



Department of Parks and Wildlife  
**2015–16 Annual Report**



Department of  
**Parks and Wildlife**



## Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by the Public Information and Corporate Affairs Branch of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

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Department of  
Parks and Wildlife



### About the Department's logo

The design is a stylised representation of a bottlebrush, or *Callistemon*, a group of native plants including some found only in Western Australia. The orange colour also references the WA Christmas tree, or *Nuytsia*.

WA's native flora supports our diverse fauna, is central to Aboriginal people's idea of country, and attracts visitors from around the world. The leaves have been exaggerated slightly to suggest a boomerang and ocean waves.

The blue background also refers to our marine parks and wildlife. The design therefore symbolises key activities of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

The logo was designed by the Department's senior graphic designer and production coordinator, Natalie Curtis.

**Front cover:** Humpback whales off Point Ann, Fitzgerald River National Park.  
*Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife*

**Back cover:** Mount Henry Bridge jetty in the Swan Canning Riverpark.  
*Photo – Boon Leong Tay*



Grey podolepis, Coalseam Conservation Park. *Photo – Sally Bostwick/Parks and Wildlife*



## Department of Parks and Wildlife 2015–16 Annual Report

Parks and Wildlife Nyangumarta and Ngarla rangers at Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park. Left to right: Augustine Badal, Jeffrey Brown, Nathan Hunter and Stephen Brown. *Photo – Miecha Bradshaw/Parks and Wildlife*



The Gap lookout at Torndirrup National Park, Albany. *Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife*

# Letter to the Minister

**Hon Albert Jacob MLA**

Minister for Environment

In accordance with section 63 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, I have pleasure in submitting for presentation to Parliament the Annual Report of the Department of Parks and Wildlife for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

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



**Jim Sharp**

Director General

Department of Parks and Wildlife



# Director General's foreword



King George Falls, proposed North Kimberley Marine Park. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife



The 2015–16 year has been momentous for Parks and Wildlife. Many significant projects were completed, new initiatives embarked upon, milestones achieved and challenges overcome.

At the forefront was the introduction to Parliament of the new Biodiversity Bill, which will fundamentally change the process for conserving the State's unique plants and animals, providing a more streamlined and effective approvals process. This new modern legislation will replace the 66-year-old *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* and the even older *Sandalwood Act 1929* and will continue to ensure stringent and improved protection measures for the State's natural values. For the first time in Western Australia, the listing and protection of threatened and critical habitat will be recognised by law.

The progressive work being achieved in the protection of the natural environment continued at a rapid pace with the Department progressing 14 management plans in the past financial year alone. These included the release of draft management plans for proposed Kimberley reserves including the North Kimberley Marine Park.

In addition the final management plans were released for Kalbarri National Park, conservation reserves on the Swan Coastal Plain's south and Esperance Recherche parks and reserves, significantly strengthening WA's conservation reserve system and ensuring continued and improved public access.

The release of draft management plans for proposed reserves in the Kimberley was only part of the work being undertaken in this world-renowned region under the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*. Of particular note was the extensive fostering of partnerships with traditional owners, which has generated numerous positive outcomes for land management and employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

Similarly, greater steps were taken in engaging traditional owners throughout the rest of the State with an overall total of 30 Indigenous ranger groups partnering with the Department and about 220 Aboriginal people employed to undertake fee-for-service work and other contracts in managing parks and reserves.

Enhancing the cultural richness of visitor experiences in national parks and reserves continued to remain a priority for the Department and this was bolstered through our interactions with traditional owners, and new and upgraded facilities in regional areas.

The Royalties for Regions-funded *Parks for People* initiative remains a boon for the delivery of affordable camping and caravan accommodation in conservation reserves and the creation of new walk, bike and drive trails, and interpretation information.



Mirima National Park. Photo – Ben Broady

We built and opened new world-class lookouts at The Gap and Natural Bridge in Albany's Torndirrup National Park. This innovative and internationally recognised tourism attraction received more than 20,000 visits in the first two weeks of opening alone.

Through providing greater access and new and improved facilities we have seen the number of visits to Parks and Wildlife-managed lands increase by 1.08 million to 19.75 million. This growth has in part provided the impetus for the development of a new Parks and Wildlife headquarters in Bunbury.

The \$28.9 million project involves the creation of a state-of-the-art visitor gateway for WA's south-west and includes a wide range of facilities including a landscaped pedestrian avenue to link the Leschenault Inlet to Koombana Bay, a new lookout, walk trails, a playground and renewal of the mangrove boardwalks.

Initially, 100 staff from Parks and Wildlife will be located at the new development when the first stage is completed in 2018, with plans for the number of staff to increase to 300 within 10 years.

The cooperation and support of the wider community is vital to the Department's success in delivering outcomes on the ground. Whether it is working towards native mammal conservation under the wildlife recovery program *Western Shield*, working with traditional owners in the Kimberley, engaging young people in conservation through *Bush Rangers* and *River Rangers* or fostering greater citizen science involvement through projects such as *Dolphin Watch*, much of what we do operationally cannot be done without the involvement of Western Australians.

This was highlighted during the year with the recognition of the Rio Tinto Earth Assist program as winner of the Managing the Environment category at the 2015 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management. The project is a unique four-way partnership between Parks and Wildlife, Department of Education, Rio Tinto and Conservation Volunteers Australia which works to connect school students to participate in priority conservation projects.

It is only one of a number of projects throughout the State that rely on community involvement. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many registered and non-registered Department volunteers who contribute countless hours of their time in supporting conservation projects and in critical incidents in the community.

We saw this first hand during the Waroona–Yarloop fire, which was one of the largest and most intense bushfires that WA has experienced in the past few decades. At more than 69,000ha, the fire devastated the town of Yarloop and tragically claimed the lives of two residents.

More than 500 staff from Parks and Wildlife joined the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and local volunteer bushfire brigades in the bushfire suppression effort, filling firefighting, incident management and behind-the-scenes support roles.

It is in critical times such as that incident that the importance of what we do as an agency is highlighted. The Department's role is to ensure the nature of WA is protected and conserved, for its intrinsic values and to enrich people's lives.

Rest assured the staff of Parks and Wildlife worked towards this mission in 2015–16 and will continue to do so in the years ahead.

**Jim Sharp**  
Director General  
Department of Parks and Wildlife

September 2016



Granite Skywalk, Porongurup National Park. *Photo – Andrew Halsall*



Spiny tailed gekko. *Photo – Kathryn Radford/Parks and Wildlife*



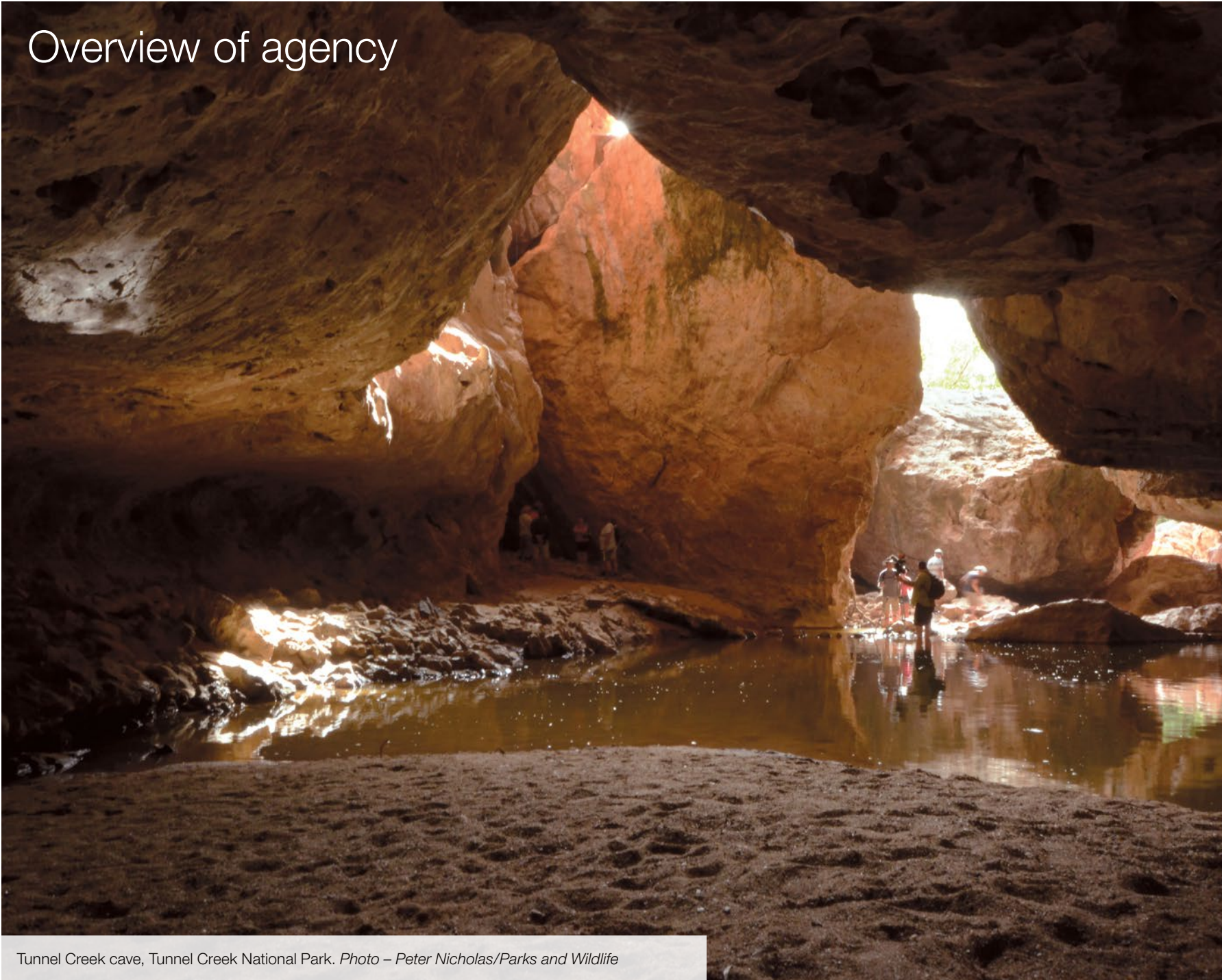
Kangaroos, Cape Range National Park. *Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife*



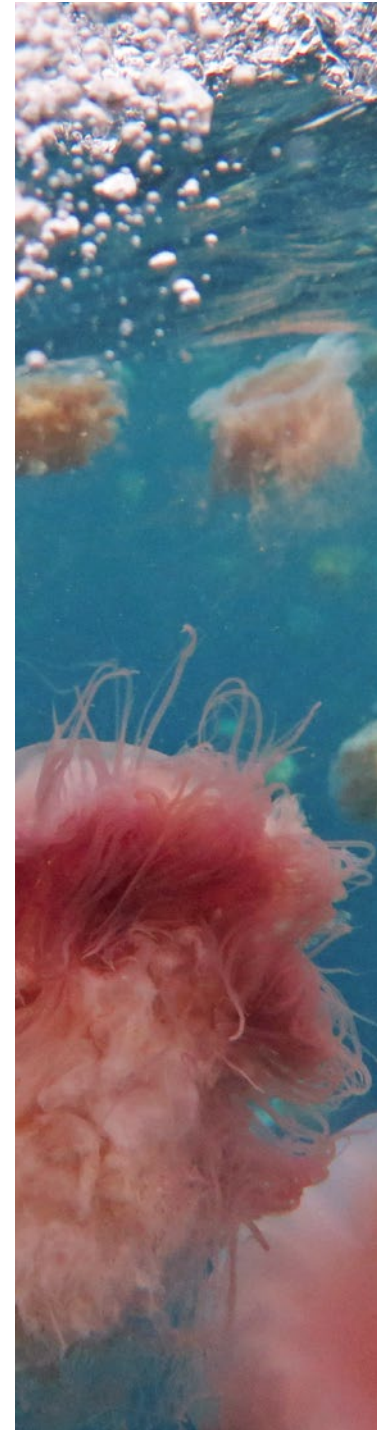
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# Overview of agency



Tunnel Creek cave, Tunnel Creek National Park. *Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife*



Overview of agency

## Executive summary

The Department of Parks and Wildlife's mission is to work with the community to ensure that the nature of Western Australia is conserved, for its intrinsic values and to sustain and enrich people's lives.

Major achievements in 2015–16 included the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*, wildlife recovery program *Western Shield*, management of the Swan Canning Riverpark, bushfire suppression, prescribed burning and the *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative.

The Department's actions were carried out by its 1460-strong workforce, with assistance from almost 5200 active volunteers, and through its partnerships within Government, and with industry and the community.

### Swan Canning Riverpark

Of particular note in 2015–16 was the amalgamation of the former Swan River Trust with the Department, which took effect on 1 July 2015 and saw the transition of about 50 staff from the Swan River Trust to Parks and Wildlife.

Parks and Wildlife took on the management of the Swan and Canning river system, including adjoining public land and the reserves along the Southern, Avon and Helena rivers.

The Department created a new division within its operational structure, called Rivers and Estuaries, to guide river science and the protection, conservation and management of the rivers. A Riverpark Unit within the existing Regional and Fire Management Services Division was also created for the day-to-day management of the Swan Canning Riverpark.

### Parks

Fostering a love for parks within the WA community continued to be a strong focus for the Department in 2015–16. The level of visitor satisfaction with the Department's parks and reserves was at a record high of 91.4 per cent satisfaction. Each year Parks and Wildlife aims for a satisfaction rating above 85 per cent, a figure it has achieved for more than 10 years in a row.

During the third year of the \$21.05 million *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative, the Department created 80 new camp sites across new and upgraded campgrounds in WA. This brings the total number of camp sites delivered in three years to more than 340. Work on the initiative is progressing quickly, with Parks and Wildlife poised to exceed the original target of 450

new camp sites delivered over the four-year initiative.

The redeveloped Black Point campground in D'Entrecasteaux National Park was completed and a new community partnership for its management began. The arrangement means a campground can remain Parks and Wildlife-owned while being managed on a daily basis by an external organisation, keeping fees low and increasing the services available to campers.

Responding to a growing demand for more nature-based mountain biking opportunities, the Department worked to construct new trails near Collie and Margaret River. Work was guided by the *South West Mountain Bike Master Plan*, which was released in November 2015. Development of a similar plan for the Perth and Peel regions is underway.

A \$6.1 million redevelopment of The Gap and Natural Bridge at Torndirrup National Park was completed, attracting an estimated 20,000 visitors in the first two weeks. The project was jointly funded by the Department and Royalties for Region.

Pink jellyfish off Legendre Island, Dampier Archipelago. Photo – Melanie Trapon/  
*Parks and Wildlife*

## Overview of agency

# Executive summary

Active and respectful engagement with Aboriginal people was again a key focus for the Department. In the Kimberley, Ngarla and Nyangumarta rangers joined the Department's Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme (MATES) following the signing of Indigenous Land Use Agreements in 2014. Cultural awareness training has been delivered to more than 850 staff across the Department, and information days were held on country with Aboriginal stakeholder groups to discuss customary activities legislation.

Fourteen management plans were in preparation in 2015–16. Draft management plans for proposed national and marine parks in the Kimberley were released for public comment. These parks will be jointly managed with traditional owner groups.

## Wildlife

The *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy* delivered conservation and nature-based tourism benefits for the region.

Long-term monitoring programs at existing and proposed marine parks began, and the *Landscape Conservation Initiative* continued in the north Kimberley. Work focused on prescribed burning, feral animal and weed control across a range of land tenures and in partnership with Aboriginal ranger groups, traditional owners, non-Government organisations and pastoralists. The Alumina Refinery (Mitchell Plateau) Agreement (Termination) Bill 2015 was enacted in

November 2015, as part of plans to enable 175,900ha of Mitchell Plateau to be included in the proposed Kimberley National Park.

The Department's wildlife recovery program *Western Shield* continued, with about 3.8 million hectares of conservation reserves and State forest baited for foxes and feral cats. The program was supported by corporate sponsors Alcoa, Tronox and Western Areas Ltd.

Emergency baiting using *Eradicat*® feral cat baits was carried out in fire-affected parks and reserves on the south coast to protect threatened species including Gilbert's potoroo, western ground parrot and noisy scrub bird (see page 52-53).

The *Western Shield action pack* was released. The pack is designed for students in Years 4–6 and their teachers, and is helping children learn about WA's threatened species and the conservation actions being done to protect them.

Work continued to reduce the threat of plant diseases, including *Phytophthora* dieback, and to manage weeds across the Department's nine regions.

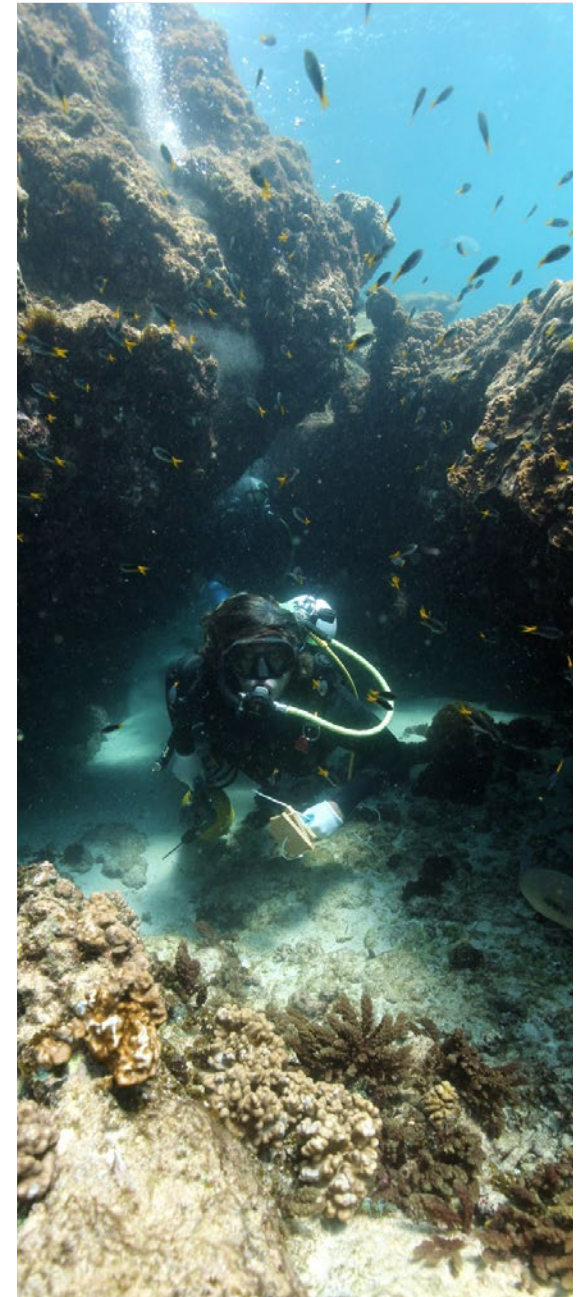
Best practice science continued to underpin the Department's conservation and management actions. Among these research programs is the Western Australian Marine Science Institution's *Kimberley Marine*

*Research Program*, a \$12 million research initiative to inform and support the planning and management of new marine parks in the Kimberley. Terrestrial biological surveys were also undertaken in the Kimberley ahead of the cane toad frontline, to determine the impact of cane toads on native wildlife.

The Department was a founding member of the newly formed Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute. The multi-agency institute was established to coordinate and facilitate research into conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial biodiversity in WA.

Significant work was done to assess and classify the status of threatened WA plants and wildlife. An extensive review was conducted of the State Wildlife Conservation Act (WC Act) specially protected (threatened) fauna and flora lists to align with the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act threatened species lists. A total of 29 animal species were added to, removed from or reclassified on the WC Act list, and eight species of flora taxa were added, removed or upgraded.

The Biodiversity Conservation Bill, designed to replace the outdated *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* and *Sandalwood Act 1929*, progressed and it was introduced to Parliament in November 2015 (see page 17).



Research scientist George Shedrawi deploying settlement tiles in Shark Bay World Heritage area.  
Photo – Michael Rule/Parks and Wildlife



Osprey. Photo – Melissa Zappelli



Prescribed burning in the Perth hills. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife



Parks and Wildlife firefighter Norman Schulze with a rescued joey. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Members of the multi-agency incident management team at the Waroona–Yarloop fire. Photo – Lauren Emmerson/Parks and Wildlife

## Fire

One of the Department’s key responsibilities is bushfire preparedness and suppression on Parks and Wildlife-managed lands.

This year, Departmental staff attended and monitored 720 bushfires that burnt about 1,887,954ha. Several major bushfires in the 2015–16 southern bushfire season required significant suppression efforts. The Waroona–Yarloop fire in January 2016 involved more than 500 staff from Parks and Wildlife who worked closely with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, volunteers, local bushfire brigades and interstate crews as part of a multi-agency incident management team.

Early in the fire season, the south coast experienced a number of large fires around Albany and Esperance, requiring substantial involvement from firefighting and support staff.

Prescribed burning throughout the State was boosted this year with the introduction of the Department’s *Enhanced Prescribed Burning Program*, established in response to the O’Sullivan bushfire near Northcliffe in January 2015. Additional funding of \$20 million over four years through Royalties for Regions was allocated to the program. In 2015–16, Parks and Wildlife achieved 154,149ha of prescribed burning in the south-west forest regions, including about 5147ha that were burnt for pine plantation protection. This was the greatest area of prescribed burning achieved by the Department in this area since 2009–10.

## Overview of agency

# Executive summary

## Forest management

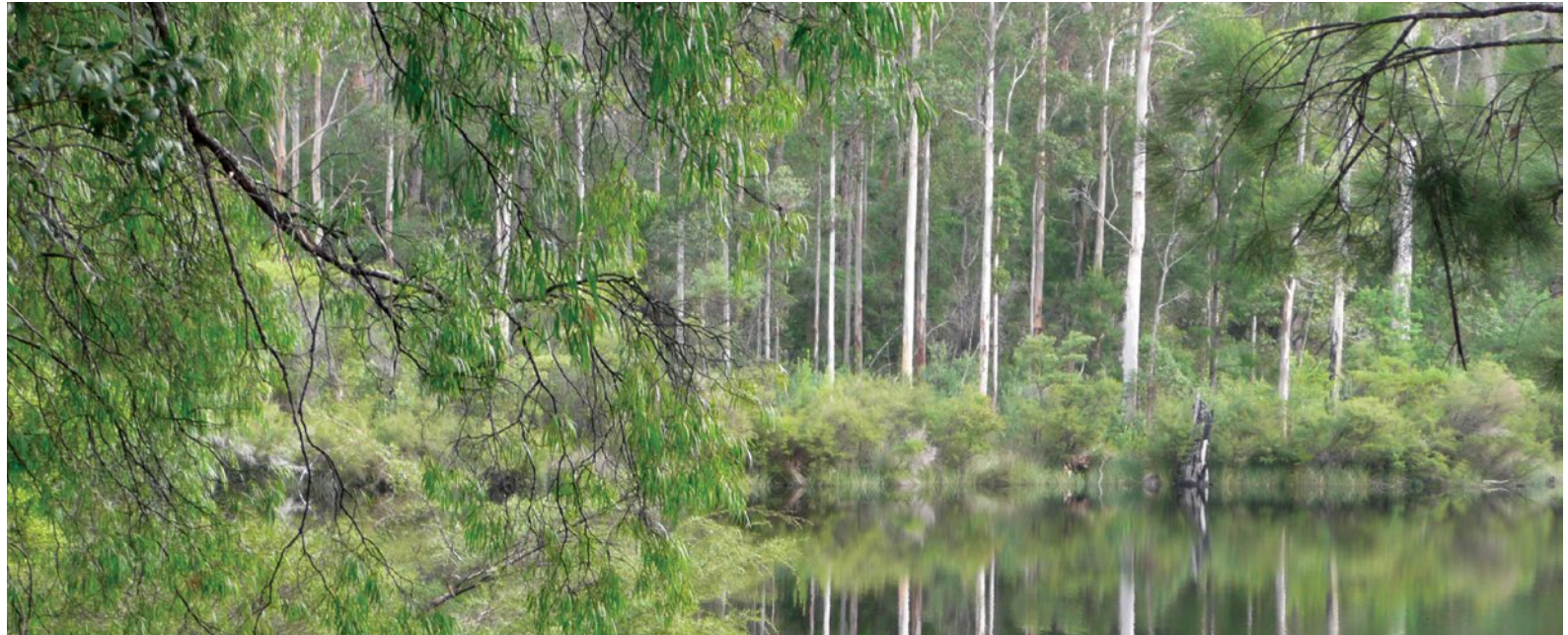
The Department works to ensure WA's plants and animals and the lands and water under its care are appropriately managed for tourism, water and wood production. The *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023* (FMP) again guided the Department in these aims.

In 2015–16, a trial of interagency working arrangements with the Forest Products Commission began. The protocols for 18 key performance indicators (KPIs) in the FMP were also reviewed and refined.

In addition, a five-year review of the *Regional Forest Agreement for the South-West Forest Region of Western Australia* began.

Surveys were undertaken to map and assess fire-damaged forests within the O'Sullivan fire area near Northcliffe to determine the amount and location of timber to be salvaged by the Forest Products Commission.

Parks and Wildlife continued to address the threat of the pathogen *Phytophthora* dieback, which attacks the root systems of plants and destroys biodiversity in affected areas. The Department worked to prevent the spread of the disease by managing soil disturbance operations and preparing hygiene management plans. It also celebrated a 40-year history of mapping and tracking the presence of dieback to help protect undisturbed sites of biological importance (see case study on page 60).



Shannon Dam, Shannon National Park. Photo – Parks and Wildlife

## Financial reporting

2015–16 saw a significant shift in the Department's financial reporting structure, with the introduction of eight service areas to replace the existing three. A large part of the Department's core business, bushfire management, is now represented in two service areas (see Service 6 on page 62 and Service 7 on page 67). The management of the Swan Canning Riverpark is represented

by another service (see Service 8 on page 75). The former Forest Management and former Wildlife Management were separated into two services each, to better reflect their functions and funding sources. The change has made reporting more transparent and more consistent with the Department's programs delivery.



Splendid fairy wren. Photo – Rick Dawson/  
Parks and Wildlife



Water quality testing in the Swan River. Photo – Jennifer Elliot/Parks and Wildlife



Bunbury Home School Network students take a closer look at Manea Park with *Nearer to Nature South West* project officer John Anderson. Photo – Bunbury Home School Network



Balanggarra Traditional Owners and Parks and Wildlife staff in the Balanggarra portion of the proposed North Kimberley Marine Park. Photo – Chris Nutt/Parks and Wildlife

## People

The Department's relationships with people, including its staff, volunteers, community partners and business organisations, are central to achieving its goals to ensure WA's natural assets are conserved and valued now and into the future.

Education and achievement by staff were supported and celebrated in various ways, including the formal Graduation and Awards Ceremony held in June 2016. Awards and scholarships were presented to 58 employees from the Department and their colleagues in the Department of Environment Regulation and the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority. The *Western Shield Award* was presented for the second year, and the Fire Management Reward and Recognition Program acknowledged excellence in fire management for the third year in a row.

Staff in the Department's People Services Branch rolled out the new *Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy*, developed on the basis of considerable research and consultation. Routine drug and alcohol testing of all staff began, and will help ensure a safe working environment for employees and those who work closely with the Department.

The Department is supported by a strong volunteer base, which this year recorded a record-high number of hours contributed to parks and conservation in WA – 638,747 hours by 5189 volunteers. This is also the highest ever number of active volunteers in any financial year. It is their dedication and enthusiasm that helped the Department achieve major conservation and park management goals.

## Overview of agency

# Operational structure

The Department of Parks and Wildlife is responsible for protecting and conserving the State's natural environment on behalf of the people of Western Australia.

The Department was established on 1 July 2013, and is in the portfolio of the Minister for Environment.

Its key responsibilities include conserving biodiversity and managing the State's national parks, marine parks and other reserves, which cover more than 28 million hectares. WA has 100 national parks and 13 marine parks with a diverse array of landscapes and seascapes, from coral reefs and tall forests to deep gorges and open plains of wildflowers. Parks and Wildlife also manages two of the world's greatest long distance trails: the 1000km Bibbulmun Track for walkers, and the 1000km Munda Biddi Trail for cyclists.

The Department is also responsible for fire preparedness and pest animal and weed control over 89 million hectares of unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves.

It employs 1460 people, many with world-class skills in areas including scientific research, policy development, land and marine management, visitor services and education.

## Enabling legislation

The Department of Parks and Wildlife was established in 2013 and operates under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

## Responsible Minister

The Department of Parks and Wildlife reported to the Minister for Environment; Heritage, Hon Albert Jacob MLA, for the entire reporting period. The Minister and Department exercised authority under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*, the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006*, the *Sandalwood Act 1929* and the other legislation administered by the Department, listed to the right.

## Legislation administered by the Department at 30 June 2016

### Acts

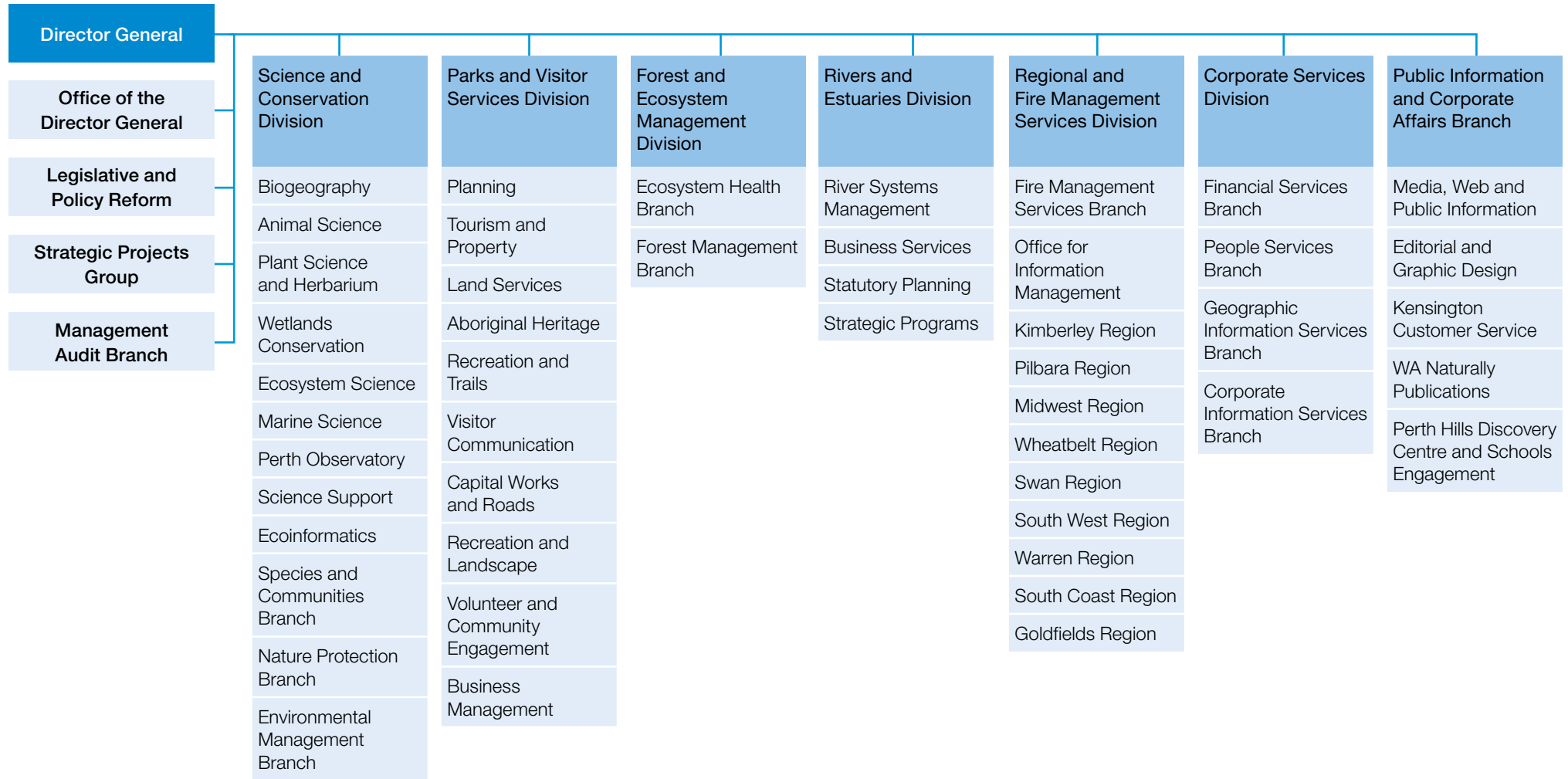
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*
- *Reserves (National Parks and Conservation Parks) Act 2004*
- *Reserves (National Parks, Conservation Parks and Other Reserves) Act 2004*
- *Reserves (National Parks, Conservation Parks, Nature Reserves and Other Reserves) Act 2004*
- *Sandalwood Act 1929*
- *Swan and Canning Rivers (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2006*
- *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006*
- *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*

### Regulations

- Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002
- Forest Management Regulations 1993
- Sandalwood Regulations 1993
- Swan and Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007
- Wildlife Conservation Regulations 1970
- Wildlife Conservation (Reptiles and Amphibians) Regulations 2002



Parks and Wildlife organisational chart



Correct at 30 June 2016

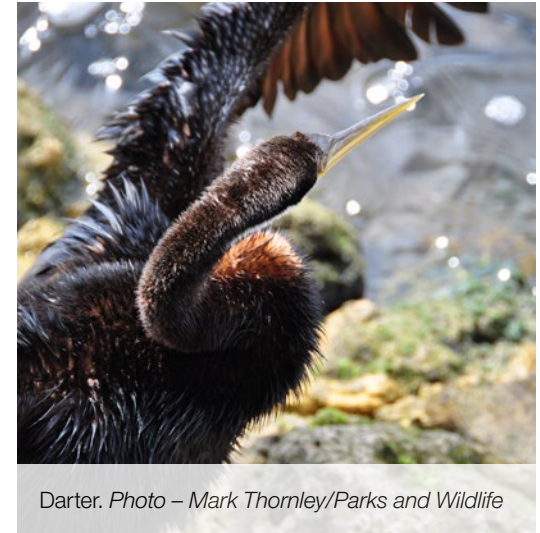
# Operational structure

## Changes made in 2015–16 to legislation administered

- On 1 July 2015 the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* and the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* were amended by the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Act 2015*, providing for the transfer of responsibility for operational functions under the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* to the CEO of the Department of Parks and Wildlife and for Swan River Trust staff to be transferred to the Department of Parks and Wildlife.
- On 1 July 2015 the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Regulations 2015 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 19 June 2015) amended the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007 with a series of minor and consequential amendments arising from the transfer of operational functions to the CEO of Parks and Wildlife and related matters in the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Act 2015*.
- On 1 July 2015 the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 2) 2015 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 19 June 2015) amended the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 by deleting regulation 84(1)(e) that required consultation with the Swan River Trust, as this was no longer required following transfer of responsibilities under the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* to the CEO of Parks and Wildlife under the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Act 2015*.
- On 1 September 2015 the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 4) 2015 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 14 July 2015) amended Regulation 56 and Schedule 1 of the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 in relation to fees applying for various activities within reserves.
- On 11 November 2015 the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 3) 2015 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 10 November 2015) amended the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 by adding an ability to restrict access by people on foot in restricted areas declared under Regulation 5.
- On 5 December 2015 the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 5) 2015 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 4 December 2015) amended the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 by including new regulation 60AA concerning management of moorings considered by the CEO to be on CALM land (waters) without lawful authority.
- On 12 December 2015 the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* was amended by the *Conservation and Land Management Amendment Act 2015*. New provisions replaced former section 114A dealing with infringement notices and removed the need for vehicle and vessel offences to be handed to the operator in person. A new provision under section 126 amended the regulation making power to specifically provide that regulations may prohibit or regulate commercial activity on relevant lands (or waters), and amendments to sections 97 and 100 provided for a maximum lease term of up to 99 years.
- On 12 December 2015 the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 6) 2015 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 11 December 2015) amended the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 by inserting a new Form for Infringement Notices as a result of the above amendments to infringement notice powers in the Act.
- On 5 March 2016 the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Regulations 2016 amended the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007 to provide minor detail updates to schedules in the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* as provided for by section 13(1) of that Act, covering small boundary amendments, including for Elizabeth Quay.
- On 4 April 2016 the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 2) 2016 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 4 April 2016) amended the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 by adding Torndirrup and West Cape Howe national parks and Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve to the group of reserves containing Stirling Range, Porongurup and Fitzgerald River national parks in terms of an annual local pass, as well as adding Lane Poole Reserve and Serpentine National Park as a new group of such reserves.
- On 7 May 2016 the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* was further amended by the *Conservation and Land Management Amendment Act 2015*. The amendments included:
  - replacement of the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority with the Conservation and Parks Commission
  - provisions for joint vesting of conservation reserves with Aboriginal body corporates
  - provisions for recognising, and preparing management plans for, regional parks
  - simplified procedures for amending the boundaries of State forest and marine parks



Swan catchment, Brigadoon. Photo – Karen Brown



Darter. Photo – Mark Thornley/Parks and Wildlife

- scope for zoning in marine parks to differentially restrict and allow classes of fishing
- specifying a function of the CEO of Parks and Wildlife to undertake planned burning of managed land and coordinate management of regional parks with agreement of landowners
- providing entry powers for enforcement officers in relation to inspections and other authorised purposes
- modernising the protections from personal liability for persons performing functions under the Act or the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*.
- On 7 May 2016 the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* was amended by the *Conservation and Land Management Amendment Act 2015* updating the reference to the former Conservation Commission with a reference to the replacement Conservation and Parks Commission.

- On 7 May 2016 the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations 2016 (published in the *Government Gazette* on 6 May 2016) amended the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 by replacing references to the Conservation Commission with references to the Conservation and Parks Commission, as well as deleting the redundant definition of ‘vessel’, as the *Conservation and Land Management Amendment Act 2015* had inserted a definition in the Act, and updating a reference to the former Department of Environment and Conservation.

### Proposed changes to legislation administered

The Environment Minister, Hon Albert Jacob MLA, introduced the Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015 to Parliament on 25 November 2015. The Bill was prepared to replace the outdated *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* and *Sandalwood Act 1929* with modern legislation that fully covers biodiversity conservation matters and the proper regulation of the harvesting and sale of wild sandalwood.

Key features of the Bill include:

- a modern approach to conservation through encouragement rather than just penalties
- greatly increased protection for WA’s unique biodiversity, especially threatened species and threatened ecological communities
- increased penalties to act as a deterrent for serious wildlife crimes, ranging up to \$500,000 for an individual taking a critically endangered species, up from \$10,000 under the Wildlife Conservation Act
- new public and targeted landholder consultation and input processes
- enhanced special protection for whales, dugongs and dolphins
- encouragement, support and protection of private landowner conservation initiatives including new voluntary conservation agreements and nature conservation covenants
- clearer assessment procedures and greater clarity of decision making, including new publicly available Ministerial decision making guidelines
- recognition and support for threatened ecological communities and preparation of recovery plans
- support for managing wildlife management interactions and sustainable use of species
- incorporation of modern provisions for managing sandalwood harvesting and trade including new provisions for tracking sandalwood from harvest to export, as well as greatly increased penalties for illegal sandalwood harvesting (up to \$200,000 for an individual and \$1 million for a corporation)
- new streamlined approvals processes and avoiding red tape, including the ability to achieve accreditation for State decisions under the Commonwealth’s EPBC Act, and avoiding unnecessary and duplicated approvals currently in place.

## Overview of agency

# Operational structure

## Notices, appointments, orders and approvals

### Wildlife Conservation Act

The following notices were made by the Environment Minister under the provisions of sections 14(4) and 23F(2) of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* during the 2015–16 reporting year:

- *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2015*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 3 November 2015
- *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2015*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 3 November 2015
- *Wildlife Conservation (Reptiles and Amphibians) (Pet Herpetofauna) Notice 2016*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 24 March 2016.

### Conservation and Land Management Act

#### Appointments

On 7 May 2016 the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* was amended by the *Conservation and Land Management Amendment Act 2015* to replace the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority with the Conservation and Parks Commission.

The following appointments were made to the new Conservation and Parks Commission, under section 21(1) of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act) and published in the *Government Gazette* on 6 May 2016:

- Ms Marion Celia Fulker was appointed as Chair and Professor Christopher Doepel as Deputy Chair, both for three years
- Mrs Ingrid Maria Cumming, for three years
- Dr Regina Flugge, Mr Kim Colero, Mr Brian Stewart Middleton and Professor Ross Dowling, all appointed as members for two years.

#### Notices of management plans and amendments

The following management plans were approved by the Environment Minister under section 60 of the CALM Act during the 2015–16 reporting year:

- *Kalbarri National Park management plan*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 18 August 2015
- *Esperance and Recherche parks and reserves management plan*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 11 March 2016
- *Swan Coastal Plain South management plan*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 24 March 2016.

During the reporting period, the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority and the Director General gave notice in the *Government Gazette* of proposed amendments to the following management plans:

- Proposed amendments to the management plan for the *Ngari Capes Marine Park management plan 2013–23*, published in the *Government Gazette* on 1 December 2015
- Proposed amendments to the management plan for the *Ningaloo Marine Park and Muiron Islands Marine Management Area 2005–15 No. 53*, published in the *Government Gazette* on 6 May 2016.

An order by the Governor in Executive Council under section 13 of the CALM Act was published in the *Government Gazette* on 8 April 2016 altering the boundaries of Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park.

The Director General gave notice in the *Government Gazette* on 6 May 2016 that the *Albany coast draft management plan 2016* was available for comment.

The Director General also gave notice under section 14 of the CALM Act of the following proposals to reserve WA waters as marine parks and released draft management plans for those areas for public comment:

- *Proposed Lalang-garram / Horizontal Falls Marine Park, proposed North Lalang-garram Marine Park and proposed Oomeday Marine Park*, published in the *Government Gazette* on 20 October 2015
- *Proposed North Kimberley Marine Park*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 19 February 2016.

#### Orders

On 31 July 2015, *Public Firewood Areas Order 2015* was published in the *Government Gazette* under regulation 98 of the Forest Management Regulations 1993, designating specified areas of State forest as public firewood collection areas.

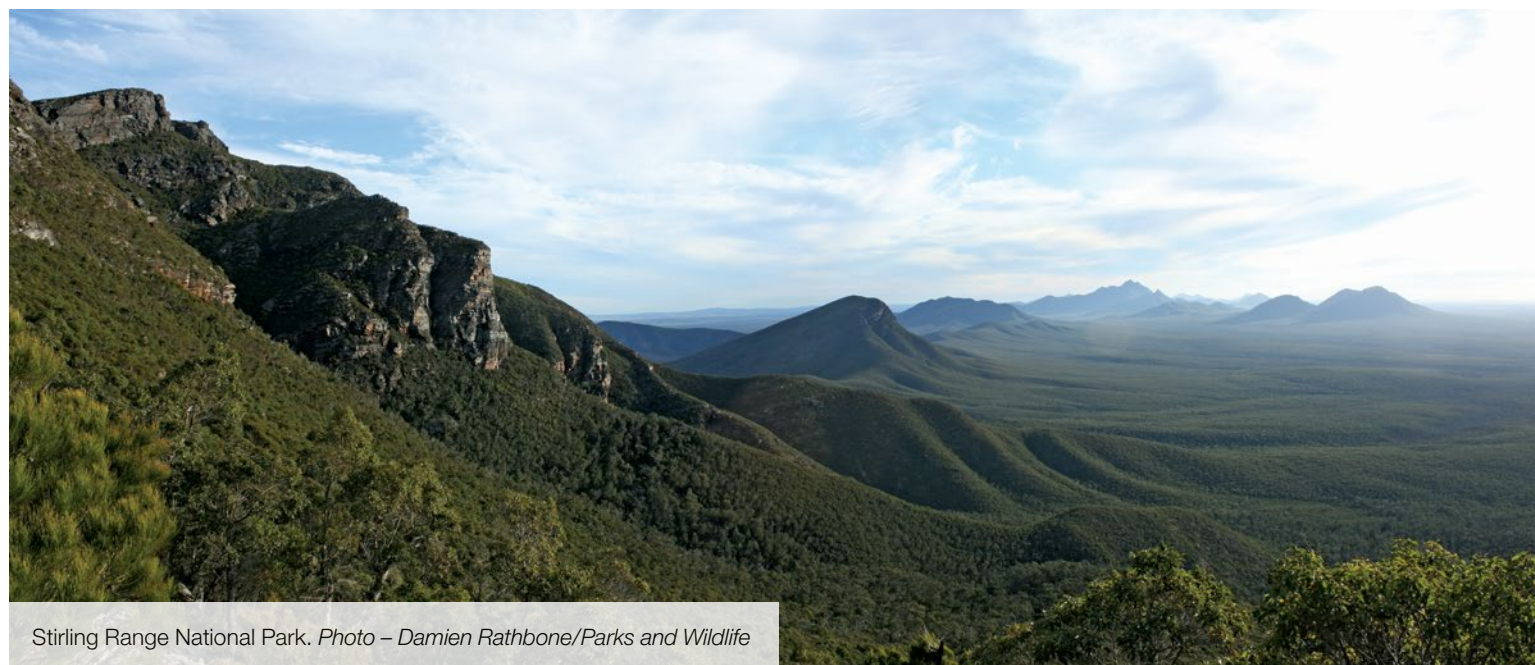
On 29 December 2015, the *Sandalwood (Limitation of Removal of Sandalwood) Order (No. 2) 2015*, made by the Governor under section 2 of the *Sandalwood Act 1929*, was published in the *Government Gazette*, bringing into effect a reduction in the annual wild sandalwood harvest quota.

Also during the 2015–16 reporting year, the following ‘*Excision from Timber Reserves*’ Orders were made by the Governor under section 17(6a) of the CALM Act and published in the *Government Gazette*:

- On 8 December 2015, the *Conservation and Land Management (Excision from Timber Reserve) Order (No. 1) 2015* excised an area of 4.0308ha from Timber Reserve No. 60/25 2km north of Margaret River to facilitate construction of the Margaret River Perimeter Road.
- On 15 January 2015, the *Conservation and Land Management (Excision from Timber Reserve) Order (No. 2) 2015* excised an area of 5.0528ha from Timber Reserve No. 151/25 41km south-west of Beverley to facilitate the dedication of a portion of Collins Road.

In the same period, the following *Conservation and Land Management (Reservation of Timber Reserve) Order*, and *Conservation and Land Management (Revocation of State Forest) Orders* were made by the Governor under section 9(2) of the CALM Act:

- On 15 January 2016, the *Conservation and Land Management (Revocation of State Forest) Order (No. 2) 2015* was published in the *Government Gazette*, revoking 180.7743ha from State Forest Nos. 14, 22, 23, 39, 49 and 65 for the purposes of road widening, road upgrades and construction.
- On 22 January 2016, a correction to the *Conservation and Land Management (Revocation of State Forest) Order (No. 2) 2015* was published in the *Government Gazette*, correcting an error in that order.
- On 23 February 2016 *Conservation and Land Management (Reservation of Timber Reserve) Order (No. 1) 2016* was published in the *Government Gazette*, reserving two areas of Crown land into adjoining Timber Reserves Nos. 163/25 and 170/25 at Donnybrook.
- On 26 February 2016, a further correction to the *Conservation and Land Management (Revocation of State Forest) Order (No. 2) 2015* was published in the *Government Gazette*, to rectify a further error in that order.
- On 29 April 2016, a further correction to the *Conservation and Land Management (Revocation of State Forest) Order (No. 2) 2015* was published in the *Government Gazette* to correct another error in that order.



Stirling Range National Park. Photo – Damien Rathbone/Parks and Wildlife

#### Notices

On 13 May 2016 the *Conservation and Land Management (Rowles Lagoon Conservation Park Restricted Area) Notice 2016* was published in the *Government Gazette*. This notice prescribed a restricted area of Rowles Lagoon, which prohibits the use of motor boats in that area.

During the 2015–16 reporting year, the following amendments were made to the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002:

- Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 3) 2015, which were published in the *Government Gazette* on 10 November 2015 and amended regulation 5, inserted a new regulation 49A and added item 39A to Schedule 2.
- Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 5) 2015, which were published in the *Government Gazette* on 4 December 2015 and inserted a new regulation 60AA regarding unauthorised moorings
- Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 6) 2015, which were published in the *Government Gazette* on 11 December 2015 and amended Schedule 3 by deleting Form 1 and prescribing a new Form 1 Infringement Notice form.
- Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 4) 2015, which were published in the *Government Gazette* on 14 July 2015 and made amendments to regulation 56 and to fees in Schedule 1

## Overview of agency

## Operational structure

- Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations (No. 2) 2016, which were published in the *Government Gazette* on 4 April 2016 and made amendments to Schedule 1 Division 2 at item 4.
- Conservation and Land Management Amendment Regulations 2016, which were published in the *Government Gazette* on 6 May 2016 and made amendments to regulations 2, 84, 94 and Schedule 3.

The following notices were made by the Environment Minister under section 63 the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* during the 2015–16 reporting period:

- *Swan Canning Riverpark Mooring Management Program 2015*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 8 September 2015
- *Swan Canning River Protection Strategy*, which was published in the *Government Gazette* on 27 October 2015.

## Performance management framework

Parks and Wildlife supports Government goals with more specific desired outcomes, achieved via delivery across eight services.

The following table illustrates the relationship between agency-level desired outcomes and Government goals.

Government goal	Desired outcomes	Services
Social and environmental responsibility: Ensuring that economic activity is managed in a socially and environmentally responsible manner for the long-term benefit of the State.	Community enjoyment of the State's national parks, marine parks, State forest and other reserves.	1. Provision of Parks and Visitor Services
	The State's native plants and animals are conserved and habitat, ecosystem and landscape-scale conservation are based on best practice science.	2. Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities 3. Conservation Partnerships
	The State's plants and animals and the lands and waters under the Department's care are managed for tourism, water and wood production, and other approved uses.	4. Forest Management Plan Implementation 5. Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry
	Lands under the Department's care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives.	6. Prescribed Burning and Fire Management 7. Bushfire Suppression
	The ecological health and community benefit of the Swan and Canning rivers is protected.	8. Protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers System

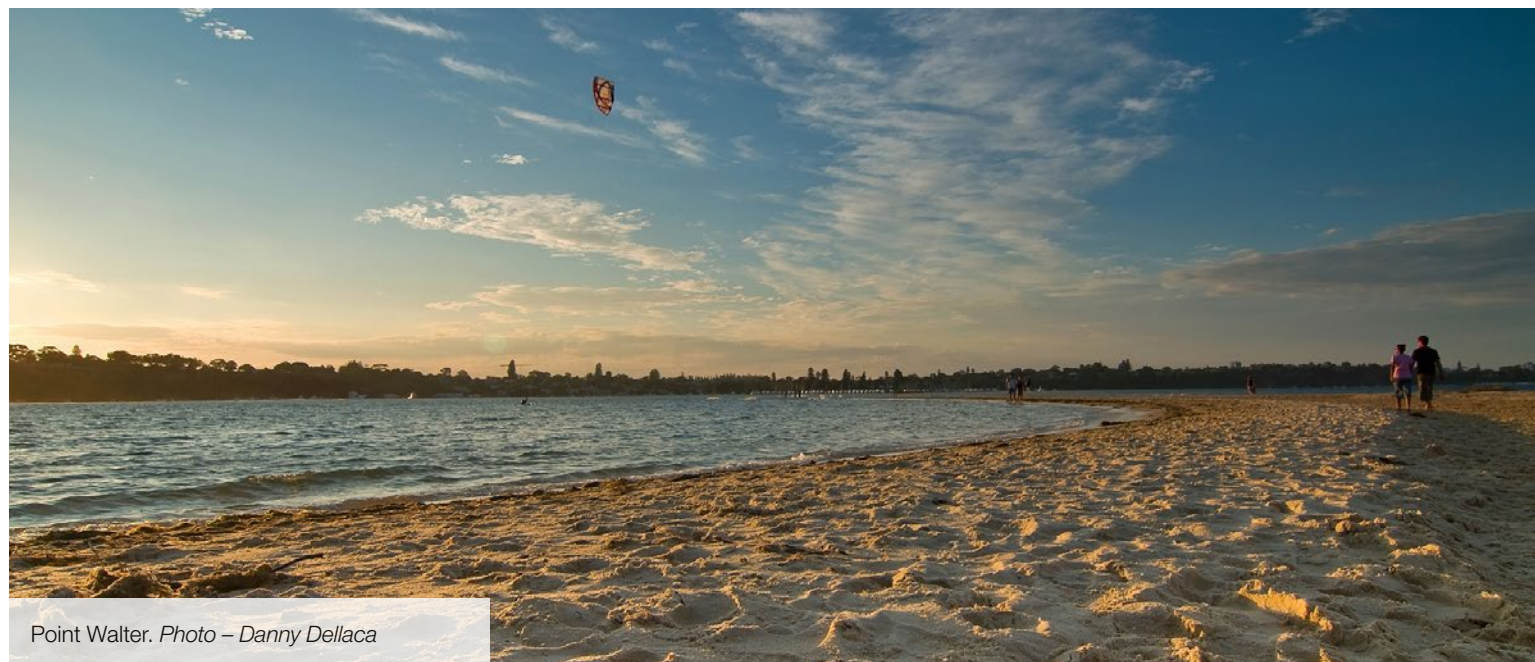
### Changes from the 2014–15 reporting year

The performance management framework was substantially changed for 2015–16 to show more detail about services provided and to reflect the amalgamation of the Swan River Trust with the Department of Parks and Wildlife on 1 July 2015.

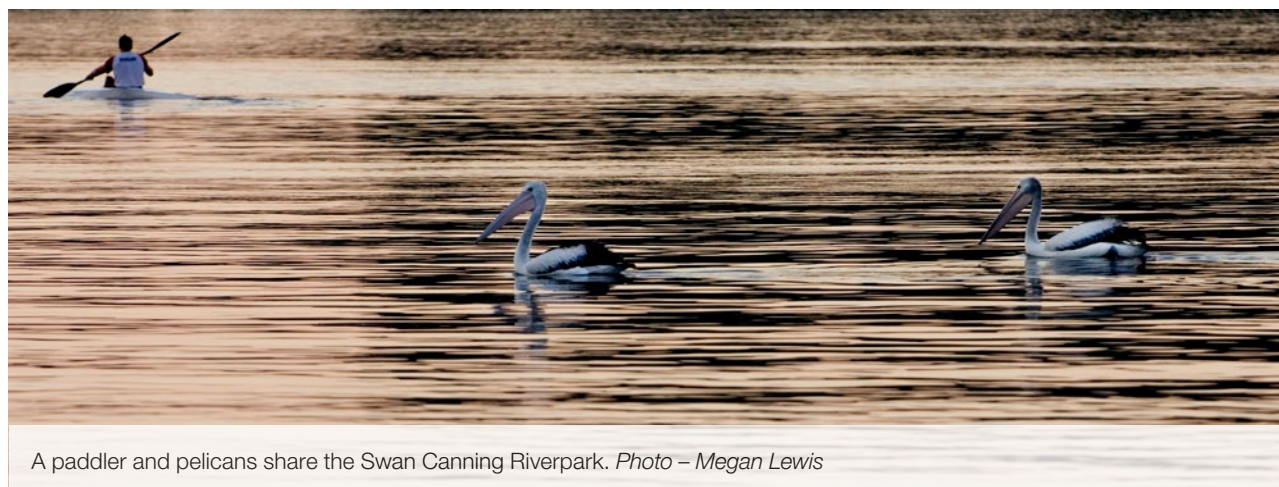
The three services adopted in the 2013–14 annual report for the Department of Parks and Wildlife were split into seven services for 2015–16 with an additional service added that relates to functions of the former Swan River Trust. Corresponding changes to effectiveness and efficiency indicators were also made.

### Shared responsibilities with other agencies

During the year, Parks and Wildlife contributed to whole-of-Government reform initiatives including implementation of efficiency and other targeted savings. The Department also contributed to development of cross-agency initiatives including a draft *Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million* for the metropolitan and Peel regions.



Point Walter. Photo – Danny Dellaca



A paddler and pelicans share the Swan Canning Riverpark. Photo – Megan Lewis

# Agency performance



Ranger Brad Scoble, looking over Geikie Gorge National Park. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife



# Report on operations

## Service 1: Provision of Parks and Visitor Services

This service is responsible for the generation of environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits through further development of a world-class parks system in terms of ecosystem management and visitor facilities and services.

The desired outcome of the service is community awareness and appreciation of wildlife and the natural environment and visitor enjoyment of park facilities.

The priorities of this service in 2015–16 were:

- continuing to establish a world-class parks system by improving the presentation of parks and developing a range of recreation opportunities including the development of trails and expansion of campgrounds through capital investments
- continuing to expand the level of Aboriginal engagement and involvement through the use of customary practices and, where resourced, joint management
- continuing to implement the *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative to improve and expand camping and associated visitor experiences by providing visitor facilities and services including establishing affordable camping and caravan accommodation

- continuing to implement the *Torndirrup National Park Improvement Project* under the *Royalties for Regions Conservation Parks Visitor Infrastructure and Roads* initiative
- building and strengthening community connections through the continued use of volunteers, working with recreation and other community user groups
- continuing to work with the tourism industry and associations to expand commercial opportunities to deliver high-quality visitor experiences that also contribute direct expenditure in regional communities
- continuing to plan for the management of Wedge and Grey reserves
- progressing the planning of the management of excluded pastoral land, in particular along the Ningaloo coast.

The following strategies and key activities guided the delivery of the service's priorities in 2015–16:

- 1. Planning and advocating for a world-class park system that maintains or enhances WA's natural environment, by:**
  - continuing to prepare CALM Act marine and terrestrial management plans, especially those associated with the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*

- incorporating in management plans the new CALM Act objective to protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons
- continuing to undertake visitor planning in selected areas
- continuing to undertake recreation and interpretation master planning at high-priority sites identified for development
- continuing to plan for the establishment of *Naturebank* sites and commercial activity opportunities
- assisting in the preparation of Statewide and regional mountain bike trail strategies
- continuing to undertake Parks and Visitor Services strategic planning for the division and regions
- continuing to improve alignment of Parks and Visitor Services strategic plans with operational plans and works programming.

### 2. Designing and building recreation facilities and services while retaining an area's distinctive social, cultural, physical and natural attributes, by:

- continuing to prepare designs and specifications for recreation sites
- continuing with a program of renovation and redevelopment of existing recreation sites and park facilities
- continuing to complete development projects already in progress

- investing in key visitor sites that have potential to capture revenue
- continuing to offer a spectrum of high-quality visitor experiences
- developing opportunities to provide a range of trails including kayaking, walking, cycling, snorkelling and diving
- continuing to develop increased camping capacity in parks
- continuing to invest in roads used to access parks with a focus on protecting high-value road assets
- developing and implementing a bridge replacement program including the use of the modular bridge product.

### 3. Managing parks, recreation areas, facilities and services to a high quality in order to protect the environment and provide a quality visitor experience, by:

- continuing to manage leases and licences
- continuing to undertake visitor risk management assessment and protection works
- developing emergency response plans
- continuing to maintain recreation assets with a focus on renovating visitor facilities
- continuing to manage and maintain high-value visitor centres
- developing and implementing a road maintenance program for each district

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

- developing and implementing a bridge maintenance program for south-west forest region districts
  - continuing to undertake compliance and law enforcement activities as required.
- 4. Enriching visitor experiences by providing opportunities to learn, explore and interact with the natural and cultural environment, by:**
- continuing to provide high-quality information and interpretation for visitors that promote awareness and appreciation of the natural environment
  - developing and implementing park sign plans in accordance with the new sign design guidelines
  - continuing to improve features in the Explore Parks and Park Stay WA websites
  - continuing to apply new technology to enrich the visitor experience.
- 5. Involving Aboriginal people in managing conservation lands in order to protect the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people, by:**
- continuing to promote the new CALM Act management objective to protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons through training and other opportunities
  - developing an Aboriginal cultural planning framework and methodology to guide work units in considering cultural values in work programs
  - continuing to protect Aboriginal cultural sites when undertaking works
  - continuing to implement Aboriginal customary activities policy, protocols and procedures
  - where resourced, developing and implementing joint management arrangements with Aboriginal working parties and other organisations
  - continuing to develop local area access arrangements including developing policy, protocols and procedures
  - continuing to build and strengthen working relationships with Aboriginal communities, native title representative bodies and Aboriginal working parties
  - continuing to promote commercial tourism and event opportunities with Aboriginal people.



Parks and Wildlife Miriuwung-Gajerrong rangers Keith Boombi, Gerard Stieg and Wayne Winton install signage at Ngamooowalem Conservation Park. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife

**6. Developing and nurturing lifelong connections between the community and parks in order to conserve and protect natural areas, through:**

- continuing to build and strengthen relationships with volunteers
- continuing to work with recreation user groups with a focus on mountain bike and off-road vehicle groups
- continuing to build and strengthen relationships with partner groups, key stakeholders and State Government agencies
- continuing to develop and implement the *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative, offering community partnership models of campground management where appropriate
- continuing to promote Parks and Visitor Services objectives and outcomes.

**7. Providing organisational support to ensure financial, administrative and staff management is appropriate to delivering parks and visitor services, through:**

- continuing to undertake financial and administrative management as required
- continuing to implement the remote parks housing replacement and renovation program
- continuing to explore opportunities to generate revenue from fees and charges
- continuing to promote and explore opportunities for implementation of the department’s *Aboriginal Employment Strategy* and *Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–15*
- continuing to progress workforce planning in association with Parks and Visitor Services’ strategic planning
- continuing to provide opportunities for staff professional development and networking opportunities
- continuing to pursue opportunities that promote staff attraction and retention
- continuing to improve technology management and information connectivity

**Performance summary**

**Table 1: Service 1 performance summary**

	2015–16 Target \$'000	2015–16 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Expense by service	81,379	79,663	(1716)
<b>Key Efficiency Indicator</b>	<b>2015–16 Target \$</b>	<b>2015–16 Actual \$</b>	<b>Variance \$</b>
KPI 1.1: Average cost per hectare of parks	2.85	2.73	(0.12)

**Key Effectiveness Indicator**

**Outcome:** Community enjoyment of the State’s national parks, marine parks, State forest and other reserves.

**KPI 1.** Average level of visitor satisfaction with their visit.

Target 2015–16: 85 per cent  
Actual 2015–16: 91.4 per cent

More details regarding the key efficiency and key effectiveness indicators can be found in the audited key performance indicator report, see pages 139 to 143.

# Report on operations

## Performance highlights

### Management planning

- A total of 14 management plans were in preparation in 2015–16. This included the following indicative and final management plans that were released either for public comment or implementation:
  - *Proposed Lalang-garram / Horizontal Falls and North Lalang-garram marine parks and proposed Oomeday National Park draft joint management plan* – released for public comment
  - *Proposed North Kimberley Marine Park indicative joint management plan* – released for public comment
  - *Albany Coast draft management plan* – released for public comment
  - *Kalbarri National Park final management plan*
  - *Swan Coastal Plain South final management plan*
  - *Esperance Recherche parks and reserves final management plan*

### Aboriginal engagement

- There has been ongoing negotiation with traditional owners in the Kimberley to facilitate the creation of jointly managed marine and terrestrial reserves under the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*.

- Following the signing of Indigenous Land Use Agreements with the Ngarla and Nyangumarta people in 2014, Aboriginal trainees under the Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme (MATES) commenced work in the Kimberley in 2015.
- As part of the *Kalbarri Skywalk and National Park Tourist Infrastructure Project*, two Aboriginal ranger assistants were employed by the Department for a period of two years, and an art project has been initiated with the Nanda community and Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation.
- In early July 2015, Martu traditional owners, Central Desert Native Title Services, Parks and Wildlife staff, mining company representatives and other guests converged on Matuwa (Lorna Glen former pastoral station) for the dedication of the Matuwa and Kurrara Kurrara Indigenous Protected Area, a significant event opening the door to many opportunities for the Martu traditional owners in the joint management of this area.
- There has been continued engagement with the Noongar community throughout the Wheatbelt Region, including strong engagement with the Pingelly/Brookton Noongar community to protect Boyagin Rock while day-use facilities were upgraded, as well as working with the Narrogin Noongar Trainee Ranger Program to undertake site protection projects such as Wolwolling Pool.



Murchison River Gorge, Kalbarri National Park. Photo – David Pearson/Parks and Wildlife



Honey possum.  
Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Lucky Bay, Cape Le Grand National Park. Photo – Klaus Tiedmann

- The Department continued to implement internally developed and mandatory Aboriginal cross-cultural awareness training, with more than 850 staff attending since May 2014.
- Staff from the Aboriginal Heritage Unit also provided customary activities training to staff and held information sessions with Aboriginal groups throughout the State to provide information on changes to the CALM Act in relation to customary activities and joint management.
- The South Coast Region undertook four information-sharing days with individual Aboriginal families. Forums were held in Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve and Stirling Range National Park where Aboriginal families had the opportunity to engage with Departmental staff, share their history and connection to that particular part of country and for the Department to share the programs and initiatives that are being undertaken in those areas.

#### Tourism and accommodation

- The Department continued to implement a new community partnership campground management model wherein a private or community sector partner organisation is engaged to undertake the day-to-day management of a campground on a contract-for-service basis. The model is now being used at D'Entrecasteaux National Park and Logue Brook campground.

- During 2015–16, potential sites under the *Naturebank* program were progressed. A call for registrations of interest was advertised for *Naturebank* sites in Millstream Chichester National Park and negotiations with respondents are continuing.
- In December 2015, the Trees Adventure Park in Lane Poole Reserve began operation. The high ropes course provides a new and original way to move from tree to tree through a network of rope bridges, flying foxes, trapezes and Tarzan jumps, and was developed from an unsolicited proposal and business case submitted by Canopy Adventure Pty Ltd.
- Work with Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AC, Governor of Western Australia, began in order to establish an independent foundation for national parks and reserves.

#### World Heritage management

- The Department continued to provide day-to-day management of the Shark Bay, Ningaloo Coast and Purnululu National Park World Heritage areas, including providing executive support to property-specific advisory committees.
- On 24 June 2016, the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage area celebrated its fifth year since inscription on the World Heritage list. The event was celebrated with a night market in Federation Park attended by about 500 people. There was also free entry into Cape Range National Park and an art display at Yardie Creek.

#### Recreation and trails

- Parks and Wildlife continued to work closely with, and support key recreation stakeholders, including the Bibbulmun Track Foundation, Munda Biddi Trail Foundation, Friends of the Cape to Cape Track, Westcycle, WA Mountain Bike Association, WA 4WD Association, Track Care WA, the Recreational Trailbike Riders' Association of WA, Motorcycling Western Australia, and the Australian Trail Horse Riders Association.
- In November 2015, the *South West Mountain Bike Master Plan* was officially launched by the Environment Minister. The Department began work developing trails in the high-priority locations of Margaret River and Collie as outlined in the plan. The next stage of trail construction is due to commence in Bramley National Park in July 2016.
- Work continued to develop the *Perth and Peel Mountain Bike Master Plan*, which will identify and prioritise future development of mountain bike trails in the Perth and Peel regions, with a draft to be released in mid-2016 for public comment.
- In September 2015, the draft *WA Mountain Bike Management Guidelines* were released for public comment. The Department facilitated the development of the guidelines, working in partnership with the Department of Sport and Recreation, Westcycle, WA Mountain Bike Association and mountain biking community representatives. Work to finalise these guidelines is underway.
- In October 2015, the *WA Horse Trail Strategy* was officially launched at the WA Trails and Outdoors Conference. The Department worked closely with the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Australian Horse Trail Riders Association to develop the strategy.
- The Department's *Track Adoption Program*, developed in partnership with Track Care WA and the WA 4WD Association, continued to see volunteers working alongside staff on a number of projects across the State. During the past three years, the program has seen a group of volunteers and their vehicles transported to Dirk Hartog Island National Park each year, to spend a week camping and working with Department staff collecting and removing accumulated rubbish from the island.
- A Bibbulmun Track user survey covering the 2014–15 period was published in early 2016, highlighting the high level of satisfaction and personal, social and economic values of the track. The survey demonstrated an average walker satisfaction of 92 per cent, and an estimated \$13.1 million of annual direct expenditure. Ninety-seven per cent of respondents would walk the track again and 98 per cent would recommend it to others.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

- Recovery works on Bibbulmun Track recreation sites damaged during the 2015 Lower Hotham and Helena bushfires progressed, with new rammed-earth camp shelters and toilets completed at Possum Springs and Brookton. Work to construct the new Murray River Bridge (replacing Long Gully Bridge) has begun (see below).
- Similarly, in D'Entrecasteaux National Park recovery works on Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail recreation sites damaged or destroyed during the 2015 O'Sullivan bushfire (near Northcliffe) were completed, with camp shelters and toilets at Dog Pool and Gardner replaced, a new bridge at Dog Pool constructed, and lookouts at Point D'Entrecasteaux and Boorara Tree repaired.
- During 2015–16, the *Long Trail Improvements Project*, an ongoing program to maintain the Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail in safe condition, focused on building a new pedestrian bridge over the Murray River to replace the burnt Long Gully Bridge, which is estimated to cost more than \$620,000.

## Visitor planning and communications

- The Department worked with private conservation organisations, Aboriginal communities, the private sector and volunteers to promote people's enjoyment and safety in parks.
- Two new mobile phone applications were developed: [Trails WA](#) and [Camping Mate](#).
- Wi-fi connectivity was installed at Conto campground, Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park.
- Significant improvements were made to the [Park Stay WA](#) and [Explore Parks WA](#) websites.
- The Department prepared visitor services plans, recreation master plans, concept plans and site development plans for many projects across the State.
- Planning is in progress for Shannon (Shannon National Park), Jarrahdene (Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park) and Miliyanha and Stargazers (Millstream Chichester National Park) campgrounds, as part of the *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative.
- Master planning for recreation at Karara former pastoral leases, Ningaloo Coast pastoral lease exclusion area, Wedge and Grey shack settlements, and Murujuga and Millstream Chichester national parks was undertaken.
- Work continued with the Department of Sport and Recreation to progress recreation (trail) audits and planning in de-proclaimed water catchments. An audit for Murray River Water Reserve was completed, with audits for Wellington Dam and Harvey Dam catchment areas close to finalisation.



Hikers pause to take in the views over Sugarloaf Rock on the Cape to Cape Track, Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife



Campground at Coalseam Conservation Park. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife

### Improving facilities

- Maintenance continued on Parks and Wildlife's 37,000km road network with road upgrade projects completed in Cape Le Grand, Cape Range, Kennedy Range and Kalbarri national parks.
- The *Torndirrup National Park Improvement Project* was completed in April 2016, the final component of the Royalties for Regions *Conservation Parks Visitor Infrastructure and Roads* and *Torndirrup National Park Visitor Infrastructure* initiatives. The new facilities are already meeting expectations of becoming a premier tourist destination on the south coast. The \$6.1 million investment at The Gap-Natural Bridge site in Torndirrup National Park boasts two universally accessible lookout structures, including a grated see-through platform over The Gap that rises 40m above the ocean and extends 4m out from the cliff face, new connecting paths, a new picnic area, interpretive signage and an upgraded car park.
- The *Kalbarri Skywalk and National Park Tourist Infrastructure Project* began. This is a \$20 million Royalties for Regions investment over two years to improve tourist access and provide world-class tourism attractions and experiences in Kalbarri National Park. Construction of the sealed roads, skywalk and other infrastructure will begin in the 2016–17 financial year.
- Royalties for Regions funding of \$5.9 million over four years has been allocated for the *Public Recreation and Joint Management Arrangements for the Ningaloo Coast* project. This will enable the creation of a conservation and recreation reserve along the Ningaloo coast and joint management with traditional owners.
- The *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative made significant progress in its third year of implementation. About 80 new camp sites were completed in 2015–16, with new and expanded campgrounds established in Dryandra Woodland, the proposed Credo Conservation Park, Cape Le Grand National Park, Millstream Chichester National Park and Leschenault Peninsula Conservation Park. This brings the total number of camp sites delivered in three years to more than 340. A further 130 camp sites are under construction or planned for construction in 2016–17, which will exceed the target of 450 additional camp sites over the four-year initiative.
- Work started on the new \$2.5 million Jarrahdene campground in Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park and expanded \$1.5 million Shannon campground in Shannon National Park.
- Construction of a new Big Lagoon campground and upgraded access road in Francois Peron National Park is well advanced and due for completion in September 2016. The \$1.25 million investment will provide 20 camp sites, a new lookout and day-use area as well as upgraded four-wheel-drive access.
- Four tourism commercial accommodation leases have been upgraded at Wharncliffe Mill (Bramley National Park), Coalmine Beach (Walpole-Nornalup National Park), Dwellingup (Dwellingup State Forest) and Lions Dryandra Village (Dryandra Woodland).
- Stage 1 of the upgrade of the Baden Powell day-use area in Lane Poole Reserve was completed with the construction of a new car park. The contract to complete Stage 2 works was awarded in June 2016. This will provide new river access stairs, picnic facilities and interpretive signage.
- In the Kimberley, a car park extension and upgrade at Bell Gorge in King Leopold Ranges Conservation Park was completed in May 2016, and work began on upgrades to the park access road and floodways in Geikie Gorge National Park. The Department also completed the redevelopment of the Ngamoowalem Conservation Park day-use sites (Molly Springs, Black Pool Rock Falls and Middle Springs).
- Upgrades to the Fortescue Falls walk trail at Dales Gorge in Karijini National Park were completed in June 2016. The investment of more than \$680,000 has provided steel staircases and walkways to access the falls.

# 638,747

hours contributed by volunteers

# Wi-fi

installed at Conto campground,  
Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park

# 5-year

anniversary of Ningaloo Coast  
World Heritage listing

# \$6.1 M

invested at The Gap  
and Natural Bridge

# \$20M

improvement project underway  
at Kalbarri National Park

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

- Following the replacement of heritage bridges on the Railway Heritage Trail in John Forrest National Park, a tender to replace pedestrian bridges in the picnic area was advertised and work is due to commence early in the 2016–17 financial year.
  - At Matilda Bay Reserve, new picnic tables, a refurbishment of barbecue and toilet facilities, together with the redevelopment of the Bayside Kitchen café (former Matilda Bay Tea Rooms), has improved the presentation of one of the most popular parks in the Swan Region.
  - The Department worked with the Pilgrim Trail Foundation to complete signage in sections of the Pilgrim Trail in Walyunga and Avon Valley national parks and Julimar State Forest.
  - \$1.6 million was invested to replace or repair 12 bridges across the south-west to maintain access for visitors and fire response. Work on replacing three other bridges has also begun.
- Signs and interpretation**
- During 2015–16, 3335 signs were developed to final production, including 245 interpretive signs, 766 risk signs, 262 directional/identification/fee signs, 1499 management and 563 other products.
  - Interpretation signage was upgraded at Toolibin Lake, Korrelocking and Yorkrakine Rock nature reserves in the Wheatbelt, Totadgin Conservation Park in the Wheatbelt, the Helms Arboretum east of Esperance, as well as Torndirrup National Park, Logue Brook campground, Lane Poole Reserve sites, Jurien Bay foreshore and Watheroo National Park.
  - Directional and identifications signs were produced and installed throughout John Forrest, Avon Valley, Cape Le Grand and Torndirrup national parks, Lane Poole Reserve, proposed Credo Conservation Park, and Potters Gorge campground.
  - Sign planning for new and redeveloped campgrounds was also undertaken to ensure all signage requirements were identified to meet visitor and management needs.
  - A variety of workshops and meetings were conducted to help community groups create interpretive signage on trails on Parks and Wildlife-managed land. These included Friends of the Porongurup Range, South Coast Natural Resource Management, South West Land and Sea Council and Newton Moore Senior High School.



New signage at the Margaret Forrest Centre in John Forrest National Park. *Photo – Karla Graham/Parks and Wildlife*



Interpretive shelter, Mount Frankland North National Park. *Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife*



Granite Skywalk, Porongurup National Park. *Photo – Andrew Halsall*



**Working with the community**

- The Department entered its first year of partnership with the Perth Observatory Volunteer Group, enabling the group to continue running the outreach program for the community to experience astronomy, space science and astrophotography. Due to its success, the partnership was extended, with a new 10-year agreement signed in June 2016.
- A successful open day was held at the Perth Observatory in September 2015, attended by more than 500 people.
- At 30 June 2016, the number of Parks and Wildlife-registered volunteers was 13,737, of whom 5189 contributed 638,747 hours to projects across the State. Volunteers took part in a wide range of activities including staffing the Wildcare Helpline, campground hosting, collecting seeds, clearing weeds, taking part in native plant and animal surveys and trail maintenance. There are 302 active volunteer projects currently underway around the State.

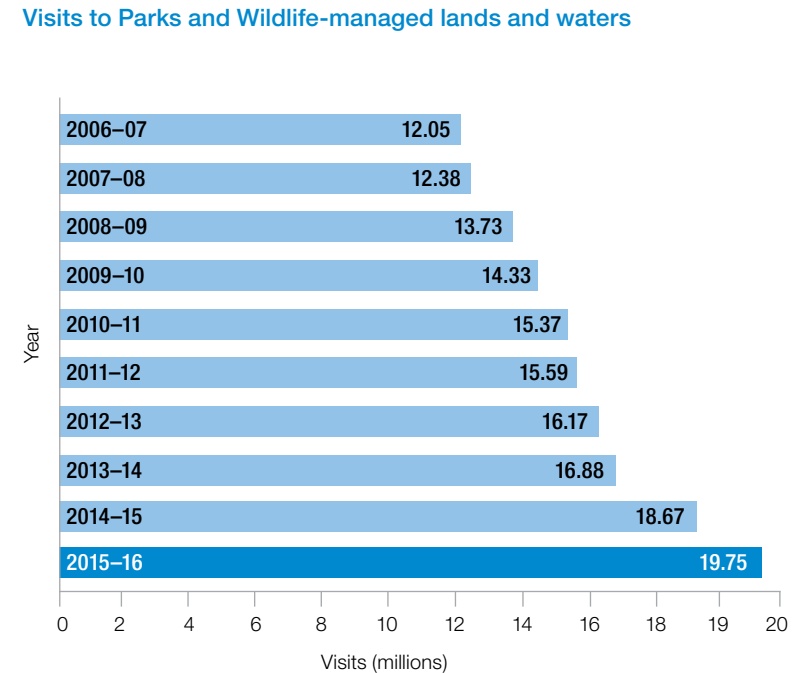
**Park visitor statistics**

- The 2015–16 visitor satisfaction index, averaged from visitor responses to surveys at selected parks, reserves and forest areas around the State, was 91.4 per cent. This outcome, with results from previous years of the survey program, is illustrated in Figure 1.
- The total number of visits to Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and waters increased to 19.75 million from 18.67 million last year (Figure 2, page 31).

**Figure 1. A comparison of annual visitor satisfaction levels within Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and waters**



**Figure 2. Total visits to Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and waters**



Note: Data in this graph is taken from the Department's VISTAT (Visitor Statistics) database and is a true and correct record of best available data from the VISTAT database at the time of preparing the visitation figure for the annual report. The VISTAT database is the true source of visitation. As the database is a live database, corrections and amendments are made in the database on an ongoing basis so figures presented here may differ from those presented in previous reports.

## Case study

**Desired outcome:** Community enjoyment of the State's national parks, marine parks, State forests and other reserves.

# Showcasing the spectacular Gap and Natural Bridge

It's a thrill walking out onto a platform 40m directly above the wild Southern Ocean, cool waves spraying up between two sheer cliff faces. At Torndirrup National Park, the newly completed redevelopment of The Gap and Natural Bridge offers exactly that. It's an exhilarating yet safe way of experiencing the awesome power of the ocean and the ancient rock formations that have been a tourism drawcard for years.

It is one of the many ways Parks and Wildlife is helping people enjoy Western Australia's unique and diverse parks and reserves.

The \$6.1 million improvement, funded by Royalties for Regions and Parks and Wildlife under the \$21.05 million *Parks for People* initiative, was opened in April 2016. In the first two weeks it attracted about 20,000 visitors, with more flocking to the site in the months following.

Featuring two large, accessible lookouts joined by pathways, a picnic area, visitor information and parking for about 30 vehicles, the redevelopment provides safe and dynamic access for people to view and enjoy The Gap and Natural Bridge while preserving their natural beauty and character.

The redevelopment, known as the *Torndirrup National Park Improvement Project*, sprung from a need to provide for a high number of visitors and increase safety at the site. The popular site attracted 240,000 visitors each year and featured one 3m-wide platform at The Gap and narrow pathways. The nearby Natural Bridge was one of several geohazards identified in the area at risk of collapse or

subject to rockfall. Serious injuries and deaths had occurred at the site.

In 2011, the Department's landscape architects began the task of designing a structure that would showcase the site's features, be safe and strong, overcome a challenging construction environment, minimise environmental impact and withstand a highly corrosive coastal setting.

For safety and longevity, the design of the structure below the ground's surface was just as important as the design above it. A 3D laser survey of the site identified rock joints and overhangs, allowing Parks and Wildlife landscape architects and engineers from GHD Pty Ltd to plan the supporting components to make use of the strongest rock and avoid weaker sections close to the edge of the cliff.

The new platform overhanging The Gap, more than 8m wide with a 1.2m high railing, is supported by five cantilevered beams anchored securely to stable rock using rock anchors up to 9m deep. The beams extend more than 10m from the fulcrum following

the natural shape of the rock, and about 4m out from the cliff face.

Metal components were pre-fabricated off site from Duplex 2205 stainless steel, offering a higher strength than conventional stainless steel and higher resistance to staining, corrosion and cracking.

Parks and Wildlife's South Coast Region staff worked closely with local construction company BGC Construction to oversee and carry out the site preparation, construction and revegetation works. Construction logistics provided many challenges, with access to the lookout areas restricted in an effort to keep remnant vegetation pockets undisturbed and the natural rock surface undamaged. Vehicle and machinery access was limited to a temporary access track, using geotextile laid over boulders to contain crushed stone and road base material. On completion of the works, BGC completely removed all traces of the track, restoring the site to its original condition. Rock removed for paths and lookout construction was re-used for landscape works and facilities within the site.

Plants were potted and kept under irrigation before being introduced back into the site.

The new facilities were finished off with interpretive and safety signage. Designed in-house by Department staff, the interpretation material enhances visitors' experience at the site by explaining the geological and cultural history of the area and the construction features of the new facilities.

In June 2016, a survey completed by Department staff indicated an overall satisfaction rating with the new site of 94.2 per cent, higher than the Statewide average for all parks and reserves.



Interpretation signage at the redeveloped site. *Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife*



Aerial view of The Gap and Natural Bridge. *Photo – Parks and Wildlife*



Cantilevered beams supporting The Gap lookout. *Photo – Mike Shephard/Parks and Wildlife*



The new family-friendly facilities have attracted thousands. *Photo – Sally Bostwick/Parks and Wildlife*

# Report on operations

## Service 2: Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities

This service is responsible for developing and implementing programs for the conservation and improved management of the State's wildlife including plants, animals, genes and ecosystems, based on best practice science.

The desired outcome of the service is the conservation and sustainable use of Western Australia's wildlife.

The priorities of this service in 2015–16 were:

- Developing and implementing a legislative and policy framework that effectively supports wildlife conservation
- Continuing to establish and effectively manage a comprehensive, adequate and representative conservation reserve system to protect biodiversity and social values
- Maintaining viable, intact and healthy ecological communities and populations of species, especially those that are threatened, significant or iconic, while allowing the sustainable use of natural resources
- Reducing impacts of key threatening processes, including altered fire regimes and hydrology, and priority pest animals, weeds and plant diseases, on biodiversity, ecological processes and sustainable land uses

- Undertaking scientific investigations that are effectively targeted to improve biodiversity knowledge and integrate science knowledge into wildlife management
- Effectively collecting, storing and managing information and data so they are available and used to improve wildlife management
- Promoting public and stakeholder awareness, understanding and support for biodiversity conservation, including through being involved in conservation programs.

The following strategies and key activities guided the delivery of the service's priorities in 2015–16. The service is delivered by multiple divisions across the Department. Regional nature conservation plans, divisional plans and Forest and Ecosystem Management Division's invasive species priority lists provide more detail on priorities and activities at those business levels.

### 1. Developing and implementing a legislative and policy framework that effectively supports wildlife conservation, through:

- progressing the Biodiversity Conservation Act to replace the Wildlife Conservation Act
- developing and implementing strategic documents and programs prioritised to support policy implementation.
- finalising the development of nine regional nature conservation plans and implementing them.

### 2. Continuing to establish and effectively manage the conservation reserve system, by:

- continuing to establish the formal terrestrial and marine conservation reserve system, with priority for:
  - terrestrial, island and marine reserves under the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*
  - lands purchased for conservation
  - proposals in the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023*
  - IBRA regions with less than 10 per cent in conservation reserves
- progressively implementing priority conservation and science actions in marine reserve management plans
- progressively implementing priority conservation and science actions in terrestrial reserve management plans or taking action to effectively manage terrestrial reserves through other appropriate mechanisms
- continuing to effectively manage World Heritage-listed areas through the implementation of collaborative conservation management programs across various tenures
- supporting and participating in audits and assessments undertaken by the Conservation Commission and Marine Parks and Reserves Authority (replaced by the Conservation and Parks Commission).

### 3. Maintaining viable, intact and healthy ecological communities and populations of species, especially those that are threatened, significant or iconic, while allowing the sustainable use of wildlife, through:

- developing and implementing approved wildlife recovery programs including recovery plans for threatened species and ecological communities
- continuing to maintain, review and update, as necessary, the lists of threatened and priority species and threatened and priority ecological communities
- continuing to ensure the sustainable use of flora and fauna, hobby keeping of fauna and the trade in wildlife are appropriately regulated and managed.
- implementing legislative amendments and supporting programs to improve the management of sandalwood and enhance its sustainable use
- understanding the requirements for Aboriginal people to undertake customary activities involving wildlife
- maintaining an effective system for monitoring and administering compliance with legislation for wildlife management
- managing wildlife interactions to protect life and property.



Australian sea lions at Jurien Bay Marine Park. *Photo – Melissa Evans/Parks and Wildlife*



Spiny tailed gekko. *Photo – Matt Swan/Parks and Wildlife*



Dugite. *Photo – Matt Swan/Parks and Wildlife*



Bar-tailed godwit, Shark Bay Marine Park. *Photo – Rick Dawson/Parks and Wildlife*

# Report on operations

## 4. Reducing impacts of key threatening processes, by:

- ensuring agreed research, appropriate monitoring and reporting is conducted to meet the ecosystem health and biodiversity key performance indicators in the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023*
- reviewing and determining priorities for pest animal control, conducting training and undertaking actions to achieve conservation and protection of native fauna and other values, including through the *Western Shield* program and the *State Cane Toad Strategy*
- reviewing and determining priorities for weed control, conducting training and undertaking actions, including surveys to determine weed distribution and abundance, to achieve conservation and protection of native flora and other values
- reviewing and determining priorities for plant disease control, conducting training and undertaking actions to achieve conservation and protection of native flora and other values, including through programs to manage *Phytophthora* dieback, with a focus on identified protectable areas
- progressing integration of feral cat and fox baiting in *Western Shield* areas, using the *Eradicat*® feral cat bait
- implementing priority and targeted actions to reduce the impacts of altered hydrology

(e.g. climate variability, secondary salinity and eutrophication) on biodiversity

- implementing strategic actions to improve the resilience of threatened terrestrial and marine species and ecological communities under predicted climate change settings
- continuing to provide consistent and timely advice to industry, regulatory agencies and the Minister on land use, resource extraction and industrial development proposals to protect the conservation reserve system and key species and ecological communities.

## 5. Undertaking targeted scientific investigations and integrating science knowledge into wildlife management, through:

- ensuring science programs address the gaps in knowledge and reflect the applied nature of advice required by the Department to deliver effective conservation, protection and management of flora, fauna, ecological communities and conservation reserves
- continuing to undertake terrestrial and marine biological surveys to systematically address gaps in knowledge and increase understanding of biodiversity components and patterns to better inform wildlife and conservation reserve management, including joint management with Aboriginal traditional owners

- determining priorities for and undertaking research relating to priority weeds, plant diseases and pest animals and related conservation and management actions
- better understanding the factors influencing the effectiveness of fox and feral cat baiting and developing more effective control regimes
- continuing to plan and implement translocations, including captive breeding programs and off site seed storage where necessary, focusing on high-priority threatened flora and fauna and the development of success criteria
- managing and curating the Western Australian Herbarium, to improve representation of rare and poorly known taxa and of the conservation estate, and conducting and supporting taxonomic research on WA plants, algae and fungi
- assisting the Western Australian Museum and other research institutions with research into faunal taxonomy, particularly in poorly known groups, such as terrestrial and marine invertebrates, and taxa of conservation concern, such as short range endemics
- undertaking research on population genetics, demography, eco-physiology and reproductive biology to improve management and conservation of threatened flora and fauna

- continuing to build partnerships and facilitate the development of models to determine the effects of climate change on biodiversity.

## 6. Effectively collecting, storing and managing information and data to improve wildlife management, by:

- providing core services and information on all plants, algae and fungi in WA
- developing a survey database to provide access to information on biodiversity
- reviewing and implementing improvements to information management and licensing systems.

## 7. Promoting public and stakeholder awareness, understanding and support for biodiversity conservation including through being involved in conservation programs, by:

- strengthening the Department's internal and public communications to enhance community understanding about the value of wildlife and its conservation requirements and the positive contribution that wildlife makes to people's lives
- improving communication with stakeholders to ensure that conservation funding is targeted towards programs and actions that will provide high-value conservation outcomes
- facilitating conservation actions on land not managed by the Department.

**Performance summary**

**Table 2: Service 2 performance summary**

	2015–16 Target \$'000	2015–16 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Expense by service	73,044	65,309	(7735)
<b>Key Efficiency Indicator</b>	<b>2015–16 Target \$</b>	<b>2015–16 Actual \$</b>	<b>Variance \$</b>
KPI 2.1: Average cost per hectare of wildlife habitat	2.55	2.24	(0.31)

**Key Effectiveness Indicator**

**Outcome:** The State’s native plants and animals are conserved and habitat, ecosystem and landscape-scale conservation are based on best practice science.

**KPI 1.** Proportion of critically endangered and endangered taxa and ecological communities that have a recovery plan.

Target 2015–16: 69%  
Actual 2015–16: 69.4%

More details regarding the key efficiency and key effectiveness indicators can be found in the audited key performance indicator report, see pages 139 to 143.

**Performance highlights**

**Wildlife legislation, policy and strategic programs**

- Drafting of the Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015 was completed and it was introduced to Parliament on 25 November 2015. This achievement addresses a commitment made by the Premier in an address to Parliament on 17 February 2015, for the Bill to be introduced into Parliament in the forthcoming year. The Bill was drafted to replace the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* with modern conservation provisions and will include significantly increased penalties for significant impacts on high-priority native plants and animals, including threatened species, whales and dolphins. The Bill also includes provisions that provide for greater flexibility and certainty for private landowner conservation initiatives with a focus on encouragement, while removing unnecessary regulatory barriers. The Bill will repeal the *Sandalwood Act 1929* and introduce new provisions for the management of wild native sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*), that will provide greater control over its trade from harvest to export and significantly increased penalties for illegal taking of this valuable resource to provide greater long-term certainty for the wild sandalwood resource.

- A range of programs and strategies for biodiversity conservation continued to be implemented across the State, including those in keeping with the national framework set out in *Australia’s Strategy for the Conservation of Biodiversity 2010–2030*.
- Technical information was provided by the Department on species, ecosystems and landscapes to facilitate environmental impact assessment, regulation of land clearing and land use planning across Government. This included advice on a range of mining and petroleum exploration and development proposals, including extraction of basic raw materials, and town planning schemes, structure plans, subdivisions and development applications.
- The Department continued to provide assistance to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in the preparation of the draft *Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million*, particularly in relation to biodiversity conservation matters, including the protection of threatened species and ecological communities.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

**Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy**

- Draft management plans for the proposed Yawuru / Nagulagun Roebuck Bay, Lalang-garram / Horizontal Falls and North Kimberley marine parks and Oomeday National Park (Horizontal Falls) were released for public comment in 2015–16. On 2 November 2015, the Alumina Refinery (Mitchell Plateau) Agreement (Termination) Bill 2015 was enacted, as part of plans to enable 175,900ha of Mitchell Plateau to be included in the proposed Kimberley National Park.
- The *Landscape Conservation Initiative* continued to be implemented in the north Kimberley under the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*. This collaborative, tenure-blind initiative has demonstrated measurable improvements in the management of fire regimes, pest animals and threatened mammals.
- Also under the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*, planning and implementing long-term monitoring across existing and proposed Kimberley marine parks has begun.

- The Kimberley Islands and Pilbara Bioregion biological surveys were published as Supplements 78 and 81 in the *Records of the Western Australian Museum*. A report on additional biodiversity surveys undertaken in partnership with the Balanggarra and Dambimangari traditional owners under the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy* was completed, with the results further highlighting the importance of the islands as conservation refuges.

**Marine science**

- Marine park and threatened marine fauna monitoring, evaluation and reporting produced updated synthesis reports of long-term monitoring for WA's marine parks and reserves. During 2015–16, fieldwork concentrated on monitoring seagrass, algae and fish communities at Ngari Capes, Shoalwater Islands, Jurien Bay and Shark Bay marine parks; benthic invertebrates at Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park; little penguins at Shoalwater Islands Marine Park and Penguin Island; fish and coral communities at Ningaloo and the Barrow and Montebello islands marine reserves; and mangroves at Shark Bay and Ningaloo marine reserves.



Parks and Wildlife Yawuru ranger Preston Manado with Yawuru cultural monitor Wayne Edgar looking for snub-nosed dolphins in the proposed Yawuru Nagulagun / Roebuck Bay Marine Park.  
Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife



Freshwater crocodile survey, Windjana Gorge National Park.  
Photo – Steve Heggie





Golden bandicoot. Photo – Judy Dunlop/Parks and Wildlife



Weighing a golden bandicoot for a monitoring program at Matuwa (Lorna Glen former pastoral station). Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife

### Western Shield

- The *Western Shield* wildlife recovery program continued to implement broadscale, integrated fox and feral cat baiting for native animal conservation. About 3.8 million hectares of conservation reserves and State forest were baited, using more than one million baits (about 600,000 fox baits and 500,000 feral cat baits). Regular monitoring of baited areas continued to track the recovery of native species. The program was supported by corporate sponsors Alcoa, Tronox and Western Areas Ltd.
- The new *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> feral cat bait is the result of more than a decade of research by Parks and Wildlife and its predecessors, and was registered in December 2014 for operational use in WA. Research and operational trials continue to improve bait delivery in different environments, with projects at Fortescue Marsh, Durba Hills, Calvert Ranges and Cape Range National Park in the Pilbara, Matuwa (Lorna Glen former pastoral station) in the Goldfields, Peron Peninsula in the Midwest, Dryandra Woodland in the Wheatbelt and on the south coast within Cape Arid and Fitzgerald River national parks and Two Peoples Bay and Mount Manypeaks nature reserves.
- Emergency feral cat baiting and trapping was conducted at Cape Arid National Park and Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve following extensive bushfires started by lightning strikes in October and November 2015 (see case study on page 52–53). The fires impacted about 90 per cent

of known occupied habitat for both the critically endangered western ground parrot (*Pezoporus flaviventris*) and the critically endangered Gilbert's potoroo (*Potorous gilbertii*). Threatened noisy scrub bird (*Atrichornis clamosus*), western bristlebird (*Dasyornis longirostris*), western ringtail possum (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) and quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*) were also impacted by the fires.

- A citizen science project, hosted on the Zooniverse website, was launched enabling volunteers around the world to help identify animals captured in remote camera images in areas baited under *Western Shield*.

### Wildlife sanctuaries and translocations

- The *Operation Rangelands Restoration* project continued at Matuwa (Lorna Glen former pastoral station). Reintroduced populations of bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*), brushtail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*), mala (*Lagorchestes hirsutus*), golden bandicoot (*Isodon auratus*) and boodie (*Bettongia lesueur*) are all breeding. Baiting for feral cats in 2015 using *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> reduced their activity by 55 per cent and was sufficient to allow a reintroduction of golden bandicoots to proceed. Martu traditional owners and Parks and Wildlife will continue to jointly manage this property on the Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara Indigenous Protected Area for conservation and cultural purposes. The process to establish a formal land management agreement is well underway and should be completed by the end of 2016.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

- The Perup Sanctuary, established with State Natural Resource Management (NRM) program funding, continued to support robust populations of threatened woylies (*Bettongia ogilbyi*), numbats (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*) and western ringtail possums (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*). Three-hundred-and-twenty critically endangered woylies have been translocated to other sites since the establishment of the sanctuary, including Dryandra Woodland.
- The Department continued to partner with Perth Zoo to breed numbats for release into the wild. Noongar Gnaala Karla Booja elders, adjoining landowners, other community members and the Federal Threatened Species Commissioner, Gregory Andrews, participated in the release of 15 numbats in Dryandra in December 2015.
- The Barna Mia Nocturnal Animal Sanctuary in Dryandra Woodland continued running its popular tours to complement Dryandra Woodland as a place where people can interact with wildlife.

## Managing threats

- The Department continued to implement the *Cane Toad Strategy for Western Australia 2014–19*, with a focus on protecting native wildlife from impacts of this pest animal and preventing the establishment of new satellite populations. Biological surveys continued to be conducted ahead of the cane toad frontline, in collaboration with Aboriginal ranger groups, *Bush Ranger* cadets, primary school students, the Western Australian Museum, universities and volunteers.
- In response to increasing numbers of introduced birds and community concerns, Parks and Wildlife hosted a forum in November 2015 attended by 20 metropolitan local governments, the Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA), Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA), BirdLife WA and Murdoch University to foster a coordinated and collaborative approach to controlling introduced white corellas and rainbow lorikeets in the metropolitan area. Parks and Wildlife, DAFWA, WALGA and alliances of neighbouring local governments are developing a coordinated program with control efforts for introduced corellas anticipated to occur in the first half of 2016–17.



Numbat release, Dryandra Woodland. Photo – Rick Dawson/Parks and Wildlife



Parks and Wildlife trainee Colen Nulgit teaching students about snakes as part of the cane toad program. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



A night encounter with a bilby and boodie at Barna Mia, Dryandra Woodland. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Common donkey orchid.

Photo – Mark Brundrett/Parks and Wildlife

- Work to reduce the threat of *Phytophthora* dieback to biodiversity continued, including phosphite spraying to protect threatened plant populations in Stirling Range National Park and the Albany coastal area, as well as upgrades to tracks in Cape Arid and Fitzgerald River national parks under *Project Dieback* to reduce risk of further spread from known infestations. The Department also continued to liaise with key industries and community groups to minimise risks of further disease introduction and spread. A number of these activities are being

undertaken in cooperation with South Coast NRM and Murdoch University.

- Operations to manage priority weeds continued throughout the State in the Department's nine regions, with a wide range of species targeted for control and management, including through collaborative efforts with traditional owners and a range of community and other groups.

#### Threatened species

- The Department participated in a national working group to develop a common assessment method for listing threatened species in a consistent manner between the Commonwealth and each state and territory, with the objective of developing a single national threatened species list. The WA Environment Minister signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Commonwealth Environment Minister agreeing to implement the common assessment method. At 30 June 2016, the MOU had also been signed by the Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.

#### Threatened plants

- The format of the State Wildlife Conservation Act list of specially protected (threatened) flora was changed to align with the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act threatened flora list and now contains four schedules: critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable and presumed extinct species.

Five species were added to the list:

- *Grevillea thelemanniana* subsp. *thelemanniana* as critically endangered
- *Stylidium coroniforme* subsp. *amblyphyllum* as critically endangered
- *Pityrodia* sp. Marble Bar (G. Woodman and D. Coultas GWDC Opp 4) as endangered
- *Hypocalymma* sp. Cascade (R. Bruhn 20896) as vulnerable
- *Tetratheca spenceri* as vulnerable.

Two species were removed from the list and added to the priority flora list:

- *Lepidium catapycnon*
- *Myoporum turbinatum*

*Typhonium* sp. Kununurra was upgraded from vulnerable to endangered.

- At 30 June 2016, there were 425 extant threatened flora species (164 critically endangered, 123 endangered and 138 vulnerable), 15 listed as presumed to be extinct and 3104 taxa on the Department's priority flora list.
- A total of 356 populations, comprising 223 species of threatened and priority plants, was surveyed or monitored, and 23 new populations of threatened flora and 82 new populations of priority flora were located. Of the 381 records added to the *Threatened and Priority Flora* database, 116 were for new populations. Interim

recovery plans were approved for eight species of threatened flora in 2015–16.

- The number of vascular plant species known for WA passed 10,000 in 2015. The number of plant specimens held at the Western Australian Herbarium increased by 1.26 per cent (a net increase of 9596 specimens), bringing the total number of specimens held to 769,256. A total of 559 names were added to the *WA Plant Census*, many of which were smut fungi.
- A total of 278 seed collections representing 137 species were banked at the Threatened Flora Seed Centre during 2015–16, of which 90 collections are critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable (declared rare flora). Department staff continued to provide technical advice and assistance for projects involving seed collection and use. Collections of six critically endangered species were withdrawn from the seed bank and germinated for use in Departmental translocation projects. The seed bank now contains collections of 340 threatened flora, 760 priority flora and 810 key restoration species.

# Report on operations

## Threatened animals

- An extensive review was conducted of the Wildlife Conservation Act specially protected (threatened) fauna lists to align with the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act threatened fauna list and assess the recommendations of the recently published national *Action Plan for Australian Mammals 2012*. The list now contains seven schedules: critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, presumed extinct, migratory birds protected under international agreements, conservation-dependent fauna, and other specially protected fauna.
- Eight species of native animal were added to the Wildlife Conservation Act list of specially protected (threatened) fauna:
  - little pygmy perch (*Nannoperca pygmaea*) as endangered
  - sperm whale (*Physeter microcephalus*) as vulnerable
  - Australian sea lion (*Neophoca cinerea*) as vulnerable
  - subantarctic fur seal (*Arctocephalus tropicalis*) as vulnerable
  - north-western brushtail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula amhemensis*) as vulnerable
  - Pilbara leaf-nosed bat (*Rhinonicteris aurantia*) as vulnerable

- ghost bat (*Macroderma gigas*) as vulnerable
- flesh-footed shearwater (*Ardenna carneipes*) as vulnerable.

Four species were added to the list of presumed extinct fauna:

- desert bettong (*Bettongia anhydra*)
- inland boodie (*Bettongia lesueur graii*)
- rufous hare-wallaby (south-western) (*Lagorchestes hirsutus*)
- Gould's mouse (*Pseudomys gouldii*).

Ten species were removed from the list:

- Shark Bay boodie (*Bettongia lesueur lesueur*)
- Barrow Island boodie (*Bettongia lesueur* subsp. (WAM M10733))
- crest-tailed mulgara (*Dasycercus cristicauda*)
- greater stick-nest rat (*Leporillus conditor*)
- humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)
- golden-backed tree rat (*Mesembriomys macrurus*)
- northern marsupial mole (*Notoryctes caurinus*)
- southern marsupial mole (*Notoryctes typhlops*)
- red-tailed phascogale (*Phascogale calura*)

- orange leaf-nosed bat (*Rhinonicteris aurantia*).

Six species were moved to a higher threat category (from vulnerable to endangered):

- sei whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*)
- fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*)
- black-footed tree rat (*Mesembriomys gouldii*)
- numbat (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*)
- black-flanked rock wallaby (*Petrogale lateralis*)
- West Kimberley rock wallaby (*Petrogale lateralis* West Kimberley race)

One species, the western barred bandicoot (*Perameles bougainville*), was moved to a lower threat category (from endangered to vulnerable).

- At 30 June 2016, there were 245 threatened fauna species (49 critically endangered, 47 endangered and 149 vulnerable), 23 listed as presumed to be extinct, six listed as conservation dependent, seven listed as otherwise specially protected, 103 migratory birds protected under international agreements and 203 species on the Department's priority fauna list.
- There were 11,812 records of sightings, captures or evidence of threatened and priority fauna added to the *Threatened and Priority Fauna* database or the *Fauna Survey Returns* system.

- A recovery plan was completed for the numbat (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*) and a *Wildlife Management Program* completed for Muir's corella (*Cacatua pastinator pastinator*). Research priorities for the conservation and management of the Pilbara leaf-nosed bat (*Rhinonicteris aurantia*) and northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) in the Pilbara were published in *Australian Mammalogy* in 2015–16.
- During 2015–16, negotiations were successfully completed with the Shire of Mukinbudin and Main Roads WA to realign a 'black spot' road to improve road user safety and to avoid the only known population of the critically endangered arid bronze azure butterfly (*Ogyris subterrestris petrina*) located in Barbalin Nature Reserve. The old road, which bisected the nature reserve, has been rehabilitated and butterflies are now dispersing more widely, including to the adjacent Wundoolin Nature Reserve.

## Threatened ecological communities

- At 30 June 2016, there were 66 extant ecological communities listed by the Department as threatened (21 critically endangered, 17 endangered and 28 vulnerable), and three listed as 'totally destroyed'. Another 353 ecological communities were on the priority list. One interim recovery plan was approved for 'Clay pans of the Swan Coastal Plain', which covers four threatened clay pan communities and one priority ecological community (PEC).

- New occurrence information was added to the *Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities* database for 87,565 occurrences of eight TECs and 21 PECs, helping resolve the status of the PECs and providing improved information for land use planning. This included 204 occurrences of 14 PECs in the Kimberley Region, 56 occurrences of a PEC in the Midwest Region, and 87,224 occurrences of the 'Eucalypt woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt' PEC, which was listed as a TEC under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act in December 2015.
- Surveys were completed in 116 occurrences of TECs and PECs throughout the State. Data collected about habitat, composition, condition, threats and recommended recovery actions were added to the database and will help guide future management.



Volunteers with quoll traps in the Pilbara.  
 Photo – Kellie Rayner/Parks and Wildlife



Pilbara leaf-nosed bat.  
 Photo – Mark Cowan/Parks and Wildlife



Paperbark trees in Dawesville. Photo – Rick Dawson/Parks and Wildlife



Black-flanked rock wallaby.  
 Photo – David Pearson/Parks and Wildlife



Yellow mountain bell.  
 Photo – Damien Rathbone/Parks and Wildlife

# Report on operations

## Wetlands

- Wetland conservation work continued, with condition assessments completed for Ramsar wetlands at Becher Point, Forrestdale and Thomsons lakes, and Peel-Yalgorup and a rapid condition assessment conducted of the mound springs within the Eighty Mile Beach Ramsar site and the proposed Walyarta / Mandora Marsh Conservation Reserve. Further progress was achieved in drafting management plans for these areas. One Ramsar information sheet was updated in 2015–16 using the new online Ramsar Sites Information Service. It has been endorsed at State and Federal levels and adopted by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat.
- The entire mapping layer of WA's nationally important wetlands was revised in 2015–16, making corrections to the 120 wetlands added to the *Directory of Important Wetlands* dataset in 1993.
- The *South West Wetlands Monitoring Program* completed a report on depth, salinity and pH trends from 1977 to 2014 of 103 individual wetlands and analyses of regional trends in wetland depths in relation to rainfall. Analysis is underway of data collected between 1996 and 2014 on the biological responses of a selection of Wheatbelt wetlands to threats such as salinisation, acidification and climate change. A project to investigate the hydrogeochemistry of peat wetlands in the Muir-Byenup complex is continuing

and groundwater monitoring continued in the Bryde and Toolibin natural diversity recovery catchments and in the Muir-Byenup Ramsar wetlands.

## Off reserve conservation

- In May 2016, a partnership agreement was signed with Natural Resource Management (NRM) WA to provide regional support to *Land for Wildlife* registrants. During 2015–16, the program registered five new properties, bringing the total area of registered sites managed privately for conservation to 286,615ha.
- Under the voluntary *Nature Conservation Covenant Program*, covenants have been established on 266 titles covering a total of 19,294ha, including habitat for several threatened species and ecological communities, a Ramsar-listed wetland and registered Aboriginal heritage sites.
- *Urban Nature* worked with more than 85 community groups, private landholders, local governments, State agencies and universities to facilitate best practice management of urban bushland. A new project to manage and restore the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands commenced and the results of trials to manage weeds and re-establish critical bridled tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*) habitat on Penguin Island have been analysed. Results of post-fire weed management and grazing exclusion trials at Paganoni Swamp were published.
- Coordination of the *Banksia Woodland Restoration Project* continued, with 50ha of banksia woodland established through topsoil transfer, planting and direct seeding to provide new feeding habitat for the endangered Carnaby's cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*). Control of major environmental weeds occurred across 23 reserves extending over 600ha. A monitoring framework using ground-based and remote sensing data continued to assess the longer-term effects of weed control and bushfire on banksia woodland biodiversity and condition. Twenty community conservation projects valued at \$300,000 continued to restore and improve the management of urban banksia woodland.



Heron, Swan Canning Riverpark. Photo – Anne Holder



Water sampling. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Carnaby's cockatoos. Photo – Rick Dawson/Parks and Wildlife



Southern Pilbara beaked gecko. Photo – Matt Swan/Parks and Wildlife

- The Roadside Conservation Committee undertook a range of activities to raise awareness of roadside conservation and engage with stakeholders, including working with 10 Wheatbelt shires and providing training for one local government in the Wheatbelt.

#### Sustainable use of natural resources

- Quotas for the commercial harvest of western grey and red kangaroos (*Macropus fuliginosus* and *M. rufus*) were set following aerial surveys under the management plan, approved by the Commonwealth Government. Improved trends in regional rainfall in the South East Zone during 2014–15 resulted in the zone

being reopened in 2016 to allow for the commercial harvest of western grey and red kangaroos.

- Management of the sandalwood industry and the detection of illegal or unsustainable harvest of sandalwood from the wild continued during 2015–16. In April 2016, wildlife officers intercepted and seized a container of illegally harvested sandalwood, which was about to be exported to Hong Kong and had been falsely declared as plantation logs. A further quantity of illegally harvested sandalwood and processing equipment was also seized, making a total of 12.2 tonnes of sandalwood worth about \$230,000. Parks and Wildlife is leading a

joint investigation into the matter with WA Police and the Federal Department of Agriculture.

- In response to the Parliamentary inquiry into the sandalwood industry, an expert review was conducted resulting in the *Sandalwood (Limitation of Removal of Sandalwood) Order 2015* being published in December 2015, reducing the wild sandalwood harvest quota by 17 per cent from 3000 tonnes to 2500 tonnes per year.

#### Licensing

To support the sustainable use of wildlife, in 2015–16, the Department issued 8780 licences under the Wildlife Conservation Act to take, collect, keep and breed, deal in, trap or export native animals, and 1886 licences to collect native plants. A further 486 licences were issued to scare, destroy, or trap and relocate nuisance wildlife and wildlife that was causing damage.

For information about prosecutions under the Wildlife Conservation Act, the Conservation and Land Management Act and associated regulations please see page 88.

# Report on operations

## Service 3: Conservation Partnerships

This service works in partnership with research organisations, private companies, non-government organisations and community groups to develop and implement programs to conserve and improve the management of the State's wildlife, based on best practice science.

The desired outcome of the service is the conservation and sustainable use of Western Australia's wildlife through effective partnerships.

The priorities of the service in 2015–16 were:

1. Developing, negotiating and improving partnerships with other research bodies, such as universities, the Western Australian Marine Science Institution (WAMSI) and the Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institution (WABSI), other Government agencies, natural resource management (NRM) bodies, local government, non-government organisations and community groups to leverage additional funding to support Government and Departmental priorities.
2. Effectively managing a comprehensive, adequate and representative conservation reserve system to protect biodiversity and social values.

3. Maintaining viable, intact and healthy ecological communities and populations of species, especially those that are threatened, significant or iconic, while allowing the sustainable use of natural resources.
4. Reducing impacts of key threatening processes, including altered fire regimes and hydrology, and priority pest animals, weeds and plant diseases, on biodiversity, ecological processes and sustainable land uses.
5. Undertaking scientific investigations that are effectively targeted to improve biodiversity knowledge and integrate science knowledge into wildlife management.

The following strategies and key activities guided the delivery of the service's priorities in 2015–16. The service is delivered by multiple divisions across the Department. Regional nature conservation plans, divisional plans and Forest Ecosystem Management Division's invasive species priority lists provide more detail on priorities and activities at those business levels.

### 1. Developing, negotiating and improving partnerships to leverage additional funding to support Government and Departmental priorities, by:

- developing and maintaining good working relationships with a range of organisations, groups and stakeholders involved or interested in biodiversity conservation, including WABSI and WAMSI.

- continuing to apply for external funds to deliver on-ground management, monitoring and research that improves management of the State's biodiversity and conservation reserve system, according to Government priorities
- working with other bodies to develop funding applications that will contribute to delivering Government and Departmental priorities
- implementing externally funded projects, including development project offsets, as agreed under governance and other arrangements, meeting agreed milestones and outcomes.

### 2. Continuing to effectively manage the conservation reserve system, by using effective partnerships to assist in:

- progressively implementing priority conservation and science actions in marine reserve management plans
- progressively implementing priority conservation and science actions in terrestrial reserve management plans or taking action to effectively manage terrestrial reserves through other appropriate mechanisms
- continuing to effectively manage World Heritage-listed areas through the implementation of collaborative conservation management programs across various tenures.

### 3. Maintaining viable, intact and healthy ecological communities and populations of species, especially those that are threatened, significant or iconic, while allowing the sustainable use of natural resources, by:

- using effective partnerships to implement approved wildlife recovery programs, including recovery plans for threatened species and ecological communities.

### 4. Reducing impacts of key threatening processes, by:

- implementing priority and targeted actions for pest animal control and undertaking actions to achieve conservation and protection of native fauna and other values
- implementing priority and targeted actions for weed control and undertaking actions, including surveys to determine weed distribution and abundance, to achieve conservation and protection of native flora and other values
- implementing priority and targeted actions for plant disease control and undertaking actions to achieve conservation and protection of native flora and other values, including through programs to manage *Phytophthora* dieback, with a focus on identified protectable areas
- progressing integration of feral cat and fox baiting in *Western Shield* areas, using the *Eradicat*® feral cat bait



- implementing priority and targeted actions to reduce the impacts of altered hydrology (e.g. climate variability, secondary salinity and eutrophication) on biodiversity
  - acquiring knowledge and determining management effectiveness of prescribed burning and bushfire suppression programs in relation to managing fire for biodiversity and impact on known biodiversity and other values
  - implementing strategic actions to improve the resilience of threatened terrestrial and marine species and ecological communities under predicted climate change models.
- 5. Undertaking targeted scientific investigations and integrating science knowledge into wildlife management, by:**
- ensuring that externally funded science programs address the gaps in knowledge and reflect the applied nature of advice required by the Department to deliver effective conservation, protection and management of flora, fauna, ecological communities and conservation reserves
  - undertaking research on population genetics, demography, eco-physiology and reproductive biology to improve management and conservation of threatened flora and fauna
  - continuing to deliver the *Return to 1616* ecological restoration project at Dirk Hartog Island National Park
  - continuing to undertake terrestrial and marine biological surveys to systematically address gaps in knowledge and increase understanding of biodiversity components and patterns to better inform wildlife and conservation reserve management, including joint management with Aboriginal traditional owners
  - undertaking research on the marine environment, including large fauna, to inform and improve management programs
  - continuing to coordinate the delivery of the WAMSI *Kimberley Marine Research Program*
  - continuing to deliver the *Northwest Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program*
  - continuing to undertake research and monitoring to inform the development and delivery of landscape-scale management
  - continuing to facilitate the development of models to determine the effects of climate change on biodiversity.

**Performance summary**

**Table 3: Service 3 performance summary**

Key Efficiency Indicator	2015–16 Target \$'000	2015–16 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Expense by service	32,952	26,510	(6442)
Key Efficiency Indicator	2015–16 Target \$	2015–16 Actual \$	Variance \$
KPI 3.1: Average cost per hectare of wildlife habitat	1.15	0.91	(0.24)



Proposed Lalang-Garram / Horizontal Falls Marine Park. Photo – Melissa Loomes/Parks and Wildlife

# Report on operations

## Performance highlights

### Strategic partnerships

- The Department is a partner in the National Environmental Science Program (NESP) Northern Australian Environment Hub. In 2015–16, as part of this hub, Parks and Wildlife renewed a collaboration with CSIRO to research the ecology of the significant weed *Passiflora* and its impact on freshwater crocodile breeding habitat in the Fitzroy River catchment. At the same time the Department and CSIRO continued to investigate the ecological impacts of *Passiflora* in the Pilbara and Kimberley with offset funding support from Mount Gibson Mining and Main Roads WA.
- The Department contributed to several projects implemented through the NESP Threatened Species Recovery Hub. In 2015–16 Parks and Wildlife focused on management and recovery of threatened plants and animals.
- Work continued on the WAMSI *Kimberley Marine Research Program*, a \$12 million research initiative to inform and support the planning and management of new marine parks in the Kimberley. The program is led by the Department and supported by about \$18 million in co-investment from WAMSI partners. Delivery of 25 integrated science projects will provide new information on marine biodiversity, habitats, ecological processes and human use across the Kimberley.

- The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute (WABSI) was founded, with Parks and Wildlife as a foundation member. The multi-agency institute was established to coordinate and facilitate research into conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial biodiversity in WA.
- A BushBlitz survey was undertaken in the Kiwirrkurra Indigenous Protected Area, with a total of 67 species of native vertebrates including one frog, 48 reptiles, and 18 mammals detected. At least five of the reptiles and eight of the mammals were new records for the area.

### Biological surveys

- Collaborative surveys of Kimberley and Pilbara marine reserves were undertaken during March and April 2016 with CSIRO and the Australian Institute of Marine Science to detect levels of coral bleaching before and during periods of predicted elevated ocean temperatures in the region. Significant bleaching was observed along the Kimberley coast north of Broome and at some offshore atolls, such as Scott and Seringapatam reefs. Limited coral bleaching was observed at Rowley Shoals Marine Park and none was seen at the Ningaloo and Barrow and Montebello islands marine reserves during this period. Further surveys will monitor recovery of these reefs.
- A biological survey of the relatively poorly known Colville map sheet area on the northern edge of the Nullarbor recorded five mammal species (of which four were introduced), 26 reptiles and 41 bird species. Fourteen vertebrate species were new records for the local area. Identification continues for plant species collected.
- Floristic and vegetation surveys of Fortescue Marsh continued with support from Fortescue Metals Group and BHP Billiton. During 2015–16, progress continued on identifying plant specimens, analysing floristic patterns and compiling vegetation maps. Control of donkeys, horses and camels continued in collaboration with Pilbara Corridors, Rangelands NRM, Fortescue Metals Group and local pastoralists. A collaboration between Parks and Wildlife and the Pilbara Mesquite Management Committee, Roy Hill, Fortescue Metals Group, Pilbara Corridors and Rangelands NRM continued to undertake control of *Parkinsonia* upstream of the marsh.
- BHP Billiton supported a biological survey of Walyarta / Mandora Marsh in the Great Sandy Desert, which resampled sites surveyed about two decades ago for terrestrial and wetland species and ecological communities.
- In collaboration with the Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust, a research plan and survey design guidelines were developed for the threatened sandhill dunnart (*Sminthopsis psammophila*), and a desktop survey was undertaken to collate existing knowledge of malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*).
- Baseline information on botanical diversity and soils was collected to inform and improve State and national biodiversity monitoring and environmental accounts reporting programs, through sampling a series of AusPlots Rangelands sites in the Pilbara and Kimberley. Analysis of floristic data from the South-West Australian Transitional Transect (SWATT) continued, and the Department provided support for the SuperSite managed by CSIRO in the proposed Credo Conservation Park.
- Biological surveys of the plants and amphibians of wetlands near Jurien Bay were undertaken to inform future resource development assessments and sustainable water extraction, with offset funding from CSR Gyprock.
- In partnership with the Chevron Gorgon Project, the island and marine conservation values of Barrow Island Nature Reserve and surrounding marine parks and reserves were monitored, researched and managed under an ongoing program.



Barrow Island Nature Reserve. Photo – Catherine Rummary/Parks and Wildlife



Pincushion starfish. Photo – Parks and Wildlife

### Managing threats

- With sponsorship from Alcoa, Tronox and Western Areas Ltd, the *Western Shield* wildlife recovery program continued to implement broadscale, integrated fox and feral cat baiting for native animal conservation over about 3.8 million hectares of conservation reserves and State forest.
- Research continued to improve the delivery of the *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> feral cat bait in different environments, with a project at Fortescue Marsh in the Pilbara supported through an offset by Fortescue Metals Group. A project continued to determine the potential impact of *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> on northern quolls (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) in the Pilbara, supported by Rio Tinto.
- Trials began on a hybrid 1080 feral cat bait, known as *Curiosity*<sup>®</sup>, in the Kimberley to determine its efficacy for feral cat control in a wetter environment than *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> is suited to, and any impacts on northern quolls. This project is funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.
- The final year of the Department's *Integrated Fauna Recovery Project* saw the continuation of the operational trial of *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> in Cape Arid, Fitzgerald River and Waychinicup national parks and Mount Manypeaks and Two Peoples Bay nature reserves. Funding was provided by State NRM and the Australian Government through South Coast NRM, and the project is delivered in partnership with The University of Western Australia and with involvement from primary and secondary schools. When combined with fox baiting, *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> has been effective in reducing the number of feral cats and foxes across the target reserves. Monitoring associated with this project has also recorded increases in the quenda (*Isoodon obesulus fusciventer*) population and stabilisation of the population of critically endangered western ground parrots (*Pezoporus flaviventris*) in Cape Arid National Park.
- Significant progress continued to be made on the *Return to 1616* ecological restoration project at Dirk Hartog Island National Park, which is substantially funded through the Gorgon Barrow Island *Net Conservation Benefits* (NCB) program. The \$11.54 million NCB funding is supporting the progressive removal of invasive pest animals, including goats, sheep and feral cats, before native animals are reintroduced in an ambitious and ground-breaking project to restore Dirk Hartog Island to its former state. In 2015–16, extensive monitoring and follow-up trapping, together with the use of specially trained detector dogs, continued to remove feral cats from the island.

# Report on operations

- A new \$1.7 million project funded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme, under the auspices of the *National Threatened Species Strategy*, was commenced to contribute to threatened species recovery through further integrating feral cat baiting with fox baiting at Kalbarri National Park, Dryandra Woodland, the Upper Warren area and in south coast reserves. In May 2015, 23 black-flanked rock wallabies (*Petrogale lateralis lateralis*) were successfully translocated from the central Wheatbelt to Kalbarri National Park to boost the existing very small population of wallabies.
  - During 2015–16, the *Chichester and Fortescue Catchment Weed Strategy* collaboration involving the Department, CSIRO, Atlas Iron and Pilbara Corridors expanded to cover the entire Pilbara region following the generous support of Roy Hill and Rangelands NRM. More than 37,000 records of 125 species have been captured.
  - Through the State NRM *Project Dieback*, administered by South Coast NRM, Parks and Wildlife upgraded tracks in Cape Arid and Fitzgerald River national parks to reduce the risk of further spread from known dieback infestations. Phosphite spraying, eradication trials for spot infestations, and education and awareness raising have helped prevent introduction and further spread of dieback.
  - The *Healthy Wetland Habitats* program received 16 new expressions of interest, three of which have progressed voluntary management agreements over 129.5ha of wetland. Seven further properties are at various stages of assessment for progressing to management agreements.
- Threatened and important animals**
- Monitoring of translocated animals on the Montebello Islands continued under Chevron Gorgon Project offset funding. Golden bandicoots (*Isoodon auratus*), spectacled hare-wallabies (*Lagorchestes conspicillatus conspicillatus*), black and white fairy-wrens (*Malurus leucopterus edouardi*) and spinifexbirds (*Megalurus carteri*) translocated from Barrow Island to Hermite Island are breeding and continuing to spread to occupy all available habitats. Boodies (*Bettongia lesueur*) that were translocated to Alpha Island are also breeding.
  - The *North West Shelf Marine Turtle Conservation Program*, also funded through an offset from the Chevron Gorgon Project on Barrow Island, aims to increase the conservation and protection of the North West Shelf flatback turtle (*Natator depressus*) population. In 2015–16, the program focused on establishing long-term monitoring sites. The Department continued studies to better understand the impacts of artificial light on hatchling behaviour, fox predation on turtle hatchlings and eggs, and climate change on marine turtle incubation. More than 20 adult female flatbacks were satellite-tracked from nesting sites in the Pilbara and the Kimberley to their home foraging sites within WA, Northern Territory and Commonwealth waters, some up to 1300km away and in water depths of more than 100m.
  - At Perup Sanctuary, a partnership with the Australian Wildlife Conservancy saw 36 critically endangered woylies translocated from Perup to the Mount Gibson and Karakamia sanctuaries. Support from the South West Catchments Council allowed 15 western ringtail possums to be translocated from around Manjimup to boost numbers of this species inside Perup Sanctuary.
  - Through a partnership with WWF-Australia, the Department began a comprehensive survey of the February 2015 O'Sullivan fire near Northcliffe fire area and up to 1km outside the fire boundary to identify remaining quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*) populations. Additional 1080 ground baiting to control foxes continues to protect recovering fauna populations in this fire-affected area.
  - Surveys and repeated monitoring of known populations of the northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) and bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*) continued in the Pilbara with offset and other corporate funding from Atlas Iron, Millennium Minerals, Fortescue Metals Group, Main Roads WA, Iron Ore Holdings, Roy Hill and BHP Billiton.
  - The results of the 2014–15 Community Rakali Survey were published in 2015. This partnership between Parks and Wildlife and WWF generated 234 records from across the range of the species and involving 167 survey participants.
  - A partnership with BirdLife Australia to conduct the annual Great Cocky Count continued for the eighth consecutive year in April 2016.
  - Research into habitat use and migratory patterns of forest red-tailed black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus banksii naso*) continued, with support from Murdoch University and The University of Western Australia.
- Threatened and important plants**
- With funding from State NRM, the Department continued to improve the conservation status of threatened plant species, establishing viable populations of 28 species in threat-free sites, developing fire management protocols and fire management procedures for 42 species, erecting 11.9km of fencing to protect 19 species over 1009ha from grazing by feral animals, baiting 17,070ha for rabbit control, and undertaking weed control and habitat restoration for 34 species covering 507ha.

- The Western Australian Herbarium's Pilbara plant identification program, in partnership with BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto, continued to provide an authoritative identification service to industry, including environmental consultants. The project has resulted in the discovery of new taxa, new populations of rare and conservation-significant taxa, additions of significant specimens to the Herbarium's collection, and more certainty for industry. The partnership with Rio Tinto also led to the creation of the *Rare and Priority Plants of the Pilbara* app, which provides descriptions, distribution maps, images and a simple identification guide for 167 rare and little-known plant species of the Pilbara.
- The Department, in collaboration with Curtin University, The University of Western Australia, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority and Fortescue Metals Group, continued DNA barcoding of 500 Pilbara plant species, with the final 100 plants currently being processed. Early results support the value of this approach in resolving species identification and confirming the conservation status of poorly known species.
- The Department's Threatened Flora Seed Centre continued to be involved in international seed conservation projects, such as the Global Trees Project and the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership, and provided technical advice and assistance for projects involving seed collection in the *WA Banksia Woodland Restoration Project*.
- In collaboration with Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton, the Department undertook analysis of patterns of genetic diversity in plant species of the Pilbara to inform identification of appropriate seed source zones for restoration.
- As part of an Australian Government Biodiversity Fund project in collaboration with Warren Catchment Council and CSIRO, the Department undertook restoration of degraded areas along the Warren and Donnelly rivers using climate-appropriate germplasm sources identified through genetic analysis.
- A collaboration with The University of Western Australia, the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority and Gondwana Link continued to evaluate the success of restoration plantings through assessment of reproductive success in comparison with native remnant vegetation.



Forest red-tailed black cockatoos. Photo – Rick Dawson/Parks and Wildlife



Flatback turtle heading back out to sea after nesting. Photo – Andrea Whiting



Gilbert's potoroo. Photo – Babs and Bert Wells/  
Parks and Wildlife



Western ground parrot being measured.  
Photo – Alan Danks/Parks and Wildlife



The team of volunteers and Parks and Wildlife staff surveying Nuytsland Nature Reserve.  
Photo – Sarah Comer/Parks and Wildlife



Setting traps for feral cats, Cape Arid National Park. Photo – Sarah Comer/Parks and Wildlife



Poison Creek devastated by bushfire, Cape Arid National Park. Photo – Peter Dans/Parks and Wildlife

## Case study

**Outcome:** The State's native plants and animals are conserved and habitat, ecosystem and landscape-scale conservation are based on best practice science.

# Emergency post-fire cat baiting saves wildlife

Since several large bushfires burned through a number of south coast reserves in October and November 2015 in catastrophic fire conditions, Parks and Wildlife staff and partners worked hard in the region to save critically endangered species, which were dealt a devastating blow.

In Cape Arid National Park, 125km from Esperance, about 90 per cent of western ground parrot (*Pezoporus flaviventris*) habitat had been lost. Sadly, the news was the same for Gilbert's potoroo (*Potorous gilbertii*) and the noisy scrub bird (*Atrichornis clamosus*) in Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve and Torndirrup National Park, near Albany.

Several other threatened species, including the western bristlebird (*Dasyornis longirostris*), quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*) and western ringtail possum (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*), were also affected.

Following the joint effort of Parks and Wildlife staff, local bushfire brigades and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services to combat the fires, attention quickly turned to recovery.

Rapid action and strong working relationships with dedicated community groups meant all was not lost for the threatened species impacted by these fires.

Emergency baiting was carried out using *Eradicat*® baits to combat the increased threat of feral cats, which are known to use fire boundaries to prey on displaced native animals. Aerial and ground baiting was

conducted in the three parks and surrounding conservation lands across 148,000ha, in addition to routine fox and feral cat control under the Department's *Western Shield* program. Trapping following the fires also resulted in the capture and euthanasia of 20 feral cats.

At Two Peoples Bay, staff swiftly rescued seven Gilbert's potoroos – the world's rarest marsupial – from small unburnt patches of vegetation where they had found refuge. The animals were held in captivity and four of these were released onto Michaelmas Island in mid-2016. The other three potoroos have been released back into unburnt habitat at Two Peoples Bay. Surveys and monitoring for the remaining potoroos will continue. Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group provided additional support for post-fire potoroo recovery actions.

Investigations into the impact of the Two Peoples Bay fire on the noisy scrub bird and western ringtail possum are continuing.

In Cape Arid National Park, emergency baiting was focused on protecting western ground parrots. Prior to the fires it was estimated there were about 140 left in the wild. Only two small pockets of parrot habitat in the park were

unburnt. Recording units designed to pick up the birds' calls were deployed in these areas, and in potential habitat east of the burnt ground where surviving parrots may have moved.

Sure enough, it seems they had. In March 2016, Parks and Wildlife staff and volunteers recorded the presence of the parrots in Nuytsland Nature Reserve, which lies to the east of Cape Arid, for the first time in 10 years.

Shortly after the Cape Arid fires, a western ground parrot workshop was held in conjunction with the Department's South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team, bringing together about 40 experts from across Australia and New Zealand to identify the most effective recovery actions for this species. The workshop was made possible through funding support from the Friends of the Western Ground Parrot, Birdlife WA, the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme, South Coast NRM and WWF-Australia, with in-kind support from Perth Zoo, Bush Heritage Australia, Birdlife Australia and the National Environmental Science Program's threatened species hub.

In Torndirrup National Park, the key species affected by the fires were threatened and priority flora, including *Banksia verticillata*, *Caladenia granitora* and *Chamelaucium* sp. Vancouver. The Department undertook post-fire monitoring and is investigating other recovery actions, such as germination trials.

The post-fire recovery work for these important species highlighted the value of the Department's partnerships with community groups, volunteers and non-Government organisations. During post-fire surveys, volunteers contributed more than 1000 hours' work.

The availability of a highly trained, multi-disciplinary team, guided by a strong base of scientific research, resulted in effective introduced predator control, fauna rescue and critical monitoring. These efforts will inform future recovery efforts.

Parks and Wildlife worked closely with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and the Federal Threatened Species Commissioner to facilitate the emergency baiting.



Lane Poole Reserve. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife

## Agency performance

# Report on operations

### Service 4: Forest Management Plan Implementation

This service is responsible for developing and implementing programs that provide for economic, social and cultural benefits from State forest and timber reserves while conserving biodiversity, maintaining soil and water values and sustaining the health, vitality and productive capacity of the forest for current and future generations.

The desired outcome of the service is the conservation and sustainable utilisation of forests.

The overall priorities for 2015–16 related to implementing the requirements of the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023* (FMP), and ecologically sustainable management of the range of forest values and uses. The priorities of this service in 2015–16 were:

1. Focusing resources on addressing the requirements of the FMP for issues that pose the greatest threat to ecological sustainability, with particular consideration to weed, pest animal and disease management (including *Phytophthora dieback*) issues.

2. Implementing processes authorising the hand-over to, and hand-back from, proponents operating on State forest and timber reserves. This included a monitoring and compliance management system to ensure operations are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the FMP.
3. Implementing activities to manage public firewood collection and standardise arrangements to provide firewood for domestic use from south-west forests.

The service outcome is delivered by a number of divisions across the Department though the following strategies and key activities:

- 1. Implementing Government policies and programs, including the management activities outlined in the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023*.**
- 2. Inventory, assessment and modelling of natural resources, including:**
  - acquiring and analysing wood inventory data to help Parks and Wildlife and the Forest Products Commission (FPC) in planning, managing and monitoring wood production in State forest and timber reserves
  - mapping vegetation to inform silvicultural decisions, old-growth forest assessments, dieback disease presence and impact predictions, reserve analysis and planning, and the protection of poorly reserved forest ecosystems and less well-reserved vegetation complexes



- providing specialist services, including aerial photography, photo-interpretation, photogrammetry, vegetation and *Phytophthora* dieback disease mapping surveys and database design and development, to other Parks and Wildlife services, other government agencies, natural resource management groups and external clients.
- 3. Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and other forest values in State forest and timber reserves, including:**
- implementing and enhancing systems for approvals, monitoring and compliance (including setting management standards) for operations undertaken on State forest and timber reserves
  - providing planning support to guide the location of fauna habitat zones, selection and management of public firewood collection areas and licensed flora harvesting areas
  - monitoring areas burnt by bushfire and prescribed burning to support landscape-scale planning and reporting; and helping evaluate biodiversity assets at risk from effects of infrastructure construction or threatening processes
  - delivering information about and mapping of *Phytophthora* dieback and evaluating disease hygiene standards to minimise spread through planned disturbance operations
- undertaking research and monitoring (such as *FORESTCHECK*) and refining operational procedures to enhance the management of biodiversity, productive capacity, ecosystem health and vitality, and soil and water values.
- 4. Providing for harvesting, regeneration and growth of forest products in accordance with the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023* and guided by the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management, including:**
- reviewing silviculture, soil and water management, and other relevant guidance documents
  - conducting training for silvicultural and soil protection practices
  - monitoring areas subject to timber harvesting and associated silvicultural treatments
  - preparing three-year regional timber harvest plans, and reviewing annual regional timber harvest plans submitted by the FPC.
- 5. Maintaining partnerships, including with:**
- the community and key stakeholder groups (including universities and volunteer projects)
  - other State Government agencies and authorities
  - Australian Government agencies.

**Performance summary**

**Table 4: Service 4 performance summary**

	2015–16 Target \$'000	2015–16 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Expense by service	13,512	8911	(4601)
Key Efficiency Indicator	2015–16 Target \$	2015–16 Actual \$	Variance \$
KPI 4.1: Average cost per hectare of managing forest	10.46	6.90	(3.56)

**Key Effectiveness Indicators**

**Outcome:** The State’s plants and animals and the lands and water under the Department’s care are managed for tourism, water and wood production, and other approved uses:

**KPI 1:** Cumulative removal of jarrah sawlogs by approved harvesting operations compared to limits in the Forest Management Plan.

Target 2015–16: 264,000m<sup>3</sup>  
Actual 2015–16: 169,993m<sup>3</sup>

**KPI 2:** Cumulative removal of karri sawlogs by approved harvesting operations compared to limits in the Forest Management Plan.

Target 2015–16: 118,000m<sup>3</sup>  
Actual 2015–16: 88,857m<sup>3</sup>

Note: Removal of jarrah and karri sawlogs under the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023* is reconciled on a calendar-year basis.

More details regarding the key efficiency indicator and key effectiveness indicators can be found in the audited key performance indicator report, see pages 139 to 143.

# Report on operations

## Performance highlights

### Major plans

- The *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023* (FMP) for south-west forests continued to be implemented. This included a trial of interagency working arrangements with the Forest Products Commission (FPC), and the refinement of protocols for 18 key performance indicators (KPI). The KPIs will report on the measure of success in meeting the objectives of the FMP.
- The third five-year progress review of the *Regional Forest Agreement for the South-West Forest Region of Western Australia* began.

### Forest management and planning

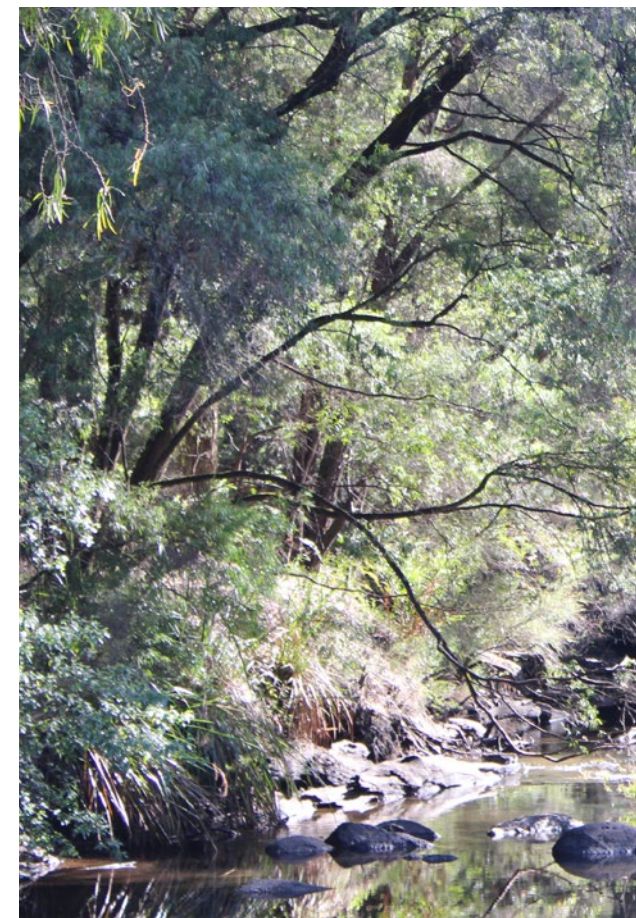
- The Department provided specialist advice on the implications for ecologically sustainable forest management of proposed developments and planned operations, including timber harvesting, mining, utilities and infrastructure work.
- Extensive vegetation condition mapping and modelling of the impacts of the major bushfires at O'Sullivan near Northcliffe, Lower Hotham near Boddington and Waroona–Yarloop was conducted to inform planning for potential timber salvage, regeneration and reconstruction operations.
- Prevention of the potential spread of *Phytophthora* dieback during soil disturbance operations continued to be managed through the preparation of hygiene management plans. Refined approaches to risk assessment and plan preparation were developed with input from a Departmental advisory group comprising specialists in plant disease, fire management, field operations and regional groups.
- The ongoing review of operational guidance documents (required by the FMP) resulted in improved soil monitoring procedures, an updated soil management manual and the development of a manual for silvicultural burning in karri forest. A health and safety code for native forest timber harvesting and chemical spill response procedures were also reviewed in conjunction with industry and other agencies.
- Three-year (2016–18) timber harvest plans for the Department's Swan, South West and Warren regions were prepared and published.
- The detection and mapping of *Phytophthora* dieback was carried out on 27,950ha of land managed by Parks and Wildlife to help plan and manage disturbance operations and the prioritisation of disease treatments (see the case study on page 60–61 for more information). This included work undertaken for the FPC (see Service 5) and included 8150ha rechecked that had been previously mapped.

**40 years**  
of dieback mapping

**95**  
disturbance operations evaluated  
and monitored in 2015

**146**  
coupes analysed and mapped  
for proposed timber harvesting

Almost  
**28,000ha**  
of Park and Wildlife-managed land  
interpreted and mapped for dieback,  
including 17,000ha for  
timber harvesting



Blue tinsel lily. Photo – Bron Anderson/  
Parks and Wildlife



Honeymoon Pool, Wellington National Park. Photo – Rory Turker



White-browed scrub wren. Photo – Doug Coughran/Parks and Wildlife

- The old-growth forest status of areas proposed for disturbance operations was reviewed, and an updated map showing the extent of and changes to areas of old-growth forest was published on the Department's website in May 2016. Data and advice was also provided to the former Conservation Commission of Western Australia on community nominations of old-growth forest areas.
- Fauna habitat zones in State forests are created to help maintain biodiversity values in areas subject to timber harvesting. Analysis of the potential location of 12 fauna habitat zones was carried out, six of which (comprising a gross area of 7270ha) were finalised in accordance with the FMP. An updated map of fauna habitat zone locations was published to the Department's website in April 2016.
- Ninety-five disturbance operations in the calendar year 2015, covering 7484ha of State forest and timber reserves, were evaluated and monitored for compliance with the environmental outcomes sought in the FMP.
- Monitoring of the compliance of timber harvesting operations with FMP requirements was streamlined using image processing software in conjunction with aerial photo acquisition and stereo mapping platforms to record silvicultural outcomes and boundaries of exclusion areas (such as old-growth forest).

#### Research

- Seven *FORESTCHECK* monitoring grids burnt in February 2015 by the Hotham bushfire were re-measured to determine the impacts on tree mortality, woody debris consumption, and the composition of plant and invertebrate communities in the jarrah forest.
- Preparation of scientific papers based on analysis of *FORESTCHECK* data from the 10-year monitoring period 2002–12 and associated scientific papers progressed, and a review of the *FORESTCHECK* program was started to inform the future approach to monitoring the impacts of disturbance activities on biodiversity and other values in the south-west forests.
- Research to inform silvicultural practices and potential adaptation strategies under a drying climate continued, with the re-measurement of groundwater boreholes in catchments in the Warren Region and maintenance on a long-term thinning experiment in high-quality jarrah regrowth forest near Dwellingup.
- The Department contributed to a project led by the University of New South Wales to develop high-resolution map products and a biomass library for woody vegetation across the continent. These products were derived using data from a range of satellite sensors and ground measurements to improve forest structure, biomass and standing carbon estimation for forests within the FMP area.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

## Service 5: Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry

This service is responsible for developing and implementing programs that provide works and services that directly support commercial forest production activities on State forests and timber reserves.

The desired outcome of the service is the efficient provision of services to support the sustainable utilisation, effective regeneration and management of forest products.

The overall priorities for 2015–16 related to implementing the requirements of the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023* (FMP) and providing a range of on-ground works, technical support and services to the Forest Products Commission (FPC) under annual works agreements. The priorities of this service in 2015–16 were:

1. Progressing a trial of interagency working arrangements with the FPC to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes for authorising access to State forest areas, timber harvest planning and compliance monitoring, as well as shared information technology, disease management and roading arrangements.
2. Ensuring areas harvested are regenerated in a timely manner (where this is the primary silvicultural objective), and appropriate fire management and protection activities are implemented following harvest.

3. Providing coupe-level harvest planning, field survey, dieback interpretation and resource evaluation services to the FPC.
4. Participating in the Australian Forestry Standard and Forest Stewardship Council audit processes for FPC certification of wood products and forest management.
5. Providing scientific support for ongoing delivery of a sustainable forest products industry in Western Australia.

The service outcome was delivered by a number of the divisions across the Department through the following strategies and key activities:

1. **Providing regulatory oversight of native forests timber harvesting processes, including implementation of management activities in the FMP relating to setting silvicultural standards, monitoring and yield regulation.**
2. **Performing on-ground works to support the regeneration and tending of harvested areas in native forest and plantations, including conducting silvicultural burns, planting, weed and pest animal management activities.**
3. **Conducting native forest harvest planning, specialist hardwood and plantation inventory, field survey and *Phytophthora* dieback interpretation activities to service annual harvest plans.**

4. **Performing field measurement programs and data analysis to monitor harvest removals and silvicultural standards in timber harvest operations.**
5. **Contributing to biodiversity research and monitoring programs (including through *FORESTCHECK*) that assess the impacts of timber harvesting and informing regeneration and silvicultural practices.**

## Performance summary

Table 5: Service 5 performance summary

	2015–16 Target \$'000	2015–16 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Expense by service	10,346	9582	(764)
<b>Key Efficiency Indicator</b>	<b>2015–16 Target \$</b>	<b>2015–16 Actual \$</b>	<b>Variance \$</b>
KPI 5.1: Average cost per hectare of forest available for timber harvesting	10.78	10.00	(0.78)



Aerial view of fire-damaged forest near Northcliffe. Photo – Al Seymour/Forest Products Commission



Fire-damaged forest near Northcliffe to be salvaged for timber. Photo – Michael Rayner

### Performance highlights

- Projections of native forest timber resources available under the FMP were prepared to inform market development options for the forest products industry. This included potential timber resources available for salvage to facilitate regeneration of areas damaged by the O'Sullivan bushfire near Northcliffe, Lower Hotham fire near Boddington and the January 2016 Waroona–Yarloop fire.
- Preparation of the annual (2015) timber harvest plan for native forests involved extensive data analysis and coupe map production for 48 new and 98 continuing coupes in the south-west forests.
- In order to implement the annual plan, the Department finalised the location of fauna habitat zones within State forest, reviewed areas for old-growth forest status, surveyed ecologically sensitive boundaries to assist field demarcation and continued to refine databases of vegetation extent, condition and silvicultural status arising from field checks and remote sensing.
- Dieback interpretation conducted by Departmental interpreters to inform current or future native forest timber harvesting and roading operations was completed on 17,060ha during 2015.
- Silvicultural burns were conducted under appropriate weather conditions to regenerate areas within coupes where jarrah and karri harvesting operations had been completed in this or previous years.
- Maintenance of fire access roads, water points and firebreaks was completed for priority areas within pine plantations across four districts.
- A report on *FORESTCHECK* sites sampled in 2014 in the eastern Blackwood and Perth Hills districts was compiled. This will inform future harvest planning and monitor the impacts of current harvesting practices on biodiversity.
- New applications of high-resolution digital imagery and LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) data were developed to refine harvest coupe design, silvicultural planning and conformance reporting in tall native forests.
- Inventory of the standing timber remaining in pine plantations following thinning operations was conducted to perform projections of future growth and yield.
- Databases recording the native forest harvesting activities and removal of timber resources were progressively updated and used in reporting FMP key performance indicators, a number of FPC key effectiveness indicators, and audit processes.

## Case study

Government outcome: The State's plants and animals and the lands and waters under the Department's care are managed for tourism, water and wood production, and other approved uses.

# Forty years mapping dieback

They say 'know your enemy', and for 40 years now Parks and Wildlife and its predecessors have been working hard to locate and map the occurrence of the destructive plant disease *Phytophthora* dieback in order to confine its spread and limit its impact on Western Australia's native plants and animals.

*Phytophthora* dieback is caused by the introduced plant pathogen, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which kills susceptible plants such as banksias, jarrah and grass trees by attacking their root systems. The plants die because they cannot take up water and nutrients.

Affecting more than 40 per cent of WA's native plant species and half of the endangered ones in the south-west, dieback is one of the biggest threats to native wildlife – and there is no known cure. Mapping the occurrence of dieback has relied on the interpretation of symptoms in plants known to be susceptible to the disease, but it can be difficult to detect because infected plants often appear to be dying from drought or other factors.

The pathogen can be readily spread by movement of infested soil or plant material, and while there is no cure, it is vital to know where dieback is in order to protect the biodiversity of dieback-free areas. The Department and the community can manage hygiene going into and out of these 'protectable areas' to minimise the chances of spreading or introducing the pathogen. The Department does this by classifying land into occurrence categories, being:

- **infested** – an area where dieback is present
- **uninfested** – free of plant disease symptoms that indicate dieback
- **uninterpretable** – an absence of, or too few, plants susceptible to the disease which does not allow an area to be interpreted with confidence.

The Department's current knowledge of disease extent is the result of field and aerial survey programs conducted over the past 40 years. In WA, it has been recorded in ecosystems from Kalbarri to Israelite Bay, particularly in areas that receive more than 400mm annual rainfall (known as the vulnerable zone). This zone covers 34 million hectares across all land tenures, of which about one million are known or inferred to be infested with dieback. Of this, 775,000ha are lands managed by the Department (Figure 3, page 61).

Formal mapping of dieback distribution began in 1976 by Parks and Wildlife's predecessor agency, the Western Australian Forests Department. The effects of the disease were noted as early as the 1920s but a cause-and-effect relationship was not confirmed until the mid-1960s.

Over 40 years, the mapping techniques have evolved from using black and white photography and a compass to map onto printed aerial photographs in the field, to using three-dimensional digital imagery, GPS navigation and recording of field evidence by mobile devices.

Validation of this mapping can involve routine testing of soil and root samples at Parks and Wildlife's Kensington labs. These samples are collected primarily from beneath dying, *Phytophthora*-sensitive native plants (known as 'indicator species') and are tested for the presence of the pathogen. Samples from other native ecosystems including forests and heathlands, as well as from parks, gardens, nurseries and plantations, are also tested.

Even with all these technological advancements, the interpretation of disease symptoms within the myriad of plant species across WA's unique landscapes still requires highly skilled officers to accurately map the presence of dieback. Aside from botanical and plant disease knowledge, the job requires technical experts/interpreters to traverse large distances and infer disease pattern and impacts through keen observation and deduction. The Department maintains an

Interpreter Registration system to ensure standards of interpretation are maintained on Departmental lands.

The spread of dieback can't be tackled alone. For many years Parks and Wildlife and its predecessors has worked closely with dedicated community and industry organisations including Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups, as well as other government agencies to map and limit the impact of dieback on native species.

The task of managing dieback to protect WA's native wildlife is large and complex, but will continue to depend on improving our knowledge of the distribution of the pathogen, building on the legacy of 40 years of dedicated work in mapping the disease.

Visit [www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/pests-diseases/phytophthora-dieback](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/pests-diseases/phytophthora-dieback) for more information.

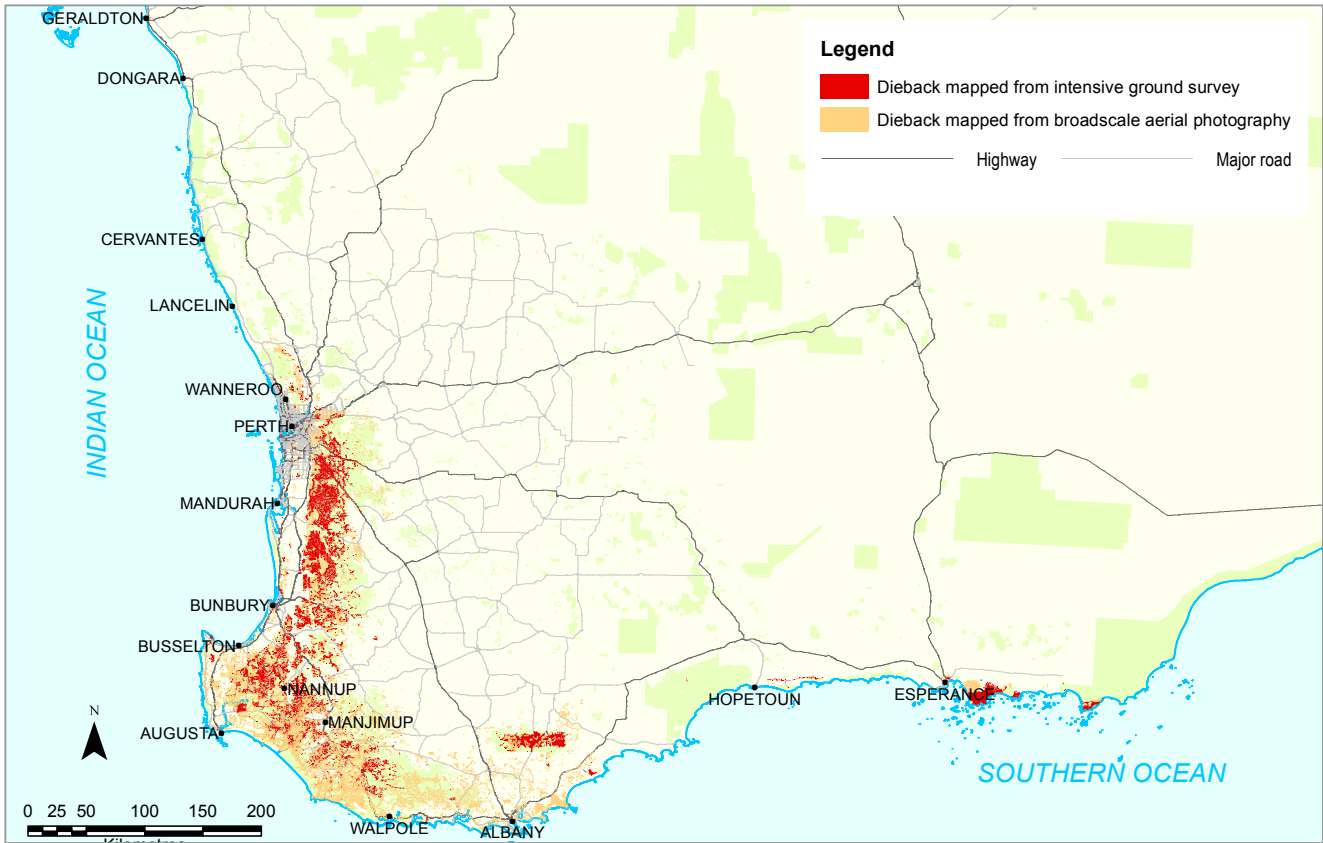


Figure 3: Map showing areas of dieback interpreted between 1976 and 2015.



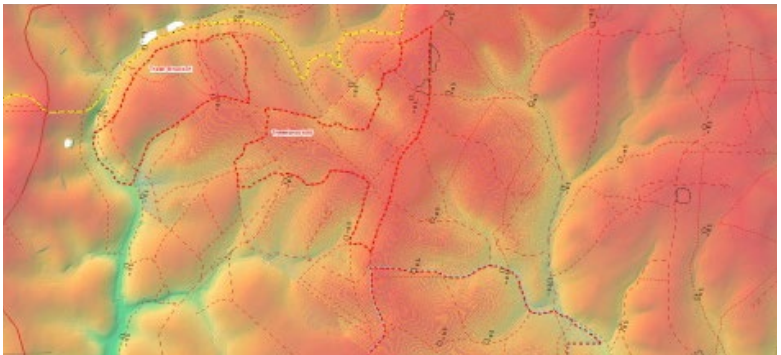
District nature conservation coordinator Bob Huston at a priority protection area, where much work was done under the *Project Dieback* partnership. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



During the 1970s and 1980s aerial photographs were viewed in stereo to help detect dead plants and suspected dieback occurrence. Photo – Forests Department



The impact of dieback at Jandakot Regional Park. Note the loss of biomass in the foreground as opposed to healthy trees in the background. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Since 2010 the interpretation of dieback pattern and disease boundaries has been informed by accurate topography information available from Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) and other data. Image – Parks and Wildlife

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

## Service 6: Prescribed Burning and Fire Management

This service is responsible for using planned fire to achieve community and asset protection; and land, forest and wildlife management objectives.

The desired outcome of the service is community protection and the enhancement of land, forest and wildlife management outcomes by continual improvement in the planning and implementation of the prescribed burning and fire management programs.

In 2015–16, the overall priorities for the Prescribed Burning and Fire Management Service were:

- Best practice prescribed burning and fire management procedures.
- New performance measures for the prescribed burning program.
- Succession planning for fire management.

The following strategies and key activities guided the delivery of the service priorities in 2015–16. The service was delivered by all work centres across the State.

### 1. Best practice prescribed burning and fire management procedures, by:

- applying principles of risk management and continual improvement to plan and conduct the prescribed burning program to minimise the risk to the community from bushfires on Department-managed lands as much as is reasonably practical
- applying adaptive management principles to the practice of prescribed burning to enable adoption of new knowledge in the use of planned fire to deliver improved environmental, silvicultural and biodiversity outcomes
- applying sound policy, technology, information management systems and the coordination of planning and operations to deliver identified fire management outcomes
- enhancing quality assurance processes for the program at all levels.

### 2. New performance measures for the prescribed burning program, by:

- developing and clearly defining a range of performance measures that enable better understanding of the Department's prescribed burning program and its contribution to both community protection and land, forest and wildlife management objectives.



Conservation employee Aaron Craig ignites a prescribed burn using a hand-held drip torch.  
Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife

### 3. Succession planning for fire management, by:

- enhancing and expanding the Fire Management Development Program through the strategic recruitment, training and development of staff to provide a sustained level of capability equal to that required to effectively and efficiently deliver the fire management program
- training and developing existing staff from across all functional areas to have the skills and knowledge required to fulfil the Department's fire management goals.





Staff are briefed before igniting a prescribed burn. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife



Conservation employee Katie Wishart keeps a prescribed burn under control. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife

**Performance summary**

**Table 6: Service 6 performance summary**

	2015–16 Target \$'000	2015–16 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Expense by service	37,560	46,708	9148*
<b>Key Efficiency Indicator</b>	<b>2015–16 Target \$</b>	<b>2015–16 Actual \$</b>	<b>Variance \$</b>
KPI 6.1: Average cost per hectare burnt	10.86	18.61	7.75**

\* The increase in the reported expense by service has been largely a result of the Department expanding the reporting of services from three services in 2014–15 to eight services in 2015–16. In this transition period it has been necessary to adjust assumptions used for the allocation of corporate costs across the various services and this has resulted in a variance comparing actual results for 2015–16 to the target.

\*\* The increase in the reported average cost per hectare prescribed burnt has resulted from there being both an increase in the reported cost of service, as well as a reduction in the area prescribed burnt in 2015–16 to 2.51 million hectares, when compared to the figure of 3.46 million hectares that was used to calculate target average cost per hectare prescribed burnt for 2015–16.

**Key Effectiveness Indicators**

**Outcome:** Lands under the Department’s care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives.

Note that the Department moved from conducting two seasonal burn programs to a single annual burn program in 2015. In order to facilitate this transition, the 2015–16 indicative prescribed burning program was in place from 30 March 2015 until 30 June 2016. The prescribed burning effectiveness measure reported above relates to that time period.

**KPI 1:** Proportion of planned Priority 1 prescribed burns achieved.

More details regarding the key efficiency indicator and key effectiveness indicator can be found in the audited key performance indicator report, see pages 139 to 143.

Target 2015–16: 50%  
Actual 2015–16: 64%

# Report on operations

## Other performance measures

- New annual performance measures were introduced in 2015–16, two of which relate most directly to prescribed burning. The third relates to bushfire suppression (see page 68). The prescribed burning measures are:

i) **The area of prescribed burning completed in three zones at defined distances from the interface between populated areas and natural lands.**

Three land management zones (LMZs) have been defined within Parks and Wildlife-managed land at specified distances from the edge of populated areas within the three forest regions: Parks and Wildlife's South West, Swan and Warren regions. Concentric zones were then created from the edge of each populated area based on fire behaviour characteristics relevant to the zone purpose.

LMZ A extends 3.5km from a populated area, reflecting the potential 'spotting' distance for a bushfire burning in LMZ B on a typical bushfire weather day.

The next zone, LMZ B, extends a further 7.5km from the populated area based on the likely forward spread of a bushfire burning for four hours under typical conditions before it reaches LMZ A.

The third zone, LMZ C, comprises the remainder of the Department-managed landscape. While more distant from populated areas, LMZ C is traversed

by infrastructure corridors of economic and public safety significance (e.g. powerlines, highways etc) and contains important biodiversity, recreational, wood production, water catchment and other values. The three LMZs are shown in Figure 4.

A portion of the total annual planned burn target of 200,000ha has been allocated to each zone, according to the proportion of all Department-managed land that occurs in that zone. After rounding, the annual prescribed burning targets for the three zones are 20,000ha, 70,000ha and 110,000ha respectively. The results of the 2015–16 achievements for each LMZ target are in Table 7.

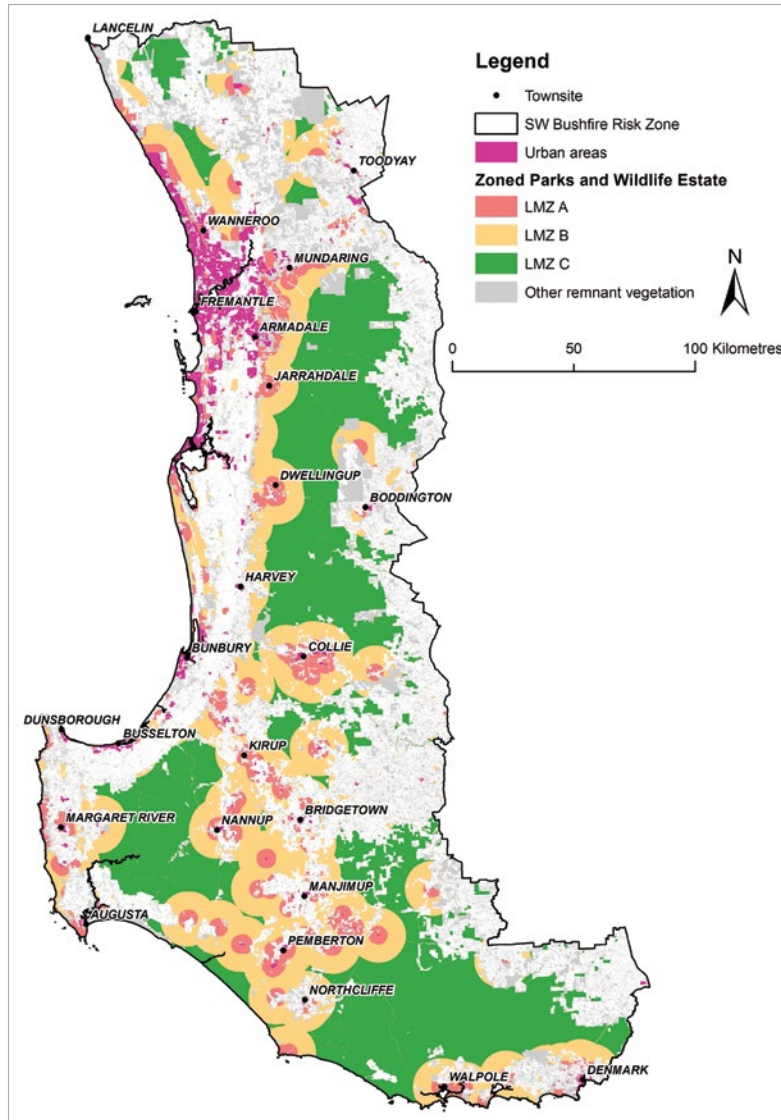
- ii) The second annual performance measure illustrates the medium-term trend, and is based on research showing that prescribed burning is effective in significantly reducing the frequency and size of bushfires in the forests of south-west Western Australia when at least 45 per cent of the landscape is maintained with a fuel age of less than six years. As such, **'the proportion of Department-managed lands in the south-west forest regions that is less than six years since last burnt'** will be used as an annual indicator of the effectiveness of the Department's prescribed burning program in mitigating bushfire risk. At 30 June 2016, the figure was 35 per cent.

**Table 7: 2015–16 LMZ prescribed burning achievements<sup>1</sup>**

LMZ	Distance from populated area	Target (ha)	Achieved (ha)	Percentage of target
A	within 3.5km	20,000	12,200	61
B	3.5–11km	70,000	42,990	61
C	beyond 11km	110,000	92,499	84

<sup>1</sup> The 6460ha discrepancy between the total area of prescribed burning achieved within LMZs and the area achieved within the south-west forest regions is due to a number of reasons, including primarily prescribed burning conducted off Department-managed land and/or outside the Department's south-west forest regional boundaries.

Figure 4: Parks and Wildlife land management zones



**Performance highlights**

**Prescribed burning achieved**

- The nominal annual prescribed burning target for 2015–16 in the south-west forest regions was 200,000ha. The Department achieved 154,149ha, including about 5147ha that were burnt for pine plantation protection. This was the greatest area of prescribed burning achieved by the Department in the south-west forest regions since 2009–10. This year’s program was assisted by additional Royalties for Regions funding provided to the Department – see case study on page 72.
- A further 2,355,697ha was burnt in the Department’s other six regions, being the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields, Midwest, Wheatbelt and South Coast. These prescribed burns were carried out on Department-managed land as well as on unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves within these regions, sometimes in conjunction with other land managers, including various traditional owner groups.

**Prescribed fire planning and risk management**

- The Department continued to engage and collaborate with the Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) in the pursuit of continual improvement.

- Through its ongoing assurance program, OBRM scrutinised Parks and Wildlife’s prescribed fire planning processes in three regions — Goldfields, South West and South Coast. These reviews confirmed that the Department’s processes for prescribed burning align with ISO 31000:2009, the international standard for risk management.

**Bushfire preparedness on unallocated Crown land**

- Since 1 July 2003, the Department and its predecessors have been responsible for the coordination and on-ground management of bushfire risk prevention and bushfire preparedness works on 89 million hectares of unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves outside the Perth metropolitan area and town sites.
- Work undertaken by the Department in 2015–16 included constructing and maintaining firebreaks, modifying vegetation in strategic buffers, ‘open-edge’ prescribed burning and large-scale aerial ignition.
- In the Kimberley, Pilbara, South Coast and Goldfields regions, Parks and Wildlife continued to engage and build partnerships with other stakeholders, including Aboriginal groups and communities and neighbouring farmers and pastoralists.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

- The use of planned fire for developing landscape-scale 'mosaic' patterns of burnt and unburnt patches continued to yield benefits for mitigating large bushfires, protecting biodiversity and cultural values and achieving designated land management and nature conservation outcomes.

## Fire Management Development Program

- The Fire Management Development Program (FMDP) is recognised in the Department's *Strategic Directions 2014–17* as a key strategy for succession planning in fire management. In 2015, a review was completed to determine the program's effectiveness and to scope potential opportunities to expand and enhance the program. The review identified a number of recommendations for improvement including opportunities to expand the program to enable additional staff to develop and broaden their skills and knowledge to a level required to fulfil the Department's fire management goals. It is anticipated that an increase in the number of staff involved in the program will occur in late 2016 as part of an expansion trial.
- During 2015–16, three FMDP participants were promoted to key fire positions outside of the program within regions and districts. These promotions highlight the program's effectiveness in assisting the Department's succession planning goals.



Lighting a prescribed burn in Pilbara spinifex to achieve a mosaic pattern of vegetation.  
Photo – Judy Dunlop/Parks and Wildlife



Bunuba rangers at a roadside burn on the Gibb River Road. Photo – Parks and Wildlife





Crews attend a prescribed burn at Yanchep pine plantation. *Photo – Jordan Cantelo/ Parks and Wildlife*

## Service 7: Bushfire Suppression

This service is responsible for responding quickly and effectively to bushfires on or near Department-managed land by maintaining an appropriate detection and response capacity.

The desired outcome of the service is to ensure the impact of bushfires on communities and built and natural assets on or near land managed by the Department is as low as reasonably practical.

In 2015–16, the overall priorities for the Bushfire Suppression Service were:

- Maintenance of a skilled, well-trained and response-ready bushfire suppression workforce.
- Maintenance of a modern, fit-for-purpose fleet of fire appliances, heavy plant, and surveillance, intelligence and water bombing aircraft as well as fire tower and communication networks to adequately support firefighters.
- Continued improvement in interagency working arrangements and common operating procedures to optimise bushfire suppression effectiveness.

The following strategies and key activities guided the delivery of the service priorities for 2015–16. The service is delivered by multiple work centres across the State.

### 1. Maintenance of a skilled, well-trained and response-ready bushfire suppression workforce, by:

- providing sound training and development opportunities for all personnel involved in bushfire suppression
- maximising the number of Departmental staff with the necessary skills and training to participate in bushfire suppression operations or support roles
- maintaining pre-formed incident management teams for deployment to major fires around the State during the southern fire season
- maintaining fire availability rosters to provide immediate, 24/7 bushfire response capacity Statewide during the fire season.

### 2. Maintenance of a modern, fit-for-purpose fleet of fire appliances, heavy plant, and surveillance, intelligence and water bombing aircraft as well as fire tower and communication networks to adequately support firefighters, by:

- providing sustainable fleet and infrastructure maintenance and renewal capacity through well-planned and cost-efficient programs conducted by internal and contracted specialists
- completing the fire tower capital improvement program.

### 3. Continued improvement in interagency working arrangements and common operating procedures to optimise bushfire suppression effectiveness, through:

- contributing to whole-of-Government initiatives for the review and improvement of State emergency management arrangements
- renewing the Heads of Agreement underpinning interagency cooperation between Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) by 30 June 2015
- continuing interagency initiatives to improve bushfire suppression effectiveness, including the adoption of common operating procedures.

# Report on operations

## Performance summary

**Table 8: Service 7 performance summary**

	2015–16 Target \$'000	2015–16 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Expense by service	31,791	59,813	28,022*
<b>Key Efficiency Indicator</b>	<b>2015–16 Target \$</b>	<b>2015–16 Actual \$</b>	<b>Variance \$</b>
KPI 7.1: Average cost per hectare burnt	14.39	31.68	17.29**

\* The costs associated with bushfire suppression in 2015–16 were high as a result of a number of very large and costly bushfires, including the Waroona–Yarloop bushfire (\$9.8 million), the Mount Solus bushfire (\$2.8 million), and a series of large bushfires in the Esperance and Albany areas (\$2.6 million). The increase in cost has been compounded as a result of the Department expanding the reporting of services from three services in 2014–15 to eight services in 2015–16. In this transition period it has been necessary to adjust assumptions used for the allocation of corporate costs across the various services and this has resulted in a variance comparing actual results for 2015–16 to the target.

\*\* The increase in the reported average cost per hectare subject to bushfire has resulted from there being both an increase in the reported cost of service, as well as a reduction in the area subject to bushfire in 2015–16 to 1.88 million hectares when compared to the figure of 2.21 million hectares used to calculate the target average cost per hectare subject to bushfire in 2015–16. Costs were higher because of significant fire events that occurred in the southwest of the State (principally the January 2016 Waroona–Yarloop fire) which increased the average cost compared to lower cost per hectare bushfires in the Kimberley and Pilbara.

## Key Effectiveness Indicators

**Outcome:** Lands under the Department's care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives.

**KPI 2:** Proportion of south-west bushfires contained to less than two hectares.

Target 2015–16: 75%  
Actual 2015–16: 75%

Note that the bushfire effectiveness indicator considers only those fires at which Parks and Wildlife were the initial attack agency.

More details regarding the key efficiency indicator and key effectiveness indicator can be found in the audited key performance indicator report, see pages 139 to 143.

## Other performance measures

- Three new annual performance measures for fire management were introduced in 2015–16, two of which are outlined in Service 6 (see page 64–65). The third measure relates most directly to bushfire suppression, being:

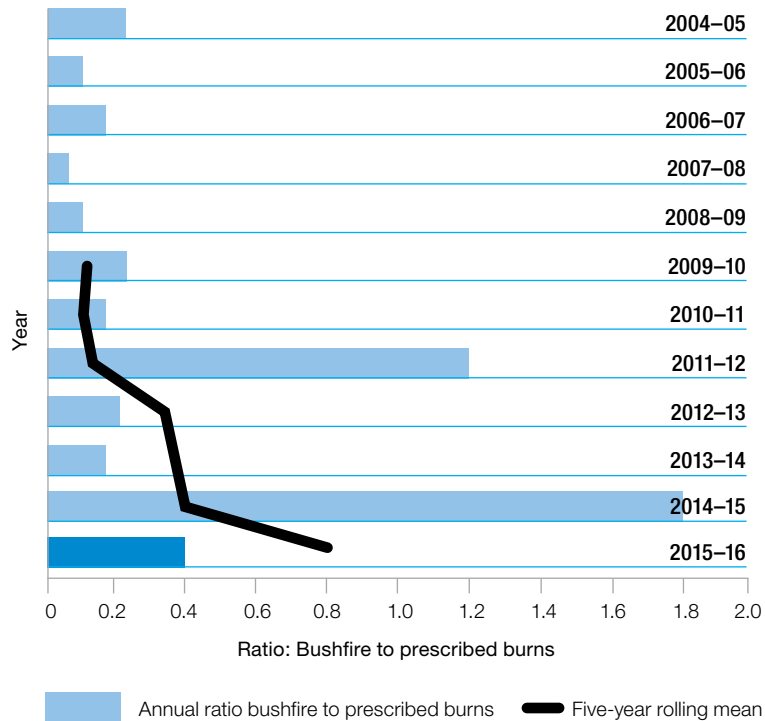
- The ratio of area affected by bushfire to area of prescribed burning completed annually.** This is one of a suite of national reporting measures on the state of Australian forests. The assumption underlying this measure is that environmental integrity and functionality will be greater where prescribed fire comprises a greater proportion of the total fire load. There is no specific target for this measure; rather it provides an indication of medium-term trends. The ratio of area affected by bushfire to the area of prescribed burning completed for 2015–16 is 56,454ha:144,077ha (ratio = 0.39). The annual ratios of bushfire to prescribed burns is graphed from 2004–05 to 2015–16 in Figure 5.

## Performance highlights

### Bushfire management

- Departmental staff attended and monitored 720 bushfires that burnt about 1,887,954ha in 2015–16, including:
  - 717,207ha in the Pilbara Region
  - 22,719ha in the Goldfields Region
  - 477,502ha in the Kimberley Region
  - 408,851ha in the South Coast Region
  - 152,090ha in the Midwest Region
  - 13,362ha in the Wheatbelt Region
  - 96,223ha in the three south-west forest regions (Swan, South West and Warren).
- The causes of these fires were:
  - lightning – 32 per cent (above the 10-year average of about 24 per cent)
  - deliberately lit or arson-caused fires – 37 per cent (below the 10-year average of about 41 per cent)
  - accidental fires – less than 11 per cent
  - escapes from private burns – 4 per cent
  - escapes from Departmental burns – less than 1 per cent
  - other causes – 3 per cent
  - unknown – 13 per cent.

Figure 5: Annual ratios of bushfire to prescribed burns 2004–05 to 2015–16.



- During 2015–16, Parks and Wildlife worked in conjunction with DFES, local government volunteer bushfire brigades and other stakeholders at major incidents including the Esperance complex, Mount Solus, Muchea, Waroona–Yarloop and Myalup bushfires.
- Agency pre-formed incident management teams were deployed either in part or as a full unit to five fires during the 2015–16 fire season: the Mount Solus, Waroona–Yarloop and Myalup, Esperance Cascades and Minnipup Pool bushfires.

**Bushfire detection**

- Parks and Wildlife provided an effective fire-detection system in the high bushfire risk zones of the south-west forest regions using single-engine aircraft and 11 fixed lookout towers. The Department’s fleet of 10 ‘spotter’ aircraft flew 4338 hours of aerial surveillance in pre-determined circuits. Flight schedules varied according to bushfire danger levels and fire activity.
- The detection aircraft also flew 604 hours in support of bushfire suppression operations during 2015–16. The detection aircraft were flown by two permanent pilots and 13 pilots filling seasonal positions.

**Aerial bushfire suppression operations**

- The Department contracted eight fixed-wing air tractor water bombers in the forest regions from November 2015 to late-March 2016. Two additional fixed-wing water bombers were also available for use and were rotated through bases at Manjimup, Albany, Bunbury, and Jandakot, alongside the other water bombers, for periods of severe bushfire weather or high demand. The aircraft provided rapid aerial bushfire suppression capability in the Department’s South Coast, Midwest, Wheatbelt and three south-west forest regions, including the Perth outer-metropolitan area, delivering valuable assistance to ground crews during the initial attack on bushfires.
- During January 2016, the Department also contracted four additional fixed-wing water bombers from the eastern states to assist principally with the Waroona–Yarloop bushfire response effort as well as other bushfires across the south-west.
- Collectively, these aircraft flew 1884 operational hours in attending 246 bushfires and dropped 3236 loads, delivering 9.76 million litres of foam, water and retardant. By comparison, in 2014–15, the aircraft flew 1410 operational hours and dropped 2291 loads.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

**Bushfire training and development**

- Fire Management Services Branch training and development staff conducted 27 formal fire training courses involving 214 participants. The courses included Basic Wildfire Awareness, Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System Awareness, Fire Fighting Crew Member, Fire Fighting Crew Leader, Fire Operations 1, Fire Weather, Fire Control Line Construction Using Machines, Intelligence Unit and Planning Officer.
- Course participants were predominantly from Parks and Wildlife but also included campground host volunteers and personnel from the Forest Products Commission (FPC), DFES and local governments.
- Annual mandatory pre-season training was presented across the Department in preparation for the 2015–16 bushfire season. More than 750 Parks and Wildlife and FPC personnel participated and met training requirements in various aspects of fire management including the use of two-way radios, storage and use of fire blankets, and 'burnover' drills.
- The Department developed a recognition process for firefighters to be awarded Fire Fighting Crew Member national units of competency.
- In addition to the above, fire aviation personnel provided training for 270 Parks and Wildlife and other fire and land management agency personnel including staff from DFES. These courses included Air Attack Supervisor Qualification, Air Attack Supervisor Currency, Air Observer, Helitorch Ground Crew, Incendiary Operations Supervisor, Aerial Incendiary Bombardier, Air Base Manager, Aerial Drip Torch Operator, Water Bomber Reloader, and Search and Rescue (SAR) Keeper.
- Water bomber reloading training was provided to 346 participants across 40 operational bases, with the majority of these participants being from volunteer bushfire brigades and local State Emergency Service units. This training was also provided to Royal Australian Air Force staff at RAAF bases Pearce and Gingin.
- Training for the roles of Incendiary Operations Supervisor, Aerial Incendiary Bombardier and Aerial Drip Torch Operator was also provided to staff from the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, the Country Fire Service and Forestry SA in South Australia.
- Parks and Wildlife has continued its collaboration with DFES and other agencies in Australia and New Zealand in the development of fire training programs and course materials.



Esperance fires near Stokes National Park. Photo – Matthew Wood/Parks and Wildlife



Fire in Cape Arid National Park. Photo – Saul Cowen/Parks and Wildlife



#### Fire management fleet and infrastructure

- In 2016, a contract was awarded for heat shield curtains to be installed on 90 Toyota 70 series light fleet fast-attack firefighting units.
- Major reconstruction and repairs to the Mount Solus and Mungilup fire towers were completed in 2016.
- The following items of fire management plant and equipment were replaced in 2015–16: three emergency generators; two replacement forward incident control trucks; four frontend loaders; two skid steer/track loaders; 13 fire trucks; one semi-trailer; one prime mover; one excavator and one bulldozer.

#### Interagency bushfire management

- During 2015–16, significant Departmental fire management resources were dedicated to improving interagency bushfire management arrangements through the Interagency Bushfire Management Committee (IBMC) and associated sub-committees.
- The sub-committees servicing the IBMC include: Research (chair moved from Parks and Wildlife to DFES), Public Information (chaired by DFES), Training (chaired by DFES), Operations (chaired by Parks and Wildlife), Aerial Fire Suppression (chaired by DFES), and Information and Communications Technology (chaired by DFES).

- Outside the IBMC, Parks and Wildlife participated in interagency liaison with DFES, local government and other State, interstate and international agencies on matters related to fire management.
- The Heads of Agreement underpinning interagency cooperation between Parks and Wildlife and DFES was renewed on 21 December 2015.

#### Fire ecology education programs

- Fire Management Services Branch continued to work with Public Information and Corporate Affairs Branch's *Nearer to Nature* team to provide a range of curriculum-linked fire education programs for students in Years 4–12. A total of 5959 students, teachers and parents took part in fire-related education programs at the Perth Hills Discovery Centre, Dwellingup Forest Heritage Centre, Henderson Centre, Wellington Discovery Forest and Margaret River Eco-Discovery Centre.
- Fire Management Services Branch has developed a fire ecology training course to be delivered to Departmental fire practitioners from 2016–17.



Post fire, Cape Arid National Park. Photo – Sarah Comer/Parks and Wildlife



New growth, post fire.  
Photo – Sally Bostwick/Parks and Wildlife

## Case study

**Government outcome:** Lands under the Department's care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives.

# Prescribed burning best in six years

In 2015–16, Parks and Wildlife achieved its best outcome for prescribed burning in six years, having burnt more than 154,000ha in the south-west forest regions. Spring burning in 2015 had been very successful, but unfavourable weather conditions in Autumn 2016 curtailed efforts to burn.

The success was largely due to the Department's *Enhanced Prescribed Burning Program*, established in response to the O'Sullivan bushfire near Northcliffe in January 2015 – the largest bushfire in the south-west since the Dwellingup fire of 1961. The program is a four-year, \$20 million investment that began in 2015–16, funded through the Royalties for Regions program, with the aim of enhancing protection of south-west communities from bushfire.

Parks and Wildlife and its predecessor agencies have been undertaking prescribed burning in the south-west forest regions of Western Australia for more than 50 years. Experience and research have shown there is an inverse relationship between the area burnt by prescribed burning and the area burnt by bushfire, as illustrated in Figure 6.

Since the inception of the State's prescribed burning program in the 1960s, there has been a steady decline in the average area prescribed burnt each decade. This has resulted in a steady increase in the area of forest and bushland carrying heavy fuel loads, which together with a warmer, drier climate

has contributed to an increase in the area burnt by intense bushfires. These bushfires are difficult, dangerous and costly to suppress, increasing the risk to firefighters, communities, infrastructure and other assets.

Factors contributing to the decline in prescribed burning include population growth leading to more fragmentation of the landscape and more urban development in proximity to bushland. This is coupled with a gradual change in Departmental firefighting resources (as reflected in the reduction of employees engaged in frontline fire management from 530 in the mid-1980s, to 290 in 2015); a drying south-west climate; and the escalating cost of prescribed burning under more stringent and necessary risk management arrangements.

To adequately reduce the risk of damaging bushfires, Parks and Wildlife aims to maintain about 45 per cent of the south-west forests at a fuel age less than six years, which equates to a planned annual burn program of about 200,000ha (equivalent to eight per cent of the area managed by Parks and Wildlife in the south-west forest regions).

It is critical that Parks and Wildlife maintains a balance of managing fuels adjacent to populated areas as well as managing the fuel hazard in the broader landscape further from settlements. Reduced fuel areas adjacent to residential areas will be substantially more effective if the fuel loads in the broader landscape are also managed.

Landscape-level fuel management also increases the likelihood of bushfires being suppressed before they reach settlements. Additionally, there are significant bushfire-vulnerable public assets, such as water catchment areas, road networks and bridges, powerlines, pipelines and communications facilities, that need protection from bushfire in the broader landscape.

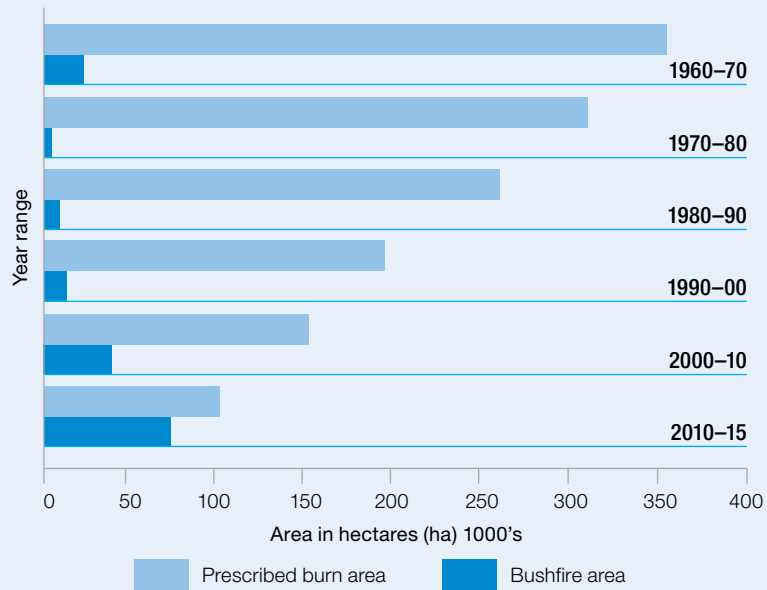
Maximising prescribed burning requires the ability to capitalise on windows of opportunity (suitable weather and fuel conditions) to safely undertake a burn, and the *Enhanced Prescribed Burning Program* has enabled the Department to make more effective use of these windows. In 2015–16, \$3.8 million was invested, allowing the Department to extend seasonal conservation employee

(frontline firefighter) employment, provide for travel, accommodation and overtime costs to improve flexibility in workforce deployment, and to engage local contractors to deliver key support services including burn boundary preparation, water supply and traffic management.

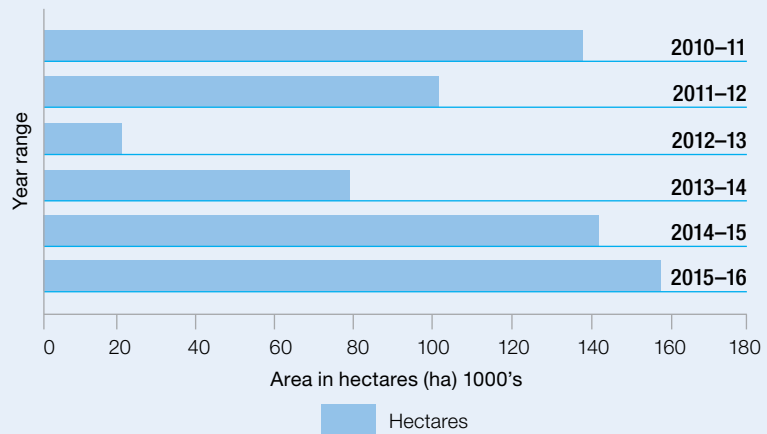
The *Enhanced Prescribed Burning Program* was integral to the Department's achievement of 154,149ha for 2015–16 (Figure 7). The nominal annual 200,000ha target may well have been achieved but for early and unexpected autumn rainfall in 2016 which significantly reduced burning opportunities. As a result, more than 40,000ha of prescribed burning planned for May 2016 was postponed until Spring 2016.

Despite these prohibitive weather conditions, the associated preparatory works for these prescribed burns and others planned for 2016–17 has resulted in completion of more than 720km of burn boundary preparation and burn security works. This means the Department is well prepared for the 2016–17 prescribed burning program.

**Figure 6: Mean area burnt by prescribed fire and bushfire annually in the south-west grouped by decade.**



**Figure 7: Prescribed burning achievements in the south-west forests on Department-managed land over six years.**





Como Jetty. Photo – Sean Nokes



South Perth foreshore. Photo – Andrew Skiers



Dolphin in the Riverpark. Photo – Trudy Klessens



Cygnets. Photo – Sue Harper

# Report on operations

## Service 8: Protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers System

This service is responsible for managing the Swan Canning Riverpark, including assessing development proposals and delivering environmental management programs.

The desired outcome of the service is to ensure the ecological health and community benefit of the Swan and Canning rivers is protected.

The priorities for this service in 2015–16 were:

- ensuring land use planning protects and enhances Riverpark values and meets community demands
- delivering environmental programs to improve the health and resilience of the river system to environmental and community pressures
- delivering programs to manage shoreline restoration, operational and compliance activities, recreation and commercial activities within the Riverpark to enhance community benefit and amenity
- establishing and implementing a planning and policy framework to achieve collaborative, coordinated Riverpark management
- enhancing community social responsibility so that more Perth people help look after the Swan Canning Riverpark

- ensuring accountability, good governance and financial sustainability by improving management systems.

The following strategies and key activities guided the delivery of the service's priorities in 2015–16:

### 1. Ensuring land use planning protects and enhances Riverpark values and meets community demands, by:

- influencing planning decisions to limit nutrient inputs to the river through advice on and oversight of strategic plans and policies relevant to urban water management
- ensuring better urban water management by supporting the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities and the New WAtER Ways capacity building program
- assessing development applications and providing advice to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) and local government
- ensuring developments are compliant with approval conditions
- reviewing development policies and keeping current with Swan River Trust Board and Parks and Wildlife aims and objectives, reflective of community values
- administering planning applications and records

- preparing precinct plans for identified areas of the Riverpark
- controlling impacts on the river from the construction of the Elizabeth Quay project through a delegated compliance role from WAPC.

### 2. Delivering environmental programs to improve the health and resilience of the river system to environmental and community pressures, by:

- financially supporting Natural Resource Management (NRM) sub-regional groups for maintaining community capacity across the catchment
- supporting the Swan Alcoa Landcare Program as a source of funding to local environmental groups
- implementing Bennett Brook and basin revegetation projects (Bennett Brook), Ellen Brook fencing and revegetation (Ellen Brook) and the Light Industry Audit Project in priority catchments
- financially supporting the Phosphorus Awareness Project
- identifying pools in the Canning River that provide habitat for freshwater fauna
- assisting landholders to implement on-ground activities that will improve soil health and contribute to improved water quality in the Swan-Avon river system
- undertaking estuarine and catchment monitoring

- operating and maintaining five oxygenation plants on the Swan and Canning rivers and beginning upgrades to two ageing oxygenation plants on the Canning River
- tracking priority estuarine fish species, with a particular focus on black bream and the oxygenation zone in the upper Swan River
- investigating and reducing non-nutrient contaminants throughout the Swan Canning river system
- investigating and supporting environmental water requirements to be secured for the Canning and Helena rivers and other major tributaries of the Swan Canning river system
- assessing Swan Canning estuary condition based on the Fish Communities Index
- monitoring seagrass as an indicator of estuarine health
- investigating dolphin health
- addressing the decline of the western school prawn
- investigating controls for *Karlodinium* algae
- undertaking FlowCAM trials to provide efficient and reliable phytoplankton data to help identify and classify aquatic micro-organisms
- demonstrating the effectiveness of nutrient intervention and water-sensitive urban design projects in urban and rural catchments

# Report on operations

- commissioning and operation of wetland intervention projects to trap nutrients, organic material, sediments and other pollutants in Bayswater Brook and Ellen Brook catchments
  - trialling soil amendments in the Ellen Brook catchment
  - evaluating best practice management of stormwater
  - continuing to support the Fertiliser Partnership with the Urban Users Working Group.
- 3. Delivering programs to manage shoreline restoration, operational and compliance activities, recreation and commercial activities within the Riverpark to enhance community benefit and amenity, by:**
- protecting and rehabilitating Riverpark foreshore areas on a prioritised basis through the implementation of a grants, proactive and emergency project funding scheme
  - supporting foreshore landholders in developing and implementing foreshore management projects through communicating and maintaining the best management practices framework
  - implementing and maintaining an Asset Management System to meet the required level of service, in the most cost-effective manner
  - maintaining Aboriginal involvement in projects through consultation and employment where appropriate
  - implementing the *Riverpark Trail Master Plan* and the *Marli Riverpark Interpretation Plan* through the development of interpretation nodes
  - establishing and maintaining visitor satisfaction through surveys, facilities condition assessment and gap analysis for the Riverpark
  - facilitating the establishment and management of sustainable commercial activities and opportunities in the Riverpark
  - ensuring river reserve leases benefit the community and are managed sustainably using environmental management systems where relevant to benchmark performance and achieve continual improvement
  - ensuring responsible visitor behaviour through compliance (education and enforcement) of relevant legislation
  - implementing a strategy in the upper Canning River to address issues of bushfire risk mitigation, unauthorised development and encroachment, water extraction and dam structures
  - maintaining public amenity and safety through implementation of a visitor risk management system and working in partnership with foreshore land managers to remove hazards and litter
  - facilitating enjoyment of the Riverpark through maintaining courtesy moorings and other public infrastructure
  - ensuring responsible use of the river for boating through implementation of the *Boating Management Strategy* in collaboration with other agencies
  - implementing and maintaining an effective incident response framework and capability
  - providing logistical support to internal and external stakeholders for water sampling, oxygenation programs, feral fish and aquatic weed management programs.
- 4. Establishing and implementing a planning and policy framework to achieve collaborative, coordinated Riverpark management, by:**
- coordinating a review of integrated marine and terrestrial management planning and management within the Riverpark
  - coordinating a review of the policy framework
  - publishing the *Swan Canning River Protection Strategy*
  - coordinating policy and advice functions on behalf of the Swan River Trust
  - establishing a River Protection Strategy Advisory Group and developing an agreed reporting framework
  - coordinating the development of projects as needed relating to the *Swan Canning River Protection Strategy* including community reporting and establishment of targets
- 5. Enhancing community social responsibility so that more Perth people help look after the Swan Canning Riverpark, by:**
- coordinating delivery of the *Research Strategy* including delivery of an annual research prioritisation exercise to support business planning
  - coordinating provision of high-level advice on the application of the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* to the Department and access to specialised legal advice via the State Solicitor's Office
  - initiating a review of the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* and Regulations to improve efficiency and coordinate internal and external consultation.
  - building a membership of RiverWise opinion leaders through education, citizen science, free public events and member benefits
  - running and promoting Great Gardens workshops and special events to encourage positive behavior change in the community
  - delivering a Riverwise/Waterwise behaviour change program to reduce fertiliser use and encourage sustainable living practices by residents in priority nutrient input suburbs.

**6. Ensuring accountability, good governance and financial sustainability by improving management systems by:**

- coordinating activity to support the Department’s budget preparation to the appropriate timeframe
- reviewing opportunities to increase funding levels
- ensuring Departmental human resources policies and plans are promoted and applied
- coordinating a risk-based management approach in divisional service delivery
- providing monthly financial reports and analysis to divisional managers and the Director
- supporting the delivery of the Department’s annual financial statements
- providing effective administration and governance to the Swan River Trust Board.

**Performance summary**

**Table 9: Service 8 performance summary**

	2015–16 Target \$’000	2015–16 Actual \$’000	Variance \$’000
Expense by service	16,738	16,477	(261)
<b>Key Efficiency Indicator</b>	<b>2015–16 Target \$</b>	<b>2015–16 Actual \$</b>	<b>Variance \$</b>
KPI 8.1: Average cost per hectare of managing the Swan Canning Riverpark	2.35	2250	2247.65

**Key Effectiveness Indicator**

**Outcome:** The ecological health and community benefit of the Swan and Canning rivers is protected.

**KPI 1:** Proportion of river ecosystem health targets achieved.

Target 2015–16: 55%  
Actual 2015–16: 58%

**Please note:**

From 1 July 2015, the Swan River Trust was amalgamated into the Department of Parks and Wildlife. Since then, the Trust’s key performance indicators (KPI) have been consolidated to form two KPIs for Service 8 of the Department relating to the ecological health of the rivers and the cost of managing the rivers. The Effectiveness Indicator presented in this report is measured through an aggregation of water quality targets for:

- chlorophyll-a and dissolved oxygen in the estuary
- nitrogen and phosphorus targets in the catchments.

The targets are set for four basins, being the Upper Swan, Middle Swan, Lower Swan-Canning and the Middle Canning and for each of the 15 major catchments discharging to the Swan Canning estuary. The targets are very stringent to ensure that management of the Swan and Canning rivers will achieve the very high standard of ecological health and community amenity we expect from our rivers.

The Swan and Canning river system is monitored weekly and the catchments each fortnight. The water quality data collected is assessed against estuary and catchment targets.

It is well understood around the world that achieving improvements in the ecological health of waterways is a complex and long-term prospect. It is also important to note that the levels of chlorophyll-a contributing to this Key Effectiveness Indicator do not indicate major environmental or public health issues.

The fact that the four estuary basins do not meet all targets set has been reported in the Swan River Trust’s annual reports for some years.

It should be noted that in 2014–15, the Mills Street Main Drain catchment achieved the long-term phosphorus target for the first time and for the past two years has increased the proportion of water quality targets achieved to 58 per cent as outlined in the key effectiveness indicator data.

More details regarding the key efficiency and key effectiveness indicators can be found in the audited key performance indicator report, see pages 139 to 143.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

## Performance highlights

The Swan Canning river system continues to face a range of water quality and ecosystem health challenges. Over the past year, river management initiatives were delivered to protect the health of the river system, improve our understanding of the rivers' function and optimise land use planning in the Riverpark.

*Swan Alcoa Landcare Program*

- The *Swan Alcoa Landcare Program* (SALP), a joint program funded by Parks and Wildlife and Alcoa and administered by Perth Natural Resource Management (Perth NRM), celebrated 18 years of delivering funding to community groups. The program provided \$390,500 to 24 community groups to implement 41 landcare projects throughout the Swan Canning Catchment in 2015–16.

## Sub-regional support

- The *Healthy Catchments Program* continued to provide support to sub-regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups in the Swan Canning catchment. These groups coordinate community projects that reduce the amount of nutrients and other contaminants entering the Swan Canning river system. This year, \$576,000 was provided to sub-regional NRM groups.

*2015–17 Light Industry Program*

- The *2015–17 Light Industry Program* began in July 2015. During its first six months, over 340 audits of more than 250 light industrial premises were conducted within the Swan Canning catchment. The program works with seven local governments in priority light industry catchments to help reduce industrial contaminants entering the Swan and Canning rivers via stormwater and groundwater.

*Drainage Nutrient and Intervention Program*

- Construction of the \$3 million Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary wetland was completed in July 2015 and was followed by the planting of 170,000 native plants. Once fully commissioned in late 2016 the wetland treatment system is expected to prevent almost 40 tonnes of sediment and rubbish, 1.3 tonnes of nitrogen and 200kg of phosphorus from flowing from Bayswater Brook and entering the Swan River every year.
- The University of Western Australia conducted a detailed evaluation of the Wharf Street Wetland project that was built in 2008 to reduce nutrients and other contaminants entering the Canning River. The evaluation determined that between 2009 and 2014 the wetland had reduced nitrogen by 65 per cent and phosphorus by 45 per cent in stormwater that passed through it into the Canning River. Over five years, this equals about 1658kg of nitrogen and 129kg of phosphorus.

- Commissioning of the \$4.05 million Ellen Brook Wetland began in August 2015. During this period the wetland was rigorously monitored with results reflecting the expected nutrient reductions.

*Swan Canning Water Quality Improvement Plan*

- The implementation of the *Swan Canning Water Quality Improvement Plan* continued through State and Federal Government funding. The plan is a whole-of-Government response to improve water quality at priority nutrient sites throughout the Swan Canning catchment. One of the major projects under the plan is nearing completion – a soil amendment trial in the Ellen Brook Catchment which will help determine the effectiveness of several soil amendment products in reducing phosphorus leaching in sandy soils.

## Riverbank funding

- During 2015–16, more than \$2 million was distributed to 24 priority riverbank projects across 14 foreshore land managers. These projects include erosion control, revegetation, weed control, river wall repair, enhancing access to the river, widening vegetation corridors and preparation of foreshore management plans.
- As part of a \$3 million State Government Riverbank funding commitment the Department received an additional \$1 million in 2015–16 for foreshore protection and rehabilitation.

&gt;23.5km

of waste fishing line safely removed from the Riverpark since 2013

41

landcare projects underway under *Swan Alcoa Landcare Program*

340 audits

of light industry in the catchment completed

24

Riverbank projects underway

4.5M

western school prawns released into the Riverpark over three years



### Science to support ecological health reporting

- The Department continued to invest in the application of indicators on the ecological health of the Swan and Canning rivers through the annual monitoring of fish communities and seagrass health. The Fish Communities Index is an established methodology developed and undertaken by Murdoch University, applied since 2012 to report on the waterway. The 2015 report showed that across the estuary as a whole, the ecological condition of both nearshore and offshore waters based on fish communities was generally good to fair.

### Science underpinning understanding of Riverpark values

- For the past three years the Department and its predecessor the Swan River Trust examined the ecology of the western school prawn through a restocking and research program. This initiative was conducted in partnership with the Centre for Applied Aquaculture Research, Murdoch University, Recfishwest, the Department of Fisheries, the WA Fish Foundation and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. To date, more than 4.5 million juvenile western school prawns have been released into the Swan and Canning rivers. The Department continued to engage with both Curtin and

Murdoch universities to understand the Riverpark's Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin population, their movement patterns and the influence of noise in the Riverpark on this popular iconic animal.

### Oxygenation program

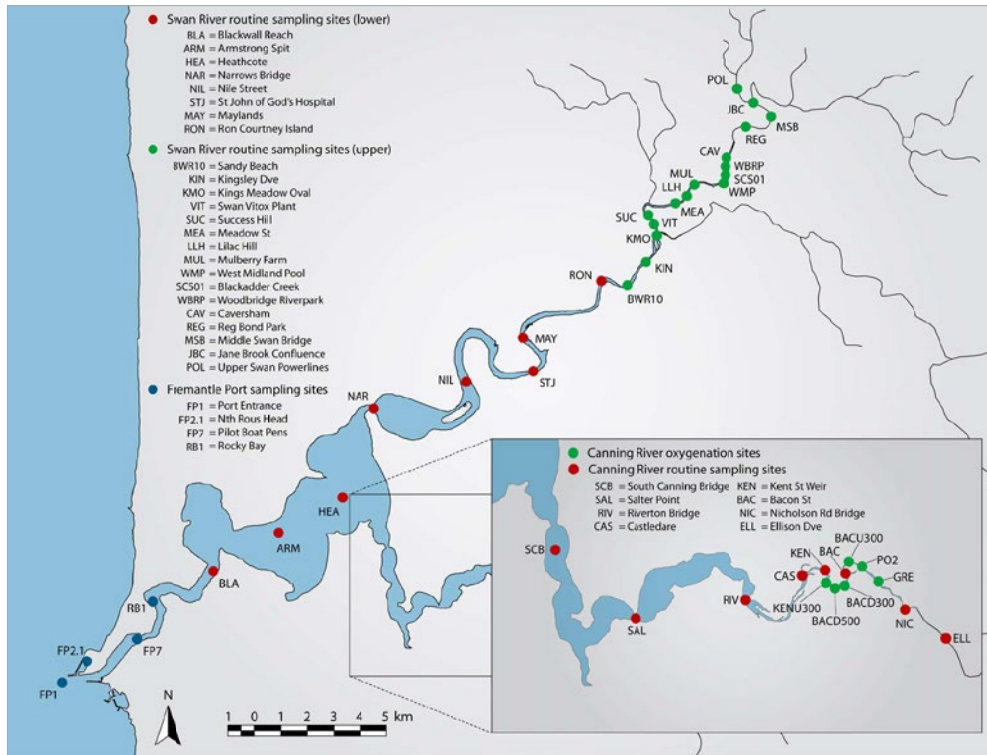
- The Department continued to operate five oxygenation plants in the river system to combat low oxygen levels in summer and autumn. There are two oxygenation plants on the Swan River and three on the Canning River, upstream of the Kent Street Weir. Operation of these plants during 2015–16 was successful with good dissolved oxygen conditions being experienced within the zones of influence.
- Planning for a major upgrade to one of the ageing oxygenation plants on the Canning River progressed in 2015–16. This forms part of the State Government's \$2.8 million investment to increase the capacity of the oxygenation program in the Canning River. The construction of a new oxygenation compound at the Caversham oxygenation plant was also completed in 2015–16.



The recently completed oxygenation compound at Caversham in the Swan River. *Photo – Parks and Wildlife*

# Report on operations

Figure 8: Swan Canning Riverpark sampling sites



### Water quality monitoring

- Parks and Wildlife, in partnership with the Department of Water, continued its weekly monitoring program of the Swan Canning estuary. Forty routine sampling sites were monitored throughout the Swan Canning estuary with water samples subjected to a range of water quality analyses.
- In addition to the Swan Canning estuary sampling, the Department monitored water quality within 27 of the 31 sub-catchments that feed into the Swan and Canning rivers (see Figure 8).

### Boating Management Strategy

- Parks and Wildlife continued to work with foreshore land managers to manage dinghy storage along the river shoreline. Almost 80 per cent of riverfront local governments have now identified and approved suitable dinghy management systems.

### Events, complaints, incidents and compliance activities

- Each year Parks and Wildlife responds to incidents and complaints in and around the Swan Canning Riverpark and takes action when appropriate. This year the Department responded to 259 complaints compared with 271 last year.
- The Department installed nine foreshore vegetation protection signs throughout the Riverpark this year. These signs highlight any significant act of deliberate vegetation damage in the Riverpark and have proven to be a successful tool to help educate the public about the value of shoreline vegetation.

- There was an increase in reported incidents of vegetation damage with 39 incidents recorded during 2015–16 in comparison with 20 incidents the previous year.

### Maintaining Riverpark amenity

- Parks and Wildlife undertook its annual program of removing rubbish, waste and dumped materials, reshaping eroded beaches, foreshore protection works and responding to incidents such as fish kills, algae blooms, stranded wildlife, sewage spills and other illegal discharges. In 2015–16, Parks and Wildlife responded to one minor fish kill and five algal bloom incidents.

### Management of commercial activities

- A targeted compliance effort identified numerous unauthorised commercial operators who were approached and subsequently sought the relevant licence or permit. This action has resulted in 45 commercial operators (22 commercial vessel-related and 23 recreation-related activities) being licensed during 2015–16 compared with 32 in the previous year.

### River Journeys interpretation

- Three interpretation facilities, part of the *River Journeys* project, were installed at Bicton Baths, Point Walter and Heathcote and formally opened in March 2016 by the Environment Minister. Community feedback regarding the walk trails and the use of audio stories shared by Whadjuk traditional owners was very positive. A fourth facility built as part of the Brentwood Living Streams project was completed in June 2016.



A marina in the Riverpark. Photo – Megan Lewis



Opening of the *River Journeys* interpretation facility at Kwoppa kepa (Bicton Baths). Left to right: Whadjuk Elder Marie Taylor, City of Melville Mayor Russell Aubrey and Environment Minister Albert Jacob. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife

#### Statutory assessments

- In its statutory assessment role under the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* and Regulations, Parks and Wildlife assesses and determines, or provides advice to the Environment Minister on a range of development proposals within the Swan Canning Development Control Area (DCA).

#### Compliance and audit

- The number of compliance actions taken for the year was less than the previous year, due to an increased focus on major development projects such as Elizabeth Quay, Perth Stadium and Swan River Pedestrian Bridge, Waterbank and Barrack Square Hotel. The percentage of works in full compliance this year was comparable to the previous year and most non-compliant situations were remedied as a result of the Department's involvement.

#### Major proposals considered

- Parks and Wildlife assessed and provided advice to the Environment Minister on eight development applications in accordance with Part 5 of the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006*. This was a significant decrease compared to 2014–15, in which 14 development applications were assessed.

#### Policy review

- During 2015–16 a thorough review of agency policies was initiated and largely completed. The policies are used to assess development, and provide guidance for stakeholders including the public, developers and other Government authorities. The revised policy suite has been prepared in consultation with the Swan River Trust Board and will be released for use in 2016–17. The Trust's previous 32 policies have been consolidated into 10 Departmental policy statements. Two corporate guidelines will remain.
- Each new policy aims to be clear and concise, use consistent language and remove duplication. The policies aim to ensure that approved developments maintain and enhance the ecological health, community benefits and amenity of the Swan Canning river system. Wherever possible, the policies have been updated to reflect current best practice, refer to relevant technical guidelines and address evolving development control issues affecting the DCA.

## Agency performance

## Report on operations

## Land use planning program

- The Department's land use planning program works on major developments around the river to ensure nutrient inputs to the river are reduced where possible. This year the land use planning program provided advice on 32 strategic planning proposals likely to impact on water quality in the Swan Canning river system, which is an increase on the previous year. The Department's ongoing advisory role on the Perth Stadium project continued to contribute to the implementation of water-sensitive urban design opportunities throughout the precinct.
- Parks and Wildlife continued to resource the New WAtEr Ways capacity-building program. New WAtEr Ways aims to raise the level of skills, knowledge and practice among Government and industry urban water sector practitioners. A highlight of the year was when the program won the award for 'Excellence in Policy or Education' at the 2015 Stormwater Industry Association awards.
- Support for the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities to address knowledge gaps and support management decisions on urban water planning and nutrient reduction also continued.

## Swan Canning River Protection Strategy

- The [Swan Canning River Protection Strategy](#) was released by the Environment Minister on 20 October 2015. The strategy provides a coordinated whole-of-Government plan to guide investment, maintain river health and ensure access for the community.
- Implementation of the strategy started with Parks and Wildlife chairing a River Protection Strategy Advisory Group to oversee ongoing implementation and reporting to the Swan River Trust. Twelve Government organisations and 20 local governments are partnering with the Trust and Parks and Wildlife to help deliver the strategy.



Yellowtail grunter, caught during fish community sampling. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife



Markus Nordstrom and Jason Menzies plant native sedges at Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary, building a nutrient stripping wetland at the site to improve water quality. Photo – Miranda Jackson/Parks and Wildlife



Dolphin Watch volunteer Trudy Klessens and River Guardians program manager Marnie Giroud at Deep Water Point. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Reel It In fishing line bin project. Photo – Parks and Wildlife

**Community engagement**

- The *River Guardians* program now has 2478 members. The program has worked with 46 stakeholder groups and was actively present at 10 environmental education events with a combined attendance of more than 20,310 people. The program continues to provide *RiverWise* training, volunteering opportunities and presentations from leading scientific and behaviour change experts addressing key issues facing rivers.
- *Dolphin Watch* is now in its seventh year and has 875 trained volunteers who have contributed more than 20,000 dolphin sighting reports since the project began in 2009. To date, 1209 students from a total of 25 schools have engaged with *Junior Dolphin Watch*.
- The *Prawn Watch* program engages the community to monitor prawns in the Riverpark and educates the community about river prawns/fauna and sustainable fishing practices. In 2015–16, *Prawn Watch* volunteers assisted with the culturing and release of nearly two million western school prawns as part of a wider program to restock and monitor the school prawn population in the Swan and Canning rivers.
- Under the *Reel It In* fishing line bin project, there are now 47 dedicated fishing line bins at popular jetties, fishing platforms, traffic bridges and foreshores along the Swan and Canning rivers. Since the project was launched in December 2013, more than 23.5km of fishing line, 4500 hooks and sinkers and 4000 bait bags have been removed from the Riverpark. Planning is underway to expand the project across the State to popular fishing locations such as Exmouth, Shark Bay, Albany, Rottnest Island and Busselton.
- The *Great Gardens* team continued to deliver free gardening behaviour change education to the community. This year, the Department funded 16 educational events designed to empower the Perth community towards river-wise behaviour. The program reached 2962 people at an average attendance rate of 185 people per event.

## Case study

**Government outcome:** The ecological health and community benefit of the Swan and Canning rivers is protected.

# Prawn project restocks rivers

2015–16 saw the 4.5 millionth western school prawn (*Metapenaeus dalli*) released into the Swan Canning Riverpark as part of a multi-agency project to increase the species' population.

The western school prawn restocking and monitoring program sees Parks and Wildlife work with six project partners to research, monitor, culture and release western school prawns with the aim of bringing recreational prawning back as a popular pastime for Perth residents.

The project began in 2012, led by the former Swan River Trust, in response to declining numbers of western school prawns in the river since the 1950s. Historically, both commercial and recreational fishers targeted this species. Commercial landings peaked at 14 tonnes in 1959 but declined to three tonnes by 1975. While the commercial fishery no longer targets prawns, recreational fishers continue to take part in drag netting for the crustaceans as a treasured part of river culture.

Environmental factors, and not fishing pressures, are thought to be responsible for the decline in western school prawn abundance. The restocking project aims to re-establish prawning in the Riverpark and encourage people to have a stronger engagement with the river environment.

Three main components make up the project: the production and release of prawns into the

Riverpark; engaging the community through stock release and monitoring; and evaluating stock status, release strategies and factors affecting population recruitment and survival.

The restocking aspect of the program began in 2014, with Challenger Institute releasing 635,000 western school prawns. Almost two million were released in 2015 and a further 1.8 million during 2016. By April 2016 the project celebrated a total of 4.5 million western school prawns released.

The project's restocking success was largely made possible by scientists at the Australian Centre for Applied Aquaculture Research (ACAAR) when they successfully cultured school prawns in 2012.

The culturing process involves collecting wild female egg-carrying (gravid) prawns from the river. They are transferred to tanks and allowed to spawn naturally in a carefully controlled environment, where chances of the young's survival are much higher than in the river. The juvenile school prawns are released back into the river when they grow past the main predation stage.

March 2016 also marked another project milestone – the completion of monitoring

over three full breeding seasons, allowing researchers to gather a robust data set that can be used to determine the biological characteristics of the prawn population in the Swan Canning Riverpark. Preliminary information has indicated that restocking has had an impact on prawn populations. Monitoring will be extended into the 2016–17 breeding season, promising even more clarity on stock status and changes over time.

Scientists also continued to undertake research into the salinity and temperature tolerance of western school prawns. In addition, a survey into the diets of potential predators revealed one of the prawns' major predators to be the aptly named gobble guts fish. A Murdoch University researcher found about 300 juvenile prawns in the stomach of a single gobble guts that was only 45mm long.

Results of all the research are being processed to determine the best release sites in the Riverpark, taking into account the availability of suitable substrate, the presence of juvenile or adult prawns at the site at the time, the environmental conditions such as prevailing wind, and easy access to the site.

Getting members of the community involved is a vital aspect of the project. Under the Parks and Wildlife *Prawn Watch* project, volunteers take part by helping collect gravid prawns, reporting details of prawning catches to help inform research, and releasing juvenile prawns into the river.

Over the project's three-year history, 179 volunteers formally joined the *Prawn Watch* project, taking part in collection and release events, training sessions and workshops. In addition, university students have contributed more than 3000 hours to support monitoring.

Community members also continued to contribute to citizen science research by logging details of their prawning catches in the *Prawn Watch* logbook, smartphone app and website.

Project partners include Parks and Wildlife, Murdoch University, the Department of Fisheries, the WA Fish Foundation, Recfishwest, ACAAR at Challenger Institute of Technology, and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation.



Drag netting for prawns. *Photo – Stewart Allen*



A western school prawn. *Photo – Stewart Allen*



Volunteers are an important aspect of the project. *Photo – Stewart Allen*



Returning by-catch to the river alive. *Photo – Stewart Allen*



Gravid (egg-carrying) prawn. *Photo – Mark Thornley/Parks and Wildlife*

## Agency performance

## Supporting our Department

## Public Information and Corporate Affairs

The Public Information and Corporate Affairs Branch delivers efficient and effective services to Parks and Wildlife's external customers and stakeholders as well as internal partners, consistent with the Department's *Strategic Directions 2014–17*. This is achieved through public safety information in support of incidents, fire awareness, education for youth, media relations, websites, photography and video production, customer service, publications and graphic design, outdoor education activities in national parks, public participation planning, events coordination, advertising, social media and a variety of corporate programs.

## Audio-visual production

In the 2015–16 period, the branch expanded its audio-visual capabilities by producing 360-degree vision and venturing into the growing world of virtual reality. CASA-certified drone operators from the branch gathered spectacular footage from across Parks and Wildlife's regions, raising public awareness and adding value to on-ground land management activities and Government announcements such as the opening of The Gap lookout, the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy* and the *Western Shield* program. The focus on safety continued with the initiation or completion of public information videos to

help manage visitor risk including in relation to swimmer and fishing safety. A number of non-English language videos were produced to target specific groups known to be at an increased risk. The branch partnered with the Department's Marine Science Program and with Fire Management Services Branch to develop training videos and worked through complex technical challenges to install cameras in fire vehicles and aircraft. Widespread viewing of the resulting materials on social and traditional media highlighted the positive impact of Departmental cameras deployed in forward operating settings.

## Media

The branch's media unit provided communications support across the Department through: the preparation and delivery of communication plans, speeches, media statements, media training, social media and events covering the full spectrum of the Department's activities; public information training for incident management; communications support for the Minister's office; as well as responding to media enquiries. Unit staff performed a vital role in providing public information for incident management during the 2015–16 fire season; including major incidents such as the Waroona–Yarloop fire and continued to work closely with colleagues from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services as well as the emergency broadcasting team from ABC Local Radio.

## Education

The branch's education officers continued to deliver programs to enable thousands of young Western Australians to connect with nature. Operating from the Perth Hills Discovery Centre in Beelu National Park, *Nearer to Nature* introduced participants from Perth and surrounds to aspects of WA's vibrant natural environment through programs focusing on *Western Shield*, wildlife, bushfire, bush skills, river and wetland ecosystems, and Aboriginal culture. A number of these activities were supported by Alcoa.

During 2015–16, 21,151 people took part in *Nearer to Nature* programs, with 13,799 children and teachers participating in school programs and 7352 children and adults in holiday programs.

The *Bush Rangers WA* program continued to support the social and educational development of young cadets drawn from high schools across WA. During 2015–16, the number of units increased from 59 to 64 and cadet numbers increased from 2275 to 3011, with 20 per cent of *Bush Rangers* coming from Aboriginal backgrounds. *Bush Rangers* has the highest number of participants of the wider *Cadets WA* program, and the highest rate of Aboriginal and female cadets enrolled.

*Rivers Rangers* is a *Cadets WA* program for Years 4 to 6, joining Parks and Wildlife after the

amalgamation with the Swan River Trust. The program provides education and volunteering opportunities related to rivers and catchments and is closely related to *Bush Rangers*. The focus of the program expanded beyond the Swan River catchment and two new units were established in the Kimberley. In 2015–16 there were 733 *River Rangers* cadets in 17 schools.

## Web

During 2015–16, the branch's web content team worked on the transition of the former Swan River Trust website content to the Parks and Wildlife website, the development of a standalone website for the Trust board, the establishment of the WA Parks Foundation website, the development of an online digital resource using Office 365, as well as the update and redevelopment of *Western Shield* web content on the Parks and Wildlife corporate site. Other projects included research and development of immersive virtual reality applications and research into options for the *WA Naturally* online shop to improve the customer experience and simplify the branch's workflow.

Internal web-based projects included ongoing server management, as well as the development of management systems for digital resources and a flight recording system for drone usage. In addition, the unit transferred all websites and databases to more secure remote web services using GitHub.





Nearer to Nature volunteer Barbara Cooper helps teach children about native animals. Photo – Dom Lim Photography



River Rangers take water samples. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife



Media staff at work during the Waroona – Yarloop bushfire. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife

**Social media**

Corporate social media accounts for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube are coordinated by Public Information and Corporate Affairs. The Department also has a number of social media accounts across the State that are managed independently in the regions with support and monitoring from the branch. Public Information and Corporate Affairs has developed a social media content management strategy, policy and social media toolbox for staff, which focus on harnessing opportunities with an engaged online community. In 2015–16, the corporate social media accounts experienced significant growth: Facebook 58 per cent, Twitter 32 per cent and Instagram 85 per cent. As at 30 June 2016, 11 Facebook pages, three Twitter accounts and two Instagram account from various Parks and Wildlife operational areas were registered.

**Publishing**

The branch also coordinated publishing for the Department and external stakeholders including the production of more than 400 reports, brochures, management plans, banners, newsletters, magazines, manuals, field guides and other information products. The publishing unit supported major Departmental initiatives and programs including the inaugural staff conference, *Western Shield*, *Parks for People*, the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*, prescribed burning and safe fishing programs. Unit staff also worked on the rebranding of former Swan River Trust materials. The branch also produced 12 issues of *Parks and Wildlife News*, a monthly online newsletter for staff, volunteers and the wider community, as well as regular stories on the Department’s internal newfeed *Nature Notes*.

**Customer service**

The Kensington Information Unit continued to deliver effective and efficient frontline services to members of the community contacting the Department’s head office. The unit also supported the Department’s saleable publishing program through processing of subscriptions and book sales and the Parks and Visitor Services Division through the sale of national park passes.

**WA Naturally**

In 2015–16, the Department’s saleable publishing program *WA Naturally* reprinted three successful Bush Book titles, produced four issues of *LANDSCOPE* magazine plus an annual Western Australia calendar. A digital edition of *LANDSCOPE* magazine containing a number interactive features including video

was produced and delivered to staff. A survey of *LANDSCOPE* readers delivered a 10 per cent response rate, providing subscriber demographic data and invaluable reader feedback.



## Agency performance

## Supporting our Department

## Legal matters

**Freedom of Information**

The Office of the Director General managed the processes for the Department under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*. The Department's *Information Statement 2015–16* (available on the Parks and Wildlife website) describes the functions of the Department and its related agencies, the nature of the information held by the Department and its related agencies, and the type of information that is made available to the public.

Parks and Wildlife received 26 valid applications for access to information, with three applicants requesting an internal review and one an external review of the Department's decisions.

**Litigation**

Information regarding litigation in progress is available in Note 32 of the Notes to the Financial Statements on page 126 of this report.

**Prosecutions**

The Department initiated 37 prosecutions during 2015–16, involving a total of 296 charges covering a broad range of offences including the illegal taking or possession of protected and rare fauna or flora, illegal importation or selling of fauna, illegal exportation of fauna, cruelty to fauna,

failure to comply with licence conditions, and offences relating to activities on State forest, nature reserves and national parks.

**Finalised prosecutions for 2015–16**

Of the 37 prosecutions commenced, 19 were subject to final court determination during 2015–16, including cases relating to the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*, *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, *Animal Welfare Act 2002*, Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2000, the Wildlife Conservation Regulations 1970 and the Wildlife Conservation (Reptiles and Amphibians) Regulations 2002.

These matters resulted in the imposition of fines totalling \$22,000 and costs to the value of \$7747.40.

In addition to the 37 prosecutions commenced during this period a further 26 were carried forward and finalised from 2014–15.

**Prosecutions currently before the courts**

As at 30 June 2016, 10 prosecutions were yet to be concluded and remained before the courts. A further eight cases were pending, subject to the evidentiary standard being met, and could result in either prosecution or a letter of warning.

**Total reported offences**

Between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2016, a total of 1366 offences were reported, of which 72 were dealt with by way of prosecution, 224 were pending, 596 were dealt with by infringement notice, six resulted in letters of warning, 379 were dealt with by caution notices, one required no further action, 33 were withdrawn and 55 dismissed.

## Office for Information Management

The Office for Information Management (OIM) provides Statewide management of the Department's information and related technology (IT) and also oversees the development of IT policies, standards and architecture.

In 2015–16, OIM focused on initiatives that addressed the Department's strategies for IT, including:

- delivering an IT change program to support the Department's strategic directions
- delivering reliable IT products and services to support the Department's critical business functions
- making use of technology that enables workforce mobility and collaboration
- strengthening the security and risk management framework to protect the Department's IT systems and assets

- enabling IT systems that provide digital engagement with the community and the Department's partners.

Key achievements for 2015–16 include:

- improving the resilience of IT systems through migration to cloud services in line with State Government strategic directions
- reducing energy consumption, costs and carbon emissions through more efficient use of infrastructure and sustainable work practices
- enabling interagency and public data exchange by increasing the adoption of open source technology
- improving community safety through the expansion and upgrade of the Department's telecommunications network
- contributing to the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer's whole-of-Government strategy for information and communications technology.

## Visitor risk management

The Department has a responsibility to consider the personal safety and welfare of visitors to Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and waters. The Department aims to manage the potential for misadventure and injuries to visitors in a manner that does not unnecessarily diminish visitor use and enjoyment. The Department manages the risk presented to visitors by implementing a *Statewide Visitor Risk Management* program. This includes conducting reviews of fatal and major incidents and implementing the key recommendations of those reviews.

Tragically, during 2015–16, four visitors died in the extensive areas managed by Parks and Wildlife. All of these deaths were due to drowning while participating in recreational activities along the coast, including one rock fishing death.

During 2015–16:

- Parks and Wildlife continued to work on a broad range of issues regarding visitor safety including remote camping, walk trail classifications and redevelopments and improvements to recreational sites and facilities
- Sixty-six staff completed a nationally accredited course provided by the Department as part of the *Statewide Visitor Risk Management* program

- Fifty-six staff completed induction training for the recently introduced online incident and hazard management reporting system
- Parks and Wildlife continued to contribute to the Statewide approach to reduce the number of injuries and deaths associated with rock fishing in WA in conjunction with Recfishwest and other stakeholders
- In partnership with the local fishing community and Recfishwest, anchor points, angel rings (life buoys) and new signs were installed in various locations in national parks around Esperance, Albany and Denmark
- In partnership with Recfishwest, suitable locations for life buoys were investigated along the Leeuwin-Naturaliste coastline between Dunsborough and Augusta
- The Department's public website was updated to improve the accessibility of safety-related information
- The Department reviewed its operational policy on park closure due to fire danger ratings following its introduction several years ago.



New walkway at Karijini National Park. Photo – Geoff Passmore/Parks and Wildlife

## Agency performance

## Supporting our Department

## Corporate Services Division

The Corporate Services Division provided corporate services to the Department and other agencies including the Department of Environment Regulation, the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority, the Swan River Trust Board, the Forest Products Commission and the Waste Authority of Western Australia.

## Financial Services Branch

The Department's central Financial Services Branch continued to maintain core financial software and manage accounts payable, accounts receivable, asset records, tax reporting and remote area housing. The branch also managed the Department's light and heavy vehicle fleet and produced a range of statutory and management financial reports.

## Corporate Information Services Branch

The Corporate Information Services (CIS) Branch continued to provide recordkeeping services and improve business recordkeeping processes, particularly through the continued roll-out of recordkeeping awareness training and ongoing use of the electronic document and records management system *InfOBase*. Comprehensive training on the use of *InfOBase* is available to all staff. Training is designed to ensure staff understand and fulfil their recordkeeping responsibilities as well as gain the necessary skills to create and manage electronic documents in the system, including version control and document approvals.

The Electronic Document and Records Management System team provided system administration, training and support to the Department of Environment Regulation and participated in recordkeeping projects within the Department. During the year, CIS completed a major upgrade of *InfOBase* to take into account new features to make corporate information more accessible.

CIS supported the work of the Ministerial Liaison Unit, in capturing, processing and responding to Ministerials and other types of correspondence from the Office of the Director General.

CIS is also responsible for implementing the Department's recordkeeping plan framework and working towards to ensuring compliance with *State Records Act 2000*.

CIS also provided various records services to other agencies including the Department of Environment Regulation and the Conservation and Parks Commission.

## People Services Branch

The People Services Branch continued to provide client-focused human resource services including employee relations, workforce services, policy delivery, learning and development programs and initiatives, strategic planning, data analysis and reporting, and management of the safety, health and wellbeing of employees.

## Geographic Information Services

The Geographic Information Services Branch provided services to support the Department's mission of protecting and conserving the nature of WA and promoting the use and enjoyment of the natural environment by:

- monitoring of Earth's surface using remote sensing to provide information on the current and historical attributes of WA's natural resources
- using spatial analysis of geospatial information to assist in natural resource management, producing maps and other information products to meet operational and public needs
- managing corporate geospatial databases for the Department and bureau clients
- developing standards for the use of geospatial data and information within the Department.

The key achievements and activities of the branch for 2015–16 are outlined below.

## Remote sensing and spatial analysis

*Vegetation monitoring*

- Developed a monitoring framework for the draft *Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million* detailing the potential applications of spatial data with a focus on the use of high-resolution digital aerial photography.

- Completed the Dirk Hartog Island National Park vegetation monitoring program for 2015–16. This included using remote sensing to report on impacts of the removal of sheep and goats.
- Completed vegetation mapping across the Pilbara islands using high-resolution multispectral imagery.
- Completed vegetation monitoring for the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*. This included analysis of rainforest patch extents and vegetation cover change.
- Completed an assessment of riparian vegetation extent change across the Swan and Canning rivers using high-resolution digital aerial photography.

*Spatial analysis*

Compilation and analysis of geospatial data and preparation of maps for the draft *Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million*.

- Spatial analysis of horse and donkey movements to assist in determining the effectiveness of the Judas method for controlling feral herbivores in the Fortescue Marsh system.
- Provided continued spatial analysis support for the establishment of the conservation reserve system by producing Statewide vegetation and tenure statistics and assisting in the extension of vegetation complex mapping for the south-west of the State.

### Fire

- Ongoing development of a spatial fire risk model for the Perth urban and peri-urban areas to assist in planning vegetation fuel reduction programs.
- Assessed key fire spatial metrics for the Kimberley *Landscape Conservation Initiative* to assess the effectiveness of changed fire management regimes.
- Mapping of Pilbara and Western Desert annual fire scarring to assess size and number of previous prescribed burns, to aid in planning future management actions.
- Develop new more efficient methodology for historic fire scar extraction utilising eCognition software.
- With Landgate, develop near real-time Normalised Burn Ratio web product for quick evaluation of burns and fires for all agencies involved in fire management.

### Marine

- Use of remote sensing to report to the former Marine Parks Reserve Authority for mangrove condition monitoring, Penguin Island coastal vegetation monitoring and seagrass extent.
- Collaboration with Landgate's Managing Coastal Vulnerability project to improve data management and access to marine dataset in State Government agencies.
- Further acquisitions of high-resolution satellite imagery through Landgate and the State-funded *Location Information Strategy*.
- In collaboration with the Marine Science Program, conducting ongoing investigations into impacts of the 2010–11 marine heatwave on the seagrass of Shark Bay.

### Mapping and data capture

- Completion of the extended *2016 South West Emergency Services Directory*, including maps for all town sites.
- Consolidating and inputting information about the Department's strategic road network into the State's Topographic Geodatabase at Landgate.

- Producing maps for reserve creation and Indigenous Land Use Agreements associated with the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*.
- Producing navigational maps of the Department's long trails for the public.
- Preparing maps to support a wide range of Departmental activities including the *Western Shield* wildlife recovery program, park management and regional and fire operations.

### Database and application development

- Development and deployment of mobile data collection software for use in crocodile surveys, road condition field capture, marine habitat sampling, apiary sites placement and fauna surveys on Penguin Island.
- Development of various applications to enhance the management of the Department's geospatial data.

## Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and waters

### Total estate

At 30 June 2016, the total area under Parks and Wildlife's care was 29,192,323ha, representing a net increase of 647,578ha during 2015–16.

The majority of the increase was 599,402ha due to the addition of lands set aside for future conservation as a result of the 2015 pastoral lease renewal program.

The terrestrial area managed (that is, not including marine reserves) is approximately 10.6 per cent of the land area of Western Australia.

Table 10 on page 92 provides a summary of all tenure classifications.

## Agency performance

# Supporting our Department

**Table 10: Tenure classification of Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and waters**

Tenure classification	Goldfields	Kimberley	Midwest	Pilbara	South Coast	South West	Swan	Warren	Wheatbelt	Total
National park	153,177	1,406,089	568,869	2,434,241	861,419	143,906	117,232	562,459	1292	6,248,684
Conservation park	183,020	467,259	15,755	149,348	677	13,597	24,407	76	2254	856,393
Nature reserve	6,299,182	174,653	740,175	251,019	1,569,517	12,982	54,590	87,265	1,058,631	10,248,014
State forest	781	-	-	-	4055	542,230	466,380	262,642	28,066	1,304,154
Timber reserve	28,509	-	26,224	-	5231	26,474	28,496	8201	-	123,135
Marine park	-	899,700	868,860	330,215	-	123,000	16,391	1446	-	2,239,612
Marine nature reserve	-	-	132,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	132,000
Marine management area	-	-	-	143,385	-	-	-	-	-	143,385
Sections 5(1)(g) & 5(1)(h) reserve	81,566	286,566	1976	7810	644	31,207	28,618	1614	1599	441,600
Miscellaneous reserve	<1	568,010	505	1779	3767	124	6006	244	15	580,450
Freehold (CALM Exec Body)	-	<1	1550	<1	91	19,884	50	4658	<1	26,233
Leasehold (CALM Exec Body)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Unallocated Crown land – Department interest	1,920,753	203,503	3,299,930	1,157,282	16,885	-	-	-	43,142	6,641,495
Section 33(2) managed land	28,514	-	90,118	-	-	-	-	-	-	118,632
Sections 16A managed land	-	37,941	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37,941
Swan River Trust – river reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	3600	-	-	3600
Crown freehold – Department interest	-	-	10,959	-	6201	3975	19,675	1702	4483	46,995
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8,695,502</b>	<b>4,043,721</b>	<b>5,756,921</b>	<b>4,475,079</b>	<b>2,468,487</b>	<b>917,379</b>	<b>765,445</b>	<b>930,307</b>	<b>1,139,482</b>	<b>29,192,323</b>

## Establishment of the Conservation and Parks Commission

In May 2016 the majority of the 2015 amendments to the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act) were proclaimed by the Governor and came into operation. The Conservation and Parks Commission was established and the membership appointed by the Minister for Environment. The Conservation and Parks Commission replaces the Conservation Commission of Western Australia and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority; combining the functions of these entities. New terrestrial and marine reserves can be vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission in accordance with section 7 of the CALM Act in a similar manner to the vesting under statute in the previous Conservation Commission of WA. All existing conservation reserves vested in the Conservation Commission of WA will remain so vested but the responsibilities for these reserves will be undertaken by the Conservation and Parks Commission.

## Amendments to the recording of statistics about lands and waters managed by Parks and Wildlife

In 2010 and 2015 changes were made to the CALM Act that altered the tenure that the Department administers and manages. The amendments to the CALM Act required changes to the way statistics concerning

the area of land, type of tenure and land management regimes are recorded and presented.

Landgate is the custodian of the State's land titles system and repository of information about Crown and freehold land. To minimise the duplication of statistics held by the Department and Landgate a decision was made to solely rely on Landgate datasets and records of land tenure. Landgate's statistical data about the area of conservation reserves, land tenure types and other information will be integrated into the Department's Annual Report and Yearbook over coming years. It is expected that there will be some variation in the statistics previously presented in the Department's Annual Report and Yearbook, and explanatory statements will be provided as required.

## National parks

The area of the 99 national parks solely vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission of WA at 30 June 2016 was 6,243,833ha, a net decrease of 71ha. The major decrease was 83ha due to the excision of four caves within the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park. These caves are now vested with the Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association Incorporated. The area of the 100 national parks at 30 June 2016 is 6,248,684ha (see Section 8A).

## Section 8A

Section 8A was introduced into the CALM Act on 8 December 2012.

This section of the CALM Act empowers Parks and Wildlife to enter into agreements to jointly manage land with another party or parties, on land not vested in either the former Conservation Commission of WA or the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, now the Conservation and Parks Commission. For example, private land, pastoral lease land and other Crown land can be managed jointly with other parties. A section 8A agreement is managed in accordance with the CALM Act as if the land was State forest, timber reserve, national park, conservation park, nature reserve or managed for a public purpose consistent with that Act.

Murujuga National Park is jointly managed as a national park under section 8A of the CALM Act by the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and Parks and Wildlife. Murujuga National Park was proclaimed the 100th national park on 17 January 2013. The area of the national park is 4851ha and is recorded in the national park tenure category under Pilbara in Table 10 on page 94. There was no change during the year.

## Conservation parks

The area of conservation parks solely vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission at 30 June 2016 was 849,076ha. There was an increase of 732ha. The majority of the increase was 695ha due to the creation of a new conservation park in the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu.

Yawuru Birragun Conservation Park is jointly managed as a conservation park under section 8A of the CALM Act by the Yawuru Native Title Holders Aboriginal Corporation, Registered Native Title Body Corporate and Parks and Wildlife. The conservation park was proclaimed on 1 February 2016. The area of the conservation park is 7317ha and is recorded in the conservation park tenure category under Kimberley in Table 10.

The area of conservation parks at 30 June 2016 was 856,393ha.

## Nature reserves

The area of nature reserves at 30 June 2016 was 10,248,014ha, representing a net increase of 819ha. The majority of the increase was 699ha due to the transfer of land formerly in the care of the Department of Water in the Shire of Mukinbudin.

## Agency performance

# Supporting our Department

**Table 11: Area of national parks vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission at 30 June 2016**

Name	Area (ha)	Name	Area (ha)	Name	Area (ha)	Name	Area (ha)	Name	Area (ha)
Alexander Morrison	8500	Eucla	3560	Kalbarri	182,931	Mount Roe	127,726	Un-named	79
Avon Valley	4366	Fitzgerald River	297,244	Karijini	624,700	Murujuga*	-	Walpole-Nornalup	19,448
Badgingarra	13,108	Forest Grove	1379	Karlamilyi	1,283,706	Nambung	19,268	Walyunga	1814
Beelu	4617	Francois Peron	52,587	Kennedy Range	141,660	Neerabup	973	Wandoo	46,493
Blackwood River	20,477	Frank Hann	67,539	Korong	6344	Peak Charles	39,959	Warren	2981
Boorabbin	28,153	Geikie Gorge	3136	Lake Muir	9625	Porongurup	2621	Watheroo	44,481
Boorara-Gardner	11,008	Gloucester	878	Lawley River	17,572	Preston	12,665	Waychinicup	3982
Boyndaminup	5439	Goldfields Woodlands	64,628	Leeuwin-Naturaliste	21,200	Prince Regent National Park	576,400	Wellington	17,415
Bramley	3895	Goongarrie	60,397	Lesmurdie Falls	56	Purnululu	239,723	West Cape Howe	3605
Brockman	52	Gooseberry Hill	33	Lesueur	27,235	Scott	3273	Whicher	6343
Cape Arid	279,449	Greater Beedelup	19,379	Midgegooroo	2492	Serpentine	4387	William Bay	1734
Cape Le Grand	31,801	Greater Kingston	21,092	Millstream Chichester	238,167	Shannon	52,598	Wiltshire-Butler	11,645
Cape Range	47,655	Greenmount	202	Milyeannup	18,692	Sir James Mitchell	247	Windjana Gorge	2050
Collier Range	235,162	Gull Rock	2104	Mirima	2068	Stirling Range	115,921	Wolfe Creek Meteorite Crater	1460
D'Entrecasteaux	118,779	Hassell	1265	Mitchell River	115,325	Stokes	9726	Yalgorup	13,141
Dalgarup	2377	Hawke	14,004	Moore River	17,254	Tathra	4322	Yanchep	2860
Dirk Hartog Island	62,928	Helena	12,255	Mount Augustus	9168	Torndirrup	3936	Yelverton	729
Dordagup	6408	Hilliger	16,962	Mount Frankland	37,359	Tuart Forest	2049		
Drovers Cave	2681	Jane	6863	Mount Frankland North	22,053	Tunnel Creek	91		
Drysdale River	448,264	John Forrest	2700	Mount Frankland South	42,283	Un-named	1571	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,243,833</b>
Easter	2985	Kalamunda	375	Mount Lindesay	39,541				

*Names shown in italics are unofficial.*

\* Managed as national park under section 8A of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* with an area of 4851ha.



### State forest

The area of State forest at 30 June 2016 was 1,304,154ha, representing a net decrease of 97ha. The majority of the decrease was 91ha due to the construction of the Perth-Darwin National Highway through the City of Swan.

### Timber reserves

The area of timber reserves at 30 June 2016 was 123,135ha representing a net decrease of 19ha. The majority of the decrease was 14ha due to the transfer of land to a Section 5(1)(h) reserve in the Shire of Manjimup.

### Marine reserves

The area of marine parks at 30 June 2016 was approximately 2,239,612ha. This represents an increase of 33,000ha due to the extension of the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park.

The area of marine nature reserves at 30 June 2016 was approximately 132,000ha. There were no changes during the year.

### Marine management areas

The area of marine management areas at 30 June 2016 was approximately 143,385ha. There were no changes during the year.

**Table 12: Marine reserves vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission at 30 June 2016**

Name	Area (ha) approx
Barrow Island Marine Park	4169
Barrow Island Marine Management Area	116,616
Lalang-garram / Camden Sound Marine Park	673,000
Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park	181,000
Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve	132,000
Jurien Bay Marine Park	82,376
Marmion Marine Park	9500
Montebello Islands Marine Park	58,375
Muiron Islands Marine Management Area	26,769
Ngari Capes Marine Park	123,000
Ningaloo Marine Park	263,313
Rowley Shoals Marine Park	87,807
Shark Bay Marine Park	748,735
Shoalwater Islands Marine Park	6545
Swan Estuary Marine Park	346
Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park	1446
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,514,997</b>

Area figures are approximate only. Quality of mapping of marine reserve boundaries is variable – improved mapping of watermark boundaries and historical boundaries may result in revised area figures in the future.

### Section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) reserves

The area of sections 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) reserves at 30 June 2016 was 441,600ha. This represents an increase of 117ha. The majority of the increase was 103ha to a section 5(1)(h) reserve in the Shire of Broome.

The 2015 amendments to the CALM Act enabled land vested in the Conservation and Land Management (CALM) Executive Body to be managed in accordance with the Act. The CALM Executive Body is a corporate entity with perpetual succession administered by Parks and Wildlife's Director General as Chief Executive Officer. Parks and Wildlife's offices and depots are examples of reserves vested in the CALM Executive Body. The statistic for Miscellaneous Reserves records land vested in the CALM Executive Body because these lands are not exclusively managed for conservation purposes.

### Miscellaneous reserves

The area of miscellaneous reserves at 30 June 2016 was 580,450ha. There were no changes during the year.

## Agency performance

## Supporting our Department

**Swan River Trust reserves**

The area of Swan River Trust river reserves at 30 June 2016 was 3600ha.

Amendments to the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* (SCRM Act) came into operation in 2015. The amendment transferred management responsibility of the river reserve from the Swan River Trust to the Parks and Wildlife CEO. This statistic includes all land that is vested or owned by the Swan River Trust that is part of the Riverpark (section 9 of the SCRM Act).

**Other land**

The area of freehold land held by the Conservation and Land Management (CALM) Executive Body at 30 June 2016 was 26,233ha. There were no changes during the year.

The area of former pastoral lease land being held under an interim management arrangement prior to formal reservation is 6,641,495ha. This represents an increase of 599,402ha. The majority of the increase is due to the addition of lands set aside for future conservation as part of the 2015 pastoral lease renewal program. The figures for this category are shown in the tenure table as 'Unallocated Crown land – Department interest'.

The area of Crown land placed under the management of the Department under section 33(2) of the CALM Act at 30 June 2016 totalled 118,632ha.

There were no changes during the year. This land is proposed for addition to the conservation estate, which is managed accordingly under an interim arrangement. Section 33(2) of the CALM Act was amended in 2010 and historically negotiated agreements under this section will remain in force until they are amended or cancelled. Two examples of land managed by the Department through historic s33(2) CALM Act are the former pastoral lease lands surrounding Kennedy Range National Park, and the unallocated Crown land that comprises the Goldfields Woodland Management Area. Sections 8A or 8C of the CALM Act replaced the functions that were previously included in section 33(2) of the CALM Act.

Areas currently managed under section 16A of the CALM Act by agreement between the lessees and the Department at 30 June 2016 was 37,941ha. There were no changes during the year. Historically, two section 16A of the CALM Act management agreements were negotiated with the lessees of Anna Plains and Carlton Hill stations. The management agreement over part of Anna Plains stations was cancelled in July 2015 when the pastoral lease was renewed. The land has reverted to unallocated Crown land and is managed by the Department until such time as a new conservation reserve over the land is created (expected to be in early 2017). The Carlton Hill management agreement area is under review

and consideration could be given to cancelling this agreement if the pastoral lease is sold.

The area of freehold land managed by the Department under section 8A and the former s16A of the CALM Act at 30 June 2016 was 8,703 hectares. This represents an increase of 639ha. Most of this land falls within regional parks and is managed by agreement between the Western Australian Planning Commission and the Department. The figures for this category are shown in the tenure table as Crown freehold – Department interest. The 2015 amendments to the CALM Act included provisions to formally recognise and gazette regional parks as areas of land with regionally significant conservation, landscape protection or recreation values (s8D-F of the CALM Act). As appropriate Parks and Wildlife will negotiate joint management agreements in accordance with s8A of the CALM Act with landholders so these lands can be included in regional parks.

The area of freehold land acquired for addition to the conservation reserve system at 30 June 2016 was 38,825ha. This represents an increase of 2672ha. Reservation of these areas pending the completion of administrative processes.

The 2015 amendments to the CALM Act allow the Environment Minister to make a determination that a new or existing CALM Act conservation reserve can be jointly managed with an Aboriginal body corporate

(s8AA of the CALM Act). The Department will consider if it is appropriate to provide specific statistics on the area of land subject to a joint vesting determination.

**Conservation land acquisitions**

During the year Parks and Wildlife purchased 10 parcels of land of high conservation value covering a combined total area of about 5182ha for future addition to the formal conservation reserve system.

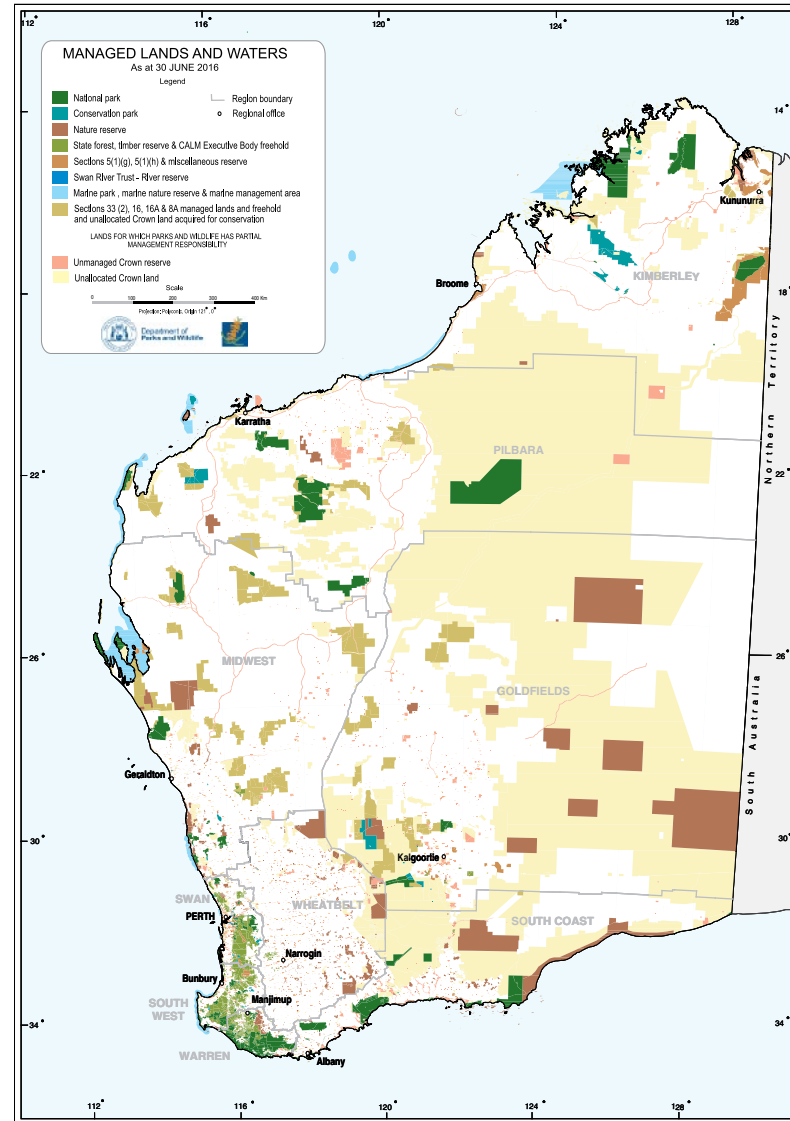
The Department's priorities for purchases are areas containing ecosystems not adequately represented in existing conservation reserves, areas containing threatened species and ecological communities, or additions to existing reserves that will greatly improve their diversity or facilitate their management.

The purchases were funded from environmental offset funds (provided from a variety of sources as a result of approved development projects and land clearing). The total expenditure was \$17.920 million.

Purchases finalised during the year were:

- 720ha property in the Shire of Kellerberrin
- 79ha property in the Shire of Harvey
- 72ha property in the Shire of Harvey
- 605ha property in the Shire of Dandaragan
- 83ha property in the Shire of Murray
- 375ha property in the Shire of Kulin
- 251ha property in the Shire of Murray
- 51ha property in the Shire of Murray
- 1995ha property in the Shire of Dandaragan
- 951ha property in the Shire of Mandurah.

Figure 9: Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and waters at 30 June 2016



# Significant issues and trends

- A new *Kalbarri Skywalk and National Park Tourist Infrastructure* project will commence with a \$20 million total project budget, providing new sealed roads to the Loop and Z Bend tourist sites and the development of new facilities at several sites including two new lookout structures overlooking the Murchison River gorge in Kalbarri National Park.
- Implementation of the Government's *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative will continue, directed at parks in the State's south-west and mid-west with a total project budget of \$21 million. The number of low-cost camping and caravan facilities in those regions is being significantly expanded to promote the State's world-class parks system and help people enjoy their parks safely by providing a range of facilities and services.
- New public recreation and joint management arrangements for the Ningaloo Coast will commence with \$6 million in total funding over four years to continue negotiation of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement, establish coordinated management of the coast and provide new and improved visitor infrastructure including roads.
- The Department will continue to strengthen and expand its partnership approach to managing the State's terrestrial and marine parks and reserves with volunteers, private conservation organisations, Aboriginal communities and the private sector.
- The Department will continue to prepare management plans and implement conservation actions for terrestrial and marine reserves across the State. This includes continuing to implement the Government's expanded *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy* to provide the largest ever targeted investment in conservation of the Kimberley's natural assets, the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage and rock art and the development of sustainable nature-based tourism. As part of the strategy the Government will invest an additional \$22 million over four years in establishing and managing new Kimberley national and marine parks, including the Great Kimberley Marine Park which will be the second largest coastal marine park in Australia. This takes the Government's total investment to more than \$103 million. The strategy is being delivered in partnership with traditional owners, community, industry and non-Government organisations.
- The Department will continue to undertake an active fire management program in an increasingly complex operating environment, exacerbated by drying conditions in the south-west of the State. Funding for prescribed burning to maximise the reduction of bushfire risk will increase by \$2 million in 2016–17.
- Western Australia has unique and highly significant biodiversity that faces threats and complex challenges, requiring integrated multi-disciplinary approaches to conservation and management.
- Invasive pests, weeds and diseases will continue to be managed. The Department will maintain the *Western Shield* wildlife recovery program in partnership with industry and the community, including expansion of trials of the new *Eradicat*<sup>®</sup> bait for feral cats.
- Implementation of the *State Cane Toad Strategy* will continue to manage the impact of cane toads on native wildlife.
- Priority will be given to assisting with Parliamentary and public consideration of the Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015 which is intended to replace the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* and *Sandalwood Act 1929*.
- The State's forests will continue to be managed to conserve plants and animals, protect water catchments, for recreation and tourism, for a sustainable timber industry, for mining and other public uses. This will be done under the framework of the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023*. Further research, monitoring and reporting will be conducted. This includes completion of the third five-yearly progress report on implementation of the *Regional Forest Agreement* for the south-west forest region.
- The Department will continue to contribute to the State Government's strategic assessment of the Perth and Peel regions which seeks upfront environmental approval for development under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and State *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. The strategic assessment aims to promote more efficient environmental assessment and improve environmental outcomes in the Perth and Peel region as it expands over the next 30 years to accommodate 3.5 million people. The draft *Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million* released for public comment in late 2015 includes a number of commitments for protection of bushland, rivers and wetlands including 170,000ha of new and expanded conservation reserves in the Perth and Peel regions and immediate surrounds.

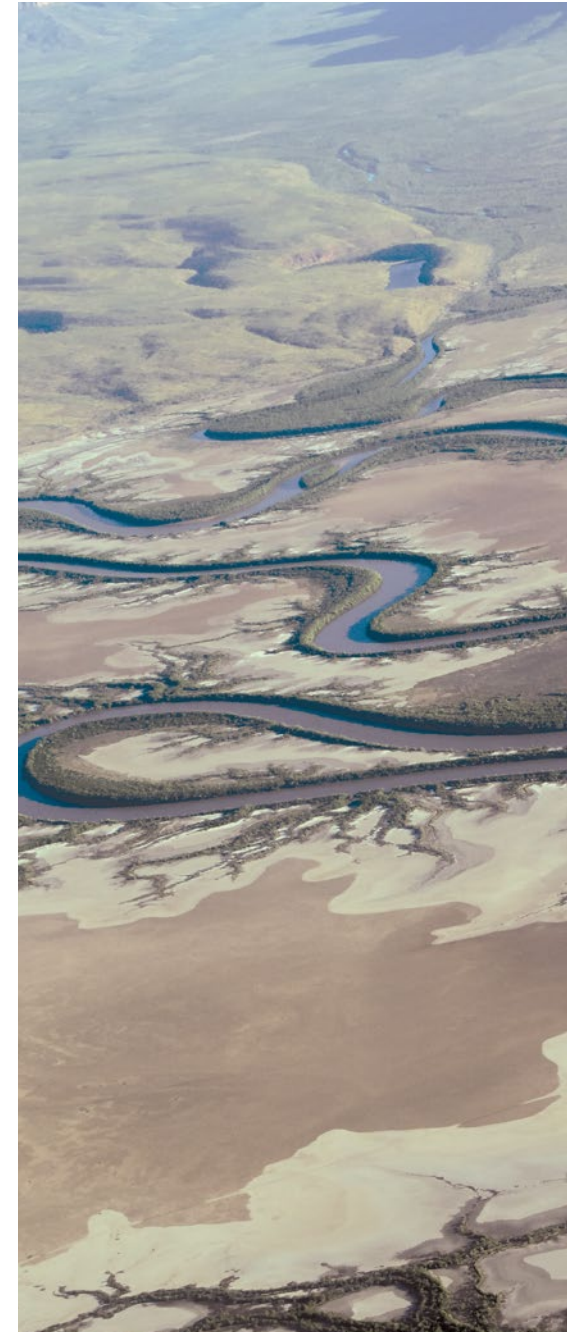
- Integration of the operations of the Swan River Trust and the Department have been successfully completed and in place since July 2015. Extra funding has accelerated major shoreline restoration projects in partnership with adjoining foreshore land managers. The release of the *Swan Canning River Protection Strategy* in 2015 will provide the basis for improved coordination of efforts across Government in managing and protecting the Riverpark.
- \$28.9 million has been allocated for the development of a new Parks and Wildlife headquarters in Bunbury. Planning is well advanced. The project will initially see 100 extra jobs relocated to Bunbury and will be one of the most significant long-term economic investments by the Government in the region, providing ongoing benefits.



Matuwa (Lorna Glen) in the Goldfields. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife

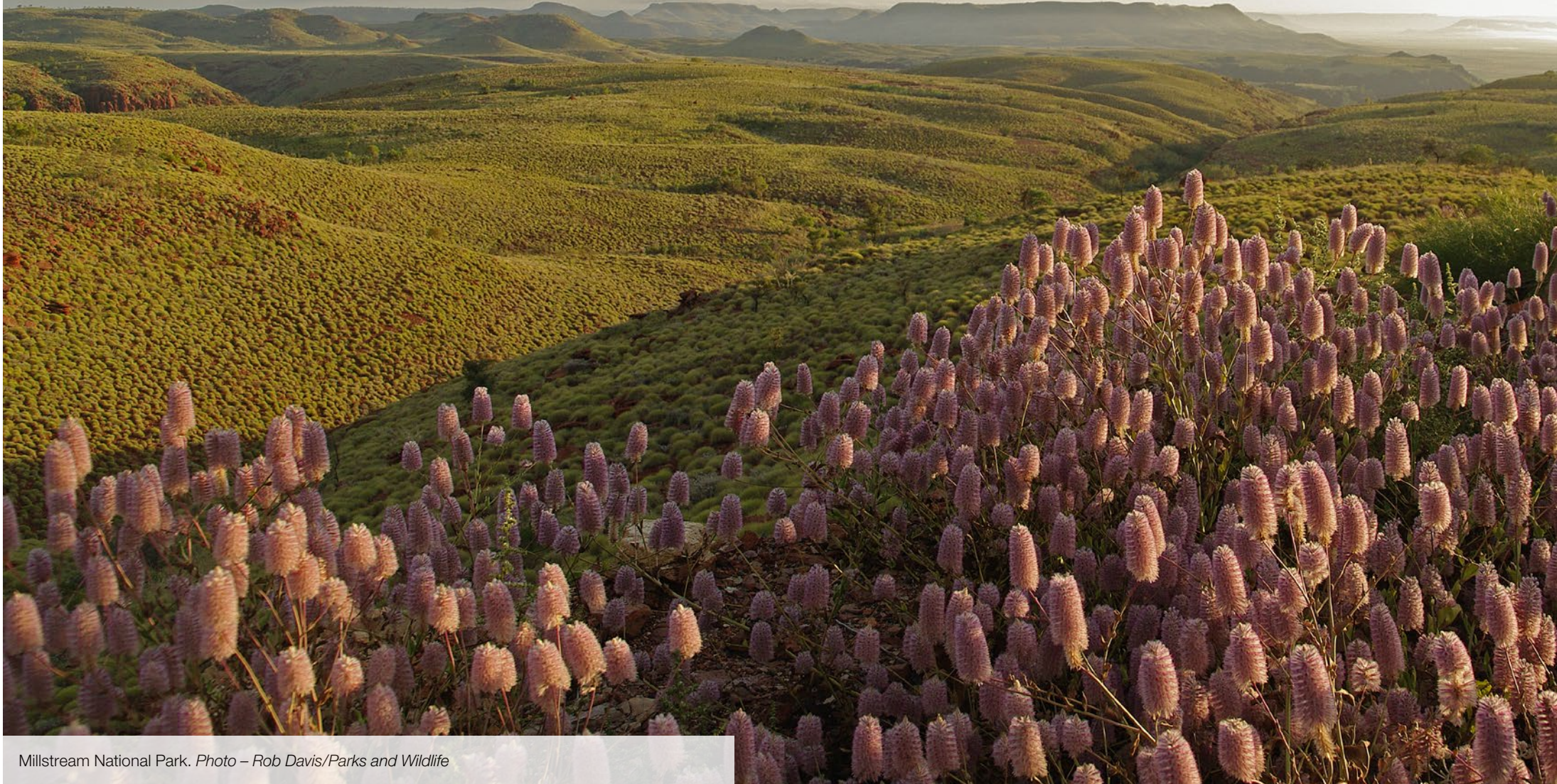


A pair of cleaner shrimp. Photo – Richard Evans/Parks and Wildlife



Aerial view of a Kimberley river system.  
Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife

# Disclosures and legal compliance



Millstream National Park. Photo – Rob Davis/Parks and Wildlife

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Certification

**Certification of Financial Statements  
for the year ended 30 June 2016**

The accompanying financial statements of the Department of Parks and Wildlife 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 2016 and the financial position as at 30 June 2016.

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



**John Byrne**  
Chief Finance Officer  
16 September 2016



**Jim Sharp**  
Accountable Authority  
16 September 2016



# Disclosures and legal compliance

## Auditor General's opinion



### Auditor General

#### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Parliament of Western Australia

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE

#### Report on the Financial Statements

I have audited the accounts and financial statements of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

The financial statements comprise the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2016, the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Schedule of Income and Expenses by Service, Schedule of Assets and Liabilities by Service, and Summary of Consolidated Account Appropriations and Income Estimates for the year then ended, and Notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, including Administered transactions and balances.

#### Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements are based on proper accounts and present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Department of Parks and Wildlife at 30 June 2016 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended. They are in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Treasurer's Instructions.

#### Director General's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Director General is responsible for keeping proper accounts, and the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Treasurer's Instructions, and for such internal control as the Director General determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### Auditor's Responsibility 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 based on my audit. The audit was conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those Standards require compliance with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and that the audit be planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Department's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Director General, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

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

#### Report on Controls

I have audited the controls exercised by the Department of Parks and Wildlife during the year ended 30 June 2016.

Controls exercised by the Department of Parks and Wildlife are those policies and procedures established by the Director General to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property, and the incurring of liabilities have been in accordance with legislative provisions.

#### Opinion

In my opinion, in all material respects, the controls exercised by the Department of Parks and Wildlife are sufficiently adequate to provide reasonable assurance that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property, and the incurring of liabilities have been in accordance with legislative provisions during the year ended 30 June 2016.

#### Director General's Responsibility for Controls

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

#### Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of Controls

As required by the Auditor General Act 2006, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the controls exercised by the Department of Parks and Wildlife based on my audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the adequacy of controls to ensure that the Department complies with the legislative provisions. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement and include an evaluation of the design and implementation of relevant controls.

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

#### Report on the Key Performance Indicators

I have audited the key performance indicators of the Department of Parks and Wildlife for the year ended 30 June 2016.

The key performance indicators are the key effectiveness indicators and the key efficiency indicators that provide information on outcome achievement and service provision.

#### Opinion

In my opinion, in all material respects, the key performance indicators of the Department of Parks and Wildlife are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the Department's performance and fairly represent indicated performance for the year ended 30 June 2016.

#### Director General's Responsibility 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 controls as the Director General determines necessary to ensure that the key performance indicators fairly represent indicated performance.



# Auditor General's opinion

## *Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of Key Performance Indicators*

As required by the Auditor General Act 2006, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the key performance indicators based on my audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the key performance indicators. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the key performance indicators. In making these risk assessments the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Director General's preparation and fair presentation of the key performance indicators in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances. An audit also includes evaluating the relevance and appropriateness of the key performance indicators for measuring the extent of outcome achievement and service provision.

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

## **Independence**

In conducting the above audits, I have complied with the independence requirements of the Auditor General Act 2006 and Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards, and other relevant ethical requirements.

## **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 Parks and Wildlife for the year ended 30 June 2016 included on the Department's website. The Department's management is responsible for the integrity of the Department's website. This audit does not provide assurance on the integrity of the Department's website. The auditor's report refers only to the financial statements and key performance indicators described above. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from these financial statements or key performance indicators. 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 refer to the hard copy of the audited financial statements and key performance indicators to confirm the information contained in this website version of the financial statements and key performance indicators.

  
COLIN MURPHY  
AUDITOR GENERAL  
FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
Perth, Western Australia  
19 September 2016

Disclosures and legal compliance  
Financial statements



Cape Dommet, proposed North Kimberley Marine Park. *Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife*

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Financial statements

**Statement of Comprehensive Income**  
 For the year ended 30 June 2016

	Note	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>COST OF SERVICES</b>			
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee benefits expense	6	160,911	157,809
Supplies and services	7	81,065	80,205
Depreciation expense	8	25,728	25,892
Accommodation expenses	9	4,684	4,751
Grants and subsidies	10	7,566	1,354
Other expenses	11	33,019	32,410
<b>Total cost of services</b>		<b>312,973</b>	<b>302,421</b>
<b>Income</b>			
<i>Revenue</i>			
User charges and fees	12	38,331	45,575
Commonwealth grants and contributions	13	1,694	1,275
Other grants and contributions	14	44,501	20,470
Interest revenue		1,907	2,083
Other revenue	16	15,653	10,936
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>102,086</b>	<b>80,339</b>
<i>Gains</i>			
Gains on disposal of non-current assets	15	177	765
<b>Total Gains</b>		<b>177</b>	<b>765</b>
<b>Total income other than income from State Government</b>		<b>102,263</b>	<b>81,104</b>
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>		<b>210,710</b>	<b>221,317</b>
<b>Income from State Government</b>			
Service appropriation	17	224,794	219,941
Services received free of charge		968	991
Assets not previously recognised		1,139	1,110
Royalties for Regions Fund		7,043	4,792
<b>Total income from State Government</b>		<b>233,944</b>	<b>226,834</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE PERIOD</b>		<b>23,234</b>	<b>5,517</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>			
<b>Items not reclassified subsequently to profit and loss</b>			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		(42,384)	(590,645)
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<b>(42,384)</b>	<b>(590,645)</b>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD</b>		<b>(19,150)</b>	<b>(585,128)</b>

See also the 'Schedule of Income and Expenses by Service'.

The Statement of Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**Statement of Financial Position**  
 As at 30 June 2016

	Note	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	30	3,805	3,575
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	18 & 30	69,987	77,241
Inventories	19	1,281	1,195
Receivables	20	17,101	15,115
Amounts receivable for services	21	8,503	9,509
Other current assets	22	8,135	1,781
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>108,812</b>	<b>108,416</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Amounts receivable for services	21	134,218	121,258
Property, plant and equipment	23	3,104,673	3,096,794
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>3,238,891</b>	<b>3,218,052</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>3,347,703</b>	<b>3,326,468</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Payables	26	2,585	8,437
Provisions	27	29,950	26,069
Other current liabilities	28	2,985	7,423
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>35,520</b>	<b>41,929</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
Provisions	27	6,129	9,174
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>6,129</b>	<b>9,174</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>41,649</b>	<b>51,103</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>3,306,054</b>	<b>3,275,365</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Contributed Equity	29	3,021,528	2,971,689
Reserves		243,330	285,714
Accumulated surplus		41,196	17,962
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>3,306,054</b>	<b>3,275,365</b>

See also the 'Schedule of Assets and Liabilities by Service'.

The Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

# Financial statements

### Statement of Changes in Equity For the year ended 30 June 2016

	Note 29	Contributed Equity \$'000	Reserves \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Total equity \$'000
<b>Balance at 1 July 2014</b>		2,950,430	876,359	12,445	3,839,234
Surplus/(deficit)		0	0	5,517	5,517
Other comprehensive income		0	(590,645)	0	(590,645)
Total comprehensive income for the period		0	(590,645)	5,517	(585,128)
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:					
Capital appropriations		11,631	0	0	11,631
Other contributions by owners		10,503	0	0	10,503
Distributions to owners - Department of Environment Regulation		(875)	0	0	(875)
Total		21,259	0	0	21,259
<b>Balance at 30 June 2015</b>		<b>2,971,689</b>	<b>285,714</b>	<b>17,962</b>	<b>3,275,365</b>
<b>Balance at 1 July 2015</b>		2,971,689	285,714	17,962	3,275,365
Surplus/(deficit)		0	0	23,234	23,234
Other comprehensive income		0	(42,384)	0	(42,384)
Total comprehensive income for the period		0	(42,384)	23,234	(19,150)
Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:					
Capital appropriations		10,384	0	0	10,384
Contributions from owners - Swan River Trust		37,101	0	0	37,101
Other contributions by owners		2,354	0	0	2,354
Total		49,839	0	0	49,839
<b>Balance at 30 June 2016</b>		<b>3,021,528</b>	<b>243,330</b>	<b>41,196</b>	<b>3,306,054</b>

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 2016

	Note	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM STATE GOVERNMENT</b>			
Service appropriation		204,886	200,224
Capital appropriations		932	704
Holding account drawdowns		8,646	9,404
Cash and cash equivalents Transferred from (to) owner		2,628	(707)
Royalties for Regions Fund		16,495	15,719
<b>Net cash provided by State Government</b>		<b>233,587</b>	<b>225,344</b>
Utilised as follows:			
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Payments</b>			
Employee benefits		(164,897)	(158,231)
Supplies and services		(81,035)	(82,028)
Accommodation		(4,684)	(4,768)
Grants and subsidies		(7,591)	(15)
GST payments on purchases		(15,152)	(12,725)
GST payments to taxation authority		(136)	(50)
Other payments		(34,041)	(32,851)
<b>Receipts</b>			
User charges and fees		42,377	36,100
Commonwealth grants and contributions		1,705	1,495
Interest received		1,098	2,288
GST receipts on sales		6,607	5,417
GST receipts from taxation authority		7,823	6,617
Other receipts		50,863	39,650
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	30	<b>(197,063)</b>	<b>(199,101)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Payments</b>			
Purchase of non-current physical assets		(44,048)	(25,127)
<b>Receipts</b>			
Proceeds from sale of non-current physical assets		500	930
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>		<b>(43,548)</b>	<b>(24,197)</b>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(7,024)	2,046
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		80,816	78,770
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE PERIOD</b>	30	<b>73,792</b>	<b>80,816</b>

## Disclosures and legal compliance

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**Schedule of Income and Expenses by Service**  
 For the year ended 30 June 2016

	Provision of Parks and Visitor Services	Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities	Conservation Partnerships	Forest Management Plan Implementation	Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry	Prescribed Burning and Fire Management	Bushfire Suppression	Protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers System	Total
	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>COST OF SERVICES</b>									
<b>Expenses</b>									
Employee benefits expense	39,346	41,617	11,550	6,736	5,147	31,550	18,431	6,534	160,911
Supplies and services	21,751	14,276	11,257	961	2,989	8,459	18,583	2,789	81,065
Depreciation expense	12,888	3,179	905	571	658	3,462	3,752	313	25,728
Accommodation expenses	1,675	1,288	266	103	22	663	552	115	4,684
Grants & subsidies	0	279	850	0	0	0	0	6,437	7,566
Other expenses	4,003	4,670	1,682	540	766	2,574	18,495	289	33,019
<b>Total cost of services</b>	<b>79,663</b>	<b>65,309</b>	<b>26,510</b>	<b>8,911</b>	<b>9,582</b>	<b>46,708</b>	<b>59,813</b>	<b>16,477</b>	<b>312,973</b>
<b>Income</b>									
User charges and fees	20,515	3,805	1,599	887	3,982	888	6,597	58	38,331
Commonwealth grants and contributions	106	66	974	0	0	48	0	500	1,694
Other grants and contributions	3,482	206	35,920	144	80	712	0	3,957	44,501
Interest revenue	159	149	1,509	90	0	0	0	0	1,907
Other revenue	6,982	4,235	86	3,438	57	319	474	62	15,653
Gains on disposal of non-current assets	0	0	0	0	0	104	73	0	177
<b>Total income other than income from State Government</b>	<b>31,244</b>	<b>8,461</b>	<b>40,088</b>	<b>4,559</b>	<b>4,119</b>	<b>2,071</b>	<b>7,144</b>	<b>4,577</b>	<b>102,263</b>
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>	<b>48,419</b>	<b>56,848</b>	<b>(13,578)</b>	<b>4,352</b>	<b>5,463</b>	<b>44,637</b>	<b>52,669</b>	<b>11,900</b>	<b>210,710</b>
<b>Income from State Government</b>									
Service appropriation	49,118	64,979	0	8,832	7,139	33,830	47,963	12,933	224,794
Services received free of charge	250	422	0	267	0	0	0	29	968
Assets not previously recognised	571	388	0	0	0	171	0	9	1,139
Royalties for Regions Fund	2,825	418	0	0	0	3,800	0	0	7,043
<b>Total income from State Government</b>	<b>52,764</b>	<b>66,207</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,099</b>	<b>7,139</b>	<b>37,801</b>	<b>47,963</b>	<b>12,971</b>	<b>233,944</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) for the period</b>	<b>4,345</b>	<b>9,359</b>	<b>13,578</b>	<b>4,747</b>	<b>1,676</b>	<b>(6,836)</b>	<b>(4,706)</b>	<b>1,071</b>	<b>23,234</b>

The Schedule of Income and Expenses by Service should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

A new Service Structure was implemented on 1 July 2015, therefore no comparative figures are available, however prior year service structure follows on next page

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# Financial statements

### Schedule of Income and Expenses by Service For the year ended 30 June 2015

	Parks Management	Wildlife Management	Forest Management	Total
	2015 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>COST OF SERVICES</b>				
<b>Expenses</b>				
Employee benefits expense	54,284	74,003	29,522	157,809
Supplies and services	31,534	33,011	15,660	80,205
Depreciation expense	15,467	5,458	4,967	25,892
Accommodation expenses	2,148	2,172	431	4,751
Grants & subsidies	1,344	10	0	1,354
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	0	0	0	0
Other expenses	11,899	8,421	12,090	32,410
<b>Total cost of services</b>	<b>116,676</b>	<b>123,075</b>	<b>62,670</b>	<b>302,421</b>
<b>Income</b>				
User charges and fees	26,169	7,677	11,729	45,575
Commonwealth grants and contributions	240	1,031	4	1,275
Other grants and contributions	3,835	16,573	62	20,470
Interest revenue	340	1,679	64	2,083
Other revenue	4,943	3,180	2,813	10,936
Gains on disposal of non-current assets	630	61	74	765
<b>Total income other than income from State Government</b>	<b>36,157</b>	<b>30,201</b>	<b>14,746</b>	<b>81,104</b>
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>	<b>80,519</b>	<b>92,874</b>	<b>47,924</b>	<b>221,317</b>
<b>Income from State Government</b>				
Service appropriation	71,695	103,791	44,455	219,941
Services received free of charge	283	452	256	991
Assets not previously recognised	470	501	139	1,110
Royalties for Regions Fund	2,628	2,164	0	4,792
<b>Total income from State Government</b>	<b>75,076</b>	<b>106,908</b>	<b>44,850</b>	<b>226,834</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) for the period</b>	<b>(5,443)</b>	<b>14,034</b>	<b>(3,074)</b>	<b>5,517</b>

The Schedule of Income and Expenses by Service should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

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## Schedule of Assets and Liabilities by Service

As at 30 June 2016

	Provision of Parks and Visitor Services	Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities	Conservation Partnerships	Forest Management Plan Implementation	Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry	Prescribed Burning and Fire Management	Bushfire Suppression	Protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers System	Total
	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>									
Current assets	22,201	11,694	53,712	3,862	2,500	2,443	5,492	6,908	108,812
Non-current assets	1,028,104	837,367	19,636	594,760	358,012	350,501	40,707	9,804	3,238,891
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>1,050,305</b>	<b>849,061</b>	<b>73,348</b>	<b>598,622</b>	<b>360,512</b>	<b>352,944</b>	<b>46,199</b>	<b>16,712</b>	<b>3,347,703</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>									
Current liabilities	10,161	10,638	2,513	2,514	811	5,318	2,016	1,549	35,520
Non-current liabilities	1,667	1,841	478	304	162	1,008	384	285	6,129
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>11,828</b>	<b>12,479</b>	<b>2,991</b>	<b>2,818</b>	<b>973</b>	<b>6,326</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>1,834</b>	<b>41,649</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,038,477</b>	<b>836,582</b>	<b>70,357</b>	<b>595,804</b>	<b>359,539</b>	<b>346,618</b>	<b>43,799</b>	<b>14,878</b>	<b>3,306,054</b>

The Schedule of Assets and Liabilities by Service should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Financial statements

**Schedule of Assets and Liabilities by Service**  
As at 30 June 2015

	Parks Management	Wildlife Management	Forest Management	Total
	2015	2015	2015	2015
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Current assets	33,082	68,326	7,008	108,416
Non-current assets	973,109	893,483	1,351,460	3,218,052
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>1,006,191</b>	<b>961,809</b>	<b>1,358,468</b>	<b>3,326,468</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Current liabilities	14,890	19,342	7,697	41,929
Non-current liabilities	3,272	4,483	1,419	9,174
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>18,162</b>	<b>23,825</b>	<b>9,116</b>	<b>51,103</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>988,029</b>	<b>937,984</b>	<b>1,349,352</b>	<b>3,275,365</b>

The Schedule of Assets and Liabilities by Service should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



## Disclosures and legal compliance

# Financial statements

### Summary of Consolidated Account Appropriations and Income Estimates

For the year ended 30 June 2016

	2016 Estimate \$'000	2016 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000	2016 Actual \$'000	2015 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
<b>Delivery of Services</b>						
Item 93 Net amount appropriated to deliver services	209,136	224,236	15,100	224,236	219,401	4,835
Royalties for Regions Fund	7,313	7,043	(270)	7,043	4,792	2,251
Amount Authorised by Other Statutes						
- Salaries and Allowances Act 1975	558	558	0	558	540	18
<b>Total appropriations provided to deliver services</b>	<b>217,007</b>	<b>231,837</b>	<b>14,830</b>	<b>231,837</b>	<b>224,733</b>	<b>7,104</b>
<b>Capital</b>						
Item 152 Capital appropriations	932	932	0	932	704	228
Royalties for Regions Fund	9,481	9,452	(29)	9,452	10,927	(1,475)
<b>Total capital</b>	<b>10,413</b>	<b>10,384</b>	<b>(29)</b>	<b>10,384</b>	<b>11,631</b>	<b>(1,247)</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>227,420</b>	<b>242,221</b>	<b>14,801</b>	<b>242,221</b>	<b>236,364</b>	<b>5,857</b>
<b>Details of Expenses by Service</b>						
<b>2016</b>						
Provision of Parks and Visitor Services	81,379	79,663	(1,716)	79,663	0	79,663
Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities	73,044	65,309	(7,735)	65,309	0	65,309
Conservation Partnerships	32,952	26,510	(6,442)	26,510	0	26,510
Forest Management Plan Implementation	13,512	8,911	(4,601)	8,911	0	8,911
Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry	10,346	9,582	(764)	9,582	0	9,582
Prescribed Burning and Fire Management	37,560	46,708	9,148	46,708	0	46,708
Bushfire Suppression	31,791	59,813	28,022	59,813	0	59,813
Protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers System	16,738	16,477	(261)	16,477	0	16,477
<b>2015</b>						
Parks Management	0	0	0	0	116,676	(116,676)
Wildlife Management	0	0	0	0	123,075	(123,075)
Forest Management	0	0	0	0	62,670	(62,670)
<b>Total Cost of Services</b>	<b>297,322</b>	<b>312,973</b>	<b>15,651</b>	<b>312,973</b>	<b>302,421</b>	<b>10,552</b>
Less Total Income	(81,137)	(102,263)	(21,126)	(102,263)	(81,104)	(21,159)
Net Cost of Services	216,185	210,710	(5,475)	210,710	221,317	(10,607)
Adjustments	822	21,127	20,305	21,127	3,416	17,711
<b>Total appropriations provided to deliver services</b>	<b>217,007</b>	<b>231,837</b>	<b>14,830</b>	<b>231,837</b>	<b>224,733</b>	<b>7,104</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>						
Purchase of non-current physical assets	22,489	44,048	21,559	44,048	25,127	18,921
Adjustment for other funding sources	(12,076)	(33,664)	(21,588)	(33,664)	(13,496)	(20,168)
<b>Capital appropriations</b>	<b>10,413</b>	<b>10,384</b>	<b>(29)</b>	<b>10,384</b>	<b>11,631</b>	<b>(1,247)</b>
<b>Details of Income Estimates</b>						
Income disclosed as Administered Income	90	80	(10)	80	78	2
	<b>90</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>2</b>

Adjustments comprise movements in cash balances and other accrual items such as receivables.

Note 33 "Explanatory statement" and Note 42 "Explanatory statement for Administered Items" provides details of any significant variations between estimates and actual results for 2016 and between the actual results for 2016 and 2015.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

# Financial statements

### Notes to the Financial Statements

#### 1. Australian Accounting Standards

##### General

The Department of Parks and Wildlife (the Department) financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2016 have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. The term 'Australian Accounting Standards' includes Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB).

The Department has adopted any applicable new and revised Australian Accounting Standards from their operative dates.

##### Early adoption of standards

The Department cannot early adopt an Australian Accounting Standard unless specifically permitted by TI 1101 *Application of Australian Accounting Standards and Other Pronouncements*. Partial exemption permitting early adoption of AASB 2015-7 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Disclosures of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities has been granted. Aside from AASB 2015-7, there has been no early adoption of any other Australian Accounting Standards that have been issued or amended (but not operative) by the Department for the annual reporting period ended 30 June 2016.

#### 2. Summary of significant accounting policies

##### (a) General statement

The Department is a not-for-profit reporting entity that prepares general purpose financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the Framework, Statements of Accounting Concepts and other authoritative pronouncements of the AASB as applied by the Treasurer's instructions. Several of these are modified by the Treasurer's instructions to vary application, disclosure, format and wording.

The *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's instructions impose legislative provisions that govern the preparation of financial statements and take precedence over Australian Accounting Standards, the Framework, Statements of Accounting Concepts and other authoritative pronouncements of the AASB.

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

The financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting using the historical cost convention, except for land and buildings which have been measured at fair value.

The accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements have been consistently applied throughout all periods presented unless otherwise stated.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and all values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$'000).

Note 3 'Judgments made by management in applying accounting policies' discloses judgments that have been made in the process of applying the Department's accounting policies resulting in the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Note 4 'Key sources of estimation uncertainty' discloses key assumptions made concerning the future, and other key sources of estimation uncertainty at the end of the reporting period, that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

##### (c) Reporting entity

The reporting entity is the Department of Parks and Wildlife. On 1 July 2015 the Swan River Trust was incorporated into Departmental operations.

##### Mission

Working with the community, we will ensure that Western Australia's environment is valued, protected and conserved, for its intrinsic value, and for the appreciation and benefit of present and future generations.

The Department is predominantly funded by Parliamentary appropriations supplemented by fees received for the provision of services to the public. The financial statements encompass all funds through which the Department controls resources to carry on its functions.

##### Services

The Department provides the following services:

###### *Service 1: Provision of Parks and Visitor Services*

The generation of environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits through further development of a world class parks system in terms of ecosystem management and visitor facilities and services. The development of community awareness and appreciation of the State's natural environment and biodiversity and promotion of community involvement in and support for its protection and conservation.

###### *Service 2: Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities*

The development and implementation of programs for the conservation of biodiversity including the variety of life forms: the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems they form.

###### *Service 3: Conservation Partnerships*

Working with the community, industry, traditional owners and other stakeholders to deliver conservation outcomes.

###### *Service 4: Forest Management Plan Implementation*

The provision of economic, social and cultural benefits from State forest and timber reserves while conserving biodiversity, maintaining soil and water values and sustaining the health, vitality and productive capacity of the forest for current and future generations.

###### *Service 5: Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry*

Undertaking works and services that directly support forest production activities.

###### *Service 6: Prescribed Burning and Fire Management*

Delivering prescribed burning and fire management to protect the community and enhance natural values. Lands under the Department's care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

# Financial statements

### *Service 7: Bushfire Suppression*

Suppressing bushfires that threaten or occur on lands managed by the Department.

### *Service 8: Protection of the Swan and Canning River System*

Managing the Swan Canning Riverpark including assessing development proposals and delivering environmental management programs.

The Department administers assets, liabilities, income and expenses on behalf of Government which are not controlled by, nor integral to the function of the Department. These administered balances and transactions are not recognised in the principal financial statements of the Department but schedules are prepared using the same basis as the financial statements and are presented at note 41 'Disclosures of administered income and expenses by service'.

#### **(d) Contributed equity**

AASB Interpretation 1038 *Contributions by Owners Made to Wholly-Owned Public Sector Entities* requires transfers in the nature of equity contributions, other than as a result of a restructure of administrative arrangements, to be designated by the Government (the owner) as contributions by owners (at the time of, or prior to transfer) before such transfers can be recognised as equity contributions. Capital appropriations have been designated as contributions by owners by TI 955 *Contributions by Owners made to Wholly Owned Public Sector Entities* and have been credited directly to Contributed Equity.

Transfer of net assets to/from other agencies, other than as a result of a restructure of administrative arrangements, are designated as contributions by owners where the transfers are non-discretionary and non-reciprocal. The transfer of assets and liabilities and the net contribution by owners arising from the restructure of administrative arrangements have been recognised at fair value.

#### **(e) Income**

##### **Revenue recognition**

Revenue is recognised and measured at the fair value of consideration received or receivable. Revenue is recognised for the major business activities as follows:

##### *Sale of goods*

Revenue is recognised from the sale of goods and disposal of other assets when the significant risks and rewards of ownership transfer to the purchaser and can be measured reliably.

##### *Provision of services*

Revenue is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the transaction.

##### *Interest*

Revenue is recognised as the interest accrues.

##### *Service appropriations*

Service appropriations are recognised as revenues at fair value 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 to the Department's bank account or credited to the 'Amounts receivable for services' (holding account) held at Treasury.

### *Net appropriation determination*

The Treasurer may make a determination providing for prescribed receipts to be retained for services under the control of the Department. In accordance with the most recent determination, as quantified in the 2015–16 Budget Statements, the Department retained \$102.263 million in 2016 (\$81.104 million in 2015) from the following:

- proceeds from fees and charges
- sale of goods
- Commonwealth specific purpose grants and contributions
- one-off gains derived from the sale of property other than real property
- other departmental revenue.

### *Grants, donations, gifts and other non-reciprocal contributions*

Revenue is recognised at fair value when the Department obtains control over the assets comprising the contributions, usually when cash is received.

Other non-reciprocal contributions that are not contributions by owners are recognised at their fair value. Contributions of services are only recognised when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would be purchased if not donated.

*Royalties for Regions* funds are recognised as revenue at fair value in the period in which the Department obtains control over the funds. The Department obtains control of the funds at the time the funds are deposited into the Department's bank account.

### *Gains*

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

#### **(f) Property, plant and equipment**

##### **Capitalisation/expensing of assets**

Items of property, plant and equipment costing \$5,000 or more are recognised as assets and the cost of utilising assets is expensed (depreciated) over their useful lives. Items of property, plant and equipment costing less than \$5,000 are immediately expensed direct to the Statement of Comprehensive Income (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

##### **Initial recognition and measurement**

Property, plant and equipment are initially recognised at cost.

For items of property, plant and equipment acquired at no cost or for nominal cost, the cost is their fair value at the date of acquisition.

##### **Subsequent measurement**

Subsequent to initial recognition as an asset, the revaluation model is used for the measurement of land and buildings and historical cost for all other property, plant and equipment. Land and buildings are carried at fair value less accumulated depreciation (buildings only) and accumulated impairment losses. All other items of property, plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

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Where market-based evidence is available, the fair value of land and buildings is determined on the basis of current market values determined by reference to recent market transactions.

In the absence of market-based evidence, fair value of land and buildings is determined on the basis of existing use. This normally applies where buildings are specialised or where land use is restricted. Fair value for existing use buildings is determined by reference to the cost of replacing the remaining future economic benefits embodied in the asset, ie. the depreciated replacement cost.

When buildings are revalued, the accumulated depreciation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount restated to the revalued amount.

Fair value of restricted use land is determined by comparison with market evidence for land with similar approximate utility (high restricted use land) or market value of comparable unrestricted land (low restricted use land).

Land and buildings are independently valued annually by the Western Australian Land Information Authority (Valuation Services) 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.

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

### **Derecognition**

Upon disposal or derecognition of an item of property, plant and equipment, any revaluation surplus relating to that asset is retained in the asset revaluation surplus.

### **Asset revaluation surplus**

The asset revaluation surplus is used to record increments and decrements on the revaluation of non-current assets on a class of assets basis as described in note 23 'Property, plant and equipment'.

### **Depreciation**

All non-current assets 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.

Depreciation is calculated using the straight-line method, using rates which are reviewed annually. Estimated useful lives for each class of depreciable asset are:

Buildings	20 years
Furniture	10 years
Office equipment	6–7 years
Computer equipment	4 years
Communication	5–20 years
Fire protection equipment	3–10 years
Infrastructure	10–33 years
Software (a)	2.5–4 years
Aircraft	5–13 years
Vessels	5–12 years

Plant and equipment	4–20 years
Vehicles	5–14 years
Recreation and Tourism Facilities	10–33 years
(a) Software that is integral to the operation of related hardware.	

Works of art controlled by the Department are classified as property, plant and equipment. These are anticipated to have indefinite useful lives. Their service potential has not, in any material sense, been consumed during the reporting period and consequently no depreciation has been recognised. Land is not depreciated.

### **(g) Impairment of assets**

Property, plant and equipment are tested for any indication of impairment at the end of each reporting period. 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 measured at cost is written down to recoverable amount, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss. Where a previously revalued asset is written down to recoverable amount, the loss is recognised as a revaluation decrement in other comprehensive income. As the Department is a not-for-profit entity, unless a specialised asset has been identified as a surplus asset, the recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs to sell and depreciated replacement cost.

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 reflects the level of consumption or expiration of the asset's future economic benefits and to evaluate any impairment risk from falling replacement costs.

The recoverable amount of assets identified as surplus assets is the higher of fair value less costs to sell and the present value of future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Surplus assets carried at fair value have no risk of material impairment where fair value is determined by reference to market-based evidence. Where fair value is determined by reference to depreciated replacement cost, surplus assets are at risk of impairment and the recoverable amount is measured. Surplus assets at cost are tested for indications of impairment at the end of each reporting period.

### **(h) Non-current assets (or disposal groups) classified as held for sale**

Non-current assets (or disposal groups) held for sale are recognised at the lower of carrying amount or fair value less costs to sell, and are disclosed separately from other assets in the Statement of Financial Position. Assets classified as held for sale are not depreciated or amortised.

Most Crown land holdings are vested in Conservation Commission of Western Australia by the Government. Crown land holdings vested in the Conservation Commission of Western Australia are included as assets of The Department as they are under the operational control of The Department. The Department of Lands (DOL) is the only agency with the power to sell Crown land. The Conservation Commission of Western Australia transfers Crown land and any attaching buildings to DOL when the land becomes available for sale.

### **(i) Leases**

The Department holds operating leases for buildings, office equipment and motor vehicles. Lease payments are expensed on a straight-line basis over the lease term as this represents the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

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### (j) Financial instruments

In addition to cash, the Department has two categories of financial instrument:

- loans and receivables; and
- financial liabilities measured at amortised cost.

Financial instruments have been disaggregated into the following classes:

- Financial Assets
  - cash and cash equivalents
  - restricted cash and cash equivalents
  - receivables
  - amounts receivable for services
- Financial Liabilities
  - payables

Initial recognition and measurement of financial instruments is at fair value which normally equates to the transaction cost or the face value. Subsequent measurement is at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

The fair value of short-term receivables and payables is the transaction cost or the face value because there is no interest rate applicable and subsequent measurement is not required as the effect of discounting is not material.

### (k) Cash and cash equivalents

For the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash and cash equivalents (and restricted cash and cash equivalent) assets comprise cash on hand and short-term deposits with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

### (l) Accrued salaries

Accrued salaries (refer to note 26 'Payables') represent the amount due to staff but unpaid at the end of the financial year. Accrued salaries are settled within a fortnight of the financial year end. The Department considers the carrying amount of accrued salaries to be equivalent to its net fair value.

The accrued salaries suspense account (refer to note 18 'Restricted cash and cash equivalents') consists of amounts paid annually into a suspense account over a period of 10 financial years to largely meet the additional cash outflow in each 11th year when 27 pay days occur instead of the normal 26. No interest is received on this account.

### (m) Amounts receivable for services (holding account)

The Department receives funding on an accrual basis. The appropriations are paid partly in cash and partly as an asset (holding account receivable). The accrued amount receivable is accessible on the emergence of the cash funding requirement to cover leave entitlements and asset replacement.

### (n) Inventories

Inventories are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Costs are assigned by the method most appropriate for each particular class of inventory, with the majority being measured on a first in first out basis.

Publications held for distribution are measured at cost.

### (o) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at original invoice amount less an allowance for uncollectible amounts (i.e. impairment). The collectability of receivables is reviewed on an ongoing basis and any receivables identified as uncollectible are written off against the allowance account. The allowance for uncollectible amounts (doubtful debts) is raised when there is objective evidence that the Department will not be able to collect the debts. The carrying amount is equivalent to fair value as it is due for settlement within 30 days.

### (p) Payables

Payables are recognised at the amount payable when the Department becomes obliged to make future payments as a result of a purchase of assets or services. The carrying amount is equivalent to fair value, as settlement is generally within 30 days.

### (q) Provisions

Provisions are liabilities of uncertain timing or amount and are recognised where there is a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event and when the outflow of resources embodying economic benefits is probable and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. Provisions are reviewed at the end of each reporting period.

#### *Provisions employee benefits*

All annual leave and long service leave provisions are in respect of employees' services up to the end of the reporting period.

#### *Annual leave*

Annual leave is not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the reporting period and is therefore considered to be 'other long-term employee benefits'. The annual leave liability is recognised and measured at the present value of amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

When assessing expected future payments consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels including non-salary components such as employer superannuation contributions, as well as the experience of employee departures and periods of service. The expected future payments are 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.

The provision for annual leave is classified as a current liability 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.

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### *Long service leave*

Long service leave is not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the reporting period and is therefore recognised and measured at the present value of amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

When assessing expected future payments consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels including non-salary components such as employer superannuation contributions, as well as the experience of employee departures and periods of service. The expected future payments are 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.

Unconditional long service leave provisions are classified as current liabilities as the Department does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period. Pre-conditional and conditional long service leave provisions are classified as non-current liabilities because the Department has an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the liability until the employee has completed the requisite years of service.

### *Superannuation*

The Government Employees Superannuation Board (GESB) and other funds administer public sector superannuation arrangements in Western Australia in accordance with legislative requirements. Eligibility criteria for membership in particular schemes for public sector employees varies according to commencement and implementation dates.

Eligible employees contribute to the Pension Scheme, a defined benefit pension scheme closed to new members since 1987, or the Gold State Superannuation Scheme (GSS), a defined benefit lump sum scheme closed to new members since 1995.

Employees commencing employment prior to 16 April 2007 who were not members of either the Pension Scheme or the GSS became non-contributory members of the West State Superannuation Scheme (WSS). Employees commencing employment on or after 16 April 2007 became members of the GESB Super Scheme (GESBS). From 30 March 2012, existing members of the WSS or GESBS and new employees became able to choose their preferred superannuation fund provider. The Department makes concurrent contributions to GESB or other funds on behalf of employees in compliance with the *Commonwealth Government's Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992*. Contributions to these accumulation schemes extinguish the Department's liability for superannuation charges in respect of employees who are not members of the Pension Scheme or GSS.

The Department has no liabilities under the Pension Scheme or the GSS. The liabilities for the unfunded Pension Scheme and the unfunded GSS transfer benefits attributable to members who transferred from the Pension Scheme, are assumed by the Treasurer. All other GSS obligations are funded by concurrent contributions made by the Department to GESB.

GESB makes all benefit payments in respect of the Pension Scheme and GSS, and is recouped from the Treasurer for the employer's share.

The GSS, the WSS, and the GESBS, where the current service superannuation charge is paid by the Department to the GESB, are defined contribution schemes. The liabilities for current service superannuation charges under the GSS, the WSS, and the GESBS are extinguished by the concurrent payment of employer contributions to the GESB.

The GSS is a defined benefit scheme for the purposes of employees and whole-of-government reporting. However, from an agency perspective, apart from the pre-transfer benefits, it is a defined contribution plan under AASB 119.

### *Employment on-costs*

Employment on-costs, including workers' compensation insurance, are not employee benefits and are recognised separately as liabilities and expenses when the employment to which they relate has occurred. Employment on-costs are included as part of 'Other expenses' and are not included as part of the Department's 'Employee benefits expense'. The related liability is included in 'Employment on-costs provision'.

### **(r) Superannuation expense**

Superannuation expense is recognised in the profit or loss of the Statement of Comprehensive Income and comprises employer contributions paid to the GSS (concurrent contributions), the WSS, the GESBS, or other superannuation funds. The employer contribution paid to the GESB in respect of the GSS is paid back into the Consolidated Account by the GESB.

### **(s) Assets and services received free of charge or for nominal cost**

Assets or services received free of charge or for nominal cost are recognised as income at the fair value of the assets and /or the fair value of those services that can be reliably measured and the Department would otherwise pay for. A corresponding expense is recognised for services received. Receipts of assets are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

Assets or services received from other State Government agencies are separately disclosed under Income from State Government in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

### **(t) Comparative figures**

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

## **3. Judgments made by management in applying accounting policies**

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgments about the application of accounting policies that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements. The Department evaluates these judgments regularly.

### **Operating lease commitments**

The Department has entered into a number of leases for buildings for branch office accommodation. Some of these leases relate to buildings of a temporary nature and it has been determined that the lessor retains substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership. Accordingly, these leases have been classified as operating leases.

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## 4. Key sources of estimation uncertainty

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.

## Long Service Leave

Several estimations and assumptions used in calculating the Department's long service leave provision include expected future salary rates, discount rates, employee retention rates and expected future payments. Changes in these estimations and assumptions may impact on the carrying amount of the long service leave provision.

## 5. Disclosure of changes in accounting policy and estimates

## Initial application of an Australian Accounting Standard

The Department has applied the following Australian Accounting Standards effective, or adopted, for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2015 that impacted on the Department.

AASB 2013-9	<i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Conceptual Framework, Materiality and Financial Instruments</i>
	Part C of this omnibus Standard defers the application of AASB 9 to 1 January 2017. The application date of AASB 9 was subsequently deferred to 1 January 2018 by AASB 2014-1. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of AASB 9.
AASB 2014-8	<i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (December 2014) – Application of AASB 9 (December 2009) and AASB 9 (December 2010) [AASB 9 (2009 &amp; 2010)]</i>
	This Standard makes amendments to AASB 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i> (December 2009) and AASB 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i> (December 2010), arising from the issuance of AASB 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i> in December 2014. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of the Standard.
AASB 2015-3	<i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Withdrawal of AASB 1031 Materiality</i>
	This Standard completes the withdrawal of references to AASB 1031 in all Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations, allowing that Standard to effectively be withdrawn. There is no financial impact.

## Future impact of Australian Accounting Standards not yet operative

The Department cannot early adopt an Australian Accounting Standard unless specifically permitted by TI 1101 *Application of Australian Accounting Standards and Other Pronouncements* or by an exemption from TI 1101. By virtue of a limited exemption, the Department has early adopted AASB 2015-7 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Fair Value Disclosures of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities. Consequently, the Department has not applied early any of the following Australian Accounting Standards that have been issued that may impact the Department. Where applicable, the Department plans to apply these Australian Accounting Standards from their application date.

		Operative for reporting periods beginning on/after
AASB 9	<i>Financial Instruments</i>	1 Jan 2018
	This Standard supersedes AASB 139 <i>Financial instruments: Recognition and Measurement</i> , introducing a number of changes to accounting treatments.	
	The mandatory application date of this Standard is currently 1 January 2018 after being amended by AASB 2012-6, AASB 2013-9 and AASB 2014-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of the Standard.	
AASB 15	<i>Revenue from Contracts with Customers</i>	1 Jan 2018
	This Standard establishes the principles that the Department shall apply to report useful information to users of financial statements about the nature, amount, timing and uncertainty of revenue and cash flows arising from a contract with a customer. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of the Standard.	
AASB 16	<i>Leases</i>	1 Jan 2019
	This Standard introduces a single lessee accounting model and requires a lessee to recognise assets and liabilities for all leases with a term of more than 12 months, unless the underlying asset is of low value. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of the Standard.	
AASB 1057	<i>Application of Australian Accounting Standards</i>	1 Jan 2016
	This Standard lists the application paragraphs for each other Standard (and Interpretation), grouped where they are the same. There is no financial impact.	

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<p>AASB 2010-7</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (December 2010) [AASB 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 101, 102, 108, 112, 118, 120, 121, 127, 128, 131, 132, 136, 137, 139, 1023 &amp; 1038 and Int 2, 5, 10, 12, 19 &amp; 127]</i></p> <p>This Standard makes consequential amendments to other Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations as a result of issuing AASB 9 in December 2010.</p> <p>The mandatory application date of this Standard has been amended by AASB 2012-6 and AASB2014-1 to 1 January 2018. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of the Standard.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2018</p>	<p>AASB 2015-2</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure Initiative: Amendments to AASB 101 [AASB 7, 101, 134 &amp; 1049]</i></p> <p>This Standard amends AASB 101 to provide clarification regarding the disclosure requirements in AASB 101. Specifically, the Standard proposes narrow-focus amendments to address some of the concerns expressed about existing presentation and disclosure requirements and to ensure entities are able to use judgement when applying a Standard in determining what information to disclose in their financial statements. There is no financial impact.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2016</p>
<p>AASB 2014-1</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards</i></p> <p>Part E of this Standard makes amendments to AASB 9 and consequential amendments to other Standards. It has not yet been assessed by the Department to determine the application or potential impact of the Standard.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2018</p>	<p>AASB 2015-6</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Extending Related Party Disclosures to Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities [AASB 10, 124 &amp; 1049]</i></p> <p>The amendments extend the scope of AASB 124 to include application by not-for-profit public sector entities. Implementation guidance is included to assist application of the Standard by not-for-profit public sector entities. There is no financial impact.</p>	<p>1 Jul 2016</p>
<p>AASB 2014-4</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Clarification of Acceptable Methods of Depreciation and Amortisation [AASB 116 &amp; 138]</i></p> <p>The adoption of this Standard has no financial impact for the Department as depreciation and amortisation is not determined by reference to revenue generation, but by reference to consumption of future economic benefits.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2016</p>	<p>AASB 2015-8</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Effective Date of AASB 15</i></p> <p>This Standard amends the mandatory effective date (application date) of AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers so that AASB 15 is required to be applied for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018 instead of 1 January 2017. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of AASB 15.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2017</p>
<p>AASB 2014-5</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 15</i></p> <p>This Standard gives effect to the consequential amendments to Australian Accounting Standards (including Interpretations) arising from the issuance of AASB 15. The mandatory application date of this Standard has been amended by AASB 2015-8 to 1 January 2018. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of the Standard.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2018</p>	<p>AASB 2016-2</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure Initiative: Amendments to AASB 107</i></p> <p>This Standard amends AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows (August 2015) to require disclosures that enable users of financial statements to evaluate changes in liabilities arising from financing activities, including both changes arising from cash flows and non-cash changes. There is no financial impact.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2017</p>
<p>AASB 2014-7</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (December 2014)</i></p> <p>This Standard gives effect to the consequential amendments to Australian Accounting Standards (including Interpretations) arising from the issuance of AASB 9 (December 2014). The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact of the Standard.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2018</p>	<p>AASB 2016-3</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Clarifications to AASB 15</i></p> <p>This Standard clarifies identifying performance obligations, principal versus agent considerations, timing of recognising revenue from granting a licence, and, provides further transitional provisions to AASB 15. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2018</p>
<p>AASB 2015-1</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Annual Improvements to Australian Accounting Standards 2012–2014 Cycle [AASB 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 110, 119, 121, 133, 134, 137 &amp; 140]</i></p> <p>These amendments arise from the issuance of International Financial Reporting Standard Annual Improvements to IFRSs 2012–2014 Cycle in September 2014, and editorial corrections. The Department has determined that the application of the Standard has no financial impact.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2016</p>	<p>AASB 2016-4</p> <p><i>Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Recoverable Amount of Non-Cash-Generating Specialised Assets of Not-for-Profit Entities</i></p> <p>This Standard clarifies that the recoverable amount of primarily non-cash-generating assets of not-for-profit entities, which are typically specialised in nature and held for continuing use of their service capacity, is expected to be materially the same as fair value determined under AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement. The Department has not yet determined the application or the potential impact.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2017</p>



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	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>6. Employee benefits expense</b>		
Wages and salaries <sup>(a)</sup>	144,884	139,935
Superannuation – defined contribution plans <sup>(b)</sup>	13,336	13,266
Redundancy payments	2,691	4,608
	<b>160,911</b>	<b>157,809</b>
(a) Includes the value of the fringe benefit to the employee plus the fringe benefits tax component and leave entitlements including superannuation contribution component.		
(b) Defined contribution plans include West State, Gold State and GESB Super Scheme (contribution paid).		
Employment on-costs such as workers' compensation insurance are included at note 11 'Other expenses'.		
The employment on-costs liability is included at note 27 'Provisions'.		
<b>7. Supplies and services</b>		
Communications	4,164	3,982
Consultants and contractors	5,135	4,300
Services and contracts	37,031	36,601
Materials	15,044	16,293
Repairs and maintenance	6,694	5,091
Travel	4,906	4,915
Regional employee housing	3,021	3,570
Staff Costs (including uniforms & protective clothing)	4,938	4,552
Other	132	901
	<b>81,065</b>	<b>80,205</b>
<b>8. Depreciation expense</b>		
Plant, equipment and vehicles	11,146	11,697
Infrastructure	4,785	4,643
Buildings	9,657	9,463
Software	140	89
	<b>25,728</b>	<b>25,892</b>
<b>9. Accommodation expenses</b>		
Lease rentals	2,683	2,569
Electricity, power and water	2,001	2,182
	<b>4,684</b>	<b>4,751</b>

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>10. Grants and subsidies</b>		
Department of Water	3,105	0
City of South Perth	1,267	0
Western Australian Museum	850	0
Other	691	0
South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare	658	0
Perth Region Natural Resource Management	276	0
City of Bayswater	257	0
Ellen Brockman Integrated Catchment Group	223	0
ChemCentre	173	0
City of Nedlands	66	0
Shire of Ravensthorpe	0	1,339
Capel Land Conservation District	0	10
Great Southern Development Commission	0	3
Director of National Parks	0	2
	<b>7,566</b>	<b>1,354</b>
<b>11. Other expenses</b>		
Employment on-costs <sup>(a)</sup>	2,093	1,366
Operating lease – motor vehicle	8,504	8,621
Other lease, rental and hire expenses	22,422	22,423
	<b>33,019</b>	<b>32,410</b>
(a) Includes workers' compensation insurance and other employment on-costs. The on-costs liability associated with the recognition of annual and long service leave liability is included at note 27 'Provisions'. Superannuation contributions accrued as part of the provision for leave are employee benefits and are not included in employment on-costs.		
<b>12. User charges and fees</b>		
User charges	17,784	15,988
Fees	20,547	29,587
	<b>38,331</b>	<b>45,575</b>
<b>13. Commonwealth grants and contributions</b>		
Recurrent	1,694	1,275
	<b>1,694</b>	<b>1,275</b>
The Department received revenue of \$1.694 million from the Commonwealth Government during the year in relation to 27 separate conservation projects with no funds carried over at 30 June 2016.		

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	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>14. Other grants and contributions</b>		
Capital	18,441	2,105
Recurrent	26,060	18,365
	<b>44,501</b>	<b>20,470</b>

The Department received revenue of \$44.501 million from a range of private and state granting entities during the year in relation to 191 separate conservation projects and of this \$21.426 million was carried over at 30 June 2016 to be spent in 2016-17. Any unspent funds remaining at the conclusion of individual projects are returned to the relevant granting entity.

**15. Net gain/(loss) on disposal of non-current assets**

*Net Proceeds from Disposal of Non-Current Assets*

Plant and equipment, vehicles	600	930
Buildings	0	0

*Carrying amount of Non-Current Assets*

Plant and equipment, vehicles	(400)	(137)
Buildings	(23)	(28)
<b>Net gain/(loss)</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>765</b>

**16. Other revenue**

Mining compensation	9,266	5,987
Insurance refunds <sup>(a)</sup>	2,346	64
Forest and beach shack leases	871	1,305
Other	734	702
Plant fund expenditure recoup	591	921
Communication sites	544	361
Workers compensation payroll recoup	407	449
Publications	362	392
Apiary sites	254	210
Diesel fuel rebate	245	354
Sale of minor assets	34	191
	<b>15,653</b>	<b>10,936</b>

<sup>(a)</sup> Recoup of damage repair costs from the Department's insurer.

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>17. Income from State Government</b>		
Appropriation received during the period:		
- Service Appropriations <sup>(a)</sup>	224,794	219,941
	<b>224,794</b>	<b>219,941</b>

Assets found during the period:

- Buildings	981	1,058
- Property, plant and equipment	158	52
<b>Total assets found</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>1,110</b>

Services received free of charge from other State Government agencies during the period:

- Landgate	236	467
- State Solicitor's Office (Department of the Attorney-General)	439	180
- Department of Agriculture and Food	41	36
- Department of Water	1	0
- Department of Finance	183	280
- Department of Corrective Services	68	27
- Department of Fire and Emergency Services	0	1
	<b>968</b>	<b>991</b>

*Royalties for Regions Fund:*

- Regional Community Services Fund <sup>(b)</sup>	7,043	4,792
	<b>7,043</b>	<b>4,792</b>
	<b>233,944</b>	<b>226,834</b>

<sup>(a)</sup> Service appropriation fund the net cost of services delivered. Appropriation revenue comprises a cash component and a receivable (asset). The receivable (holding account) comprises the depreciation expense for the year and any agreed increase in leave liability during the year.

<sup>(b)</sup> This is a sub-fund within the over-arching 'Royalties for Regions Fund'. The recurrent funds are committed to projects and programs in WA regional areas.

**18. Restricted cash and cash equivalents**

*Current*

Cash amounts in suspense account <sup>(a)</sup>	69,987	77,241
	<b>69,987</b>	<b>77,241</b>

<sup>(a)</sup> Cash held in the account is to fund the three special purpose accounts disclosed at note 39 'Special Purpose Accounts' and a range of specific purpose accounts.

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	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>19. Inventories</b>		
<i>Current</i>		
Inventories held for resale:		
Souvenirs	699	447
Inventories held for distribution:		
Publications	582	748
	<b>1,281</b>	<b>1,195</b>

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>20. Receivables</b>		
<i>Current</i>		
Receivables	13,406	13,079
Allowance for impairment of receivables	(2)	(635)
GST receivable	2,925	1,905
Accrued revenue	772	766
	<b>17,101</b>	<b>15,115</b>

**Reconciliation of changes in the allowance for impairment of receivables:**

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Balance at start of year	635	403
Doubtful debts expense	(623)	256
Amounts written off during the year	(10)	(24)
<b>Balance at end of year</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>635</b>

The Department does not hold any collateral or other credit enhancements as security for receivables.

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>21. Amounts receivable for services (Holding Account)</b>		
Current	8,503	9,509
Non-current	134,218	121,258
	<b>142,721</b>	<b>130,767</b>

Represents 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.

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>22. Other assets</b>		
<i>Current</i>		
Prepayments	8,135	1,781
	<b>8,135</b>	<b>1,781</b>

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>23. Property, plant and equipment</b>		
Land		
At fair value <sup>(a)</sup>	2,844,227	2,842,960
	<b>2,844,227</b>	<b>2,842,960</b>
Buildings		
At fair value <sup>(a)</sup>	121,513	123,755
	<b>121,513</b>	<b>123,755</b>
Plant and equipment		
At cost	131,443	126,165
Accumulated depreciation	(69,325)	(62,733)
	<b>62,118</b>	<b>63,432</b>
Infrastructure		
At cost	72,706	70,301
Accumulated depreciation	(39,014)	(34,113)
	<b>33,692</b>	<b>36,188</b>
Vehicles		
At cost	37,771	34,611
Accumulated depreciation	(20,854)	(20,452)
	<b>16,917</b>	<b>14,159</b>
Works of art		
At cost	555	555
	<b>555</b>	<b>555</b>
Assets under construction	25,651	15,745
	<b>3,104,673</b>	<b>3,096,794</b>

(a) Land and buildings were revalued as at 1 July 2015 by the Western Australian Land Information Department (Valuation Services). The valuations were performed during the year ended 30 June 2016 and recognised at 30 June 2016. In undertaking the revaluation, fair value was determined by reference to market values for land: \$189,090,027 (2015: \$176,667,950) and buildings: \$2,351,000 (2015: \$2,720,000). For the remaining balance, fair value of land and buildings was determined on the basis of existing use or depreciated replacement cost.

Reconciliations of the carrying amounts of property, plant, equipment and vehicles and assets under construction at the beginning and end of the reporting period are set out in the table below:

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	Land	Buildings	Plant and equipment	Infrastructure	Vehicles	Works of art	Assets under construction	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>2016</b>								
Carrying amount at start of year	2,842,960	123,755	63,432	36,188	14,159	555	15,745	3,096,794
Assets not previously identified	0	981	158	0	0	0	0	1,139
Additions	17,670	887	3,313	2,103	4,647	0	15,563	44,183
Disposals	0	(23)	(286)	0	(114)	0	0	(423)
Transfers <sup>(a)</sup>	29,878	1,673	4,935	186	77	0	(5,657)	31,092
Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	(46,281)	3,897	0	0	0	0	0	(42,384)
Depreciation	0	(9,657)	(9,434)	(4,785)	(1,852)	0	0	(25,728)
<b>Carrying amount at end of year</b>	<b>2,844,227</b>	<b>121,513</b>	<b>62,118</b>	<b>33,692</b>	<b>16,917</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>25,651</b>	<b>3,104,673</b>
<b>2015</b>								
Carrying amount at start of year	3,425,629	121,106	66,318	26,458	12,786	555	25,330	3,678,182
Assets not previously identified	0	1,058	52	0	0	0	0	1,110
Additions	1,776	2,607	4,731	3,424	3,312	0	9,370	25,220
Disposals	0	(748)	(686)	0	(70)	0	0	(1,504)
Transfers <sup>(a)</sup>	8,860	6,535	2,870	10,949	64	0	(18,955)	10,323
Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	(593,305)	2,659	0	0	0	0	0	(590,645)
Depreciation	0	(9,463)	(9,853)	(4,643)	(1,933)	0	0	(25,892)
<b>Carrying amount at end of year</b>	<b>2,842,960</b>	<b>123,755</b>	<b>63,432</b>	<b>36,188</b>	<b>14,159</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>15,745</b>	<b>3,096,794</b>

(a) The Department received \$31.14 million of assets in 2015-16 and \$10.32 million of assets in 2014-15 from other agencies which has been accounted as contributed equity.

Information on fair value measurement is provided in Note 24

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## 24. Fair Value Measurements

Assets measured at fair value: 2016	Level 1 \$'000	Level 2 \$'000	Level 3 \$'000	Fair Value at end of period \$'000
Land (Note 23)	0	189,090	2,655,137	2,844,227
Buildings (Note 23)	0	2,351	119,162	121,513
	<b>0</b>	<b>191,441</b>	<b>2,774,299</b>	<b>2,965,740</b>

Assets measured at fair value: 2015	Level 1 \$'000	Level 2 \$'000	Level 3 \$'000	Fair Value at end of period \$'000
Land (Note 23)	0	176,668	2,666,292	2,842,960
Buildings (Note 23)	0	2,720	121,035	123,755
	<b>0</b>	<b>179,388</b>	<b>2,787,327</b>	<b>2,966,715</b>

## Valuation techniques to derive Level 2 fair values

Level 2 fair values of Land and Buildings (Office Accommodation) are derived using the market approach. Market evidence of sales prices of comparable land and buildings (office accommodation) in close proximity is used to determine price per square metre.

Non-current assets held for sale have been written down to fair value less costs to sell. Fair value has been determined by reference to market evidence of sales prices of comparable assets.

## Fair value measurements using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3)

2016	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000
Fair Value at start of Period	2,666,292	121,035
Additions	29,878	3,541
Revaluation increments/(decrements) recognised in Other Comprehensive Income	(41,033)	4,079
Transfers from/(to) Level 2	-	-
Disposals	-	(23)
Depreciation Expense	-	(9,470)
<b>Fair Value at end of Period</b>	<b>2,655,137</b>	<b>119,162</b>

## Fair value measurements using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3)

2015	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000
Fair Value at start of Period	2,144,133	117,545
Additions	10,472	7,545
Revaluation increments/(decrements) recognised in Other Comprehensive Income	(68,955)	5,223
Transfers from/(to) Level 2	580,642	-
Disposals	-	(27)
Depreciation Expense	-	(9,251)
<b>Fair Value at end of Period</b>	<b>2,666,292</b>	<b>121,035</b>

## Valuation Processes

There were no changes in valuation techniques during the period.

Transfers in and out of a fair value level are recognised on the date of the event or change in circumstances that caused the transfer. Transfers are generally limited to assets newly classified as non-current assets held for sale as Treasurer's instructions require valuations of land, buildings and infrastructure to be categorised within Level 3 where the valuations will utilise significant Level 3 inputs on a recurring basis.

## Land (Level 3 fair values)

Fair value for restricted use land is based on comparison with market evidence for land with low level utility (high restricted use land). The relevant comparators of land with low level utility is selected by the Western Australian Land Information Authority (Valuation Services) and represents the application of a significant Level 3 input in this valuation methodology. The fair value measurement is sensitive to values of comparator land, with higher values of comparator land correlating with higher estimated fair values of land.

## Buildings (Level 3 fair values)

Fair value for existing use specialised buildings is determined by reference to the cost of replacing the remaining future economic benefits embodied in the asset, i.e. the depreciated replacement cost. Depreciated replacement cost is the current replacement cost of an asset less accumulated depreciation calculated on the basis of such cost to reflect the already consumed or expired economic benefit, or obsolescence, and optimisation (where applicable) of the asset. Current replacement cost is generally determined by reference to the market-observable replacement cost of a substitute asset of comparable utility and the gross project size specifications.

Valuation using depreciation replacement cost utilises the significant Level 3 input, consumed economic benefit/obsolescence of asset which is estimated by the Western Australian Land Information Authority (Valuation Services). The fair value measurement is sensitive to the estimate of consumption/obsolescence, with higher values of the estimate correlating with lower estimated fair values of buildings and infrastructure.

## Basis of valuation

In the absence of market-based evidence, due to the specialised nature of some non-financial assets, these assets are valued at Level 3 of the fair value hierarchy on an existing use basis. The existing use basis recognises that restrictions or limitations have been placed on their use and disposal when they are not determined to be surplus to requirements. These restrictions are imposed by virtue of the assets being held to deliver a specific community service.

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### 25. Impairment of assets

There were no indications of impairment to property, plant and equipment at 30 June 2016.

The Department held no goodwill or intangible assets with an indefinite useful life during the reporting period and at balance sheet date there were no intangible assets not yet available for use.

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
	<u>608</u>	<u>1,743</u>
	<u>1,889</u>	<u>1,539</u>
	<u>0</u>	<u>4,660</u>
	<u>0</u>	<u>398</u>
	<u>88</u>	<u>97</u>
	<b><u>2,585</u></b>	<b><u>8,437</u></b>

### 26. Payables

#### Current

Trade payables	608	1,743
Accrued expenses	1,889	1,539
Accrued salaries	0	4,660
Accrued superannuation	0	398
Parental payment	88	97
	<b><u>2,585</u></b>	<b><u>8,437</u></b>

### 27. Provisions

#### Current

##### Employee benefits provision

Annual leave <sup>(a)</sup>	10,551	11,535
Long service leave <sup>(b)</sup>	19,059	14,215
	<u>29,610</u>	<u>25,750</u>

##### Other provisions

Employment on-costs <sup>(c)</sup>	340	319
	<u>340</u>	<u>319</u>
	<b><u>29,950</u></b>	<b><u>26,069</u></b>

#### Non-current

##### Employee benefits provision

Long service leave <sup>(b)</sup>	6,057	9,062
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##### Other provisions

Employment on-costs <sup>(c)</sup>	72	112
	<u>6,129</u>	<u>9,174</u>

(a) Annual leave liabilities have been classified as current as there is no unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period. Assessments indicate that actual settlement of the liabilities is expected to occur as follows:

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Within 12 months of the end of the reporting period	7,501	7,152
More than 12 months after the reporting period	3,050	4,383
	<b><u>10,551</u></b>	<b><u>11,535</u></b>

(b) Long service leave liabilities have been classified as current where there is no unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting period. Assessments indicate that actual settlement of the liabilities will occur as follows

Within 12 months of the end of the reporting period	7,501	14,215
More than 12 months after the reporting period	17,615	9,062
	<b><u>25,116</u></b>	<b><u>23,277</u></b>

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

The associated expense, apart from the unwinding of the discount (finance cost), is included in note 11 'Other expenses'.

#### Movements in Other Provisions

Movements in each class of provisions during the financial year, other than employee benefits, are set out below.

##### Employment on-cost provision

Carrying amount at start of period	431	464
Additional provisions recognised	(19)	(25)
<b>Carrying amount at end of period</b>	<b><u>412</u></b>	<b><u>431</u></b>

### 28. Other liabilities

#### Current

Unearned revenue	2,985	7,423
	<b><u>2,985</u></b>	<b><u>7,423</u></b>

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## 29. Equity

The Western Australian Government holds the equity interest in the Department on behalf of the community. Equity represents the residual interest in the net assets of the Department. The asset revaluation surplus represents that portion of equity resulting from the revaluation of non-current assets.

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>Contributed equity</b>		
Balance at start of period	2,971,689	2,950,430
<i>Contributions by owners</i>		
Capital appropriation	932	704
<i>Other contributions by owners</i>		
Royalties for Regions Fund – Regional Infrastructure and Headworks Account	2,725	2,524
Royalties for Regions Fund – Regional Community Services Account	6,727	8,403
<i>Transfer of net assets from other agencies</i>		
Department of Lands	2,354	0
Western Australian Planning Commission	0	8,697
Government Regional Officer Housing	0	1,056
Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia	0	400
Main Roads Western Australia	0	182
Swan River Trust	37,101	168
<b>Total contributions by owners</b>	<b>3,021,528</b>	<b>2,972,564</b>
<i>Distributions to owners</i>		
Transfer of net assets to other agencies and Government	0	(875)
<b>Total distributions to owners</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(875)</b>
<b>Balance at end of period</b>	<b>3,021,528</b>	<b>2,971,689</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Asset revaluation surplus:		
Balance at start of period	285,714	876,359
Net revaluation increments/(decrements):		
Land	(46,281)	(593,305)
Buildings	3,897	2,660
<b>Balance at end of period</b>	<b>243,330</b>	<b>285,714</b>
<b>Accumulated surplus</b>		
Balance at start of period	17,962	12,445
Result for the period	23,234	5,517
<b>Balance at end of period</b>	<b>41,196</b>	<b>17,962</b>

## 30. Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows

## Reconciliation of cash

Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the Statement of Financial Position as follows:

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Cash and cash equivalents	3,805	3,575
Restricted cash and cash equivalents (note 18 'Restricted cash and cash equivalents')	69,987	77,241
	<u>73,792</u>	<u>80,816</u>

## Reconciliation of net cost of services to net cash flows provided by/(used in) operating activities

Net cost of services	(210,710)	(221,317)
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## Non-cash items:

Depreciation expense	25,728	25,892
Services received free of charge	968	991
Adjustments for other non cash items	0	1,339
(Gain)/Loss on sale of property, plant and equipment	(177)	(765)

## (Increase)/decrease in assets:

Current receivables <sup>(a)</sup>	(326)	(3,600)
Inventories	(86)	89
Prepayments	(6,355)	(291)
Other current assets	(639)	453

## Increase/(decrease) in liabilities:

Current payables <sup>(a)</sup>	(10,278)	(534)
Current provisions	3,880	(417)
Non current provisions	(3,045)	(201)
Net GST receipts/(payments) <sup>(b)</sup>	(859)	(740)
Net Assets transferred to (from) Department of Parks and Wildlife	4,836	0

<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<b>(197,063)</b>	<b>(199,101)</b>
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(a) Note that Australian Taxation Office (ATO) receivable/payable in respect of GST and the receivable/payable in respect of the sale/purchase of non-current assets are not included in these items as they do not form part of the reconciling items.

(b) This is the net GST paid/received, i.e. cash transactions.

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### 31. Commitments

#### Non-cancellable operating lease commitments

Commitments for minimum lease payments are payable as follows:

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Within 1 year	5,202	5,770
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	7,669	8,755
Later than 5 years	19	447
	<b>12,890</b>	<b>14,972</b>

The Department's fleet leases account for \$3.4 million of the non-cancellable operating lease commitments for 2016. The lease term varies depending on the vehicle. The lease payments are fixed for the term of the lease and are payable monthly.

The capital expenditure commitments below are inclusive of GST.

#### Capital Expenditure Commitments

Capital expenditure commitments, being contracted capital expenditure additional to the amounts reported in the financial statements, are payable as follows:

Within 1 year	1,313	4,096
	<b>1,313</b>	<b>4,096</b>

#### Other expenditure commitments

Other expenditure commitments, being contracts pertaining to bushfire suppression and prescribed burning at the end of the reporting period but not recognised as liabilities, are payable as follows:

Within 1 year	8,578	4,213
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	8,060	16,427
	<b>16,638</b>	<b>20,640</b>

A prior year amount which was not reported in the prior year has been reported for comparative purposes in the current year's financial statements.

### 32. Contingent liabilities and contingent assets

#### Contingent liabilities

In addition to the liabilities included in the financial statements, the Department has the following contingent liabilities:

#### Litigation in progress

The Department has 12 litigation claims against it that may affect the Department's financial position if all claims are successful to the value of \$448,083 having regard to the excess payable under the Department's general liability insurance policy. The total contingent liability for the Department's insurer is \$83,265,659. The Department has denied liability and any legal claim will be defended.

#### Native title claims

The Department's land is subject to a number of native title claims that have yet to be assessed by the National Native Title Tribunal. The financial effect should these claims be successful cannot be estimated at this time.

#### Contaminated sites

Under the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* the Department is required to report known and suspected contaminated sites on land the Department owns or occupies or where its activities may have caused or contributed to contamination. In accordance with the Act, the Department classifies these sites on the basis of the 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.

The Department has five sites classified as "contaminated – remediation required" and 63 sites classified as "possibly contaminated - investigation required." It is not practicable to estimate the potential financial effect or to identify the uncertainties relating to the amount or timing of any outflows in relation to these sites.

### 33. Events occurring after the end of the reporting period

The Department had no adjusting or non-adjusting events after the period.

### 34. Explanatory Statement

All variances between estimates (original budget) and actual results for 2016 and between the actual results for 2015 and 2016 are shown below. Narratives are provided for key variations selected from observed major variances, which are generally greater than:

- 5% and \$6 million for the Statements of Comprehensive Income and Cash Flows; and,
- 5% and \$25.0 million for the Statement of Financial Position.

	Variance Note	Estimate 2016 \$000	Actual 2016 \$000	Actual 2015 \$000	Variance between estimate and actual \$000	Variance between actual results for 2016 and 2015 \$000
<b>Statement of Comprehensive Income (Controlled Operations)</b>						
<i>Expenses</i>						
Employee benefits expense		165,037	160,911	157,809	(4,126)	3,102
Supplies and services	1	72,405	81,065	80,205	8,660	860
Depreciation expense		19,908	25,728	25,892	5,820	(164)
Accommodation expenses		5,471	4,684	4,751	(787)	(67)
Grants and subsidies	A	6,482	7,566	1,354	1,084	6,212
Loss on disposal of non-current assets		0	0	0	0	0
Other expenses		28,019	33,019	32,410	5,000	609
<b>Total cost of services</b>		<b>297,322</b>	<b>312,973</b>	<b>302,421</b>	<b>15,651</b>	<b>10,552</b>



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	Variance Note	Estimate 2016	Actual 2016	Actual 2015	Variance between estimate and actual	Variance between actual results for 2016 and 2015		Variance Note	Estimate 2016	Actual 2016	Actual 2015	Variance between estimate and actual	Variance between actual results for 2016 and 2015
		\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000		\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
<b>Income</b>							<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>						
<i>Revenue</i>													
User charges and fees	B	37,107	38,331	45,575	1,224	(7,244)	Changes in asset revaluation surplus	4,D	0	(42,384)	(590,645)	(42,384)	548,261
Commonwealth grants and contributions		1,521	1,694	1,275	173	419	<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>(42,384)</b>	<b>(590,645)</b>	<b>(42,384)</b>	<b>548,261</b>
Other grants and contributions	2,C	29,136	44,501	20,470	15,365	24,031	<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD</b>		<b>2,315</b>	<b>(19,150)</b>	<b>(585,128)</b>	<b>(21,465)</b>	<b>565,978</b>
Interest revenue		2,988	1,907	2,083	(1,081)	(176)	<b>Statement of Financial Position (Controlled Operations)</b>						
Other revenue		10,305	15,653	10,936	5,348	4,717	<b>ASSETS</b>						
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>81,057</b>	<b>102,086</b>	<b>80,339</b>	<b>21,029</b>	<b>21,747</b>	<b>Current Assets</b>						
<i>Gains</i>													
Gains on disposal of non-current assets		80	177	765	97	(588)	Cash and cash equivalents		6,072	3,805	3,575	(2,267)	230
<b>Total Gains</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>(588)</b>	Restricted cash and cash equivalents	E	69,871	69,987	77,241	116	(7,254)
<b>Total income other than income from State Government</b>		<b>81,137</b>	<b>102,263</b>	<b>81,104</b>	<b>21,126</b>	<b>21,159</b>	Inventories		1,284	1,281	1,195	(3)	86
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>		<b>216,185</b>	<b>210,710</b>	<b>221,317</b>	<b>(5,475)</b>	<b>(10,607)</b>	Receivables	5	10,398	17,101	15,115	6,703	1,986
<b>Income from State Government</b>							Amounts receivable for services		8,503	8,503	9,509	0	(1,006)
Service appropriation	3	209,694	224,794	219,941	15,100	4,853	Other current assets	F	5,801	8,135	1,781	2,334	6,354
Services received free of charge		1,493	968	991	(525)	(23)	<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>101,929</b>	<b>108,812</b>	<b>108,416</b>	<b>6,883</b>	<b>396</b>
Assets not previously recognised		0	1,139	1,110	1,139	29	<b>Non-Current Assets</b>						
Royalties for Regions Fund		7,313	7,043	4,792	(270)	2,251	Restricted cash and cash equivalents		1,519	0	0	(1,519)	0
<b>Total income from State Government</b>		<b>218,500</b>	<b>233,944</b>	<b>226,834</b>	<b>15,444</b>	<b>7,110</b>	Amounts receivable for services		134,218	134,218	121,258	0	12,960
<b>SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD</b>		<b>2,315</b>	<b>23,234</b>	<b>5,517</b>	<b>20,919</b>	<b>17,717</b>	Property, plant and equipment	6	3,713,217	3,104,673	3,096,794	(608,544)	7,879
							<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>3,848,954</b>	<b>3,238,891</b>	<b>3,218,052</b>	<b>(610,063)</b>	<b>20,839</b>
							<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>3,950,883</b>	<b>3,347,703</b>	<b>3,326,468</b>	<b>(603,180)</b>	<b>21,235</b>

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	Variance Note	Estimate 2016	Actual 2016	Actual 2015	Variance between estimate and actual	Variance between actual results for 2016 and 2015
		\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
<b>LIABILITIES</b>						
<b>Current Liabilities</b>						
Payables		7,116	2,585	8,437	(4,531)	(5,852)
Provisions		25,765	29,950	26,069	4,185	3,881
Other current liabilities		7,919	2,985	7,423	(4,934)	(4,438)
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>40,800</b>	<b>35,520</b>	<b>41,929</b>	<b>(5,280)</b>	<b>(6,409)</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>						
Provisions		9,375	6,129	9,174	(3,246)	(3,045)
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>9,375</b>	<b>6,129</b>	<b>9,174</b>	<b>(3,246)</b>	<b>(3,045)</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>50,175</b>	<b>41,649</b>	<b>51,103</b>	<b>(8,526)</b>	<b>(9,454)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>3,900,708</b>	<b>3,306,054</b>	<b>3,275,365</b>	<b>(594,654)</b>	<b>30,689</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>						
Contributed Equity		2,992,892	3,021,528	2,971,689	28,636	49,839
Reserves	7,G	880,386	243,330	285,714	(637,056)	(42,384)
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)		27,430	41,196	17,962	13,766	23,234
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>3,900,708</b>	<b>3,306,054</b>	<b>3,275,365</b>	<b>(594,654)</b>	<b>30,689</b>
<b>Statement of Cash Flows (Controlled Operations)</b>						
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM STATE GOVERNMENT</b>						
Service appropriation	8	189,786	204,886	200,224	15,100	4,662
Capital appropriations		932	932	704	0	228
Holding account drawdowns		8,646	8,646	9,404	0	(758)
Cash and cash equivalents distributed to owner		0	2,628	(707)	2,628	3,335

	Variance Note	Estimate 2016	Actual 2016	Actual 2015	Variance between estimate and actual	Variance between actual results for 2016 and 2015
		\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Royalties for Regions Fund		16,794	16,495	15,719	(299)	776
<b>Net cash provided by State Government</b>		<b>216,158</b>	<b>233,587</b>	<b>225,344</b>	<b>17,429</b>	<b>8,243</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>						
<b>Payments</b>						
Employee benefits		(168,683)	(164,897)	(158,231)	3,786	(6,666)
Supplies and services	9	(71,106)	(81,035)	(82,028)	(9,929)	993
Accommodation		(5,469)	(4,684)	(4,768)	785	84
Grants and subsidies	H	(5,882)	(7,591)	(15)	(1,709)	(7,576)
GST payments on purchases		(11,322)	(15,152)	(12,725)	(3,830)	(2,427)
GST payments to taxation authority		0	(136)	(50)	(136)	(86)
Other payments	10	(27,905)	(34,041)	(32,851)	(6,136)	(1,190)
<b>Receipts</b>						
User charges and fees	I	37,507	42,377	36,100	4,870	6,277
Commonwealth grants and contributions		1,521	1,705	1,495	184	210
Interest received		2,988	1,098	2,288	(1,890)	(1,190)
GST receipts on sales		5,500	6,607	5,417	1,107	1,190
GST receipts from taxation authority		5,827	7,823	6,617	1,996	1,206
Other receipts	11,J	39,041	50,863	39,650	11,822	11,213
<b>Net cash (used) in operating activities</b>		<b>(197,983)</b>	<b>(197,063)</b>	<b>(199,101)</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>2,038</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>						
<b>Payments</b>						
Purchase of non-current physical assets	12,K	(22,489)	(44,048)	(25,127)	(21,559)	(18,921)

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Variance Note	Estimate 2016 \$000	Actual 2016 \$000	Actual 2015 \$000	Variance between estimate and actual \$000	Variance between actual results for 2016 and 2015 \$000
<b>Receipts</b>					
Proceeds from sale of non-current physical assets	580	500	930	(80)	(430)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used) in investing activities</b>	<b>(21,909)</b>	<b>(43,548)</b>	<b>(24,197)</b>	<b>(21,639)</b>	<b>(19,351)</b>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(3,734)	(7,024)	2,046	(3,290)	(9,070)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	<b>81,196</b>	<b>80,816</b>	<b>78,770</b>	<b>(380)</b>	<b>2,046</b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE PERIOD</b>	<b>77,462</b>	<b>73,792</b>	<b>80,816</b>	<b>(3,670)</b>	<b>(7,024)</b>

**Major Estimate and Actual (2016) Variance Narratives for Controlled Operations**

- Supplies and services exceeded estimate by \$8.7 million (12%) due to unbudgeted bushfire suppression expenditure (including major bushfires in Waroona and Esperance).
- Other grants and contributions exceeded estimates by \$15.4 million (52.7%) mainly due to receipt of grant funding from Main Roads WA for the purchase of conservation land.
- Service appropriation exceeded estimates by \$15.1 million (7.2%) due principally to funding provided for unbudgeted bushfire suppression expenditure (including major bushfires in Waroona and Esperance).
- Changes in asset revaluation surplus under estimates by \$42.4 million due to a write down of the Department's land values by the Valuer General.
- Receivables exceeded estimates by \$6.7 million (64.5%) mainly due to late timing of mining compensation invoices.
- Property, plant and equipment under estimates by \$608.5 million (16.4%) due to movement of the land values assessed by Valuer General.
- Reserves under estimates by \$637.1 million (72.4%) due to the movement of land values assessed by Valuer General.
- Service appropriation exceeded estimates by \$15.1 million (8%) due principally to funding provided for unbudgeted bushfire suppression expenditure (including major bushfires in Waroona and Esperance).
- Supplies and services exceeded estimate by \$9.9 million (14%) due to unbudgeted bushfire suppression expenditure (including major bushfires in Waroona and Esperance).
- Other payments increased by \$6.1 million (22.0%) due to amalgamation of the Swan River Trust with Department of Parks and Wildlife, incorporating Swan and Canning Rivers Management Grant Program.
- Other receipts over estimates by \$11.8 million (30.3%) due to receipt of grant funding from Main Roads WA for the purchase of conservation land.
- Purchase of non-current assets exceeded estimates by \$21.6 million (95.9%) due to conservation land acquisitions.

**Major Actual (2016) and Comparative (2015) Variance Narratives for Controlled Operations**

- Grants and subsidies increased by \$6.2 million (458.8%) due to amalgamation of the Swan River Trust with Department of Parks and Wildlife, incorporating Swan and Canning Rivers Management Grant Program.
- User charges and fees decreased by \$7.2 million (15.9%) due to higher expenditure incurred under the Western Australian National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements associated with bushfires in 2014-15.
- Other grants and contributions increased by \$24 million (117.4%) due mainly to receipt of grant funding from Main Roads WA for the purchase of conservation land.
- Changes in asset revaluation surplus increased by \$548.2 million (92.8%) due to the movement of land values assessed by Valuer General.
- Restricted cash and cash equivalents, current, decreased by \$7.3 million (9.4%) mainly attributable to the payment of the 27th pay.
- Other current assets increased by \$6.4 million (356.8%) due to prepayments, with the amalgamation of Swan River Trust into Department of Parks and Wildlife.
- Reserves decreased by \$42.4 million (14.8%) due to the movement of the land values assessed by Valuer General.
- Grants and subsidies increased by \$7.6 million (50,506.7%) due to amalgamation of the Swan River Trust with Department of Parks and Wildlife, incorporating Swan and Canning Rivers Management Grant Program.
- User charges and fees increased by \$6.3 million (17.4%) mainly due to receipt of funding under the Western Australian National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements associated with bushfires in 2014-15.
- Other receipts increased by \$11.2 million (28.3%) due to receipt of grant funding from Main Roads WA for the purchase of conservation land.
- Purchase of non-current assets increased by \$18.9 million (75.3%) due to conservation land acquisitions.

**35. Financial instruments****(a) Financial risk management objectives and policies**

Financial instruments held by the Department are cash and cash equivalents, restricted cash and cash equivalents, receivables and payables. The Department has limited exposure to financial risks. The Department's overall risk management program focuses on managing the risks identified below.

*Credit risk*

Credit risk arises when there is the possibility of the Department's receivables defaulting on their contractual obligations resulting in financial loss to the Department.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at end of the reporting period in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the gross carrying amount of those assets inclusive of any allowance for impairment, as shown the table at note 35(c) 'Financial Instruments Disclosures' and note 20 'Receivables'.

Credit risk associated with the Department's financial assets is minimal because the main receivable is the amounts receivable for services (holding account). The Department has policies in place to ensure that sales of products and services are made to customers with an appropriate credit history. In addition, receivable balances are monitored on an ongoing basis with the result that the Department's exposure to bad debts is minimal. At the end of the reporting period there were no significant concentrations of credit risk.

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### *Liquidity risk*

Liquidity risk arises when the Department is unable to meet its financial obligations as they fall due.

The Department is exposed to liquidity risk through its trading in the normal course of business. The Department has appropriate procedures to manage cash flows including drawdowns of appropriations by monitoring forecast cash flows to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet its commitments.

### *Market risk*

Market risk is the risk that changes in market prices such as foreign exchange rates and interest rates will affect the Department's income or the value of its holdings of financial instruments. The Department does not trade in foreign currency and is not materially exposed to other price risks.

Other than as detailed in the Interest rate sensitivity analysis table at note 35(c), the Department is not exposed to interest rate risk because the Department has no borrowings.

### **(b) Categories of 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:

#### **Financial Assets**

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Cash and cash equivalents	3,805	3,575
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	69,987	77,241
Loans and receivables <sup>(a)</sup>	156,897	143,977

#### **Financial Liabilities**

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	2,585	8,437
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(a) The amount of loans and receivables excludes GST recoverable from the ATO (statutory receivable).

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**(c) Financial instrument disclosures***Credit Risk*

The following table details the Department's maximum exposure to credit risk and the ageing analysis of financial assets. The Department's maximum exposure to credit risk at the end of the reporting period is the carrying amount of financial assets as shown below. The table discloses the ageing of financial assets that are past due but not impaired and impaired financial assets. The table is based on information provided to senior management of the Department.

The Department does not hold any collateral as security or other credit enhancements relating to the financial assets it holds.

**Ageed analysis of financial assets**

	Carrying Amount \$'000	Not past due and not impaired \$'000	Up to 1 month \$'000	Past due but not impaired 1-3 months \$'000	3 months to 1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	More than 5 years \$'000	Impaired financial assets \$'000
<b>2016</b>								
Cash and cash equivalents	3,805	3,805	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	69,987	69,987	0	0	0	0	0	0
Receivables <sup>(a)</sup>	14,176	12,918	428	799	26	0	0	5 <sup>(b)</sup>
Amounts receivable for services	142,721	142,721	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>230,689</b>	<b>229,431</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2015</b>								
Cash and cash equivalents	3,575	3,575	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	77,241	77,241	0	0	0	0	0	0
Receivables <sup>(a)</sup>	13,210	11,553	244	551	410	447	0	5 <sup>(b)</sup>
Amounts receivable for services	130,767	130,767	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>224,793</b>	<b>223,136</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>

(a) The amount of receivables excludes the GST recoverable from the ATO (statutory receivable).

(b) It is expected that of the staff advances that are 61+ days overdue that only \$4,595 (2015: \$5,208) of the amount owing will be recovered. The carrying amount of the receivable before deducting the impairment loss was \$9,106 (2015: \$10,416)

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### Liquidity risk and interest rate exposure

The following table details the Department's interest rate exposure and contractual maturity analysis of financial assets and financial liabilities. The maturity analysis section includes interest and principal cash flows. The interest rate exposure section analyses only the carrying amounts of each item.

#### Interest rate exposure and maturity analysis of financial assets and financial liabilities

	Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate %	Interest rate exposure				Nominal Amount \$'000	Maturity dates				
		Carrying Amount \$'000	Fixed interest rate \$'000	Variable interest rate \$'000	Non- interest bearing \$'000		Up to 1 month \$'000	1-3 months \$'000	3 months to 1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	More than 5 years \$'000
<b>2016</b>											
<i>Financial Assets</i>											
Cash and cash equivalents	2.26	3,805	0	3,805	0	3,805	3,805	0	0	0	0
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	2.26	69,987	0	69,987	0	69,987	69,987	0	0	0	0
Receivables <sup>(a)</sup>		14,176	0	0	14,176	14,176	14,176	0	0	0	0
Amounts receivable for services		142,721	0	0	142,721	142,721	0	0	8,503	46,249	87,969
		<b>230,689</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73,792</b>	<b>156,897</b>	<b>230,689</b>	<b>87,968</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8,503</b>	<b>46,249</b>	<b>87,969</b>
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>											
Payables		2,585	0	0	2,585	2,585	2,585	0	0	0	0
		<b>2,585</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

(a) The amount of receivables excludes the GST recoverable from the ATO (statutory receivable).

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# Financial statements

## Interest rate exposure and maturity analysis of financial assets and financial liabilities

	Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate %	Interest rate exposure				Nominal Amount \$'000	Maturity dates				
		Carrying Amount \$'000	Fixed interest rate \$'000	Variable interest rate \$'000	Non-interest bearing \$'000		Up to 1 month \$'000	1-3 months \$'000	3 months to 1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	More than 5 years \$'000
<b>2015</b>											
<i>Financial Assets</i>											
Cash and cash equivalents	2.70	3,575	0	3,575	0	3,575	3,575	0	0	0	0
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	2.70	77,241	0	71,528	5,713	77,241	77,241	0	0	0	0
Receivables <sup>(a)</sup>		13,210	0	0	13,210	13,210	13,210	0	0	0	0
Amounts receivable for services		130,767	0	0	130,767	130,767	0	0	9,509	35,177	86,081
		<b>224,793</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>75,103</b>	<b>149,690</b>	<b>224,793</b>	<b>94,026</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,509</b>	<b>35,177</b>	<b>86,081</b>
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>											
Payables		8,437	0	0	8,437	8,437	8,437	0	0	0	0
		<b>8,437</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8,437</b>	<b>8,437</b>	<b>8,437</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

(a) The amount of receivables excludes the GST recoverable from the ATO (statutory receivable).

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### Interest rate sensitivity analysis

The following table represents a summary of the interest rate sensitivity of the Department's financial assets and liabilities at the end of the reporting period on the surplus for the period and equity for a 1% change in interest rates. It is assumed that the change in interest rates is held constant throughout the reporting period.

	Carrying amount \$000	-100 basis points		+100 basis points	
		Surplus \$000	Equity \$000	Surplus \$000	Equity \$000
<b>2016</b>					
<i>Financial Assets</i>					
Cash and cash equivalents	3,805	(38)	(38)	38	38
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	69,987	(700)	(700)	700	700
<b>Total Increase/(Decrease)</b>		<b>(738)</b>	<b>(738)</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>738</b>
	Carrying amount \$000	-100 basis points		+100 basis points	
		Surplus \$000	Equity \$000	Surplus \$000	Equity \$000
<b>2015</b>					
<i>Financial Assets</i>					
Cash and cash equivalents	3,575	(36)	(36)	36	36
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	77,241	(772)	(772)	772	772
<b>Total Increase/(Decrease)</b>		<b>(808)</b>	<b>(808)</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>808</b>

### Fair Values

All financial assets and liabilities recognised in the Statement of Financial Position, whether they are carried at cost or fair value, are recognised at amounts that represent a reasonable approximation of fair value unless otherwise stated in the applicable notes.

### 36. Remuneration of senior officers

The number of senior officers, whose total fees, salaries, superannuation, non-monetary benefits and other benefits for the financial year fall within the following bands are:

Remuneration Band (\$)	2016	2015
170,001 – 180,000	0	1
180,001 – 190,000	2	1
190,001 – 200,000	2	0
200,001 – 210,000	1	2
210,001 – 220,000	2	2
250,001 – 260,000	0	1
260,001 – 270,000	1	0
380,001 – 390,000	1	0
430,001 – 440,000	0	1

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Base remuneration and superannuation	1,812	1,518
Annual leave and long service leave accruals	(1)	116
Adjustment for accruals	(51)	(4)
Other benefits	291	245
<b>Total remuneration of senior officers</b>	<b>2,051</b>	<b>1,875</b>

Total remuneration includes the superannuation expense incurred by the Department in respect of senior officers.

### 37. Remuneration of Auditor

Remuneration paid or payable to the Auditor General in respect of the audit for the current financial year is as follows:

Auditing the accounts, controls, financial statements and key performance indicators	187	183
	<b>187</b>	<b>183</b>

### 38. Affiliated bodies

The following are government affiliated bodies that received administrative support from the Department, but are not subject to operational control by the Department.

Conservation and Parks Commission <sup>(a)</sup>	114	0
Conservation Commission <sup>(a)</sup>	719	740
Marine Parks and Reserves Authority <sup>(a)</sup>	62	103
	<b>895</b>	<b>843</b>

<sup>(a)</sup> The Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority were replaced through amendments to the *CALM Act* effective 7 May 2016. The new body is the Conservation and Parks Commission.

### 39. Special purpose accounts

#### Special Purpose Account section 16 1(b) of FMA

##### Nature Conservation and National Parks Account

The purpose of the account is for scientific research relating to flora and fauna.

Balance at start of period	174	127
Receipts	43	48
Payments	(30)	(1)
<b>Balance at end of period</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>174</b>



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	2016	2015
	\$'000	\$'000

**Barrow Island Net Conservation Benefit Account**

The purpose of the account is for the funding of ongoing programs that will provide demonstrable and sustainable additions to or improvements in biodiversity conservation values of Western Australia targeting, where possible, the biodiversity conservation values affected or occurring in similar bioregions to Barrow Island.

Balance at start of period	7,802	9,038
Receipts	2,503	2,546
Payments	(4,513)	(3,782)
<b>Balance at end of period</b>	<b>5,792</b>	<b>7,802</b>

**National Parks Essential Works Account**

This account is established under section 69(2) of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* to hold net proceeds in respect of forest produce taken or received under section 99A *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* and from which moneys shall be applied only for the purposes of land to which Division 2 of VIII of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* applies.

There were no transactions through the account for the reporting period. The account had a zero balance at the end of the reporting period.

**40. Supplementary financial information****(a) Write-offs**

During the financial year \$9,856.90 was written off as bad debts and \$97,948.66 of the Department's asset and public property register under the authority of:

The Accountable Authority	108	55
The Minister	0	0
Executive Council	0	0
	<b>108</b>	<b>55</b>

The amount approved for write off during the year of \$97,948 (2015: \$30,387) relates to losses through theft, defaults and other causes disclosed at note 40(b) below.

**(b) Losses through theft, defaults and other causes**

Losses of public money and, public and other property through theft or default.	98	30
Amounts recovered	0	0
	<b>98</b>	<b>30</b>

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Financial statements

41. Disclosure of administered income and expenses by service<sup>(a)</sup>

	Provision of Parks and Visitor Services	Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities	Conservation Partnerships	Forest Management Plan Implementation	Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry	Prescribed Burning and Fire Management	Bushfire Suppression	Protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers System	Tot
	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	2016 \$'000	20 \$'0
<b>COST OF SERVICES</b>									
<i>Income</i>									
Regulatory fees and charges	0	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other revenue	0	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Total administered income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<i>Expenses</i>									
Transfer payments <sup>(b)</sup>	0	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Total administered Expenses</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Net Income from Administered items</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

<sup>(a)</sup>A new Service Structure was implemented on 1 July 2015; therefore no comparative figures are available, however prior year service structure follows on the next page

<sup>(b)</sup>Transfer payments represent the transfer of non-retainable regulatory and royalty fees to the Consolidated Account.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

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## 2015 Disclosure of administered income and expenses by service

	Parks Management	Wildlife Management	Forest Management	Total
	2015 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>COST OF SERVICES</b>				
<i>Income</i>				
Regulatory fees and charges	0	37	0	37
Other revenue	0	41	0	41
<b>Total administered income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78</b>
<i>Expenses</i>				
Transfer payments <sup>(a)</sup>	0	78	0	78
<b>Total administered expenses</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Net Income from Administered Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>(a)</sup>Transfer payments represent the transfer of non-retainable regulatory fees to the Consolidated Account.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

# Financial statements

### 42. Explanatory Statement for Administered Items

All variances between estimates (original budget) and actual results for 2016, and between the actual results for 2016 and 2015 are shown below. Narratives are provided for key major variances, which are generally greater than 5% and \$1,600.

	Variance Note	Estimate 2016 \$000	Actual 2016 \$000	Actual 2015 \$000	Variance between estimate and actual \$000	Variance between actual results for 2016 and 2015 \$000
<b>INCOME FROM ADMINISTERED ITEMS INCOME</b>						
For transfer:						
Regulatory fees and charges	1,A	30	41	37	11	4
Other Revenue	2,B	60	39	41	(21)	(2)
<b>Total Administered Income</b>		<b>90</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
Transfer payments	3	90	80	78	(10)	2
<b>Total Administered Expenses</b>		<b>90</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>NET INCOME FROM ADMINISTERED ITEMS</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### Major Estimate and Actual Variance Narratives for Administered Items

- 1) Regulatory fees and other charges exceeded estimates by \$0.011 million (36.7%) due to increased enforcement activity.
- 2) Other revenue was under estimates by \$0.021 million (35.0%) due to fewer kangaroo shooter royalty tags being issued than was estimated.
- 3) Transfer payments were under estimates by \$0.010 million (11.1%) and reflect payments to the Consolidated Account of income items mentioned in Variance Notes 1) and 2) above.

#### Major Actual (2016) and Comparative (2015) Variance Narratives for Administered Items

- A) Regulatory fees and other charges exceeded prior year by \$0.004 million (9.8%) due to increased enforcement activity.
- B) Other revenue in 2015-16 was \$0.002 million (5.1%) less than the prior year due to a reduction in kangaroo shooter royalty tags being issued.

Disclosures and legal compliance

## Certification

### **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 Parks and Wildlife's performance, and fairly represent the performance of the Department of Parks and Wildlife for the financial year ended 30 June 2016.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Sharp', written in a cursive style.

**Jim Sharp**

Accountable Authority  
16 September 2016

# Key performance indicators

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

### Outcome Based Management Structure

Government goal	Desired outcomes	Services and performance indicators
Social and Environmental Responsibility: Ensuring that economic activity is managed in a socially and environmentally responsible manner for the long-term benefit of the State	1. Community enjoyment of the State's national parks, marine parks, State forest and other reserves.	<b>1. Provision of Parks and Visitor Services</b>  Key effectiveness indicator: 1. Average level of visitor satisfaction with their visit  Key efficiency indicators KPI 1.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Parks
	2. The State's native plants and animals are conserved and habitat, ecosystem and landscape-scale conservation are based on best practice science	<b>2. Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities</b>  Key effectiveness indicator: 1. Proportion of critically endangered and endangered taxa and ecological communities that have a recovery plan  Key efficiency indicators KPI 2.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Wildlife Habitat  <b>3. Conservation Partnerships</b>  Key efficiency indicators KPI 3.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Wildlife Habitat
	3. The State's plants and animals and the lands and waters under the Department's care are managed for tourism, water and wood production, and other approved uses	<b>4. Forest Management Plan Implementation</b>  Key effectiveness indicator: 1. Cumulative removal of jarrah sawlogs by approved harvesting operations compared to limits in the Forest Management Plan 2. Cumulative removal of karri sawlogs by approved harvesting operations compared to limits in the Forest Management Plan  Key efficiency indicators KPI 4.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Forest  <b>5. Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry</b>  Key efficiency indicators KPI 5.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Forest Available for Timber Harvesting

Government goal	Desired outcomes	Services and performance indicators
	4. Lands under the Department's care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives	<b>6. Prescribed Burning and Fire Management</b>  Key effectiveness indicator: 1. Proportion of planned Priority 1 prescribed burns achieved  Key efficiency indicators KPI 6.1 Average Cost per Hectare Burnt  <b>7. Bushfire Suppression</b>  Key effectiveness indicator: 2. Proportion of South West bushfires contained to less than two hectares  Key efficiency indicators KPI 7.1 Average Cost per Hectare Burnt
	5. The ecological health and community benefit of the Swan and Canning rivers is protected	<b>8. Protection of the Swan and Canning River System</b>  Key effectiveness indicator: 1. Proportion of river ecosystem health targets achieved  Key efficiency indicators KPI 8.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Managing the Swan Canning Riverpark

On 1 July 2015 the Department of Parks and Wildlife updated its Outcome Based Management structure, recategorising its activities from three services to eight services. This structure aligns more closely with strategic priorities set out in the *Strategic Directions 2014 – 2017* plan adopted by the Department and incorporates the amalgamation of the Swan River Trust as at 1 July 2015 as the eighth service.

Comparative figures for 2014-15 are available for all effectiveness indicators. Comparative figures for efficiency indicators are not available due to costs for former services now being distributed across the new Departmental services.

# Disclosures and legal compliance

## Key performance indicators

### Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators

#### Outcome 1: Community enjoyment of the State's national parks, marine parks, State forest and other reserves:

##### 1. Average level of visitor satisfaction with their visit

The average level of customer satisfaction with their visit is a key indicator of the department's effectiveness in delivering parks and other natural areas that allow the community to understand, enjoy and appreciate the natural environment. Visitor satisfaction levels are consistently high.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Target	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%
Actual	88.0%	89.1%	87.9%	91.4%

**Note to indicator:** A benchmark visitor satisfaction index has been adopted to compare visitor satisfaction levels each year. This benchmark has been set at 85 per cent. The index is averaged from visitor responses (1,008 in 2015-16; confidence level 95%; margin of error 0.73%) to the statewide visitor satisfaction survey and park-wide surveys conducted at selected parks, reserves and forest areas around the state. The survey sample is stratified across the state by visitation distribution and collected in both peak and off-peak periods that includes weekday, weekends, public holidays and school holidays.

Statewide visitor satisfaction surveys are conducted on-site by a departmental officer or volunteer at major recreation areas within parks such as picnic areas and campgrounds. The target population are members of the general public who visit Parks and Wildlife-managed land and waters of a park or protected area for purposes mandated for the area. The statewide visitor satisfaction surveys (983 conducted) are administered via a structured interview via department staff and volunteers and are recorded on either paper or tablet. Respondents contact details are collected for audit purposes on an opt-in basis. The interview is voluntary. All respondents receive the same set of questions, asked in the same order or sequence by the interviewer who has been instructed to treat every interview situation in a like manner and ensuring they are playing a neutral role.

In addition to the statewide visitor satisfaction survey, some results are collated using park-wide surveys at indicator sites that contain the same two satisfaction questions used to calculate the result for this KPI. The park-wide surveys were collected via face to face interviews by an external contractor, recorded on a tablet, with similar parameters as described above. Park-wide surveys contain a broader range of questions as they are used to inform individual park management based on the research aims e.g. better understanding of camping in national parks. A random sample is extracted from the total park-wide surveys' dataset (sample of 25) and included in the overall statewide KPI for satisfaction. Tests of significance are conducted to determine any potential sampling irregularities.

The average level of visitor satisfaction is based upon the average response of two survey questions: (1) 'How would you rate your visit overall?' and (2) 'How did you feel about your visit today?' The level of satisfaction for 2015-16 remained consistently high and exceeded the target of 85 per cent. This is consistent with previous years.

#### Outcome 2: The State's native plants and animals are conserved and habitat, ecosystem and landscape-scale conservation are based on best practice science:

##### 1. Proportion of critically endangered and endangered taxa and ecological communities that have a recovery plan

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Target	68.0%	69.0%	68.0%	69.0%
Actual	69.3%	69.4%	68.9%	69.4%

**Note to indicator:** Recovery plans are prepared for threatened species to outline the actions needed to improve the conservation status of those species and provide guidance to managers for implementing recovery actions. The proportion of species and communities covered by recovery plans varies each year as additional plans are prepared and new species or communities added to the lists.

#### Outcome 3: The State's plants and animals and the lands and waters under the Department's care are managed for tourism, water and wood production, and other approved uses:

##### 1. Cumulative removal of jarrah sawlogs by approved harvesting operations compared to limits in the Forest Management Plan

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Target	1,310,000m <sup>3</sup>	132,000m <sup>3</sup>	264,000m <sup>3</sup>
Actual	1,157,348m <sup>3</sup>	71,195m <sup>3</sup>	169,993m <sup>3</sup>

**Note to indicator:** The 2013-14 Actual is the cumulative removal of first and second grade jarrah sawlogs over the 10 year period of the 2004-2013 Forest Management Plan. The 2014-15 Target is 10 per cent of the cumulative 10 year limit in the 2014-2023 Forest Management Plan, which commenced on 1 January 2014. The 2014-15 Actual removals of first and second grade jarrah sawlogs are lower than the pro-rata limit reflecting market conditions. The 2015-16 target is 20 per cent (or two years equivalent) of the cumulative 10 year limit in the 2014-2023 Forest Management Plan. The 2015-16 Actual removals of first and second grade jarrah sawlogs are lower than the pro-rata limit reflecting market conditions. Removal of first and second grade jarrah sawlogs under the 2014-2023 Forest Management Plan is reconciled on a calendar year basis. Minor adjustments (if required) for variations in product specifications will be applied in the reporting for the mid-term performance review of the Forest Management Plan. The actual cumulative total is obtained from the Logging Operations Information System (LOIS), a computer database which tracks log products removed from harvest coupes.

##### 2. Cumulative removal of karri sawlogs by approved harvesting operations compared to limits in the Forest Management Plan

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Target	540,000m <sup>3</sup>	59,000m <sup>3</sup>	118,000m <sup>3</sup>
Actual	539,540m <sup>3</sup>	40,580m <sup>3</sup>	83,857m <sup>3</sup>

**Note to indicator:** The 2013-14 Actual is the cumulative removal of first and second grade karri sawlogs over the 10 year period of the 2004-2013 Forest Management Plan. The 2014-15 Target is 10 per cent of the cumulative 10 year limit in the 2014-2023 Forest Management Plan, which commenced on 1 January 2014. The 2014-15 Actual removals of first and second grade karri sawlogs are lower than the pro-rata limit reflecting market conditions. The 2015-16 target is 20 per cent (or two years equivalent) of the cumulative 10 year limit in the 2014-2023 Forest Management Plan. The 2015-16

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Key performance indicators

Actual removals of first and second grade karri sawlogs are lower than the pro-rata limit reflecting market conditions. Removal of first and second grade karri sawlogs under the 2014-2023 Forest Management Plan is reconciled on a calendar year basis. Minor adjustments (if required) for variations in product specifications will be applied in the reporting for the mid-term performance review of the Forest Management Plan. The actual cumulative total is obtained from the Logging Operations Information System (LOIS), a computer database which tracks log products removed from harvest coupes.

**Outcome 4: Lands under the Department's care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives:**

#### 1. Proportion of planned Priority 1 prescribed burns achieved

	2014-15	2015-16
Target	45%	50%
Actual	42%	64%

**Note to indicator:** This year's prescribed burning program was assisted by additional Royalties for Regions funding.

Reflecting the transition to new performance measures, the 2014-15 data is for a seasonal 8 month period from 8 August 2014 to 29 March 2015, the 2015-16 data is for a 15 month period 30 March 2015 to 30 June 2016, while for 2016-17 onwards the measurement period will be standardised to a 12 month financial year period.

#### 2. Proportion of South West bushfires contained to less than two hectares

	2014-15	2015-16
Target	75%	75%
Actual	75%	75%

**Note to indicator:** Historically, the Department has been able to detect and respond reasonably quickly to most bushfires in the South West, so as to contain them to two hectares or less in size. This target was achieved by the Department during the 2015-16 financial year.

**Outcome 5: The ecological health and community benefit of the Swan and Canning rivers is protected:**

#### 1. Proportion of river ecosystem health targets achieved

	2014-15	2015-16
Target	55%	55%
Actual	58%	58%

**Note to indicator:** Water quality throughout the Swan Canning river system is regularly monitored and assessed against ecosystem health targets for 15 catchments and four estuary zones.

## Key Efficiency Indicators

### Service 1: Provision of Parks and Visitor Services

#### 1.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Parks

Management of lands and waters; dealing with public involvement, visitation and appreciation of the natural environment on lands and waters managed by the Department.

	2015-16
Target	\$2.85
Actual	\$2.73

**Note to indicator:** The difference between the target and actual costs reported for 2015-16 has largely been as a result of the Department expanding the reporting of services from three in 2014-15 to eight in 2015-16.

### Service 2: Conserving Habitats, Species and Ecological Communities

#### 2.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Wildlife Habitat

Relates to costs associated with the development and implementation of programs for the conservation of biodiversity including the variety of life forms: the different plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems they form.

	2015-16
Target	\$2.55
Actual	\$2.24

**Note to indicator:** The overall efficiency of land management for wildlife will vary with the change in total cost of the service, with changes in the total cost reflecting inputs into specific wildlife management programs. There were no significant additions to the area of land managed, however, a reduction in the total cost of the service resulted in a small reduction in the cost per hectare managed.

### Service 3: Conservation Partnerships

#### 3.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Wildlife Habitat

Working with the community, industry, traditional owners and other stakeholders to deliver conservation outcomes

	2015-16
Target	\$1.15
Actual	\$0.91

**Note to indicator:** The total cost of implementing programs for managing wildlife habitat will vary depending on the level of support from external funding sources, and the time period over which that support is to be expended. While there was a significant level of support from external funding sources during the year, not all of this was expended in the financial year, resulting in a reduction in the actual average cost per hectare for managing wildlife habitat from these funding sources from the estimated value.



# Disclosures and legal compliance

## Key efficiency indicators

### Service 4: Forest Management Plan Implementation

#### 4.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Forest

The figure used is the accrual basis average gross cost per hectare of managing State forest and timber reserves in accordance with the relevant management plan. The area managed is less than the area gazetted, as State forest and timber reserves that are proposed to become part of the formal conservation reserve system in the *Forest Management Plan 2014–2023* are being managed as if the land category change had already occurred.

	2015–16
Target	\$10.46
Actual	\$6.90

**Note to indicator:** The difference between the target and actual costs reported for 2015-16 has largely been as a result of the Department expanding the reporting of services from three in 2014-15 to eight in 2015-16. This has adjusted the allocation of corporate costs across the various services contributing to the variance.

### Service 5: Provision of Services for Commercial Forestry

#### 5.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Forest Available for Timber Harvesting

Undertaking works and services that directly support forest production activities

	2015–16
Target	\$10.78
Actual	\$10.00

**Note to indicator:** The difference between the target and actual costs reported for 2015-16 has been due to the adjustment of the allocation of corporate costs across the various services and seasonal weather conditions reducing the extent of jarrah silvicultural burning activities.

### Service 6: Prescribed Burning and Fire Management

#### 6.1 Average Cost per Hectare Burnt

Delivering prescribed burning and fire management to protect the community and enhance natural values. Lands under the Department’s care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets from bushfire damage and planned fire is used to achieve other land, forest and wildlife management objectives.

	2015–16
Target	\$10.86
Actual	\$18.61

**Note to indicator:** The increase in the reported average cost per hectare prescribed burnt has resulted from there being both an increase in the reported cost of service, as well as a reduction in the area prescribed burnt in 2015-16 to 2.51 million hectares when compared to the figure of 3.46 million hectares that was used to calculate target average cost per hectare prescribed burnt for 2015-16. While the area prescribed burnt has reduced there have been significant costs incurred in edging and burn preparation for future prescribed burns.

### Service 7: Bushfire Suppression

#### 7.1 Average Cost per Hectare Burnt

Suppressing bushfires that threaten or occur on lands managed by the Department.

	2015–16
Target	\$14.39
Actual	\$31.68

**Note to indicator:** The increase in the reported average cost per hectare subject to bushfire has resulted from there being both an increase in the reported cost of service, as well as a reduction in the area subject to bushfire in 2015-16 to 1.88 million hectares when compared to the figure of 2.21 million hectares used to calculate the target average cost per hectare subject to bushfire in 2015-16. Costs were higher because of significant fire events that occurred in the southwest of the State (principally the January 2016 Waroona fire) which increased the average cost compared to lower cost per hectare bushfires in the Kimberley and Pilbara.

### Service 8: Protection of the Swan and Canning River System

#### 8.1 Average Cost per Hectare of Managing the Swan Canning Riverpark

Managing the Swan Canning Riverpark including assessing development proposals and delivering environmental management programs

	2015–16
Target	\$2.35
Actual	\$2,250

**Note to indicator:** The target in the 2015-16 Budget Statements was stated as \$2.35 on the basis of \$’000, so the actual budget target is \$2,350 per hectare. The area used in the calculation consists of the number of hectares of Riverpark for which the Department of Parks and Wildlife is responsible under the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* (the “SCRM”), comprising the Swan Canning waterway (vested with Parks and Wildlife) and the adjoining public lands (vested with State and Local Authorities) included in the Parks and Recreation Reservation created under the Metropolitan Region Scheme. Actual average cost per hectare was in line with the adjusted target figure for the 2015-16 financial year. It should be noted that other state and local government authorities listed in Schedule 5 of the SCRM also carry out management functions within the Riverpark.

Disclosures and legal compliance

## Ministerial directives

### Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during the financial year.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Other financial disclosures

## Pricing policies

The Department is largely funded by appropriations; however, fees are charged for a range of goods, services and licensing arrangements on a full or partial cost recovery basis. Fees and charges are determined in accordance with *Costing and Pricing Government Services: Guidelines for Use by Agencies in the Western Australian Public Sectors* published by Treasury. Fees are reviewed annually.

## Capital works: incomplete and completed

The Department's planned capital works program of \$22.489 million for 2015–16 provided funds for buildings, tourism roads and park facilities, plant and equipment, conservation land purchases and firefighting fleet replacement.

Table 13: Summary of major capital works undertaken

Works in progress	Expected year of completion	Estimated expenditure remaining \$'000	Estimated total project cost \$'000
Great Kimberley Marine Park	2016–17	1410	2740
<i>Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy</i> tourism initiatives	2016–17	842	3115
<i>Parks for People Caravan and Camping</i> initiative	2017–18	4823	21,050
Kalbarri Skywalk and National Park tourist infrastructure	2017–18	18,508	20,033
Bunbury headquarters and public access facilities	2018–19	17,350	18,000
Public recreation and joint management arrangements for the Ningaloo Coast	2018–19	3075	3125
Recurring capital programs	Expected year of completion		2015–16 expenditure \$'000
Conservation land acquisition	Ongoing		17,960
Fire-related bridge maintenance and replacement	Ongoing		1571
Firefighting fleet and equipment	Ongoing		5651
Park improvement program	Ongoing		13,009
Plant and equipment purchase and replacement	Ongoing		4644
Tourism road improvements	Ongoing		1200

## Employment and industrial relations

Table 14: Staff profile

	2015–16	2014–15
Full-time permanent	1034	1054
Full-time contract	239	278
Part-time measured on a FTE basis	186	147
On secondment	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1460</b>	<b>1481</b>

## Other financial disclosures

### Industrial relations

The People Services Branch provides strategic industrial relations advice, manages employee relations issues and represents the Department in industrial relations tribunals. The focus for 2015–16 was to negotiate the replacement of the *Rangers (National Parks) General Agreement* with the United Voice and commence preparations for the renegotiation of two of the agency-specific fire agreements.

### Staff development

#### Nationally recognised training

During 2015–16, the Department of Parks and Wildlife's Registered Training Organisation (National ID 0397) received 384 enrolments for nationally recognised qualifications, accredited courses and/or units of competency and issued 22 Certificates of Qualification and 588 Statements of Attainment. These enrolments and completions resulted from learning and development programs offered by the Department and attended by personnel employed by the Department or agencies that form part of its bureau service.

#### Corporate training

The Department received 1386 enrolments for corporate training programs delivered in 2015–16, with 705 of these being for face-to-face training and 623 for training delivered via e-learning.

### Leadership training

In 2015–16 Parks and Wildlife selected 23 personnel to take part in its *Aspiring Leaders* program, a program targeted at middle management, in particular those working at PSA levels 5 and 6 (or equivalent) and who aspire to increased management responsibility. Sessions 1–3 were delivered, with the remaining two sessions scheduled for 2016–17.

### E-learning

In 2015–16 Parks and Wildlife established its *Centralised Learning Management System*, an online training system that provides personnel with a unified e-learning experience.

At 30 June 2016, the system had 1177 users. In 2015–16, 1640 enrolments were received across 10 courses hosted on the system.

### Workers' compensation

The Department recognises there is a direct relationship between work health and safety and workers' compensation and injury management. An increase in the number or severity of incidents leads to increased costs. Equally relevant is the strong link between a safe and healthy workplace and performance.

Although the major objective is caring for employees and looking after their health and safety, there is a return on investment in implementing an effective workers' compensation and injury management system and related procedures to minimise insurance premiums and associated costs.

In 2015–16, the Department's contribution to workers' compensation (adjusted) was \$2,255,751 compared with \$1,502,476 (adjusted) for the previous year. The number of lost time injuries in 2015–16 was 50 (up from 41 in 2014–15), with 61 medical treatment injuries (up from 46 in 2014–15).

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Governance disclosures

## Unauthorised use of credit cards

Officers of the Department of Parks and Wildlife hold corporate credit cards where their functions warrant usage of this facility including to meet travel costs. To 30 June 2016, there were 29 personal transactions charged to credit cards by 20 cardholders, most occurring as a result of mistaking a Government credit card for a personal credit card for small transactions where a PIN was not required; or a merchant's online payment facilities defaulting to the Government credit card details provided on a previous occasion. In each case, the cardholder provided written advice to their cost centre manager, chief finance officer and notifiable authority of the personal use of a Government credit card, consistent with the requirements of *Treasurer's Instruction 321-2*.

**Table 15: Unauthorised use of credit cards**

	2015–16 (31 December 2015 –30 June 2016)
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure for the reporting period	\$2494
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure settled by the due date (within 5 working days)	\$244
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure settled after the period (after 5 working days)	\$2250
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure outstanding at balance date	\$0

## Contracts with senior officers

At the date of reporting, senior officers of the Department held no contracts with the Department other than normal employment contracts. No senior officers of the Department had substantial interests in entities with existing or proposed contracts or agreements with the Department.

# Governance disclosures

## Board and committee remuneration

The following boards and committees form part of Parks and Wildlife responsibility and where remuneration is paid, this is highlighted below.

- Conservation and Parks Commission
- Conservation Commission of Western Australia
- Marine Parks and Reserves Authority
- Shark Bay World Heritage Advisory Committee
- Purnululu World Heritage Area Advisory Committee
- Roadside Conservation Committee
- Swan River Trust Board
- Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional (Miriuwung Gajerrong) Park Council
- Animal Ethics Committee (Parks and Wildlife)
- Dieback Consultative Council

**Table 16: Board and committee remuneration**

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
<b>Conservation and Parks Commission (established 7 May 2016)</b>				
Chair	Marion Fulker	Sessional	7/5/16 to 30/6/16	0
Deputy Chair	Christopher Doepel	Sessional	7/5/16 to 30/6/16	2681
Member	Kim Colero	Sessional	7/5/16 to 30/6/16	1519
Member	Ingrid Cumming	Sessional	7/5/16 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Ross Dowling	Sessional	7/5/16 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Regina Flugge	Sessional	7/5/16 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Brian Middleton	Sessional	7/5/16 to 30/6/16	0
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>4200</b>
<b>Conservation Commission of Western Australia (ceased 6 May 2016, replaced by the Conservation and Parks Commission)</b>				
Chair	Brian Easton	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	30,521
Deputy Chair	William Mitchell	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	11,396
Member	Vanessa Davies	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	7245
Member	Wade De Campo	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	6525
Member	Ross Dowling	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	6521
Member	Regina Flugge	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	6521
Member	Steve Harvey	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	0
Member	Brian Middleton	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	6525
Member	David Newsome	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	0
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>75,253</b>

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Governance disclosures

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
<b>Marine Parks and Reserves Authority (ceased 6 May 2016, replaced by the Conservation and Parks Commission)</b>				
Chair	Tom Hatton	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/6/16	9091
Deputy Chair	Christopher Doepel	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	11,095
Member	Kim Colero	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	6295
Member	Jeff Cooper	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	0
Member	Ida Holt	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	8114
Member	Kellie Pendoley	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	7814
Member	Diana Walker	Sessional	1/7/15 to 6/5/16	8114
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>50,523</b>
<b>Shark Bay World Heritage Committee</b>				
Chair	Thomas Day	Sessional	19/5/16 to 30/6/16	1274
Member	Paul Anderson	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Laurence Bellottie	Sessional	1/7/2015 to 4/11/2015	1251
Member	Keith Capewell	Sessional	1/7/2015 to 30/6/2016	1459
Member	Jane Garrett	Sessional	19/5/16 to 30/6/16	625
Member	Sue Graham-Taylor	Sessional	1/7/15 to 4/11/2015	834
Member	Peter Green	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1668
Member	Robert Morgan	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1877
Member	Therese Morris	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2502
Member	Harvey Raven	Sessional	1/7/15 to 4/11/15	0
Member	Phillip Scott	Sessional	19/5/16 to 30/6/16	834
Member	Diana Walker	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1668
Member	Geoffrey Wardle	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>13,992</b>

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Governance disclosures

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
<b>Purnululu World Heritage Area Advisory Committee</b>				
Chair	Christopher Done	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1688
Member	Tanba Banks	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1097
Member	Dwayne Butters	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	269
Member	Paul Butters	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	828
Member	Glen Chidlow	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1097
Member	Dennis Williamson	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2232
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>7211</b>
<b>Roadside Conservation Committee</b>				
Chair	Ken Atkins	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Jeff Anderton	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	680
Member	Glenice Batchelor	Not eligible for remuneration	3/3/16 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Julia Beijeman	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 11/2/16	0
Member	Gary Choney	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 22/10/15	0
Member	Gemma Grigg	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Craig Morgan	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	John Morrell	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Michael Norman	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Murray Limb	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 10/11/15	0
Member	Bethan Lloyd	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 22/10/15	0
Member	Rachael Parkes	Not eligible for remuneration	10/11/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Peter Ray	Sessional	5/8/15 to 30/6/16	680
Member	Rodney Safstrom	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Martine Scheltema	Not eligible for remuneration	11/2/16 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Matthew Warnock	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 10/11/15	0
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>1360</b>



## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Governance disclosures

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
<b>Swan River Trust Board</b>				
Chair	Hamish Beck	Fortnightly	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	27,742
Deputy Chair	Barbara Watrosa	Fortnightly	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	13,457
Member	Victoria Rasmussen	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	7660
Member	Vanessa Davies	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	7660
Member	Darryl Trease	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2667
Member	Shelley Taylor-Smith	Sessional	1/7/15 to 20/6/16	7376
Member	David Saunders	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Jeffrey Stone	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>66,562</b>
<b>Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional (Miriuwung Gajerrong) Park Council</b>				
Chair	Margaret Moore	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	5048
Member	Agnes Armstrong	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1430
Member	Michael Birch	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	610
Member	Rita Boombi	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	990
Member	Stephanie Boombi	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2200
Member	Philip Bradshaw	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	660
Member	Edmund James Calwatt	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	990
Member	Ron Carlton	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1100
Member	Ralph Gerrard	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2220
Member	Garry Gerrard	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	610
Member	Franklin Scott Gerrard	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	200
Member	Alfred Gerrard	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2150
Member	Carol Hapke	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1100
Member	Andrew McGinty	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	400
Member	Jerry Moore	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	660

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Governance disclosures

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
<b>Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional (Miriuwung Gajerrong) Park Council (continued)</b>				
Member	Phyllis Ningamarra	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1210
Member	Jimmy Paddy	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	550
Member	William Simon	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	660
Member	Pamela Simon	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	330
Member	Joan Simon	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2420
Member	Bruce Thomas	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	400
Member	Jessica Webster	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2530
Member	Juju Wilson	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2310
Member	Jennifer Wilson	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	660
Member	Andy Wilson	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	880
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>32,318</b>

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Governance disclosures

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
<b>Animal Ethics Committee (Parks and Wildlife)</b>				
Chair	Manda Page	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Category A	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1750
Member	Category A	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1750
Member	Category B	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Category B	Not eligible for remuneration	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	0
Member	Category C	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2100
Member	Category C	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1750
Member	Category D	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1750
Member	Category D	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	2100
Member	Category E	Sessional	1/7/15 to 30/6/16	1050
<b>Animal Ethics Committee (Parks and Wildlife) (continued)</b>				
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>12,250</b>
(Members not identified by name due to privacy reasons)				
Categories:				
A – Veterinarian				
B – Scientist				
C – Animal Welfarist				
D – Layperson				
E – Other				
<b>Dieback Consultative Council – no payments made</b>				
<b>Total</b>				<b>263,669</b>

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Other legal requirements

## Expenditure on advertising, market research, polling and direct mail

In accordance with section 175ZE of the Western Australian *Electoral Act 1907*, the Department incurred the following expenditures in advertising, market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising.

**Total expenditure for 2015–16 was: \$299,706**

**Table 17: Breakdown of expenditure incurred**

Advertising agencies	\$62,427
Adcorp Australia Limited	\$62,427
Direct mail organisations	NIL
Market research organisations	\$22,528
Patterson Research Group	\$22,528
Polling organisations	NIL

**Media advertising organisations \$214,751.20**

Andimaps	\$1323	Eyezon Pty Ltd	\$675
Artha Publishing	\$40	FaceBook	\$79
Aussie Drawcards Pty Ltd	\$595	Government Gazette	\$3732
Australia's South West Inc	\$2672	Marsh Advertising Agencies	\$594
Boyup Brook Community Resource Centre	\$70	Mount Barker Tourist Bureau	\$990
Café Capers WA	\$1320	Nannup Community Resource	\$110
Carat Australia Media Services Pty Ltd	\$147,330	Paper Napkin Creative	\$9270
City of Albany	\$6905	Penguin Island Cruises Pty Ltd	\$6795
Concept Media	\$720	Plantagenet News	\$180
Cooks Tours Pty Ltd	\$1750	State Law Publisher	\$7850
Denmark Bulletin	\$792	The Western Australian Newspaper	\$7443
Denmark Chamber of Commerce	\$770	Walpole Community Resource Centre	\$161
Ebridal Com AU Pty Ltd	\$495	Walsh Media	\$2805
Executive Media Pty Ltd	\$4050	West OZ Web Services	\$1015
Experience Perth	\$900	Whats ON	\$3320

## Other legal requirements

### Disability access and inclusion plan outcomes

Parks and Wildlife is committed to fostering an accessible and inclusive environment for its staff and the public, and continues to be a leading proponent of universal access, which is based on the principles of equal opportunity and equity, and access and inclusion.

Under the Department's *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2015–20*, work continued in 2015–16 to improve access to facilities and services to ensure they meet the needs of the public and staff, with participatory inclusion being the primary and ongoing aim.

The plan is monitored by the Department's Disability Access and Inclusion Committee, which meets quarterly. Committee members include representatives from four divisions and two Corporate Executive representatives.

The following information details the current initiatives and activities being implemented by the Department in line with the *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2015–20*:

#### Services and events

The Department is committed to providing people with disability the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and events organised by, the Department. Parks and Wildlife does this by:

- ensuring all staff are aware of the DAIP by making it available on the Department's intranet, through broadcast emails and the induction program
- organising events that are accessible to people with disability and continuing to raise awareness and promote the Department's public participation fact sheets to staff
- ensuring additional standard infrastructure such as audio loop is available upon request.

#### Buildings and facilities

The Department's policy is to ensure that everyone in the community can access, use and enjoy WA's natural areas and the associated facilities, services and programs provided by the Department. It does this by ensuring:

- Department reception areas are accessible to people with disability
- ACROD parking provisions meet the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location
- where practical and appropriate, all new recreation facilities are accessible to people with disability.

As a major provider of outdoor recreation locations and facilities in natural areas, Parks and Wildlife ensures that all site plans consider access requirements and are developed in accordance with the Department's *Policy 18 (Recreation, Tourism and Visitor Services)*.

In 2015–16, as part of the *Parks for People Caravan and Camping* initiative, accessible (including assisted access) infrastructure was under construction at Potters Gorge, Baden Powell, Lucky Bay and Big Lagoon campgrounds; and in the final planning stages for Shannon and Jarrahdene campgrounds.

Construction of significant accessible infrastructure at The Gap and Natural Bridge in Torndirrup National Park was completed and opened to the public. This site provides full wheelchair access along defined paths to two impressive lookouts at Natural Bridge and The Gap, the latter providing a grated see-through platform that rises 40m above the ocean and extends 4m out from the cliff face. Accompanying the lookouts and pathways is a full suite of interpretation and signage describing the values of the site and accessible picnic facilities. These new facilities allow full accessibility to one of WA's premier tourist sites.

#### Access to information

The Department continued to provide information to people with disability in a format that will enable them to access information from the Department as readily as other people are able to access it. This includes:

- ensuring the Department's website continues to meet contemporary good practice and applicable legislative requirements for access for people with disability
- continuing to provide information in alternative formats upon request
- using a nationally-agreed system of bushfire alerts and warnings.

# Other legal requirements

## Customer service

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Department as other people receive. The Department is committed to:

- improving volunteer awareness of disability access issues by including disability awareness information in training manuals for campground hosts
- generating and sustaining staff awareness of disability and access issues by providing regular information on access and inclusion in the Department's internal news mediums promoting to staff the availability of resources on the Department's intranet, such as the *Access Resource Kit* and *Guidelines for access formats*.

## Complaints handling

The Department recognises and promotes the right of community members to be heard in relation to a complaint and continues to monitor and address complaints received about disability access.

People with disability are provided with the same access to the complaints management process, with complaints able to be lodged online, or by phoning or visiting a Parks and Wildlife metropolitan, regional office or district office.

## Public consultation

The Department seeks a broad range of views on disability and access issues from the local community and ensures that consultations with the public are held in an accessible manner.

Members of the Department's Disability Access and Inclusion Committee are encouraged and supported to attend disability forums and workshops to increase knowledge and awareness of disability and access issues.

## Employment

The Department is committed to providing people with disability the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Department.

It does this by:

- employing people with disability on fee-for-service contracts through Australian Disability Enterprises – this currently includes Activ, Intework and Westcare
- using a range of disability recruitment specialists and continuing to email all advertised positions to recruitment agencies
- significantly simplifying the application process and creating a detailed guideline for selection panels which provides thorough information on options to simplify the application process.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Other legal requirements

## Compliance with public sector standards and ethical codes

Under s31 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, the Department is required to report on its compliance with public sector standards and ethical codes for 2015–16:

**Table 18: Compliance with public sector standards and ethical codes**

Compliance issue	Significant action taken to monitor and ensure compliance
<i>Public Sector Standards</i>	
<p>There were no breach claims lodged in 2015–16.</p>	<p>The Department's People Services Branch intranet site has information on the <i>Public Sector Standards</i> including a hyperlink to the Public Sector Commission's website.</p> <p>Policies and guidelines relevant to the standards have been reviewed and updated and are available on the People Services Branch intranet site.</p> <p>An online induction was developed and is currently in the testing phase. The induction will provide all staff with an online resource that outlines Departmental policies and procedures related to the <i>Public Sector Standards</i>.</p> <p>The online Accountable and Ethical Decision Making course provides information and links to the <i>Public Sector Standards</i>. More than 400 staff completed the online course in 2015–16.</p>
<i>Code of Ethics</i>	
<p>There were no reports of non-compliance with the WA <i>Code of Ethics</i>.</p>	<p>The <i>Code of Ethics</i> is contained within Park and Wildlife's <i>Code of Conduct</i>. The <i>Code of Conduct</i> was revised and released in December 2015 and includes more information on national police clearances and a requirement to report criminal charges during employment.</p>
<i>Department's Code of Conduct</i>	
<p>Ten allegations of breaches of the <i>Code of Conduct</i> were raised in 2015–16.</p> <p>Three allegations were carried over from 2014–15 and seven of the allegations raised in 2015–16 were finalised in 2015–16. Three alleged breaches have been carried over to 2016–17.</p>	<p>The Department has released an online learning tool for Accountable and Ethical Decision Making in the public sector to assist in improving employees understanding of the requirements of their role in relation to Conflict of Interest, <i>Code of Conduct</i>, Ethical and Accountable Decision Making and Public Interest Disclosure.</p>

# Other legal requirements

## Recordkeeping plans

The Department, through Corporate Information Services Branch, is continuously working towards ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* and recordkeeping plan requirements set down by the State Records Office.

Management of corporate records and information is specified in the Department's recordkeeping plan and mandatory records and document training for employees is part of the induction process. Additional training is available to employees upon request to Corporate Information Services and is tailored to meet business unit needs.

Recordkeeping roles and responsibilities are also included in the Department's *Code of Conduct*, Ethical and Accountable Decision Making training, and Recordkeeping Awareness training course. All staff are required to complete the courses to ensure recordkeeping plan compliance.

Corporate Information Services Branch regularly reviews the Department's recordkeeping policy and operational documents such as the Department's recordkeeping manual.

The Department uses *Objective*, also known as *Inf0Base*, an electronic document and records management system available for deployment to all staff upon request.



## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Government policy requirements

## Government building training policy

Parks and Wildlife has a commitment to the *Government Building Training Policy* (GBT Policy), which aims to increase the number of apprentices and trainees in the building and construction industry. The Department has altered prospective tender documentation and developed a monitoring plan for building and construction or maintenance projects with a duration of greater than three months, a value of greater than \$2 million and tendered after 1 October 2015. At the balance date, no contracts subject to the GBT Policy had been awarded.

Table 19: Projects under the *Government Building Training Policy*

Measure	Building and construction projects 2015	Maintenance projects 2015
Active contracts within the scope of the policy in the reporting period	0	0
Contracts granted a variation to the target training rate in the reporting period	Not applicable	Not applicable
Head contractors involved in the contracts	Not applicable	Not applicable
Construction apprentices/trainees required to meet target training rate across all contracts	Not applicable	Not applicable
Construction apprentices/trainees employed by head contractors; and the subcontractors they are using for the contracts	Not applicable	Not applicable
Contracts that met or exceeded the target training rate	Not applicable	Not applicable

# Government policy requirements

## Substantive equality

The Department implements the Policy Framework for Substantive Equality primarily through management planning processes associated with the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act).

Management plans cover a 10-year period over specific conservation areas, and contain a statement of policies or proposed guidelines to be followed and a summary of the operations proposed to be undertaken in the area. Management plans are developed with input from public and stakeholder meetings, formal advisory committees and community advisory committees, newsletters and broad public invitations to comment on draft plans.

The Department's *Reconciliation Action Plan* (RAP) strongly supports the requirements of the State's *Substantive Equality Policy Framework*. Through the RAP the Department is committed to the national reconciliation effort of building better relationships between Aboriginal people and the wider community for the benefit of all Australians.

In 2015–16 the RAP key outcomes included:

- Development of policy and guidelines to affirm the Department's commitment to work in collaboration with key Aboriginal stakeholders in joint management
- Staff throughout the State participated in Reconciliation Week events
- An education strategy was implemented to provide information on new legislation to Aboriginal stakeholders and staff
- The Department is in partnership with 30 Indigenous ranger groups to manage parks and reserves
- New management plans have implemented more extensive consultation and input on Aboriginal cultural values in line with the revised objective
- About 800 staff have undertaken cultural awareness training, representing all divisions and regional locations
- *Policy 69 Guidelines for Acknowledgment Statements and Welcome to Country* was upheld at all appropriate Departmental functions and events
- Training on Aboriginal heritage and culture was provided to volunteers including campground hosts, *Bush Ranger* and *River Ranger* coordinators, and commercial operators
- The diversity of Aboriginal language groups was considered and reflected in all publications, reports, marketing, internet, intranet and promotional material
- A number of Department-managed areas, features and assets have been named using Aboriginal languages
- The Department participated in the State Government's *Aboriginal Economic Participation Strategy*. It has excelled in meeting the nominated strategic milestones.
- About 220 Aboriginal people across the State are employed to undertake fee-for-service work and other contracts
- The *Culture in the Parks Strategy* has been developed to support and increase the representation of Aboriginal business operators undertaking cultural tourism.

## Disclosures and legal compliance

## Government policy requirements

## Workplace health, safety and injury management

The Department promotes a strong culture of workplace health and safety and embraces the duty of care responsibility prescribed in the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*. The Department is committed to providing and maintaining a working environment in which employees are not exposed to hazards.

The Department's commitment to health and safety excellence is shared across all levels of the agency to ensure the highest achievable performance.

The Department's *Work Health and Safety Policy* requires managers to demonstrate safety leadership, consult and collaborate with employees and maintain, monitor and review health and safety systems in the workplace. Employees are responsible for taking care of their own and others' health and safety as well as identifying hazards, assessing risks and undertaking corrective actions.

The Director General and Corporate Executive are committed to providing, maintaining and promoting a safe working environment.

To this end, Parks and Wildlife's health and safety committees, health and safety representatives, directors, managers, supervisors and employees are responsible for ensuring that health and safety policies, programs and procedures are followed.

## Consultation with employees

The Department recognises that effective communication and consultation are critical elements of a high-quality health and safety system. Continuous improvement is best achieved by consulting employees as part of a proactive approach.

Internal consultation occurs via liaison with:

- the well-established network of 53 management-appointed safety officers who focus on ensuring a healthy and safe work environment for employees in their work area
- employee-elected health and safety representatives
- health and safety committees
- managers and supervisors
- the Health and Safety Advisory Group that comprises divisional representatives
- the Corporate Health and Safety Committee that comprises directors and the Director General.

Employees are encouraged to participate in the consultation process via interaction with the stakeholders above. Furthermore, as part of enhancing communication and transparency, meeting minutes are uploaded to the intranet and available to all employees.

The Department also established an inter-agency committee for managers to discuss and share health and safety information as part of achieving standardisation across the WA public sector. The group consists of 14 agencies and meets every six weeks. The Department also consults with members of the Australasian Fire Authorities Council and relevant unions.

## Injury management

Parks and Wildlife is committed to providing best practice injury management for its employees by complying with the requirements of the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981* and the *Workers' Compensation Code of Practice (Injury Management) 2005*. Together with effective health and safety practices and wellbeing initiatives, the Department's injury management system strives for an early return to work for injured employees as medically appropriate.

It is acknowledged that an effective injury management system benefits the employee through comprehensive assistance in times of injury. An effective process has been established through local management of the employee's injuries and liaison with the treating GP.

When required, external rehabilitation providers are appointed to further aid an employee's recovery.

## Assessment of the health and safety management system

The Department's health and safety management system was audited against the AS/NZS 4801: 2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems in July 2015. The audit identified system strengths as well as areas for policy and procedural improvement relating to risk management, reporting, investigating and emergency preparedness and response. These findings were identified as priority areas and in conjunction with requirements of the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* guided the Department's Employee Relations and Safety Section's work plan.

The Department's *Work Health and Safety Management Plan* is a framework to assess employees' understanding of health and safety and progress in working towards common goals. The plan assesses health and safety management system compliance at the local level and directs attention to areas for improvement. The framework provides a consistent approach across the Department and aims to reduce injury, disability, lost productivity and workers' compensation costs.

Disclosures and legal compliance

# Government policy requirements

Parks and Wildlife is also committed to ensuring staff across the State are provided with appropriate, evidence-based health, safety and wellbeing initiatives that encompass a whole-of-workplace approach where policy and the environment are considered alongside awareness and education.

### Other initiatives in work health and safety

The following initiatives were introduced as part of ensuring a safe work environment:

- An alcohol and other drugs policy and testing program, whereby employees are required to present to work fit-for-duty and free of impairment by alcohol or other drugs.
- An online hazard, near-miss and incident reporting system to encourage reporting of safety issues and to assist in identifying trends.
- A health and safety induction for Departmental volunteers which will help ensure that the health and safety of volunteers is not affected by the work, a hazard, or the system of work being undertaken.
- High-visibility workwear for employees that undertake fieldwork and high-risk tasks as part of alignment with Australian Standards and best practice.

- The availability of respiratory protective equipment for employees involved in fire management activities to reduce exposure to bushfire smoke and toxins.

Parks and Wildlife continued, and expanded, wellbeing support available to employees through the full-time chaplain, *Employee Assistance Program* and *Peer Support Program*. The Department also introduced Mental Health First Aid training to teach employees how to assist people who are developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. Parks and Wildlife actively analyses its critical-incident response incorporating the continual review of best practice in emergency management and staff welfare.

**Table 20: Health and safety performance indicators**

Measure	Actual results		Results against target	
	2013–14*	2015–16	Target	Comment on result
Number of fatalities	1	0	0	Achieved
Lost time injury and/or disease incidence rate	2.13	3.75	0 or 10% reduction	Not achieved
Lost time injury and/or disease severity rate	8.82	10	0 or 10% reduction	Not achieved
Percentage of injured workers returned to work:				
(i) within 13 weeks	88%	94%	Greater than or equal to 80%	Achieved
(ii) within 26 weeks	91%	98%	Greater than or equal to 80%	Achieved
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health and injury management responsibilities	>80%	>80%	Greater than or equal to 80%	Achieved

Compiled in accordance with the *Public Sector Commissioner's Circular 2012–05* which requires reporting of a three-year trend.

\* The comparison year is to be three full years prior to the current reporting year, that is, the current being 2015–16 and the comparison year being 2013–14, to show a trend over a period of three years inclusive.





Department of  
Parks and Wildlife

