Office of the Appeals Convenor, having completed the training. The biennial records awareness refresher training module has been completed by 471 employees.

 **1,112**
staff have completed record awareness training

 **471**
staff have completed refresher module

In December 2023, we implemented a new *Information Classification Policy*. By the end of 2023–24, 1,001 employees had completed information classification awareness training.



Government policy requirements

Substantive equality

Our whole-of-department commitment to substantive equality is built into the way we deliver water and environmental management. All processes associated with our management tasks and planning practices are developed with comprehensive input from the community and stakeholders. This development process invites broad public consultation across multiple platforms for comment on draft documents.

We aim to implement substantive equality measures across all operations and departmental functions. This ensures equitable access to our services, to meet diverse individual and cultural needs.



We are committed to improving our recruitment of Aboriginal talent, providing employment opportunities for Aboriginal people within the department and through our business, and strive to be to an employer of choice that respects and celebrates First Nations people.

We are strengthening sustainable relationships with Aboriginal communities, developing respect for their knowledge and deep connection to Western Australia's land and waterways, and working together to care for Country.

We continue to listen to, learn from and build partnerships with Traditional Owners across the state. As part of our reconciliation commitment, we incorporate and consider

the social and cultural wellbeing as well as the rights of Aboriginal people when working on Country with Traditional Owners. The department incorporates Acknowledgement of Country protocols into all official meetings and events to recognise Aboriginal peoples' spiritual and cultural connection to lands and waters.

Understanding the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal employees and cultural competency for our entire workforce, we continue to educate, celebrate and acknowledge First Nations culture and voices. We do this through our internal events for National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, and on an ongoing basis through training, storytelling and recognition of key partnerships, achievements and days of significance.



► Jawun secondment

The department encourages staff to deepen their experience and understanding of the state's Aboriginal culture and communities and continues to support employee participation in the Jawun program.

Jawun provides a professional development opportunity for government sector staff to undertake a secondment and contribute their skills to support Aboriginal economic development while learning about Aboriginal culture and history.

In 2023–24, three secondments were completed by departmental staff – partnering with the Wunan Foundation in Kununurra, the Kimberley Land Council in Broome, the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council and Derbarl Yerrigan Health Services in Perth.

One secondee joined the Wunan Foundation with a goal to determine and implement a manageable review process to maintain currency of documents and exemplify good governance.

The secondee at Kimberley Land Council focused on identifying ways to make the East Kimberley Energy Project more attractive

to potential funders within the Council's objectives.

The third secondee worked with the senior leadership at South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council to develop organisational reporting processes, and at Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service on an organisational communication and engagement strategy.

All the organisations and secondees learned valuable skills and knowledge that continue to be used long after the placement.



Workforce inclusiveness requirements

Our agency is committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. Research shows that agencies that value diversity and inclusion achieve greater staff satisfaction, better customer service outcomes, and improved decision-making and performance. The workforce is more connected, motivated and productive.

As part of the 2023 WA Public Sector Census, our staff were asked about their diversity, whether they had shared this with our agency and, if not, the reason for not sharing. The census was completed by 76.4 per cent of our staff.

The confidence of staff to give voice to their identities, workplace experiences and concerns is an indication of the level of workplace trust, psychological safety and inclusion.

► Our results

The percentage of staff who have shared their diversity information with our agency:

- 81.8 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- 34.9 per cent of culturally and linguistically diverse staff
- 64.6 per cent of staff with disability.

A number of staff indicated they had not shared this information with our agency because:

- they did not think it would be kept confidential
- they felt they may be treated differently
- they did not want to be a spokesperson
- they felt they may be limited in the roles they were offered.

The census insights are informing the development of our strategic workforce plan, which will guide us to build a capable, agile and diverse workforce.

Some of the actions we undertook in 2023–24 to improve diversity and inclusion were:



Inclusive access

The department has completed a comprehensive review of its recruitment practices, policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to having equitable opportunity in employment for people with disability. In 2023–24, we were accredited as a Disability Confident Recruiter through the Australian Disability Network. We will continue to ensure all employment opportunities are accessible and encourage diversity in employment.

The delivery of our *Disability access and inclusion plan 2018–2023* demonstrates the department's commitment to an inclusive public service. Our next five-year plan (2024–29) is open for consultation from internal and external stakeholders and members of the public until September 2024. The plan outlines the strategic framework of how we will ensure we provide equitable access to our services, information and facilities over seven key outcomes. It helps us to meet and surpass obligations under the *Disability Services Act 1993*, the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*, and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).

Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework

The department's [Multicultural Plan 2023–2026](#), our second such plan, sets out tangible actions against three key outcomes:



Guided by the principles and desired outcomes established in the State Government's [Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework](#), our multicultural plan

outlines our commitment to actions across our policy, programs and service areas. Through these actions, we seek to promote economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation.

In 2023, the department provided a full report on the outcomes of our first multicultural plan to the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Safe2Say program

In 2023–24, the department released the Safe2Say program aligned with our Code of Conduct and a new Dignity at Work Policy to help create inclusive and safe workspaces across our business.

Created by Crimestoppers WA, the Safe2Say platform allows staff to report employee misconduct and inappropriate behaviour that has been witnessed, while guaranteeing their anonymity. Staff can use Safe2Say to report bullying, corruption, fraud, discrimination, misconduct and sexual harassment.

Multicultural Policy Framework highlights



Our website has new automatic content translation capability, enabling our content to be accessible in more than 100 languages.



We oversaw department-wide promotion of culturally important days and events, including National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and Harmony Week.

Work health, safety and injury management

As a department, we prioritise the health and safety of our staff and are dedicated to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. Our Health and Safety Committee meets quarterly and regularly consults with regional offices through subcommittees. The subcommittees include health and safety representatives, employee representatives and management representatives.

These groups focus on resolving systemic safety issues and continuously improving our work safety and health systems, processes and performance. Our Health and Safety Committee is also responsible for safety risk and hazard identification and awareness. This includes ensuring our department-wide workplace health and safety action plan



Healthy workplace: Mental Health First Aid attendees

is implemented and meets its targets. Locations and details of our health and safety representatives, as well as associated documents and forms, are available to all staff through our intranet.

We are progressing our [Thrive at work: Wellbeing strategy 2023–26](#). Managers are provided with psychosocial risk training and about 50 employees to date have been trained in Mental Health First Aid. The three key wellbeing areas comprise job design, dignity at work and job uncertainty.

► Manager and supervisor training in occupational health and safety and injury management

In 2023–24, the department continued to provide on-site training for managers and employees. The introduction of the MyLearning online training portal enabled the department to conduct health and safety training on a range of topics.

Throughout the year, 1,039 employees completed 135 online health and safety courses, including fundamentals of risk

 **1,039**
employees completed
135 online health and safety courses

management which was the most attended course. All managers and employees are required to undertake workplace health and safety training every two years. This training is easily accessible through MyLearning.

We continued to train our health and safety representatives to ensure efficient safety standards and appointed additional workplace health and safety representatives to work closely with management teams. These voluntary roles include undertaking worksite inspections for potential hazards, incident investigation, and communications with department staff.

► Mechanisms for consultation with employees

Our primary mechanism for consultation with employees is through our health and safety committees and representatives. Our incident management reporting system provides a reporting function that can be presented through Power BI portals.

► Commitment to return employees to work after injury

Our comprehensive workers compensation and injury management policy was recently updated to incorporate the provisions of the new workers compensation and injury management legislation. This system ensures we can intervene promptly and effectively in injury management, enabling injured employees to remain at work or return to work at the earliest possible time. This system and our return-to-work programs are compliant with the requirements of the *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023* and have been reviewed and approved by RiskCover, our department's insurer.

► Performance

Ensuring the health and safety of our workforce is paramount. Our responsibilities are primarily set out under the Public Sector Commissioner's *Circular Code of Practice: Occupational Safety and Health in the Western Australian Public Sector*, as well as the requirements of the *Work Health Safety Act 2020* and the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981*. We comply with the code and the requirements of the Acts. Our performance against targets set in the code is demonstrated in the table below.



Measures	Results 2020–21	Results 2021–22	Results 2022–23	Targets	Comments towards targets
Number of fatalities	0	0	0	0	The department had 0 fatalities.
Lost time injuries and disease incidence rate	0.1	0.2	0.2	0	While the number of lost time injuries is low, we are continuously reviewing better and more efficient ways of managing risk and injuries in the workplace to reach our target of zero time lost to injuries.
Lost time injury and severity rate	0.1	0	0.1	0	Severe claims are measured against those which have lost 60 days or more.
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 13 weeks	99.9%	100%	99.9%	100%	Injured employees must return to work in some capacity before 13 weeks, with restrictions on work in the original area of employment or other meaningful work.
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 26 weeks	100%	100%	99.9%	100%	We have put strategies in place to ensure claimants return to work within 13 weeks, as guided by the clinical advice.
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health and injury management responsibilities, including refresher training within three years	Online training modules for managers 92%	Online training modules for managers 90%	Online training modules for managers 94%	100%	We will continue to provide mandatory injury management training for managers. Refresher training will occur for online modules every two years.

Complaints procedure

Feedback on our service delivery is welcome and is used to improve our current offerings. This ensures we consistently deliver the highest quality of service that meets the needs of our stakeholders and customers.

Our [service charter](#) guides our relationship with everyone we work with. We have a dedicated [feedback and complaints portal](#) where stakeholders and customers are encouraged to bring matters to the department's attention so we can action and track inquiries and monitor trends.

We received 23 complaints via our online complaints and feedback mechanism from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. This process is in line with our service charter.

The complaints ranged from:

- matters not relating to the department's services
- direct feedback on faults on the department's website
- Water Online, Pollution Watch, and EPA submissions requiring redirection
- various operational matters including air pollution data and regulatory functions, including sprinkler rosters.

These submissions were actioned and closed. In the timeframe recorded, no items are yet to be finalised.

This data does not include complaints managed under statutory processes within the department's remit, such as noise, dust and littering complaints.

Freedom of information

It is our commitment to make information available to the public as soon as possible and at the lowest possible cost.

In accordance with s.10 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (FOI Act), a person has a right to be given access to documents of an agency subject to, and in accordance with, the FOI Act.

For the 2023–24 period, we received 233 FOI applications. Of these, five applications were transferred to another agency in full. Of the remaining 228 applications, eight progressed to an internal review (six decisions confirmed, one varied and one pending) and two to external review with the Office of the Information Commissioner (decisions pending).

This financial year:

- the average time taken to process an FOI application was 44 days (the mandatory requirement under the FOI Act is 45 days)
- no personal information applications were received
- 228 applications were for non-personal information
- an additional 49 consultations from other government agencies were processed.





Woola Awards 2024

On 25 June 2024, the department held its fourth annual Woola Awards which coincided with the United Nations Public Service Day. Woola – the Noongar word for 'shout of praise' – sets the tone for this event, with individuals and teams from across our organisation celebrated for their contributions.

Awards are presented across three categories, comprising the:

- Significant Achievement Award
- Aboriginal Empowerment Award
- Recognition of Service Award.



This year, 97 staff members were recognised for their continuous service in the public sector, while the remaining awards highlighted outstanding contributions at work and for living our values.

The 2024 Significant Achievement Award was presented to Michael Whiting for his extensive work for the water measurement and monitoring program and work to empower various teams and stakeholders.

The Aboriginal Empowerment Award went to Mighel Chivilo and Phil Correll for their role in the guidance of the Yamatji Water Monitoring Trainees.

A special mention was given to Mark Williams, who celebrated 45 years of public service. Other recipients of long service recognition included Timotheos Katsavounidis for 40 Years; Teri Burmej, Sharon Gray, Julia Tilleke and Diane McKinnon for 35 years; and Deborah Rohan, Sharon Stratico, Hanna Wardecki, Tim Gentle, Stuart Barter, Malcolm Robb and Stuart Clarke for 30 years of service.

We are committed to ensuring our employees feel valued as we know this directly impacts the level of service delivered to our stakeholders, business units and the community.

We congratulate all nominees and recipients of this year's awards and look forward to the 2025 ceremony.



Appendices

Appendix A: Legislation

Legislation administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2024

Carbon Rights Act 2003

Contaminated Sites Act 2003

Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947

Environmental Protection Act 1986

Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2020

Environmental Protection (Landfill) Levy Act 1998

Litter Act 1979 (the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Keep Australia Beautiful Council [Western Australia])

Metropolitan Arterial Drainage Act 1982

Metropolitan Water Authority Act 1982

Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act 1909

National Environmental Protection Council (Western Australia) Act 1996

Plumbers Licensing Act 1995 (except Part 5A which is administered by the Minister for Commerce principally assisted by the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) – alternative citations are *Water Services Coordination Act 1995* and *Water Licensing Act 1995*

Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007 (the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Waste Authority)

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Act 2007 (the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Waste Authority)

Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984

Water Agencies Restructure (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 1995

Water Corporations Act 1995

Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2006

Water Resources Legislation Amendment Act 2007

Water Services Act 2012

Water Services Coordination Act 1995

Water Services Licensing Act 1995 (also called *Plumbers Licensing Act 1995*) (except Part 5A, which the Department of Commerce administers)

Waterways Conservation Act 1976

Regulations administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2024

Clean Air (Determination of Air Impurities in Gases Discharged to the Atmosphere) Regulations 1983	Environmental Protection (Kwinana) (Atmospheric Wastes) Regulations 1992	Environmental Protection Regulations 1987
Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006	Environmental Protection (Metal Coating) Regulations 2001	Litter Regulations 1981
Country Areas Water Supply (Clearing Licence) Regulations 1981	Environmental Protection (NEPM-NPI) Regulations 1998	Noise Abatement (Noise Labelling of Equipment) Regulations (No. 2) 1985
Environmental Protection (Abattoirs) Regulations 2001	Environmental Protection (NEPM-UPM) Regulations 2013	Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulations 2000
Environmental Protection (Abrasive Blasting) Regulations 1998	Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997	Rights in Water and Irrigation Regulations 2000
Environmental Protection (Bilateral Agreements) Regulations 2021	Environmental Protection (Packaged Fertiliser) Regulations 2010	Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Regulations 2019
Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004	Environmental Protection (Petrol) Regulations 1999	Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Regulations 2008
Environmental Protection (Concrete Batching and Cement Product Manufacturing) Regulations 1998	Environmental Protection (Plastic Bags) Regulations 2018	Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (e-waste) Regulations 2024
Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004	Environmental Protection (Prohibited Plastics and Balloons) Regulations 2018	Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008
Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021	Environmental Protection (Recovery of Vapours from the Transfer of Organic Liquids) Regulations 1995	Water Agencies (Entry Warrant) Regulations 1985
Environmental Protection (Fibre Reinforced Plastics) Regulations 1998	Environmental Protection (Rural Landfill) Regulations 2002	Water Agencies (Infringements) Regulations 1994
Environmental Protection (Goldfields Residential Areas) (Sulfur Dioxide) Regulations 2003	Environmental Protection (Solid Fuel Heater and Firewood) Regulations 2018	Water Corporations (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2013
	Environmental Protection (Unauthorised Discharges) Regulations 2004	Water Services Regulations 2013
		Water Services (Water Corporations Charges) Regulations 2014
		Waterways Conservation Regulations 1981

Other subsidiary legislation affecting our activities

For all other subsidiary legislation including bylaws, notices, declarations, proclamations, approvals, exemptions, orders, policy, pollution control areas, vesting orders, irrigation districts, standards and guidelines, please visit www.legislation.wa.gov.au.

Other key legislation affecting our activities

In the performance of our functions, the department complied with the following laws:

Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972

Auditor General Act 2006

Corruption and Crime Commission Act 2003

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Disability Services Act 1993

Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Financial Management Act 2006

Freedom of Information Act 1992

Government Employees Housing Act 1964

Industrial Relations Act 1979

National Environmental Protection Council Act 1997 (Cth)

Long Service Leave Act 1958

Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993

Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)

Procurement Act 2020

Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003

Public Sector Management Act 1994

Salaries and Allowances Act 1975

State Records Act 2000

Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981

Work Health and Safety Act 2020

Appendix B: Shortened forms

Term	Definition
AWEAG	Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group
C&D	construction and demolition
C&I	commercial and industrial
Contaminated Sites Act	<i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003</i>
CWSP	Community Water Supplies Partnership
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
DEMIRS	Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
department	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
DMA	decision-making authority
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
EIA	environmental impact assessment
EP Act	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
ERRF	Environmental Revegetation and Rehabilitation Fund
EV	electric vehicle
FOGO	food organics and garden organics

Term	Definition
FOI	freedom of information
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1992</i>
GL	gigalitres
ha	hectares
JTSI	Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
KABC	Keep Australia Beautiful Council
KPI	key performance indicator
LGA	local government authority
MAC	Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation
MAR	Mandatory Auditor's Report
MSW	municipal solid waste
RtR	Roads to Reuse
SCWS	Strategic Community Water Supply
SERS	<i>Sectoral emissions reduction strategy for Western Australia</i>
WA	Western Australia
WALGA	Western Australia Local Government Association
waste strategy	<i>Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030</i>
WIR	Water Information Reporting

Appendix C: References

BoM (Bureau of Meteorology) (2024a) [Western Australia in summer 2023-24](#), BoM website, accessed 6 September 2024.

BoM (2024b) [Western Australia in 2023](#), BoM website, Australian Government, accessed 4 September 2024.

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Caputi N, Kangas M, Denham A, Feng M, Pearce A, Hetzel Y and Chandrapavan A (2016) 'Management adaptation of invertebrate fisheries to an extreme marine heat wave event at a global warming hot spot'. *Ecology and Evolution* 6(11):3583–3593. doi: [10.1002/ece3.2137](https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.2137).

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NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) National Centers for Environmental Information (2024) [January 2024 Global Climate Report](#), NOAA NCEI website, accessed 4 September 2024.

Teasdale N and Panegyres PK (2023) 'Climate change in Western Australia and its impact on human health', *Journal of Climate Change and Health*, 12(1) Article 100243. doi: [10.1016/j.joclim.2023.100243](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joclim.2023.100243).

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Feedback form

Your feedback on our 2023–24 annual report would be greatly appreciated. We will use your comments to help improve the clarity and presentation of our publications. Thank you for your input.

- Did the report help you understand the department, its purpose, services and performance?

not at all | not really | somewhat | yes | absolutely

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

not at all | not really | somewhat | yes | absolutely

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

not at all | not really | somewhat | yes | absolutely

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

not at all | not really | somewhat | yes | absolutely

Please return completed feedback forms to:

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