



DEC stylesheet

This document was prepared by the Department of Environment and Conservation's Corporate Communications Branch.

It is intended for internal use only.

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Department of
Environment and Conservation

Our environment, our future



DEC stylesheet

The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) Corporate Communications stylesheet is for use by people who write and edit information for DEC publications and electronic media.

The stylesheet does not purport to include every matter of style or usage. It is a continually updated handy alphabetical reference list of many of the more frequently encountered style questions in our day-to-day written communications.

The stylesheet has been developed by staff of Corporate Communications Branch, using the state government media office's style guide, the sixth edition of the federal government *Style manual for authors, editors and printers* (australia.gov.au/publications/style-manual), the former Department of Environment and Department of Conservation and Land Management styles and the Macquarie Australian dictionary.

For spelling of words not covered here, please use the first reference in the Macquarie Australian dictionary.

While the stylesheet's rules provide the basis for a uniform standard for all DEC material, there are some exceptions. For example, media releases prepared by Public Affairs Branch must follow the government media office style guide. Other regular publications may, for specific reasons, adopt different style rules to the standard. Where known, these are noted in the column 'Exceptions'.

Corporate Communications coordinates regular editorial conferences with a broad representation of DEC editors. If you have other common-use style points you would like resolved, please refer them to the editorial conference for consideration, by emailing DEC-Publishing@dec.wa.gov.au.

Recent amendments:

as such

Cabinet

'centre' vs 'center'

Crown

DFES replaces FESA

House

Hon.

licensee (not licencee)

management plans – extra information regarding recommended sections and order

Mount, Road, Street, Saint, etc, in place names (see abbreviations)

orthographic markings on maps

Treasury

town site

urls

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>abbreviations – Omit the full point after a contraction when the last letter of the word or title ends the abbreviation, for example Mr, 2nd, St (saint and street), Lt (not Lieut), Ltd for limited.</p> <p>Full points are usually used if the word ends in a different letter from the word itself, for example Capt. Jones, the Rev. John Smith and Prof. Hancock.</p> <p>Omit the full point with abbreviations printed in capitals, for example USA, QC.</p> <p>Use verbs in full. For example, cannot, will not, we will, rather than can't, won't or we'll.</p> <p>Abbreviations formed from capital letters or years take plural without apostrophes (unless possessive), for example MPs, 1990s.</p> <p>Mount, Road, Street, Saint, etc, in place names should appear in full in text. Exception: in maps, graphs, illustrations, tables the abbreviated form may be used but should be consistent within the document.</p>	<p>It is the preferred style for <i>LANDSCOPE</i>, saleable publications and other corporate publications that abbreviations are avoided. For example, use hectares, kilometres and tonnes.</p> <p>Where required (such as in tables or graphs), lower case abbreviations for measurement are joined to the preceding figure, for example 8ha, 60kmh, 7am.</p> <p>Where abbreviations are required, use 'km' for kilometres; 'ha' for hectares; 'm' for metres; 'kmh' for kilometres per hour and 'tonnes' not 't' for tonnes.</p> <p>(See also distances/speed.)</p> <p>On web pages, avoid abbreviations and acronyms as much as possible.</p>
<p>ABC TV – is referred to as the ABC, not Channel 2</p>	
<p>ablution block – avoid, aim to use toilet block unless you are certain there are showers in the facility</p>	
<p>Aboriginal – with cap 'A' and 'Indigenous' with cap 'I' when referring to Aboriginal or Indigenous people or communities.</p> <p>Avoid using the word 'non-Aboriginal' or 'non-Indigenous'.</p> <p>Use alternatives such as 'Aboriginal and other Australian'</p> <p>Current government preference is to use Aboriginal rather</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
than Indigenous.	
about – use about, not approximately or around	
accuracy, brevity, clarity – be accurate, brief and to the point. Use active voice and be clear in what you say	
acid sulfate soil – not acid sulphate soil	
acknowledgment – not acknowledgement	
<p>acronyms – should only be used if the term occurs more than twice.</p> <p>In this case, spell it out in full the first time , following it with the acronym in brackets and thereafter refer to it by the acronym</p>	<p>In <i>Environment and Conservation News</i> and <i>DECmatters</i>, when first mentioning the department, use the acronym 'DEC' – no need to write out in full the first time.</p> <p><i>Websites</i> – see also <i>abbreviations</i></p>
<p>Act – use with a capital 'A' in a legislative sense. Italicise the Act name only when it is written in full with the year at the end, for example <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>, <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i> (CALM Act).</p> <p>Subsidiary legislation such as Regulations is capitalised but not italicised, for example Environmental Protection Regulations 1987.</p> <p>Sections of an Act should be written with a lower case 's' followed by the number.</p>	
Acting – avoid using except for directors	
active voice – usually preferred to passive, for example 'DEC translocated 45 bilbies' is preferable to 'Forty-five bilbies were translocated by DEC'	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
added – should usually be avoided in reporting speech and not used as a variant of ‘said’	
advisor – not adviser	
affect/effect – the verb ‘affect’ means to influence something, for example ‘rainfall affects the environment’ The verb ‘effect’ means to bring about a result. Effect can also be a noun, for example household effects.	
airconditioner – one word, no hyphen	
airshed – one word, no hyphen	
all right – two words	
alternative – means a choice; be careful not to confuse with ‘alternate’, which means to follow one another in time or place	
am/pm/noon – numbers should be numerical with no space between the number and unit of measurement, for example 8am (and not 8.00am) Do not use 1200, 12am, 2400 or 12pm. Use 12 noon or midday and midnight.	Science publications will adopt whatever stylesheet applies to the receiving journal. <i>Nuytsia</i> includes spaces between the number and the unit of measurement.
among – not amongst; amid , not ‘amidst’.	
ampersand – do not use the ampersand symbol (&) in written text. It can be used in tables, graphs and referencing.	
antenna – antennas (TV), antennae (feelers)	
anticlimax, anticyclone, antitoxin – no hyphens	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>apostrophes – apostrophes are inserted before the possessive ‘s’ of singular common nouns, for example the government’s priorities; tomorrow’s prescribed burns; DEC’s program.</p> <p>Nouns whose singular ends in ‘s’ are treated in the same way, for example James’s investigations, the blue ringed octopus’s range. Plural nouns ending in ‘s’ take the apostrophe ‘s’, for example the governments’ budgets; two years’ work.</p> <p>In contrast, plural nouns that do not end in ‘s’ take the apostrophe ‘s’; for example the children’s appreciation; the men’s roles.</p> <p>Plurals of lower case letters need the apostrophe, for example p’s and q’s; dotting the i’s. Apostrophes are not used in place names, for example St Georges Tce (see place names).</p> <p>However, the apostrophe is maintained in species names, for example Gilbert’s potoroos, Russell’s toadlet.</p>	
<p>appendix – plural, appendices (books, etc); appendixes – medical</p>	
<p>approximately – use ‘about’ and not around or round</p>	
<p>army – is lower case in general reference, but caps for the specific service, for example Australian Regular Army or Army Reserve.</p>	
<p>around not round – use around as in ‘run around the oval’, or ‘roam around the country’. Do not say ‘around 400’. Use ‘about 400’.</p>	
<p>artefact – not artifact</p>	
<p>as – do not use for ‘because’, for example ‘Because the</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
school was involved in the program, they had a greater appreciation for the environment’.	
as such – this phrase is not a substitute for the word ‘therefore’. In the phrase ‘as such’, the word ‘such’ needs to refer to a preceding word. For example, ‘I am a scientist, and as such I need to be satisfied that the data are correct’. The word ‘therefore’ refers to a preceding point or argument that is not itself complete.	
autopsy – is performed or done, not held Necropsy refers to an autopsy or post mortem examination of an animal.	
backward, backwards – as an adverb, use either form, as in looking backward(s). As an adjective, use backward: a backward glance.	
banded iron formation – not banded ironstone formation	
barbecue – not barbeque or BBQ	
barbed – barbed-wire fence, not barb wire	
barrel – single-barrel or double-barrel gun, not barrelled	
baseline – one word, no hyphen	
Baudin’s cockatoo – not Baudin’s black cockatoo	
because of – rather than ‘owing to’, and usually preferable to ‘due to’, which relates to money matters	
beeswax – one word	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
before – not ‘prior to’ or ‘previous to’	
begin or start – not commence	Aim to use simple language
benefit, benefited – one ‘t’	
beside/besides – at the side of, for example ‘beside the reserve’; besides means ‘in addition to’, for example ‘besides air pollution, they were worried about accidents’	
between – can be used for more than two things, for example ‘the space between three quadrats’; ‘an agreement between agencies’; ‘it is between him and me’ (not ‘I’)	
bi – avoid where possible, as a prefix to words of time such as bi-weekly, bi-monthly. Use two hourly and half-hourly, fortnightly, two monthly, half-yearly	bicentenary
biannual – twice a year; biennial – every two years	
big – use instead of large or huge	
Bill – cap in legislative sense, for example Bill of Rights	
billion – one thousand million is a billion	
bird hide – two words, no hyphen	
birdlife, birdwatching, birdwatcher – all one word, no hyphen	
boat, ship – liners, freighters, tankers and warships are ships; tenders, submarines and small craft are boats. ‘Craft’ and ‘vessel’ cover boats and ships. Where possible, use	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
'vessel'.	
boost – use sparingly in headlines. Don't overdo in text where you mean 'increase'.	
bore water – two words, no hyphen	
both – is usually unnecessary, for example it is not necessary to say 'both the flora and the fauna were endemic'	
brackets – use around scientific names, for example 'the slipper orchid (<i>Cryptostylis ovata</i>)'	
broadscale – one word	
Budget – cap for the Budget when referring to a specific government Budget. Note budgeting and budgeted have one 't'.	
bushfire vs wildfire – the Minister has requested we use 'bushfire' rather than 'wildfire' (except for fire managers and directors).	
Bush Ranger – in the case of the DEC program should be two words, both capped. E.g. Bush Ranger cadet	
bushwalking – one word	
business names – no full point after abbreviations used in businesses such as Bros, Co, Corp, Inc, Pty, Ltd.	
but – as a conjunction is often used illogically. It should introduce a contrast, for example 'the resolution was passed, but some participants abstained'.	
Cabinet, the – upper-case initial when referring to	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
government	
campaigns and programs – names of major DEC campaigns are italicised, for example <i>Western Shield</i> and <i>CleanRun</i> .	
campground – no hyphen, one word; camp site – two words; campfire – one word	
capital letters – use sparingly unless otherwise stated. Their overuse is perceived as bureaucratic.	The federal government <i>Style manual for authors, editors and printers</i> recommends using sentence case for headings. The government terms Crown, Treasury, House and Cabinet are upper-case initial.
car park – two words	
Carnaby's cockatoo – not Carnaby's black cockatoo	
centre – generally 'centre' is correct rather than 'center'. The former is the British (and therefore Australian spelling), while the latter is American	Exceptions are sometimes appropriate for mathematics contexts – such as in algebra
chairman, chairwoman or chairperson – not chair	
cheap – goods may be cheap, not prices	
children – not juveniles, except juvenile crime. Use 'kids' sparingly and 'students' where appropriate. Use toddler for between one and two years.	
Christian name – use 'first name' or 'given name(s)'	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
circa – abbreviated to [c.]	
class ‘A’ nature reserve; class ‘A’ reserve – ‘A’ in inverted commas.	
claypan – one word, no hyphen	
clean-up/clean up – the noun or adjective is hyphenated, the verb is two words. E.g. ‘The staff took part in a clean-up’ and ‘They asked people to clean up after the event.’	
<p>clerical titles – must be used correctly. After ‘the Rev.’ you need first name before surname, for example the Rev. John Smith.</p> <p>‘The Rev.’ is singular and plural, don’t use ‘the Revs.’</p> <p>If a Minister of religion has a doctorate, there is no need to precede title of ‘Dr’ with the additional titles of Most Rev. or Right Rev.</p> <p>‘The Anglican Bishop of Timbuktu Dr Bill Smith’ will do. Give the denomination of clergymen unless it is clear in the context.</p>	
clichés – avoid the overuse of stale phrases such as ‘mountainous seas’ and ‘curious creatures’	
<p>collective nouns – a collective noun denotes one undivided whole and takes a singular verb, for example ‘DEC has 2,000 staff.’</p> <p>Collective words for groups such as committee, crowd, family, government and team can take the singular or plural verb depending on whether the meaning relates to the group as a whole or to the individuals, for example ‘the committee is made up of four men and four women’ and ‘the committee [<i>its members</i>] are divided on how the park should be managed’.</p>	

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<p>colon – use a capital letter after a colon only if it is the start of a quote, for example The editor said: “You’re fired”.</p> <p>Note there is only one full point and it is outside the quote marks.</p>	
<p>commas – no comma before a bracket or in phrases such as ‘Research Scientist John Smith’.</p>	
<p>commence – avoid. Use begin or start.</p>	
<p>common names – common names are always written using lower case letters unless they are a proper noun, for example, if they are named after a person, for example Gilbert’s potoroo, Carnaby’s cockatoo.</p> <p>Common names should always be used when available, followed by the italicised scientific name in brackets. They should be free from hyphens unless grammatically indicated.</p> <p><i>See also ‘species names’</i></p>	<p>Common names fall into the domain of ordinary English grammar and are therefore subject to the rules placed on them by editors using house style (which works in accordance with the rules and emerging trends in English grammar and usage).</p> <p>The publication <i>Western Wildlife</i> is an exception.</p>
<p>complement, compliment – complement refers to a person or thing that completes something; to compliment means to express praise; a compliment may also be a formal greeting.</p>	
<p>comprised – common usage often sees the phrase ‘comprised of’; however, <i>comprise</i> means “to include, to be made up of, to constitute”, i.e. the whole comprises the parts, not the other way around. Therefore correct usage leaves out the ‘of’.</p>	<p>For example, you may see the sentence “The federal government is comprised of the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches.” Correct usage is in fact “The federal government comprises the executive, the legislative, and</p>

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
	the judicial branches.” An easier option may be to use ‘consist’, i.e. “The federal government consists of the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches.”
Conservation Commission of Western Australia – should only be shortened to Conservation Commission. CCWA refers to the Conservation Council of WA.	
conservation estate – do not use this expression. The preferred expression is DEC-managed lands and waters.	Legislation-specific documents will have to refer to land tenure as described in the relevant Acts and/or Regulations.
country – generally lower case (e.g. ‘work with community elders to record songs and stories of the area to maintain their connection to country’)	Exceptions: federal government grants program ‘Caring for our Country’ and ‘Connection to Country project’ are upper case
criteria – is plural, singular form is criterion	
Crown – upper-case initial when referring to government	
currently – avoid, it is usually not necessary	
Curtin University – no longer Curtin University of Technology	
dashes – an ‘em’ dash—achieved by pressing Alt+Ctrl+Num- —is used to signify an abrupt change, introduce an amplification or explanation and set apart elements in a sentence. Sometimes this appears as an ‘en’ dash – achieved by	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>pressing Ctrl+Num- – with spaces either side.</p> <p>Use an ‘en’ dash to identify a range, for example 10–15 per cent or April–June, and to show an association between words, for example a federal–state agreement.</p> <p><i>See also ‘en and em dashes’</i></p>	
<p>data – is plural (the singular datum is not commonly used)</p>	
<p>dates – write all months in full and in order of day, date, month, year, for example Saturday 17 March 2007.</p> <p>Years are written as 1980s, the 80s (no apostrophe) and 18th century (no superscript).</p> <p>The style for grouped dates is ‘from 1939 to 1945’ or (for tables and other situations where an abbreviated form is required) ‘1939–45’ (using an en dash to denote a span) and not with a forward slash, i.e. 1939/45.</p> <p>Days of the week are spelt out in text.</p> <p>They take a full point when abbreviated in lists or tables, for example Thurs. for Thursday.</p>	
<p>‘day-use area’ / ‘area for day use’ (no hyphen)</p>	
<p>DEC – is the acronym for the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).</p> <p>The department’s name should be spelt out in full, followed by the acronym in brackets, and then referred to as ‘DEC’.</p> <p>Do not use ‘the’ before DEC.</p>	
<p>department – lower case ‘d’ unless in the full name of a department.</p>	
<p>DFES – Department of Fire and Emergency Services (formerly FESA, Fire and Emergency Services Authority)</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>distances/speed – It is the preferred style for <i>LANDSCOPE</i>, saleable publications and other corporate publications (including <i>Environment and Conservation News</i> and <i>DECmatters</i>) that abbreviations are avoided. For example, use kilometres and metres. For readability, this rule can be broken for repetitive use or use in technical documents, graphs or tables.</p>	<p>Where abbreviations are required, such as in tables, figures, technical documents and media statements, use the following:</p> <p>Use the abbreviations ‘km’ for kilometres; ‘ha’ for hectares; ‘m’ for metres; ‘sq’ for square; ‘kmh’ for kilometres per hour.</p> <p>Close up the number and the abbreviation when they appear together, for example 8km, 100kmh.</p> <p>The plural is not used for abbreviations, i.e. do not use kms, mms.</p>
<p>divisions/branches – use upper case and lower case for the names of DEC’s divisions, branches and sections for example Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Division, Corporate Communications Branch.</p> <p>Use lower case when referring to the generic divisions, branches or sections. For example, ‘the Natural Resources Branch is one of six branches in DEC’s Nature Conservation Division’.</p>	
<p>dots – series of three ‘...’ <i>see ellipsis</i></p>	
<p>Earth and earth – cap ‘E’ for planet Earth, lower case for dirt</p>	<p>Unlike other planets, when referring to Earth (the planet) the word ‘the’ may be used, e.g. ‘the Earth’s crust’ rather than ‘Earth’s crust’, as per common useage.</p>

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>edition/issue – an edition is an updated version of the same document</p> <p>An issue is a new publication carrying the same title, for example magazines and newsletters.</p> <p>In referencing, abbreviate edition to ed. (not edn.), for example ‘5th ed’.</p>	
<p>e.g. and for example – ‘for example’ is preferred to e.g., except in tables where space is limited</p>	
<p>elder – use lower case when referring to Aboriginal elders generally, and a capital letter when used specifically in someone’s title, for example ‘Aboriginal Elder Trevor Walley’. ‘Committee of Elders’ is also upper case.</p>	
<p>ellipsis – a series of three full stops ‘...’ indicating a word or words have been removed from a quotation. Can also be used in text other than quotations to indicate incompleteness, or a pause or a connection between sentences or sentence fragments. Use a space on either side.</p>	
<p>email – one word, no hyphen, lower case ‘e’.</p>	
<p>en and em dashes</p> <p>an ‘em’ dash—achieved by pressing Alt+Ctrl+Num— is used to signify an abrupt change, introduce an amplification or explanation and set apart elements in a sentence.</p> <p>Sometimes this appears as an ‘en’ dash – achieved by pressing Ctrl+Num- – with spaces either side.</p> <p>Use an unspaced ‘en’ dash to identify a range, for example 10–15 per cent or April–June, and to show an association between words, for example a federal–state agreement.</p> <p>Shortcuts: two hyphens with no space will automatically create an ‘em’ dash when you hit the space bar after the following word; two hyphens with spaces will create an ‘en’</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
dash	
<p>enquiries, enquire, vs enquiry inquiries, inquire, inquiry – the terms are not interchangeable; the former means to ask for information while the latter, more formal version, refers to an investigation of an official nature</p>	
<p>estate – do not use this word when referring to DEC-managed lands and waters</p>	
<p>etc – avoid using, especially at the end of a list that begins with ‘for example’ or ‘including’</p>	
<p>European – avoid using in reference to time periods. Instead refer to ‘colonial’, ‘20th century’, ‘contemporary’. Also note that immigrants to or settlers in Australia were not always European (that is, avoid ‘Aboriginal and European heritage’ – ‘Aboriginal and other Australian heritage’ is preferable).</p>	
<p>EveryTrail – one word, capped ‘T’, not italicised</p>	
<p>exceedence – used when a limit has been exceeded. Not to be spelled ‘exceedance’.</p>	
<p>fact – Generally ‘the fact’ does not have to be used. For example, ‘because of the fact they breached their licence’ becomes ‘because they breached their licence’. In cases where ‘the fact’ cannot be avoided, use ‘because of’ not ‘owing to’, the fact. Use ‘though’, or ‘even though’, rather than ‘in spite of the fact’. ‘He stressed that’ not ‘he stressed the fact that’.</p>	
<p>FESA – no longer current. Refer to DFES.</p>	
<p>field work – two words</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
figures	<p><u>Scientific journals</u></p> <p>When illustrations, figures or maps are computer generated, ensure that the density of any tint is not less than 30 per cent and that there is a significant difference between varying tints. Use the abbreviation 'Fig.' for all references to figures in text. Add labels to figures and maps using a sans serif typeface. Colour can be used but the print copy of CSWA is black and white and most people printing papers from the web version will print to a greyscale printer so contrast should be suitable for this.</p>
firefighter – one word	
fire crews – two words	
fish – not fishes	
floodwater – one word, no hyphen	
<i>FloraBase</i> – DEC's online herbarium database. Note cap 'F' and 'B' and no spaces, italics.	
flyer – not flier	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
focus, focusing, focused – single ‘s’	
footnotes – try to limit use of footnotes. Incorporate explanation into the main text, or make use of appendices instead. A list of acronyms and abbreviations and/or a glossary may also be used.	
foreign (i.e. French) orthographic markings – use of orthographic accuracy is always preferred (for example, façade, café, François Péron National Park). These symbols can be found in the character set of most fonts by using the ‘Insert/Symbol’ option in Word (and shortcut keystrokes can be established)	
foreign words – see <i>italics</i>	
forward slash – means and/or and should be avoided in written text. Use ‘to or an ‘en’ dash to express a range, for example 2006 to 2007 or 2006–07 not 2006/07.	
four-wheel drive – not 4WD or four wheel drive. Four-wheel-drive track. Use four-wheel-drive vehicle.	4WD is used in Everytrails guides.
François Péron National Park – preferred style is to include orthographic conventions of cedilla on the ‘c’ and acute accent on the ‘e’.	Sends a positive message to international visitors when foreign names are represented correctly. Orthographic markings are not used on maps or other official geospatial data unless they appear in the gazettal database.
frontrunner – one word.	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>full points – go after an end bracket when the bracketed part is not a complete sentence, for example ‘A good man (so he said).’</p> <p>It goes before the end bracket when the brackets enclose a complete sentence, for example, ‘(A good man, so he said.)’</p> <p>This applies to quotes as well, for example “The ecosystem of this area must be protected.”; “In James’s words ‘the ecosystem of this area must be protected.’”</p> <p><i>Also see quotation marks.</i></p>	
<p>fur seal – two words, no hyphen</p>	
<p>further – avoid. Use ‘more’, for example ‘for more information’.</p>	
<p>gender – remain gender neutral when referring to animals (it and its rather than he and she), for example, ‘the female bird feed its chick’</p>	<p>When referring to horses is it acceptable to use gendered pronouns. When referring to horses is it acceptable to use gendered pronouns</p>
<p>government – cap ‘Government’ for Australian Government and when referring to a specific state or federal government going by their official name (Government of Western Australia, South Australian Government) and in governments of other countries (United States Government).</p> <p>Do not cap when it is used as an adjective, for example government department.</p> <p>Use lower case when the reference is non-specific (for example the role of government; the process of government) and for local government.</p> <p>Use lower case when referring to state government or federal government. Federal government is preferred over Australian Government unless part of an official title.</p> <p>Use ‘Barnett Government’, ‘Gillard Government’, or</p>	<p>For more information regarding these conventions, refer to the federal government <i>Style manual for authors, editors and printers</i>, sixth edition, pages 124–125.</p>

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>'Australian Government'.</p> <p>Within documents that may have international readership, 'Australian Government' is preferable to 'Commonwealth Government'.</p>	
<p>grasstrees/balgas – use either, but not blackboys</p>	<p>Both grass tree and grasstree are correct according to the Macquarie Dictionary but, for consistency, DEC preferred style is one word</p>
<p>Great Western Woodlands – capitalised as is a proper noun. 'The woodlands' should be lower case.</p>	
<p>groundbreaking – one word, no hyphen</p>	
<p>groundwater – one word, no hyphen</p>	
<p>hang-gliding – two words</p>	
<p>heartwood – one word, no hyphen</p>	
<p>hectares – write out in full, not 'ha'</p>	<p>For readability, use 'ha' in tables, graphs or technical documents.</p>
<p>Hon. – use a full stop when abbreviating the title Honourable for Ministers or members of Parliament</p>	
<p>horseriding – one word</p>	
<p>hot spot – two words, no hyphen</p>	
<p>House – upper case initial when referring to government</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>hyphens – use to improve understanding, for example compare vice president with vice-president, recover with re-cover; a sweet shop assistant with a sweet-shop assistant.</p> <p>Other uses include a one-third share, ninety-nine, pro-government, tail-light, Australian-born, blue-grey hills, five-month sentence, four-wheel drive, multi-million-dollar-deal.</p> <p>Don't hyphenate coordinate, cooperate or statewide.</p> <p>Use a hyphen after vice in titles (Vice-Admiral and Under-Secretary), but not after acting, assistant, associate or deputy (Deputy Prime Minister).</p> <p>Hyphenate compound adjectives, for example slow-growing shrubs, water-resistant skin, unless the adverb ends in 'ly', for example a naturally occurring poison.</p>	
<p>icecap – one word, no hyphen</p>	
<p>iconic – this overused term actually means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. relating to or of the nature of an icon, portrait, or image. 2. <i>Art</i> (of statues, portraits, etc.) executed according to a convention or tradition. <p>Icon means</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a picture, image, or other representation. 2. <i>Eastern Church</i> a representation in painting, enamel, etc., of some sacred personage, as Christ or a saint or angel, itself venerated as sacred. 3. a sign or representation which stands for its object by virtue of a resemblance or analogy to it. 4. a person who is seen by a community as being closest to an admired stereotype: <i>*The song evokes memories of James Dean, Bob Dylan and other icons of cool to capture the feeling of romantic infatuation</i> –AAP NEWS, 2000. <p>Use of icon/iconic is best limited to noteworthy individual people associated with an outstanding idea.</p> <p>Alternatives to describe striking or well-known landscapes,</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
flora and fauna may include famous, celebrated, noteworthy or distinctive.	
<p>ideologies – lower case for ideologies, for example green, anarchism, communism, liberalism, and for their adherents, for example greenie, anarchists, communists, liberals.</p> <p>But cap in a party sense, for example the Greens, a Democratic majority, Labor voters, Liberal candidates.</p>	
<p>i.e. and that is – with full stops and no spaces. As with ‘e.g. and for example’, it is preferred that i.e. is written in full (that is), except in tables and other situations where space is limited)</p>	
<p>imagery – use this term when appropriate. It has a technical application which refers to a range of image types and technology, for example, satellite imaging and aerial photography; and a literary application referring to creative use of language. Should not be used to refer to photographs only.</p>	
<p>Indigenous – cap ‘I’ when referring to Indigenous people, for example ‘Indigenous people use plants that are indigenous to the area’.</p>	
<p>Inf0Base – capital ‘I’, capital ‘B’, numerical ‘0’</p>	
<p>inquiries – not enquiries</p>	
<p>install, installation – two ‘I’s, but instalment</p>	
<p>initials – do not use punctuation, for example JW Smith not J.W. Smith</p>	
<p>internet and intranet – lower case ‘i’</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
interpretive and interpretative – both correct, though ‘interpretive’ is preferred to ensure consistency in DEC publications	
interstate – one word, no hyphen (like international)	
into – can be one or two words	
-ise/-isation – not -ize/-ization in suffixes. Make sure the computer dictionary is set to Australian English. If in doubt, consult the Australian Macquarie Dictionary.	
italics – the following foreign language expressions are italicised: <i>in situ</i> , <i>ex situ</i> , <i>en masse</i> , <i>en route</i> , <i>et al.</i>	per se – not italicised in scientific publications Aboriginal words are not italicised or capitalised (unless a proper noun, in which case they are capitalised only).
it’s – prefer ‘it is’. Do not confuse with its, the possessive adjective, for example ‘it’s a message’ and ‘its message was’.	
jail – not gaol	
jarrah – lower case ‘j’ unless starting a sentence	
job titles – capitalise titles when they are specifically referred to with a person’s name, for example ‘Research Scientist Joe Bloggs’ but lower case when it is, ‘Joe Bloggs has been a research scientist for 10 years.’	In management plans ‘District Manager’ should be capped, even though it won’t be referring to a specific person in that position.
judgment – not judgement	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
kerb – for the edge of a footpath. To curb is to restrain	
kickstart – one word, no hyphen	
kilometres – it is the preferred style for kilometres to be in full (as with square kilometres); however, readability is most important.	Therefore it may be abbreviated depending on context, such as for science, land tenure, air quality or other documents in a technical style. Abbreviate to km for <i>EveryTrail</i> guides.
landcare – one word, no hyphen	
landholder – one word	
landowner – one word	
LANDSCOPE – italics and capital letters	
last – refers to the end. Do not interchange with past, for example for the past five years.	
legislation – <i>see Act</i>	
leschenaultia – common name reserves the 's'; scientific name is spelled <i>Lechenaultia</i>	
licence, license – licence is the noun, license is the verb	
licensee (not licencee)	
life cycle – two words, no hyphen	
lightning – not lightening	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
likely – this is an adjective, not an adverb (use probably for adverb)	
<p>local government and shires – cap the names of local governing bodies at first mention, for example the City of Perth, the Shire of Corrigin and thereafter refer to them as the council, shire, city or town.</p> <p>Use a lower case when referring to councils generally, for example a council publication.</p>	
<p>long words – where possible use short words, which are handy and vigorous, rather than long words, which are often pretentious, for example ‘acceded to’ use granted; ‘acquired’ use bought; ‘appropriate’ use apt, fitting, right; ‘assistance’ use help; ‘assisted’ or ‘rendered assistance’ use helped; ‘require’ use need; ‘attempted’ use tried and replace ‘utilise’ with use.</p>	
<p>Management plans – edited in line with usual departmental style described in this stylesheet, with a few exceptions (see next column).</p> <p>Standard section headings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortened forms (rather than ‘Acronyms, abbreviations and initialisms’) • Glossary (rather than ‘Common terms’, ‘Definitions’ or ‘Terminology’) • References (rather than ‘Bibliography’) <p>Order of sections should be: imprint page, vision (if included), foreword (if included), acknowledgments, contents (with list of illustrations, tables, figures and maps at end), summary, introduction (if included), bulk of text, appendices, shortened forms, glossary, references.</p>	<p>Exception – ‘District Manager’ should be capped in all cases, even though it may not be referring to a specific person in that position</p> <p>Exception – when referring to priority species where their ranking is given (e.g. Priority 1, Priority 2) ‘Priority’ may be upper case</p>
<p>measurement, units of – for distance or length, such as kilometres or millimetres, full words are preferred to</p>	<p>Readability and consistency within the document are the main considerations.</p>

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>abbreviations, except in scientific or technical documents.</p> <p>For units of storage, abbreviations are preferred, for example, kB, MB, GB.</p>	<p>Abbreviated forms may also be preferable to specialist readers. Some media such as trail markers or IT devices have space limitations to consider. When abbreviations are used there should be no space between the abbreviation and the preceding numeral (e.g. 10ha, 150km).</p>
<p>meet – not meet with</p>	
<p>metre – it is the preferred style for metres to be in full (as with square metres), however readability is most important.</p>	<p>Therefore it may be abbreviated depending on context, such as for science, land tenure, air quality or other documents in a technical style.</p>
<p>microns – should be used instead of micro metres. However, consistency is most important</p>	
<p>Midwest – when referring to the DEC region. Capital ‘M’, one word no hyphen. When not referring to the DEC use region lower case ‘m’.</p>	
<p>Millstream Chichester National Park – not hyphenated</p>	
<p>Minister’s title – should be written as ‘Environment Minister’ or ‘Minister for Environment’. When referring to an Opposition Minister use this term, rather than ‘Shadow Minister’.</p> <p>When abbreviating Honourable, place full stop after Hon.</p>	
<p>Miriuwung-Gajerrong – should be hyphenated, e.g. Miriuwung-Gajerrong people, Miriuwung-Gajerrong lands. However, Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation is not</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
hyphenated	
modelling – two ‘l’s	
moon – lower case ‘m’	
more than – say ‘more than 1,000 people’ not ‘over 1,000 people’. Use over when referring to height, for example, over 1,000 metres high.	
MOU – write ‘an MOU’ rather than ‘a MOU’, assuming the reader mentally says ‘MOU’ rather than ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ and this is dictated by how it sounds	
names – always check the spelling of names	
<p>national park – lower case except when using the full name of the national park, for example Shannon National Park. Rule applies to other DEC-managed lands and waters. When referring to ‘the park’ or ‘the national park’ thereafter, lower case is best.</p> <p>Also use lower case when referring to several national parks, for example, Shannon and D’Entrecasteaux national parks.</p> <p>Generally, ‘the’ is not required before the name of a national park, nature reserve etc. For example, use ‘Camden Sound Marine Park’ rather than ‘... the Camden Sound Marine Park’.</p>	
native title – lower case ‘n’ and ‘t’ but National Native Title Tribunal .	
natural resource management – generally lower case but upper case when referring to the program; in any document it should appear in full the first time and thereafter as the acronym NRM. The state NRM program should be referred to in the first instance as ‘the Western Australian Natural Resource Management (NRM) program’ and thereafter as	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
'state NRM'.	
NatureBase – the former CALM website. This is NO LONGER IN USE. Refer instead to relevant pages on DEC website.	
NatureMap – Science Division web	based biodiversity mapping application. Capital 'N', capital 'M', no italics
nest box – two words, no hyphen	
Ningaloo – 'the' Ningaloo Coast when referring to World Heritage area.	
noisy scrub-bird	
no one – two words, no hyphen	
nowhere – one word, no hyphen	
<p>numbers – spell out figures from one to nine, except dates, times, dimensions and statistics, groups of figures, streets, ratios and times, and where followed by fractions or decimals, for example 4½ years, 3¾ hours.</p> <p>Ages also take numerals, except compounds, for example 'a five-year-old boy'.</p> <p>Always spell out numbers at the start of a sentence.</p> <p>Numbers 10 and above should be in numerical form.</p> <p>Commas are used in numbers with four or more digits, for example 1,000, 10,000, 100,000. Use \$15 million not 15M or 15 million dollars.</p> <p>Insert a space when spelling out million, for example \$5 million, but close when it's abbreviated, for example \$5m.</p> <p>Use \$500,000 not half a million dollars. Spell out and</p>	<p>SI units are used for exact physical quantities and measurements, except where a non-SI Australian legal unit of measurement is appropriate, for example, 5ha not 50,000m².</p> <p>Public Affairs media statements</p> <p>Commas are used only in numbers of five digits or more.</p>

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>hyphenate fractions, for example four-fifths, unless they're preceded by an 'a' or an 'an' for example 'he took a two thirds share'.</p> <p>Hyphens are used to connect numbers when they are spelt out, for example 'Thirty-five kangaroos were in the block.'</p>	
<p>Nyoongar/Noongar – both spellings are accepted and correct. Choose the most appropriate depending on the Aboriginal stakeholder group for the document, or intended audience. Aim to be consistent in the one document.</p> <p>Staff at DEC's Aboriginal Heritage Unit have advised that people in the south coast area (south of Kojonup) prefer Noongar (and dislike Nyoongar) while people in the Perth area prefer Nyoongar (but don't tend to mind Noongar). So if covering the area from Perth to Albany use Noongar.</p>	<p>In large documents, such as management plans, aim to include an explanation paragraph as a footnote – 'The term 'Nyoongar' refers to Aboriginal people who live in the south-west corner of Western Australia, between Jurien Bay and Esperance. The word 'Nyoongar' can be spelt in different ways, and spelling in this form should also be seen to encompass the Noonar, Nyungar, Noongah and Nyungah spellings.'</p>
<p>Office of the EPA (OEPA) – this is the agency that supports the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)</p>	
<p>off-road vehicle</p> <p>off-road-vehicle track</p>	
<p>old-growth forest – hyphenated</p>	
<p>ongoing – one word</p>	
<p>online – one word, no space</p>	
<p>on to – two words. Sometimes 'to' is superfluous.</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
open-cut – when used as an adjective, referring to mines, is two words, hyphenated	
over – means ‘above’. Not to be used for ‘about’ as in ‘angry over a decision’	
overused words – look out for overused words, for example unique, spectacular, iconic	
<p>Parliament – capitalise when referring to a specific parliament, for example State Parliament, Federal Parliament or when it stands alone and the meaning is clear.</p> <p>Capitalise for Upper and Lower Houses, Ministry, Cabinet, the State Budget, a White Paper, Act, Bill, Opposition.</p>	For more information regarding these conventions, refer to the federal government <i>Style manual for authors, editors and printers</i> , sixth edition, pages 124–125.
part-time / full-time – hyphenated	
per annum – better to use ‘each year’	
per cent – two words, spelt out in text. The percentage symbol (%) can be used in tables and graphs.	For ease of reading, a per cent sign (%) may be used in technical journals or those with multiple uses. It should immediately follow the number, for example 25%.
personal pronouns – remain gender free for animals, except horses	Exceptions may apply in children’s books and <i>Nearer to Nature</i> publications, characters and program names
Perth hills – lower case ‘h’ when referring to the area	
Perth Hills Centre – no longer Perth Hills National Park Centre. Another previous name was the ‘Hills Forest	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
Discovery Centre' – this is no longer correct.	
phenomena – is plural, singular form is phenomenon	
<p>place names – place names do not have apostrophes, for example Kings Park, Mounts Bay Rd, St Georges Tce, St Johns Brook Conservation Park</p> <p>Check the spelling of WA place names, including DEC-managed lands and waters, on the website of Landgate's State Nomenclature Advisory Committee (www.landgate.wa.gov.au). DEC-managed lands and waters can also be checked on TENIS.</p> <p>Its Index of Localities includes remote stations.</p> <p>Other sources include phone books and post code lists.</p>	
plateau – plural is plateaux	
plurals – follow the rule that the main word takes the plural form, for example aides-de-camp, attorneys-general, solicitors-general, except with lord mayors, detective-sergeants, judge-advocates.	
<p>politicians – it is not necessary to include all of a Minister's portfolios in their title, for example Environment Minister Bill Marmion.</p> <p>Deputy is capped when part of a title, as in Deputy Leader of the Opposition.</p> <p>When it is necessary to distinguish between federal and state, say Federal Opposition Leader (not the Federal Leader of the Opposition).</p> <p>Use a lower case 'l' for leader in Liberal leader.</p> <p>Do not use 'shadow ministers'. Refer to the opposition person who has portfolio responsibilities as the opposition spokesman or woman. Also, use 'Kimberley MLA', instead of 'Member for Kimberley', and North Metropolitan MLC Peter</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
Collier instead of the Member for the North Metropolitan Region, Peter Collier.	
possums – brushtail possum, ringtail possum	
practice is the noun, practise is the verb	
premise, premises – when referring to buildings and associated land, the plural form is always used. The singular ('a premise') refers to the basis of an argument. The word 'premises' is never singular.	
prepositions – compare <i>with</i> ; liken <i>to</i> ; differ <i>from</i> ; derive <i>from</i> .	
priority – when referring to priority species this should be in lower case, including in cases where their ranking is given (e.g. priority 1, priority 2)	Exception – in technical and management documents, such as management plans, this may be upper case when the ranking is given (e.g. Priority 1, Priority 2). It remains lower case in other cases
program – not programme	
publications – titles of publications are italicised, for example <i>Geology and landforms of the Kimberley</i> . <i>See also titles</i>	
quantities – weights and measures, though in bulk, are singular, for example '10 millimetres of rain was recorded', '10 kilometres is a long way to walk'. But 'eight tonnes of toothpicks were imported'. The verb takes its number from the substance, not the quantity.	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>quotation marks – a comma or full stop goes inside end quotes if the quote is a full sentence, for example “The whale disentanglement was very successful.”</p> <p>But not if the quote is within a sentence, for example: He said: “We were pleased with the outcome”.</p> <p>“But, I heard the fisher say, ‘the whale was caught in crayfish nets’,” he said.</p> <p>Double quotation marks should be used for direct quoting only.</p> <p>Single quotation marks should be used for quotes within quotes and when a technical term is first referred to, for example some of these ‘non-nutrient contaminants’ can result; when a word or phrase has been coined, for example dieback is a ‘biological bulldozer’; for ironic emphasis, for example the ‘policy’ was never approved and certainly never implemented; and for colloquial words, nicknames, slang or humorous words and phrases, for example they called him Mark ‘toad buster’ Jones.</p>	
<p>Radiello – a brand name of a passive air sampling system – capitalised</p>	
<p>radio collar – two words</p>	
<p>rainwater – one word, no hyphen</p>	
<p>rangelands – one word, no capital, unless part of a title, for example <i>Operation Rangelands Restoration</i></p>	
<p>recordkeeping – one word</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>references – use the full title of the author not the shortened form, for example, Department of Environment and Conservation, not DEC. If the shortened form is used for the in-text citation there should be a cross-reference in the reference list, for example, DEC—see Department of Environment and Conservation.</p> <p>Whatever referencing system is used, citations must be consistent through the document and must include author, publication title, year of publication, publisher, and location.</p>	<p>For more information regarding these conventions, refer to the federal government <i>Style manual for authors, editors and printers</i>, sixth edition, page 220.</p>
<p>regions – DEC has nine regions (Kimberley, Pilbara, Midwest, Wheatbelt, Swan, South West, Warren, South Coast and Goldfields) with districts within these. They should be capitalised. When using the full title ‘Region’ should be capitalised, for example, ‘Swan Region’.</p> <p>Note: Midwest is one word.</p>	
<p>reported speech – uses past tense, for example, The Minister said he supported the biodiversity strategy that would lead future environmental management.</p>	
<p>ringbark – one word, no hyphen, ‘ringbark’ not ‘ring-bark’ or ‘ring bark’</p>	
<p>rivers – upper case for the name of a single river, for example Swan River, but lower case when referring to several rivers in one sentence, for example the Swan, Helena and Canning rivers.</p> <p>The same rule applies to streets and roads.</p>	
<p>roadside – one word, not ‘road side’ or ‘road-side’</p>	
<p>roll out – as a verb, two words, no hyphen (for example, we will roll out the policy in November).</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
roll-out – hyphenate when used as a noun (for example, the roll-out will take place in November) or adjective (for example, the roll-out procedure will be as follows).	
run-off – hyphenated	
savanna – the vegetation type does not have an ‘h’ (Savannah – a place name)	
sawmill – one word	
school years – capitalise ‘Y’ and use the number for the level (for example, Year 1 and Years 3 and 4).	
scientific names – should be included in parenthesis in italics after the common name after the first usage in scientific documents and others with a science readership, such as <i>LANDSCOPE</i> , reports, <i>Nuytsia</i> . This should include birds and introduced animals and plants.	In brochures and other ephemera and material of a less formal nature common names may be preferred.
scuba diving – lowercase ‘scuba’ not ‘SCUBA’	
sea lion – two words, no hyphen	
sea water – two words, no hyphen	
seagrasses – one word	
smartphone – one word	
smoke bush – two words	
snapshot – one word	
South Coast – use cap ‘s’ and ‘c’ when referring to DEC	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>region.</p> <p>Lower case when referring to the generic direction and feature ('the south coast of the island').</p>	
<p>South West/south-west – the capital letters refer to the DEC and/or Tourism WA named regions as proper nouns. When referring to compass points or general areas defined by compass direction the lower case hyphenated version should be used. This will be determined somewhat by context.</p> <p>Similarly, North West for the area in WA but refer to the north-west of WA.</p>	
<p>species names – common names should always be used when available, followed by the italicised scientific name in brackets.</p> <p>Common names are always written using lower case letters unless they are a proper noun, that is, they are named after a person, for example Gilbert's potoroo, Carnaby's cockatoo.</p> <p>The first letter of the scientific name is capped, for example <i>Acacia drummondii</i>.</p> <p>When two scientific names with the same species name are written one after another the second can be abbreviated, for example <i>Acacia drummondii</i>, <i>A. pulchella</i>.</p> <p>Refer to 'species of bird/plant', not 'species of birds/plants'.</p> <p><i>See also 'common names'</i></p>	<p>Common names fall into the domain of ordinary English grammar and are therefore subject to the rules placed on them by editors using house style (which works in accordance with the rules and emerging trends in English grammar and usage).</p> <p>Common names should be free from hyphens unless grammatically indicated.</p> <p>The publication <i>Western Wildlife</i> is an exception.</p>
<p>state – use a lowercase 's' for state when the reference is to one of the states of Australia, for example the state's environment, the state government. Also use lower case for local government.</p>	<p>For more information see the federal government <i>Style manual for authors, editors and printers</i> page 124–125.</p>

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
statewide – one word	
State forest – upper case ‘S’, lower case ‘f’	
subregion – not sub-region	
sulfate – not sulphate	
<p>superfluous words – omit unnecessary words, for example ‘a total of 42’, ‘a distance of 35 metres’, ‘they both shared’, ‘first began’, ‘funeral of the late Tom Citizen’, ‘have got’, ‘he possibly may do it’, ‘matinee performance’, ‘the original source’, ‘throughout the whole state’, ‘together with’.</p> <p>Also avoid verbosity, for example acts of a hostile nature, use hostile acts; ‘the unremunerative nature of the work’, use ‘the work does not pay’.</p>	
Swan River Trust – refer to the ‘Swan River Trust’ in full, or SRT where appropriate	
targeted – one ‘t’	
temperature – write ‘degrees Celsius’ in full, with cap ‘C’, for example 30 degrees Celsius (or, in a table, 30°C).	For ease of reading, technical and scientific journals and those with many repetitions may abbreviate, for example 27°C.
territory – capital ‘T’ when referring to Northern Territory for example the Territory	
thank you – two words	
The University of Western Australia (UWA) – cap ‘T’	
<i>The West Australian</i> (newspaper) – capitalise the ‘T’	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>Threatened ecological community and priority ecological community – if referred to more than once in a document, provide the acronym ('TEC' or 'PEC') after the first usage, then the acronym only thereafter.</p> <p>When referring to a particular TEC or PEC, capitalise the first letter of the first word and use single inverted commas, e.g. 'Coastal dune soft spinifex grassland'</p>	
<p>times – numbers should be numerical with no space between the number and unit of measurement, for example 8am (and not 8.00am).</p> <p>Do not use 1200, 12am, 2400 or 12pm. Use 12 noon or midday and midnight.</p>	
<p>titles (appellation) – write a person's title before the name, for example Director General Keiran McNamara said litter reporting could now be done online.</p> <p>Commas are only used when 'the' proceeds the title, for example The Director General, Keiran McNamara, said the changes would increase the number of reports.</p> <p>Avoid using 'Acting' except for Directors.</p> <p>Capital letters are used only when referring to specific offices (Regional Manager, Swan Region). Any other references are lower case (regional managers' conference).</p>	<p>Media statement style is to use capital letters ONLY when referring to the Director General or Deputy Director General. All other positions are lower case.</p>
<p>titles (of publications) – titles of publications are italicised in text, for example <i>Geology and landforms of the Kimberley</i>. Publication titles should be sentence case in text, on the front cover and in references.</p>	<p>Maintain capital letters where their use forms part of a publication's brand identity (<i>LANDSCOPE</i>).</p>
<p>tonne – not ton</p>	
<p>town site – two words, no hyphen</p>	
<p>Track – capital 'T' when referring to the Bibbulmun Track in</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
documents produced for, or in conjunction with, the Bibbulmun Track Foundation.	
track; trail; path – use trail when referring to recreational activities. The word trail implies management and planning; the word track implies unmanaged informality. Path is more abstract.	Bibbulmun Track (proper noun and brand)
Traditional Custodians – usually upper case, particularly when referring to a particular Traditional Custodian group (e.g. 'Traditional Custodians of Murujuga'). Consistency across a document, or set of documents, is most important.	Exception – lower case when referring generally (e.g. 'Section 9 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act allows for the authorisation of 'traditional custodians' to exercise...')
traditional owners – generally lower case. Use in full (do not abbreviate to TOs) to avoid confusion with tour operators.	
travelled, travelling – two 'l's	
Treasury – upper-case initial capital when referring to government	
under-age (adjective) under age (noun), underrate , undervalue	
underway – one word. Ships get underway, jobs, races, etc start or begin.	
<p>unique – means</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. of which there is only one; sole. 2. having no like or equal; standing alone in comparison with others; unequalled. <p>Mistakenly used to imply greater value, and overused in its correct scientific sense. Suitable alternatives for its misuse include: unusual, special, remarkable ...</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
<p>The karri tree is a remarkable species found in the south-west of Western Australia.</p> <p>Suitable alternatives for its correct use include: endemic ...</p> <p>The karri tree is endemic to the south-west of Western Australia.</p>	
<p>until – not till, do not use ‘up until’ or ‘up until now’. Make it ‘so far’.</p>	
<p>urls – include a full point at the end of sentences that conclude with a url.</p>	<p>It is suggested that the imprint page of a document with urls includes a brief statement along the following lines: ‘Please note that urls in this document which conclude a sentence are followed by a full point. If copying the url please do not include the full point.’</p>
<p>verandah – with an ‘h’</p>	
<p>very – avoid use</p>	
<p>visitor centre, visitors centre – use of this term is in decline, the preferred terms are interpretive centre or discovery centre. If visitor centre must be used, singular form is preferred.</p>	
<p>wait – waiting for a decision not awaiting on a decision.</p>	
<p>walk trails – two words, no hyphen</p>	
<p>ward off vs thwart – ‘ward’ is intransitive and must be followed by ‘off’ (to ward off ...) while thwart is transitive and is never followed by a preposition (something is thwarted or someone thwarts something)</p>	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
waterbird – one word	
waterskiing, waterski – one word	
watertable – one word, no hyphen	
web page – two words	
website – one word	
<p>Western Australia(n) – use ‘Western Australia’ in full at first mention and WA subsequently. Use ‘Western Australian’ for those who live in WA, not ‘West Australian’.</p>	Web text – avoid WA, given wider readership. Use ‘Western Australia’ instead.
whale watching – two words, not one	
Wheatbelt – cap ‘W’ for DEC region only, lower case when referring to geographical area	
when – is sometimes carelessly written when ‘after’ is meant, for example ‘the company was fined when it did not comply with the legislation’ is wrong	
whet or wet? – whet means to sharpen (whet the appetite) and wet relates to water or liquid (wet paint)	
while – not whilst	
white – do not use in reference to culture/ethnicity	
white-water rafting	
with regard to – not ‘with regards to’	

Style item	Exceptions and clarifying information
wood heater – two words	
World Heritage area – lower case ‘a’; World Heritage-listed site/area; lower case ‘l’ for World Heritage list and World Heritage listing; World Heritage nomination lower case ‘n’.	
World War II – not World War Two	
worldwide – one word, not ‘world wide’ or ‘world-wide’	
worth while – a worthwhile job is worth while. It is worth doing (NOT worth while doing).	
zookeeper – one word, no hyphen	

Formatting

Spacing

Full points should be followed by a single space, not double, before the next sentence.

Headings and subheadings

Headings in DEC publications are written in upper and lower case, not all capital letters. Use a capital only for the first word, proper names and titles.

Bullet points and lists

Different writers and editors take different views on punctuation for dot-point series, too much punctuation can make documents look cluttered and too little can cause confusion. The following examples provide clarity while still conforming with the modern style of using less punctuation.

Use a sentence or part of one to introduce dot points and enable the series to be properly integrated into the text flow.

Use normal sentence rules to determine if dot points in a series need capital letters. If the dot points are full sentences, each sentence should start with a capital letter and finish with a full point. If each dot point consists of, or begins with, a sentence fragment, no initial capital letter is used and only the last dot point has a full point attached.

1. Full sentences

The committee came to three important conclusions:

- Officers from the department should investigate the reports of a breach of licence.
- A policy should be put in place.
- Extra resources should be allocated to the priority projects.

2. Two levels of indentation

These features can be summarised as:

- physical characteristics
 - considerable climatic variability
 - extensive coral reefs and offshore islands
- environmental characteristics
 - many unique species of plants and animals
 - limited and highly variable water resources.

3. Sentence fragments

Research is conducted using several techniques including:

- surveying tracks
- fitting radio collars
- collecting scats.

Improve your style

Redundancies

Redundant words	Suggested alternative
a number of	several
acted as	was
adjacent to	next to
adverse weather conditions	bad weather
Amongst	among
as a matter of urgency	urgently
as a result of	because
assist	help
at present	now
at this moment in time	now
carry out	do
close proximity	close
commence	start
construct	build
continue to remain	remain
despite the fact that	although
due to	because of
during the course of	during

Redundant words	Suggested alternative
effect a saving	save
emergency situations	emergency
event	(omit, e.g. flood instead of flood event and emergency evacuation instead of emergency evacuation event)
final outcome	result
forward planning	planning
give active consideration to	consider
I myself personally	I
in attendance	present
in order to	to
in terms of	(delete and rewrite sentence)
in the not too distant future	soon
in the vicinity of	near
informed	told
is located	is
is situated	is
meet with	meet
months of May and June	May and June
my own personal view	my view
on a yearly basis	yearly
owing to	because of
plan of action	plan
prior to	before
prior to the commencement of	before
purchase	buy

Redundant words	Suggested alternative
put forward the concept	propose
regarding	about (as in 'thank you for your letter about')
short period of time	short time
state of Western Australia	Western Australia
till	until
together with	with
utilise	use
up until now	so far
whilst	while