

Who we are

Our purpose

The vision of the Department of Environment and Science (DES) is for the environment, science and the arts to enrich Queenslanders' lives now and into the future.

We work with First Nations peoples, communities, stakeholders and government to achieve a better environmental, economic and social future for Queensland. We do this by:

- protecting and sustainably managing Queensland's environment and natural, cultural and heritage values
- safeguarding the state's environmental values and reducing any impacts from environmental harm
- promoting the development of, and engagement with, science, heritage and the arts.

DES contributes to Queensland's economic prosperity by enabling ecologically sustainable development, supporting the science and arts sectors, and promoting nature-based tourism. We enrich Queensland's community life by supporting vibrant cultural experiences, protecting significant heritage places and providing opportunities to connect with our stunning natural environments.

Our operating environment

The department operates in a context of pressing environmental issues, such as the importance of securing Queensland's future by mitigating and adapting to climate change, and protecting the Great Barrier Reef. Issues like these present both challenges and opportunities.

Challenges that affect our operations include:

- balancing environmental protection with economic development
- balancing a future focus against current demands
- the need to anticipate, and respond to, emerging trends and issues
- adapting our workforce and services to respond to technological transformations
- remaining responsive to government and community expectations.

These challenges present us with opportunities to:

- provide stewardship of the environment, science and the arts for future generations
- transform our customer experience and the way we do business with new digital technologies
- collaborate beyond traditional boundaries to deliver best practice services and solutions to complex problems.

Our services

Our department delivers its services through the following six service areas:

Environmental protection services

We work to avoid, minimise or mitigate negative impacts on the environment with policies, standards and regulations that guide the operation of businesses, individuals and governments.

Species and ecosystem protection services

We preserve the diversity and integrity of Queensland's natural ecosystems, maintain or enhance the conservation status of native species, control the use of native species, and minimise negative interactions between humans and wildlife.

Heritage protection services

We protect the state's historical cultural heritage and promote it for present and future generations, in line with the Queensland Heritage Strategy: protecting, investing in and connecting Queensland's story.

National parks

We manage our parks and forests to sustain natural and cultural values, build environmental resilience for healthier species and ecosystems, and support nature-based recreation for all Queenslanders. We also deliver joint field management of the Great Barrier Reef in partnership with the Australian Government.

Science

We support science and research in Queensland and provide scientific information and advice to support government priorities. We work closely with the Queensland Chief Scientist to inform Queensland's science strategy and promote science in the state including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.

Arts Queensland

We support a vibrant and sustainable arts and cultural sector in Queensland. We manage investments in individual artists and arts and cultural organisations, provide public spaces for arts production and engagement, maintain Queensland's premier cultural assets, and provide policy advice to the Queensland Government on arts and culture.

What we do – a snapshot



13
MILLION
HECTARES

We are the custodian or joint manager of approximately 13 million hectares of protected areas and forests, in partnership with First Nations peoples, and collaboration with local government, industry groups, research bodies and local communities.

4.45
MILLION
HECTARES



We support the protection of over 4.45 million hectares of nature refuges and manage 12,000 square kilometres of declared fish habitat areas.



356km²

GREAT BARRIER
REEF & STATE
MARINE PARKS



We manage 356,000 square kilometres of Great Barrier Reef and state marine parks with the Australian Government and monitor water quality across 20 key catchments to inform the health of the Reef.



We support 51.3 million domestic and 8 million international visits to marine parks, national parks and forests each year, including 1.3 million guests in overnight camper stays.

955 SPECIES OF
ANIMALS
AND PLANTS

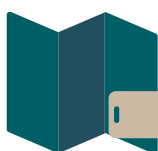
LISTED AS THREATENED IN QUEENSLAND

We are responsible for managing species listed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and undertaking effective regulation under the Act's subordinate legislation, with 955 species of animals and plants listed as threatened (extinct in the wild, endangered or vulnerable) in Queensland.

17,500 sites



We monitor legislative and regulatory compliance relating to the impact of licenced activity on the environment, regulating over 17,500 sites under environmental authorities.



169,000
DOWNLOADED
MAPS

We provide comprehensive digital maps and information systems to Queensland businesses, industry and individuals, with more than 169,000 maps downloaded in 2018.

870,000
PLANT SPECIMENS

160
YEARS
OF SPECIES
DISCOVERY



We help to manage the state's biodiversity, with information on more than 870,000 plant specimens, representing 160 years of species discovery, collected and curated by the Queensland Herbarium.

6,500,000 visits
TO STATE-OWNED ARTS
AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

We support more than 6.5 million visits to our state-owned arts and cultural facilities each year.

1,770 PLACES

We administer information on the cultural heritage significance of the 1,770 places on the Queensland Heritage Register.

Our leaders



Jamie Merrick

Director-General

Jamie leads the implementation of the government's sustainability agenda relating to Queensland's environment, national parks and heritage. He also ensures the delivery of robust scientific services and a vibrant and sustainable arts sector in Queensland. Under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Director-General is accountable to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts for the efficient, effective and financially responsible performance of DES.



Kirsten Herring

Deputy Director-General, Arts and Heritage

Kirsten oversees the department's investment and policy activities in the arts and preservation of the state's heritage assets. This includes the Queensland Government's investment in the Queensland Cultural Centre and funding of major arts companies. Kirsten provides corporate governance support to the state's arts statutory bodies, government-owned companies and the Queensland Heritage Council. She also manages arts and heritage investment funding programs.



Tony Roberts

Deputy Director-General, Environmental Policy and Programs

Tony is responsible for developing and coordinating policy, strategy and legislation relating to the environment and conservation. He oversees the delivery of strategic programs, such as the Advancing Queensland Priority – Protect the Great Barrier Reef by reducing Queensland's contribution to climate change and improving water quality. He also leads policy and on-ground programs on waste avoidance and resource recovery, climate change transition and adaptation, improved water quality, offsets fund management, mine rehabilitation, Land Restoration Fund operations, koala preservation and State of Environment reporting.



Rob Lawrence

Deputy Director-General, Environmental Services and Regulation

Rob leads the department's environmental regulatory program, ensuring it is targeted, consistent and transparent. He ensures that frameworks and services are in place to support sustainable development and strong environmental performance. Rob is also responsible for managing environmental risks through a proactive compliance and enforcement program. This includes 24/7 issues reporting and incident response, and strong litigation capabilities to respond to serious breaches. Rob was appointed to the role in May 2019. Prior to this, the role was filled by Dean Ellwood.



Dean Ellwood

Project Executive Regulatory Reform, Office of the Director-General

Dean is leading a review of the Department's regulatory capacity and performance to ensure Queensland's environmental framework is consistent with regulatory best practice. Dean was appointed to this role in May 2019.



Paul Bertsch

Interim Queensland Chief Scientist

Paul is responsible for providing leadership in science policy development and implementation and provides high-level, strategic advice to the Queensland Government on the role of science, research and innovation in meeting the state's economic challenges. The Queensland Chief Scientist is a whole-of-government position that also provides advice on maximising opportunities from the government's investment in research and development. As the Chief Scientist role is part-time, Paul also maintains his role as Deputy Director, Science of the Land and Water Business Unit, CSIRO. Paul was appointed as Interim Queensland Chief Scientist in February 2019.



Ben Klaassen

Deputy Director-General, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships

Ben leads the management of Queensland's parks and forests, including partnerships with First Nations peoples to protect cultural values, support sustainable use and provide eco-tourism opportunities. He is also responsible for protecting threatened species, managing the interaction between people and protected species, overseeing World Heritage management of selected sites, and leading the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program. Ben also delivers the Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program, in partnership with the Australian Government.



Mark Jacobs

Deputy Director-General, Science and Technology

Mark leads the provision of scientific and technical advice and services to government agencies on environmental, natural resource and climate matters. This advice underpins agency decision-making and legislative responsibilities. He provides oversight of the department's digital capability and ensures digital insights are harnessed to improve organisational performance. Mark is responsible for managing investment in science sector development, which is delivered in close collaboration with the Queensland Chief Scientist.

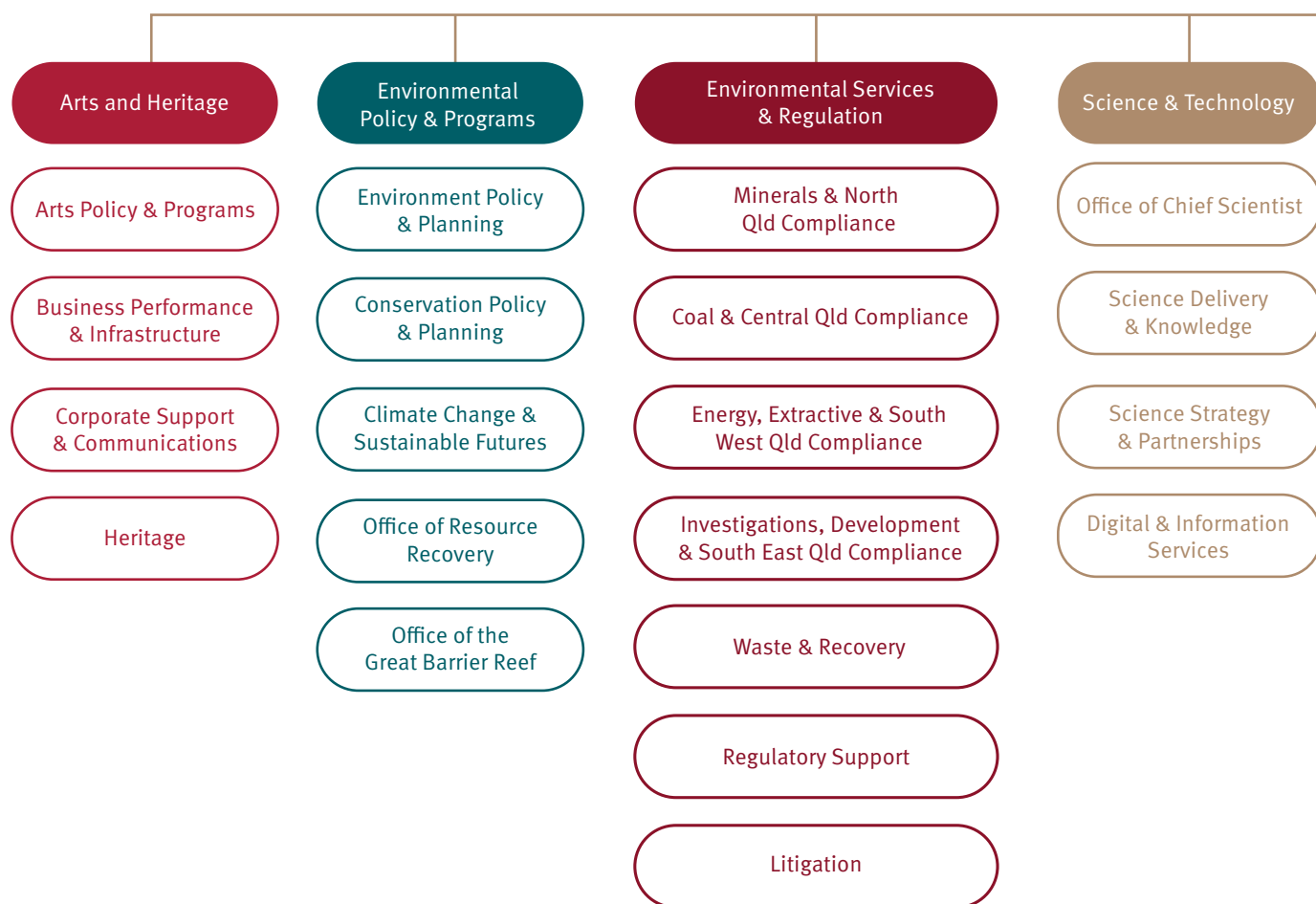


Susan Chrisp

Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services

Susan is responsible for developing and implementing corporate capability and governance frameworks that enable the department to meet its strategic objectives. Her role includes developing and implementing best practice policies, programs and systems to enable effective and efficient management of the department's financial, human, information and physical resources. Susan was appointed to the role in May 2019. Prior to this, the role was filled by Rob Lawrence.

Our structure

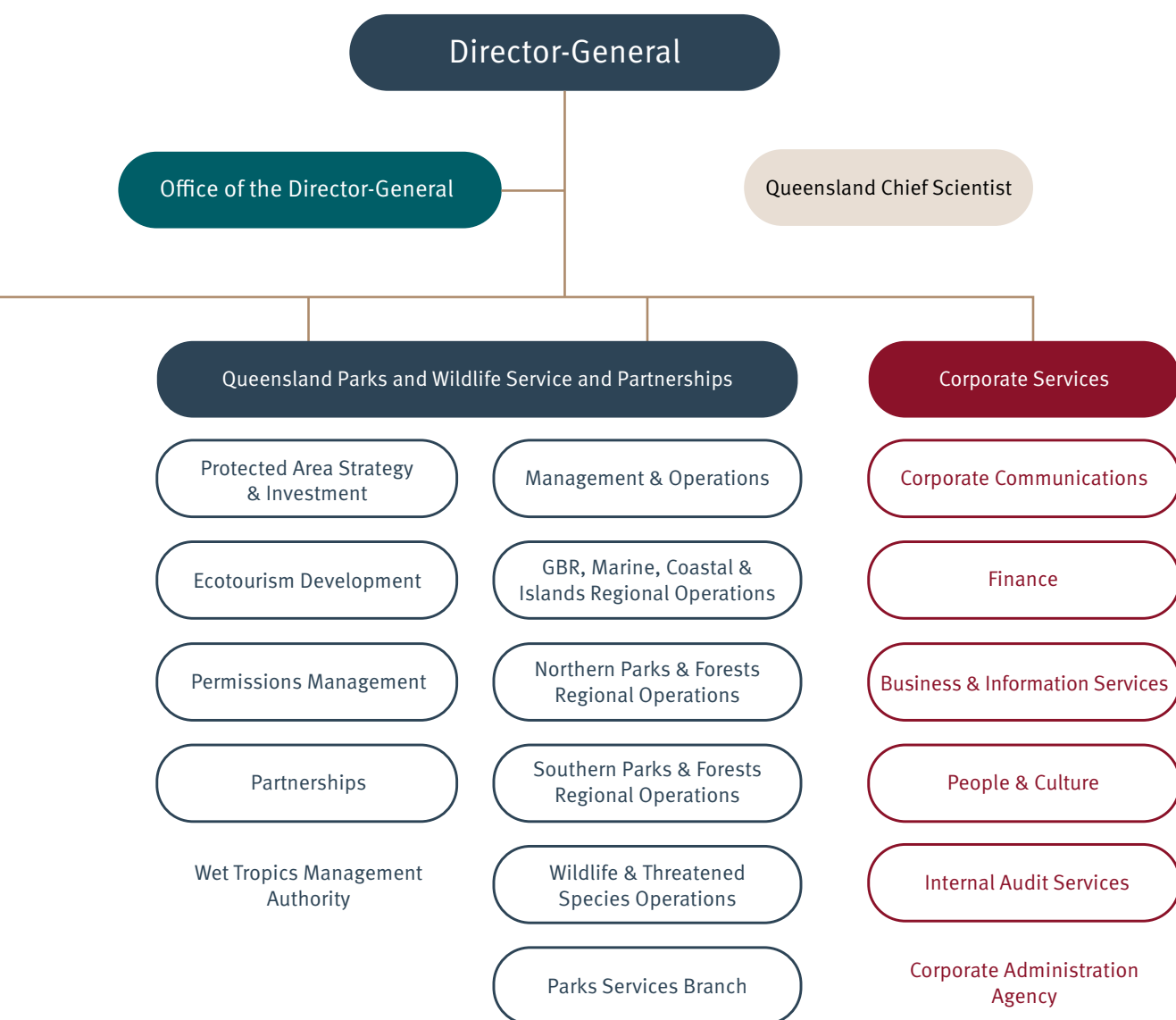


Designing DES

The Designing DES organisational change process began in 2018 and was primarily focused on reviewing the structure of DES following its creation from multiple agencies in 2017. The intent was to create a unified and high-performing organisation, better equipped to meet government priorities and deliver vital services and outcomes for the Queensland community into the future. Six key elements were identified for a successful organisational design—strategy, culture, structure, operating model, digital and people. Designing DES

initially concentrated on structure, with a view to reducing duplication, consolidating systems and processes, and building a foundation for a rewarding culture.

From the outset, Designing DES ensured that meaningful opportunities for staff involvement were provided throughout the process. Feedback and engagement opportunities included focus groups, regional visits, a state-wide staff information session, individual and group meetings with the Director-General, email submissions, an intranet page and an anonymous online survey. Unions were also actively engaged for their advice and suggestions.



Staff input contributed greatly to the final structure. It has better positioned DES to deliver on its commitments by aligning complementary functions (including arts and heritage), harnessing the latest science and placing an increased focus on developing and strengthening the department's partnerships with First Nations peoples, particularly on protected area initiatives.

The work of Designing DES will continue through programs that enhance organisational culture and capability, executive talent acquisition and employer branding.

Our values

The department's work is underpinned by government-wide values:



Customers first

- Know your customer
- Deliver what matters
- Make decisions with empathy



Ideas into action

- Challenge the norm and suggest solutions
- Encourage and embrace new ideas
- Work across boundaries



Unleash potential

- Expect greatness
- Lead and set clear expectations
- Seek, provide and act on feedback



Be courageous

- Own your actions, successes and mistakes
- Take calculated risks
- Act with transparency



Empower people

- Lead, empower and trust
- Play to everyone's strengths
- Develop yourself and those around you

Our government champion role

The Queensland Government is committed to delivering effective and integrated services for First Nations peoples across the state. The Government Champion program partners government ministers and departmental chief executives with individual communities. Our Director-General is the champion for the Wujal Wujal community on Cape York Peninsula.

Over 2018–19, the program delivered a number of initiatives to improve services and outcomes in close partnership with the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council, Traditional Owners and the broader community. These include:

- the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur's 2018 Venturer Program—held in Wujal Wujal, in which lasting relationships were formed between the community and entrepreneurs on tourism development ideas
- planning around key community priorities, such as infrastructure, economic development, social housing and non-government services, with a particular focus on funding, health care and disaster recovery
- ethnobotanist advice on safeguarding traditional plants impacted by climate change
- a review of Wujal Wujal's hydrology and landscape changes following the 2018–19 severe weather events.



Our contribution

In 2018–19, our work directly contributed to the government’s community objectives in Our Future State: Advancing Queensland’s Priorities by:

Protect the Great Barrier Reef

- improving water quality in partnership with Australian and local governments, industry, natural resource management groups, research, community and private organisations
- managing the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park jointly with the Australian Government
- advocating for Queensland research and its commercialisation.

Create jobs in a strong economy

- facilitating sustainable development
- supporting nature-based heritage, arts and cultural tourism
- partnering with First Nations peoples to manage and protect significant land and sea areas
- managing and promoting national parks as tourist destinations
- supporting the transition to a knowledge-based and low-carbon economy
- supporting the development of new recycling markets and infrastructure
- facilitating innovative and new commercial partnerships in the circular economy
- supporting and promoting artists, and arts and cultural organisations.

Keep Queenslanders heathy

- monitoring and regulating for clean and healthy air, land and water
- promoting active recreation in parks and forests
- responding to natural disasters and threats to the environment, including pollution.

Keep communities safe

- managing human interaction with dangerous wildlife, such as crocodiles
- ensuring the health and safety of Queenslanders with air, water, storm tide and wave monitoring.

Give all our children a great start

- giving children the opportunity to experience and learn about the natural environment and cultural and heritage values
- supporting arts programs and promoting science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) for young children
- working with local councils and communities to give children access to quality arts and culture.

Be a responsive government

- engaging, collaborating and partnering with First Nations peoples and key stakeholders to reduce Queensland’s contribution to climate change and deliver adaptation programs
- identifying and investigating non-compliance with Queensland’s environmental laws
- conserving nature and heritage, managing parks and forests, and protecting marine and island ecosystems
- protecting urban and natural areas with fire management in parks and forests
- ensuring decision-making is based on the best available science.