

# Managing our department

## Summary of financial management

This financial summary of the department's performance and position provides an overview of the key financial information for the year ended 30 June 2020. A complete view is provided in the Financial Statements which are included separately in this report.

Overall, the department reported a net surplus for the year of \$75.13 million, compared to a deficit of \$64.03 million in 2018-19. The 2019-20 surplus position was impacted by an increase associated with asset revaluation totalling \$80.41 million. This was a combination of the revaluation increment through the Statement of Comprehensive Income of \$31.43 million coupled with an increase in the Asset Revaluation Reserve of \$48.98 million.

### Financial performance snapshot

Table 1 Summary of financial results of the department's operations

Category	2020 Actual \$'000	2019 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Total revenue	864,187	1,031,037	(166,850)
Total expenses	838,041	1,072,396	(234,355)
Other comprehensive income	48,984	(22,669)	71,653
Total comprehensive income	75,130	(64,028)	139,158

### Revenue

The primary source of the department's revenue is appropriation from the Queensland Government which accounts for 71.66% of the department's total revenue. User charges and fees represent 17.46% of total revenue and consist of income streams associated with the issue of licences, permits and other fees for environmentally relevant activities, national parks and car parks. The department also received significant grant income accounting for 5.99% of total revenue. These include grants associated with managing the environment including the Great Barrier Reef,

Yellow Crazy Ants and the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

### Expenses

The labour resourcing costs to administer departmental activities accounts for 38.98% of total expenditure.

Supplies and services represent 28.21% of all expenditure. The major expense types include information and technology costs, legal expenses, outsourced services/contractors, repairs and maintenance, and accommodation.

Grants and subsidies represent 17.73% of all expenditure with 33.45% (\$49.7 million) to support the Arts sector and the balance to support the environment.

With a significant non-current asset base of \$5.58 billion that represents property, plant, equipment and intangibles, the department recorded depreciation and amortisation of \$92.15 million which represents 11% of total expenditure.

### Budget result

Table 2 – Summary of operating result for the year

Category	2020 Budget \$'000	2020 Actual \$'000	Variance 2020 Budget to Actual \$'000
Total revenue	830,063	864,187	34,124
Total expenses	808,453	838,041	29,588
<b>Operating result</b>	21,610	26,146	4,536

Total revenue exceeded expectations by \$34.12 million primarily due to the revaluation increment of \$31.43 million. This relates to land and infrastructure assets with over 77% relating to land assets.

There was a positive variance in User Charges and Fees with actual revenue exceeding budget

by \$15.78 million. This is due to goods provided below fair value (non-cash) for rent to statutory bodies at the Queensland Cultural Centre Precinct of \$28.47 million which was not budgeted.

This was offset by a decrease in Environmentally Relevant Activity annual return fees as well as National Park camping, and visitor fees revenue associated with COVID-19 restrictions; and a negative variance of \$16.51 million in Grants and Other Contributions. The grants variance was due to the reprofiling of Queensland Reconstruction Authority for the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements - Riparian Recovery Program of \$22.4 million, offset by increased funding from the Commonwealth Reef Trust (\$5 million).

Other Revenue also impacted the positive variance to budget with a \$7.76 million variance. This increase is primarily related to higher than expected restitutions associated with protected area estate and general recoveries associated with natural disaster management.

Total expenditure exceeded budget by \$29.59 million. This variance was predominantly related to the category of Other Expenses of goods provided below fair value (non-cash) for rent to statutory bodies in the Queensland Cultural Centre Precinct of \$28.47 million. There was a positive variance in Employee Expenses of 6% which was offset by a negative variance of 6% within Supplies and Services.

## Financial position

Table 3 – Summary of net assets as at 30 June 2020

Category	2020 Actual \$'000	2019 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Total assets	5,759,709	5,694,086	65,623
Total liabilities	65,299	102,076	(36,777)
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>5,694,410</b>	<b>5,592,010</b>	<b>102,400</b>

### Assets

Assets were steady with receivables and property, plant and equipment making up the majority of the \$65.62 million variance.

The decrease in receivables of \$25.25 million was primarily related to the loan receivable from Container Exchange (CoEx) of \$29.17 million, being fully paid out. Trade debtors increased slightly by \$1.8 million. To assist businesses, the

department entered into a number of payment plans with debtors a result of COVID-19.

Property, plant and equipment increased by \$78.72 million due primarily to infrastructure and land revaluation increments. With road infrastructure representing more than \$2.87 billion of the total assets, the department continually reassesses use and road lengths to improve asset assessment and valuation results. The Road Infrastructure Valuation Program used to apply for overall road category assessment is endorsed annually.

### Liabilities

The department's current liabilities decreased by \$40.78 million. This reduction relates to trade creditors reducing by \$12.36 million and appropriation payable reducing by \$13.21 million. Both reductions relate to the general timing of transactions.

For payables, due to COVID-19, the department reduced all payment terms to 'pay immediately' to assist with cash flow support for businesses who supply goods and services for or on behalf of the department.

There was also a reduction of \$13.87 million for Other Liabilities of which \$13.61 million, held for Curtis Island Precinct management, was reclassified in 2019-20 as income as a result of the application of the new accounting standard AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*.

Overall, the department's financial position is very healthy due to the large asset portfolio and minimal liabilities.

## Administered

Table 4 – Summary of the departments Administered activities

Category	2020 Actual \$'000	2019 Actual \$'000	Variance \$'000
Total revenue	458,576	152,665	305,911
Total expenses	458,576	152,665	305,911
Total assets	52,019	135	51,884
Total liabilities	52,019	135	51,884

The department administers, but does not control, certain activities on behalf of the Queensland Government. The administrative responsibility resides with the department; however the monies

are reported separately and outside of the department's controlled financial reporting.

The department returns all monies received to Queensland Treasury and therefore records a balanced result for the year. Further information is contained within the notes to the Financial Statements.

The introduction of the waste levy on 1 July 2019 has impacted the administered ledger with an increase of revenue of \$294.97 million.

### **Statement by the Chief Finance Officer**

In accordance with the requirements of the Section 77 (2)(b) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Chief Finance Officer has provided the Director-General with a statement confirming the financial internal controls of the department are operating efficiently, effectively and economically. This is also in conformance with Section 54 of the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019.

The Chief Finance Officer has fulfilled the minimum responsibilities as required by the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

## Corporate governance

Our corporate governance framework sets the department's direction and performance oversight arrangements.

The framework is based on the Australian National Audit Office's *Public Sector Governance guides* and *Australian Standard AS 8000-2003 Good Governance Principles*. It is aligned with the Queensland Government Performance Management Framework and the Queensland Audit Office's *Leading Accountability—Governance*.

The department obtains information about its operational and financial performance through its performance management framework, governance structure and financial systems.

### Ethics and accountability

The department recognises that employment in the public service is a position of trust and, as such, we hold ourselves to a high standard. We ensure our staff are aware of the importance of ethical decision-making and accountability as key factors in strong performance and effective governance. Our strategies, plans, systems and procedures promote a culture of integrity. Together with ethics-focused training, they help staff undertake their roles impartially and apolitically. Our ethics resources and strategies include:

- Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service—the standard for ethical behaviour expectations
- Code of Conduct online training—mandatory for all staff at induction and at regular intervals
- fraud and corruption awareness training—refresher training was completed by employees during the year and tailored training provided to managers
- information on the department's website for staff and the public—including how to report alleged wrongdoing by employees, right to information, complaints handling, role of the Queensland Ombudsman, and rights of review
- fraud and corruption awareness and prevention website—provides resources to identify and mitigate risks
- dedicated ethics intranet page—including ethics resources for managers and staff
- presentation for employees by Crime and Corruption Commission on 9 December 2019, International Anti-Corruption Day
- updated Customer Complaints Management Policy and Procedure and Ombudsman Inquiries and Complaints Policy and Procedure.

### Governance committees

The groups and committees below form the core of the department's governance arrangements. They ensure that the department has a clear direction, operates efficiently and fulfils its legislative responsibilities. They oversee and inform all major activities and decision-making:

- Executive Leadership Team
- Finance Committee
- Strategic Human Resources Sub-Committee
- Health and Safety Strategy Group
- Digital Investment Sub-Committee
- Agency Security Committee
- Audit and Risk Committee.

In addition, the Business and Corporate Partnership Board oversees delivery of corporate services and business programs to four partnering Queensland Government departments.

### Executive Leadership Team

Chaired by the Director-General, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) oversees the effective management and administration of the department, to ensure outcomes in line with the department's strategic priorities. It meets fortnightly to:

- ensure departmental activities align with, and achieve, the government's priorities and the department's strategic objectives
- prioritise resources and capabilities to deliver key strategies and programs
- provide strong leadership, direction and guidance to the department.

ELT's responsibilities also include supporting the Director-General to comply with corporate governance responsibilities:

- setting the strategic direction of the department and developing the Strategic Plan
- stewardship of the department's strategic direction, including managing strategic and key operational issues
- managing the corporate planning cycle, including setting and monitoring risk, key performance indicators and corporate priorities
- overseeing the department's corporate governance framework and the work of the ELT sub-committees
- setting and exemplifying expectations about the department's culture, values and working environment.

### Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is chaired by the Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services, and meets monthly to:

- provide governance over the department's financial resources
- develop the department's financial risk management strategies
- make recommendations to the Director-General on financial issues.

Throughout the year, the Finance Committee:

- monitored the department's performance against fiscal targets
- coordinated in-depth reviews of financial risks, efficiency measures and financial management practices
- determined strategies to manage key departmental pressures.

### Strategic Human Resources Sub-Committee

The sub-committee meets every six weeks and is chaired by the Deputy Director-General, Arts and Heritage. It assists the department to discharge its duties under the *Public Service Act 2008* and other legislative requirements. This sub-committee also identifies and manages key challenges, opportunities and priorities affecting DES' people and culture. This includes providing strategic input into, and championing, key human resource initiatives across the department and within divisions.

The sub-committee considers strategic human resource matters, including:

- the department's human resources direction and annual priorities

- strategic workforce planning
- organisational design and associated changes
- department-wide change management programs
- organisational culture
- human resource reporting and analytics.

### Health and Strategy Safety Group

The Health and Safety Strategy Group meets every six weeks or as determined by the chair, Deputy Director-General, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships.

The group is an integral part of the department's workplace health and safety (WHS) governance arrangements and helps discharge the department's duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. The group advises the Director-General and ELT on WHS strategy, governance, policy and procedures, and systems performance.

### Digital Investment Sub-Committee

The sub-committee meets monthly and is chaired by the Deputy Director-General, Science and Technology. Its role is to provide strategic leadership and governance of digital investments and strategies in the department. It ensures that all investments are aligned with whole-of-government priorities and the DIGITAL1ST Strategy. To fulfil this role, the sub-committee:

- provides oversight of relevant whole-of-government policies to ensure appropriate control of initiatives managed by the department
- assesses and determines investments in digital initiatives and ICT service activities
- ensures that digital service performance standards are efficient, effective and economical, meet the business needs of the department and are aligned with whole-of-government ICT policies, standards and guidelines
- reviews, reports and recommends remediation of service or change management issues and risks in digital initiatives
- oversees supporting governance entities and digital working groups.

## Agency Security Committee

The Agency Security Committee is chaired by the Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services and meets bi-monthly. It ensures that the department addresses its information security obligations, including the performance of the Information Security Management System (ISMS) through compliance with relevant legislation, regulation, policy, and *IS18:2018 Information Security Policy* and *ISO 27001*. To fulfil this role, the committee:

- provides agency guidance on information security and ISMS related issues
- ensures ISMS controls implementation plans are developed, monitored and adequately progressed in line with the level of assurance required by the Director-General
- ensures information security related risks are identified, assigned appropriate controls, are within tolerance, and approved
- oversees the application of a systematic and repeatable approach to risk management under the ISMS
- ensures the annual information security assurance assessment is carried out with assurance reported to the Director-General prior to 30 September each year.

## Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee meets five times a year including a special meeting to review the department's annual financial statements and is chaired by a member from outside the department. The committee's role is to provide independent assurance and assistance to the Director-General regarding risk, control and compliance frameworks, external accountability responsibilities and the integrity framework. The committee also has responsibilities in relation to financial statements, misconduct prevention, performance management, audits and reporting. It actively contributes to the improvement of the department's management of risks and the development of a risk appetite statement.

The committee comprises internal and external members. The following external members were appointed by the Director-General and were remunerated for their services:

- Marita Corbett, chair—entitled to be paid \$3,000 (GST exclusive) per meeting to prepare for, and attend, up to five meetings per annum, up to a maximum of \$15,000 (GST exclusive) per calendar year
- Peter Dowling, external member—entitled to be paid \$600 (GST exclusive) per meeting to

prepare for, and attend, up to five meetings per annum, up to a maximum of \$3,000 (GST exclusive) per calendar year

- Karen Prentis, external member—entitled to be paid \$600 (GST exclusive) per meeting to prepare for, and attend, up to five meetings per annum, up to a maximum of \$3,000 (GST exclusive) per calendar year.

Departmental members of this committee are not remunerated for their roles.

Representatives of the department's Internal Audit Services and Queensland Audit Office (QAO) are invited to attend each meeting of the committee.

The committee convened five times during 2019–20. It observed its terms of reference and had due regard to Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines*. It gave consideration to all audit recommendations by the QAO, including performance audit recommendations, reviewed the implementation of external audit recommendations accepted by management and ensured that satisfactory progress was made to mitigate risks associated with audit findings.

## Business and Corporate Partnership Board

The Business and Corporate Partnership (BCP) delivers corporate services and business programs to four Queensland Government departments. The BCP Board is responsible for the long-term performance and business success of the BCP. Its role is to provide leadership and set the strategic direction of the partnership.

The BCP operates through three corporate hubs - the Department of Environment and Services, Department of Agricultural and Fisheries, and Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Each hub is managed by a Head of Corporate, who is responsible for delivering a set of core services to the host agency and a selection of cooperative services to partnering agencies. The intent of this model is to ensure economies of scale, service integration, consistent service delivery, scalability, flexibility and responsiveness.

# Accountability and risk management

## Internal audit

Internal Audit Services provides an independent, objective assurance function to the Director-General in discharging responsibilities under section 78 of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

Internal Audit Services enhances the department's corporate governance environment through an objective, systematic approach to evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of corporate governance processes, internal controls, risk assessment and management practices. Its function is independent of management and external auditors.

These functions are provided to the department and two other Queensland Government departments (Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development) under the BCP.

Internal Audit Services operates in accordance with the Internal Audit Annual Plan, a risk-based plan endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee and approved by the Director-General. During 2019–20, it delivered its role and responsibilities in line with the Internal Audit Charter.

Internal Audit Services assists the Audit and Risk Committee to obtain independent assurance on its responsibilities, including risk management, internal controls, financial statements, internal and external audit matters and improved governance. The internal audit function is independent of management and the external auditors.

This year, Internal Audit Services completed the following reviews for the department:

- Waste Levy Program Health Check Review
- Queensland Cultural Centre Car Park Revenue Model Review
- Social Media Effectiveness Review
- ESR Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Review
- Compliance of Science Facilities Review
- Governance Committees Review
- Connect Annual Fee Invoicing Review
- Review of Car Park Cash Collection Review
- Integrated Waste Program Waste Levy Finance Management Review
- Regional Office Administrative Process and Financial Compliance Review
- QPWS&P Camping and Vehicle Permits—Non-agent Revenue Processes Review
- Science and Technology Procurement and Purchases Review

- ESR Investigations Processes Review
- QPWS&P Strategic Capital Infrastructure Program Review
- Regional Recycling Transport Assistance Package – Grant Review

## External scrutiny

Independent scrutiny of government performance may be carried out by a number of external entities. Significant external audits and reviews undertaken during the year are detailed below.

### Queensland Audit Office—Managing cyber security risks (Report 3: 2019–20) (Tabled 1 October 2019)

The QAO *Report Managing Cyber Security Risks* (Report 3: 2019–20), was tabled in Parliament on 1 October 2019 and examined whether entities effectively manage their cyber security risks. While the audit was specifically performed in relation to three public sector entities, all public sector agencies were advised to assess themselves against the first three audit recommendations and to assess the relevance of the other 14 recommendations to their agency.

The Department is committed to managing cyber security and has established governance arrangements and frameworks for managing cyber security risks. This includes implementing an Information Security Management System as required under the Queensland Government Information security policy IS18:2018. The department has an established Agency Security Committee and works closely with our Information Technology service providers to consider and implement the audit recommendations. Quarterly reports on progress with establishing the Report recommendations were also submitted to the department's Audit and Risk Committee for consideration and endorsement.

The self-assessment against recommendations 1 to 3 of the Report showed the department had established an effective cyber security framework, information security classification practices and the ability to identify and assess cyber security risks. Recommendations 4 to 17 of the Report highlighted areas for improvement, and these have been established with only two recommendations (recommendations 12 and 13) remaining, scheduled to be completed by December 2020.

The department has a systematic and repeatable approach to managing its risks and ensures steps are taken to minimise all risks outside of its established risk appetite.

### **Queensland Audit Office—Addressing mine dust lung disease (Report 9: 2019–20) (Tabled 5 December 2019)**

The QAO assessed how effectively public sector entities had implemented recommendations from the Monash review and reports 2 and 4 from the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee, which aimed to reduce the risk and occurrence of mine dust lung disease.

The QAO identified the recommendations that the department was responsible for implementing and found that the department had effectively implemented the recommendations of the Monash Review and the Select Committee. There are no outstanding recommendations for the department.

### **Queensland Audit Office—Managing coal-seam gas activities (Report 12: 2019–20) (Tabled 18 February 2020)**

The QAO assessed how well entities regulate and manage Queensland's coal seam gas activities and environmental obligations, to ensure a safe, efficient and viable industry.

The QAO audited two entities—the department and the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) as regulator, and the GasFields Commission Queensland (GFCQ) as overseer of the regulatory framework.

The QAO made six recommendations involving the department:

1. make better use of data to effectively deliver regulatory activities
2. enhance coordination with DNRME to assist in providing greater clarity for applicants and stakeholders on the progress of tenure and environmental authority applications.
3. develop and implement a coordinated data-sharing framework with GFCQ and DNRME
4. work with key stakeholders to further evaluate the adequacy of remedy for property owners neighbouring coal seam gas activities
5. evaluate the current collaborative engagement approach with GFCQ and DNRME to determine its effectiveness
6. facilitate ways to further enhance the exchange of information between industry, government and landholders in situations where landholders have not been given the information to make an informed decision.

On 7 February 2020, the department responded to the QAO, indicating that the department agreed with the findings and would work with DNRME and the GFCQ to implement the recommendations due between April and December 2020.

### **Risk management**

The department's risk management policy is based on the international risk management standard ISO 31000:2018 and Queensland Treasury's risk management guidelines. This provides a sound framework for managing risks consistently across the department.

The department's risk appetite statement applies to all risk management decision-making. It encourages prudent risk-taking and escalation when appropriate. Key strategic risks and opportunities are identified as part of our annual strategic planning process. Risks that may impact on business objectives are identified by business areas as part of their business planning.

Strategic and operational risks are reviewed regularly to monitor the progress of risk treatments and the overall effectiveness of controls. The Three Lines of Defence framework provides assurance of the effectiveness of risk controls, including monitoring of enterprise risks and quarterly reporting of significant risks to the Audit and Risk Committee.

This year, the department reviewed and updated:

- DES Risk Management Procedure
- DES Risk Appetite Statement.

### **Recordkeeping**

The department has a comprehensive records management framework, consistent with the *Public Records Act 2002*, *Public Service Act 2008* and the Queensland State Archives Records Governance Policy.

All documents are held in corporate document and records management systems (eDOCS, Micro Focus Content Manager) or held in file structures with appropriate security access according to the Information Security Policy. There have been no serious security breaches of this system.

Our Digital Recordkeeping Futures plan outlines the strategic direction for recordkeeping in the department. Our approach continues to apply new technologies to maximise the use of digital records in business processes and ensure digital recordkeeping requirements are met. The number

of records transferred to off-site storage continues to decline as the transition to digital recordkeeping increases.

The department has a proactive appraisal and disposal program, with departmental records covered by a number of approved retention and disposal schedules:

- Environment QDAN 733
- Parks QDAN 740
- Heritage Conservation QDAN 741.
- University Sector QDAN - science function.

This year, under a machinery-of-government change, the physical records from the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program transferred to the department from the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.

## Information systems

The department maintains critical information systems to support its services, including:

- 'MyRanger' App —National Parks visitor resource
- HerbreCs—repository of flora taxonomy data
- Wetland/Info—first-stop-shop for wetland management resources in Queensland
- Coastal Data System—wave and storm-tide information from remote monitoring stations
- Supply of Climate Information (SILO)—natural resource management information for users such as the Bureau of Rural Sciences
- Strandnet—stranded animals information
- National Parks Booking System—National Parks camping and vehicle permits
- Living Heritage Information System—places on the Queensland Heritage Register and other places of cultural heritage significance
- Queensland Waste Disposal Levy System—waste data and levy reconciliation
- Littering and Illegal Dumping Online Reporting System—public reporting of littering or illegal dumping
- Corporate systems—correspondence, finance and human resources
- DES intranet and internet—information and services to employees and the public.

# Our people

## Workforce profile

We employ a diverse range of talented people who work together to ensure the environment, science and the arts enrich the lives of Queenslanders. We strive to create workplaces where diversity is celebrated, health and safety is valued, the wellbeing of employees is a priority and career development is encouraged.

As at 30 June 2020, the department employed 2,992.27 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, 85.20% of whom were employed on a permanent basis.\* The permanent separation rate is 4.68% per annum.

*\*The FTE figure reflects Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) collected and reported by the Queensland Public Service Commission as at 30 June 2020.*

## Workforce planning

We are committed to strategies to attract and retain a workforce that is inclusive, diverse, engaged, agile and high performing. To meet the challenges of the future, the department is particularly focused on:

- maximising performance
- building capabilities needed for the workforce of the future
- talent acquisition with a focus on frontline roles
- leadership and management development
- developing a diverse and inclusive culture
- employee health and wellbeing.

## Talent acquisition

### Onboarding

The department's induction process for all new employees:

- provides a smooth transition into the department and the work environment
- provides information on employment conditions and entitlements
- helps new starters understand the responsibilities and behaviours expected of them
- provides an understanding of the function and operations of the department as well as their business group or work unit.

The induction process includes online courses:

- Welcome to DES
- Code of conduct
- Emergency safety
- Fraud and corruption awareness
- Work, health and safety
- Information privacy awareness
- Starting the journey
- Public entities and Queensland's *Human Rights Act 2019*
- Disability awareness
- Procurement 101
- Financial delegations
- Information security
- Recognise, Respond and Refer—domestic and family violence awareness.

### Career pathway programs

The department supports a range of career pathway programs to ensure we have the right people with the right skills for the future. In the 2020 graduate program, eight graduates from a range of disciplines undertook structured leadership development with exciting, challenging and rewarding opportunities.

Work placement opportunities were also provided for 12 university students as part of their degree requirements. They came from a range of disciplines, including environmental management and law.

### Leadership talent acquisition

Over the last 18 months, the department has transformed the approach to Senior Executive Service (SES) talent acquisition. This has been designed to increase the breadth of executive experience from across the public, private and higher education sectors and bring contemporary skillsets to the leadership of DES.

The Executive Leadership Team has achieved gender parity and is approaching parity for the entire SES cohort.

## Maximising performance

### Planning for performance

All employees participate in performance and development processes throughout the year. Managers and their staff are strongly encouraged

to have regular and meaningful conversations about achievements and development needs.

The department has a range of tools and support mechanisms to assist managers and employees to have meaningful conversations about development. Employees are encouraged to consider a range of development options, including on-the-job training, relieving, short-term projects, coaching and mentoring, as well as participation in formal training activities.

### Reward and recognition

The department values its employees and recognises that their success and achievements contribute to the department's high performance. Reward and recognition mechanisms that acknowledge successes, achievements and employment milestones support a healthy and positive workplace culture. Formal reward and recognition initiatives include:

- DES Excellence Awards
- Public Service Medals
- Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Service Delivery
- Director-General's Safety Behaviour Awards
- Certificates of Service.

Supervisors and managers are also encouraged to informally recognise and celebrate the value and contributions of their staff.

### **Building capability**

The department continues to support staff to develop critical skills and assists them in their career development.

We provide a broad range of training and development opportunities for our staff, using the 70:20:10 model of learning and development. Development opportunities cover technical training, management and leadership, cultural capability training, disability awareness as well as business and interpersonal skills.

Employees have access to a range of other opportunities, including further education, conferences and seminars. Staff also make use of on-the-job development opportunities through self-directed learning, stretch projects, secondments and higher duties arrangements.

For example, in 2019–20 the department's traditional Authorised Officers training was recrafted to be part online and the face-to-face component streamlined to ensure participants are well-equipped to perform their role.

### Mentoring programs

Following the success of the mentoring program in 2018–19, the department delivered another three programs for (1) general staff, (2) women in leadership and (3) First Nations employees. These programs attracted over 100 nominations and included mentors from all levels and areas of the department. This year, our Women on Boards Network were also invited to participate to broaden contacts and foster stronger working relationships across the department.

In response to restrictions placed on large gatherings due to COVID–19 and to ensure our employees could access the program, we transitioned the mentoring orientation sessions to an online platform and successfully engaged more than 60 mentoring participants over two days.

### **Leadership and management development**

Our leaders and managers play a vital role in delivering business outcomes and building the capabilities of our people. In 2019–20, we developed a renewed approach to leadership development that incorporates the Queensland public sector competency framework, Leadership Competencies for Queensland, employee feedback, and Working for Queensland results.

Two new leadership programs were developed and piloted with 15 employees. Leadership in Focus, launched in March 2020 for advanced managers, assesses participants' current leadership capabilities using the LEAD4QLD assessment tool. Framing Leadership, to be launched 2020-21, will provide leadership development guidance for new managers. Both programs use online learning, face-to-face development, 1:1 coaching and group activities.

This year, 44 employees completed the People Matters program, a three-day, hands-on development program that equips emerging leaders with foundational leadership skills to support their journey into management.

### **A diverse and inclusive culture**

We are working to create a diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the communities in which we live and serve. Our work to support diversity is woven through all programs and initiatives, and set out in our Cultural Capability Action Plan, Reconciliation Action Plan and Disability Service Plan.

Outlined below is the percentage of our workforce that identifies with our Equal Employment Opportunity groups:

4.43%	Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people
2.92%	People with a disability
7.47%	People from a non-English speaking background
50.35%	Women in the workforce
46.04%	Women in senior leadership roles (CEO, SES, SO)

The department has Employee Reference Groups, made up of staff who identify or have an interest in diversity, which are supported by senior leaders who act as champions. Key achievements of the groups this year include:

- supporting NAIDOC week participation and government activities at Musgrave Park
- celebrating AccessAbility Day by hosting nine jobseekers with lived experience for a full day, including on-the-job training and a career planning session
- celebrating Disability Action Week with the screening of the Wide-Angle Film Festival, a whole-of-government initiative
- the development of an AccessAbility video on reasonable adjustment to support employees and managers of people with a disability
- the addition of disability awareness training to the department's corporate induction
- delivering 19 cultural capability training sessions across the department, with 425 employees completing the training
- celebrating Queensland Women's Week with events in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns on the topic #eachforequal.

### A Thriving Culture

We are committed to creating a vibrant and rewarding organisational culture. Our Thrive program is fostering a culture where continuous learning is valued, and people are supported to seek out new challenges. Thrive builds on insights and staff feedback, gathered during the 2018–19 Designing DES initiative and Working for Queensland employee opinion surveys. Staff said they wanted to see improvements in the areas of performance, collaboration, trust and transparency.

Thrive is building awareness of how individual mindsets can impact organisational culture. It provides staff with opportunities to learn more about emotional intelligence, unconscious biases, failure and resilience. The program is being delivered through information sessions, workshops and a fortnightly e-newsletter.

### **Employee health and wellbeing**

#### Health, Safety and Wellness

Managing workplace risks to ensure our employees can go home safely is a key priority for the department. During 2019-20, we completed a review of the department's safety management system to align with the new ISO Safety Management Standard 45001. Key initiatives this year include:

- development of a new incident reporting tool, designed with the end user in mind, to improve the quality of data from workplace incidents and better inform decision-making
- continuing our wellness program, ensuring employees have access to skin cancer checks, flu vaccinations, mental health awareness sessions, nutritional information, financial fitness seminars and corporate memberships for health insurance and fitness centres
- best practice early intervention strategies to appropriately manage our injury and illness cases to get the best possible return-to-work outcomes
- trialling a proactive welfare check program targeting employees who are vulnerable or working in remote and isolated locations
- completing a review of workplace health and safety policies and procedures to standardise processes across the department, support legislative compliance and align with the safety management standard.

#### Flexible working arrangements

Providing flexible working arrangements is a key enabler of an inclusive and productive workplace.

This year, the department progressed promoting a culture of flexibility by being flexible about location in all vacancy advertising.

To facilitate workplace flexibility and mobility, we have accelerated the transition from desktop computers to laptops and enabled greater remote access to emails and online conferencing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the department, with over 50% of employees working remotely full or part-time while restrictions were in place; and our onsite staff adapting workplace practices to remain COVID-safe. The resilience and innovation of our employees ensured that work practices were successfully adapted, with employees still able to provide services to the community and deliver on our priorities. Continued embedding of remote working and online conferencing will continue post COVID-19.

#### Ethical behaviour and the Code of Conduct—it's not just about what we do, but how we do it

The department expects all employees to demonstrate high ethical standards and values. These are clearly explained in the Code of Conduct and are underpinned by the ethical principles set out in the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*:

- integrity and impartiality
- promoting the public good
- commitment to the system of government
- accountability and transparency.

To ensure all employees are aware of expected standards of behaviour, all new starters complete Code of Conduct training as part of their induction. Refresher training occurs at regular intervals. Face-to-face information sessions on appropriate workplace behaviour that help employees recognise inappropriate behaviour in the workplace, identify who has responsibility for addressing the behaviour and consider ways it could be addressed are also delivered.

#### Industrial and employee relations framework

The *Industrial Relations Act 2016* provides a framework for cooperative industrial relations and sets out the minimum employment standards for employees. The *Public Service Act 2008* prescribes arrangements and responsibilities specific to public service employees. Associated industrial instruments detail employee conditions:

- Queensland Public Service Employees and Other Employees Award—State 2015
- Parks and Wildlife Employees Award—State 2016
- General Employees (Queensland Government Departments) and Other Employees Award—State 2015
- Civil Construction, Operations and Maintenance General Award—State 2016.

The State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2019, certified on 9 June 2020, is the only certified agreement that applies to employees of the department.

The department engages with employees and their representatives through the Agency Consultative Committee. The People and Culture branch, within Corporate Services, has responsibility for overall management of industrial relations in consultation with business areas. The branch is also responsible for liaising with central agency departments, such as the Office of Industrial Relations and the Public Service Commission, in relation to whole-of-government matters, including enterprise bargaining, directives, industrial instruments and legislative changes.

#### **Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment**

During the period, one employee received a redundancy package at a cost of \$128,315.30

# Human rights—respect · protect · promote

## Department of Environment and Science Human Rights Working Group

In July 2019, the department established an internal working group to oversee the implementation of the *Human Rights Act 2019* across the department by:

- supporting the department's representative on the Human Rights Inter-Departmental Committee, established by the Department of Justice and Attorney General
- acting as a point of contact and advice for divisions
- ensuring the department is implementing the Act appropriately
- keeping the Director-General and Executive Leadership Team updated on progress and providing advice on risks, issues and workload across the department in complying with the Act.

The working group is chaired by the department's representative on the inter-departmental committee and has members from each of the department's divisions and relevant areas of corporate services. The working group meets monthly and reports back to both the Executive Leadership Team and the inter-departmental committee.

## Training and awareness-raising

The department rolled out mandatory training on the department's human rights responsibilities for all current staff (and new staff as part of their induction). The department is arranging tailored, face-to-face training for specific frontline staff and authorised officers.

In December 2019, the department hosted a seminar by the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner. The seminar was available to all departmental staff and statutory bodies. The presentation gave attendees information on the origin of human rights, the scope of the Queensland legislation and an opportunity to explore some practical applications with the Commissioner.

## Human rights relevant to pandemic response

During COVID-19, the Department of Environment and Science played an important role in the government's efforts to protect and support Queenslanders. The department took actions and made decisions consistent with the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the main one being to close national parks and camping areas for certain periods, which limited the right to freedom of movement (section 19) so as to protect the right to life (section 16).

In taking these actions and making these decisions, the department was mindful of its obligation to act compatibly with human rights, by ensuring that any limitations on human rights were reasonable and justified.

## Reporting

In response to complaints reporting under section 97(2)(b) of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the department has not received any human rights complaints since commencement of the Act.

In response to section 97(2)(c) and under the supervision of the department's Working Group, the department has undertaken a review of its 24 pieces of primary legislation and 16 subordinate instruments for which it has responsibility. A review of the department's extensive list of policies and procedures is underway.