



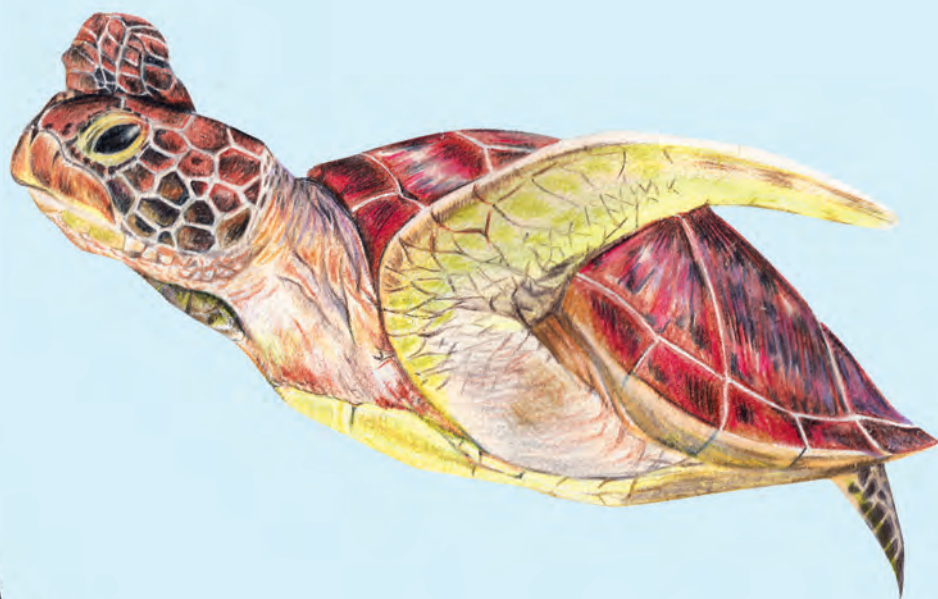
**Australian Government**

**Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority**

GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

2014–15



**40** YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY  
1975 - 2015

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Prepared by: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
Designed by: Vetta Productions Pty Ltd

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority acknowledges the continuing sea country management and custodianship of the Great Barrier Reef by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners whose rich cultures, heritage values, enduring connections and shared efforts protect the Reef for future generations.

## Printing standards

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## Australian Government

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# LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
PO Box 1379  
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29 September 2015

The Hon Greg Hunt MP  
Minister for the Environment  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with subsection 53(1) of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, I submit the annual report of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for the year ended 30 June 2015.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements for annual reports for departments, executive agencies and other non-corporate Commonwealth entities, as approved by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit under subsections 63(2) and 70(2) of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

This annual report has been prepared in line with the *Requirements for Annual Reports* updated by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet on 25 June 2015.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reichelt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Russell Reichelt  
Chairman



Figure 1: Map of the Great Barrier Reef Region

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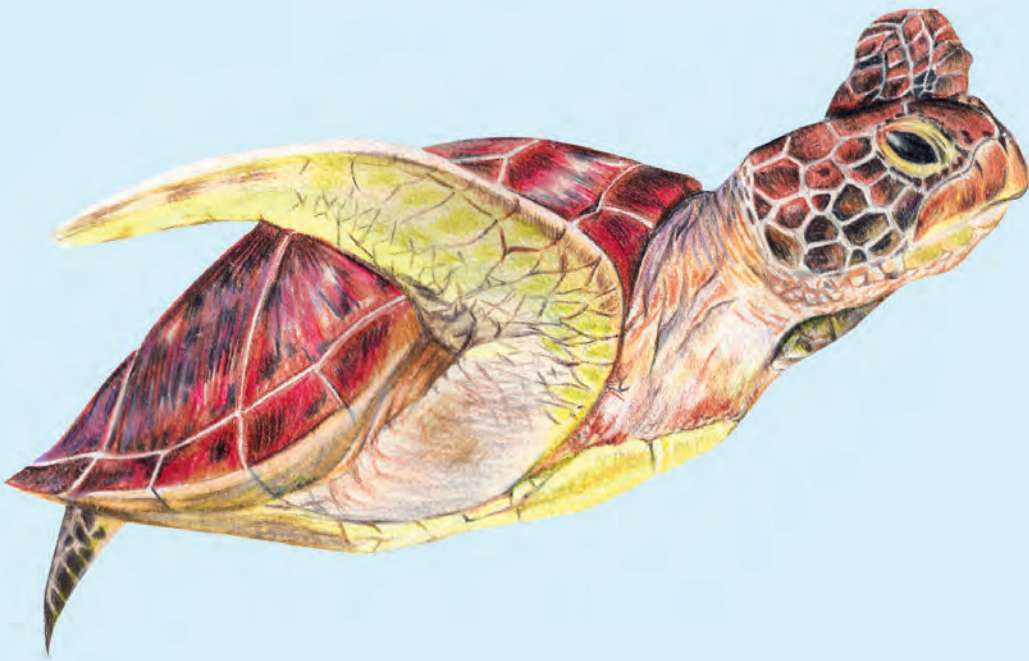
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# **INTRODUCTION**

## **IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT**

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Annual Report 2014–15 complies with requirements for annual reports outlined by the Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. It is also consistent with the structure of the Portfolio Budget Statement for the agency.

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## INTRODUCTION

Following the Introduction and Chairman's review, the annual report comprises six chapters:

- Overview
- Performance
- Management and accountability
- Finances
- Appendices
- Acronyms and index.

The *Overview* provides corporate background to the agency including its role and functions. It also provides a summary of financial performance and a staff overview.

The *Performance* chapter details the actions taken by the agency in 2014–15 to meet its stated outcome of the *long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park*.

This chapter is presented in three parts under the agency's three objectives. It details how the agency has met the deliverables and key performance indicators that relate to the objectives, as outlined in the agency's Portfolio Budget Statement.

The first part addresses Objective 1: **Protect and restore the Reef's biodiversity.**

The second part addresses Objective 2: **Safeguard the Reef's heritage.**

The third part addresses Objective 3: **Ensure use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations.**

The *Management and accountability* chapter covers the delivery of the management framework that supports effective functioning of the agency. This includes corporate governance, statutory and advisory committees, management and training, work health and safety, asset management, corporate services and management of consultants.

The *Finances* chapter delivers an analysis of financial performance and a detailed financial statement.

The *Appendices* comprise the agency resource statement, staffing overview, advertising and marketing, freedom of information, ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance, staff papers and presentations, and Queensland Government financials.

The *Acronyms and index* comprise a list of acronyms, glossary, compliance index and alphabetical index.

## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW



The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's key objective is the long-term protection of the Great Barrier Reef. We achieve this by managing the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the risks to the Reef, encouraging partnerships and research, and enhancing the public's understanding of the Reef's values and the actions needed to protect its remarkable natural beauty.

The Great Barrier Reef is one of the world's living treasures. Bigger than Italy, or the size of Victoria and Tasmania combined, the Reef is a priceless natural asset, a massive archipelago of 3000 individual coral reefs, deep shoals, seagrasses and mangrove systems that support thousands of marine species. It inspires awe in two million tourists every year and is considered 'our Reef' to the 1.1 million Australians living along its coastline.

As we move into our 40th year of Marine Park management, we reflect on a year of achievements.

The agency released two key reports that have been fundamental in guiding the future management of the Great Barrier Reef — the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment* and the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*.

Significant legislation was introduced to prohibit disposal of capital dredge material in the Marine

Park — a major step forward in protecting the Reef by minimising incremental, cumulative changes that cause pressure on the natural system.

The World Heritage Committee's draft decision recommended that the Great Barrier Reef not be listed as World Heritage in Danger. Notwithstanding the well-documented pressures on the Reef, this draft decision acknowledges Australia's commitment to protect the Reef. The agency's four decades of innovative management and protection were featured in this decision through recognition of our Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report, which has now been adopted by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as their assessment method for all World Heritage properties listed for their natural values.

### Informing the long-term protection of the Reef

In August 2014 we released the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment* and the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*, which provide the most comprehensive information about the Reef's values, impacts on those values and current condition. These documents have identified the actions needed to improve Reef health and have been critical to informing the agency's forward plans.

*The Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment 2014*, undertaken in cooperation with the Queensland government between 2012 and 2014, was the most comprehensive assessment of the Reef's World Heritage values ever conducted. The findings confirmed that while the Reef's outstanding universal value remains largely intact, the accumulation of impacts over time over an ever-increasing area are diminishing the Reef's resilience. It confirmed that the trends are negative and strong action is needed to reverse this decline.

The assessment showed the northern third of the Great Barrier Reef region is in good condition, but inshore areas south of Cooktown are in decline, concluding that managing the multiple impacts requires a multi-pronged approach. The offshore southern regions have experienced massive loss of coral cover from a combination of outbreaks of the coral predator,



*The Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment and the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014 provided the most comprehensive information about the Reef's values, impacts on those values and current condition and have identified the actions needed to improve Reef health and inform the agency's forward plans.*

crown-of-thorns starfish, and a series of severe cyclones causing physical damage over a wide area.

The agency's second Outlook Report (2014) found that while the outstanding universal value of the Reef remains in good condition overall, climate change, declining water quality, catchment run-off and some fishing impacts remain the biggest threats facing the Reef.

For the first time, the Outlook Report assessed the Reef's heritage values — Indigenous heritage, historic heritage and the World Heritage values. It also identified positive results of actions taken since the first report in 2009, such as improvements in the recovery of corals and catchment water quality after the major storms and floods over the past decade. Informed by these two reports, the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* was released by Prime Minister the Hon Tony Abbott and Minister for the Environment the Hon Greg Hunt in March 2015 at Hamilton Island in the

Whitsundays. In addition to the projected \$2 billion that will be invested in Reef protection over the next decade, implementation of the plan will be underpinned by an additional \$140 million Reef Trust which will harness and coordinate public and private investment to maximise outcomes for the Reef.

The Australian and Queensland governments have further strengthened their commitment to the Reef, with an update to the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement, first established in 1979, which now includes the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* as a schedule. This plan provides clear outcomes, objectives and targets to ensure management is coordinated and the Reef is protected into the future. The agency will lead the implementation of the Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Programme agreed at the Ministerial Forum in June 2015, ensuring the plan's effectiveness is monitored in a scientifically sound and publicly transparent manner.

## Legislative changes

In June 2015, a new regulation came into effect, ending the disposal of dredged sediments in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park from capital projects such as port developments.

This was the first significant step towards a regulatory approach to prevent the expansion of major ports in the Great Barrier Reef Region.

The Australian Government legislative amendment to the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act* prohibits capital dredge disposal in the Marine Park. This is a critically important addition to the long-term protection of the Reef.

An independent report, *Synthesis of current knowledge of the biophysical impacts of dredging and disposal on the Great Barrier Reef* found the indirect effects of dredging and disposal could be contributing to the increase of fine suspended sediments in inshore areas over time as well impacting on local biodiversity.

Another significant legislative amendment was the declaration of two new special management areas to protect two Royal Australian Air Force Second World War Catalina aircraft wrecks. The new management areas protect the important maritime cultural heritage values of the two

wrecks, one located south of Cairns, the other near Bowen.

Further amendments to the Act in March 2015 provided greater protection to dugong and turtle populations by increasing penalties for taking or injuring these protected species within the Marine Park.

## Joint Field Management programme

Keeping the Reef healthy requires a collaborative effort across federal and state jurisdictions. Stretching across 2,300 km from north to south, the agency and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service operate a joint Field Management programme for the marine and island national parks, encompassing the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park.

The field team deliver practical on-ground actions to protect and maintain well-functioning

marine and island ecosystems that support economic, traditional and recreational uses of the Reef.

Compliance and illegal fishing continue to be key areas of focus for the agency. During the year, the first commercial fisher was banned from fishing in the Marine Park under the 'three strikes' legislation. This provision in the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act* allows the agency to ban a person entering or using the Marine Park or impose conditions where that person has been convicted of at least three offences under the Act in the past decade. Failure to comply can attract a fine of up to \$85,000. In this instance, the individual was banned from entering or using the Marine Park for recreational and commercial fishing and collection for two years.

Vessel tracking technology, which is used to pinpoint the location of boats and other craft in the Marine Park, was also expanded. The



*The field team deliver practical on-ground actions to protect and maintain well-functioning marine and island ecosystems that support economic, traditional and recreational uses of the Reef. ©GBRMPA, Photographer Pine Creek Pictures*

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technology has been installed on the field management fleet, and it is planned to extend it to trials on commercial fishing vessels during 2015–16. While the devices are operational on field management vessels and larger fishing vessels like trawlers, the primary objective of these field trials is to demonstrate the devices are suitable for monitoring small vessels that operate in reef and inshore fisheries.

The agency is working with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to assess how new technologies such as vessel tracking systems can improve compliance with zoning plans.

Last year, the field team welcomed a new patrol boat, *Reef Ranger*, to its fleet. Funded by the Australian and Queensland governments, the \$5 million, 24-metre vessel is based in Cairns and patrols waters off far north Queensland. The *Reef Ranger* is twice as fast as its predecessor and well suited to multi-tasking, making it a valuable tool in the day-to-day activities of our field management team. It has increased productivity of our field operations by a massive 34 per cent.

## Controlling the coral predator – *Acanthaster planci* or the crown-of-thorns starfish

The crown-of-thorns starfish is native to Indo-Pacific reefs and has been driven to population outbreaks of pest proportions through excess nutrients running off the land to the sea. Our policy is to support control programmes to reduce starfish numbers and prevent loss of coral while efforts continue on the land to reduce nutrient run-off.

Excellent results were achieved during the year through a partnership delivered by the agency and the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators, with some 92,000 crown-of-thorns starfish culled.

As part of our Great Barrier Reef Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, research has been done in conjunction with the CSIRO to identify specific reefs where crown-of-thorns control would have the greatest effect on limiting further outbreaks.

The agency has also partnered with research institutions, including the Australian Institute

of Marine Science, James Cook University and University of Queensland to significantly improve our understanding of the crown-of-thorns starfish and investigate other options for managing their numbers.

A new three-year control programme is supported by the Australian Government's Reef Trust and brings together the agency, the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators, the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. This partnership will enhance the efforts to control this destructive starfish.

## Impact of cyclones

Extreme weather events have been identified as a major threat to the Reef, and earlier this year we saw the impact when category five and four tropical cyclones Marcia and Nathan struck in north Queensland.

Tropical cyclone Marcia crossed the coast near Shoalwater Bay on 20 February, followed by Nathan, which crossed near Cape Melville on 20 March.

Incident management teams coordinated field responses to both events, with surveys carried out to assess the damage to affected reefs. Modelling indicated the combined area of damage from both cyclones covered 35.4 per cent of the total reef area in the Marine Park, however a systematic damage assessment hasn't been completed, and the full extent of the impact on the Reef's values is not yet known.

It is clear the Reef retains strong resilience in the face of these destructive storms. Research in 2012 on coral abundance in the aftermath of category five, extreme tropical cyclone Yasi in 2011 has shown corals recovering from extensive damage caused by the cyclone. This is encouraging news, highlighting the natural resilience of the ecosystem and its ability to bounce back. Our management efforts are aimed at retaining or restoring the Reef's resilience wherever possible.

## Marine debris

After tropical cyclone Marcia in April, the agency worked with Tangaroa Blue Foundation to coordinate a clean-up, under the Reef Trust, over four days concentrating efforts along 17



kilometres of impacted coastline in the Yeppoon area. More than five tonnes of marine debris was cleared from local beaches. This event has been used as a pilot study for a larger community event organised for later this year as part of the Australian Government's marine debris programme.

Over the next two years, we will be working with communities and industries to minimise the source and occurrence of marine debris in the Great Barrier Reef. The project — funded by the Australian government's Reef Trust — will see on-ground community clean-ups, targeted education and awareness raising, and is one of four key projects to be delivered as part of the Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan.

### Science strategy

Ensuring we have the best available knowledge on which to base management decisions is critical to the long-term protection of the Reef. Science information is one major source of knowledge contributed by a wide range of research institutions, government agencies, universities, industry, stakeholders and Traditional Owners.

The agency published its Science Strategy and Information Needs 2014–2019 which sets out our future scientific information needs. It aims to ensure scientific activities are relevant and targeted to address our critical management questions, and that our scientific outputs are easily accessible. As part of the development of the strategy, which draws on the Outlook Report and strategic assessment, a register of research questions relating to the strategy has been developed and is accessible through the agency's website.

### Stewardship

We are committed to working with the people who live and work along the coast of the Reef. In the third and final year of the current term, the 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees have had a far-reaching, positive impact in raising awareness, education and management of Reef issues in those communities that live, work and play alongside the Marine Park.

One of their most significant contributions during their term has been their valuable input to the comprehensive strategic assessment and



*The Reef Guardian programme recognises the good environmental work undertaken by communities and industries to protect the Great Barrier Reef. It involves working closely with those who use and rely on the Reef and its catchment for their recreation or business to help build a healthier and more resilient Reef.*

Outlook Report 2014, and the Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan. They have also played an important role in grassroots environmental activities, from monitoring water quality, hosting Reef information evenings and field trips, donating funds to local environmental activities, supporting local Reef Guardian programmes and organising beach clean-ups.

### Permissions framework

Sustainable tourism is clearly an extremely important use of the Marine Park — visitors who experience the marine environment are found to be more inclined to care about its protection. We regard Reef tourism as a powerful way to showcase the Reef's world heritage value to millions of visitors.

Reef tourism operators rely on the agency's permit process to secure their investment and provide confidence to the general public that their businesses are ecologically sustainable.



*The agency continues to build on its work in detailing the impacts of coastal land use changes on water quality, habitat and inshore biodiversity in the Marine Park. ©Matt Curnock*

This year we have worked on improving the tourism permissions system. Currently, commercial tourism operators in the World Heritage Area need three separate permits to operate, however as a result of work done with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, an opportunity has been identified to consolidate these to create a single permit.

With phase one of the project complete, a trial is now underway with holders of permits for commercial activities. Not only will a single permit help streamline administrative processes, it will also have the benefit of creating a single front-counter for commercial operators in the World Heritage Area.

## Coastal ecosystems

The agency continues to build on its work in detailing the impacts of coastal land use changes on water quality, habitat and inshore biodiversity in the Marine Park. This includes

refining science-based tools to identify which areas in the catchment are most critical to the Reef's long-term health and working with key stakeholders such as local governments and natural resource management agencies to ensure this information is available to inform on-ground management decisions.

## Education and engagement

During the past year, international interest in marine protected areas has increased, and the Great Barrier Reef has come under a global spotlight.

In September 2014, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and its management was showcased to the world as part of the G20 Finance Ministers meeting and Central Bank Deputies and Governors meeting in Cairns. As part of the event, the agency hosted a Reef information booth and Reef trip for international delegates and journalists. This provided an

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opportunity to highlight to an international audience the comprehensive management programme and the strong regulatory frameworks in place to protect the Marine Park.

The agency again took centre stage in Sydney in November, 2014 when it co-hosted the Marine stream of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) World Parks Congress. This is a global forum on protected areas held once a decade. With 4800 delegates in attendance, the Congress provided a further opportunity to shine an international spotlight on the work being done to improve the health and resilience of the Reef. Staff participated in a range of events as well as hosting workshops and presentations on some of the agency's innovative management tools, including Eye on the Reef, Indigenous partnerships and marine park compliance. This was followed by a field trip to Heron Island and a Reef visit where international delegates, including UNESCO Director-General Ms Irina Bokova, were able to experience first-hand the scope of work being done to protect the World Heritage value of the Great Barrier Reef.

A live 'underwater' cross from our Townsville Reef HQ Aquarium supported the opening plenary address made by Julia Marton-Lefèvre — Director General IUCN and Ernesto Enkerlin — Head of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas with 4,800 delegates from more than 165 countries in attendance.

## Financial performance

The agency's 2014–15 financial report shows that as at June 30 2015, the agency had an operating deficit of \$2.386 million including depreciation. This result was in large part due to the unplanned and unbudgeted cost of litigation, especially the cost of seeking funds to clean up the toxic paint left on Douglas Shoal after the 2010 grounding of the 220 metre Shen Neng I.

The agency obtained approval from the Minister for Finance for an operating loss for this reporting period.

## Looking forward

When the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area was inscribed in 1981 the Great Barrier

Reef Marine Park was one tenth of its current size. Ninety percent of the area was relatively unmanaged.

In the year ahead we celebrate 40 years of Reef management — a journey that has taken us from a small office space in the Townsville central business district to a national 35-year plan to protect the Reef with partnerships extending across federal, state and local governments and many community groups, Traditional Owners and industry sectors. All Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority staff, past and present, have been at the heart of this effort.

The final decision of the World Heritage Committee will be made by the time this report is published. We celebrated the news of the Committee's draft decision recommending the Great Barrier retains its World Heritage listing and remain confident that together with the Australian and Queensland governments, we have delivered a strong and positive response to address their concerns and enhance protection of this globally significant ecosystem.

Our top priority in the years ahead will be to deliver our commitments in the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, including the implementation of an integrated monitoring and reporting programme to enable us to track our progress in achieving the plan's targets, outcomes and objectives. This reporting programme will inform the nation and the international community about the condition of the Reef, and provide evidence that our actions to protect the Reef are on track and report honestly where they are not.

While our priorities have adapted with changing issues over the years, the agency's fundamental role has remained the same — to continue our critical foundational work to manage and preserve the Marine Park, ensuring its use is ecologically sustainable.

## *Thanks to all staff, the board and the wide range of partners*

During the past year, the agency farewelled our long-serving team member and general manager, Andrew Skeat. During his 17 years, Andrew led many important Reef protection programmes and became known for his

---

passion and dedication to the Reef, and his practical knowledge of the wide range of actions needed to manage this massive, unique marine protected area.

In presenting this Annual Report, I thank all agency staff, the executive management team and my colleagues on the Authority's board. The team effort from all at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is evident in all the products and achievements reported here.

We are confident of our path forward through implementing the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, together with our strong management that underpins the plan.

We remain focused on implementing and enhancing a framework of innovative Reef management in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure the Great Barrier Reef continues to be protected and enjoyed by future generations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Russell Reichelt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Russell Reichelt  
Chairman

# OVERVIEW

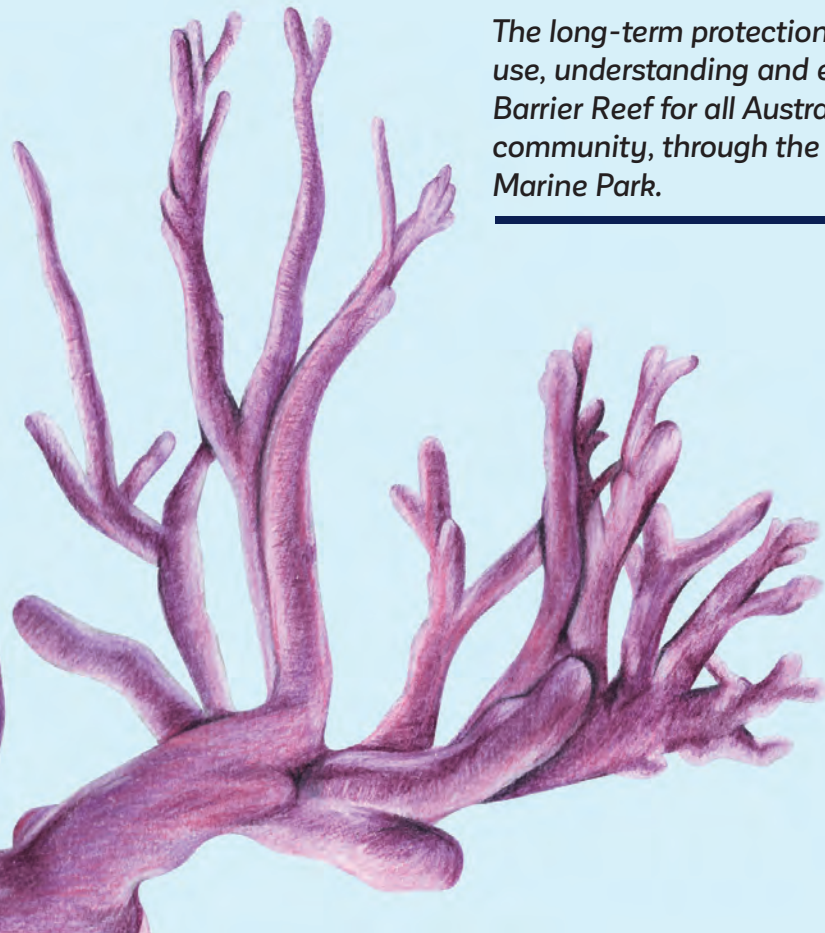
## THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is an Australian Government statutory authority within the Environment portfolio.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is responsible for managing one of the world's premier natural resources, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The agency implements a range of policies and programmes, management strategies and legislative measures to work towards the following outcome:

***The long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park.***

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## OVERVIEW

Delivery of this outcome is through three objectives set out in the agency's strategic and corporate plans:

1. Protect and restore the Reef's biodiversity.
2. Safeguard the Reef's heritage.
3. Ensure use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations.

Within these objectives, over the next four years, the priorities of the agency are to:

- implement new initiatives resulting from the comprehensive strategic assessment to protect and restore values, reduce pressures and ensure use is managed within ecologically sustainable limits.
- have a collaborative approach to management, especially with Traditional Owners, the Queensland and Commonwealth governments, Reef industries, the scientific and the broader community.
- enable the agency to evolve as a knowledge-based organisation, where decisions regarding the management of the Marine Park are fully informed by the best science and information available.

The agency's comprehensive management programme builds on the strong foundational management arrangements already in place to protect biodiversity and heritage values and provide for ecologically sustainable use. The agency will continue these arrangements and, drawing on the recommendations of the Strategic Assessment Report, has committed to adopting a suite of measures to strengthen management by:

- implementing an outcome based adaptive management framework
- ensuring the best available knowledge is captured and used to inform management decisions
- delivering effective environmental regulation
- strengthening engagement
- maintaining a high performing, efficient and effective organisation.

The agency is focused on improving the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef by addressing declining water quality from catchment run-off, the degradation of coastal habitats, and the remaining impacts from fishing, illegal fishing and poaching. The agency also works to minimise the impacts of shipping and coastal developments. This work will enable the Reef to better withstand the impacts of major threats, particularly climate change and extreme weather events.

The agency engages with communities and industries to raise awareness of climate change risks, vulnerability and resilience, and encourage local stewardship actions that can help the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem cope with climate change. A range of

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agency programmes and partnerships are aimed at protecting species and habitats from unsustainable uses and land-based sources of pollution.

The agency actively promotes the sustainable use of the Marine Park, including the use of the adjacent coast and catchments from which water flows to the Reef. Many commercial and non-commercial uses of the Great Barrier Reef Region depend on the biodiversity and health of this ecosystem. The agency aims to ensure activities occurring within the Marine Park continue to operate on an ecologically sustainable basis.

To effectively manage the Great Barrier Reef, the agency works with a wide range of government agencies, Reef users, industries, Traditional Owners and other community representatives with an interest in the Reef and its outlook. These working partnerships are vital given the challenges facing the Reef.

The relationship between the agency, the Queensland Government and a range of other government agencies is critical for effective management of the Great Barrier Reef. In particular, the Field Management Programme, a jointly funded cooperative partnership between the Australian and Queensland governments, coordinates the day-to-day activities and field operations required to manage the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the Queensland Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park and the World Heritage Area.

The agency acknowledges and respects the native title rights and cultural responsibilities of the Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef Region. Traditional Owners have a long association with the region. There are more than 70 Traditional Owner groups whose sea country lies within the Great Barrier Reef Region. The agency partners with these groups to help maintain their cultural rights and interests and, through collaboration, to achieve the most effective management of the Marine Park.

# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

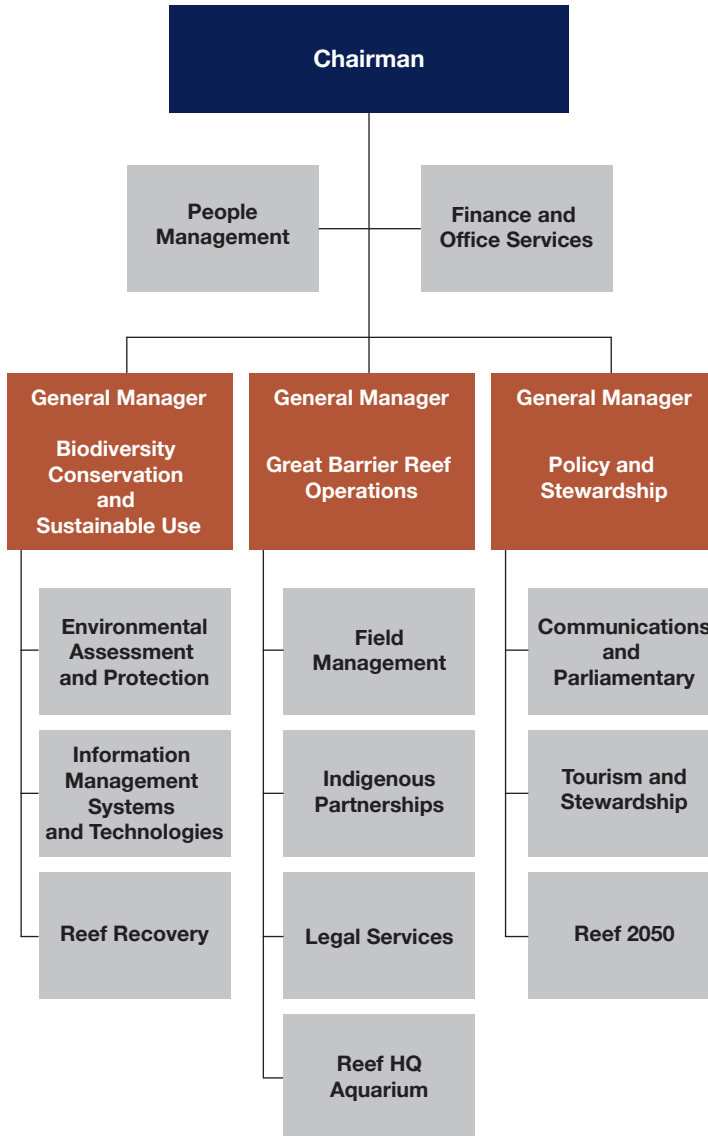


Figure 2 Organisational structure as at 30 June 2015



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## Responsible Minister

As Minister for the Environment, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, was responsible for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority as at 30 June 2015.

No Ministerial directions were issued to the agency in 2014–15.

## Legislative framework

The agency is established by the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (the Act) as an Australian Government statutory authority. The objects of the Act are set out in section 2A, and the specific functions of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority are defined in sections 7 and 7A.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park consists of areas declared by the Great Barrier Reef (Declaration of Amalgamated Marine Park Area) Proclamation 2004 made under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act.

Other Acts administered by the agency are:

- *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Environmental Management Charge–Excise) Act 1993*
- *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Environmental Management Charge–General) Act 1993*.

Regulation in force under the Act:

- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983

The agency also administers the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003 and the following plans of management:

- Cairns Area Plan of Management 1998
- Hinchinbrook Plan of Management 2004
- Shoalwater Bay (Dugong) Plan of Management 1997
- Whitsundays Plan of Management 1998.

The Authority's statutory board has four part-time members and a full-time chair who is also the agency head for the purposes of the *Public Service Act 1999* and the Accountable Authority for the purposes of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

## Amendments to legislation during 2014–15

On 2 June 2015, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 were amended to end the disposal of dredge material in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park from capital dredging projects. The amendments:

1. Prohibit the agency from granting permissions for the dumping of more than 15,000 cubic metres of capital dredge in the Marine Park.
2. Revoked an existing permission granted by the agency that, if not revoked, would have allowed in future the uncontained disposal of three million cubic metres of capital dredge spoil in the Marine Park.

These amendments are intended to decrease the potential impacts of dumping capital dredge spoil, which will protect the Reef's overall World Heritage values by improving water quality and increasing protection and conservation of the plants and animals of the Marine Park (including protected species).

On 14 May 2015 the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 were amended to add a new type of Special Management Area, the Maritime Cultural Heritage Protection Special Management Area.

The purpose of the regulation is to protect cultural heritage in general, and in particular, the heritage value of two Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Catalina air wrecks (RAAF Catalina A24-24 and RAAF A24-25) located in the Marine Park. The regulation includes specific management provisions for the Maritime Cultural Heritage Protection Special Management Area regulating entering and approaching the wrecks, operating and anchoring vessels, fishing and collecting.

On 6 March 2015 amendments to the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* commenced to provide additional protection for dugong and turtle populations from the threats of poaching, illegal trade and illegal transportation. The amendments increase the financial penalties for various offences and civil penalty provisions relating to protected dugong and turtles.

They are intended to deter persons from committing offences or breaching civil penalty provisions by imposing increased penalties in respect of taking or injuring protected dugong and turtles within the Marine Park.

On 4 November 2014 amendments to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 commenced to increase the ability to take enforcement action against commercial fishers who take or possess non-bait fish while using commercial bait net(s) in the Conservation Park Zone. The amendments will not affect other users of the Marine Park such as recreational fishers.

### Finances overview

Total operating revenue for 2014–15 was \$50.009 million. Appropriation for 2014–15 of

\$27.145 million was \$1.267 million less than the 2013–14 appropriation with supplementary funding being received for voluntary redundancies.

Own source income includes support for the continuation of the agency's work and measures to improve the outlook for the Great Barrier Reef funded from the National Landcare Programme. This is included in funding from related entities. Related entities are bodies which either form part of the Australian Government or are controlled by the Australian Government. In the figure below, related entity refers primarily to funds received from the Department of the Environment.

Own source income for 2014–15 was \$22,864 million, compared to \$24,055 million in 2013–14. Significant funding was

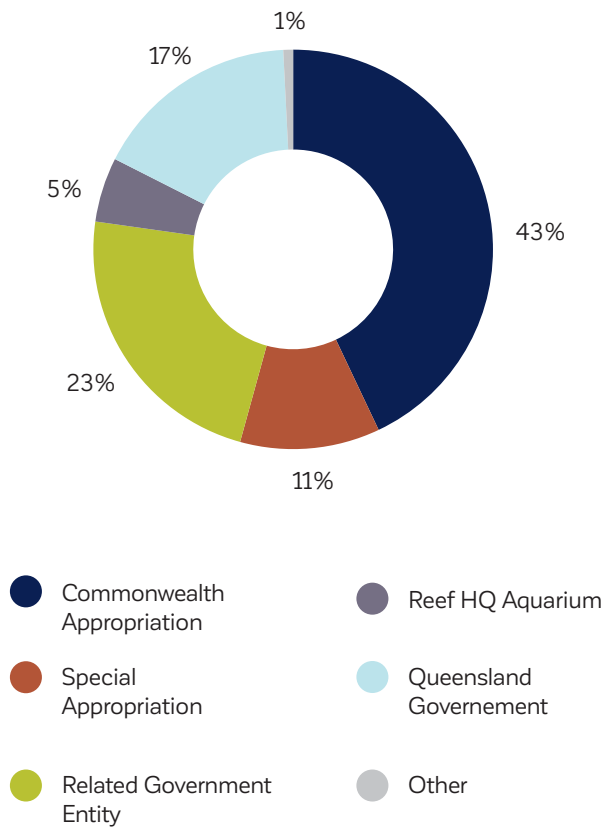


Figure 3 Income by source 2014–15

received for 'Ensuring the resilience of the Reef', for a targeted crown-of-thorns starfish control programme, for the Marine Monitoring Programme and Indigenous Sea Country Partnerships as part of the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. The main reason for the decrease was the cessation of AusAid funding.

The Australian and Queensland governments provided matching funding for field management of the Marine Park, which was implemented in partnership with the Queensland Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing and other agencies.

The operating expense of managing the Marine Park in 2014–15 was \$52.450 million. Employee expenses were lower than in 2013–14 following a number of voluntary

redundancies late in the 2013–14 financial year. Expenses for suppliers were \$1.580 million more than 2013–14 with a significant expenditure on litigation.

Expenses by category is outlined in Figure 4.

The agency had an operating deficit of \$2.386 million in 2014–15 including depreciation.

Further details of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's financial operations are provided in the Finances chapter.

### Staff overview

The Executive Management Group consists of the Chairman and three Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 General Managers:

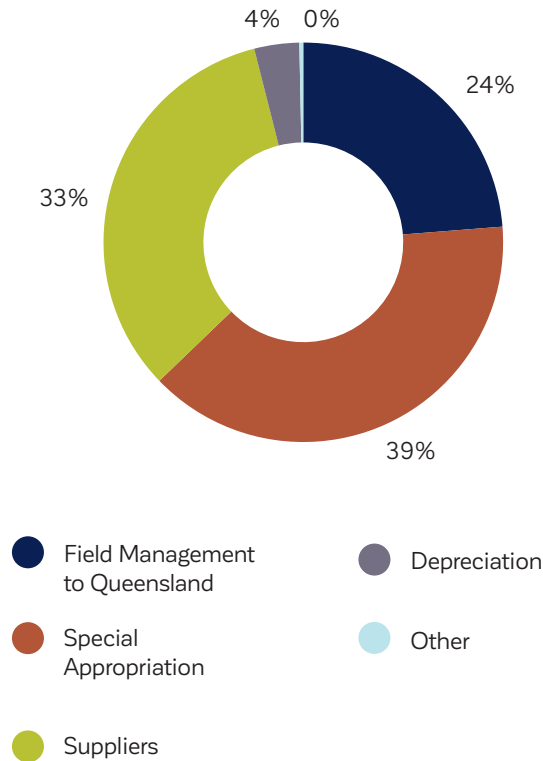


Figure 4 Expenses by category 2014–15

- 
- Policy and Reef Stewardship
  - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use
  - Great Barrier Reef Operations.

The number of employees in the agency was 193 for 2014–15, a decrease from 214 in 2013–14. The total number of employees in 2012–13 was 222. (See Appendix B for an overview of staffing, employee numbers, composition and location as at 30 June 2015).

The staff figure for 2014–15 includes fixed-term, non-ongoing positions.

The agency also employs casual staff to work in the Reef HQ Aquarium which operates seven days a week. In addition, about 140 volunteers assist in the day-to-day operation of the aquarium.

# PERFORMANCE

## THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

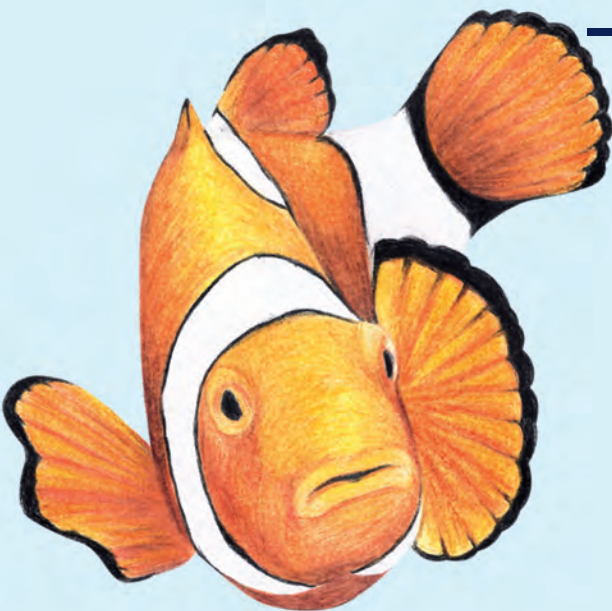
In 2014–2015 the agency delivered a range of policies and programmes, strategies and legislative measures to implement the following mission:

***The long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park.***

The agency's performance report is based on the Portfolio Budget Statement 2014–15, which details the deliverables and key performance indicators for the year.

These provide a framework for the agency to measure progress in meeting its three objectives.

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**Table 1** Deliverables, key performance indicators and achievement highlights 2014–15

Objective 1: Protect and restore the Reef's biodiversity	
Deliverable	Develop a suite of standards, thresholds and limits to maintain ecosystem health and biodiversity
Key performance indicator	Reduce local impacts affecting the condition of key species and habitats
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerability assessments completed for dugong, marine turtles, humpback whales and snapper —bringing total number completed to 16</li> <li>• Targeted science to improve knowledge gaps and support management decisions in relation to climate change and adaptation</li> <li>• Adaptive management works on Raine Island including re-profiling and fencing to reduce mortality of adult female nesting turtles</li> <li>• Improvements to remote sensing network on Raine Island to survey green turtle and seabird nesting sites</li> <li>• 940 Reef Health and Impact surveys completed across 81 reefs</li> <li>• New research into coral disease in conjunction with James Cook University, identifying ability of coral to recover after a cyclone or major disturbance</li> <li>• Indigenous Ranger Compliance Enhancement Programme developed to support compliance activities in Indigenous communities, specifically in relation to dugong and turtle protection</li> <li>• Project commenced to minimise source and occurrence of marine debris in the World Heritage Area through behavioural change and clean-up activities</li> <li>• New regulation to end disposal of dredge material in the Marine Park from capital dredging projects, and banning future disposal of capital dredge spoil</li> <li>• Action plan developed to strengthen existing permissions system, with a new Permissions Compliance Plan to commence in new financial year</li> </ul>

**Objective 1: Protect and restore the Reef's biodiversity**

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Identify and implement a programme of regionally based on-ground/in park restoration actions</b>
Key performance indicator	Reduce local impacts affecting the condition of key species and habitats
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water quality guidelines incorporated into state legislation, the <i>Environment Protection (Water) Policy 2009</i></li> <li>• Pilot Reef Recovery Plan in development for the Mackay–Whitsunday region to help guide managers and Reef stakeholders to implement locally relevant actions to reduce impacts</li> <li>• New coastal ecosystem calculator rolled out to natural resource management groups to use as part of Water Quality Improvement plans</li> <li>• Situation analysis of Marine Park fisheries completed</li> <li>• Strategy developed to guide investment in fisheries-related research</li> <li>• Helped develop commercial quota setting decision rules for coral trout</li> <li>• Amended regulations prohibiting capture of some species in conservation Park zones</li> <li>• Coastal Bird Monitoring and Information Strategy revised and updated to enable specific reporting of 20 species of seabirds representative of inshore, offshore and open ocean areas</li> </ul>
<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Implement scheduled actions in the National Landcare Programme Memorandum of Understanding (for the Crown-of-thorns starfish control programme, the Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships Programme and the Marine Monitoring Programme)</b>
Key performance indicator	Improving trends in water quality for end-of-catchment waters against the trigger levels outlined in the Reef Water Quality Guidelines
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the Great Barrier Reef Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, new research done in conjunction with CSIRO to improve knowledge of connectivity processes underlying crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks</li> <li>• Partnered with the Australian Institute of Marine Science and James Cook University to investigate options for increasing the effectiveness of crown-of-thorns starfish control</li> <li>• Water quality, coral and seagrass monitoring sites realigned to better reflect current trends and results</li> <li>• Reef Report Card published in August 2014 for the 2012–13 period—used to monitor improvements in the quality of water entering the Marine Park</li> <li>• Eight marine resource agreement contracts in place</li> <li>• New Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee formed</li> <li>• New national junior ranger guide developed</li> <li>• Total of 92,313 crown-of-thorns starfish culled during reporting period</li> <li>• Average live coral cover 38 per cent at reefs of high tourism and conservation value</li> </ul>

Objective 2- Safeguard the Reef's heritage	
Deliverable	Develop and implement strategies to safeguard Indigenous heritage, historic heritage and other heritage values within a comprehensive management framework
Key performance indicator	Enhanced identification, understanding, recognition, protection and conservation of the Reef's heritage values
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <i>Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan</i>, informed by the Outlook Report and the Strategic Assessment, is a key component of the Australian Government's State Party report to the World Heritage Committee</li> <li>• The Reef 2050 Plan is appended to the Australian and Queensland governments' Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement, reflecting the shared vision for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area's long-term protection</li> <li>• Growing interest by Traditional Owners in the use of marine resource agreements, which captures and records Indigenous cultural heritage</li> <li>• Amendments to legislation to protect key heritage sites in the Marine Park. Special Management Areas declared to protect two Royal Australian Air Force Second World War Catalina plane wrecks</li> <li>• Survey and assessment for Second World War minesweeper HMAS Warrnambool off Cape York to help preserve the site</li> <li>• Statements of significance prepared for two important heritage sites – for the historic wreck <i>Foam</i> (1893) located off Myrmidon Reef; and the Princess Charlotte Bay area, the location of a number of historic shipwrecks and Second World War wreck sites</li> <li>• Reef named in honour of acclaimed marine biologist Dr Bob Endean</li> <li>• Draft site management arrangements for Lady Musgrave Island Reef released for public comment</li> <li>• Draft moorings policy approved, providing framework for the management and use of moorings in the Marine Park</li> <li>• Draft cruise ship policy developed</li> <li>• World Parks Congress held in Sydney in November 2014 provided the opportunity to showcase the management work being undertaken to protect the Reef's World Heritage values to an international audience</li> </ul>



Objective 3- Ensure use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations

Deliverable	Implement the policy, planning and regulatory framework for the sustainable use of the Marine Park
Key performance indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved integration of knowledge about the Reef's values, their condition and impacts that affect them in management decisions</li> <li>Declining incidence of illegal fishing</li> </ul>
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of <i>The Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014</i>, providing an overview of Reef's condition. Its findings, together with <i>Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment</i>, provide the most up to date analysis on the Reef's health and management and helped inform the Government's <i>Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan</i></li> <li>Amendments to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 to increase ability to take enforcement action against commercial fishers who take or possess non-bait fish in the Conservation Park Zone</li> <li>Amendments to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 to provide additional protection for dugong and turtle populations from poaching, illegal trade and transportation</li> <li>Amendments to Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 to declare two special management areas in the Marine Park protecting two Royal Australian Air Force Second World War Catalina aircraft wrecks</li> <li>Amendments to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 to ban dumping of capital dredge material in the Marine Park</li> </ul>

**Objective 3- Ensure use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations**

Deliverable	Deliver the 2014–15 Annual Business Plan for Field Management
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of policies for improving field operations were finalised: internal incident management framework, incident management plan (sunk and grounded vessel response)</li> <li>• Abandoned 13 metre sailing vessel removed from Andersen Reef off Cape Tribulation</li> <li>• Specialised software for improving in-field efficiencies developed</li> <li>• Adaptive management works undertaken on Raine Island before turtle nesting season, including re-profiling 150 metres of beach to boost turtle hatchling success, and installing 400 metres of fencing to reduce nesting turtle mortality from cliff falls</li> <li>• Green turtle and seabird nesting surveys on Raine Island completed over 11 days</li> <li>• Development and implementation of a joint Field Management foundation programme</li> <li>• Field assessments and mapping done as part of Siam weed response on Magnetic Island</li> <li>• 792 dedicated compliance vessel patrol days</li> <li>• 20 land-based patrol days</li> <li>• 62 aerial surveillance days</li> <li>• 21 court prosecutions, resulting in fines totalling \$194,000</li> <li>• Trial of improved vessel monitoring technology, with a total of 20 vessel tracking systems installed on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service field management fleet</li> <li>• Amendments to Great Barrier Reef Park Regulations 1983 to increase ability to take action against commercial fishers who take non-bait fish with a commercial net while in the Conservation Park Zone</li> </ul>

**Objective 3- Ensure use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations**

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Implement partnership, stewardship, education and communications programmes</b>
<b>Key performance indicator</b>	Improved uptake of best practice and stewardship in activities that contribute to the health and resilience of the Marine Park
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Tourism Reef Advisory Committee for a three-year term to help ensure tourism in the Marine Park remains sustainable</li> <li>• Reef Guardian Councils increase in number to 17</li> <li>• Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers programme expands to include 29 participants</li> <li>• First commercial trawl fisher joins the Reef Guardian Fishers programme</li> <li>• Reef Guardian Schools programme continues to expand, now involving more than 127,000 students in 310 schools across Queensland</li> <li>• More than 4500 Eye on the Reef surveys recorded on 224 reefs</li> <li>• Number of operators participating in Tourism Weekly programme increased to 350</li> <li>• Over 7000 sightings reported through the Smartphone app and sightings form</li> <li>• Field Management patrol vessel, Reef Ranger, opened to the public as part of Gold Coast International Marine Expo</li> <li>• Reef HQ Aquarium surpassed annual visitation target of 120,000 by 11 per cent</li> <li>• More than 70 per cent of visitors to Reef HQ Aquarium participated in formal talk/tour</li> <li>• More than 29,800 people participated in a tour of the turtle hospital at Reef HQ Aquarium</li> </ul>

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## OBJECTIVE 1

### Protect and restore the Reef's biodiversity

The priorities for the reporting period have included a range of actions designed to restore, protect and maintain the outstanding universal value of the Great Barrier Reef.

These actions have been determined by the agency's strategic assessment which then informed the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, the overarching framework for Reef's protection and management for the next 35 years. Work has focused on improvements to water quality monitoring, research to improve knowledge about the long-term effects of local impacts, strengthening permissions, and new integrated monitoring and reporting to help inform the condition and trend of the Reef's values.

#### Deliverables

- Develop a suite of standards, thresholds and limits to maintain ecosystem health and biodiversity
- Identify and implement a programme of regionally based on-ground/in park restoration actions
- Implement scheduled actions in the National Landcare Programme Memorandum of Understanding (for the crown-of-thorns starfish control programme, the Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships programme and the Marine Monitoring programme)

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## Projects

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Vulnerability assessments are a tool to help inform management priorities by identifying where species and habitats are under the greatest pressure. ©GBRMPA, Photographer Ken Hoppen

## Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

The Great Barrier Reef is internationally recognised for its outstanding biodiversity, a key aspect of its World Heritage status.

The *Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2013* provides a framework to protect at-risk plants, animals and habitats of the Reef. A strong focus of the strategy is improving inshore biodiversity where species and habitats are under the greatest pressure from a range of threats, including coastal developments.

Key to the strategy is vulnerability assessments which help inform Marine Park management priorities. During the reporting period assessments were undertaken for dugong, marine turtles, humpback whales and snapper, bringing the number completed to 16. A simple tracking tool was also developed to help monitor progress on key actions in the strategy.

### Biodiversity conservation

The agency continued to provide technical and field assistance to the World Wildlife Fund's four year *Rivers to Reef to Turtles* project. This project is investigating the cause of green turtle mass strandings in Upstart Bay to determine

whether coastal pollutants are adversely affecting the health of resident turtles. Partners include researchers, Reef managers, Indigenous rangers and Banrock Station. Environmental data is collected on seagrass, sediment and water quality, and health screening information has been collected from more than 985 turtles to date.

The agency has also worked with the Department of Defence and the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to explore the use of satellite tagging to detect potential behavioural responses of turtles to defence activities in Shoalwater Bay.

### Coastal ecosystems

Coastal ecosystems in and adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef are critical habitats connecting the land and the sea. The extent of coastal ecosystems — and the way they function — can have a big impact on the long-term health and resilience of the Reef. A report published in 2012, *Informing the Outlook for Great Barrier Reef coastal ecosystems* identified that in order to restore and protect coastal ecosystems and manage future coastal development, there is a need to understand coastal processes and aquatic connectivity.

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The focus over the past year has been consolidating the coastal ecosystem work and developing a suite of tools that include the ecological process calculator and hydrological connectivity maps. An essential part of this work has been presenting the coastal ecosystems programme — the suite of tools and local case studies — to Local Marine Advisory Committees, local councils and the six natural resource management groups in the Great Barrier Reef catchment.

Over the past year the coastal ecosystem tools have been developed and refined with natural resource management groups and have been incorporated into Water Quality Improvement Plans in multiple natural resource management regions and the NQ Dry Tropics Natural Resource Management Plan.

Work also continues with local councils to incorporate the outcomes of the coastal ecosystem programme into planning schemes. Further details on the work being done with local councils as part of the Reef Guardian programme can be found under Objective 3 on page 89.

The agency continues to work closely with the Queensland Wetlands Program as part of its Great Barrier Reef Wetland Governance Group and Network and the Marine and Estuarine Classification and Mapping Project. Activities have included developing tools to engage stakeholders to better understand the importance of functions such as hydrology, nutrient recycling and assimilation, and groundwater recharge provided by coastal ecosystems to support a healthy Reef.

This work was reported at two major conferences: a keynote presentation of the coastal ecosystem programme at the New Zealand Coastal Conference in November 2014 and at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney in November 2014. The IUCN World Parks Congress is reported in more detail under Objective 2 on page 58.

### **Supporting Reef Water Quality Protection Plan 2013**

During the reporting period, the agency has continued to refine its hydrological maps and ecological processes calculator for coastal ecosystems. The outputs from these tools are

being used to develop revised Water Quality Improvement Plans for the Wet Tropics, Mackay–Whitsunday, Burdekin Dry Tropics, Fitzroy and Cape York natural resource management regions. Work is also being done with the Burnett–Mary natural resource management region and the Queensland Wetlands Program to determine actions that can be taken on land to improve the quality of water flowing to the ocean.

### **Reef Recovery programme**

A project to develop a pilot Reef Recovery Plan for the Mackay–Whitsunday region has started, with a workshop held in January with a range of stakeholders. This pilot will inform the development of similar plans for other regions.

There is geographic variation in the condition of the Reef and the threats to it. Regionally-specific plans of action (Reef Recovery Plans) are a way of translating overarching whole-of-Reef management plans to local areas — to ensure effective on-ground actions. Regional Reef Recovery Plans will help guide managers and Reef stakeholders in implementing locally-relevant actions to reduce impacts and restore, maintain and enhance the condition of important habitats, species and ecosystem processes.

The plans will help marshal existing resources and activities and provide guidance. They will also encourage cooperation among government agencies, the private sector, local communities and research institutions in implementing actions.

### **Great Barrier Reef Climate Change and Adaptation Strategy**

Climate change is recognised as the greatest threat to the long-term health of the Reef, with predicted effects including severe weather events, ocean acidification, rising sea temperature and levels, and changes in biological processes.

The agency is continuing to implement its second climate change action plan, the *Great Barrier Reef Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan 2012–2017*, which outlines how it will improve the resilience of the Reef to better cope with stress and reduce the impacts of climate change.

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The plan has been reviewed during the reporting period to support integration of its key activities/actions and targets into the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* and the Reef Recovery programme, including the pilot Reef Recovery Plan for the Mackay–Whitsundays. To support this work, an expert workshop was held in November 2014 to consider potential restoration approaches to help support reef recovery.

### *Action on climate change*

The outlook for the Reef ultimately depends on the concentration of greenhouse gas emissions in the Earth's atmosphere over the coming century. A core objective of the strategy is to encourage action that reduces the rate and extent of climate change.

Activities to help meet this objective included providing strategic information about the implications of climate change for the Reef through the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014* and directly to policymakers.

### *Targeted science*

Significant progress was made on two projects through an ongoing collaboration between the agency, CSIRO and other partners. The focus has been on developing new tools that assess connectivity processes underlying crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks and coral recruitment to guide starfish control efforts, and a situation analysis examining the current vulnerability of the state's commercial fisheries to future challenges, including climate change, to support their long-term adaptation.

The agency also partnered with the Australian Institute of Marine Science and James Cook University to investigate options for increasing the effectiveness of managing crown-of-thorns starfish populations.

The agency also supported several targeted science projects aiming to address key knowledge gaps for management of the Reef and support management decisions and adaptation planning. These included:

- analysis of cumulative exposure of reef habitats to known biophysical pressures using remote sensing records and data on cyclones and wave exposure

- a historical ecology project to improve understanding of long-term fishery trends which has generated insights for adaptive management of Queensland's coral trout fishery
- dedicated underwater visual surveys of coral trout and other fish species at baseline reefs in the Lizard Island, Townsville and Mackay regions
- a study of physical oceanographic influences (such as cyclones, ocean currents and sea surface temperature anomalies) on Queensland reef fish and scallops to improve assessments, forecasting and sustainable management.

### *Partnerships*

During the reporting period, the agency maintained its partnership approach to the climate change challenge. This included:

- continuing the partnership with the Queensland Seafood Industry Association to progress work around extreme weather incident response planning, fisheries adaptation, stewardship and compliance issues
- working with researchers and other partners on ecosystem resilience and climate change adaptation research partnerships
- working closely with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service on adaptation work at Raine Island. Managers have been trialling and evaluating adaptive management actions to help reduce mortality of adult female turtles nesting on the island, thereby enhancing the population's resilience to other climate-related impacts.

### *Summer response programme*

Summer can be a period of increased risk to the Reef from temperature-related coral bleaching and extreme weather events such as cyclones and flooding. Stressful conditions can lead to coral disease outbreaks, while nutrient-rich floodwaters can lead to an increase in crown-of-thorns starfish.

The agency convened a pre-summer Reef health workshop on 28 November 2014 to help prepare for these risks. Regular updates on current conditions were provided on the agency's website throughout the reporting

period. A seasonal overview was also published on the agency's website.

During summer two severe tropical cyclones (Marcia and Nathan) impacted the Reef, while an ongoing crown-of-thorns starfish outbreak is continuing to reduce coral cover in the Cairns–Cooktown region. This was in line with the forecast for this region.

Modelling indicates the combined damage area from these two recent cyclones covers 35.4 per cent of the total reef area in the Marine Park. Aerial and vessel-based surveys by the agency, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, and Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol were conducted to help determine the impact of the cyclones on key habitats and species in the Marine Park. Some of the vegetation on the islands and cays in the footprint of cyclone Nathan were significantly impacted, as were terrestrial habitats in Shoalwater Bay, in the path of tropical cyclone Marcia.

Assessments of iconic species such as seabirds, green turtles and dugongs indicated these species have fared well, while surveys showed that some coral reef habitats in the footprint of tropical cyclone Marcia were severely damaged.

Photo and video evidence provided by Eye on the Reef programme participants showed some reefs in the footprint of tropical cyclone Nathan were severely damaged, however a systematic

damage assessment has not been completed, so the full extent of the impact on the Reef's values is not presently known.

Surveys after previous severe cyclones show damage is likely to be patchy in the areas affected by the cyclones.

Any impacts need to be considered within the context of ongoing reef health impacts and the legacy of previous events. Coral disease and crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks in the northern Reef pose an ongoing cumulative impact on affected reefs also damaged by the extreme weather events of the past decade.

### *Reef health and impact surveys*

Together with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Eye on the Reef monitoring network, the agency completed 940 reef health and impact surveys across 81 reefs on the Reef between 1 December 2014 and 30 April 2015.

Most surveys (74 per cent) were undertaken in the Cairns–Cooktown region due to the ongoing management of the crown-of-thorns starfish outbreak in that region. The remaining surveys represent the Townsville–Whitsunday and Mackay–Capricorn regions.

Of all the surveys, 24 per cent recorded no recent reef health impact (e.g. coral bleaching, disease), 33 per cent recorded one type of impact and 43 per cent recorded more than one type of reef impact.

**Table 2** Reef health and impact surveys done in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area since 2012

Year	Number of surveys completed	Number of reefs surveyed	Regions where most surveys undertaken	No impact	one impact	2–5 impacts
2012–13	663	81	74 per cent Cairns–Cooktown	31	34	35
2013–14	1599	117	89 per cent Cairns–Cooktown	31.5	37	31.5
2014–15	940	81	73 per cent Cairns–Cooktown	24	33	43





Reef health and impact surveys are a useful tool to monitor the condition of individual reefs in the Marine Park.

### Coral disease surveys

In May 2015, the agency collaborated with James Cook University and the United States of America's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to conduct coral health and disease surveys at reefs offshore from Townsville.

The aims were to obtain data on current conditions and impacts following recent thermal stress, to assess post-cyclone Yasi recovery, and to survey coral health and disease at reefs. This is helping to evaluate satellite-based predictions of the risk of coral disease outbreaks and refine the early warning system for reef health impacts. The surveys revealed low-level coral bleaching and disease, and that corals are continuing to slowly recover from the extensive damage caused by tropical cyclone Yasi in 2011, with juvenile corals and regrowth of surviving coral colonies observed on many reefs.

### Influencing sustainable fishing

During the reporting period, the agency continued to work cooperatively with commercial and recreational fishing industry stakeholders and Fisheries Queensland in the management and monitoring of fisheries in and adjacent to the Marine Park. The agency also actively participated in Fisheries Queensland Fishery Stock Status workshops.

Fishing issues related to the Marine Park and World Heritage Area were discussed at biannual meetings with the Fisheries Queensland Executive in August 2014 and March 2015.

Work was undertaken with the Queensland Fisheries Research Advisory Board to develop a strategy to guide Fisheries Research Development Corporation investment in fisheries-related research in the state. The agency also worked on a collaborative project with the CSIRO, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and James Cook University to undertake a situation analysis of Marine Park fisheries, due for completion by the end of 2015.

The agency was also involved in the Queensland Government's successful Netting Buyback Programme, through its membership of the Netting Buyback Working Group as well as guiding development of commercial quota setting decision rules for coral trout through its membership of the Fisheries Queensland managed Line Working Group.

Under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the agency advised the Department of the Environment on fisheries operating in the Marine Park, focusing on concerns relating to the ecological sustainability of the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery. This included threats posed by large-mesh fishing nets to species of conservation interest, and uncertainty regarding the status of shark species taken in the fishery.

As a result of marine parks legislation introduced by the Queensland Government, complementary regulations to prohibit commercial bait netting of some table fish species, for example bream, whiting and flathead, in Conservation Park Zones were also introduced during the reporting period.

## Fishing strategies

The agency briefed the independent consultants conducting the review of fisheries management arrangements in Queensland and prepared a detailed submission on priority fishing matters in the Marine Park.

A number of discussions were also held with Fisheries Queensland in relation to the benefits of introducing electronic position reporting in Queensland commercial fisheries where it is not yet operating.

The agency also reviewed a number of chapters in the Status of Australian Fish Stocks Report 2014.

Recreational fishing is also reported as part of Objective 3 on page 96.

## Standards and thresholds

During the year, the *Water Quality Guidelines for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park 2010* were reviewed and incorporated into Queensland legislation through the *Environment Protection (Water) Policy 2009*.

## Marine Monitoring Programme

The Marine Monitoring Programme (MMP) was established in 2005 to support Reef Plan and to 'assess the long-term effectiveness of Reef Plan in reversing the decline in water quality of run-off originating from Queensland catchments'.

It is a key component of Reef Plan, and in 2015 the agency collaborated to draft the Reef Report Card 2014, due for release in August 2015. Reef Plan is designed to improve the quality of water in the Marine Park through improved land management in Reef catchments

As a result, the Marine Monitoring Programme is the primary mechanism for evaluating improvements in water quality and ecosystem health in the Marine Park that may occur as a result of actions undertaken through Reef Plan.

During the reporting period, the Marine Monitoring Programme was comprehensively reviewed resulting in 39 potential changes that were presented to an independent science panel. As a result, 34 high priority options have been implemented. These include additional water quality, coral and seagrass monitoring sites, as well as coordinating and integrating

the water quality monitoring across three institutions — James Cook University, University of Queensland and the Australian Institute of Marine Science. The outcomes of this review will help ensure monitoring provides information that adequately informs management, is scientifically robust and is delivered in the most cost-effective manner.

The programme will be delivered over the next four years in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Marine Science, James Cook University, and the University of Queensland and will consider the outcomes from the independent science review to improve alignment with Reef Plan, the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, and the Integrated Monitoring and Reporting programme. This will help achieve the programme's objectives to document long-term changes in the condition of inshore water quality, seagrass and coral reefs.

The reports for the 2014–2015 wet season are available on the agency's website.

Key outputs from the programme have helped inform other initiatives, including Reef Recovery plans, standards and thresholds, and the report card for the Mackay–Whitsundays River to Reef Healthy Waters Partnership.

## Water Quality Protection Plan

Based on modelled estimates, the long-term average end-of-catchment loads for sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus and pesticides are as follows:

- sediment load was reduced by approximately 11 per cent, with the greatest reduction occurring in the Burdekin region (16 per cent)
- pesticide load was reduced by approximately 28 per cent, with the greatest reduction occurring in the Mackay–Whitsunday region (42 per cent)
- total nitrogen load reduced by approximately 10 per cent, with the greatest reduction occurring in the Mackay–Whitsunday region (17 per cent). Dissolved inorganic nitrogen, which contributes to crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks, reduced by 16 per cent.

It is understood these modelled estimates, are estimates of load reductions based on idealised conditions and may not be realised immediately.

The overall condition of the inshore marine environment remained poor in 2013 due to extreme weather events in recent years.

Inshore seagrass showed some signs of regional recovery and improved from very poor to poor.

**Table 3** Water quality results for end-of-catchment loads

Quantitative key performance indicator	2012–2013 revised budget (achievement)	2013–14 revised budget (achievement)	2014–15 revised budget (achievement)
Indicative trends in long-term average end-of-catchment loads in the northern, central and southern regions of the Great Barrier Reef for sediment, nitrogen, phosphorous and pesticides  (increasing/decreasing)	Decreasing  (decreasing)	Decreasing  (decreasing)	Decreasing  (decreasing)



*The close physical connection between the catchment and the Reef means land-based activities have a significant impact on water quality in the Marine Park.*

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## Integrated monitoring and reporting programme

The agency is establishing an integrated Reef-wide monitoring and reporting network as part of a suite of new initiatives to manage the Reef over future years. Effective management of the Reef, given its dynamic and complex nature, requires an ongoing adaptive management approach informed by long-term monitoring information.

Monitoring provides information on the condition and trend of the Reef's values, as well as the impacts and activities affecting those values. It allows early detection of trends and changes in the ecosystem, and the application of appropriate and timely management actions.

The programme is being developed collaboratively with stakeholders involved in research and monitoring, and protection and management of the World Heritage Area as well as government. A working group has met twice — December 2014 and February 2015 — and finalised an implementation plan.

A steering group has been formed, co-chaired by the agency Chair and the Director General of the Department of Environment and Heritage, and includes key monitoring providers and end users to develop a robust monitoring programme that builds on existing monitoring and reporting systems.

Three working groups have also been formed around the focus areas — programme design, synthesis and reporting, and data management and systems.

## Science coordination and engagement

*Science Strategy and Information Needs 2014–19* was published in October 2014 to communicate priority science information needs. It provides a framework for integrating science into the management of the Marine Park, including facilitating discussion between scientists and managers.

The agency's science information needs have been published regularly since 2000 and this is now aligned with the five-yearly Outlook reporting process. A register of detailed research questions related to the strategy was

also developed and is accessible through a searchable database on the agency's website. Maintaining this database separately from the five-year strategy will allow more regular updating of the specific science needs.

The agency has worked closely with the federal Department of Environment to ensure its science needs are reflected in the priorities for the National Environmental Science Programme (NESP). The National Environmental Science Programme Tropical Water Quality Hub is mostly focused on north-east Queensland and the agency is represented on the steering committee for this hub. The hub's short-term research plan has been developed and work has started on its longer-term plan. Input has also been provided to the development of the National Environmental Science Programme Marine Biodiversity Hub.

The agency continues to be represented on committees and boards of major science programmes and advisory bodies, including the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, the National Environmental Science Programme Tropical Water Quality Hub and the National Marine Science Committee.

The agency runs an internal science seminar series to encourage researchers to share important, management-relevant science with staff. Staff also participate in relevant conferences and symposia. During the reporting period, a mini symposium was hosted for scientists of the Australian Institute of Marine Science to share recent scientific findings relevant to Reef management.

## Social and economic programme Guidelines for social impact assessment

The *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment Programme Report* identified the need to better understand and protect the social and economic benefits derived from the environment. Guidelines are being developed to help planners and decision-makers assess the benefits that the environment provides to the community. This includes a framework, with categories and attributes for the region's social and economic values, which uses the

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driver-pressure-state-impact-response risk assessment approach adopted in the Strategic Assessment Report and Outlook Report 2014.

The guidelines and framework are being refined following consultation and feedback from experts as to their usefulness as decision support tools for permit assessments.

A newly established social science network provides an avenue for regular engagement on related issues including biodiversity offsets, human wellbeing and net benefits policy development. An information paper on the development of the draft guidelines is being prepared to provide the basis for wider engagement with stakeholders.

### **Social and Economic Long-term Monitoring Programme**

The project to develop a robust social and economic long-term monitoring programme for the Reef through the National Environmental Research Programme funding has been completed. The project was led by CSIRO and James Cook University, in partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and NQ Dry Tropics Ltd Natural Resource Management.

Agency staff participated as the chair and secretariat of the Social and Economic Long-term Monitoring Programme steering committee, and through the stakeholder and scientific advisory panel and several working groups.

The project team mapped, measured and monitored the activities and dependencies of people on the Reef, human wellbeing and important drivers for the region such as perceptions, values, behaviours, markets, media, demography and technology. The study revealed some fascinating statistics. For example, 94 per cent of coastal residents are proud that the Reef is a World Heritage Area, and 25 per cent of coastal residents rely on the Reef for at least part of their household income.

Project results have been widely disseminated and include a video presentation featuring the agency Chairman, which was prepared for the World Parks Congress, a PowerPoint presentation being run in Reef HQ Aquarium, a range of reports and brochures circulated to staff, and a seminar/workshop on How to

access and use SELTMP data. A suite of peer-reviewed publications is also available on the National Environmental Research Programme website ([www.nerptropical.edu.au](http://www.nerptropical.edu.au)).

In 2014–15 the project contributed to the integrated monitoring programme, the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, and development of the agency's draft social impact assessment guidelines.

### **Partnerships**

Staff contributed to a number of external projects aimed at improving our knowledge of social and economic aspects of the Reef to inform management decisions, in particular:

- The Mackay–Whitsunday Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership. The partnership was established to develop a report card for the Mackay–Whitsunday region, including social and economic indicators. The programme design for the pilot report card was published in June 2015.
- The socio-economics and Reef resilience project led by James Cook University and funded through the National Environmental Research Programme designed to better understand the Reef's non-market values, such as recreation, resources and amenity.
- The National Recreational Fishing Survey, a joint project with the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) to develop a framework for regular national surveys of recreational fishing in Australia.

### **Indigenous Partnerships**

#### **Reef Rescue Land and Sea Country Indigenous partnerships**

Establishing an effective and meaningful partnership with Traditional Owners is essential to protect cultural and heritage values, conserve biodiversity and enhance the resilience of the Reef.

The Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships programme engages Indigenous communities along the length of the Reef in the management and sustainability of the Reef's marine resources and is reported as part of the Indigenous Heritage Strategy, Objective 2, Safeguarding the Reef's heritage, page 48.

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## Indigenous training programme

The Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan aims to enhance the protection of dugong and turtle populations of Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait from the threats of poaching, illegal hunting and marine debris.

The Indigenous Ranger Compliance Enhancement Programme has been developed to deliver multiple complementary outcomes in line with the Government's 2013 election commitment. It aims to strengthen compliance powers of Indigenous rangers and provide professional development. This will in turn improve Indigenous-led marine conservation of turtles and dugong as a long-term outcome.

The agency's Indigenous compliance team will employ and train four non-ongoing full-time Indigenous compliance officers in professional compliance operations for two years. The four Indigenous compliance officers will provide direct compliance support to Indigenous communities and rangers who participate in the Indigenous Ranger Compliance Enhancement Programme.

The Indigenous Compliance team will deliver a nationally accredited certificate level IV compliance training programme to the four officers and up to 20 Indigenous community rangers based in communities across the Reef, with the aim of enabling these rangers to:

- apply for appointment as *Marine Park inspectors under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act* upon successful completion of the training
- gain the skills to enable them to undertake other compliance functions over time (where authorised under the relevant legislation).

## Coastal bird monitoring and information strategy

The seabird component of the Coastal Bird Monitoring and Information Strategy has been revised using the best available data, expert opinion, commissioned reports and operational expertise.

The resulting Coastal Bird Monitoring and Information Strategy: Seabirds 2015–2020 encompasses the east coast of Queensland, excluding the Gulf of Carpentaria (due to

operational capacity). It is built around three indicator species representative of inshore, offshore and pelagic feeding species, crested tern (inshore), brown booby (offshore) and wedge-tailed shearwater (pelagic). Initial site selection prioritised these species and additional sites added to improve coverage of species less well represented in the initial selections.

The sites and timing of visits will maximise the likelihood of obtaining useful data on 20 species of seabird while minimising operational effort. The strategy is divided into a list of essential sites and visits to be made annually and a list of significant sites that will contribute valuable data if resources are available to include them.

It defines a maximum period of five years between visits for any significant seabird site to ensure major changes are not overlooked, and highlights the need to integrate this with other requirements for visitation.

The strategy will be published in the coming months. Field Management is working with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to develop an implementation plan for 2015–16.



*Graham Hemson from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service checks a wedge-tailed shearwater burrow on the Capricornia Cays.*

## WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER IN THE CAPRICORNIA CAYS

The Capricornia Cays, 60–100 kilometres north-east of Gladstone, has the second largest breeding aggregation of wedge-tailed shearwaters in Australia.

In January 2015, staff from the agency and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service field management programme counted wedge-tailed shearwater burrows on four islands of the Capricornia Cays — Lady Musgrave, Heron, North West and Mast Head Island.

The January 2015 count was similar to the preceding two surveys, however very different to survey results between 1996 and 2001. The average number of burrows recorded since 2012 is 340,000 burrows, whereas the average number of burrows from earlier surveys was 530,000.

The decline of wedge-tailed shearwaters is similar on each of the four islands surveyed. It represents a significant long-term reduction of approximately 40 per cent from the 1990s to now.

The pressure on tuna stocks in the winter feeding grounds of the wedge-tailed shearwater around the Federated States of Micronesia in the Central Western Pacific is thought to be a factor contributing to this decline, and this possibility is being explored by James Cook University researchers.

Understanding Reef-wide bird trends helps guide future management decisions and actions at key nesting islands and foraging grounds.

## Crown-of-thorns starfish control programme

The agency continues to work closely with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service through the Field Management programme to assess the crown-of-thorns starfish (COTS) outbreak status on the Reef and locate aggregations of the starfish in the Cairns–Cooktown outbreak region.

Work also continued with the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC) to strategically align the control work undertaken by both organisations. This partnership will continue during the next three years.

The continued implementation of the one-shot technique, which replaced a multiple injection method in July 2013, has significantly improved the programme's efficiency.

The reporting period (2014–15) is the last year of the current (2012–15) agreement with the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators for these control activities (locating and culling crown-of-thorns starfish) at 21 priority reefs which are either popular tourism sites or 'super-spreaders' of crown-of-thorns starfish larvae to other reefs.

The objective of the crown-of-thorns starfish management actions is to maintain coral cover above critical thresholds at reefs of high tourism and conservation value. During the reporting period, the agency has re-focused cull activity

away from non-priority reefs to provide more capacity for regular repeat cull visits to the 21 priority reefs in order to reduce crown-of-thorns starfish numbers on these reefs and support or improve coral cover.

Eye on the Reef surveys conducted on these priority reefs have shown that live coral cover, based on the most recent surveys, is 38.9 per cent, indicating the control programme has been successful in achieving its objective. Coral cover thresholds of 20 and 40 per cent are used to determine the intensity of crown-of-thorns culling efforts to ensure coral cover is sustained.

During the reporting period, a total of 53,814 crown-of-thorns starfish were culled by agency-contracted cull vessels. A further 38,499 crown-of-thorns starfish were culled on other reefs by control vessels contracted by the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre. While together the total number of crown-of-thorns starfish culled in this reporting period is less than during the previous reporting period, this is due to the focus on repeated visits to priority sites, which effectively reduced the numbers of crown-of-thorns starfish at these sites. This highlights the efficiency of the repeated cull visits in reducing crown-of-thorns starfish at sites of high tourism or conservation value.

**Table 4** Number of crown-of-thorns starfish culled in the Marine Park since 2012

Financial year	Number of crown-of-thorns starfish culled by agency-managed vessels	Number of crown-of-thorns starfish culled by partner-managed vessels	Total number culled per financial year
1 July 2012–30 June 2013	89,991	0	89,991
1 July 2013–30 June 2014	187,301	0	187,301
1 July 2014–30 June 2015	53,814	38,499	92,313
Total	331,106	38,499	369,605



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## Marine debris

The agency has been working with key community, industry, Traditional Owner and conservation partners to develop a Great Barrier Reef Clean-up event.

This will feature major events in six locations to raise awareness of marine debris and actions that everyone can take to reduce their individual debris footprint.

This Reef-wide clean-up is part of the \$700,000 Great Barrier Reef Marine Debris Clean-up project, funded through the Department of the Environment's Reef Trust. It is a component of the Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan and addresses the primary Reef Trust outcome to *'improve and protect marine biodiversity, including the reduction of crown-of-thorns starfish and protection of listed threatened and migratory species, such as dugongs and turtles'*.

Key project objectives are to:

- minimise the source and occurrence of marine debris in the World Heritage Area by fostering behavioural change through targeted education and awareness raising campaigns
- identify and reduce the source and occurrence of marine debris
- reduce the volume of debris from beaches and waterways generated in or entering the World Heritage Area through on-ground clean-up activities across the Reef catchment.

This project engages with Reef Guardian Schools, Reef Guardian Councils, Traditional Owner and Indigenous ranger groups, community groups and the tourism industry to participate in on-ground clean-up activities to actively remove debris from communities and the marine environment.

The Great Barrier Reef Clean-up weekend will encourage Reef users, visitors and communities to register a clean-up site. Tangaroa Blue Foundation and Eco Barge Clean Seas Inc will facilitate clean-up events in each of their regions, providing expertise and guidance on the Reef clean-up.

The project continues to evolve with more engagement from key stakeholders through Reef Guardian School networking meetings, Reef Guardian Council steering committee and working group meetings and the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee. This has resulted in the creation of the Marine Debris Advisory Group with a range of representatives to provide advice in relation to the project.

To promote the project and encourage community participation in clean-up events in October, 'Don't let your Litter Bug our Reef' tag line and promotional materials have been developed.

In April 2015, Tangaroa Blue Foundation coordinated a post cyclone Marcia clean-up over four days, concentrating efforts along 17 kilometres of impacted coastline in the Yeppoon area to prevent debris from re-entering the World Heritage Area. More than 50 people participated with fragments of hard plastic and a derelict catamaran among more than five tonnes of marine debris cleared from local beaches. This effort provided a pilot study for the larger event. The clean-up operation is further described in the case study on page 40.



*More than five tonnes of marine debris were cleared from Yeppoon beaches as part of a four day clean-up after tropical cyclone Marcia crossed the coast north of the area in February 2015. ©GBRMPA in partnership with Tangaroa Blue and the Australian Marine Debris Initiative.*

## FIVE TONNES OF MARINE DEBRIS CLEARED FROM LOCAL BEACHES

Fragments of hard plastic and a derelict catamaran were among the 5.43 tonnes of marine debris cleared from Yeppoon beaches after tropical cyclone Marcia crossed the coast just north of the area in February 2015.

The four-day clean-up by Tangaroa Blue Foundation was part of a broader \$700,000 project by the agency, funded by the Australian Government's Reef Trust, to reduce the amount of marine debris entering the Great Barrier Reef lagoon from land-based sources. It also tackles debris that is carried ashore by tides.

Agency Chairman Dr Russell Reichelt praised the work of volunteers.

"We were delighted to see on-ground action that directly protects the Great Barrier Reef. All actions, big or small, are vital to ensuring the Reef is protected for the future," Dr Reichelt said.

"The efforts of these volunteers prevented more than five tonnes of rubbish, mostly plastic, entering the ocean from land-based sources. It also prevented re-entry of debris washed ashore from the intensified oceanic activity where it can affect turtles, seabirds and the reef ecosystem."

Heidi Taylor from Tangaroa Blue Foundation said 67 marine debris hotspots were identified from an aerial survey of 320 kilometres of coastline, helping target clean-up efforts.

"Our volunteers covered more than 17 kilometres of coastline and most of the debris collected was fragmented hard plastic, along with a few unusual items such as a cement pontoon," she said.

"It was wonderful to see such a broad cross-section of the community taking part — Traditional Owners, rangers, council staff and community members took to local beaches for the clean-up."

Marine ecosystems worldwide are affected by human-made refuse, much of which is plastic.

According to the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014, plastic bags, discarded fishing gear, plastic and glass bottles, rubber thongs, aerosols and drink cans are commonly found in the Reef region.

Between 2008 and March 2014, about 683,000 individual items of marine debris, weighing over 42 tonnes, were collected from the region's beaches by volunteers in the Australian Marine Debris Initiative.

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## Environmental and Regulatory Permissions

### *Dredging-related legislation and policy*

The agency established a new regulation that ends disposal of dredge material in the Marine Park from capital dredging projects such as port developments. The regulation in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 came into effect on 2 June 2015.

This was the first significant step towards a regulatory approach to prevent the expansion of major ports in the Great Barrier Reef Region.

The ban prohibits the disposal of capital dredge spoil in volumes greater than 15,000 cubic metres. The regulation also revoked the existing permission for the disposal of up to three million cubic metres of capital dredge spoil associated with development of the Port of Abbot Point.

Capital dredging is undertaken to create new shipping channels or enlarge existing ones, as well as berth areas, swing basins, marinas and boat harbour areas.

Maintenance dredging is not affected by this regulation and can still be considered under an application for the activity to occur in the Marine Park, subject to the agency's stringent environmental assessment process.

Maintenance dredging is undertaken to maintain existing port and marina facilities to provide vessels with safe access. Over time, sand and mud builds up in shallow channels within and near ports, potentially making them too shallow for navigation. Maintenance dredging removes this material to ensure the channels can be used safely. This practice has been occurring at long-established ports for more than a century, hence a longer-term approach is required to reduce disposal in the Marine Park.

In addition to the regulation, the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, released in March 2015, has committed the Australian and Queensland governments to work together with industry and other stakeholders to develop longer-term solutions to manage maintenance dredging and disposal.

### *Strategic management of dredge material*

An independent panel of experts has compiled existing scientific knowledge of how dredging and disposal impacts the Reef. Brought together under a joint initiative with the Australian Institute of Marine Science, the panel of 19 technical and scientific experts reviewed information on the physical and biological effects of dredging and disposal.

The key findings of the panel's report titled *Synthesis of current knowledge of the biophysical impacts of dredging and disposal on the Great Barrier Reef* included:

- In terms of direct effects, dredging and burial of seafloor habitats during disposal can have substantial impacts at a local level, but only a small impact on the broader Reef and its biodiversity as a whole.
- In terms of indirect effects, sediments released by dredging and disposal have the potential to stay suspended in the water. This may be contributing significantly to the long-term chronic increase in fine suspended sediments in inshore areas, however there wasn't consensus among the panellists on the extent to which this happens and its impact on biodiversity.
- Dredging and disposal may be a significant source of fine sediments in the World Heritage Area, in addition to other sources, such as land run-off. A general comparison shows that past large dredging projects produced amounts of fine sediment similar in magnitude to natural loads coming from land run-off in the same region.
- The commitment to ban disposal of capital dredge material in marine environments will mean future disposal, limited to maintenance dredging, will contribute much less fine sediment. This reduced amount will still need to be considered in the context of other cumulative impacts on the Reef.

Improving our understanding of the effects of dredging will help us further develop policy and best practice guidelines.

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## Strengthening permissions

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003 provides for the spatial control of the multiple uses of the Marine Park. It sets out specific arrangements for activities consistent with protecting the environment and the principles of ecologically sustainable use. As part of these arrangements, many activities cannot be conducted within areas of the Marine Park without a permission issued by the agency.

Permissions are legal documents granting a company or a person authorisation to carry out activities in the Marine Park.

Since the inception of overlapping state and Commonwealth marine parks in 1982, complementary legislation has existed to enable the consolidation of permitting arrangements. This means operators make one application that is considered under both the respective state and Commonwealth marine park legislation before a single state–Commonwealth countersigned permission is issued. Most approved applications receive joint permits.

This arrangement has worked for over 30 years, successfully delivering a one-stop shop, halving the administrative onus on both operators and the respective governments (one application, one renewal process, one application fee, consistent assessment criteria, requirement to submit a single set of returns and minimal duplication).

Part 2A of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 describes how permissions apply to the conduct of activities in the Marine Park and sets out the statutory requirements. For each permit application, the agency undertakes an assessment of the nature and scale of activities and makes a determination based on the acceptability of those activities on the environment.

The Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment Programme Report commits the agency to several initiatives to improve the permission system. To fulfil this commitment, a five-year project started in January 2015 to deliver a range of enhancements to the permission system, including streamlining initiatives to reduce administrative burden.

These improvements will support the approval of a class of actions under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 2009*, in effect switch off the EPBC Act for those proposals wholly within the Marine Park.

This project will be implementing other commitments in the Programme Report and the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* and is expected to result in several key changes to the way the permission system operates, including:

- a major revision of the Environmental Impact Management Policy
- revocation of the Structures Policy, with this material contained in new guidelines
- publication of new guidance material explaining how the agency assesses and decides permit applications
- amendments to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 which at a minimum:
  - establish assessment levels and fees for complex applications, such as those requiring an environmental impact statement
  - require public advertising for proposals which might have significant impacts on matters of national environmental significance and
  - deliver any other critical improvements to the permission system, such as those arising from the Australian National Audit Office performance audit findings.

The project is being delivered in two phases to minimise disruptions to Marine Park users and maximise business certainty. The first phase is expected to be implemented from 1 July 2017.

The Programme Report and the Corporate Plan 2014–2019 commits the agency to strengthening systems for monitoring and managing compliance risks associated with permission requirements.

To fulfil this commitment, a Permissions Compliance Action Plan has been developed, outlining the agency's approach to permissions compliance through the following key areas:

- legislation and permissions systems
- education and communication

- 
- monitoring and reporting
  - enforcement.

Key elements to deliver a strengthened permissions compliance system will be the development of:

- an annual permissions compliance plan to address the risks and threats associated with non-compliance with permit conditions and the environmental management charge and provide mechanisms to regularly inform and promote compliance with permission requirements.
- permissions compliance guidelines that outline the requirements and responsibilities of staff engaged in permissions compliance activities for the agency and ensure all activities are undertaken in accordance with the highest professional standards.

The first annual permissions compliance plan is expected to start in the 2015–2016 financial year.

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## SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR OBJECTIVE 1

- Pilot Reef Recovery Plan for the Mackay–Whitsunday region has started, which will guide development of similar plans for other areas.
- Ecological Processes Calculator and hydrological mapping have been refined to help develop revised Water Quality Improvement Plans across natural resource management regions.
- Supported Rivers to Reef to Turtles project, investigating the stranding of green turtles in Upstart Bay, with health screening information recorded for more than 983 turtles.
- Total number of species vulnerability assessments now at 16, with dugong, marine turtles, humpback whales and snapper completed during the reporting period.
- Integration of Great Barrier Reef Climate Change and Adaptation Strategy 2012–17 into the Reef Recovery programme and Reef *2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*.
- Partnership project with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service on adaptation work at Raine Island to help reduce mortality of adult female nesting turtles.
- Coral disease surveys done in partnership with James Cook University and the United States of America's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- Participated in a collaborative project to undertake a situational analysis of commercial fisheries and how well they are positioned for future challenges including climate change.
- Reef Report Card 2014 developed, due for release in August 2015.
- Review of marine monitoring programme to document long-term changes in condition of inshore water quality, seagrass and coral reefs.
- Integrated monitoring and reporting programme established to help achieve integrated Reef-wide monitoring and reporting network
- Publication of the Science Strategy and Information Needs 2014–19 to communicate priority science information needs.
- Water Quality Guidelines for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park 2010 incorporated into state legislation.
- Partner in the development of a social and economic long-term monitoring programme with James Cook University and CSIRO to map, measure and monitor the activities and dependencies of people on the Reef.
- Coastal Bird Monitoring and Information Strategy revised to incorporate seabird populations along east coast.
- Crown-of-thorns starfish control programme resulted in 92,313 crown-of-thorns starfish culled
- Great Barrier Reef Clean-up weekend being planned for all areas of Reef during October as part of Great Barrier Reef Marine Debris Clean-up project.
- New regulations to ban the disposal of capital dredge spoil in the Marine Park came into effect in June.
- Permissions system that regulates the multiple uses of the Marine Park has been reviewed.

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## OBJECTIVE 2

### Safeguard the Reef's heritage

In 2014–15, a focus for the agency has been showcasing its innovative management of the Marine Park and the World Heritage Area to an international audience. Informed by the latest, most up-to-date reports on the Reef's health, the *Outlook Report 2014* and the Strategic Assessment, the agency engaged with Marine Park managers from other countries, delegates from the World Heritage Committee and international media to highlight the range of actions and strategies in place to safeguard the Reef's heritage and outstanding universal value.

This programme of engagement culminated with the World Heritage Committee's draft decision to retain the World Heritage listing of the Great Barrier Reef in June 2015.

For the first time, the *Outlook Report 2014*, a five-yearly overview of the Reef's health, considered the Reef's heritage values. This assessment is new and responds to the revised requirements of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* and the World Heritage Committee's request of an explicit assessment of the area's heritage values, including outstanding universal value.

The Outlook Report, together with the Great Barrier Reef Strategic Assessment report, informed the development of the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* which was a key part of the Australian Government's response to the recommendations of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. The Reef 2050 Plan provides an overarching national framework for protecting and managing the Great Barrier Reef for the next 35 years. The plan was submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in March for consideration at the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee meeting in June–July 2015. In June the Reef 2050 Plan was appended as a schedule to the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement which outlines joint arrangements between the Australian and Queensland governments for managing this iconic natural asset.

The agency has also taken steps to protect the Reef's heritage values through the development of special management areas to protect key historic sites in the Marine Park. Working with Traditional Owners continues to be an important focus for the agency through marine resource agreements which describe how Traditional Owners wish to manage their traditional sea country estate. These can address the take and use of natural resources, their role in compliance and their role in monitoring the condition of plants, animals and human activities in the Marine Park.

### Deliverables

- Develop and implement strategies to safeguard Indigenous heritage, historic heritage and other heritage values within a comprehensive management framework

## Projects

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## Supporting Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan

The agency has been a key partner in the development of the Australian and Queensland governments' *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan*, released in March 2015.

The Reef 2050 Plan provides a shared pathway to the future management of the Great Barrier Reef by bringing together actions across government, Traditional Owners, industry, researchers and the community. It contains targets, actions, objectives and outcomes along with defined areas of responsibility to protect and improve the Reef's health and resilience, while allowing ecologically sustainable use.

The plan is informed by the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment* and the Outlook Report 2014 and the agency will continue to be a key partner in its implementation. It recognises the critical role of the agency's foundational management arrangements, such as its zoning plan, Traditional Owner agreements, joint Field Management programme and stewardship activities in the ongoing protection of the Reef. The plan also incorporates the agency's new initiatives taken from the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment Programme Report* to strengthen management. This includes developing and implementing cumulative impact assessment guidelines to manage impacts from multiple sources, a net benefit policy to guide actions to restore ecosystem health, and implementing a

regionally-based Reef Recovery programme.

An implementation strategy was released in May 2015 outlining governance arrangements and engagement processes and identifying how progress will be monitored and reported.

The Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum is responsible for overseeing the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the Reef 2050 Plan. The plan was appended as a schedule to the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement between the Australian and Queensland governments.

Critical to the success of the Reef 2050 Plan is the Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Programme which will strengthen the effectiveness of adaptive management through comprehensive and systematic monitoring and reporting of the condition of the Reef's values and the impacts affecting them. The programme will ensure the performance of management actions outlined in the Reef 2050 Plan are measured, assessed and where necessary the actions adapted in response to new information and emerging issues.

The programme, led by the agency, is being established in partnership with government, science, industry and community partners. It draws together and builds on existing monitoring and reporting systems.

Monitoring partners have met twice to define the programme's scope, objectives,



## REEF 2050: A LONG-TERM PLAN TO MANAGE THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

A long-term plan to protect and manage the Great Barrier Reef was released in March 2015.

The Australian and Queensland governments' *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* is the overarching framework to manage the Reef for the next 35 years.

The plan, a key component of the Australian Government's response to the recommendations of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, was developed in consultation with tourism, fishing, ports, agriculture, Indigenous, local government, resources, research and conservation partners. More than 6000 submissions were received through a six-week public consultation process.

Informed by the agency's Outlook Report 2014 and strategic assessment, the most up-to-date reports on Reef health and management, the plan responds to the challenges facing the Reef and presents actions to protect its values, health and resilience while allowing ecologically sustainable use.

It includes seven overarching themes and clear actions, targets, objectives and outcomes for each that will achieve the plan's vision:

*"To ensure the Great Barrier Reef continues to improve on its Outstanding Universal Value every decade between now and 2050 to be a natural wonder for each successive generation to come."*

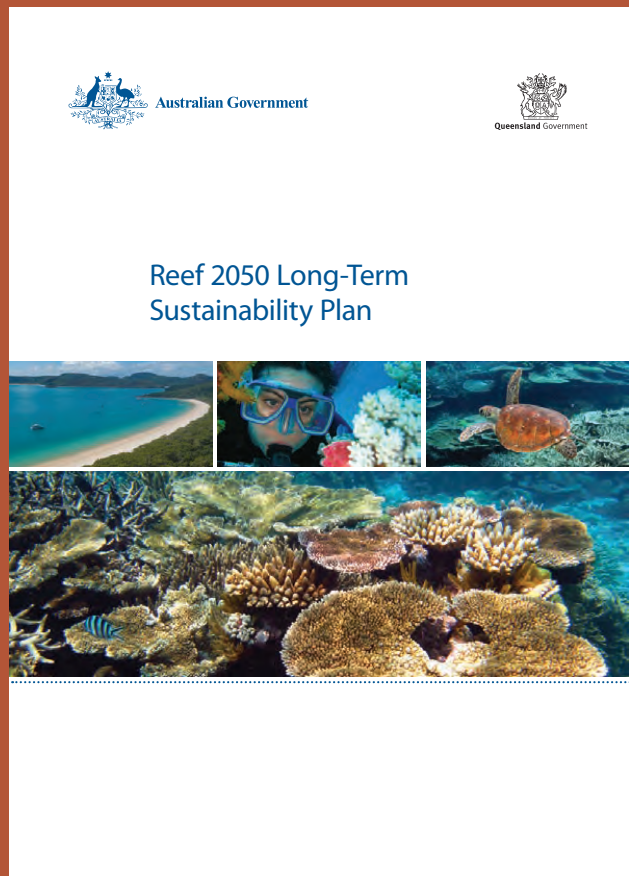
The plan acknowledges the biggest threat facing the Reef is climate change, and sets out a strategic, management driven approach to addressing the challenges it poses.

It also recognises the Reef is large and complex — an area bigger

than Italy — and that its many competing uses must be ecologically sustainable.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is a partner in the implementation of this plan by the Australian and Queensland governments, along with a range of government and industry sectors.

The agency is leading a new integrated monitoring and reporting programme that will provide a mechanism for Australia to report to the world on progress in meeting targets and outcomes under the plan.



*The agency is leading an integrated monitoring and reporting programme that will provide a mechanism for Australia to report on its progress in meeting the targets and outcomes identified in the Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan.*

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foundational requirements and roles and responsibilities for programme development.

A steering group for the programme, co-chaired by the Chairman of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Queensland Government Director-General of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, will guide its development and operation. The agency will lead the marine component of the programme while the Queensland Government will lead the catchment component.

## Heritage strategies

### *Indigenous heritage strategy*

The agency is currently updating its Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Heritage Strategy to more comprehensively address Indigenous heritage. This is being achieved through a number of programmes facilitating the mapping and assessment of Indigenous heritage values across the Great Barrier Reef region.

Recording and storing cultural information regarding marine resources is carefully managed by Traditional Owners as part of the marine resource agreement programme. A number of groups have developed their own management regimes based on a deep understanding of their sea country. Much of this knowledge is passed down through on-country activities where Traditional Owners implement their marine resource agreements.

Groups hold extended on-country programmes during school holidays, ensuring that as many participants as possible are included. Junior ranger programmes provide a supported platform to express culture and learn about heritage and land and sea management practices. These activities also form an educational programme for children of all ages.

*(Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements are reported in more detail as part of Reef Rescue Land and Sea Country Indigenous partnerships, below).*

### *Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships Programme (see Objective 1, page 35)*

Effective and culturally appropriate engagement

underpins the progress of the five-year Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships Programme, now in its second year. This programme is a component of the broader Australian Government Reef Programme (2013–2018).

Partnerships with Traditional Owners on sea country management have been key to the programme achieving many of its milestones. However, providing opportunities and services to over 70 Traditional Owner clan groups (with sea country rights and interests in the Marine Park) over approximately 2300 kilometres of coastline remains challenging. The team meets this challenge with the strategic use of time while on country and managing expectations by communicating what needs to be in place (for example, governance structures) before the development of a marine resource agreement can be negotiated.

### *Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements*

The traditional use of marine resources is the undertaking of activities as part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's customs or traditions, for the purposes of satisfying personal, domestic or communal needs and may include fishing, collecting (e.g. shellfish), hunting, and looking after culture and heritage places. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders undertake traditional use of marine resources to:

- practice 'living maritime culture'
- provide traditional food for families
- educate younger generations about traditional and cultural rules, protocols and activities in sea country.

A Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement is a legal management framework formally recognising Traditional Lore and custom through conserving and protecting species, habitats and ecosystems critical to the healthy functioning of people, culture and country. This agreement is developed between Traditional Owners and both the Australian and Queensland governments.

The programme may offer financial support through contracts to support Traditional Owners in the development and submission of a marine



*Establishing effective and meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners is essential to protecting cultural and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef.*

resource agreement. Development contracts are in place with Paal Paal Traditional Owners and Gunggandji Traditional Owners. Paal Paal have also applied for a marine resource agreement accreditation.

Once accredited by the Commonwealth and Queensland, implementation is funded through the Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships Programme (2013–2018) and supported by both governments. By June 2014 eight implementation contracts were in place with Traditional Owner groups as part of the Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement programme, including six multi-year contracts to implement accredited marine resource agreements and two marine resource agreement development contracts.

Recording and storing cultural information regarding marine resources is carefully managed by Traditional Owners as part of the marine resource agreement programme. A number of groups have developed their own management regimes based on a deep understanding of their sea country. Much of this

knowledge is passed down through on-country activities where Traditional Owners implement their marine resource agreements.

### **Future interest**

There is growing interest in marine resource agreements from Traditional Owner groups from both the northern and southern Great Barrier Reef region. Groups who have contacted the agency during the reporting period include Gudang, Hopevale Congress, Juru, Ngaro, Gia and Yuibera.

### **Traditional Owner group overview**

#### ***Paal Paal***

Paal Paal Traditional Owners have successfully delivered on the milestones in their marine resource agreement development contract, and their application is currently being assessed for accreditation. During the year Paal Paal undertook a number of activities, including:

- steering committee meetings to authorise content of the Traditional Use agreements



*Holly Savage from the agency's Indigenous Partnership team travelled home to country as part of a work trip to Raine Island last year. It was Holly's first trip to the island, allowing her to walk in the footsteps of her people, the Erubam Le. Holly is standing on the Raine Island Tower, constructed as a navigational aid by convicts in 1844.*

- submission of a proposed Paal Paal boundary map
- meetings with neighbouring Traditional Owner groups to gain support for boundary delineation.

### **Lama Lama**

Lama Lama Traditional Owners continue to be leaders in implementing high standard, effective sea country management activities. They have developed a junior rangers programme providing hands-on and practical experience in marine-related career options for youth. This leadership module, developed by the Traditional Owners with input from the agency, culminated in a bus trip for 27 youth, rangers and parents to Cairns and Townsville to visit the agency's headquarters, Reef HQ Aquarium, James Cook University, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Cairns Aquarium and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service offices.

In addition to the Careers Pathway Programme, Lama Lama junior rangers took part in an

exchange organised by the Yuku-Baja-Muliku groups to further network and share their skills in a regional junior ranger programme. Twenty-five Traditional Owners participated in this event.

Compliance activities continue including joint vessel and aerial surveillance patrols with Lama Lama rangers. These compliance actions are supported by the Lama Lama Compliance Plan finalised in May 2014.

### **Yuku-Baja-Muliku**

The Yuku-Baja-Muliku Traditional Owners have made considerable progress on their sea country management plan supported by the 2014-15 marine resource agreement. Although the Yuku-Baja-Muliku agreement was accredited in August 2013, the group only came together in October 2014 to celebrate their accreditation.

Recent progress includes:

- two steering committee meetings to

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develop signage, plan junior ranger exchanges and detail compliance activities and issues

- a regional junior ranger exchange programme hosted by Yuku-Baja-Muliku with participation by Lama Lama junior rangers. Approximately 45 children from Yuku-Baja-Muliku, Lama Lama and non-Indigenous children from the greater Cooktown region participated
- the development of a draft compliance plan for the next 12 month period.

### *Yirrganydji*

As a result of the recently accredited 2013–2015 Yirrganydji marine resource agreement and the contract for its implementation, a part-time coordinator has been employed, on-country cultural activities implemented and a communication plan developed.

Through marine resource agreement steering committee meetings, Yirrganydji Traditional Owners have reviewed and completed their communication strategy and planned on-country cultural heritage activities. Project plans for the Cultural Heritage Sea Country activity and Junior Ranger Pathway activity have been finalised. Community engagement and education have occurred, including:

- on-country cultural activities for Yirrgandji adults and elders at Michaelmas Cay and Hastings Reef in May 2015
- on-country junior ranger beach camp and cultural activities for Yirrgandji youth at Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre in May 2015, including a field trip to Michaelmas Cay.

International recognition of the marine resource agreement occurred during the World Parks Congress in Sydney (November 2014), where Yirrganydji Traditional Owners were involved in a sea country management session, and performed traditional dances during the Marine Stream opening ceremony.

### *Gunggandji*

The agency continues to work closely with Gunggandji Traditional Owners through the marine resource agreement to address Traditional Owner and community concerns around traditional hunting and fishing at Green

Island. A memorandum of intent was submitted to the Minister for the Environment on 30 May 2014 outlining Gunggandji Traditional Owners commitment towards developing a marine resource agreement.

An integral step in the marine resources agreement development process has been the work undertaken by the Indigenous compliance team. A two-day compliance training programme held in November 2014 provided new Gunggandji rangers with the skills to identify and report illegal activity in their area.

### *Girringun*

A large emphasis for Traditional Owners implementing their marine resource agreement has been on communication and community networking. As part of the marine resource agreement initial review and community consultation, Traditional Owners have had meetings in Palm Island, Townsville, Cairns, Ravenshoe, Innisfail, Ingham, and Cardwell.

Another highlight for Girringun was participating in the filming of a documentary *Life on the Reef*, shown on ABC television during March 2015. An elder from the Bandjin Traditional Owner group discussed his sea country around Hinchinbrook Island and took the film crew around the Hinchinbrook Channel.

Girringun also assisted James Cook University scientists in a Hinchinbrook Channel dolphin project, helping with surveys and recording traditional knowledge of the channel and Hinchinbrook Island.

A Girringun marine resource agreement meeting was held to assist both Girramay and Nywaigi people in reviewing their current hunting suspension of green turtle and dugong.

Experts from the agency and James Cook University presented the latest scientific data related to turtle and dugong populations in the agreement area, and as a result both Traditional Owner groups decided to keep the hunting suspension in place, with a review due in late 2015.

The Girringun marine resource agreement coordinator, along with Girringun rangers also completed geographic information systems (GIS) training in Brisbane, took part in turtle

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tagging, attended Hinchinbrook and Cassowary Coast Local Marine Advisory Committee meetings and underwent compliance training.

### **Woppaburra**

Woppaburra Traditional Owners are implementing the third marine resource agreement for their traditional sea country, covering 561 square kilometres of the Marine Park and the only offshore agreement of its kind. The Woppaburra agreement took effect on 30 June 2014 and is a 10-year accreditation. The achievement was celebrated on Great Keppel Island as part of a Woppaburra festival.

A highlight from this reporting period was the participation of Woppaburra elders in a fish habitat survey assessment at Leekes Creek on Great Keppel Island. The survey was the first step in identifying fish species and habitat types to help inform whether to declare a fish habitat area over the creek. Elders participated in two fish surveys with scientists and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service staff, providing important traditional knowledge.

### **Port Curtis Coral Coast**

*'The Port Curtis Coral Coast (PCCC) Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement is the largest of its kind. It is also unique as it is mostly in the Great Barrier Reef but is also in the Great Sandy Marine Park. The agreement has been instrumental as a lever to achieve sea country outcomes'* [Port Curtis Coral Coast Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement Coordinator 2014 report].

The Port Curtis Coral Coast Traditional Owners have continued to deliver a wide range of sea country activities through their marine resource agreement. In addition to steering committee meetings, a number of Traditional Owners attended the Burnett Heads Lighthouse festival and participated in on-ground activities such as a Mangrove Watch with James Cook University, seagrass and water quality monitoring with Gladstone Port Authority, turtle monitoring at Mon Repos, fish habitat surveys, marine debris clean up with Tangaroa Blue, cultural surveys and Traditional knowledge transfer with elders.

Another key focus is the communication and networking which are important deliverables

under their marine resource agreement implementation plan. This has included Port Curtis Coast producing newsletters, attendance at Burnett Local Marine Advisory Committee meetings, participation in local NAIDOC activities, attendance at Gladstone Port Authority board meetings, presentations at local primary schools and attendance at the Turtle Trail Family Fun Day.

Port Curtis Coral Coast Traditional groups have also discussed development of a junior ranger programme using the successful Sensory Advisory programme. This will be progressed in the next six months.

A highlight for Port Curtis Coral Coast was the opening of the Environmental Marine Training Centre at the port of Bundaberg. It is hoped the new centre will increase the level and amount of environmental and marine training options for Indigenous rangers. This was followed by the opening of a Gidarjil office in Gladstone as a contact point for partners and another training centre for the Traditional Owners. In June 2015 the agency used the training centre to deliver compliance training to Gidarjil rangers and staff.

### **Indigenous compliance**

During the reporting period, the agency's Indigenous compliance unit increased the knowledge and capacity of Indigenous rangers and Traditional Owners along the coast. The unit continues to work with Traditional Owners in geographic areas that have high compliance concerns for both the agency and Traditional Owners. Compliance management plans have been completed for each marine resource agreement with associated risk assessments and action plans in place.

Eyes and Ears compliance training was delivered to five Indigenous ranger groups comprising 35 rangers and coordinators. Training was delivered to the newly established Gunggandji rangers (including two elders) at Yarrabah, the Jabalbina rangers (including two elders) at Wujal Wujal community, Yirrganydji rangers in Cairns, Madingalbay Yindinji rangers in Trinity Inlet–Murray Prior Ranges and Gudjuda rangers in the Ayr–Home Hill area.

The 'Engaging Traditional Owners in Compliance' training package was delivered



*Correct handling and measuring techniques were covered during the sea turtle workshop held in Cooktown.*

## TURTLE HANDLING A TOP PRIORITY FOR INDIGENOUS RANGERS

During the year, two Traditional Owners were sponsored to participate in a sea turtle handling workshop run by the Yuku-Baja-Muliku rangers south of Cooktown.

The training focused on how to best handle and care for sick and injured turtles out on the water and transport them to the Archer Point Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, built by the Yuku-Baja-Muliku Traditional Owners at their ranger base.

Transporting injured turtles to the turtle hospital can be risky business. Injured turtles need to be handled carefully so they have the

best chance of recovery once they get to the hospital.

The training by the Yuku-Baja-Muliku rangers was funded as part of their Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement, which formally describes how the group manage traditional activities on their sea country.

The Yuku-Baja-Muliku Regional Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement was accredited in August 2013 and covers 1088 square kilometres stretching from Monkhouse Point south to Forsberg Point and extending east to just past the Ribbon Reefs.

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to five Traditional Owner groups comprising 22 Traditional Owners and two government employees. This training was based in Rockhampton and Gladstone and concentrated on hunters, developing corporations and interested government staff. A key outcome of the meeting was the strengthened relationships developed between hunters and key Indigenous stakeholder groups in these regions.

The Starcke River area continues to be a high risk area for compliance and the Indigenous compliance team is working closely with the Junjuwarra Traditional Owners. As part of the strategy for the area, the agency has engaged the Hopevale Congress rangers to complement education and awareness processes in the greater Hopevale area.

To ensure Marine Park inspectors understand native title rights, cultural awareness and Indigenous use protocols, the Indigenous compliance unit delivered a one day training package to 134 Marine Park inspectors.

During the reporting period, the Indigenous compliance team facilitated seven joint patrols between the agency and Indigenous rangers. These patrols involved aerial and vessel based vehicle patrols of the Marine Park and coastal zones.

An extended vessel patrol was held with Apudthama rangers, concentrating on illegal activity in the northern extremities of the Marine Park. The patrols utilised the local knowledge of rangers when conducting night-time surveillance operations in the Newcastle Bay area in and around isolated cay islands.

Rangers from Juru Enterprise Limited participated in land based patrols in the Abbott Point area. Public restricted areas were targeted, concentrating on unlawful hunting and illegal commercial fishing activities.

Within the agency the unit continues to provide high level advice and support to the field management compliance unit and other government regulatory agencies involved in the delivery of compliance and enforcement treatments within the Marine Park. This support is in the form of native title advice, investigation advice and case recommendations relating to incidents involving Indigenous persons and activities in the Marine Park.

The Indigenous compliance unit contributed to the development of a new Indigenous activity area within the field management compliance database to improve reporting and case management of Indigenous related activities in the Marine Park.

The unit also commenced a marine resource agreement permit review project to re-evaluate and implement a consolidated permit system for all agreements.

## *Sponsorship*

Ten sponsorship applications were made available to Traditional Owners through the Sea Country Sponsorship programme to attend the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney during November 2014. This included an event organised by the Traditional Owners of The Gully Aboriginal Place in Katoomba, New South Wales, for Indigenous peoples and local communities from five continents.

Lama Lama, Yuku-Baja-Muliku, Yirrganydji and Port Curtis Coral Coast Traditional Owners attended the Katoomba event, held at The Gully, a declared Aboriginal Place in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. At this event the delegates learnt about the critical importance of engaging Traditional Owners in managing World Heritage properties as part of their ongoing care and protection, and the need to strengthen coordination and support for the Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network.

Two Traditional Owners from Lama Lama, Yuku-Baja-Muliku, Girringun, Yirrganydji, and Port Curtis Coral Coast received sponsorship and participated in the World Parks Congress, where five Traditional Owners presented sea country management activities.

## *Leadership*

Through the marine resource agreements, many Traditional Owner groups are engaging children in fun and culturally appropriate environmental activities. Traditional Owners have developed a coordinated approach to getting kids on country through junior ranger and Sense Activity programmes. Traditional Owners retain ownership of the activities, allowing them to develop programmes to suit their needs and interests, with support from the agency through marine resource agreement funding and staff.





*Dr Robert Endean was a leader in marine science and pioneering research into the crown-of-thorns starfish.*

## BOB ENDEAN REEF

In January 2015, tribute was paid to leading marine biologist and ecotoxicologist, the late Dr Bob Endean, with a reef in the Marine Park named in his honour.

Dr Endean played a key role in the 1960s environmental movement, which led to the establishment of the agency in 1975.

He was a leader in marine science and ecotoxicology and a key player in Reef management. Not only did he pioneer crown-of-thorns starfish research, his research forms the basis of the work being done today.

Dr Endean held positions of Secretary, Chair and President of the Great Barrier Reef Research Committee between 1954 and 1975, and was a member of the World Health Organization's Expert Advisory Committee on Food Additives.

He also advised Queensland police, government and medical authorities about toxins and marine biology, and had key involvement in setting up the Heron Island Research Station.

Dr Endean spent more than 40 years working in the University of Queensland's Zoology

Department before his retirement in 1990 and was highly regarded amongst Reef users, scientists and managers.

The Bob Endean Reef, reef number 17-065, is in the Innisfail zoning region, approximately 65 kilometres east of Mission Beach (Lat 17.876°S, Long 146.727°E) — an area where Bob undertook a lot of his field research.

Bob Endean Reef was officially named through a formal process in conjunction with the agency, the Royal Australian Navy—Australian Hydrographic Office and the Queensland Government.



*The location of the newly named Bob Endean Reef.*

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A number of Traditional Owner groups have now participated in the Sense Activity programme introduction phase. This is done on-country with Dharumbal Traditional Owners. Port Curtis Coral Coast has also indicated interest in participating.

### *Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee*

The first meeting of the new three-year term of the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee was held in Townsville in June 2015 with eight new members. Mr Phil Rist was appointed Interim Chair. The Committee met for two days and was briefed on the role of the agency in managing the Marine Park. The role of the committee is to:

- provide strategic guidance on Indigenous partnerships matters
- provide advice on the application of world's best practice principles to sea country planning and implementation
- recommend ways to facilitate partnerships, build capacity and engage with Traditional Owner groups in the management of marine resources in the Great Barrier Reef.

### *Ensure management of key heritage sites*

Two nationally significant Royal Australian Air Force Second World War Catalina plane wrecks in the Marine Park were protected under new measures on 21 May 2015. The declaration of a one kilometre square special management area over each wreck recognises and better protects their important maritime cultural heritage values. One wreck is off Bowen and the other is to the south of Cairns. Boaters can travel through the special management areas but cannot anchor or stop unless in an emergency. Fishing is not allowed and diving is only possible for special purposes if a permit is granted.

As part of efforts to expand understanding of the heritage values present in the Marine Park, a survey and assessment was undertaken for the Second World War minesweeper HMAS *Warrnambool* off Cape York. The *Warrnambool* sank in 1947 while clearing mines. Baseline knowledge of this site is an important first step in managing the site and providing advice to managers as to the direction that conservation should take. There is a push by returned service

personnel to have the site declared a historic shipwreck under the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*. The agency has also been involved in an Australian National Maritime Museum-led expedition to survey several other far north Queensland wreck sites.

To make information about maritime cultural heritage more readily available, statements of significance have been prepared for several places with important heritage values. The first is for the historic wreck *Foam* (1893), located on Myrmidon Reef off Townsville. The statement summarises research on the wreck and recommends future management of the site including assessment and mitigation of impacts. The second is for Princess Charlotte Bay and summarises the maritime cultural heritage values in this part of the Reef. The 1899 Pearling Disaster — the major shipwreck event in the area — is detailed, along with the fact the area potentially also contains more than 60 other historic shipwrecks and Second World War wreck sites. It also touches on submerged Aboriginal sites, and explores impacts and future management for the area's heritage values.

### *Heritage awareness*

A framework has been drafted to help agency staff appropriately recognise and consider heritage values during permit assessment processes. These include information on topics such as the new protection measures for two Catalina aircraft wrecks and, more generally, historic voyages and shipwrecks, historic lightstations, Second World War features and other places of historic significance.

Information on the Reef's maritime cultural heritage has been shared through presentations to Local Marine Advisory Committees (Bowen–Burdekin, Cairns and Cassowary Coast) and the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology conference, as well as several local radio interviews and the production of a mini-documentary for the agency's YouTube channel.

Expert advice has also been provided to a Magnetic Island Museum project to research and develop displays on the historic shipwrecks and associated maritime heritage of Magnetic Island.



The agency's management of the World Heritage Area was showcased when UNESCO delegates visited Whitsunday Islands National Park as part of a study tour. ©Commonwealth of Australia (DFAT), Photograph Patrick Hamilton

## Engage with international and domestic agencies, organisations and forums

### International

It has been a busy year of sharing expertise, including best practices and success stories, with Marine Park and world heritage managers facing similar challenges. The agency welcomed and assisted visitors wanting to learn how the Marine Park is managed, with particular interest in zoning, compliance, crown-of-thorns starfish control and fisheries. This included visits from marine protected area management practitioners and policy makers from localities including the Dutch Caribbean, France's Port-Cros National Park and China, and Caribbean and Pacific nations participants in an Australia Awards Fellows training programme on coral reef management.

The agency played an important role in assisting the federal Department of Environment in their preparation of the *State Party Report on the State of Conservation of the Great Barrier*

*Reef World Heritage Area (Australia)* submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in January 2015.

This involved extensive engagement with key government agencies to showcase the latest tools being used to manage the World Heritage Area, visits to provide technical briefings to international stakeholders, and sharing the results of the Outlook Report and Strategic Assessment, the agency's most comprehensive assessment of the Reef's health and condition.

Between March and June 2015 the agency welcomed a number of UNESCO ambassadors and technical experts from World Heritage Committee countries undertaking a study tour to learn more about how the World Heritage Area is managed. Briefings provided an introduction and overview of the Marine Park, and covered key areas of the agency's work including:

- foundational management arrangements for the Marine Park
- key findings of the *Outlook Report 2014*

- the Strategic Assessment Programme Report and *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* and the actions the agency is taking
- the joint Queensland and Australian governments Field Management programme
- the collaboration across all levels of government to manage and protect the World Heritage Area.

An agency representative presented at the closing of the 7th Coordination Meeting of the *South-East Asian Regional Plan of Action for Promoting Sustainable Fisheries* in Cairns. The agency also provided technical assistance to Ecuador for their rezoning of the Galapagos Islands Marine Park, and sent representatives to international conferences and workshops on issues including climate change, coastal development, coastal ecosystems and zoning.

The agency also contributed to international networks focused on coral reefs and marine protected area management through participation in the 29th International Coral Reef Initiative General Meeting and the Big Ocean Partnerships 6th Network Business Meeting.

It has also continued to grow collaborative relationships with heritage sections of the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage and the federal Department of Environment, particularly around management of historic heritage such as ship and aircraft wrecks.

### *IUCN 2014 World Parks Congress*

The agency participated in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) 2014 World Parks Congress in Sydney from 12–19 November 2014 as a co-leader of the Marine cross-cutting theme, in conjunction with the United States of America's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, and the Department of Environment's Wildlife, Heritage, and Marine Division. The marine programme facilitated more than 225 events.

The congress is a global forum on protected areas held every 10 years. The theme of the 2014 congress was *Parks, People Planet: Inspiring Solutions* and attracted 4,800

representatives from over 170 countries.

The congress provided a unique and important opportunity to showcase the work being done to manage the Reef to protected area managers from throughout the world. The agency was involved in approximately 28 sessions across all aspects of Reef management, including tourism, Indigenous partnerships, strategic assessment, stewardship and compliance.

Highlights included:

- Working with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) World Heritage Centre to organise the four day pre-congress capacity building workshop on compliance in protected areas in Townsville from 7–10 November 2014. Thirty-five international delegates attended the workshop, including Fanny Douvere, the coordinator of UNESCO's World Heritage Marine Programme (this workshop is reported in further detail in Objective 3 as part of the joint Field Management Programme on page 81).
- Presenting on 'Tourism partnerships for conservation' as part of a congress parallel event on 12 November 2014, entitled '*Global Eco-Tourism in Protected Areas Forum*'.
- Using videoconferencing technology to complement the congress opening plenary on 13 November 2014, with a live cross from the coral reef exhibition at Reef HQ Aquarium into the Sydney Olympic Park.
- Participating as a panel member for the dialogue session on 13 November 2014 entitled *What's happening in the Great Barrier Reef?* coordinated by IUCN. Other panel members included Dermot O'Gorman from World Wildlife Fund Australia and Tony Brown from True Blue Sailing.
- Leading the World Parks Congress Great Barrier Reef Management field trip to Heron Island from 20–23 November 2014 that attracted 19 delegates from countries including the USA, Hong Kong, Germany and Kiribati. The trip provided useful information on Reef management, research being done at the Heron Island Research Station, and a Reef experience.



*The agency hosted a Reef trip and dive for international delegates and journalists as part of the G20 event in Cairns. The purpose of the visit was to share the latest available information regarding the health of the Reef and its long-term management.*

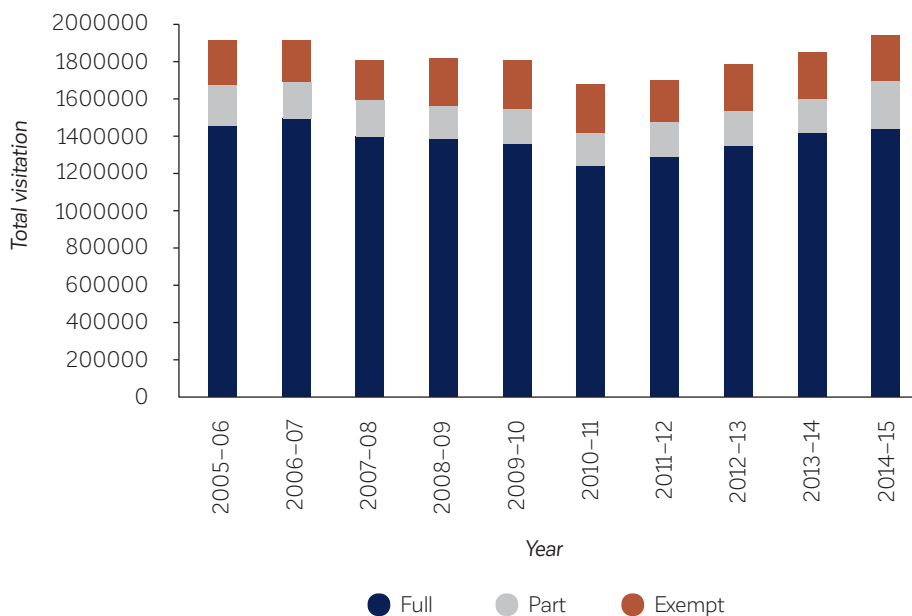
## OUT OF THE BOARDROOM AND ONTO THE REEF: THE G20 EXPERIENCE

In September 2014, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park was showcased to the world as part of the G20 Finance Ministers meeting and Central Bank Deputies and Governors meeting.

The two meetings associated with the G20 event took place in Cairns and in addition to the formal agendas, the agency hosted a Reef information booth and worked with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to conduct a Reef trip for international delegates and journalists to showcase the partnership approach to managing this international natural icon to protect its outstanding universal value.

It included a number of briefings with field management staff, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers, Traditional Owners, marine biologists and the tourism industry. Delegates also took part in Eye on the Reef programme activities, contributing Reef data through the sightings network.

The visit was an important channel for the agency to generate accurate and informed international reporting on the condition, outlook and extensive management strategies and the strong regulatory frameworks in place to protect the Marine Park and its outstanding universal value.



**Figure 5** Tourist visits\* to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park since 2005-06. This includes full-day and part-day visitors, and passengers exempt from the environmental management charge. Source: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority environmental management charge records \* These figures do not include stand-alone coral-viewing activities and scenic flights

- Multiple high profile and international stakeholders and technical experts were taken to the Reef, including Ms Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General, who visited Hamilton Island and Hardy Reef Lagoon, and four World Heritage experts who visited offshore Cairns.

## Ensure contemporary tourism and recreation management

There are a range of strategies, policies, position statements and guidelines on the management of tourism and recreation use of the Great Barrier Reef that guide decision makers and the public. During 2014-15, a number of documents were under review to reflect the best available science and management, consistent with maintaining high environmental standards.

In July and August 2014, the draft moorings policy was revised taking into consideration the submissions received during public consultation. The amended policy was approved by the Marine Park Authority Board in November 2014. The moorings policy is

a joint policy with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and provides a framework for the management and use of moorings in the Marine Park that protects the environment and promotes ecologically sustainable use.

A draft cruise ship policy has been developed in partnership with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. This is part of strengthening the agency's foundational management. In early 2015 targeted consultation on the draft was undertaken with an external working group including the cruise industry, Australian Reef Pilots, Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Maritime Safety Queensland and Tourism and Events Queensland. In May 2015, the agency's Tourism Reef Advisory Committee provided advice and endorsed the draft policy for public consultation. In June 2015, the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee provided advice on the draft policy and ways to consult with Traditional Owners.

The objectives and key actions of the draft Tourism Management Strategy were considered by the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee in October 2014.

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Targeted consultation has also begun to scope potential amendments to the Whitsundays Plan of Management. The Whitsundays Plan of Management is reported in further detail as part of Objective 3, Plan of Management Review, on page 64.

During the reporting period, work continued on analysing tourism visitation. Visitation fluctuates depending on tourism trends, weather and even global factors. The Reef remains an iconic destination for both international and domestic visitors, with visitation in 2014–15 growing in comparison to 2013–14, with a continuing trend of a slow but steady recovery. Figure 5 (page 60) is based on information provided by tourism operators in their environmental management charge returns.

### **Implementation of Programme Report recommendations - Permissions Assessment and Decision Enhancement project**

This five-year project is reported in further detail under Objective 1, as part of the Strengthening permissions, on page 42.

### **Commonwealth Islands planning and coordination**

The Field Management Programme manages cultural and Indigenous heritage on island national parks and Commonwealth-owned islands. This includes developing heritage management plans to protect significant sites and active maintenance and restoration at some locations.

During the reporting period, new lease arrangements were put in place at Dent Island, and new lease arrangements at Lady Elliot Island are also in the process of being finalised.

Over the course of the year, annual building, asbestos and natural resource management audits were completed for all Commonwealth islands, and arrangements finalised to extend the caretakers on Low Isles for another two years, until 2017.

Draft site management arrangements for Lady Musgrave Reef were released for public comment on 15 June 2014 and are expected to close on 22 July 2015.

Field Management officers conducted a site visit to Lady Elliot Island with heritage expert Peter Marquis-Kyle to inspect the lighthouse. The purpose was to determine if upgrades to the lighthouse meet National Construction Code 2015 standards for public access as well as meeting requirements to maintain its Commonwealth heritage values.

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## SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR OBJECTIVE 2

- The *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* is a key component of the Australian Government's State Party report to the World Heritage Committee.
- The Reef 2050 Plan is appended to the Australian and Queensland governments' Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement, reflecting the shared vision for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area's long-term protection.
- Eight Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements in place with Traditional Owner groups.
- Range of compliance training delivered to Traditional Owners and five joint patrols with Indigenous rangers.
- Presentation of sea country management by Traditional Owners as part of G20 activity and World Parks Congress.
- First meeting of Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee in Townsville in June 2015.
- Four Indigenous compliance officers employed to provide support to Indigenous communities and up to 20 Indigenous rangers trained.
- *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act* amended to create two Special Management Areas to protect two Royal Australian Air Force Second World War Catalina plane wrecks in the Marine Park.
- Statements of significance prepared for two important heritage sites — the historic wreck Foam, on Myrmidon Reef off Townsville, and Princess Charlotte Bay.
- Site assessment completed for Second World War minesweeper HMAS Warrnambool off Cape York to help preserve the area.
- Reef off Mission Beach named in honour of acclaimed researcher, the late Dr Bob Endean, a pioneer in crown-of-thorns starfish research.
- Leading the Marine cross-cutting theme at the 2014 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Parks Congress in Sydney in November.
- Hosting a Reef trip and information sessions for G20 Finance Ministers as part of international G20 Summit in September 2014.
- Draft moorings policy revised and approved, providing a framework for the management and use of moorings in the Marine Park.
- Draft cruise ship policy developed.
- Draft site management arrangements for Lady Musgrave Reef released for public comment.



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## OBJECTIVE 3

Ensure use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park supports a range of recreational and commercial activities — from recreational fishing, snorkelling and scuba diving, to tourism, commercial fishing, ports and shipping.

A key focus during the reporting period has been delivering smarter, more efficient ways to effectively manage the multiple uses of the Marine Park in the most sustainable way possible.

This has been achieved by increasing Marine Park users' awareness of zoning rules and responsible reef practices through education and engagement programmes such as Reef Guardians, the continued development and refinement of field reporting tools, and legislative reform.

### Deliverables

- Implement the policy, planning and regulatory framework for the sustainable use of the Marine Park
- Deliver the 2014–15 Annual Business Plan for Field Management
- Implement partnership, stewardship, education and communications programmes

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### Projects

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## 2014 Outlook Report

One of the most significant achievements during the reporting period was the publication of *The Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*. The report provides an overview of the Reef's condition, and its findings helped inform the development of the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*. Further detail about the report can be found in the case study on page 65.

The findings of the Outlook Report, together with the Great Barrier Reef Region Strategy Assessment reports, have strongly informed our future management approach and have been embedded in the agency's corporate communication strategy, and underpin our engagement with partners and key stakeholders. The results have been communicated internationally through presentations to delegates of the World Heritage Committee's member countries and through key reports such as Australian Government's *State Party report on the state of conservation of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area* to the World Heritage Committee.

## Whitsundays Plan of Management review

A review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management 1998, last amended in 2008, commenced in late 2014 after it was determined that a published notice of intent to prepare the amendments wasn't required.

A small planning team was established in January 2015 to lead the amendments. Targeted discussions and consultation with industry groups, tourism operators and individuals with particular interests in the planning area identified the key items for inclusion in the review.

Preliminary discussions have been held with representatives from families who form part of the Ngaro Traditional Owner group, and a first draft of the amendments is well underway and expected to be finalised for public consultation in the coming months.

## Regulatory reform

### Regulatory and policy reform

The agency is contributing to the whole-of-government commitment to reduce regulatory

burden. As part of this, a regulator performance framework has been developed which establishes six key performance indicators, supported by a range of metrics to allow monitoring and data collection. Using these metrics, the agency will self-assess their performance every 12 months, with the results made available to the public.

Work has also started on the development of the *Net Environmental Benefit Policy*, *Offset Guidelines* and *Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines*. These initiatives are key commitments resulting from the Great Barrier Reef Strategic Assessment Programme Report. Information papers have been prepared outlining the scope of the policies and guidelines to inform discussion with stakeholders over the year.

### Legislation including annual regulatory plan

During 2014–15 a number of legislative changes came into effect to improve the agency's ability to meet its three objectives of protecting and restoring the Reef's health and biodiversity, safeguarding the Reef's heritage, and ensuring the sustainable use of the Reef. These are reported in further detail in the Introduction as part of Amendments to legislation 2014–15 on page 15.

## Compliance and permissions

### Reef Management System

The Reef Management System is a database designed to provide simple and seamless functionality to manage permissions for all the activities that occur within the World Heritage Area. The system allows internal staff and external permission holders to manage a range of legislative and regulatory requirements. Over the course of the year, Phase 2 development of the Reef Management System – Permits internal module continued with significant functionality developed, tested and moved into production. The project is expected to be delivered on schedule by 30 June 2015.

Planning for Phase 3 has started and focuses on migrating the system to the new database platform and integrating the electronic documents and records management system (EDRMS) and geospatial components. This

# MAJOR REPORT RELEASED ON REEF HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT

Climate change, declining water quality, catchment run-off and some fishing impacts are the key threats to the Reef identified in a major report released in August 2014.

The *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014* provides an overview of the Reef's condition, use, management and resilience, along with consideration of risks and the long-term outlook for the Reef's ecosystem and heritage values.

This five-yearly report, first published in 2009, is required under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (section 54) and aims to provide a regular and reliable means of assessing the state of the Reef and its management in an accountable and transparent way.

For the first time, the report specifically considers the region's heritage values, including Indigenous heritage, historic heritage and world heritage values. This assessment is new and responds to both revised requirements of the Act and a World Heritage Committee request for an explicit assessment of the Reef's World Heritage Area outstanding universal values.

The Outlook Report concludes that the outstanding universal value of the Reef remains in good condition overall, although

the condition of some key attributes is poor.

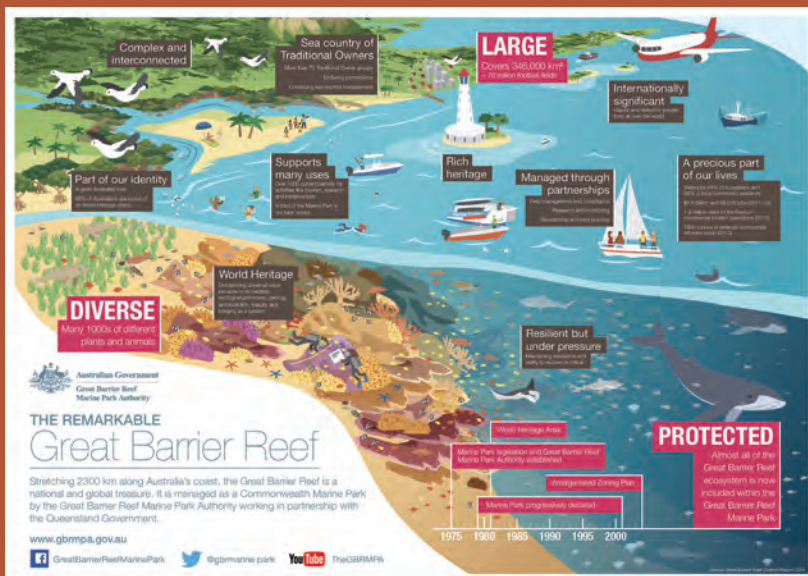
The report identifies positive actions since the 2009 report, such as improvements in agricultural practices in the catchment leading to less nutrients, sediments and pesticides entering the Reef.

The report highlights how a series of major storms and floods have affected an ecosystem already under pressure, with the accumulation of all impacts on the Reef having the potential to further weaken its resilience.

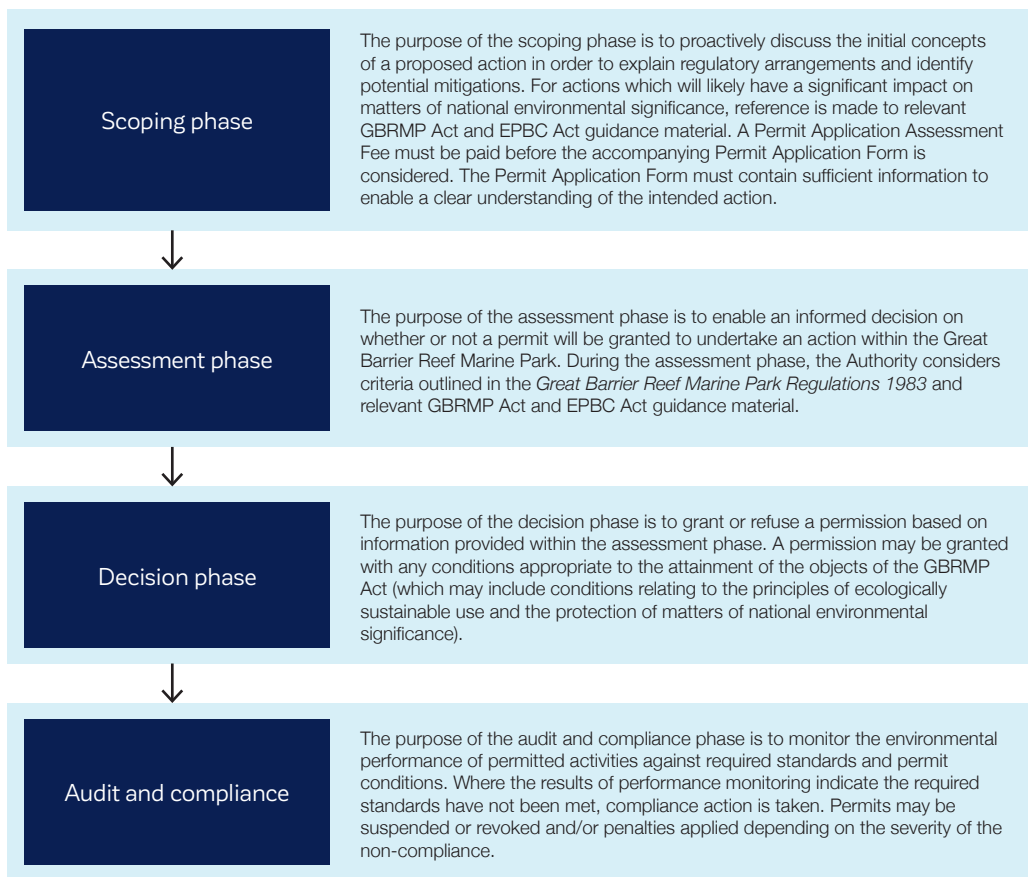
The report recognises more needs to be done to look after the values that define the Reef as a World Heritage Area — everyone's actions, whether big or small, to reduce threats and help restore the Reef's condition will improve its outlook.

The Outlook Report and the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment* together provide the most comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the Reef's health and management.

The findings from these reports underpin the Australian and Queensland governments' *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* (this plan is reported in more detail on page 46).



*The Outlook Report 2014 recognises there's been a range of positive actions since the first report in 2009, including government and landholders focusing on improving the quality of water that runs off the land.*



**Figure 6** The four key steps in the permission assessment and decision process

phase is due for completion December 2015. Phase 4 scoping will incorporate the requirements of the programme report, Long-term Sustainability Plan, Australian National Audit Office audit and various government policies.

### Permissions systems

The permission system is established under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*. Section 2A(3)(d) of the Act states that ‘in order to achieve its objects, this Act:

*regulates, including by a system of permissions, use of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in ways consistent with ecosystem-based management and the principles of ecologically sustainable use’.*

It operates within an objective-based regulatory and outcome-based policy framework.

There are four key steps in the permission assessment and decision process. They are scoping, assessment, decision, auditing and compliance (Figure 6).

### Permits managed

Each permit can typically include multiple permissions and each permission has multiple conditions.

At 30 June 2015, 1313 permits were being managed. Of these, almost 90 per cent are categorised as the lower risk, level one permits, such as those for commercial tourism operations that provide scuba diving and non-motorised water sports activities. The remaining 10 per cent of permits are categorised as level two (such as heli-pontoons), level three (such as sewage and aquaculture discharge) or level four assessments for complex or large-scale

projects that may have a significant impact on the Marine Park. All permits and applications under assessment are published on the agency's website at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au).

Many of the current permits require several post-permit management actions. For example, some of the more complex level four permits may generate an environmental management plan, a removal plan, a schedule of works, a sampling and analysis plan, or a sampling and analysis report for dredging. Most of the plans mentioned will require an assessment, negotiation and ultimately, written sign-off. Post-permit management of the more complex permits can be time-consuming.

### New applications

During 2014–15, the agency received 472 applications and granted 332 permits. More than 90 per cent of those issued were low risk and/or standard level one permits. During the reporting period one new level four application was received and no level four decisions were made.

Table 5 provides a summary of permit decisions against agreed targets compared to previous years.

The number of permits issued (achievement) has progressively decreased. The target was

calculated based on the inclusion of camping permits for Commonwealth Islands. This was made electronic in 2013–14 and the target should have been changed to reflect this. Furthermore, the downturn in permits issued is a reflection of the agency's focus on post-permit management. A large amount of resources are being utilised on post-permit management of high risk proposals in order to ensure the proper and orderly management of the Marine Park. There is also a significant amount of time spent on engaging with permittees to ensure the best outcome for the Marine Park. There were also a number of legal challenges during 2013–14 and the current reporting period that required significant time and resources.

### Multiple permissions

At the end of the reporting period, the agency was managing a total of 2376 permissions.

Of the 332 permits granted during the reporting period, 578 permissions were issued. Figure 7, (page 68), represents the total number of current permissions in the Marine Park. Most of the permissions granted were for tourist programmes, charter vessel/aircraft, research, moorings and facilities. Facilities include structures such as barge ramps, boat ramps, jetties, marinas, pipelines, pontoons, snorkel trails and marker buoys.

**Table 5** Comparison of permit decisions versus agreed targets

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
Permit applications received per annum	488	489	507	472
Permits issued per annum: target (achievement)	650 (625 permits including camping permits)	650 (552 permits including camping permits)	650 (449 permits not including camping permits*)	650 (332 permits not including camping permits*)
Per cent level one permits issued			382 (91%)	308 (93%)

\*The agency used to report on camping permits issued for Commonwealth Islands by Queensland Parks and Wildlife. In 2013–13 camping bookings became electronic and were no longer a reportable line item. The target number of permits issued per annum should have been changed to reflect this.

The category called ‘other activities’ includes:

- carrying out dredging works
- carrying out disposal of dredge spoil
- navigating a ship
- implementing Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements.

### Traditional use of Marine Resources Agreements

The agency had two applications for accreditation of Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements under assessment against Regulation 89 of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983. The outcome

for the applicants will be determined following completion of the assessment. Accredited agreements now cover a total of 45,200 square kilometres of sea country and involve 16 Traditional Owner groups. Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements are reported in more detail as part of the Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships Programme in Objective 2 on page 48.

### Applications refused, reconsidered and appealed

In 2014–15, one application for a permit was refused by the delegate that related to netting in Princess Charlotte Bay. The initial decision was reconsidered and a new decision was

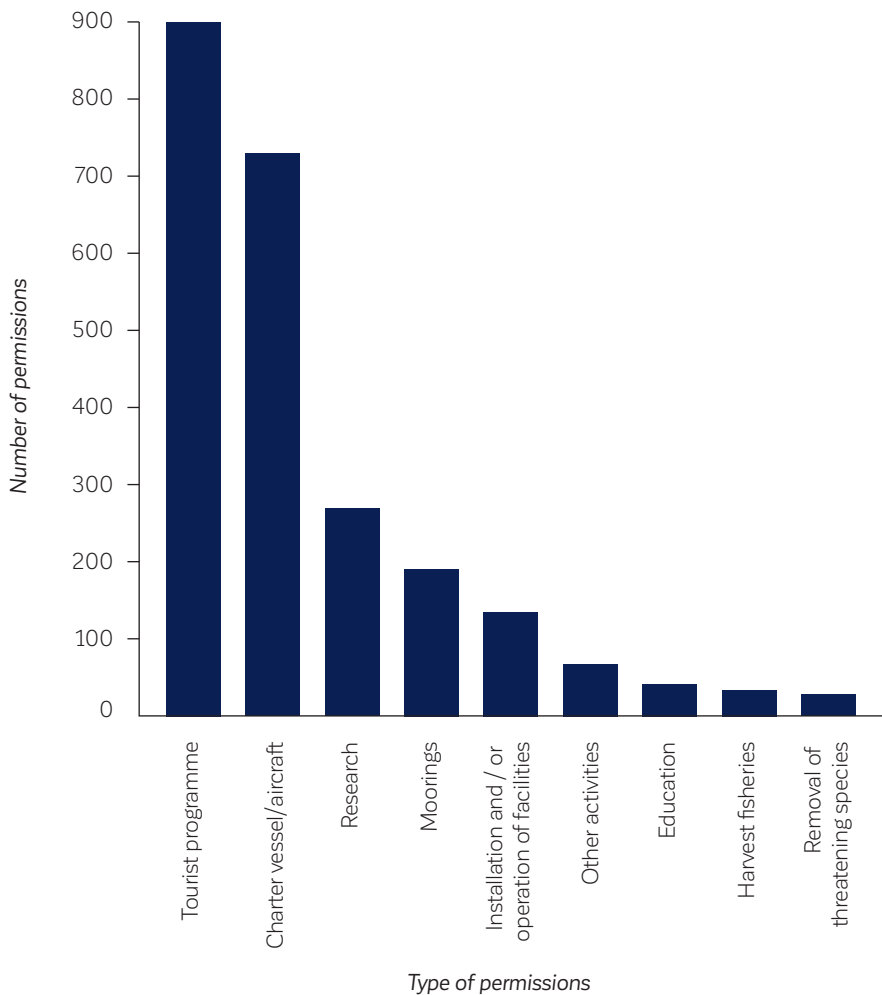


Figure 7 Type and number of current permissions managed by the agency as at 30 June 2015.

substituted resulting in the grant of a permit with conditions.

The agency received seven requests for a reconsideration of an initial decision.

Five reconsideration processes resulted in the variation of conditions to the existing permit or substituted with a new decision resulting in the grant of a permit with conditions.

Two reconsideration processes resulted in the original decision being affirmed, namely the refusal of an operation and maintenance of a facility, and the refusal of daily access to the Hinchinbrook Planning Area.

### **Administrative Appeals Tribunal**

There were a number of legal challenges in which the agency was directly involved during the reporting period.

There was one Administrative Appeals Tribunal appeal and one Federal Court application relating to the Abbott Point disposal in the Marine Park decision, two Administrative Appeals Tribunal appeals relating to the Hay Point maintenance dredging and disposal decisions, one Administrative Appeals Tribunal decision relating to Queensland Nickel, and two Administrative Appeals Tribunal decisions relating to two tourism permissions.

### **Post-decision monitoring and compliance**

A suite of monitoring and administrative compliance activities was carried out in 2014–15 including targeted field inspections, monitoring of permitted use, ensuring permitted facilities are well maintained, and education designed to promote self-regulation.

Environmental site supervision was also conducted at priority sites, typically linked to an approved schedule of works, an environmental management plan or to supervise and ensure permit condition compliance. The assessments team undertook four environmental site supervisory trips including supervising two dredging activities, one jetty installation and navigation of a ship. Six on-site visits were undertaken, usually involving a general familiarisation of the site and on-site discussions with the proponent/permittee.

Conditions associated with three permits were varied as a result of administrative compliance actions.

During 2014–15 several staff participated in training related to environmental impact assessment, legal matters, environmental auditing and compliance.

The following tables present a summary of permissions-related, reported non-compliances (Table 6), and actions taken to address non-compliant behaviour (Table 7).



*Agency staff member Rean Gilbert and Sir David Attenborough.*

*During October–November 2014 the agency undertook environmental site supervision on board the MV Alucia, a 56-metre research vessel being used to film a three-part documentary series on the Great Barrier Reef produced by Atlantic Productions and featuring acclaimed naturalist Sir David Attenborough.*

*The use of environmental site supervision is one of a suite of management tools routinely used to manage and mitigate potential risks to the Marine Park.*

*The film is scheduled to be released towards the end of 2015.*

**Table 6** Alleged non-compliance reported to the agency since July 2014

Non-compliance (alleged)	Jul–Sept '14	Oct–Dec '14	Jan–Mar '15	Apr–Jun '15	Total
Overdue deeds/bonds Number	12	1	9	5	27
Outstanding maintenance certificates, reports, plans, schedule of works etc.	23	2	10	0	35
Other permission condition contraventions	20	27	39	7	93
Failure to commence operations	37	No audit conducted	No audit conducted	No audit conducted	37
Failure to maintain Eco-certification	4	1	0	0	5
Unpermitted moorings	14	8	4	2	28
Unpermitted facilities	7	1	2	0	10
Unpermitted vessels etc.	25	2	14	1	42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>277</b>

\*This is likely to be an underestimate, as it does not include conditions during transfers and continuations.

\*\*Total amount (\$) of bonds currently outstanding from four permittees.

**Table 7** Actions taken to resolve reported non-compliance since July 2014

Compliance actions taken	Number of cases finalised				
	Jul–Sept '14	Oct–Dec '14	Jan–Mar '15	Apr–Jun '15	Total
Education	2	6	5	2	15
Extension of time	4	3	22	2	31
Advisory/further information request	7	3	13	6	29
Infringement notices	0	0	0	0	0
Directions/orders	0	0	8	1	9
Revoke permits (multiple permission on each)	1	3	1	0	5
Permit modification/reapply	0	0	4	0	4
Prosecution	1	0	0	0	1
Surrender of permits (multiple permission on each)	2	1	0	0	3
No action taken*	12	10	23	5	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>147</b>

\* Following an investigation of alleged non-compliance (includes natural justice and referral)



## Notifications and directions

During the reporting period, the agency gave six Part 5 Directions under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003 relating to the operation and maintenance of essential navigation aids in the Marine Park.

One direction (part 5.4 Management Activities) was granted to existing tourism permittees between Cairns and Cooktown to 'right' overturned coral affected by Cyclone Nathan.

Four directions (part 5.2(b) Navigational Aid) were issued to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority for the upgrade of existing navigational aid structures on Kent and Penrith islands, Bailey Islet and Swains Reef.

One direction (part 5.2(e) Government Survey) was issued to the Bureau of Meteorology at Gannet Cay.

## Performance audit by the Australian National Audit Office

The Australian National Audit Office conducted a performance audit of the permission system to assess the effectiveness of the regulation of permits and approvals within the Marine Park. The scope of their review focused on the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2014. A final report on their findings from the review is expected to be tabled in Parliament early in the new financial year.

## Environmental management charge

The management and administration of the environmental management charge that is placed on most commercial activities, including tourism operations in the Marine Park, continues to be a priority. A formal set of environmental management charge guidelines for permittees has been reviewed this year to ensure best practice and transparent management of the revenue.

In 2012 the Australian Government announced a temporary reduction in the standard tourist programme charge (a category of the environmental management charge) until 31 March 2015. This brought the charge for full-day passengers from \$6 to \$3.50. During the reporting period, all tourism operators were advised that the temporary reduction was ending. This meant that from 1 April 2015, the standard tourist programme charge returned to \$6 per visitor for a full-day visit and \$3 per visitor for trips less than three hours, or for trips where visitors enter the Marine Park after 5 pm and depart before 6 am.

During the year the agency undertook a number of environmental management charge administrative compliance actions as noted in Table 8 below.

Since 2011, there have been substantial improvements to the management of the environmental management charge. These

**Table 8** Summary of administrative compliance actions taken associated with environmental management charge non-compliance from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015

Action	Apr–Jun 2014	Jul–Sep 2014	Oct–Dec 2014	Jan–Mar 2015
Intention to suspend letter	55	55	99	165
Suspension notice	0	0	2	5
Reinstatement letter	0	0	2	5
LPP* invoiced letter	15	7	11	5
LPP remitted letter	26	46	34	31
Revocation notice	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>201</b>

\*LPP = late payment penalty



**Figure 8** Summary of administrative actions taken for environmental charge non-compliance since 2011.

improvements have allowed better auditing and the ability to take action when required in relation to non-compliances (Figure 8).

### Single Great Barrier Reef tourism permit

Commercial tourism operators in the World Heritage Area require three separate permits under the Nature Conservation Act (State), Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act (Commonwealth) and Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park Act (State) to operate across the World Heritage Area, Commonwealth and State marine parks and island national parks.

There are currently about 600 commercial operators that hold around 1000 permissions to undertake their protected area activities in the World Heritage Area, as well as a separate permit to access Queensland's island national parks.

Work has continued with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to provide both opportunity and scope for further consolidation of the permitting arrangements for commercial tourism operators in the World Heritage Area by incorporating the island National Park permit into the existing Commonwealth–State Marine Park joint permission. This consolidation would result in the creation of a single Great Barrier

Reef tourism permission, removing duplication, streamlining administrative processes and creating a true single front counter for commercial operators operating in the World Heritage Area.

Phase 1 of this project was completed with administrative procedures in place to allow commercial activity permit holders to trial the new single process with their Marine Parks permissions.

### Coordination with the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The agency has continued to implement the 2009 memorandum of understanding with the Department of the Environment in relation to the integration and application of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*. This memorandum assists with integration and streamlining of the application and assessment processes when approvals and permissions are required under both Acts through establishing agreed administrative arrangements.

In 2014–15 the agency provided advice to the Department of Environment on 24 referrals and approved projects.

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## Defence

The agency hosted a senior environmental officer from the Department of Defence as part of a secondment programme to increase awareness and communications between agencies.

The agency hosted the annual meeting between departments in Townsville in March 2015 to learn about the roles and function of Defence activities, new capabilities and to participate in planning and monitoring of major defence activities within the Marine Park.

In June 2015, a member of the Assessments and Permissions team undertook a 10-day secondment to Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015 to work with the Defence environment team in Shoalwater Bay Training Area (Central Queensland) and Fog Bay (Northern Territory).

The officer was attached to the environmental management group responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of all environmental protection measures associated with the exercise. This group had an on-ground supervisory role to ensure standard operational procedures were adhered to and to advise military commanders on environmental mitigation and avoidance measures.

Held on alternate years, the Talisman Sabre series of exercises is a major Australian and United States military training exercise focused on the planning and conduct of mid-intensity high-end warfighting involving up to 30,000 Australian and United States defence personnel.

## Field Management

The Marine Park and World Heritage Area is jointly managed by the Australian and Queensland governments. The Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement outlines the obligations of both levels of government to protect and manage the Reef ecosystem through a joint Field Management programme. This joint programme undertakes operations and routine day-to-day activities in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the adjacent Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park and island national parks.

## Incident management response

During the reporting period, the incident management framework was applied to all marine incidents in which the Field Operations support team played a role. Work also continued on a range of policies, including finalising the draft internal incident management framework policy, the incident management plan: sunk and grounded vessel response, and Form 20: vessel incident notification. A working draft procedure for the agency's marine incident duty officers was also developed.

## Maritime incident management

Thirty-three maritime incidents were recorded in the region, requiring some level of Field Management response. Three formal regulation 94 removal orders were issued and six other vessel removals were managed by the programme.

The removal of the 13-metre recreational sailing vessel *Flur De Lys* from Andersen Reef off Cape Tribulation was the first time a vessel has been removed under contract to the programme. The programme worked in collaboration with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Maritime Safety Queensland and Australian Customs and Border Protection Command to achieve faster and more effective incident responses.

There was no major ship spill or grounding in 2014–15. The greatest risks to the Marine Park came from a general cargo ship with a disabled engine drifting very close to reefs in Swains Reefs and a bulk carrier with steerage failure in the vicinity of Howick Group.

## Severe weather response

Incident management teams were established to coordinate an agency and Field Management programme response to severe tropical cyclone Marcia, which crossed the coast near Shoalwater Bay on 20 February 2015 and severe tropical cyclone Nathan, which crossed the coast around Cape Melville on 20 March 2015. The response to cyclone Marcia was completed in April 2015, while the field surveys of cyclone Nathan's path are expected to continue until August 2015.

## Field data technology

Specialised software has been developed for use in the field, improving efficiencies and consistency in reporting.

Initial development of the field reporting system software has focused on patrol and compliance reporting and incorporating them into existing systems. Agency and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service staff are entering patrol reports using the software, with quality information collected and management reports being generated.

The introduction of the field reporting system has improved data collection. This data is matched with the vessel tracks collected from vessel tracking devices on all Field Management programme vessels, resulting in greater analysis of patrol activity.

Work is also continuing with an information technology consultant to develop further compliance forms and to refine the database reporting functionality.

## Reef Ranger vessel

The Field Management programme's new primary vessel, the 24 metre *Reef Ranger*, was commissioned in July 2014 at a cost of \$5 million. It has the ability to operate away from port for 12 weeks, a range of up to 2000 nautical miles, a top speed of up to 25

knots, and can carry 28 people and 16 people overnight. The *Reef Ranger* carries a fast compliance rigid hulled inflatable boat and a landing barge. The *Reef Ranger* provides the Field Management programme with the ability to reach the entire Reef and deliver multiple tasks simultaneously in the field, a first for the programme.

Comprehensive measures were put in place to monitor the benefits of the investment in *Reef Ranger*. During the reporting period, the vessel covered 25,698 kilometres — more than half way around the world — during its 242 days at sea. During this time, the *Reef Ranger* visited over 53 islands in the Marine Park, and increased field officer presence in the park to 2588 person days at sea.

## Field activities

### Raine Island

Over 80 tonnes of machinery and equipment was barged to Raine Island for two weeks in September 2014 to continue adaptive management works before turtle nesting season. The work included re-profiling 150 metres of beach to reduce the likelihood of water inundation in the optimal nesting areas, installing an additional 400 metres of fencing to reduce adult turtle mortality from cliff falls, and improvements to the remote sensing network for greater island coverage.



Raine Island, in the far north of the Marine Park, is one of the largest green turtle nesting rookeries in the world.

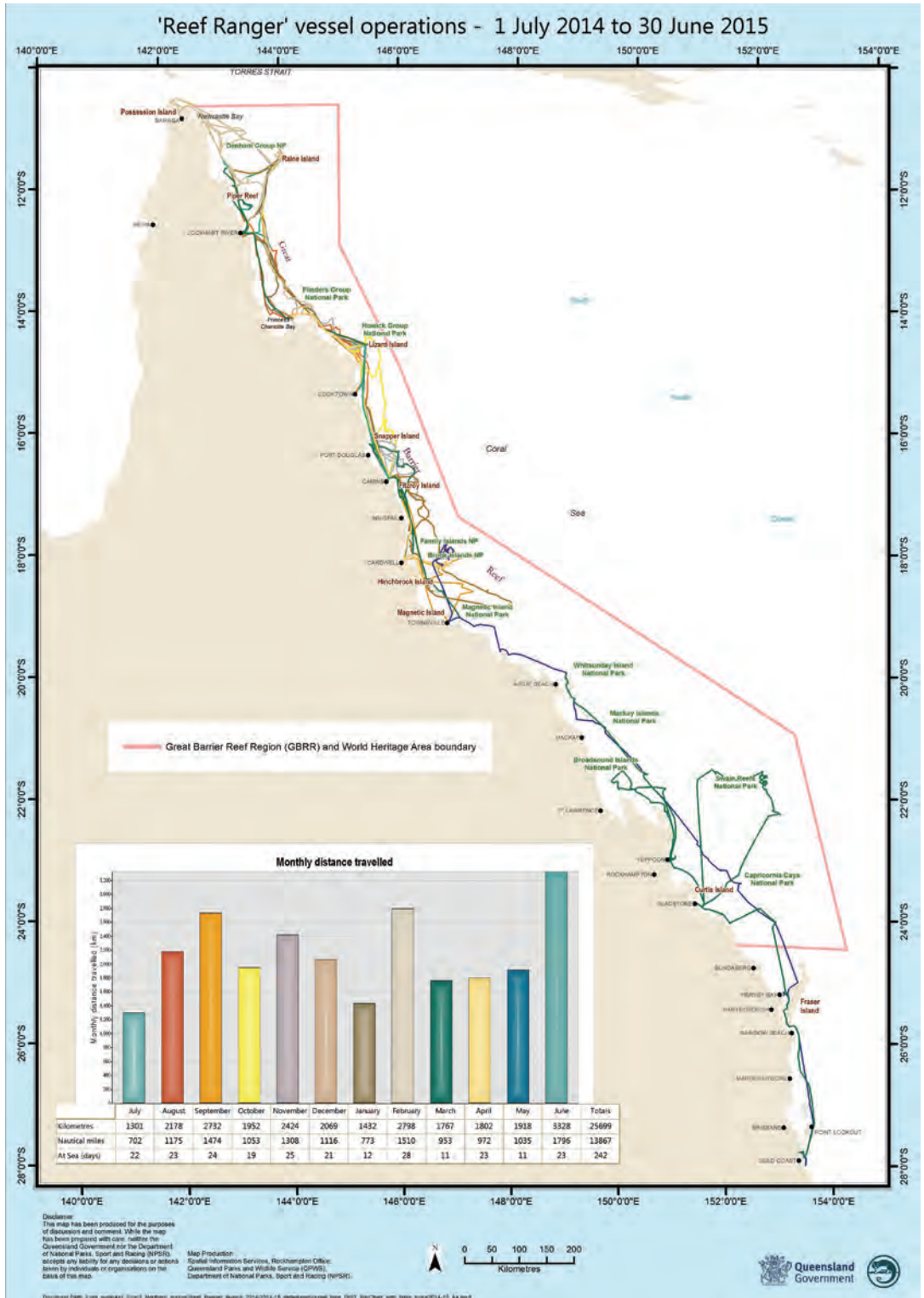


Figure 9 Reef Ranger vessel operations 1 July 2014–30 June 2015.

Sixteen officers from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Protection, James Cook University, Biopixel and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines undertook green turtle and seabird nesting surveys over 11 days on the island in December 2014.

As anticipated, nesting turtle numbers were low, with nightly tallies averaging around 2000 individuals, and the total estimate of breeding females in the waters surrounding Raine Island around 15,000.

Twenty-nine dead turtles were recorded on arrival and 19 were rescued during the trip, most from exhaustion in the beach swale area and rock entrapment. Fencing and cliff re-profiling appear to have successfully mitigated a large number of turtle deaths.

## Reef health and impact surveys

The agency, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Eye on the Reef monitoring network partners conduct reef health and impact surveys throughout the year to gain a better understanding of what's happening in the Marine Park. See Objective 1, page 30.

**Table 9** Reef health and impact surveys completed year-to-date

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	307
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service	1407
Tourism operators	41
Research	14
Other volunteers	1889
<b>Total</b>	<b>3658</b>

## THREE STRIKES LEGISLATION USED FOR FIRST TIME

During the year, there have been significant developments in compliance management, with the first person to be banned from fishing in the Marine Park under the 'three strikes' legislation.

In January 2015 a commercial fisher became the first person to be banned after being convicted of three separate offences of fishing in a no-take green zone over five years.

The fisher has been directed not to engage in commercial or recreational fishing in the Marine Park for two years, emphasising the importance placed on protecting no-take areas and the seriousness of illegal fishing offences.

A strong focus on education and encouraging people to comply with the zoning rules means that fishers who intentionally target green zones are letting down those who abide by the rules.

Illegal fishing can have a very real impact on the broader marine ecosystem, because no-

take zones play a critical role in protecting and conserving biodiversity, including supplying fish for the future.

For zoning arrangements to continue being effective, Reef users need to be aware of and comply with the rules.

As this case shows, if people choose to repeatedly breach those rules, then they can face a stiff penalty.

The 'three strikes' provision in the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act* allows the agency to ban a person entering or using the Marine Park, or to impose conditions, where a person has been convicted of at least three offences under the Act in the past decade.

The provision was included in the Act in 2008, and failure to comply with a direction can attract a fine of up to \$85,000. As of 31 July 2015, the penalty units will increase, with a maximum penalty of \$90,000.

## Unofficial car dump on Curtis Island

In February 2015, Zebra Metal and Environmental Services (Gracemere) were contracted to remove 100 tonnes of car bodies and other rubbish from Curtis Island Regional Park and restore the site to a near-natural condition.

The island's unofficial car dump was on a property acquired by the Coordinator General as part of the Curtis Island Environmental Management Precinct, now part of Curtis Island Regional Park. Approximately 130 car bodies, demolition and construction waste and general waste materials were compacted into large bails and barged to the mainland for disposal or sale. The site was handed back to Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in April.

## Field Management Foundation programme

The Field Management Foundation programme commenced in 2014 as a way of improving productivity and engagement of Field management staff. The five-day live-in training course provides a solid foundation in the theory and practice of managing and protecting the Great Barrier Reef and includes class-based modules, networking opportunities and field trips.

Thirty-six staff from the agency, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Queensland Boating and Fisheries successfully participated in the Field Management foundation programme in December 2014 and March 2015.

## TARGETING NIGHT-TIME RECREATIONAL FISHING IN GREEN ZONES

The Field Management compliance unit has been dealing with an increasing number of reports of shoals and shipwrecks within green zones being intentionally targeted by recreational fishers at night. In response, vessel and aircraft patrols by the unit, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, Queensland Water Police and Maritime Border Command have been increased in a number of high risk areas in the Marine Park.

Offenders are often detected fishing shoals and wrecks in green zones and are known to use avoidance techniques. They often switch off lights until they have been boarded by the patrol vessels and deny fish in their possession were caught at the location, despite them being obviously freshly caught, the presence of wet and baited lines and navigation data on chart plotters supporting the offence.

Offenders can hear patrol vessels approaching, and will cut or retrieve their lines so they are not fishing at the time of interception. Patrol officers must locate and collect circumstantial evidence to prove

fishing has occurred.

Night-time detections in which only circumstantial evidence is available still results in an infringement notice with a penalty of \$1700. The approach will continue, along with the use of more advanced night vision equipment to enable evidence of actual fishing activity to be better collected.

Fishing historic ship and aircraft wrecks has the potential to damage them with anchors and to litter them with fishing lines, hooks and sinkers. Many of these wrecks remain grave sites and have exclusion areas around them under the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*. Fishers and other users of the Marine Park are expected to respect and comply with both the environmental protection of these areas afforded by their zoning, and with the other legislative protections of the wrecks themselves.

The unit will continue to target enforcement resources on the intentional fishing of shoals and wrecks in green zones at high risk times and at night using both vessel and aircraft surveillance.

The programme involved presentations from industry stakeholders such as the Queensland Seafood Industry Association, the Association of Marine Tourism Operators, researchers from James Cook University and Marine Park managers. It also involved putting theory into practice with a visit to the Reef and Torres Strait Vessel Traffic Service (ReefVTS) and a field trip to Magnetic Island to gain an insight into the diversity of the Marine Park.

### **Magnetic Island Siam weed response**

A rapid response to the reporting and confirmation of the declared Class 1 pest plant Siam weed was undertaken by Field Management staff at Mount Cook in Magnetic Island National Park.

Significant progress has been made including control of all known plants, field assessments and mapping exercises with the assistance of Biosecurity Queensland and the Department of Defence.

A pest management proposal and communication plan were developed to address the issue and implementation has included chemical control and erosion control barriers to prevent the mobilisation of seed.

A site visit was done in March and sediment barriers were extended, with no further emergence of seedlings being reported. An environmental management plan was prepared by the Department of Defence and approved by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, and an agreement made on management of future practices on site.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service undertook a prescribed burn in the area in May 2015 as an additional measure to combat the spread of the weed.

### **Managing illegal fishing**

In order to be effective, compliance management responses to illegal recreational and commercial fishing need to be adaptable. Compliance can be improved by enhancing communication and education activities, and through engagement with recreational fishers. Improving understanding and awareness of zones will also improve the reporting of illegal fishing activity when observed by other fishers and Marine Park users.

For recreational and commercial fishers who intentionally fish in protected zones, targeted enforcement is needed, with coordinated surveillance, field operations and intelligence to catch offenders in the act. Penalties need to be sufficient to deter further illegal activity and may include the use of infringement notices, court prosecution, vessel forfeiture and the possibility of including zoning offences and Queensland Fisheries offences in 'three strikes and you're out' legislative provisions.

Responses to address illegal commercial fishing also include vessel monitoring technology, which is expected to greatly enhance the ability to monitor zoning compliance across all fisheries, and compliance with net attendance requirements in inshore net fisheries. This is expected to reduce the frequency of interactions between nets and vulnerable species, as fishers will be less likely to leave nets set for long periods. In areas of high conservation value, such as the remote Princess Charlotte Bay where netting compliance and interactions with vulnerable species remains a major concern, the ability to detect illegal activity and the deterrent effect of the vessel monitoring technology is expected to have significant conservation outcomes.

### **Compliance**

Compliance is managed across the World Heritage Area for both the Australian and Queensland governments.

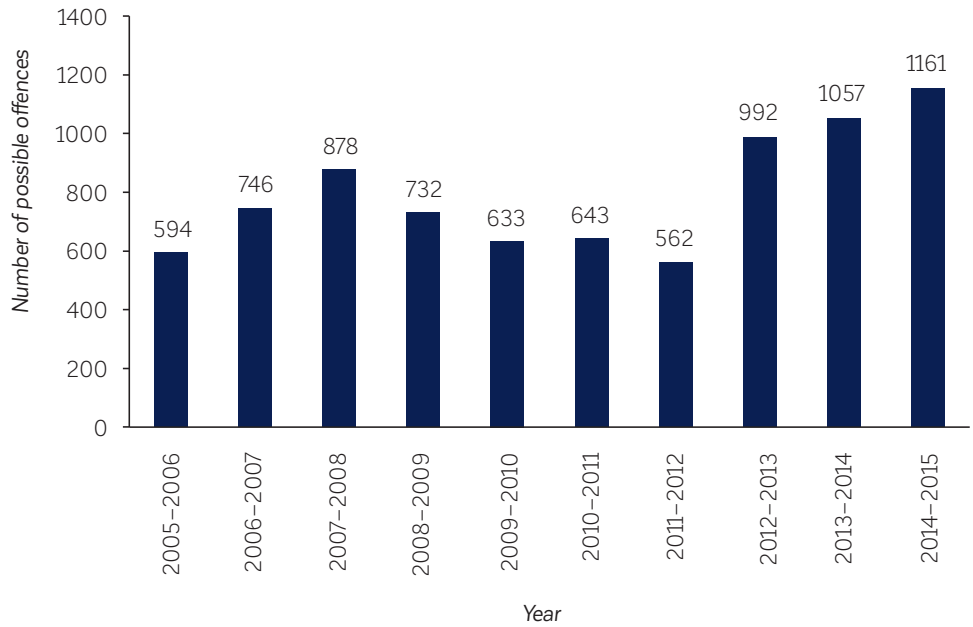
### **Surveillance**

The Field Management compliance unit coordinates vessel, aerial and land-based surveillance activities across the World Heritage Area. A cooperative multi-agency

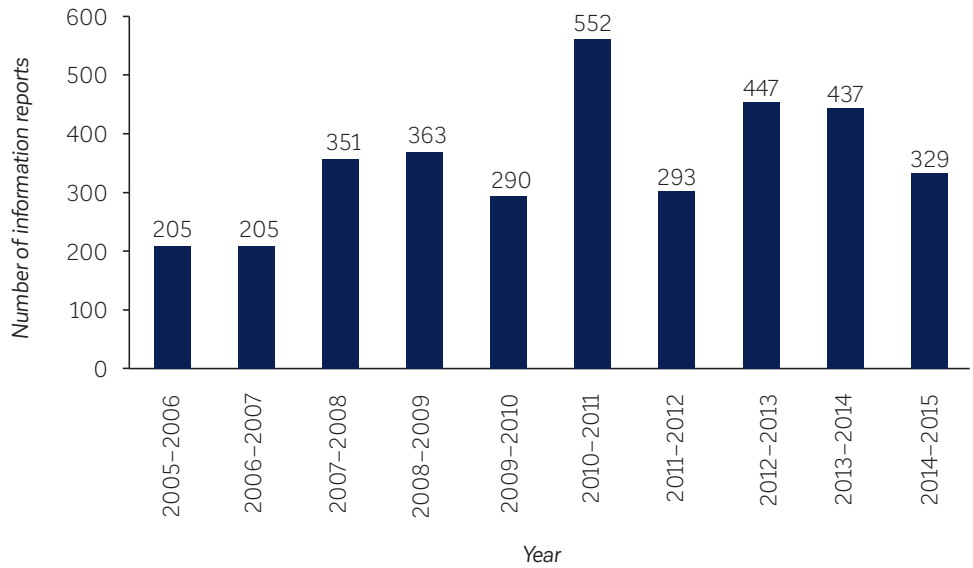


*An average helicopter surveillance operation covers a distance of around 1500 kilometres.*





**Figure 10** Number of possible Commonwealth offences reported to the Field Management programme during 2014-15



**Figure 11** Number of information reports received each year since 2005-06

approach to patrolling allows the application of a broad range of legislation and compliance management tools in an efficient whole-of-government manner.

Across the participating agencies, there were 792 dedicated compliance vessel patrol days in 2014–15. Twenty land-based patrol days focused on high-risk areas including Cape Bowling Green, Starke River coastline and Princess Charlotte Bay. Sixty-two aerial surveillance days using chartered helicopters complemented the Maritime Border Command aircraft surveillance program and focused on coastal and inshore areas.

Inshore helicopter surveillance has provided a highly visible compliance presence in remote areas of the World Heritage Area and the detection of a large number of possibly illegal incidents, including commercial netting and crabbing, unlawful traditional hunting and recreational fishing. The inshore helicopter surveillance programme is an effective and successful patrolling method for both detection and deterrence, and has resulted in the detection of recreational and commercial offenders that intentionally fish in Marine National Park (Green) zones where vessel and land-based surveillance is difficult or ineffective.

### Incidents and offences

Figure 10 shows the number of possible offences reported to the Field Management programme each year since the rezoning of the Marine Park came into effect in July 2004. During the reporting period, 1161 possible offences from 616 incident reports were reported from across the Commonwealth and Queensland jurisdictions of the World Heritage Area.

### Information reports

During the reporting period, 329 information reports relating to a wide variety of issues and activities were recorded and analysed, enabling a greater understanding and enhanced response to ongoing compliance issues and emerging trends in the World Heritage Area. Figure 11 shows the number of information reports received each year since 2005–06.

### Compliance actions and outcomes

Table 11 provides details of the assessments and compliance actions other than prosecution taken in relation to reported offences during 2014–15. The individual circumstances of each matter are assessed and considered before a decision on appropriate action is made. As in previous years, a significant number of offences were addressed with an advisory letter. More serious matters were dealt with an infringement notice or court prosecution. Sixteen Commonwealth infringement notices were issued resulting in fines of \$27,200. Many of these notices were issued following investigations into intentional recreational fishing offences within the Marine National Park zones (this is reported in further detail in the case study on targeted night time recreational fishing on page 77).

The 21 court prosecutions finalised during 2014–15 resulted in fines totalling \$194,000 (Table 12). Significant prosecutions include:

- On 21 July 2014, the bulk coal carrier MV *Bulk Ingenuity* travelled approximately five kilometres outside the designated shipping area and in a Marine National Park zone en route to Abbot Point. After contact from the Reef Vehicle Traffic Service, the ship changed its course. Investigations were conducted with officers from the agency, Australian Federal Police, and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. Two Chinese crew members were arrested and charged in Bowen and appeared in Townsville Magistrates Court on 29 July 2014, with the master fined \$40,000 and the second mate \$85,000.
- A vessel which departed Hay Point was detected by the Reef Vehicle Traffic Service without a pilot on 1 January 2015 entering Hydrographers Passage. The vessel was stopped and a pilot boarded. After investigating, the master of the vessel was put on alert, and was arrested by the Australian Federal Police when he returned. He entered a guilty plea in the Newcastle Local Court and was convicted and fined \$8,000 with one month to pay (\$17,000 was the maximum fine amount as the matter was heard in a court of summary jurisdiction).

## Other compliance initiatives

More information about the first use of the three strikes legislation can be found as part of the case study on page 76.

## World Parks Congress compliance workshop

As part of the 10th World Parks Congress held in Sydney in November 2014, a four day pre-congress workshop was held in Townsville, attended by 35 senior managers representing marine park and World Heritage areas from 15 countries. The aim was to discuss the latest

innovations in managing marine protected areas worldwide. During the workshop participants examined the role of compliance management in maintaining the values of marine protected areas.

As a result of the workshop, a global network of marine park compliance practitioners has been established, enabling information, ideas and experiences to be shared and techniques to be developed more effectively. The workshop outcomes will contribute to international priorities to build capacity to manage the expanding protected area network.

**Table 10** Summary of Commonwealth offences reported (by management area)

Activity		Far Northern	Cairns–Cooktown	Townsville–Whitsunday	Mackay–Capricorn	Other	Total
<b>COMMERCIAL FISHING (GENERAL)</b>							
Breach of permit		5	0	0	1	0	6
Fishing	Collecting	1	0	0	3	0	4
	Line fishing	2	6	1	11	0	20
	Netting	0	0	2	2	0	4
	Trawling	1	0	1	1	0	3
	Unattached dory — Collecting	4	0	0	7	0	11
	Unattached dory — line fishing	1	27	10	6	0	44
Maritime Incident	Groundings	0	0	1	0	0	1
Unpermitted activity	Restricted access areas	0	0	0	2	0	2
Wildlife	Non Traditional take	2	0	0	0	0	2
Other		1	1	1	0	0	3
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>							
Breach of permit		0	0	5	0	1	6
<b>RECREATIONAL</b>							
Environmental Management Charge		0	1	0	0	0	1
Fishing	Crabbing	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Line fishing	5	114	157	148	0	424
	Netting	0	0	1	2	0	3
	Spearfishing	2	40	21	1	0	64

Activity		Far Northern	Cairns– Cooktown	Townsville– Whitsunday	Mackay– Capricorn	Other	Total
Maritime Incident	Groundings	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Pollution/Discharge	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Sinkings	0	0	0	1	0	1
Moorings offence	Unpermitted	0	1	2	0	0	3
	Other	0	1	0	0	0	1
Plan of Management	Cairns	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Whitsunday	0	0	3	0	0	3
Unpermitted activity	Commercial activity (tourist)	0	2	1	0	0	3
	Restricted access areas	0	0	1	7	0	8
	Other	0	0	2	0	0	2
Wildlife	Interaction with cetacean	0	0	3	0	0	3
	Non Traditional take	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Unknown take type	0	4	0	0	0	4
<b>RESEARCH</b>							
Breach of Permit		0	0	1	2	1	4
Fishing	Line Fishing	0	1	0	0	0	1
Maritime Incident	Groundings	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>SHIPPING</b>							
Fishing	Line Fishing	0	0	0	4	0	4
Maritime incident	DSA breach	0	0	3	0	0	3
	Pilotage	0	0	1	1	0	2
	Pollution/Discharge	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>TOURISM INDUSTRY</b>							
Breach of permit		1	41	19	6	0	67
Environmental Management Charge		0	2	2	0	0	4
Fishing	Line fishing	2	0	3	3	0	8
Maritime incident	Groundings	0	5	1	2	0	8
	Pollution/Discharge	0	0	1	0	0	1
Moorings offence	Unpermitted	0	8	7	0	0	15
	Other	0	4	1	2	0	7
Plan of Management	Cairns	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Whitsundays	0	0	11	0	0	11

Activity		Far Northern	Cairns-Cooktown	Townsville-Whitsunday	Mackay-Capricorn	Other	Total
Unpermitted activity	Commercial activity (tourist)	0	2	3	3	0	8
	Restricted access area	0	1	0	2	0	3
	Other	1	0	0	1	0	2
Wildlife	Non Traditional take	0	1	0	0	0	1
Other		0	2	0	0	0	2
<b>TRADITIONAL ACTIVITY</b>							
Wildlife	Hunting	0	11	3	0	0	14
	Non Traditional take	0	2	1	0	0	3
	Traditional Take	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Unknown take type	6	22	4	0	0	32
<b>OTHER</b>							
Breach of Permit		0	0	1	0	0	1
Fishing	Collecting	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Line Fishing	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Netting	1	1	0	0	0	2
Moorings offence	Unpermitted	0	5	3	0	0	8
Unpermitted Activity	Other	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>849</b>

**Table 11** Summary of compliance actions for investigations

Action	Far Northern	Cairns – Cooktown	Townsville – Whitsunday	Mackay – Capricorn	Other	Total
Administrative action	0	0	2	0	0	2
Advisory letter (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority)	5	86	132	79	3	305
Advisory letter (State)	0	1	29	5	0	35
Ceased by Executive	0	0	1	0	0	1
Commonwealth caution notice	0	7	27	9	0	43
Infringement notice (Commonwealth)	0	5	4	7	0	16
Infringement notice (State)	0	0	13	2	0	15
Insufficient evidence	0	8	18	7	0	33
Insufficient evidence - CDPP	0	0	0	1	0	1
No further action – CDPP	0	0	1	0	0	1
No further action – other	0	34	31	19	5	89
No offence	6	40	14	2	0	62
Public education process	0	5	4	0	0	9
Recorded for information	0	2	1	1	1	5
Referred to management	0	7	3	0	0	10
Referred to other agency	0	1	3	0	0	4
State warning notice	0	0	8	27	0	35
Unable to locate offender	0	15	21	1	0	37
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>703</b>

### Improved technology for vessel monitoring

This project, which is also reported as part of *Managing illegal fishing* on page 78, is to evaluate how new technologies such as vessel tracking systems can improve compliance with zoning plans and fish habitat area provisions. Working in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, it will focus on the Coral Reef Fin Fish Fishery and the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery, the two fisheries of greatest compliance concern. So far, 20 vessel tracking systems have been installed on field management fleet, with the next stage

being to run field trials on commercial fishing vessels during 2015–16. The main aim of the field trials is to demonstrate the capacity of this technology for monitoring smaller vessels located in reef and inshore fisheries.

### Stewardship and partnership programmes

To manage the Great Barrier Reef effectively, the agency works with a range of community partners and stakeholders such as tourism and industry associations, scientists, local government and community groups. These partnerships aim to facilitate the adoption of

**Table 12** Court actions by management area during 2014–15

Activity		Far Northern		Cairns–Cooktown		Townsville–Whitsunday		Mackay–Capricorn		Other		Total	
		Number	Fines (\$)	Number	Fines (\$)	Number	Fines (\$)	Number	Fines (\$)	Number	Fines (\$)	Number	Fines (\$)
Breach of permit		1	3,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3,000
Fishing	Line Fishing	0	0	0	0	3	25,000	0	0	0	0	3	25,000
Fishing	Netting	2	5000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5000
Fishing	Unattached dory — line fishing	0	0	0	0	2	10,500	2	13,500	0	0	4	24,000
Maritime Incident	Designated shipping area breach	0	0	0	0	2	125,000	0	0	0	0	2	125,000
	Pilotage	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8,000	0	0	1	8000
Wildlife	Non Traditional Take	0	0	0	0	8	4000	0	0	0	0	8	4000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>8000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>164,500</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>194,000</b>

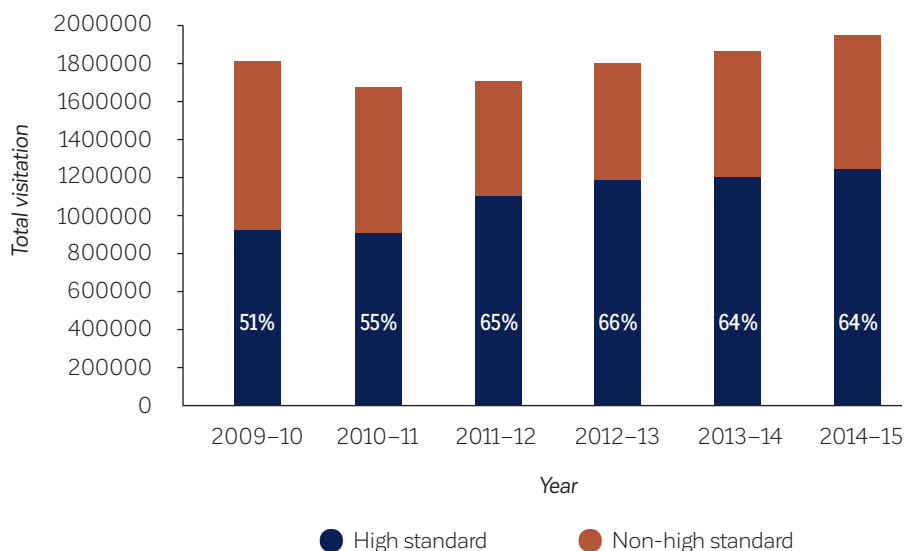
environmentally sustainable best practices and knowledge and information sharing in order to achieve critical environmental outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef.

### *High Standard Tourism programme*

During the reporting period, 64 per cent of all visitors to the Marine Park were carried by high standard tourism operators, exceeding the agency's key performance indicator by nine per cent (55 per cent). The High Standard Tourism programme continues to promote tourism operators who voluntarily operate to a higher standard than required by legislation as part of their commitment to ecologically sustainable use. These operators are independently certified with the ECO Certification programme managed by Ecotourism Australia, as meeting best practice standards for the key areas of protection, presentation and partnership. The number of high standard tourism operators

increased from 62 operators in 2013–14 to 64 operators in 2014–15.

A review of the High Standard Tourism programme has started, with Ecotourism Australia contracted to undertake 22 audits (both announced and unannounced) of high standard operators to determine the level of compliance with their ECO Certification requirements. The audit results reveal some fundamental strengths and positive experiences, however there were interpretive content and skill gaps which the agency will look to address in 2015–16. All 15 operators passed the announced audits relating to environmental, social and economic standards required of the ECO Certification programme. The seven secret shopper audits focused on minimal disturbance to wildlife, opportunities for interpretation, and credibility of information and education.



**Figure 12** Percentage of visits to the Great Barrier Reef undertaken on high standard tourism operations  
 Source: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority environmental management charge records

### Tourism Reef Advisory Committee

The Tourism Reef Advisory Committee comprises 16 members appointed for a three-year term. The members reflect the diversity of the tourism sector that is one of the biggest users of the Reef and also other stakeholders such as recreational users and Traditional Owners. The tourism industry understands the importance of a healthy and resilient Reef that their industry relies on and one of the key roles of members is to ensure tourism in the Marine Park remains ecologically sustainable.

The inaugural meeting of the current term of this advisory committee was held in Townsville on 14–15 October 2014 with Ms Glenys Schuntner appointed as Chair. The Committee provided advice on the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, the Corporate Plan and the development of regional Reef Recovery plans. Advice was also provided on tourism specific issues such as crown-of-thorns starfish control, the High Standard Tourism programme and the draft Tourism Management Strategy. The Committee endorsed the draft moorings policy prior to the Marine Park Authority board’s approval of it in December 2014.

The second meeting of the committee was held in Townsville on 30 April–1 May 2015, where a range of matters were dealt with, including:

- providing advice on the status of the tourism industry and commentary on potential amendments to the Whitsundays Plan of Management
- committing support for projects such as the pilot Reef Recovery Plan for the Mackay–Whitsundays area and the continued funding of the crown-of-thorns starfish control programme
- establishing a working group to improve industry on-ground involvement in the marine debris clean-ups in regional areas
- providing advice on Marine Park permit matters including guidelines relating to the management of bonds and pontoons
- endorsing the draft cruise ship policy for public consultation.

### Local Marine Advisory Committees

During the year, the agency’s 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees (LMACs) continued to play an influential role in Marine Park management, providing advice on a range





The inaugural meeting of the current Tourism Reef Advisory Committee was held in Townsville in October 2014. Those present included Peter Gash, Lady Elliot Island Eco Resort, Russell Reichelt, agency chair, Glenys Schuntner, committee chair, Daniel Gschwind, chief executive Queensland Tourism Industry Council and Tony Baker, Quicksilver group managing director.

**Table 13** Quantitative deliverables for the Local Marine Advisory Committees

Quantitative deliverable	2011–12 Revised budget (achievement)	2012–13 Target (achievement)	2013–14 Target (achievement)	2014–15 Target (achievement)
LMACs in place (number)	11 (11)	12 (12)	12 (12)	12 (12)
LMAC meetings held (number)	55 (55)	55 (60)	55 (60)	55 (60)

of issues. Committee members come from a wide range of backgrounds and include Traditional Owners, commercial fishers, farmers, local councillors, conservationists, tourism operators, recreational Reef users, shipping representatives and port operators. They provide a diverse range of views on policy proposals, and also communicate matters of local concern to the agency.

The Local Marine Advisory Committees are located in Cape York, Douglas, Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Hinchinbrook, Townsville,

Bowen–Burdekin, Whitsundays, Mackay, Capricorn Coast, Gladstone and Burnett.

These committees supported a wide range of projects in their communities, including:

- supporting Great Northern Clean-up annual events (Cape York)
- monitoring water quality in Dickson Inlet (Douglas)
- raising awareness about local Reef issues through media features (Cairns)



Cassowary Coast LMAC members Maurice Franklin, Cr Bill Shannon, Tony Lee and Tom Brown with one of their community projects.

- helping restore local Mission Beach wetlands (Cassowary Coast)
- production of the 'Marine Wonders of the Hinchinbrook Guide' and providing advice on transit routes in and around Hinchinbrook Island (Hinchinbrook)
- donating barotrauma kits — designed to improve survival rate of fish suffering from barotrauma by allowing pressure to be released via a needle and tubing (Townsville)
- donating funds to help local school environmental projects (Bowen–Burdekin)
- providing advice on stakeholder consultation for the review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management (Whitsundays)
- raising awareness of biodiversity at local Gooseponds community days (Mackay)
- supporting Reef Guardian Schools Future Leaders Eco Challenge events (Capricorn Coast)
- raising awareness about marine debris through a video competition (Gladstone)
- donating funds to the Bundaberg Sport Fishing Club to boost valuable fish tagging efforts (Burnett).

During 2015, a number of Local Marine Advisory Committee members were also recognised for 10 years' service including Fay Griffin from Mackay, Tony Fontes from Whitsunday, Wade Mann and Robert Frietag from Capricorn Coast, and Warwick Sheldon for involvement with both the Gladstone and Capricorn Coast Local Marine Advisory Committees.

Communiques for each meeting of the 2012–2015 Local Marine Advisory Committee term can be accessed through the agency's website. The next Local Marine Advisory Committee 2015–2018 term begins 1 July 2015.

### Community access points

Community access points are an important tool in distributing zoning information to users of the Marine Park.

During the reporting period, around 65,000 zoning maps were distributed across approximately 293 community access points along the length of the Marine Park, extending from Cape York in the north, to Mooloolaba in the south, and west to Biloela. These sites

range from visitor information centres to boat and tackle shops, dive shops, caravan parks, service stations and resorts.

With the exception of community access points in the Cape York area, all sites were serviced at least twice during the year, in the form of physical visits or phone calls. Due to their remote location, sites in the far northern section (Cape York) were serviced only once during the period.

The range of enquiries referred back to the agency included issues about water quality impacts, the Queensland Fisheries review, the traditional use of marine resources and zoning effectiveness.

### Reef Guardian programme

The Reef Guardian programme recognises the good environmental work undertaken by communities and industries to protect the Great Barrier Reef. It involves working closely with those who use and rely on the Reef and its catchment for their recreation or business to help build a healthier and more resilient Reef.

### Reef Guardian Councils

Over the past year, Reef Guardian Councils have been busy identifying and highlighting a range of new measures to help protect the Reef.

Following local government de-amalgamations, Douglas Shire, Mareeba Shire and Whitsunday Regional Council joined the Reef Guardian Council programme during the reporting period.

A supporting suite of marketing and communication tools has been rolled out to councils, successfully creating greater awareness of the programme and generating additional interest in the range of Reef-

friendly activities being undertaken at the local government level.

The Reef Guardian Council Action Plans and Milestone Reports have been redesigned to make them easier to read and councils are promoting them on their websites, providing additional transparency and an incentive for continuous improvement.

Highlights from some of these action plans include coastal erosion mitigation projects, participation in National Recycling Week, water sensitive urban design, a junior rangers programme, and a trial to ban plastic bags.

Following the release of the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* in March 2015, work has also begun to align council actions with those identified in the plan. The *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, a partnership between the Australian and Queensland governments and key stakeholders, focuses on strategies and management practices to ensure the Reef's outstanding universal value is retained. Linking the actions of Reef Guardian Councils to this outcome reinforces the important role that communities play in improving the health of the Reef.

Two working group and two steering committee meetings were held during the year, an increase on the previous year. This provided additional opportunities for engagement, with feedback supporting the hands-on involvement of the councils in driving continuous improvements to the Reef Guardian Council programme.

### Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers

Twenty-nine farmers and graziers spanning sugar, banana, horticulture and beef industries across the Reef catchment are recognised for their long-term love of the land and desire that future generations have and enjoy healthy

**Table 14** Quantitative deliverables for Reef Guardian Councils

Quantitative deliverable	2011–12 Revised budget (achievement)	2012–13 Target (achievement)	2013–14 Target (achievement)	2014–15 Target (achievement)
Reef Guardian Councils (number)	14 (13)	15 (13)	15 (15)	16 (17)

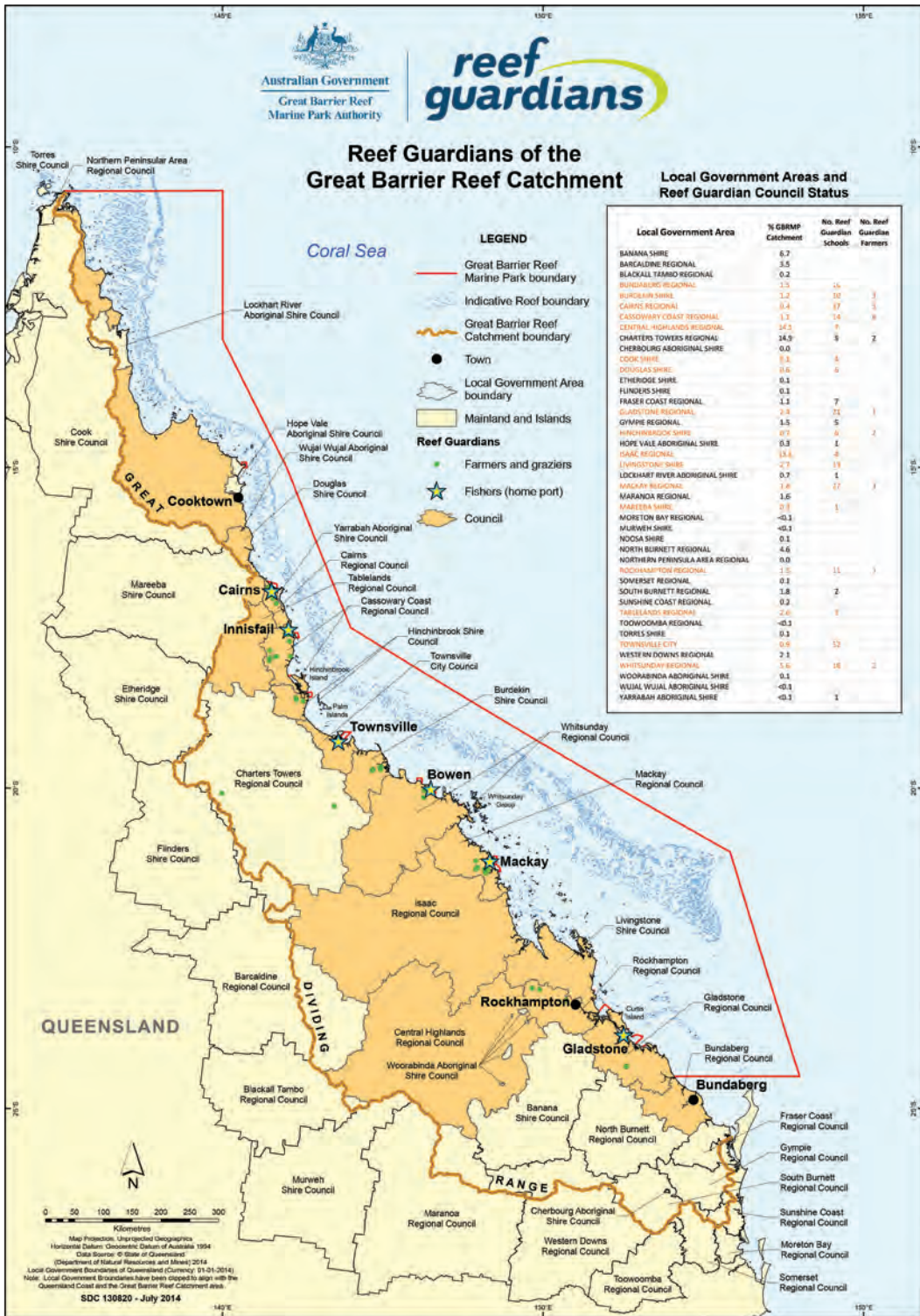


Figure 13 Locations of Reef Guardian Councils across the state.

**Table 15** Number of Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers

Deliverable	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
Number of participating farmers and graziers	17	19	25	29

farms, catchments, rivers and the Reef. This is reflected in the continual improvement of:

- soil health
- water quality and use efficiency
- biodiversity and ecosystem health
- management of waste and farming by-products
- energy use efficiency
- business resilience
- social responsibility.

In 2014–15 the Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers programme expanded in clusters around pilot participants in the Tully–Innisfail, Burdekin and Rockhampton areas. Ten farmers and graziers are engaged in the process to be recognised as Reef Guardians. There is strong interest in the programme in the Mackay area and in the Lakeland agricultural area, which will be the next areas for expansion.

The processes for identifying and evaluating potential Reef Guardian Farmers are being continually improved as the programme evolves. Ongoing engagement with participants is being adaptively managed to optimise value from the programme for participants and the agency.

The programme supports Reef Guardians Farmers continual improvement with opportunities to participate in activities that help improve their business, water quality and coastal ecosystems that influence the health of the Reef. Through these activities the Reef Guardians hope to foster environmental stewardship within agriculture and the wider community by:

- sharing their knowledge and experience to help others
- encouraging other farmers to adopt practices that are good for their catchment, industry and the Reef
- raising awareness about the good practice

and continuous improvement that farmers are doing

- building understanding in the community about the role farmers play in caring for the land.

### *Reef Guardian Graziers support Beef 2015*

About 85,000 people visited Beef 2015 in Rockhampton held from 4–9 May 2015, including 1,000 international delegates from 55 countries, mostly China and Indonesia.

Reef Guardian Graziers Jeff and Karen Mills hosted a property tour featuring best practice pasture management. About 55 people from Australia, New Zealand and China saw and heard about Jeff and Karen’s environmental stewardship reflected in the grazing and environmental management practices on their station, ‘Melrose’.

Richard Moffatt, another Reef Guardian Grazier, was a panellist in the NextGen ‘Get your hoof in the door’ forum, specifically designed to help 18–35 year-olds confront the many issues facing young people in Australia’s beef industry. Richard told the audience that ‘we’re in the land business’, and explained that he and wife Victoria’s vision for their future is associated with healthy land.

The agency shared a site at the expo with Fitzroy Basin Association and other partners. The event was an opportunity for stakeholders to present a coordinated message about catchments that flow to the Reef. Nearly 1,000 people spoke to staff at the booth, which also featured a coral tank and live animals. The site also hosted 24 school groups for tailored education sessions.

### **Reef Guardian Fishers**

The Reef Guardian Fishers programme has expanded to include six reef line fishing operations of up to 59 vessels including primary vessels and dories from ports including Gladstone, Bowen, Innisfail and Cooktown.

There are also three mixed diversified fishing operations, four marine aquarium fish and coral collecting operations, three (predominantly) large mesh net fishing operations and a trawl fisher. This means that coverage of the full suite and geographical range of the major fishing operations occurring in the Marine Park has now been achieved.

During the reporting period, amendments to Fisheries Queensland policy for management of the coral collection fishery (Queensland Coral Fishery) were drafted. These amendments occurred as a result of an earlier ecological risk assessment of the fishery, and aim to ensure the fishery maintains approval to export coral species listed on the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species, as well as mitigating sustainability risks to collected coral species. The amendments are expected to come into effect on 1 July 2015.

The evaluation of three predominantly large mesh net fishers in the diverse multi-species inshore net fishery has enabled work to start on developing relevant operational standards and protocols to address ecological risk. This supports work started by a former multi-agency protected species working group disbanded following structural changes to Fisheries Queensland. Reef Guardians who are also large mesh net fishers have, as part of their action plan, committed to operational best practice to reduce risk and resource user conflict in this fishery.

One of the highlights during the reporting period has been the first commercial trawl fisher joining the Reef Guardian programme in February 2015. More details can be found as part of the case study on page 95. Reef Guardian fishers seek to encourage others in the industry to adopt high environmental operating standards as part of their core fishing practices and by so doing give recognition of the need to fish for the future.

Due to a change in government and the pending policy response to the MRAG Asia Pacific Review of Queensland Fisheries Management, the Reef Guardian Fishers programme remains in a pilot phase, until these structural issues are finalised.

### Reef Guardian Schools

The Reef Guardian Schools programme aims to guide and influence everyday actions and decisions in the community in a way that will help to ensure long-term environmental benefits. This place-based education programme seeks to support communities by empowering students and school staff in addressing environmental issues at a community level.

The Reef Guardian Schools on-ground actions are reflected in the Corporate Plan and aim to strengthen engagement by supporting best practice and stewardship, including implementing education and community awareness programmes to inform the broader community about the Reef and its protection and management.

As part of the programme, the Reef Guardian Annual Awards and Ripples of Change funding grants are presented each year to recognise outstanding Reef Guardian School stewardship activities. By funding small projects at a school level the programme aims to encourage small scale citizen science projects with local partners such as councils and natural resource management agencies. The winners of the 2014–15 awards were chosen on their project's ability to link with the Strategic Assessment Report and address key threats to the Reef as outlined in the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*.

During the reporting period, 18 Reef Guardian Schools Future Leader Eco Challenge (FLEC) events were held in regional locations from Cape York to Brisbane. More than 1110 students and 170 teachers from 115 schools

**Table 16** Number of Reef Guardian Fishers

Deliverable	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
Number of participating fishers	7	11	12	17

**Table 17** Number of Reef Guardian Schools

Deliverable	2012–13 Target (Achievement)	2013–14 Target (Achievement)	2014–15 Target (Achievement)
Student participants in the Reef Guardian schools programme	110,000 (114,900)	111,000 (126,000)	112,000 (127,448)
Quantifiable key performance indicator: Number of Reef Guardian schools	205 (293)	210 (308)	250 (310)

participated in the events. More than 140 people from 76 partner organisations supported the Future Leaders Eco Challenge events either through activities, resourcing or providing expert skills and knowledge.

Activities undertaken as part of the challenge included tree planting, marine debris clean-ups, exploring turtle habitats in Keppel Bay, beach revegetation, sustainable farming techniques, touring local wetlands, identifying pest fish and fish adaptations, mangrove identification, fish passageway assessments, water quality

monitoring, fish tagging, identifying and removing waterway weeds, crown-of-thorns starfish workshops, soil testing, composting and understanding climate change.

Students and teachers learnt valuable skills that can be used in furthering their Reef Guardian stewardship activities in local communities. The support of local partners demonstrates that a practical, locally-based approach to Reef protection activities is crucial to the success of grassroots projects and activities such as these.



*The Reef Guardian Schools programme is now in its 13th year and involves more than 127,000 students from 310 schools across Queensland.*

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The 2015 Reef Guardian networking meetings were held during March and April 2015 in 11 regional locations from Bundaberg to Cairns. From 106 Reef Guardian Schools, 193 teachers participated in planning future projects with 137 partners from 100 environmental organisations. This year's networking meetings looked at the 'Five key threats to the Great Barrier Reef' with a special focus on marine debris.

The Reef Guardian Schools programme is in its 13th year in 2015, and now involves more than 127,000 students in 310 schools across Queensland. Reef Guardian Schools are *working together today, for a healthier Reef tomorrow.*

### **Eye on the Reef programme**

Eye on the Reef is an environmental monitoring, education and stewardship programme run in partnership with scientists, the tourism industry, Marine Park rangers and other Reef users.

The programme began in 1997 as a set of observations collected by tourism operators and has since expanded to include a number of monitoring tools that collect different types of information on reef health, species and incidents. The information is combined in an integrated data management system to provide an up-to-date picture of reef health and the distribution of marine species.

The different monitoring tools are designed to suit people from all walks of life, with various levels of reef monitoring experience. They include Tourism Weekly Monitoring, Reef Health and Impact Surveys, Rapid Monitoring and Sightings network.

During the reporting period, the agency received more than 4500 surveys from almost 223 reefs in the Marine Park. Along with reef health surveys, the agency received 7296 sightings through the smartphone app and sightings forms.

The Eye on the Reef programme is now recognised on a national and international scale and many countries have started modifying it to suit their local reef area. An example of this is Reunion Island (French territory) and, more recently, the islands of the Caribbean.

### **In-water training days**

During the second half of the reporting period, the agency conducted annual in-water training days for tourism operators and the joint field management programme, with 60 Marine Park rangers and tourism crew trained in reef health monitoring. Training events were conducted in key tourism areas of Cairns, Port Douglas and the Whitsundays along with training in the southern area of the Reef to continue a monitoring and incident response presence centred on the tourism staff at Lady Elliot Island.

### **Tourism Weekly Monitoring**

Participation in the Tourism Weekly Monitoring programme was highlighted with a series of videos featuring high achieving tourism staff. The videos released on the agency's YouTube channel and shared on social media showcase how participants have progressed into different survey tools after commencing the Tourism Weekly programme.

About 50 tourism crew on 16 operators are participating in the programme, monitoring sites on up to 25 reefs on a regular basis and submitting sightings of protected and iconic species from more than 160 reefs through the Sightings and Rapid Monitoring programmes. Over the last financial year, the number of participants has increased from around 323 to more than 350.

### **Data uses**

For some time the agency has used the data collected through Eye on the Reef to inform Reef Health Incident Response, resilience mapping and water quality. This data is now being used by researchers from the Australian Institute of Marine Science, James Cook University, University of Queensland and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre to inform protected species abundance and distribution, crown-of-thorns starfish impact and density analysis, and current Reef health.

Various functionality including specific reporting ability and data visualisation outputs continue to be developed for the Eye on the Reef system in response to adaptive management needs.





The agency welcomed the first trawl fisher, Neil Mogensen, to the Reef Guardian Fisher programme in February 2015.

## REEF GUARDIANS WELCOME FIRST TRAWL FISHER

The Reef Guardian Fishers programme continued to expand in 2014–15, recognising new operators from a variety of fishing industries for their commitment to delivering best fishing practices that help protect the marine environment and ensure sustainable fish stocks throughout the Reef.

In February 2015, Townsville local Neil Mogensen became the first commercial trawl industry member to join the Reef Guardian programme. Neil is a second generation commercial fisherman who began working in the industry in 1998.

Agency Chairman Dr Russell Reichelt said it was an important step to recognise those commercial trawl fishers who are operating at the highest environmental standard in the Reef and encourage others in the industry to adopt similar core operational fishing practices.

“Mr Mogensen’s actions and attitude towards sustainable fishing and the need to fish for the future lead the way for others in the trawl industry,” Dr Reichelt said.

Among his Reef-friendly practices are crew inductions including species identification, information on Marine Park rules and zones and daily briefings on green zone locations and fishing plans. Fishing is also spread to

reduce risk of overfishing. His use of larger than standard turtle excluders and two types of appropriately rigged bycatch reduction devices, coupled with more frequent net retrieval improves catch quality, reduces bycatch and improves bycatch release conditions.

According to Neil, he is in the fishery for the long haul.

“My inclusion in the programme is recognition by the agency that I am fishing for the future, and that good fishing practices can also be good environmental practices,” Neil said.

The inclusion of a trawl fisher means the full suite of major commercial fisheries operating in the Marine Park are represented in the programme, including Reef line fishery, marine aquarium fish and coral collection, large mesh gill net fishery and trawl.

Participants set robust voluntary protocols for their operations, develop innovative practices to minimise impacts on the environment and actively share knowledge with other fishers and their communities. Participants also report back to the agency on the health of the marine environment including coral damage, and sightings of rare or unusual species.



*Eye on the Reef underwater identification cards. More than 400 people have completed online training courses and contribute survey data to the Eye on the Reef programme.*

### Smartphone app

The Eye on the Reef smartphone app launched in June 2013 provides a tool for Reef visitors and users to send in real-time sightings of marine animals. The app enables anyone with a smartphone to send photos, video recordings and observations of marine animals to the agency, while also sharing these sightings on Facebook.

There have been 630 registrations of the free app since its release, with new participants signing up daily.

While most sighting reports continue to be submitted through paper forms, a growing number of regular Reef users are submitting observations through the smartphone app. During the reporting period, the agency received 829 observations through the app—a figure expected to grow as the app continues to be promoted.

### Online training

Eye on the Reef online training packages for all three survey tools in the programme have been completed, enabling interested people to do a course relevant to their training, experience and

backgrounds. All courses have been developed by experts in the field of reef health assessment and cover biology and ecology, coral impacts, best environmental practice on coral reefs and how to provide valuable monitoring data to the agency.

More than 400 people have completed the online training courses and now actively contribute by providing survey data. Feedback has been consistently positive.

Work began on creating the online version of the Reef Discovery course in May 2015 that aims to align and standardise the knowledge and interpretive skills of the entire Reef tourism industry. Based on a module approach, the course provides participants with a core understanding of concepts and expands into detailed knowledge on the full range of environmental, cultural and historical best practice.

### Recreational fishing

The agency was active at major marine and fisheries public shows and events promoting Reef values and the importance of stewardship and best practice. These events also provided

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an opportunity to highlight the importance of zoning plans and compliance, as well as promoting the work being done with Field Management partners to protect the Reef and manage the Marine Park as a multiple use area.

The Reef Ranger, Field Management's newest long-range patrol vessel, was opened to the public at the Gold Coast International Marine Expo in May 2015, highlighting the programme's diverse work and the vessel's increased capacity and remote area capability.

## Reef HQ Aquarium

By providing educational and informational services relating to the Marine Park, Reef HQ Aquarium ensures the community and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the value of the Reef, the threats to its sustainable future and their role in protecting it. This is done by providing world-class living exhibits complemented by thematic and interactive educational experiences, which raises awareness and encourages behavioural change that will help protect the Reef.

The net cost of operating the Reef HQ Aquarium is offset from the agency's budget (approximately \$1 million annually). The aquarium recovers approximately 70 per cent of its annual operational costs through revenue generation including admission sales, education programmes, a membership programme, and functions and events held at the Reef HQ Aquarium. This is quite exceptional for a Commonwealth facility, taking into account its public communication and education role. A small increase to general admission prices of \$1.50 per person was made on 1 July 2014 to generate additional revenue and maintain cost recovery at approximately 70 per cent. Since the last admission price increase in 2011–2012, Reef HQ Aquarium has invested significant funds into infrastructure, exhibitions and product offerings, increasing the value for money offered to visitors. Market research has shown Reef HQ Aquarium is relatively inexpensive compared to other activity options in the region, as well as other aquariums in the state and country. Reef HQ Aquarium has been absorbing ongoing increases in operational costs such as electricity, property rates, salaries and other general service delivery costs.

## Reef videoconferencing

The Reef HQ Aquarium videoconferencing programme continues to grow and is recognised nationally and internationally as an example of a best practice outreach education and content delivery. This cutting edge technology enables a living reef to be taken virtually into classrooms around Australia and the world with live content delivered by a scuba diver. In the past five years, reef videoconferences have been streamed live into over 700 locations nationally and internationally, directly engaging with more than 60,000 people. Reef videoconferencing technology was used to bring a living example of a coral reef to the World Parks Congress in Sydney in November 2014. A live cross from Reef HQ Aquarium was used to support the opening plenary address made by Julia Marton-Lefèvre — Director General IUCN and Ernesto Enkerlin — Head of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas with 4,800 delegates from more than 170 countries in attendance.

Reef HQ Aquarium was again a recipient of a Centre for Interactive Learning Collaborations, Pinnacle Award during 2014–2015. This is the sixth consecutive year that Reef HQ Aquarium's outreach education programme Reef videoconferencing has received this award. The award is presented annually and based on teacher evaluations submitted from across Canada and the United States of America and recognises outstanding performance by an educational content provider.

## Visitors to Reef HQ Aquarium

More than 70 per cent of people (93,782 visitors) who visited the Reef HQ Aquarium during 2014–2015 took part in a formal talk and/or tour which raised awareness and encourages behavioural change and uptake of best practice and stewardship that contribute to the health and resilience of the Marine Park. This is above the 63 per cent key performance target.

## Turtle hospital

The Reef HQ Aquarium turtle hospital continues to be highly successful. It operates under and promotes the C.A.R.E (Conserve. Act. Rehabilitate. Educate) philosophy, and plays a key role in raising community awareness



*More than 29,800 people participated in the turtle hospital tour during the reporting period.*

about threatened species and encouraging behavioural change that will benefit these animals.

More than 29,800 people participated in the turtle hospital tour during 2014–2015. Since opening in 2009, more than 150,000 people have done the tour.

More than 190 marine turtles have received care at the hospital since it opened in August 2009. As at 30 June 2015, the hospital had six turtles in care (green, hawksbill and flatback species), and five turtles have been released after being rehabilitated.

Reef HQ Aquarium consistently meets visitor expectations and maintains good visitation numbers thanks to a high quality product and well-targeted marketing and public relations strategies. This is despite a decline in 2015 regional visitation figures for Townsville (Tourism and Events Queensland).

The aquarium surpassed its 2014–15 visitation target of 120,000 by 11 per cent. Reef HQ Aquarium received 133,400 visitors during 2014–2015, which is three per cent down on 2013–2014.

A world-class suite of Reef education programmes are delivered to students across all stages of learning, including early childhood through to tertiary level. During 2014–2015, formal Reef education programmes were delivered to about 10,800 students, 19 per cent up on 2013–2014.

In addition to formal education programmes Reef HQ Aquarium's marketing and public relations programme activations have reached an audience of almost 8.8 million people during 2014–2015, shining a positive light on Reef HQ Aquarium, North Queensland and the Great Barrier Reef, in particular, how people can help to protect and conserve the Reef.



*More than 70 per cent of visitors to Reef HQ Aquarium participated in a formal tour or talk during the reporting period.*

## EDUCATION CENTRE BOOSTS UNDERSTANDING OF THE REEF

More than 71 per cent of visitors to Reef HQ Aquarium say a visit to the centre has given them a better understanding of how they can help protect the Great Barrier Reef, according to a satisfaction survey.

In 2014–15 a total of 2,164 people voluntarily took the iPad-based survey during their visit to the national education centre in Townsville.

The survey results also reveal that 72 per cent of visitors believe they have an improved understanding of Reef issues because of their trip to the facility.

Reef HQ Aquarium is the world's largest living coral reef aquarium, and a major tourism attraction for North Queensland.

Its primary role is to ensure the community and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the value of the Great Barrier Reef, the threats to its sustainable future and their role in protecting it.

World-class living exhibits, complemented by thematic and interactive educational experiences, help raise awareness and encourage behavioural change within the community.

Visitors are also offered daily tours to the centre's turtle hospital.

More than 70 per cent of people who visited the aquarium in 2014–15 took part in a formal talk or tour of the centre (93,782 visitors).

The positive results from the survey were complemented by an increase in the number of students who received formal Reef education programmes.

Reef HQ Aquarium received 133,405 visitors from July 2014 to 30 June 2015, achieving its target of 120,000 visitors for the year.

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## Promoting the Reef's values

The communications and parliamentary section supports the agency's core objectives by providing strategic communications advice and planning, event management, media and issues management, maintaining digital communicating channels, and liaising with the Minister's office and the Department of Environment. The section also oversees the production and distribution of key publications, including a regular internal newsletter and monthly e-newsletter

## Parliamentary services

The Federal Environment Minister and Department of the Environment are key stakeholders. The agency maintains strong relationships with each by providing formal briefings, responses to correspondence and advice.

During 2014–15 the agency prepared 76 briefs and submissions for the Minister. Topics included dredging in the Marine Park, special management areas, the *Reef Ranger* launch, *Shen Neng 1* grounding, the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014* and the Dredge Synthesis report. Many of the briefs were to support the Minister at meetings with people interested in the health and management of the Reef. The agency provided draft responses for 117 letters to the Minister from people interested in shipping, dredging and developments in the Marine Park, and concern about the management of the Reef following the World Heritage Committee's consideration of listing the Marine Park as World Heritage In Danger.

The agency works with the Department of the Environment and regularly contributes to portfolio responses, questions on notice and related matters. Over 2014–15, the agency provided responses to 234 questions on notice from the Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications and the Senate Budget Estimates Committee. These related to matters specific to the agency, as well as portfolio-wide issues. The agency contributed to 217 coordination requests from the Department of the Environment, including responses to requests from other government departments for input.

The agency also supported the Minister's Office and the Department for the development and launch of the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* (see page 46 for more information).

## Communications plan

All major activities and programmes undertaken by the agency are supported by a communication strategy that outlines objectives, audiences, channels and tactics. The strategy provides a strategic and coordinated approach to communicating the work being undertaken to protect the Marine Park. Core activities include communication management and planning, digital communications, media and issues management and publications.

## Corporate communications strategy

The corporate communication strategy provides a high-level framework to support the implementation of the Corporate Plan, which outlines the key priorities and focus for the next five years. The communication strategy's objective is to *build confidence that the Great Barrier Reef is in good hands, and to strengthen partnerships that contribute to boosting the health of the Reef*. It outlines tools and channels to strengthen the agency's 'brand,' raise its profile and best practice management of the Reef, manage issues, reach decision makers, communicate internally and work with partners. Specific communication plans for major programmes and activities fall under this overarching plan.

## Major reports released

In 2014–15, the agency released two major reports — the Outlook Report 2014 and the strategic assessment. Combined, these are the largest and most up-to-date reports about the Reef health and its management.

A communication plan was in place for the release of each report, outlining the combination of tools and channels to promote these reports. Summary documents of each report, news releases, social media content, web content and online videos were among the materials produced. Further details about the Outlook Report can be found in the case study on page 65.

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The agency also provided significant support for the production and launch of the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*, which is reported in further detail in the case study on page 47.

### **Reef in Brief newsletter**

More than 1200 subscribers receive the agency's primary stakeholder e-newsletter, *Reef in Brief*. It summarises hot topics, key work, programs and achievements. In 2014–15, the e-newsletter was moved to a new platform and a new design was applied, enabling greater functionality as well as customising the design and distribution.

Twelve editions were distributed in 2014–15. Topics included Reef conditions, sightings of the month, mooring updates, stakeholder engagement, major reports, tropical cyclone Marcia, Eye on the Reef, compliance, dredge synthesis report, historic heritage, research and events.

### **Digital communications**

The agency's 2014–15 digital communication strategy outlines how the agency will further develop and expand its online and social media channels to position the agency as a leader in government online communications. In 2014–15 there was a focus on specific activities and projects to improve the agency's online presence. This included content and navigation improvements, updates to the content management system, expanding social media, producing new and innovative content and scoping the development of a smartphone application.

### **Website**

A year-by-year project plan outlines how the agency's external website will be maintained, developed and enhanced. Key aspects of the strategy include:

- modifying the home page to include improved navigation and features
- the use of online flip books for major reports
- developing new banners to promote key content
- updated colour scheme for menu items and new Reef imagery
- embedding an image gallery on pages to

showcase more Reef pictures

- amending the site's information architecture on the menu items.

The website continues to receive a high amount of traffic—over 768,000 visits over the last 12 months, which is an increase of over 10 per cent from the previous year. Users spend an average of three minutes on the site. The most popular content is pages on Reef facts, zoning maps, animals, management, crown-of-thorns starfish and climate change.

There continues to be an increase of users accessing the website from a mobile device, with over 173,300 sessions occurring on mobile devices.

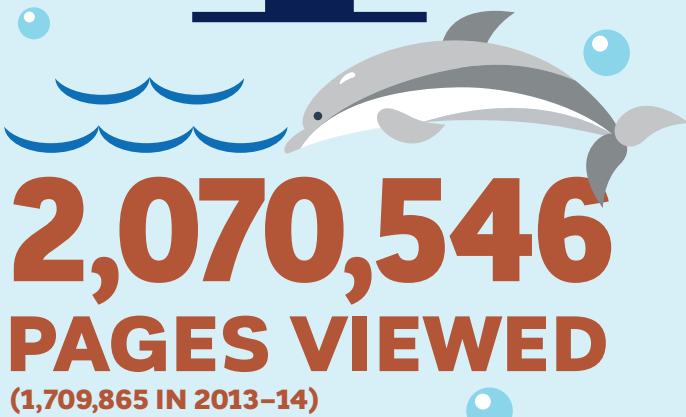
Accessibility continues to be a key focus, addressing whole-of-government reporting requirements. These requirements seek to ensure everyone, regardless of location or ability, can access government materials online.

### **Social media**

The agency runs six social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, a YouTube Channel and Instagram. These contemporary online communication tools are key channels for the agency to promote its work and raise awareness about the Reef to a wide audience in Australia and around the world. The social media platforms are also a great two-way communication channel with key audiences.

The agency's Facebook page began in 2011 to create an online community of people who care about the Reef. Several posts are made each week drawing from news releases, corporate content, interesting facts, images and videos. In 2014–15, engagement reached a milestone of 34,000 followers. Interaction is highest for content that is visual and informative. For example, a short video of mermaids swimming at Reef HQ Aquarium reached over 31,000 people, a rare sighting of whale sharks in the Marine Park reached over 47,000 people and a series of underwater photos posted for World Environment Day reached over 18,000 people.

The agency's YouTube channel includes 22 playlists and 149 videos about Reef management, plants, animals and habitats. In 2014–15, 28 new videos were added about the Eye on the Reef training programme, the



**LINKEDIN: 186 FOLLOWERS**



**YOU TUBE** 186 SUBSCRIBERS AND  
44,892 VIDEO VIEWS TO-DATE  
(139 SUBSCRIBERS AND 28,036 VIDEO VIEWS IN 2013-14)



Figure 14 Web and social media statistics for 2014-15



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crown-of-thorns starfish programme, historic heritage and marine life videos including footage of an extremely rare whale shark aggregation. Videos about the Outlook Report and lighthouse keepers attracted more than 1000 views. Two videos were also picked up by ABC Open, ABC's online story sharing platform. This broadened the reach on these videos and provided opportunities through cross promotion in the media and other channels.

Twitter is used to promote news from the agency. Other information, photos and stories about the Marine Park are also tweeted. In 2014–15 there were more than 1770 followers.

As part of the 2014–15 digital communications strategy, LinkedIn was added to the agency's suite of social media channels as a professional, stakeholder-focused social network to share corporate information, including reports, consultation, key events, and recruitment. Currently there are more than 180 followers. Engagement was highest on posts about career opportunities and participation at events, such as the first TEDx event in Townsville.

The agency implemented photo sharing through Flickr to provide a platform for photo albums to be integrated into the website. This platform was under development in 2014–15 and by the end of the reporting period, Instagram was being used to promote the Reef's visual beauty and diversity.

### **Media and issues management**

A range of media organisations — from regional media to international film crews — are interested in the Reef and contact the agency for information or interviews.

Over 2014–15, the agency distributed 78 news releases to local, state and national media. About 90 per cent of these resulted in at least one news story. Popular topics included Reef Guardian events, studies about the crown-of-thorns starfish and post-cyclone Yasi recovery, the Reef HQ Aquarium turtle hospital, and whale migration season.

Among the most significant media coverage about the Reef was ABC1's three-part observational documentary, *Life on the Reef*. Filmed over a year, it told the story of the people who live and work near the Reef. Considerable

assistance was provided through information, interviews and logistics. The *Life on the Reef* documentary is further reported in the case study on page 104.

The agency also participated in a monthly interview segment with ABC Radio in Townsville, featuring experts discussing Reef issues in detail. During 2014–15, topics included the history of Raine Island, training for Indigenous rangers, the search for shipwrecks, and coral propagation at Reef HQ Aquarium.

### **Public information unit**

Information on Reef management is distributed by the public information unit to stakeholders, community members, school students and a range of other locations and events. The public information unit is often the first point of contact stakeholders have with the organisation, either by phone, email or visiting head office.

Over 2014–15, the public information unit answered 16,190 phone calls on a range of topics, including enquiries about permits and environmental management charges and requests for publications about the Reef. Some 6140 emails were received, including orders for zoning maps and information requests from students. More than 4800 customers presented to the front office counter at the Townsville headquarters. The agency distributed 125,395 zoning maps, which show what activities can take place where in the Marine Park. These were supplied to community access points — a network of bait and tackle shops and other locations along the coast that distribute material — and to recreational users who requested maps.

### **Community events**

The agency took part in a number of key community events throughout the year, ranging from boating and fishing shows to corporate events. These provide good opportunities to share information about Reef health, management and zoning, and engagement with people interested in the Reef.

Events at which the agency had a booth or presence included:

- Townsville Fishing and Outdoor Expo, 23–24 May 2015

## FILM PROJECT TURNS LOUNGE ROOMS INTO UNDERWATER OBSERVATORIES

A three-part series capturing life on the Reef turned lounge rooms across the country into virtual underwater observatories.

Produced by Sydney-based production company Northern Pictures, *Life on the Reef* aired on ABC1 and iView in March 2015. The first episode attracted 726,000 metro viewers, the ninth highest for the night overall.

Filmed over a year, the observational documentary combined spectacular underwater images with the stories of people who live near and work on the Reef, including Traditional Owners, reef managers, scientists, and reef industries

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority wildlife biologist Mark Read was among those featured, highlighting his time on Raine Island, the largest green turtle rookery in the world.

Green turtles have been nesting at Raine Island for over 1000 years. It's also home to amazing bird life, with 84 species recorded on the island.

According to Mark, who has been working on the island in various capacities for 25 years, highly protected Raine Island is one of the jewels in the crown of the Reef.

“Putting Raine Island in the spotlight highlighted this special location and the challenges facing the island as one of the world’s turtle rookeries,” he said.

“On-ground work by dedicated park managers, researchers and Traditional Owners has reduced mortality and improved nesting and hatching success of the green turtles that nest there.

“*Life on the Reef* shows how this group of people have been able to put management practices into place to give the green turtles nesting at Raine Island the best chance of success.

“Installing fencing around the cliffs to stop turtles toppling over and dying are some of the simple management actions we’re taking

to reduce the threats to nesting green turtles.

“In one area, we reduced the mortality of turtles toppling over the cliffs from 60 per season to just two by installing the fencing.

“It is our preparedness to intervene and be innovative at places like Raine Island that the *Life on the Reef* series highlights.”

Our work detecting illegal fishing was also showcased in the documentary, with the series director accompanying field staff on a patrol in the northern section of the Marine Park.



The agency's Mark Read featured in the Australian-produced observational documentary, *Life on the Reef*, which aired on the ABC in March 2015.

- Townsville Defence Expo
- Boyne Tannum HookUp, 5–7 June 2014
- Gladstone Ecofest, 31 May 2015
- TEDx Townsville, 30 May 2015
- G20 finance meeting, Cairns, 20–21 September 2014
- Sea Safe Sunday, Townsville, 19 April 2015
- Mackay Boat Show, 13–14 June 2015
- Bundaberg Lighthouse Festival, 25 October 2014
- Kinka Wetlands Discovery Day, 18 May 2015
- Beef Australia 2015, 4–9 May, 2015
- Kurrimine Beach Fishing Competition, 20–21 September 2014
- Cairns Home Show and Caravan, Camping and Boating Expo, 15–17 May, 2015
- Cairns Envirofiesta, 31 May 2015
- Innisfail Eco Expo, 6 June 2015
- St Lawrence Wetlands Discovery Day, 8–9 May 2015
- Bluewater Ecofest, 5 October 2014
- Centenary of Parks Celebrations, Cape Hillsborough
- River to Reef Festival Mackay, 6 October 2014
- Moranbah Home Show, 8 October, 2014
- Reef Festival Airlie Beach, 1–8 August 2014
- Seaforth Community Day, 29 June 2014
- Start the Switch Mackay, 4–5 March 2015
- Beach Clean-ups in Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions, 23–24 May 2015
- Gold Coast Marine Expo, 23–24 May 2015
- Tackle and Tinny Show Manly, 6–8 March 2015.

## Internal communications

The agency established a draft framework for internal communication, including strategies to ensure the flow of information between sections. An electronic internal newsletter is produced, with 24 editions distributed in 2014–15. It focused on providing updates from the executive and information for staff relevant to their work.

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## SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR OBJECTIVE 3

- *Outlook Report 2014* published, the second in a five year series, providing an overview of the Reef's health, use and management, and long term outlook.
- Regulator Performance Framework developed to allow the agency to self-assess its annual performance.
- Work commenced on a five year project to enhance the permissions system.
- Amendments were made to the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* to:
  - ban the disposal of capital dredge material in the Marine Park
  - create two Special Management Areas to protect two Royal Australian Air Force Second World War Catalina plane wrecks in the Marine Park
  - increase ability to take enforcement action against commercial fishers who breach conditions in the Conservation Park Zone
  - provide additional protection for dugong and turtle populations from threats of poaching, illegal trade and illegal transportation.
- First phase of development of a single Marine Park Tourism Permit completed, with a trial about to start with commercial activity permit holders.
- Specialised field reporting software developed and incorporated into existing systems to improve data collection and increase efficiencies.
- 36 Field Management staff participated in a joint Field Management Foundation programme in December 2014 and March 2015.
- New vessel tracking technology successfully trialled on field management fleet.
- Number of high standard tourism operators increased from 62 to 64, with 64 per cent of all visitors to the Marine Park carried by high standard tourism operators.
- Local Marine Advisory Committees played an instrumental role in providing hands-on guidance and management advice to communities who live alongside the Marine Park.
- Reef Guardian Fishers programme expands to cover all major fishing operations, and the first trawl fisher joins the programme.
- Reef Guardian Schools programme continues to grow, now involving more than 127,000 students across 310 schools in Queensland.
- More than 4500 Eye on the Reef surveys received.
- 60 rangers and tourism crew trained in Reef health monitoring as part of in-water training days.
- Reef HQ Aquarium received 133,405 visitors during the year, an 11 per cent increase on previous year.
- More than 70 per cent of visitors reported that the visit gave them a better understanding of how they can help protect the Reef.
- 78 media releases issued.
- 16,190 phone calls were answered.
- 125,395 zoning maps were distributed.

**Table 18** Quantitative deliverables – targets and achievements since 2012–13

Deliverable	2012–13 Target (achievement)	2013–14 Target (achievement)	2014–15 Target (achievement)
Number of reef health impact surveys achieved	620 (1169)	620 (1954)	(620) 1714
Number of Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements or Indigenous Land Use Agreements in place	7 (8)	6 (7)	(8) 8
Number of permits issued	650 (552)	650 (449)	650 (332)
Number of Reef Guardians schools	205 (293)	210 (308)	250 (310)
Number of Reef HQ Aquarium visitors	118,000 (141,417)	120,000 (137,375)	122,000 (133,400)

**Table 19** Quantitative key performance indicators since 2012–13

Key performance indicators	2012–13 Target (achievement)	2013–14 Target (achievement)	2014–15 Target (achievement)
Number of reef health impact surveys achieved	620 (1169)	620 (1954)	(620) 1714
Number of Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements or Indigenous Land Use Agreements in place	7 (8)	6 (7)	(8) 8
Number of permits issued	650 (552)	650 (449)	650 (332)
Number of Reef Guardians schools	205 (293)	210 (308)	250 (310)
Number of Reef HQ Aquarium visitors	118,000 (141,417)	120,000 (137,375)	122,000 (133,400)
Percentage of the Marine Park managed in accordance with an accredited Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement of Indigenous Land Use Agreement	18 (24)	18 (24.6)	23 (24.6)
Percentage of visitors to the Reef using tourism operators accredited as High Standard Operator	50 (>65)	50 (64)	55 (64)
Student participants within the Reef Guardian Schools Programme	110,000 (114,900)	111,000 (126,000)	112,000 (127,448)
Percentage of visitors to Reef HQ that participate in talks and tours that deliver key messages about risks to the Reef	63 (73)	63 (71)	63 (70)



# MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's governance framework for the 2014–2015 reporting period was based on the legislative requirements of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the *Public Service Act 1999*.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority reports to the Australian Environment Minister. The Marine Park Authority Board oversees the agency, which is structured into three branches: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use; Great Barrier Reef Operations; and Policy and Stewardship.

The agency uses the best available scientific information to guide its work, and engages with experts and the community — including through two Reef Advisory Committees and 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees.

The main office is in Townsville, and regional offices in Cairns, Mackay and Rockhampton ensure a close connection with those communities.

A small office in Canberra provides a key liaison function with the Environment Minister's office and the Department of the Environment portfolio and other Australian Government agencies.

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## THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY (THE BOARD)

The Chairman and members of the Board are chosen by the Federal Minister for the Environment and are appointed by the Governor-General. The Act requires that the Board include a representative from the tourism industry, a Queensland government representative and an Indigenous representative.



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### Membership of the Board

#### *Dr Russell Reichelt*

Chairman and Accountable Authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

Russell Reichelt joined the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in 2007 as Chairman and Chief Executive following an extensive career in marine science and management.

He began diving on the Great Barrier Reef as a teenager in 1968 and then worked as a research scientist at the Australian Institute of Marine Science in the 1980s, studying the ecology of coral reefs, particularly the crown-of-thorns starfish.

Dr Reichelt has a PhD in marine science and has served as Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, Chairman of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, and as a member of Australia's State of the Environment Committee. He has previously chaired the National Oceans Advisory Group, CSIRO's Wealth from Oceans Flagship Advisory Committee, and Seafood Services Australia Ltd.

He is an adjunct professor at the University of Queensland, and is a fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (UK) and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Dr Reichelt is a board member for both the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

He was reappointed Chairman of the Marine Park Authority Board on 1 November 2012 for a second five-year term, concluding on 31 October 2017.





### *Melissa George*

Melissa George is a Wulgurukaba woman whose traditional area includes Magnetic Island and the greater Townsville region.

She has been actively involved in protecting and managing land and sea through community natural resource management projects and liaising with and advising the Queensland and Australian governments. Miss George has been a member of the Australian Government's Indigenous Advisory Committee (EPBC Act 1999) since 2002 and the Committee's Chair since 2006.

She was reappointed as a member of the Marine Park Authority Board on 22 November 2012 for a five-year term, concluding on 21 November 2017.



### *Tony Mooney AM*

Tony Mooney has extensive experience in infrastructure, economic development, community engagement and regional government.

He served as a Townsville City councillor for 31 years, 19 of them as Mayor, concluding in 2008. During his time as Mayor, he oversaw a period of unprecedented sustainable urban and infrastructure development. In 2008, Mr Mooney was appointed to the Board of Ergon Energy and, in 2009, was appointed to the Board of Townsville Enterprise Limited.

Mr Mooney received a Centenary Medal in 2001 for distinguished service to local government and, in 2011, was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for service to local government and to the community of Townsville through his work for a range of tourism, business and infrastructure organisations.

He was appointed as a member of the Marine Park Authority Board on 7 December 2011 for a five-year term, concluding on 6 December 2016.



### *Jon Grayson*

Jon Grayson was appointed Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in March 2012, bringing substantial private sector and government experience to the role.

For the two years before his appointment, Mr Grayson was principal and founder of Queensland Infrastructure Partners, an advisory and transaction arranging firm specialising in infrastructure investment and development.

He was previously a senior executive with a major international advisory and investment management firm. Mr Grayson's investment banking experience was primarily in the infrastructure space, having led successful bids for infrastructure assets including the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal. This experience

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included two years as the inaugural chief executive of Prime Infrastructure, which became one of Australia's largest infrastructure funds, guiding it to an initial public offering on the Australian Stock Exchange.

Prior to his investment banking career, Mr Grayson had a long career in Queensland Treasury and Queensland Treasury Corporation. He led major reform processes within government including leading the Suncorp–Metway merger, and the major review of Queensland Rail corporatisation. At Queensland Treasury Corporation, Mr Grayson served on the executive management team, leading the structured finance group, arranging and executing a range of efficient financing structures for government-owned corporations and statutory bodies, including cross-border lease transactions over Queensland Government-owned rail and electricity assets.

He was appointed as the Queensland Government's representative member of the Marine Park Authority Board on 22 November 2012 for a three-year term. In March 2015, Mr Grayson advised the Governor-General he would be leaving his role as Director-General, and tendered his resignation from the Marine Park Authority Board. A new Queensland Government nominee has yet to be appointed.



### *Margie McKenzie*

Margie McKenzie has extensive experience in the Queensland marine tourism industry.

She is currently the managing director of a marine tourism consulting company in Cairns; and has been a scuba diving instructor for 29 years, and is still an active instructor certifier with Scuba Schools International.

Mrs McKenzie has been a partner in one of Australia's largest dive training companies based in Cairns; has been the general manager of Dive Queensland, a non-profit association committed to promoting and developing the diving industry in Queensland for 17 years; and spent seven years as the general manager of Scuba Schools International.

As a CPA, Mrs McKenzie has specialised in assisting tourism and small businesses to develop into profitable enterprises.

She was appointed as a member of the Marine Park Authority Board on 16 May 2013 for a five-year term, concluding on 15 May 2018.

## Meeting schedule

During 2014–2015, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority held five meetings (Table 20).

**Table 20** Meetings of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority 2014–2015

Meeting	Date	Location	Attendance
MPA 233	22 July 2014	Teleconference	Dr Russell Reichelt, Miss Melissa George, Mr Jon Grayson, Mrs Margie McKenzie, Mr Tony Mooney AM
MPA 234	17 September 2014	Airlie Beach	Dr Russell Reichelt, Miss Melissa George, Mr Jon Grayson, Mrs Margie McKenzie, Mr Tony Mooney AM
MPA 235	3 December 2014	Canberra	Dr Russell Reichelt, Miss Melissa George, Mr Jon Grayson, Mrs Margie McKenzie, Mr Tony Mooney AM
MPA 236	18 March 2015	Townsville	Dr Russell Reichelt, Miss Melissa George, Mrs Margie McKenzie, Mr Tony Mooney AM
MPA 237	6 May 2015	Teleconference	Dr Russell Reichelt, Miss Melissa George, Mrs Margie McKenzie, Mr Tony Mooney AM

## Senior executive

The agency is structured into three branches, led by three general managers. The agency's senior executive team, during the reporting period, is described below. Mr Skeat retired from the agency in May 2015.



**Bruce Elliot**  
**General Manager Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use.** The branch comprises the following sections:

- Environmental Assessment and Protection
- Information Management Systems and Technologies
- Reef Recovery



**Andrew Skeat**  
**General Manager Great Barrier Reef Operations.** The branch comprises the following sections:

- Field Management
- Indigenous Partnerships
- Legal Services
- Reef HQ Aquarium



**Margaret Johnson**  
**General Manager Policy and Stewardship.** The branch comprises the following sections:

- Communications and Parliamentary
- Reef 2050
- Tourism and Stewardship

An organisational chart depicting the senior executives and their responsibilities is in the Overview section of this report, page 14.

## Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Audit Committee

The Accountable Authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has established an audit committee (the Committee) in compliance with section 45 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and PGPA Rule section 17 Audit Committees for Commonwealth Entities.

The audit committee provides independent assurance and assistance to the Accountable Authority and the Marine Park Authority board on the agency's risk, control and compliance framework, and its financial statement responsibilities.

The audit committee comprised the following members during 2014–2015:

- Mr Roy Peterson, member and Committee Chairman
- Mr Phillip Fogarty, member and Manager Financial Services, Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Ms Margie McKenzie, member, Managing Director of Gempearl Pty Ltd, and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority board member
- Mr Michael O'Keeffe, member.

During 2014–2015, the Audit Committee held four meetings (Table 21).

Observers and guests attending audit committee meetings included the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Chairman, General Manager Policy and Stewardship, Chief Finance Officer, Director Reef 2050, Manager and Financial Accountant with Finance and Office Services, Manager Governance Support Unit, Manager Strategic Planning, Manager Workforce Planning/People Strategy, Manager Protection Strategies and Systems, Chief Information Officer, Director Communications and Parliamentary, General Manager Great Barrier Reef Operations, representatives from the Australian National Audit Office and the internal audit service provider.

Business activities of the audit committee addressed:

- financial statements
- financial management
- internal audit
- external audit
- internal controls and compliance management
- legislative and policy compliance
- environmental management charge and sustainable funding
- court-imposed fines
- policies and procedures
- corporate governance, including risk management and fraud risk management
- the strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef Region and associated programme report, and corporate planning processes.

## Roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities are set out in the audit committee's charter of operation, reflecting requirements under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and regulations. The Charter covers:

- Risk management
  - risk management framework
  - management of major risks
  - business continuity and disaster recovery plans
  - fraud control plan
- Internal control
  - internal control framework
  - Accountable Authority instructions
  - policies and procedures
  - use of Commonwealth resources
  - delegations
  - key internal controls
- Financial statements
  - adequacy of key internal controls and management sign-off
  - review and provision of advice to the Accountable Authority
  - consistency with information provided in

- the annual report
- Legislative and policy compliance
  - legal and compliance risks
  - system to monitor compliance with relevant laws, regulations and associated government policies
  - compliance with international conventions
  - annual certificate of compliance report
- Internal audit
  - monitoring of internal audit's coverage and its alignment to the assessment of key risks
  - monitoring of the Audit Committee's annual work plan
  - adequacy of internal audit resources
  - audit program
  - monitoring of management's implementation of audit recommendations
  - review of all audit reports and provision of advice to the Accountable Authority
  - review of Audit Committee performance
- External audit
  - financial statement and performance audit coverage
  - review of external audit plans and reports regarding planned or completed audits
  - monitoring of management's response on implementation of audit recommendations

- Governance arrangements
  - periodic review of governance arrangements
- Other responsibilities
  - parliamentary committee reports and external reviews
  - performance reporting framework.

### *Responsibilities of committee members*

Members of the audit committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and regulations. Members are also expected to:

- act in the best interests of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- apply good analytical skills, objectivity and good judgement
- express opinions constructively and openly, raise issues that relate to the Audit Committee's responsibilities and pursue independent lines of enquiry
- contribute the time required to review meeting papers provided.

### *Internal audit reports*

During 2014–15 internal audits were undertaken in the following areas of operation:

- income
- travel management
- internal policies and procedures management

**Table 21** Meetings of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Audit Committee 2014–15

Meeting	Date	Location	Attendance
AC 64	27 August 2014	Townsville	Mr Roy Peterson, Mr Phillip Fogarty, Ms Margie McKenzie, Mr Michael O'Keeffe
AC 65	20 November 2014	Townsville	Mr Roy Peterson, Mr Phillip Fogarty, Ms Margie McKenzie, Mr Michael O'Keeffe
AC 66	19 February 2015	Townsville	Mr Roy Peterson, Mr Phillip Fogarty, Ms Margie McKenzie, Mr Michael O'Keeffe
AC 67	20 May 2015	Townsville	Mr Roy Peterson, Mr Phillip Fogarty, Ms Margie McKenzie, Mr Michael O'Keeffe

- business and strategic planning
- assets
- recruitment management
- fraud control
- contract management
- project management
- financial controls
- internal control framework.

## Risk management

Work continued in 2014–15 to improve the quality of the risk management framework with new guidance material and tools being enhanced and integrated into the everyday business activities of the agency.

Improvement work is ongoing and guided by an overarching plan, with progress regularly monitored via the agency's Audit Committee.

The internal and external audit functions continue to provide independent assurance to the agency on the integrity and reliability of operational and financial risk mitigation arrangements in place.

## Fraud control

In 2014–15 the agency developed and implemented its next iteration of the fraud control policy and plan which sought to further reduce the incidence of and opportunity for fraud.

The new policy and plan is consistent with the Commonwealth fraud control framework and gives effect to the fraud control provisions of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and Rule 10 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014.

The new fraud control policy and plan is also aligned to Australian Standards and Better Practice Guidance developed by the Australian National Audit Office. The actions included continue to be implemented with regular oversight provided by the agency's Audit Committee. The provision of mandatory awareness training in the upcoming financial year will contribute to a greater awareness amongst workers of fraud and fraud risk.

Collectively, the fraud risk assessment and corresponding fraud control policy and plan continues to:

- facilitate appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection in a way that meets the specific needs of the agency
- minimise the incidence of fraud in the agency as much as is reasonably practicable
- facilitate the process to recover of the proceeds of fraud against the agency.

One incident of suspected fraud was reported to the fraud liaison officer during 2014–15.

## Advisory committees

The agency has a number of committees that provide support and strategic advice, including 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees. Other committees may be appointed from time to time to deal with specific issues. All committees have terms of reference and procedures established by the agency. Their composition and membership is reviewed as necessary.

### Reef Advisory Committees

The agency's Reef Advisory Committees were established to advise about actions that could be taken to address risks to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. In 2014, the agency reviewed the arrangements around its advisory committees to improve alignment with its structure and programme commitments.

In April 2014, the Marine Park Authority Board approved the establishment of a Tourism Reef Advisory Committee to replace the Tourism and Recreation Reef Advisory Committee. This committee has met on two occasions: 14–15 October 2014; and 30 April–1 May 2015.

In March 2015, the Marine Park Authority Board approved the re-establishment of the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee. This committee convened its first meeting on 3–4 June 2015.

The Reef Advisory Committees are competency-based, and comprise a cross-section of stakeholder interests with expertise and experience in relevant areas. Each committee includes members appointed as a

representative of a particular group or sector (for example, industry, recreational, government) or for their linkages to Traditional Owner groups. Staff of the relevant branch and sections work closely with the Reef Advisory Committees to ensure policy development and strategic direction are developed in consultation with stakeholders.

The agency continues to review arrangements for additional Reef Advisory Committees.

### *Local Marine Advisory Committees*

Twelve Local Marine Advisory Committees operate along the Great Barrier Reef catchment.

Representing community interests from Cape York south to the Burnett region, these advisory committees provide an avenue for local communities to discuss areas of concern directly with the agency. The committees also have input into the management of the Marine Park and undertake activities that contribute to its long-term protection.

The committees are:

- Cape York
- Douglas
- Cairns
- Cassowary Coast
- Hinchinbrook
- Townsville
- Bowen–Burdekin
- Whitsunday
- Mackay
- Capricorn Coast
- Gladstone
- Burnett.

Each advisory committee meets five times a year. Members are appointed for a three-year term, with the current term beginning in July 2012 and ending at the end of this reporting period.

Local Marine Advisory Committees are also reported on under Objective 3 of the *Performance* chapter, page 86.



*LMAC Chairs meet with the agency at least once every term. Burnett LMAC Director Kirstin Dobbs, Burnett LMAC Chair Sue Sargeant, agency Chair Russell Reichelt and Burnett LMAC member Jim Buck, at the LMAC Chairs meeting held October 2014.*

## Strategic planning process

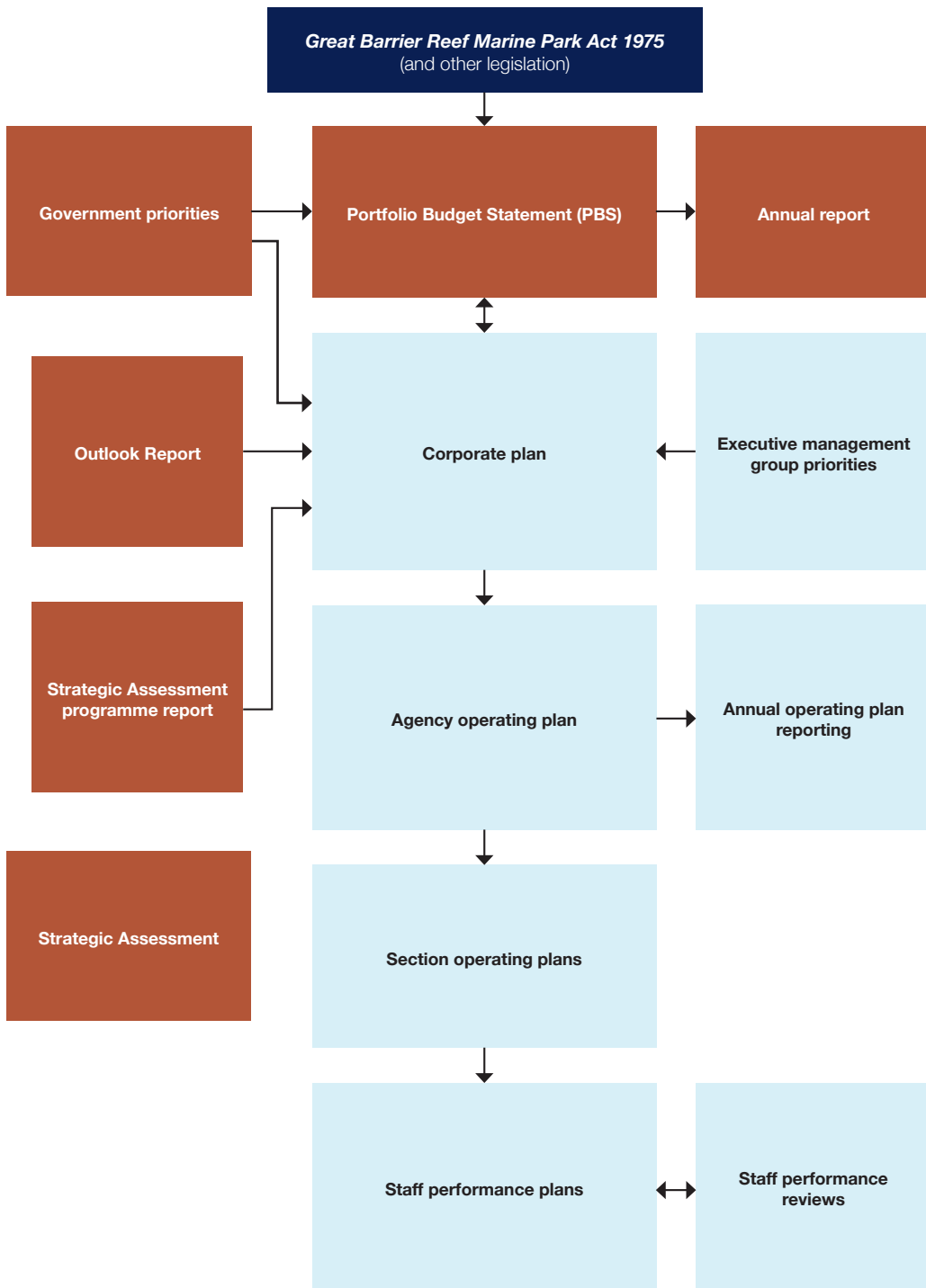


Figure 15 Strategic planning process



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## Strategic and operational plans

The agency carries out planning at the strategic and operational levels. In 2014–15, the agency's strategic and operational planning was influenced by the recommendations in the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment Programme Report* and the findings of the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*. The strategic planning process is shown in Figure 15, page 118.

## Corporate Plan 2014–2019

The *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Corporate Plan 2014–2019* takes into account the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014* and outlines the direction and priorities of the agency. It focuses on delivering outcomes required by legislation, especially the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, through four objectives:

- Protect and restore the Reef's ecosystem health and biodiversity
- Safeguard the Reef's heritage
- Ensure ecologically sustainable use and benefits for current and future generations
- Reduce cumulative impacts.

## Annual operating plans

The Corporate Plan is supported by section and agency-level annual operating plans. These plans set out detailed actions to achieve our objectives, as well as relevant performance measures and targets.

## Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014

The *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014* was finalised and published in 2014. The report is required under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (section 54) to provide a regular and reliable means of assessing Reef health and management in an accountable and transparent way.

The report assesses nine areas: biodiversity, ecosystem health, heritage values, commercial and non-commercial use, factors influencing the Reef's values, existing protection and management, resilience, risks and the long-term outlook for ecosystem and heritage values. The contents of the report are independently peer reviewed.

## Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment Programme Report

In 2013–14, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority undertook a strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef Region. The strategic assessment examines impacts on relevant matters of national significance as defined in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, it also assesses the agency's management arrangements to deal with such impacts. It details actions to improve the agency's management arrangements through the development of a comprehensive 25-year management programme.

These reports have been fundamental in developing the agency's priority projects and shaping its work programme for 2014–15 and subsequent years.

## Service Charter 2011–2015

The Service Charter outlines the agency's goals, aims, customers, and commitments to those customers. The agency aims to provide an appropriate service to meet all of its commitments. These services will continue to develop as new issues arise and the Service Charter will be reviewed regularly in line with these changes.

The Service Charter is available on the agency's website [www.gbbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbbrmpa.gov.au).

## Ethical standards

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is committed to the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*. The Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct is an integral part of the people management framework and is incorporated in the agency's Corporate Plan and the Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014.

Information on ethical standards is provided to staff through the agency's intranet, induction procedures and internal newsletter *Chairman's Update*.

## External scrutiny

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Audit Committee Charter and other documents reflect the requirements for Audit Committees

under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Benchmark International Group Pty Ltd is contracted to provide internal audit services from September 2012 to August 2015. Internal audit work was in accordance with an agreed strategic internal audit plan. The agency's Audit Committee is reported earlier in this chapter on page 114.

In line with the Australian Government's focus on accountability and corporate governance, audit activity concentrated on areas of high risk, the adequacy of existing control frameworks and compliance with the provisions of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

There were no judicial decisions that significantly impacted on the agency's operations during the 2014–15 period.

On March 2014, the Senate referred 'The adequacy of the Australian and Queensland Government's efforts to stop the rapid decline of the Great Barrier Reef' to the Environmental and Communications References Committee for inquiry and report. The report was tabled on 3 September 2014.

## **Australian National Audit Office reports**

Moore Stephens, under contract to the Australian National Audit Office, undertook the external audit of the agency's 2014–15 financial statements (See Finances Chapter, page 125).

The agency was included in the following Auditor General's reports tabled in Parliament during 2014–15:

- No. 16–Audits of the Financial Statements of Australian Government Entities for the Period Ended 30 June 2014.

The following Auditor General reports of 2014–15 can contain recommendations of relevance to the agency:

- No. 1–Confidentiality in Government Contracts: Senate Order for Departmental and Agency Contracts (Calendar Year 2013 Compliance)
- No. 3–Fraud Control Arrangements
- No. 6–Business Continuity Management

- No. 24–Managing Assets and Contracts at Parliament House
- No. 44–Interim Phase of the Audits of the Financial Statements of Major General Government Sector Agencies for the year ending 30 June 2015
- No.48–Limited Tender Procurement.

## **Commonwealth Ombudsman**

No complaints were made to the Ombudsman in the 2014–15 financial year.

## **Management of human resources**

### ***People management effectiveness***

The People Management, Office and Security Services section provides a range of payroll, recruitment, work health and safety, and dive services to employees. Higher level advice is also provided to managers and supervisors regarding workforce planning, performance management and workplace relations matters.

People management proactively supports line areas to meet business objectives as outlined in annual operating plans.

During 2014–15, the People Management, Office and Security Services section:

- maintained high standards in service delivery of core functions including recruitment, payroll, workplace health and safety, dive operations, workplace relations and property and security services
- provided employees with access to timely and comprehensive information on employment-related activities through the use of the agency's intranet
- finalised the agency restructure and voluntary redundancy round
- successfully integrated and managed high volumes of recruitment in line with the Australian Public Service Interim Recruitment Arrangements
- conducted quarterly workplace inspections to identify hazards and treat the associated risks across 33 work units in the agency
- implemented mandatory corporate training and included this aspect in all performance agreements
- developed and implemented an agency wide eLearning system

- progressed many enhancements within the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) to create better efficiencies for all users
- implemented in-house training for dive related activities for agency staff.

### **Training and staff development**

The agency spent \$122,800 on learning and development and study assistance in 2014–15.

This included the costs of specific training courses, conference attendance, formal qualifications, study fee reimbursements, professional memberships and all associated travel and accommodation costs.

Refresher training was provided for health and safety representatives. Other specialised training included first aid, dive and resuscitation, emergency response and a variety of field-based skills training.

Individual employee learning and development opportunities were identified through the annual employee performance and development agreements. To further support this area the People Management, Office and Security Services section implemented an agency wide eLearning system for all staff.

The agency maintains its support of employees' professional development with time off for face-to-face study and reimbursement of professional fees upon successful completion of a semester of study.

### **Work health and safety**

The agency's working environment varies from contemporary office to remote camping. Officers conduct extensive field work which includes boat patrols, diving surveys, underwater construction, engineering and water quality management. The agency's broad community consultation sees officers liaising with schools, landholders, tourist operators, the fishing industry and remote Traditional Owners.

Thirty-two incident reports were lodged by employees during 2014–15. Three claims for compensation were accepted by Comcare.

The agency continues to provide an employee assistance programme to enable support for work and family matters, with 14 staff and

family members using this service between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015.

Quarterly workplace inspections have been conducted by the agency's 30 work units and reports were provided to the work health and safety committee and executive management group. During the reporting period, significant investment was made in revising and updating general work health and safety arrangements including 11 new sit/stand workstations across the agency.

Emergency response, first response and general evacuation training was provided to 121 employees. Emergency procedures were reviewed and fire drills were conducted.

Free influenza vaccinations in 2015 were given to 60 employees. In addition, occupational therapists conducted workstation assessments and provided specified ergonomic equipment and furniture for staff with specific needs.

### **Dive safety and operations**

A full suite of in-house training courses has been introduced in an effort to increase the percentage of current divers on the agency's dive register. Since its introduction in November 2014, the currency rate on the register has increased from 49 per cent to 87 per cent. In-house training has been primarily targeted to fulfil the requirements of the dive register with regard to first aid, CPR and oxygen courses in addition to required annual rescue refreshers. All the requirements for maintaining currency on the dive register are now facilitated in-house by the dive officer, with the exception of dive medicals. This efficiency gain is being rolled out to non-divers in an effort to widen the first responder capabilities of all agency staff. Further courses are being added as demand dictates.

The agency's dive register has been increased in scope to include snorkelers and to maintain records of their currency. In an effort to better comply with the diving operations manual, water skills assessments have been re-introduced as annual minimum mandatory requirements in conjunction with medical evaluations. The introduction of snorkel swims as a prerequisite for working snorkelers brings the agency's requirements closer in line with

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best practice and makes inter-agency co-operation much simpler and more efficient.

All diving documentation, forms and policies underwent an exhaustive audit in conjunction with members of the Dive Safety Committee and internal stakeholders. All policies and forms were either updated and reworked resulting in increased efficiency and safety, or retired if deemed redundant or no longer applicable.

A number of eLearning training courses were developed to facilitate training and inductions in an effort to increase efficiency and widen learning opportunities.

Two diving incidents were reported during the 2014–15 financial year. Both were minor injuries with no loss of work.

### **Staffing statistics**

The agency had a total of 193 staff employees as at 30 June 2015. Of these, 129 people were employed at Australian Public Service levels 1–6; 60 were employed at Executive Level 1 or 2; and four were employed at Senior Executive Service levels, including the Chief Executive. More information is provided in the staffing overview table in Appendix B, page 191.

### **Workplace diversity**

Workplace diversity data for the agency employees is provided in Appendix B, page 192.

The agency's workplace diversity programme seeks to ensure:

- annual operating plans (section) and longer term strategic plans (corporate) acknowledge the diverse backgrounds of employees and their current and potential contribution to the agency
- the suite of terms and employment conditions enshrined in the agency's Enterprise Agreement assists employees in balancing their work, family, caring and lifestyle responsibilities and preferences
- the Australian Public Service values remain central to the agency's culture.

### **Providing access for people with disabilities**

Since 1994, Commonwealth departments and

agencies have reported on their performance as policy adviser, purchaser, employer, regulator and provider under the Commonwealth Disability Strategy. In 2007–08, reporting on the employer role was transferred to the Australian Public Service Commission's State of the Service Report and the APS Statistical Bulletin. These reports are available at [www.apsc.gov.au](http://www.apsc.gov.au). From 2010–11, departments and agencies are no longer required to report on these functions.

The Commonwealth Disability Strategy has been overtaken by the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020, which sets out a 10-year national policy framework to improve the lives of people with a disability, promote participation and create a more inclusive society. A high level two-yearly report will track progress against each of the six outcome areas of the strategy and present a picture of how people with disability are faring. The first of these reports was expected to be available in late 2014, and can be found at [www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au).

The agency's disability action plan includes applying the principle of reasonable adjustment to office access and accommodation. Ergonomic assessments are conducted and equipment provided to suit the needs of the individual.

The agency's main building in Townsville, which includes the Field Management office, conference room, meeting rooms and Reef HQ Aquarium are wheelchair accessible. The Rockhampton and Canberra offices are also wheelchair accessible.

The 2014–15 workplace diversity data identifies two per cent of employees as having some form of disability.

### **Employment agreements**

The agency's Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014 was introduced in November 2011. Negotiations for the next enterprise agreement are well progressed with implementation of the agreement expected in late 2015.

Consistent with government policy, all non-senior executive service employees are covered by the enterprise agreement. The current agreement provides salaries to cover classifications ranging from an Australian Public

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Service 1 to Executive Level 2, including a specific legal officer classification.

The salary range for non-senior executive service employees is \$34,970 for Australian Public Service 1 to \$132,801 for Executive Level 2.

Non-salary benefits provided to employees include:

- payment of one work-related professional association membership fee for ongoing employees, exempt from fringe benefits tax
- access to salary packaging of vehicles and superannuation for all ongoing employees, exempt from fringe benefits tax
- a healthy lifestyle allowance of \$150 per financial year to help meet the cost of activities or equipment that maintain health and fitness.

### Senior executive remuneration

As at 30 June 2015 all Senior Executive Service (SES) employees were remunerated by way of section 24(1) determinations under the *Public Service Act 1999*. The average salary for employees covered by a section 24(1) determination was \$206,483.

More information on senior executive remuneration is included in the *Finances* chapter on page 165.

### Performance pay

The agency does not operate a performance pay scheme.

### Assets management

There are five significant components of the agency's asset management:

- office fit-out
- Reef HQ Aquarium
- Commonwealth islands
- Field Management equipment
- information management systems and technology.

During the reporting period work on Reef HQ Aquarium was funded and completed under the departmental capital budget. Work continued on the implementation of major information

management systems and technology projects.

The agency has in place capital management plans for Reef HQ Aquarium, office fit-out, information management systems and technology and Field Management equipment.

## Purchasing Delegations

The *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rules confer powers and functions of the Accountable Authority that may be delegated. The Accountable Authority has, in writing, delegated certain powers and functions to officials. The delegate does not have the power to sub-delegate without a specific provision in legislation.

### Accountable Authority instructions

Accountable Authority instructions are the primary mechanism for an Accountable Authority to set out the processes to promote the proper use of Commonwealth resources, including relevant money and property by officials in his or her agency.

The agency's Accountable Authority instructions comply with requirements of the PGPA Act and ensure compliance with Commonwealth procurement guidelines.

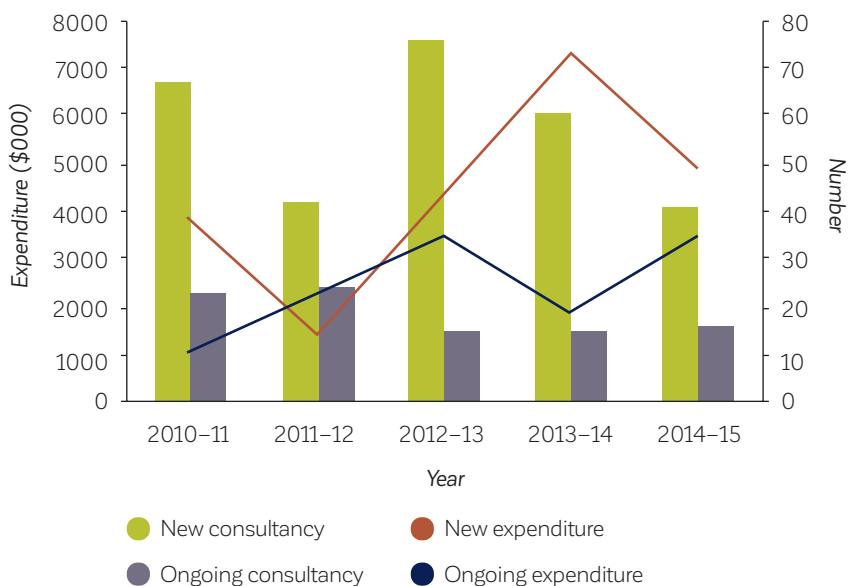
### Consultants and contracts

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website [www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au).

### Consultancies

During 2014–15, 41 new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$4,883 million. In addition, 16 ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the reporting period, involving total actual expenditure of \$3,473 million.

Consultants are engaged when specialist expertise is not available within the agency or where an independent assessment is considered desirable. In 2014–15 this included



**Figure 16** Trend in new and ongoing consultancy services

marine research, organisational management advice, information systems management, the targeted crown-of-thorns starfish control programme, the Marine Monitoring Programme and development of Traditional Marine Use Resource Agreements.

### Competitive tendering and contracting

In accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules 2014 and the agency's purchasing guidelines and depending on the estimated values of the tender, the selection and engagement of consultants may involve open tender, pre-qualified tender, limited tender or, where appropriate, direct engagement of a recognised and pre-eminent expert.

#### Exempt contracts

During 2014-15 no contract was exempted by the Accountable Authority from publication in AusTender.

#### Access by Auditor-General

All contracts provided for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises.

### Procurement initiatives to support small businesses

The agency supports small business

participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website: [www.finance.gov.au/procurement/statistics-on-commonwealth-purchasing-contracts/](http://www.finance.gov.au/procurement/statistics-on-commonwealth-purchasing-contracts/)

The agency procurement practices support SMEs in ways that are consistent with paragraph 5.4 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules including consideration of SMEs capabilities and their commitment to Townsville and regional markets and through such practices as electronic systems or use of payment cards that facilitate on-time payment performance.

### Grant programmes

Information on grants awarded by the agency during the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 is available at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au). During 2014-15 the agency administered the following grants programmes:

- Internal Coral Reef Initiative grants programme
- Ripples of Change — Reef Guardian Schools award.

# FINANCES

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### To the Minister for the Environment

I have audited the accompanying annual financial statements of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for the year ended 30 June 2015, which comprise:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Schedule of Commitments;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes comprising a Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and other explanatory information.

### *Accountable Authority's Responsibility for the Financial Statements*

The Accountable Authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards and the rules made under that Act. The Accountable Authority is also responsible for such internal control as is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### *Auditor's Responsibility*

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. These auditing standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit 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 entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the

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circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Accountable Authority of the entity, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

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

### ***Independence***

In conducting my audit, I have followed the independence requirements of the Australian National Audit Office, which incorporate the requirements of the Australian accounting profession.

### ***Opinion***

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority as at 30 June 2015 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office



Serena Buchanan  
Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra  
7 September 2015

GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2015 comply with subsection 42(2) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.



Russell Reichelt  
Accountable Authority

7/9/2015



Matthew Goodall  
A/g Chief Financial Officer

7/9/2015

**Statement of Comprehensive Income**  
for the period ended 30 June 2015

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>			
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee Benefits	4A	20,484	24,057
Supplier	4B	17,435	15,855
Grants		12	42
Depreciation and amortisation	4C	1,908	1,986
Write-down and impairment of assets		-	1
Losses from asset disposal		5	101
Cost of goods sold		149	193
Payments to Queensland Government for Field Management Program	7(b),28	12,457	12,282
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>52,450</b>	<b>54,517</b>
<b>Own-source Income</b>			
<b>Own-source revenue</b>			
Sale of goods and rendering of services	5A	2,617	2,686
Payments from Queensland Government for Field Management Program	7(b),28	8,372	8,372
Other Revenue	5B	11,875	12,997
<b>Total own-source revenue</b>		<b>22,864</b>	<b>24,055</b>
<b>Gains</b>			
Other	5C	55	54
<b>Total gains</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Total own-source income</b>		<b>22,919</b>	<b>24,109</b>
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>		<b>(29,531)</b>	<b>(30,408)</b>
Revenue from Government	5D	27,145	28,412
<b>Total Revenue from Government</b>		<b>27,145</b>	<b>28,412</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to the Australian Government</b>		<b>(2,386)</b>	<b>(1,996)</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>			
<b>Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services</b>			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		(465)	-
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) attributable to the Australian Government</b>	3	<b>(2,851)</b>	<b>(1,996)</b>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**Statement of Financial Position**  
as at 30 June 2015

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Financial Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>8A</u>	132	324
Trade and other receivables	<u>8B</u>	<u>11,486</u>	<u>12,701</u>
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<u><b>11,618</b></u>	<u><b>13,025</b></u>
<b>Non-Financial Assets</b>			
Buildings and leasehold improvements	<u>9A,C</u>	17,159	18,554
Property, plant and equipment	<u>9B,C</u>	2,328	2,820
Intangibles	<u>9D,E</u>	2,307	2,452
Inventories	<u>9F</u>	339	62
Prepayments		1,019	266
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>		<u><b>23,152</b></u>	<u><b>24,154</b></u>
<b>Total assets</b>		<u><b>34,770</b></u>	<u><b>37,179</b></u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Payables</b>			
Suppliers	<u>10A</u>	3,613	2,097
Other payables	<u>10B</u>	658	2,000
Permit bonds	<u>10C</u>	263	293
<b>Total payables</b>		<u><b>4,534</b></u>	<u><b>4,390</b></u>
<b>Provisions</b>			
Employee provisions	<u>11A</u>	5,593	5,762
Other provisions	<u>11B</u>	74	382
<b>Total provisions</b>		<u><b>5,667</b></u>	<u><b>6,144</b></u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<u><b>10,201</b></u>	<u><b>10,534</b></u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u><b>24,569</b></u>	<u><b>26,645</b></u>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Contributed equity		22,367	21,592
Reserves		13,168	13,633
Retained surplus (accumulated deficit)		<u>(10,966)</u>	<u>(8,580)</u>
<b>Total equity</b>		<u><b>24,569</b></u>	<u><b>26,645</b></u>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity  
for the period ended 30 June 2015

	Retained earnings		Asset revaluation surplus		Contributed equity/capital		Total equity	
	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Opening balance</b>								
Balance carried forward from previous period	(8,580)	(6,584)	13,633	13,633	21,592	20,712	26,645	27,761
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	<b>(8,580)</b>	<b>(6,584)</b>	<b>13,633</b>	<b>13,633</b>	<b>21,592</b>	<b>20,712</b>	<b>26,645</b>	<b>27,761</b>
<b>Comprehensive income</b>								
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	(2,386)	(1,996)	(465)	-	-	-	(2,386)	(1,996)
Other comprehensive income							(465)	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>(2,386)</b>	<b>(1,996)</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(2,851)</b>	<b>(1,996)</b>
Total comprehensive income attributable to Australian Government	(2,386)	(1,996)	(465)	-	-	-	(2,851)	(1,996)
<b>Transactions with owners</b>								
<b>Contributions by owners</b>								
Equity injection - Appropriations	-	-	-	-	775	880	775	880
Departmental capital budget	-	-	-	-	775	880	775	880
<b>Total transactions with owners</b>	<b>(10,966)</b>	<b>(8,580)</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>13,633</b>	<b>22,367</b>	<b>21,592</b>	<b>24,569</b>	<b>26,645</b>
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>								

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**Cash Flow Statement**  
for the period ended 30 June 2015

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Appropriations		27,145	28,412
Receipts from Government		11,478	12,524
Permit assessment fees		350	341
Reef HQ admission fees		1,363	1,449
GST received		112	164
Payments from Queensland Government for Field Management Program		8,372	8,372
Section 72 receipts transferred from OPA		1,303	-
Other		1,957	3,269
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>52,080</b>	<b>54,531</b>
<b>Cash used</b>			
Grants		12	42
Employees		21,899	22,712
Suppliers		16,250	16,231
GST paid		1,525	1,398
Payments to Queensland Government for Field Management Program		12,457	12,282
Section 72 receipts transferred to OPA		-	1,748
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>52,143</b>	<b>54,413</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) operating activities</b>	12	<b>(63)</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash used</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		904	1,154
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>904</b>	<b>1,154</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) investing activities</b>		<b>(904)</b>	<b>(1,154)</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Contributed equity		775	880
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>775</b>	<b>880</b>
<b>Net Cash from/(used by) Financing activities</b>		<b>775</b>	<b>880</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash held</b>		<b>(192)</b>	<b>(156)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		324	480
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	8A	<b>132</b>	<b>324</b>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Schedule of Commitments  
as at 30 June 2015

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>BY TYPE</b>			
<b>Commitments receivable</b>			
Net GST recoverable on commitments		1,004	444
<b>Total commitments receivable</b>		<b>1,004</b>	<b>444</b>
<b>Commitments payable</b>			
<b>Capital commitments</b>			
Property, plant and equipment <sup>1</sup>		130	69
<b>Total capital commitments</b>		<b>130</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Other commitments</b>			
Operating leases <sup>2</sup>		849	841
Other commitments <sup>3</sup>		10,065	4,048
<b>Total other commitments</b>		<b>10,914</b>	<b>4,889</b>
<b>Total commitments payable</b>		<b>11,044</b>	<b>4,958</b>
<b>Net commitments by type</b>		<b>10,040</b>	<b>4,514</b>
<b>BY MATURITY</b>			
<b>Commitments receivable</b>			
<b>Other commitments receivable</b>			
Within 1 year		502	425
Between 1 to 5 years		502	19
<b>Total other commitments receivable</b>		<b>1,004</b>	<b>444</b>
<b>Total commitments receivable</b>		<b>1,004</b>	<b>444</b>
<b>Commitments payable</b>			
<b>Capital commitments</b>			
Within 1 year		130	69
<b>Total capital commitments</b>		<b>130</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Operating lease commitments</b>			
Within 1 year		567	690
Between 1 to 5 years		282	151
<b>Total operating lease commitments</b>		<b>849</b>	<b>841</b>
<b>Other Commitments</b>			
Within 1 year		4,825	4,003
Between 1 to 5 years		5,240	45
<b>Total other commitments</b>		<b>10,065</b>	<b>4,048</b>
<b>Total commitments payable</b>		<b>11,044</b>	<b>4,958</b>
<b>Net commitments by maturity</b>		<b>10,040</b>	<b>4,514</b>

Note: Commitments are GST inclusive where relevant.

1. Capital commitments are primarily for Reef HQ construction projects.
2. Operating leases are primarily non-cancellable and include:

<b>Nature of Lease</b>	<b>General description of leasing arrangements</b>
Leases for office accommodation	Lease payments are subject to increases in accordance with terms as negotiated under the lease. GBRMPA leases generally have options for renewal. Future options not yet exercised are not included as commitments.
Leases for motor vehicles	Leases are for motor vehicles used by staff to travel on work related business. There are no purchase options available to GBRMPA.
Leases for office equipment	Photocopiers are supplied through a Government tender panel arrangement. Various schedules exist commencing March 2012 expiring March 2016.

3. Other commitments are primarily for Reef Rescue Marine Monitoring program and Reef Trust Marine Debris and Crown of Thorns Starfish.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



**Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income**  
for the period ended 30 June 2015

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>			
Expenses			
Suppliers	17	-	900
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>900</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
Revenue			
<b>Non-taxation revenue</b>			
Rent from island properties	18	245	297
Fines and infringement notices	18	232	98
Environmental management charge	18	5,660	5,344
<b>Total non-taxation revenue</b>		<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,739</b>
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,739</b>
<b>Total income</b>		<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,739</b>
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>		<b>6,137</b>	<b>4,839</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>			
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		(5,270)	-
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<b>(5,270)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss)</b>		<b>867</b>	<b>4,839</b>

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

<b>Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities</b>				
<i>as at 30 June 2015</i>				
		<b>Notes</b>	<b>2015 \$'000</b>	<b>2014 \$'000</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Financial Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents		20	-	132
Receivables - Environmental management charge		20	1,649	1,008
Receivables - GST input tax credits		20	-	23
Receivables - CDPP Court ordered fines		20	729	732
<b>Total financial assets</b>			<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,895</b>
<b>Non-Financial Assets</b>				
Island properties		21A,B	3,880	9,150
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>			<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>
<b>Total assets administered on behalf of Government</b>			<b>6,258</b>	<b>11,045</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>Payables</b>				
Suppliers		22	-	155
Environmental management charge payable to Commonwealth		22	1,649	1,008
CDPP court ordered fines payable to Commonwealth		22	729	732
Other payables		22	-	-
<b>Total payables</b>			<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,895</b>
<b>Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government</b>			<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,895</b>
<b>Net assets/(liabilities)</b>			<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**Administered Reconciliation Schedule**

	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>9,150</b>
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>	<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,739</b>
Income	-	(900)
Expenses		
<b>Transfers (to)/from the Australian Government:</b>		
Appropriation transfers from Official Public Account	-	900
Annual appropriations		
Appropriation transfers to Official Public Account		
Transfers to OPA	(6,137)	(5,739)
Administered revaluations taken to reserves	(5,270)	-
<b>Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

<b>Administered Cash Flow Statement</b> <i>for the period ended 30 June 2015</i>				
		<b>Notes</b>	<b>2015</b> <b>\$'000</b>	<b>2014</b> <b>\$'000</b>
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Cash received</b>				
Rent from island properties	245		245	297
Infringement notices	232		232	98
Environmental management charge	5,660		5,660	5,344
<b>Total cash received</b>	<b>6,137</b>		<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,739</b>
<b>Cash used</b>				
Suppliers	132		132	822
<b>Total cash used</b>	<b>132</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>822</b>
<b>Net cash flows from/(used by) operating activities</b>		<u>23</u>	<b>6,005</b>	<b>4,917</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period				
<b>Cash from the Official Public Account</b>			132	54
Appropriations	-		-	900
	-		-	900
<b>Cash to Official Public Account</b>			5,660	5,344
Appropriations	477		477	395
Other	6,137		6,137	5,739
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>		<u>20A</u>	-	132

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

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## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### 1.1 Objectives of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) is an Australian Government controlled entity. It is a not-for-profit entity. The objective of the GBRMPA under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, is responsible for managing one of the world's premier natural resources - the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

The GBRMPA primary outcome is to ensure the long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community through the care and development of the Marine Park.

This outcome is supported by three objectives - protecting and restoring the Reef's ecosystem health and biodiversity, safeguarding the Reef's heritage, and ensuring use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations.

The GBRMPA, the Queensland Government and a range of Australian Government agencies jointly manage the Marine Park - this close collaboration is critically important for effectively managing such a large, diverse and complex marine area.

The continued existence of the GBRMPA in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on Government policy and on continued funding by Parliament for the GBRMPA's administration and programs.

GBRMPA activities contributing toward this outcome are classified as either departmental or administered. Departmental activities involve the use of assets, liabilities, income and expenses controlled or incurred by the GBRMPA in its own right. Administered activities involve the management or oversight by the GBRMPA, on behalf of the Government, of items controlled or incurred by the Government.

The GBRMPA conducts the following administered activities on behalf of the Government:

- a) Collection of the Environmental Management Charge (EMC) and Fines; and
- b) Management of Commonwealth Islands land, Heritage Buildings and lease revenue.

### 1.2 Basis of Preparation of the Financial Statements

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are required by section 42 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013.

The Financial Statements and notes have been prepared in accordance with:

- a) Financial Reporting Rule (FRR) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2014; and
- b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Unless an alternative treatment is specifically required by an accounting standard or the FRR, assets and liabilities are recognised in the statement of financial position when and only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the entity or a future sacrifice of economic benefits will be required and the amounts of the assets or liabilities can be reliably measured. However, assets and liabilities arising under executory contracts are not recognised unless required by an accounting standard. Liabilities and assets that are unrecognised are reported in the schedule of commitments and the contingencies note.

Unless alternative treatment is specifically required by an accounting standard, income and expenses are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income when and only when the flow, consumption or loss of economic benefits has occurred and can be reliably measured.

## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

### 1.3 Significant Accounting Judgements and Estimates

In the process of applying the accounting policies listed in this note, the GBRMPA has made the following judgements that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements: The fair value of buildings, plant and equipment has been taken to be the depreciated replacement cost or market value as determined by an independent valuer.

No accounting assumptions or estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

### 1.4 New Australian Accounting Standards

#### Adoption of New Australian Accounting Standard Requirements

No accounting standard has been adopted earlier than the application date as stated in the standard.

The following new standards/revised standards/interpretations/amending standards were issued prior to the signing of the statement by the accountable authority and chief financial officer, were applicable to the current reporting period and had a material effect on the GBRMPA's financial statements:

#### *AASB 1055: Budgetary Reporting - March 2013 (Principal)*

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) has issued a new AASB 1055. This new Standard requires reporting of budgetary information and explanation of significant variance between actual and budgeted amounts by not-for-profit entities within the General Government Sector. The new Standard applies to reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2014.

#### *AASB 13: Fair Value measurement - July 2016 (Early adoption)*

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) has issued an update to AASB 13. This update provides relief for not-for-profit public sector entities from making some previously-required disclosures about the fair value measurement of property, plant and equipment assets which are primarily held for internal or policy use, rather than to earn revenue. More specifically, the disclosure of quantitative information about the significant unobservable inputs used in fair value measurements and the sensitivity of certain fair value measurements to changes in unobservable inputs will no longer be required.

When transitional provisions apply, all changes in accounting policy are made in accordance with their respective transitional provision.

All other new standards/revised standards/interpretations/amending standards that were issued prior to the sign off date and are applicable to the current reporting period did not have a material effect, and are not expected to have a future material effect, on the GBRMPA's financial statements.

#### Future Australian Accounting Standard Requirements

The following new standards/revised standards/interpretations/amending standards were issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board prior to the signing of the statement by the accountable authority and chief financial officer, which are expected to have a material impact on the GBRMPA's financial statements for future reporting period(s):

#### *AASB 2015-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Extending Related Party Disclosures to Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities [AASB 10, AASB 124 & AASB 1049] (Effective date 1 Jul 2016)*

Extends the scope of AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures to include application by not-for-profit (NFP) public sector entities and includes implementation guidance for these entities.

#### *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers (Effective date 1 Jan 2017)*

Establishes principles for reporting information about the nature, amount, timing and uncertainty of revenue and cash flows arising from an entity's contracts with customers, with revenue recognised as 'performance obligations' are satisfied; and will apply to contracts of NFP entities that are exchange transactions. AASB 1004 will continue to apply to non-exchange transaction until the Income for NFP project is completed.

#### *AASB 9 Financial Instruments - December 2014 (Effective date 1 Jan 2018)*

*AASB 2010-7 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 & 1038 and Interpretations 2, 5, 10, 12, 19 & 127] AASB 2014-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards [Part E Financial Instruments] AASB 2014-7 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (December 2014)*

The classification and measurement requirements for financial assets (including limited amendments) and for financial liabilities, and the recognition and derecognition requirements for financial instruments, requirements for impairment of financial assets; and hedge accounting. The change may have an impact on the recognition and measurement of financial instruments. Final outcome will be considered once the project is completed.

## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

The GBRMPA's expected initial application date is when the accounting standard becomes operative at the beginning of the GBRMPA's reporting period.

All other new standards/revised standards/interpretations/amending standards that were issued prior to the sign off date and are applicable to future reporting period(s) are not expected to have a future material impact on the GBRMPA's financial statements.

### 1.5 Revenue

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when:

- a) the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer;
- b) the GBRMPA retains no managerial involvement or effective control over the goods;
- c) the revenue and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- d) it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the GBRMPA.

Revenue from rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date. The revenue is recognised when:

- a) the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- b) the probable economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the GBRMPA.

The stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date is determined by reference to the proportion that costs incurred to date bear to the estimated total costs of the transaction.

Receivables of goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amount due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed as at end of reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

#### Revenue from Government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as Revenue from Government when GBRMPA gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

The GBRMPA, as agent for the Commonwealth, collects an Environmental Management Charge (EMC) from permit holders. Amounts collected are paid into the Official Public Account (OPA). The GBRMPA receives an equivalent amount via a special appropriation for its operations. Special appropriation is recognised when the GBRMPA has the right to receive the revenue and it can be reliably measured. This is deemed to occur when monies are received by the GBRMPA from permit holders.

### 1.6 Gains

#### Resources Received Free of Charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as gains when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense.

Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

Contributions of assets at no cost of acquisition or for nominal consideration are recognised as gains at their fair value when the asset qualifies for recognition, unless received from another Government agency or authority as a consequence of a restructuring of administrative arrangements (Refer to Note 1.7).

#### Sale of Assets

Gains from disposal of assets are recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.



## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

### 1.7 Transactions with the Government as Owner

#### Equity injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental Capital Budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

#### Restructuring of Administrative Arrangements

Net assets received from or relinquished to another Government entity or authority under a restructuring of administrative arrangements are adjusted at their book value directly against contributed equity.

### 1.8 Employee Benefits

Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*) and termination benefits expected within twelve months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability.

Other long term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligation are to be settled directly.

#### Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of the GBRMPA is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including the GBRMPA's employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

#### Separation and Redundancy

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. The GBRMPA recognises a provision for termination when it has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out the terminations.

#### Superannuation

The GBRMPA staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS) or the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap).

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported by the Department of Finance administered schedules and notes.

The GBRMPA makes employer contributions to the employees' superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. The GBRMPA accounts for contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions for the final fortnight of the year.

## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

### 1.9 Leases

A distinction is made between finance leases and operating leases. Finance leases effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of leased assets. An operating lease is a lease that is not a finance lease. In operating leases, the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits.

Operating lease payments are expensed on a straight-line basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

### 1.10 Borrowing Costs

All borrowing costs are expensed as incurred.

### 1.11 Fair Value Measurement

The GBRMPA deems transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy to have occurred at 30 June 2015.

### 1.12 Cash

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents includes:

- a) cash on hand;
- b) demand deposits in bank accounts with an original maturity of 3 months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value;
- c) cash held by outsiders; and
- d) cash in special accounts.

### 1.13 Financial Assets

The GBRMPA classifies its financial assets in the following category:

- a) loans and receivables.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised and derecognised upon trade date.

#### Effective Interest Method

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and of allocating interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

Income is recognised on an effective interest rate basis except for financial assets that are recognised at fair value through profit or loss.

#### Loans and receivables

Trade receivables, loans and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are classified as 'loans and receivables'. Loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment. Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate.

#### Impairment of Financial Assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period.

*Financial assets carried at amortised cost* - if there is objective evidence that an impairment loss has been incurred for loans and receivables or held to maturity investments held at amortised cost, the amount of the loss is measured as the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. The carrying amount is reduced by way of an allowance account. The loss is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

### 1.14 Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

#### Other financial liabilities

Other financial liabilities, including borrowings, are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective yield basis.

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial liability and of allocating interest expense over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments through the expected life of the financial liability, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

### 1.15 Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the statement of financial position but are reported in the relevant schedules and notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

### 1.16 Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

### 1.17 Property, Plant and Equipment

#### Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than \$5,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located. This is particularly relevant to 'make good' provisions in property leases taken up by the GBRMPA where there exists an obligation to restore the property to its original condition. These costs are included in the value of the GBRMPA's leasehold improvements with a corresponding provision for the 'make good' recognised.

## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

### Reef HQ

The Reef HQ building was funded as a Commonwealth–State Bicentennial project, through the Great Barrier Reef Wonderland Association Incorporated (the Association) on land leased from the Townsville Port Authority. Following the winding up of the Association in September 2001 the lease arrangement for the land is now between the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Townsville Port Authority.

### Revaluations

Fair values for each class of asset are determined as shown below:

<i>Asset Class</i>	<i>Fair Value Measurement</i>
Buildings	Market selling price
Leasehold Improvements	Depreciated replacement cost
Plant and equipment	Market selling price

Following initial recognition at cost, property plant and equipment were carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations were conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets do not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depends upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments were made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment was credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation surplus except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets were recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reverse a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

### Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the GBRMPA using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable assets are based on the following useful lives:

	2015	2014
Buildings	5 - 50 years	50 years
Leasehold improvements	Lease Term	Lease Term
Plant and equipment	3 to 20 years	1 to 20 years

### Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2015. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if the GBRMPA were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

### Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

### 1.18 Intangibles

The GBRMPA's intangibles comprise purchased software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Intangibles costing less than \$5,000 are expensed in the year of acquisition.

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful lives of the GBRMPA's software is 3 to 8 years (2013-14: 3 to 8 years).

All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2015.

### 1.19 Inventories

Inventories held for sale are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Inventories acquired at no cost or nominal consideration are initially measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition. Live fish in the aquarium from 2014-15 are now classed as inventory with stock added or removed but the primary purpose is not for sale.

### 1.20 Taxation

The GBRMPA is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST except:

- a) where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office; and
- b) for receivables and payables.

### 1.21 Insurance

The GBRMPA has insured for risks through the Governments insurable managed fund, called 'Comcover'. This includes insurance cover for the operation of Reef HQ. Workers compensation is insured through Comcare Australia.

### 1.22 Advances for Field Management

Except for expenditure on fixtures upon land owned by or under the direct control of the Commonwealth or the GBRMPA, payments to the Queensland Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (DNPRSR) for the Field Management Program are fully expensed in the year of payment (refer Note 7 and 30 for details).

### 1.23 High Court decision

The Australian Government continues to have regard to developments in case law, including the High Court's most recent decision on Commonwealth expenditure in *Williams v Commonwealth [2014] HCA 23*, as they contribute to the larger body of law relevant to the development of Commonwealth programs. In accordance with its general practice, the Government will continue to monitor and assess risk and decide on any appropriate actions to respond to risks of expenditure not being consistent with constitutional or other legal requirements.

## Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont)

### Reporting of Administered Activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes.

Except where otherwise stated below, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards.

#### Administered Cash Transfers to and from the Official Public Account

Revenue collected by the GBRMPA for use by the Government rather than the GBRMPA is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. Conversely, cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under Parliamentary appropriation on behalf of the Government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the GBRMPA on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the schedule of administered cash flows and in the administered reconciliation schedule.

#### Revenue

All administered revenues are revenues relating to ordinary activities performed by the GBRMPA on behalf of the Australian Government. As such, administered appropriations are not revenues of the individual entity that oversees distribution or expenditure of the funds as directed.

The GBRMPA, as agent for the Commonwealth, collects an Environmental Management Charge (EMC) from tourist operators to use the Marine Park. Amounts collected are paid into the OPA. The GBRMPA receives an equivalent amount via a Special Appropriation for its operations under Section 65A of the GBRMP Act. Special appropriation is recognised when the GBRMPA has the right to receive the revenue and it can be reliably measured. This is deemed to occur when monies are received by the GBRMPA from permit holders (Refer note 5E).

Revenue is generated from rent that is charged under leases associated with the use of the land including a number of heritage listed lighthouse properties. The rent revenue is recognised when the amount of revenue can be reliably measured and the transaction has been completed and recorded. Other revenue received is from QLD Government State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER) that administer the recovery of fines debts.

#### Expenses

All administered expenses are expenses relating to the course of ordinary activities performed by the GBRMPA on behalf of the Australian Government.

#### Loans and receivables

Administered receivables include amounts due to be collected from tourist operators in relation to the Environmental Management Charge and fee and fines payable to the Commonwealth that are administered by QLD Government State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER).

#### Property, plant and equipment

Administered property, plant and equipment include island properties valued at fair value. Lighthouse and other adjacent properties are heritage listed therefore no depreciation is recorded against the asset. The Island properties are valued in accordance with AASB116 by an independent valuer. Valuations are deemed to occur on 30 June of each year. From 1 July 2014, the islands are valued in accordance with their restricted use under lease agreements.

#### Liabilities

Administered liabilities include amounts collected from tourist operators in relation to the Environmental Management Charge and rent and fines to be transferred to the OPA.

**Note 2: Events After the Reporting Period**

**Departmental**

There was no subsequent event that had the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of the GBRMPA.

**Administered**

There was no subsequent event that had the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of the GBRMPA.

**Note 3: Net Cash Appropriation Arrangements**

	2015	2014
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) less depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriations</b>	<b>(943)</b>	<b>(10)</b>
Plus depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriation	<u>(1,908)</u>	<u>(1,986)</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) - as per the Statement of Comprehensive Income</b>	<b><u>(2,851)</u></b>	<b><u>(1,996)</u></b>

1. From 2010-11, the Government introduced net cash appropriation arrangements, where revenue appropriation for depreciation/amortisation expenses ceased. Entities now receive a separate capital budget provided through equity appropriations. Capital budgets are to be appropriated in the period when cash payment for capital expenditure is required.

## Note 4: Expenses

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 4A: Employee Benefits</b>			
Wages and salaries		15,492	17,172
Superannuation			
Defined contribution plans		1,506	1,578
Defined benefit plans		1,228	1,396
Leave and other entitlements		2,169	2,397
Separation and redundancies <sup>1</sup>		39	1,452
Other Employee benefits		46	55
Fringe Benefit Tax		4	7
<b>Total employee benefits</b>		<b>20,484</b>	<b>24,057</b>

1. GBRMPA restructuring decision made in April/May 2014 with 17 staff accepting voluntary redundancies. Supplementary appropriation for redundancies from Government of \$420,000 was received in 2013/14 and additional appropriation of \$449,000 was received in 2014/15.

## Note 4B: Suppliers

### Goods and services supplied or rendered

Consultants		6,576	6,894
Contractors		240	45
Travel		1,828	1,986
IT Services		513	415
Utilities		695	689
Employment agency temporary staff		299	97
Aircraft and vessel charter costs		1,009	948
Telephone and communications		506	476
Legal fees		1,514	260
Reef HQ general expenses		753	695
Other general expenses		1,871	1,924
<b>Total goods and services supplied or rendered</b>		<b>15,804</b>	<b>14,429</b>

### Goods and services in connection with

Provision of goods - external parties		995	987
Rendering of services - related entities		351	1,774
Rendering of services - external parties		14,458	11,668
<b>Total goods and services supplied or rendered</b>		<b>15,804</b>	<b>14,429</b>

### Other Suppliers

#### Operating lease rentals in connection with

External Parties			
Minimum lease payments		1,251	1,202
Workers compensation premiums		380	224
<b>Total other suppliers</b>		<b>1,631</b>	<b>1,426</b>
<b>Total suppliers</b>		<b>17,435</b>	<b>15,855</b>

## Note 4C: Depreciation and Amortisation

### Depreciation

Buildings & leasehold improvements		911	968
Property, plant and equipment		535	588
<b>Total depreciation</b>		<b>1,446</b>	<b>1,556</b>

### Amortisation

Intangibles		462	430
<b>Total amortisation</b>		<b>462</b>	<b>430</b>
<b>Total depreciation and amortisation</b>		<b>1,908</b>	<b>1,986</b>



## Note 5: Income

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Own-Source Revenue</b>			
<b>Note 5A: Sale of Goods and Rendering of Services</b>			
Provision of goods - external parties		360	377
Rendering of services - external parties		2,257	2,309
<b>Total sale of goods and rendering of services</b>		<b>2,617</b>	<b>2,686</b>
<b>Note 5B: Other Revenue</b>			
Permit Assessment Fees	30	350	341
Other revenue - external parties		47	131
Crown of Thorns Starfish Control <sup>1</sup>		2,800	3,100
Ensuring the Resilience of the Great Barrier Reef <sup>1</sup>		4,000	4,000
Reef Rescue Land & Sea Country Partnership <sup>1</sup>		2,000	2,000
Reef Rescue Marine Monitoring Program <sup>1</sup>		2,300	2,500
Marine Debris <sup>1</sup>		350	-
Other revenue - related entities		28	925
<b>Total other revenue</b>		<b>11,875</b>	<b>12,997</b>
1. Funding received directly from Department of Environment			
<b>Note 5C: Other Gains</b>			
Resources received free of charge - audit services		54	54
<b>Total other gains</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Note 5D: Revenue from Government</b>			
Appropriations			
Departmental appropriation		13,113	14,697
Departmental special appropriation		5,660	5,343
Field management program	7.28	8,372	8,372
<b>Total revenue from Government</b>		<b>27,145</b>	<b>28,412</b>

**Note 6: Fair Value Measurements**

The following tables provide an analysis of assets and liabilities that are measured at fair value. The different levels of the fair value hierarchy are defined below.

- Level 1: Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at measurement date.
- Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3: Unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

**Note 6A: Fair Value Measurements**

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period		For Levels 2 and 3 fair value measurements	
	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	Category (Level 1, 2 or 3) <sup>a</sup>	Valuation technique(s) <sup>1,2</sup>
<b>Non-financial assets</b>				
Buildings	-	10,347	Level 2	Market approach Quoted costs, indexing, industry useful lives
	<b>16,569</b>	7,484	Level 3	Cost approach Reference is made to professional publications such as Rawlinson's and Cordell's construction cost handbooks
Leasehold improvements	-	341	Level 2	Market approach Quoted costs, indexing, industry useful lives
	<b>425</b>	382	Level 3	Cost approach Reference is made to professional publications such as Rawlinson's and Cordell's construction cost handbooks

**Note 6: Fair Value Measurements (cont)**

**Note 6A: Fair Value Measurements (cont)**

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period		For Levels 2 and 3 fair value measurements	
	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	Category (Level 1, 2 or 3)*	Valuation technique(s) <sup>1,2</sup>
<b>Non-financial assets</b>				
Other property, plant and equipment	808	1,053	Level 2	Market approach Market data derived from observed transactions
	1,418	1,767	Level 3	Cost approach Replacement costs based on professional judgement and information provided by GBRMPA
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>	<b>19,220</b>	<b>21,374</b>		
<b>Total fair value measurements of assets in the statement of financial position</b>	<b>19,220</b>	<b>21,374</b>		

1. Valuation technique changed during the period for buildings and leasehold improvements as market approach was deemed unsuitable as Reef HQ cannot be easily sold and there is no market for leasehold improvements.

2. The following valuation techniques were used:  
 Cost approach: The amount a market participant would be prepared to pay to acquire or construct a substitute asset of comparable activity, adjusted for obsolescence  
 Market approach: Estimate of the current value of an asset with reference to recent market evidence including transactions of comparable assets within local markets

The GBRMPA procured valuation services from Pickles and relied on valuation models provided by Pickles. Pickles re-tests the valuation model every 12 months. Pickles provided written assurance to the GBRMPA that the model developed is in compliance with AASB 13.

**Note 6: Fair Value Measurements****Note 6B: Reconciliation from Recurring Level 3 Fair Value Measurements****Recurring Level 3 fair value measurements - reconciliation for assets**

	Buildings		Leasehold improvements		Plant and equipment		Total	
	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>As at 1 July</b>	<b>7,484</b>	<b>7,132</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>1,767</b>	<b>1,513</b>	<b>9,633</b>	<b>9,023</b>
Purchases	119	352	7	4	89	254	215	610
Disposals	(250)	-	(385)	-	(24)	-	(659)	-
Total gains/(losses) recognised in other comprehensive income <sup>1</sup>	(1,924)	-	(72)	-	(634)	-	(2,630)	-
Transfers to Level 3 <sup>2</sup>	11,189	-	493	-	220	-	11,902	-
Transfers out of Level 3 <sup>3</sup>	(49)	-	-	-	-	-	(49)	-
<b>Total as at 30 June</b>	<b>16,569</b>	<b>7,484</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>1,418</b>	<b>1,767</b>	<b>18,412</b>	<b>9,633</b>

1. These gains/(losses) are gross revaluations presented in the other comprehensive income

2. Transfers to Level 3 - items transferred due to change in methodology

3. Transfers out of Level 3 - items transferred to intangibles

The GBRMPA's policy for determining when transfers between levels are deemed to have occurred can be found in Note 1.

## Note 7: Field Management Program of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

Note 7A: The guiding principles agreed between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments under the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009 are:

- i) A collaborative and cooperative approach is fundamental to the effective long-term protection, conservation and management of the Great Barrier Reef as this is beyond the power and remit of either jurisdiction
- ii) The precautionary principle will be applied to protecting the environmental, World Heritage and National Heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef
- iii) The marine and land environments within and adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area will be managed in an integrated manner consistent with ecosystem-based management and the principles of ecologically sustainable use
- iv) Economic growth and the long-term health of the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem are interconnected, and actions or changes in one area can impact on the other and must be taken into account, in particular
  - population growth and economic development increases the demand for resource and recreational use of the Great Barrier Reef
  - land-use activities in the catchment, and urban development can have adverse impacts on the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef, and
  - regulation of activities that exploit marine resources, measures for protection of marine parks, or initiatives to reduce external pressures on the ecosystem can have regional and local social and economic effects, and improve the long term viability of the region
- v) Trends in the health, use of and risks to the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem will be regularly monitored and reported to ensure decisions are soundly based
- vi) Co-ordinated long-term monitoring and research and the collection and sharing of marine-based biological, physical, social and economic data is fundamental
- vii) Regular, periodic review of the resources necessary for the long-term management of the marine and national parks within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area will be undertaken
- viii) Initiatives should be delivered through a concerted response across all levels of government with shared funding arrangements of joint Commonwealth-State initiatives agreed on a case-by-case basis
- ix) Expenditure on the Field Management to be in accordance with the Annual Business Plan, and
- x) The GBRMPA to administer funds provided by the Commonwealth and Queensland for these purposes (Note 28).

Note 7B: Revenue received from the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments and from other sources

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Queensland Government contribution - refer Note 7 ( c ) below	8,372	8,372
Commonwealth Government appropriation Field Management Program	8,372	8,372
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Contribution	-	236
Revenue from permit assessment fees.	91	64
Other revenue	-	-
	<u>16,835</u>	<u>17,044</u>

Note 7C: Payments to the Queensland Government for Field Management Program for 2014-15 totalled \$12,456,919 (2013-14 \$12,281,919).

Note 7D: The balance of funds available is used by the GBRMPA for the operations of the Field Management Co-ordination Unit, and for compliance and enforcement operations.

## Note 8: Financial Assets

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 8A: Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>			
Field Management special account		-	1
Cash on Hand or on deposit		132	323
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>324</b>
<b>Note 8B: Trade and Other Receivables</b>			
<b>Goods and services receivables in connection with</b>			
Related entities		9	41
External parties		76	135
<b>Total goods and services receivables</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>Appropriations receivable</b>			
Existing programs		10,855	12,188
<b>Total appropriations receivable</b>	ZTC	<b>10,855</b>	<b>12,188</b>
<b>Other Receivables</b>			
GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office		342	270
Other		204	70
<b>Total other receivables</b>		<b>546</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>Total trade and other receivables (gross)</b>		<b>11,486</b>	<b>12,704</b>
<b>Less impairment allowance</b>			
Goods and services		-	(3)
<b>Total impairment allowance</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b>Total trade and other receivables (net)</b>		<b>11,486</b>	<b>12,701</b>
<b>Receivables are expected to be recovered</b>			
No more than 12 months		11,486	12,701
<b>Total trade and other receivables (net)</b>		<b>11,486</b>	<b>12,701</b>
<b>Trade and other receivables (gross) aged as follows</b>			
Not Overdue		11,419	12,568
Overdue by			
0 to 30 days		48	92
31 to 60 days		6	5
61 to 90 days		2	30
More than 90 days		12	9
<b>Total trade and other receivables (gross)</b>		<b>11,486</b>	<b>12,704</b>

## **Note 9: Non-Financial Assets**

### **Note 9A: Buildings and Leasehold Improvements**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Buildings</b>			
Work in progress		119	-
Fair Value		16,569	18,674
Accumulated depreciation		-	(843)
<b>Total buildings</b>		<b>16,688</b>	<b>17,831</b>
<b>Leasehold Improvements</b>			
Work in progress		-	-
Fair Value		500	875
Accumulated depreciation		(29)	(152)
<b>Total leasehold improvements</b>		<b>471</b>	<b>723</b>
<b>Total buildings and leasehold improvements</b>		<b>17,159</b>	<b>18,554</b>

No indication of impairment were found for buildings and leasehold improvements. No buildings were expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

### **Note 9B: Property, Plant and Equipment**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Other property, plant and equipment</b>			
Work in progress		102	-
Fair Value		2,237	3,553
Accumulated depreciation		(11)	(733)
<b>Total other property, plant and equipment</b>		<b>2,328</b>	<b>2,820</b>
<b>Total property, plant and equipment</b>		<b>2,328</b>	<b>2,820</b>

Impairments recognised of \$312 (2014: \$710) for property, plant and equipment. No property, plant and equipment is expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

### **Revaluations of non-financial assets**

All revaluations are conducted in accordance with the revaluation policy stated at Note 1. During 2014/15, an independent valuer (Pickles) conducted the revaluations.

Revaluation conducted in 2014/15 include decrements of \$269,000 for Buildings (2014: \$0), \$335,000 for plant and equipment (2014: \$0) increment of \$139,000 for leasehold improvements (2014: \$0).

All increments and decrements were transferred to the asset revaluation surplus by asset class and included in the equity section of the statement of financial position. No increment/decrement were expensed (2014: Nil).

**Note 9: Non-Financial Assets (cont)****Note 9C: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment****Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment 2015**

	Buildings \$'000	Leasehold Improvements \$'000	Total Buildings and Leasehold Improvements \$'000	Plant & Equipment \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2014</b>					
Gross book value	18,674	875	19,549	3,553	23,102
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(843)	(152)	(995)	(733)	(1,728)
<b>Net book value 1 July 2014</b>	<b>17,831</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>18,554</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>21,374</b>
<b>Additions</b>					
Purchase or internally developed	99	7	106	285	391
Work in progress	119	-	119	102	221
Revaluations and impairments recognised in other comprehensive income	(269)	139	(130)	(335)	(465)
Transfers between classes	(21)	-	(21)	(4)	(25)
Depreciation	(821)	(90)	(911)	(535)	(1,446)
Other movements <sup>1</sup>	-	3	3	-	3
Disposals					
Other	(250)	(311)	(561)	(5)	(566)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2015</b>	<b>16,688</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>17,159</b>	<b>2,328</b>	<b>19,487</b>
<b>Net book value as of 30 June 2015 represented by</b>					
Gross book value	16,688	500	17,188	2,339	19,527
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	-	(29)	(29)	(11)	(40)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2015</b>	<b>16,688</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>17,159</b>	<b>2,328</b>	<b>19,487</b>

1. Increase in Make Good provision [see Note 11B] which is amortised over the Lease Term.



**Note 9: Non-Financial Assets (cont)**

**Note 9C (Cont'd): Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment**

Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment 2014

	Buildings \$'000	Leasehold Improvements \$'000	Total Buildings and Leasehold Improvements \$'000	Plant & Equipment \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2013</b>					
Gross book value	18,366	871	19,237	3,383	22,620
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(29)	-	(29)	(172)	(201)
<b>Net book value 1 July 2013</b>	<b>18,337</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>19,208</b>	<b>3,211</b>	<b>22,419</b>
<b>Additions</b>					
Purchase or internally developed	352	4	356	254	610
Impairments recognised in net cost of services	-	-	-	(1)	(1)
Depreciation	(816)	(152)	(968)	(588)	(1,556)
Other movements <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Other	(42)	-	(42)	(56)	(98)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2014</b>	<b>17,831</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>18,554</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>21,374</b>
<b>Net book value as of 30 June 2014 represented by</b>					
Gross book value	18,674	875	19,549	3,553	23,102
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(843)	(152)	(995)	(733)	(1,728)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2014</b>	<b>17,831</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>18,554</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>21,374</b>

1. Increase in Make Good provision [see Note 11B] which is amortised over the Lease Term.

**Note 9: Non-Financial Assets (cont)**

	2015	2014
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Note 9D: Intangibles</b>		
<b>Computer software</b>		
Work in progress	74	-
Purchased	4,886	4,621
Accumulated amortisation	(2,653)	(2,169)
<b>Total computer software</b>	<b>2,307</b>	<b>2,452</b>
<b>Total intangibles</b>	<b>2,307</b>	<b>2,452</b>

No indicators of impairment were found for intangible assets  
No intangibles are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months

**Note 9E: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Intangibles**

**Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of intangibles 2015**

	Computer software purchased	Total
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2014</b>		
Gross book value	4,621	4,621
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,169)	(2,169)
<b>Net book value 1 July 2014</b>	<b>2,452</b>	<b>2,452</b>
Additions		
By purchase	218	218
Work in progress - internally developed	74	74
Amortisation expense	(462)	(462)
Transfers between classes	25	25
Disposals	-	-
Other	-	-
<b>Net book value 30 June 2015</b>	<b>2,307</b>	<b>2,307</b>
<b>Net book value as of 30 June 2015 represented by</b>		
Gross book value	4,960	4,960
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,653)	(2,653)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2015</b>	<b>2,307</b>	<b>2,307</b>

**Note 9: Non-Financial Assets (cont)**

**Note 9E (Cont'd): Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Intangibles**

Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of intangibles 2014

	Computer software purchased \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2013</b>		
Gross book value	4,331	4,331
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(1,990)	(1,990)
<b>Net book value 1 July 2013</b>	<b>2,341</b>	<b>2,341</b>
Additions		
By purchase	546	546
Amortisation expense	(431)	(431)
Disposals		
Other	(4)	(4)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2014</b>	<b>2,452</b>	<b>2,452</b>
<b>Net book value as of 30 June 2014 represented by</b>		
Gross book value	4,621	4,621
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(2,169)	(2,169)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2014</b>	<b>2,452</b>	<b>2,452</b>

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 9F: Inventories</b>			
<b>Inventories held for sale</b>			
Reef HQ shop		89	62
<b>Total inventories held for sale</b>		<b>89</b>	<b>62</b>
Reef HQ aquarium live fish		250	
<b>Total inventories</b>		<b>339</b>	<b>62</b>

During 2015, \$0 of inventory held for sale was recognised as an expense (2014: \$0). All Reef HQ shop inventories are expected to be sold or distributed in the next 12 months. No items of inventory were recognised at fair value less cost to sell.

**Note 10: Payables**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 10A: Suppliers</b>			
Trade creditors and accruals		3,613	2,097
<b>Total suppliers</b>		<b>3,613</b>	<b>2,097</b>
<b>Supplier expected to be settled</b>			
No more than 12 months		3,613	2,097
<b>Total suppliers</b>		<b>3,613</b>	<b>2,097</b>
<b>Suppliers in connection with</b>			
Related entities		30	523
External parties		3,583	1,574
<b>Total suppliers</b>		<b>3,613</b>	<b>2,097</b>
Settlement was usually made within 30 days			
<b>Note 10B: Other payables</b>			
Wages and salaries		515	515
Superannuation		95	89
Separations and redundancies		-	1,253
Revenue received in advance		-	108
Amounts owed to Commonwealth		48	35
Other		-	-
<b>Total other payables</b>		<b>658</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Other payables expected to be settled</b>			
No more than 12 months		658	2,000
<b>Total other payables</b>		<b>658</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Note 10C: Permit bonds</b>			
Cash Bonds held on behalf of Permit Holders		263	293
<b>Total permit bonds</b>		<b>263</b>	<b>293</b>

## Note 11: Provisions

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 11A: Employee Provisions</b>			
Leave		5,567	5,738
Other		26	24
<b>Total employee provisions</b>		<b>5,593</b>	<b>5,762</b>
<b>Employee provision are expected to be settled</b>			
No more than 12 months		4,607	4,741
More than 12 months		986	1,021
<b>Total employee provisions</b>		<b>5,593</b>	<b>5,762</b>
<b>Note 11B: Other Provisions</b>			
Provision for restoration		74	382
<b>Total other provisions</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>382</b>
<b>Other provisions expected to be settled</b>			
More than 12 months		74	382
<b>Total other provisions</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>382</b>
<b>Provision for restoration</b>			
		<b>\$'000</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>As at 1 July 2014</b>		382	382
Additional provisions made		3	3
Amounts reversed		(311)	(311)
<b>Total as at 30 June 2015</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>74</b>

The GBRMPA currently has 1 (2014: 2) agreements for the leasing of premises which have provisions requiring the entity to restore the premises to their original condition at the conclusion of the lease. The GBRMPA has made a provision to reflect the present value of this obligation.

**Note 12: Cash Flow Reconciliation**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents as per statement of financial position to cash flow statement</b>			
<b>Cash and cash equivalents as per</b>			
Cash flow statement		132	324
Statement of financial position		132	324
<b>Discrepancy</b>		-	-
<b>Reconciliation of net cost of services to net cash from/(used by) operating activities</b>			
Net (cost of)/contributions by services	5D	(29,531)	(30,408)
Revenue from Government		27,145	28,412
<b>Adjustments for non-cash items</b>			
Depreciation/amortisation	4C	1,908	1,986
Asset transferred to inventory	9F	250	-
Net write down of non-financial assets		5	102
<b>Movements in assets and liabilities</b>			
<b>Assets</b>			
(Increase)/Decrease in net receivables	8B	1,215	(533)
(Increase)/Decrease in inventories	9F	(277)	19
(Increase)/Decrease in prepayments		(753)	(73)
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Increase/(Decrease) in supplier payables	10A	1,516	13
Increase/(Decrease) in other payables	10B	(1,342)	466
Increase/(Decrease) in permit bonds	10C	(30)	63
Increase/(Decrease) in employee provisions	11A	(169)	71
<b>Net cash from/(used by) operating activities</b>		<b>(63)</b>	<b>118</b>

## Note 13: Contingent Assets and Liabilities

### Contingent assets

The GBRMPA has no Contingent assets for the 2014-15 financial year (2013-14: Nil)

### Contingent Liabilities

The GBRMPA has no Contingent liability for the 2014-15 financial year (2013-14: Nil)

### Unquantifiable Contingent Assets

On 3 April 2011, the Shen Neng 1, a Chinese owned bulk coal carrier, grounded on Douglas Shoal east of Yeppoon. The 225m vessel incurred a substantial damage on its port side which punctured a fuel tank discharging between 3 - 4 tonne of bunker oil oil and causing a 3km oil slick. As well as damage cause by oil discharge, the vessel grounding also resulted in significant damage to the surrounding coral and shoal habitat.

Under Part VIII of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 (the GBRMPA Act), the Minister for the Environment may make enforceable directions or seek various orders in the Federal Court for recovery of respect of costs associated with conduct which may be in breach of the GBRMPA Act, including reimbursement for costs incurred by the GBRMPA associated with that conduct.

Legal Services expenditure during the 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 Financial years may be recoverable under part VIII of the GBRMPA Act, and is disclosed as an unquantifiable contingent asset for the purposes of these financial statements.

### Unquantifiable Contingent Liabilities

On 4 June 2014 Queensland Nickel Pty Ltd (QNPL) commenced proceedings in the Federal Court challenging the Commonwealth's right to regulate its use of a 2km pipeline which is located within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. If QNPL is successful in its claim, GBRMPA may be liable for an unquantifiable contingent liability, being damages and the costs associated with QNPL's claim. If QNPL is unsuccessful in its claim, Legal Services expenditure during the 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years may be recoverable from QNPL.

### Significant Remote Contingencies

The GBRMPA has no Significant Remote Contingencies for the 2014-15 financial year (2013-14: Nil)

## Note 14: Senior Management Personnel Remuneration

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
<b>Short-term employee benefits</b>		
Salary	892,024	894,012
Performance bonuses	-	-
Motor vehicle and other allowances	40,899	41,896
<b>Total short-term employee benefits</b>	<b>932,923</b>	<b>935,908</b>
<b>Post-employment benefits</b>		
Superannuation	135,909	135,053
<b>Total post-employment benefits</b>	<b>135,909</b>	<b>135,053</b>
<b>Other long-term employee benefits</b>		
Annual leave	61,280	62,870
Long service leave	25,826	26,497
<b>Total other long-term employee benefits</b>	<b>87,106</b>	<b>89,367</b>
<b>Total senior executive remuneration benefits</b>	<b>1,155,938</b>	<b>1,160,328</b>

The total number of senior management personnel that are included in the above table are 4 individuals (2014: 4 individuals)

## Note 15: Financial Instruments

	2015	2014
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Note 15A: Categories of Financial Instruments</b>		
<b>Financial Assets</b>		
<b>Loans and receivables</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	132	324
Receivables for goods and services	85	173
Other receivables	204	70
<b>Total loans and receivables</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>567</b>
<b>Total financial assets</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>567</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>		
<b>Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b>		
Trade Creditors	3,613	2,097
Other	658	2,000
<b>Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b>	<b>4,271</b>	<b>4,097</b>
<b>Total financial liabilities</b>	<b>4,271</b>	<b>4,097</b>

### Note 15B: Credit Risk

The GBRMPA is exposed to minimal credit risk as loans and receivables were cash and trade receivables. The maximum exposure to credit risk was the risk that arises from potential default of a debtor. This amount is equal to the total amount of trade receivables (2015: \$85,000 and 2014: \$172,649).

The GBRMPA has assessed the risk of the default on payment and has allocated \$0 in 2015 (2014: \$2,671) to an impairment allowance account.

The GBRMPA held no collateral to mitigate against credit risk.

### Note 15C: Liquidity Risk

The GBRMPA's financial liabilities are payables and other non-interest bearing liabilities. The exposure to liquidity risk is based on the notion that GBRMPA will encounter difficulty in meeting its obligations associated with financial liabilities. This is highly unlikely as the GBRMPA is appropriated funding from the Australian Government and GBRMPA manages its budgeted funds to ensure that it has adequate funds to meet payments as they fall due. In addition, GBRMPA has policies in place to ensure timely payments are made when due and has no past experience of default.

The GBRMPA had no derivative financial liabilities in either 2015 or 2014

### Note 15D: Market Risk

The GBRMPA held basic financial instruments that did not expose the entity to certain market risks, such as 'Currency risk' and 'Other price risk'.

## Note 16: Financial Assets Reconciliation

	Notes	2015	2014
		\$'000	\$'000
<b>Total financial assets as per statement of financial position</b>		<b>11,618</b>	13,025
<b>Less non-financial instrument components</b>			
Appropriation receivable	8B	10,855	12,188
Other receivables	8B	342	270
<b>Total non-financial instrument components</b>		<b>11,197</b>	12,458
<b>Total financial assets as per financial instruments note</b>		<b>421</b>	567



**Note 17: Administered - Expenses**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 17: Suppliers</b>			
Goods and services supplied or rendered Suppliers		-	900
<b>Total good and services supplied or rendered</b>		-	<b>900</b>
<b>Goods and services supplied in connection with External parties</b>			
<b>Total goods and services supplied</b>		-	<b>900</b>
<b>Total suppliers</b>		-	<b>900</b>

**Note 18: Administered - Income**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<b>Non-Taxation Revenue</b>			
<b>Note 18: Sale of Goods and Rendering of Services</b>			
Rent from island properties		245	297
Infingement notices - external parties		232	98
Environmental management charge - external parties		5,660	5,344
<b>Total sale of goods and rendering of services</b>		<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,739</b>

### Note 19: Administered - Fair Value Measurements

The following tables provide an analysis of assets and liabilities that are measured at fair value. The different levels of the fair value hierarchy are defined below.

Level 1: Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at measurement date.  
 Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.  
 Level 3: Unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

#### Note 19A: Administered Fair Value Measurements

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period		For Levels 2 and 3 fair value measurements	
	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000	Category (Level 1, 2 or 3)	Valuation technique(s) <sup>1,2</sup>
<b>Non-financial assets</b>				<b>Inputs used</b>
Island Land & Buildings	-	9,150	Level 2	Market approach Income approach
Dent Island	1,080	-	Level 3	Rental details and capitalisation rates
Lady Elliot Island	2,190	-	Level 3	Adjusted transactions and sales data
Low Isles	610	-	Level 2	Market approach
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>		
<b>Total fair value measurements of assets in the statement of financial position</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>		

1. Valuation technique changed during the period for buildings and leasehold improvements as market approach was deemed unsuitable as Reef HQ cannot be easily sold and there is no market for leasehold improvements.

2. The following valuation techniques were used:

Cost approach: The amount a market participant would be prepared to pay to acquire or construct a substitute asset of comparable activity, adjusted for obsolescence  
 Market approach: Estimate of the current value of an asset with reference to recent market evidence including transactions of comparable assets within local markets

The GBRMPA procured valuation services from Pickles and relied on valuation models provided by Pickles. Pickles re-tests the valuation model every 12 months. Pickles provided written assurance to the GBRMPA that the model developed is in compliance with AASB 13.

**Note 19: Administered - Fair Value Measurements**

Note 19B: Administered Reconciliation from Recurring Level 3 Fair Value Measurements

Recurring Level 3 fair value measurements - reconciliation for assets

	Non-financial assets			
	Land & Buildings		Total	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 1 July	9,150	9,150	9,150	9,150
Revaluations	(5,270)	-	(5,270)	-
<b>Total as at 30 June</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>

The GBRMPA's policy for determining when transfers between levels are deemed to have occurred can be found in Note 1.

**Note 20: Administered - Financial Assets**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 20A: Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>			
Cash on hand or on deposit		-	132
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Note 20B: Trade and Other Receivables</b>			
<b>Goods and services receivable</b>			
Environmental management charge - external parties		1,649	1,008
<b>Total goods and services receivable</b>		<b>1,649</b>	<b>1,008</b>
<b>Other receivables</b>			
GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office		-	23
CDPP Court ordered fines		729	732
<b>Total other receivables</b>		<b>729</b>	<b>755</b>
<b>Total trade and other receivables (net)</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,763</b>
<b>Receivables are expected to be recovered</b>			
No more than 12 months		1,649	1,031
More than 12 months		729	732
<b>Total trade and other receivables (net)</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,763</b>
<b>Receivables (gross) are aged as follows</b>			
Not Overdue		1,649	1,031
Overdue by more than 90 days		729	732
<b>Total receivables (gross)</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,763</b>

Goods and services receivable was with entities external to the Australian Government. Credit terms are net 30 days (2014: 30 days).

**Note 21: Administered - Non-Financial Assets**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 21A: Land and Buildings</b>			
<b>Land</b>			
Island properties at fair value		3,880	9,150
<b>Total land and buildings</b>		<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>

No indications of impairment were found for the Island properties.  
The Islands are not expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

**Revaluations of non-financial assets**

All revaluations are conducted in accordance with the revaluation policy stated at Note 1. During 2014/15, an independent valuer (Pickles) conducted the revaluations.

Revaluation conducted in 2014/15 include decrements of \$5,270,000 for Island properties (2014: \$0).

All increments and decrements were transferred to the asset revaluation surplus by asset class and included in the equity section of the statement of financial position. No increment/decrement were expensed (2014: Nil).

Valuation methodology was changed for 2015 compared to previous years as improved data was available with visits undertaken to each island by the valuer as the islands are restricted in their use under Commonwealth lease agreements.

**Note 21: Administered - Non-Financial Assets (cont)****Note 21B: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment****Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment for 2015**

	Buildings \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2014</b>		
Gross book value	9,150	9,150
<b>Total as at 1 July 2014</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>9,150</b>
Additions		
Revaluations and impairments recognised in other comprehensive income	(5,270)	(5,270)
<b>Total as at 30 June 2015</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>3,880</b>
<b>Total as at 30 June 2015 represented by</b>		
Gross book value	3,880	3,880
<b>Total as at 30 June 2015</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>3,880</b>

**Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment for 2014**

	Buildings \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2013</b>		
Gross book value	9,150	9,150
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	-	-
<b>Total as at 1 July 2013</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>9,150</b>
Additions		
Revaluations and impairments recognised in other comprehensive income	-	-
<b>Total as at 30 June 2014</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>9,150</b>
<b>Total as at 30 June 2014 represented by</b>		
Gross book value	9,150	9,150
<b>Total as at 30 June 2014</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>9,150</b>

**Note 22: Administered - Payables**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 22: Suppliers</b>			
Trade creditors and accruals		-	155
Environmental management charge payable to Commonwealth		1,649	1,008
CDPP court ordered fines payable to Commonwealth		729	732
Other payables		-	-
<b>Total suppliers</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,895</b>
<b>Supplier payables expected to be settled within 12 months</b>			
Related entities		2,378	1,740
External parties		-	155
<b>Total supplier</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,895</b>

Settlement was usually made within 30 days (2014: 30 days)

**Note 23: Administered - Cash Flow Reconciliation**

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents as per administered schedule of assets and liabilities to administered Cash Flow Statement</b>			
<b>Cash and cash equivalents as per</b>			
Schedule of administered cash flows		-	132
Schedule of administered asset and liabilities		-	132
<b>Discrepancy</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Reconciliation of net cost of services to net cash from/(used by) operating activities</b>			
Net (cost of)/contribution by services		6,137	4,839
<b>Changes in assets / liabilities</b>			
<b>Assets</b>			
(Increase)/Decrease in net receivables	20B	(615)	149
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Increase/(Decrease) in supplier payables	22	(155)	98
Increase/(Decrease) in environmental management charge payable to Commonwealth	22	641	(106)
Increase/(Decrease) in CDPP Court order fines payable to Commonwealth	22	(3)	(58)
Increase/(Decrease) in other payables	22	-	(5)
<b>Net cash from/(used by) operating activities</b>		<b>6,005</b>	<b>4,917</b>

## Note 24: Administered - Contingent Assets and Liabilities

### Contingent Assets and Liabilities

The GBRMPA has no Contingent assets and Liabilities for the 2014-15 financial year (2013-14: Nil)

## Note 25: Administered - Financial Instruments

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Note 25A: Categories of Financial Instruments</b>			
<b>Financial Assets</b>			
<b>Loans and receivables</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents		-	132
Trade and other receivables		1,649	1,008
CDPP Court ordered fines		729	732
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,872</b>
<b>Carrying amount of financial assets</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,872</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>			
<b>At amortised cost</b>			
Trade Creditors		-	155
<b>Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>Carrying amount of financial liabilities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>155</b>

### Note 25B: Credit Risk

The administered activities of the GBRMPA were not exposed to a high level of credit risk as the majority of financial assets were cash and trade receivables. The GBRMPA manages its credit risk by undertaking background and credit checks prior to allowing a debtor relationship. In addition, the GBRMPA has policies and procedures that guide employees debt recovery techniques that are applied.

The GBRMPA held no collateral to mitigate against credit risk.

### Note 25C: Liquidity Risk

The GBRMPA's financial liabilities are payables and other non-interest bearing liabilities. The exposure to liquidity risk is based on the notion that GBRMPA will encounter difficulty in meeting its obligations associated with financial liabilities. This is highly unlikely as the GBRMPA is appropriated funding from the Australian Government and GBRMPA manages its budgeted funds to ensure that it has adequate funds to meet payments as they fall due. In addition, GBRMPA has policies in place to ensure timely payments are made when due and has no past experience of default.

The GBRMPA had no derivative financial liabilities in in both the current and prior financial year.

### Note 25D: Market Risk

The GBRMPA held basic financial instruments that did not expose the entity to certain market risks, such as 'Currency risk' and 'Other price risk'.

## Note 26: Administered - Financial Assets Reconciliation

	Notes	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Total financial assets as per administered schedule of assets and liabilities</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,895</b>
<b>Less financial instrument components</b>			
Receivables - GST input tax credits		-	23
<b>Total financial instrument components</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Total financial assets as per administered financial instruments note</b>		<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,872</b>

**Note 27: Appropriations**

**Note 27A: Annual Appropriations (Recoverable GST exclusive)**

	Appropriation Act		PGPA Act			Appropriation applied in 2015 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance <sup>3</sup> \$'000	Section 51 determinations <sup>5</sup> \$'000
	Annual Appropriation \$'000	AFW <sup>2</sup> \$'000	Section 74 \$'000	Section 75 \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000			
<b>Departmental</b>								
Ordinary annual services	21,485	-	24,794	-	46,279	47,547	(1,268)	-
Other services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total departmental</b>	<b>21,485</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24,794</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>46,279</b>	<b>47,547</b>	<b>(1,268)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Administered</b>								
Ordinary annual services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Administered items	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total administered</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**Notes**

1. In 2014-2015, there were no appropriations that have been quarantined.
2. In 2014-2015, there was no adjustment that met the recognition criteria of a formal addition or reduction in revenue (in accordance with FRR Part 6 Div 3) but at law the appropriations had not been amended before the end of the reporting period.
3. In 2014-2015, there were no material differences.



**Note 27: Appropriations (cont)**

**Note 27A: Annual Appropriations (Recoverable GST exclusive)**

Annual Appropriations for 2014	Appropriation Act		FMA Act				Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2014 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance \$'000
	Annual Appropriation \$'000	Appropriations reduced <sup>1</sup> \$'000	Section 30 \$'000	Section 31 \$'000	Section 32 \$'000	Section 33 \$'000			
Departmental									
Ordinary annual services	23,069	-	1,682	24,000	-	-	48,751	46,520	2,231
Other services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total departmental</b>	<b>23,069</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>24,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>48,751</b>	<b>46,520</b>	<b>2,231</b>
Administered									
Ordinary annual services	900	-	80	-	-	-	980	980	-
Administered items	900	-	80	-	-	-	980	980	-
<b>Total administered</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,960</b>	<b>1,960</b>	<b>-</b>

**Notes**

- Appropriations reduced under Appropriation Acts (Nos. 1,385) 2013-14, sections 10, 11, 12 and 15 and under Appropriation Acts (Nos.2,486) 2013-14, sections 12, 13, 14 and 17. Departmental appropriations do not lapse at financial year-end. However, the responsible Minister may decide that part or all of departmental appropriation is not required and request the Finance Minister to reduce that appropriation. The reduction in the appropriation is effected by the Finance Minister's determination and is disallowed by Parliament. In 2014, there was no reduction in departmental and non-operating departmental appropriations.
- As with departmental appropriations, the responsible Minister may decide that part or all of an administered appropriation is not required and request that the Finance Minister reduce that appropriation. For administered appropriations reduced under section 11 of Appropriation Acts (Nos. 1,385) 2012-13 and section 12 of Appropriation Acts (Nos. 2,486) 2013-14, the appropriation is taken to be reduced to the required amount specified in Table F of this note once the annual report is tabled in Parliament. All administered appropriations may be adjusted by a Finance Minister's determination, which is disallowable by Parliament. In 2013, there was no reduction in administered and non-operating administered appropriations.
- In 2013-14, there was no adjustment that met the recognition criteria of a formal addition or reduction in revenue (in accordance with FMO Div 101) but at law the appropriations had not been amended before the end of the reporting period.

**Note 27: Appropriations (cont)**

**Note 27B: Departmental and Administered Capital Budgets (Recoverable GST exclusive)**

	2015 Capital Budget Appropriations		Capital Budget Appropriations applied in 2015 (current and prior years)			
	Appropriation Act	PGPA Act	Total Capital Budget Appropriations	Payments for non-financial assets <sup>2</sup>	Total payments	Variance
	Annual Capital Budget \$'000	Section 75 Appropriations \$'000	Appropriations \$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Departmental Ordinary annual services - Departmental Capital Budget	775	-	775	775	775	-

**Notes**

1. Departmental and Administered Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3&5). They form part of ordinary annual services, and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts. For more information on ordinary annual services appropriations, please see Note 27A: Annual Appropriations.

2. Payments made on non-financial assets include purchase of assets, expenditure on assets which has been capitalised and costs incurred to make good an asset to its original condition.

	2014 Capital Budget Appropriations			Capital Budget Appropriations applied in 2014 (current and prior years)			
	Appropriation Act	Appropriations reduced <sup>1</sup>	FWA Act	Total Capital Budget Appropriations	Payments for non-purposes	Total payments	Variance
	Annual Capital Budget \$'000	\$'000	Section 32 \$'000	\$'000 financial assets <sup>3</sup>	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Departmental Ordinary annual services - Departmental Capital Budget <sup>1</sup>	880	-	-	880	(880)	(880)	-

**Notes**

1. Departmental and Administered Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3&5). They form part of ordinary annual services, and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts. For more information on ordinary annual services appropriations, please see Table A: Annual appropriations.

2. Appropriations reduced under Appropriations Acts (No.1,3&5) 2013-14: sections 10, 11, 12 and 15 or via a determination by the Finance Minister.

3. Payments made on non-financial assets include purchase of assets, expenditure on assets which has been capitalised, costs incurred to make good an asset to its original condition and the capital repayment component of finance leases.

## Note 27: Appropriations (cont)

### Note 27C: Unspent Annual Appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Departmental</b>		
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2012-13	-	4,855
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2013-14	8,468	6,740
Special Appropriation Act (s65A GBRMP Act) 2013-14	-	593
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2014-15	1,727	-
Special Appropriation Act (s65A GBRMP Act) 2014-15	660	-
<b>Total departmental</b>	<b>10,855</b>	<b>12,188</b>

Note 1. The GBRMPA commenced as a 'prescribed agency' from 1 July 2007 under the *Financial Management Accountability Act 1997*. Previous to 1 July 2007, the GBRMPA was subject to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.

### Note 27D: Special Appropriations Applied ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

Authority	Type	Purpose	Appropriation applied	
			2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act s.65A, Departmental	Unlimited Amount	Operations of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	5,660	5,343
<b>Total</b>			<b>5,660</b>	<b>5,343</b>

## Note 28: Special Accounts

### Note 28: Special Accounts ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

Departmental	Great Barrier Reef Field Management Account <sup>1</sup>	
	2015	2014
Cash Balance brought forward from previous period	678	643
Prior Year funds held in the OPA	1,346,505	1,334,280
<b>Total cash available for Field Management Program</b>	<b>1,347,183</b>	<b>1,334,923</b>
<b>Increases</b>		
Payments from Queensland Government	8,372,000	8,372,000
Appropriation	8,372,000	8,608,015
Receipts from external parties	90,530	64,199
<b>Total increases</b>	<b>16,834,530</b>	<b>17,044,214</b>
<b>Available for payments</b>	<b>18,181,713</b>	<b>18,379,137</b>
<b>Decreases</b>		
Payments made to Queensland Government	12,456,919	12,281,919
Payments made to external parties and employees	4,333,789	4,724,002
Bank Fees	57	46
Capital expenditure	78,951	25,987
<b>Total decreases</b>	<b>16,869,716</b>	<b>17,031,954</b>
<b>Total balance carried to the next period and represented by:</b>	<b>1,311,996</b>	<b>1,347,183</b>
Funds held in the OPA	1,311,685	1,346,505
<b>Cash Balance</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>678</b>

1. Appropriation: Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act section 80.

Establishing Instrument: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975; section 49

Purpose: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975; section 51(2):

- the management, protection or maintenance of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area;
- purposes incidental to the management, protection or maintenance of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area;
- meeting the expenses of administering the account.

The Special Account is used for the facilitation of payments for and on behalf of the GBRMPA and the Queensland Government Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (DNPRSR). See Note 7 for further details.

## Note 29: Reporting of Outcomes

The GBRMPA is included in the Department of Environment Portfolio: Program 1.1: Sustainable management of natural resources and the environment.

The GBRMPA primary outcome is to ensure the long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park.

The outcome is supported by three objectives:

- a) Protecting and restoring the Reef's ecosystem health and biodiversity;
- b) Safeguarding the Reef's heritage; and
- c) Ensuring use of the region is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations.

### Note 29A: Net Cost of Outcome Delivery

	Outcome 1	
	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Departmental</b>		
Expenses	52,450	54,517
Own-Source income	22,919	24,109
<b>Administered</b>		
Expenses	-	900
Income	6,137	5,739
<b>Net cost/(contribution) of outcome delivery</b>	<b>23,394</b>	<b>25,569</b>

## Note 30: Cost Recovery

### Note 30: Cost Recovery Summary

	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>Expenses</b>		
Departmental	2,029	1,967
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>2,029</b>	<b>1,967</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Departmental	350	341
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>341</b>

### Cost recovered activities

1. Regulation of tourist access to the Reef through a system of permits and approval of major projects involving the Marine Park

## Note 31: Budgetary Reports and Explanations of Major Variances

The following tables provide a comparison of the original budget as presented in the 2014-15 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) and the revised budget as presented in the 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) to the 2014-15 final outcome as presented in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards for the GBRMPA. The budget is not audited.

### Note 31A: Departmental Budgetary Reports

#### Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period ended 30 June 2015

	Actual	Budget Estimate		Variance <sup>3</sup>
	2015 \$'000	Original <sup>1</sup> 2015 \$'000	Revised <sup>2</sup> 2015 \$'000	2015 \$'000
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>				
<b>Expenses</b>				
Employee Benefits	20,484	20,639	21,088	(155)
Supplier	17,435	14,392	16,527	3,043
Grants	12	35	20	(23)
Depreciation	1,908	1,700	1,900	208
Losses from asset sales	5	-	-	5
Cost of goods sold	149	-	-	149
Payments to Queensland Government for Field Management Program	12,457	12,226	12,226	231
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>52,450</b>	<b>48,992</b>	<b>51,761</b>	<b>3,458</b>
<b>Own-source Income</b>				
<b>Own-source revenue</b>				
Sale of goods and rendering of services	2,617	3,020	3,020	(403)
Payments from Queensland Government for Field Management Program	8,372	8,372	8,372	-
Other Revenue	11,875	10,300	10,650	1,575
<b>Total own-source revenue</b>	<b>22,864</b>	<b>21,692</b>	<b>22,042</b>	<b>1,172</b>
<b>Gains</b>				
Other	55	48	54	7
<b>Total gains</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total own-source income</b>	<b>22,919</b>	<b>21,740</b>	<b>22,096</b>	<b>1,179</b>
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>	<b>(29,531)</b>	<b>(27,252)</b>	<b>(29,665)</b>	<b>(2,279)</b>
Revenue from Government	27,145	26,072	26,485	1,073
<b>Total Revenue from Government</b>	<b>27,145</b>	<b>26,072</b>	<b>26,485</b>	<b>1,073</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to the Australian Government</b>	<b>(2,386)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>				
<b>Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services</b>				
Changes in asset revaluation surplus	(465)	-	-	(465)
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(465)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) attributable to the Australian Government</b>	<b>(2,851)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,671)</b>

1. The GBRMPA's original budgeted financial statement that was first presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 13 May 2014 being the GBRMPA's 2014-15 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

2. The GBRMPA's revised budgeted financial statement that was presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 12 May 2015 being the GBRMPA's 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

3. Between the actual and the revised budgeted amounts for 2015. Explanations of major variances are provided further below.

## Note 31: Budgetary Reports and Explanations of Major Variances (cont)

### Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2015

	Actual	Budget Estimate		Variance <sup>3</sup> 2015 \$'000
	2015 \$'000	Original <sup>1</sup> 2015 \$'000	Revised <sup>2</sup> 2015 \$'000	
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Financial Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	132	480	324	(348)
Trade and other receivables	11,486	10,511	10,231	975
<b>Total financial assets</b>	<b>11,618</b>	<b>10,991</b>	<b>10,555</b>	<b>627</b>
<b>Non-Financial Assets</b>				
Buildings and leasehold improvements	17,159	18,269	18,160	(1,110)
Property, plant and equipment	2,328	3,620	2,620	(1,292)
Intangibles	2,307	2,176	2,442	131
Inventories	339	81	62	258
Other non-financial assets	1,019	193	266	826
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>	<b>23,152</b>	<b>24,339</b>	<b>23,550</b>	<b>(1,187)</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>34,770</b>	<b>35,330</b>	<b>34,105</b>	<b>(560)</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>Payables</b>				
Suppliers	3,613	1,784	2,495	1,829
Other payables	658	932	436	(274)
Permit bonds	263	-	-	263
<b>Total payables</b>	<b>4,534</b>	<b>2,716</b>	<b>2,931</b>	<b>1,818</b>
<b>Provisions</b>				
Employee provisions	5,593	5,873	6,551	(280)
Other provisions	74	383	382	(309)
<b>Total provisions</b>	<b>5,667</b>	<b>6,256</b>	<b>6,933</b>	<b>(589)</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>10,201</b>	<b>8,972</b>	<b>9,864</b>	<b>1,229</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>24,569</b>	<b>26,358</b>	<b>24,241</b>	<b>(1,789)</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>				
Contributed equity	22,367	13,791	13,791	8,576
Reserves	13,168	22,209	22,209	(9,041)
Retained surplus (accumulated deficit)	(10,966)	(9,642)	(11,759)	(1,324)
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>24,569</b>	<b>26,358</b>	<b>24,241</b>	<b>(1,789)</b>

1. The GBRMPA's original budgeted financial statement that was first presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 13 May 2014 being the GBRMPA's 2014-15 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

2. The GBRMPA's revised budgeted financial statement that was presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 12 May 2015 being the GBRMPA's 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

3. Between the actual and the revised budgeted amounts for 2015. Explanations of major variances are provided further below.

**Note 31: Budgetary Reports and Explanations of Major Variances (cont)**

**Statement of Changes in Equity**  
*for the period ended 30 June 2015*

	Actual		Retained earnings		Variance <sup>3</sup>		Actual		Asset revaluation		Variance <sup>3</sup>	
	2015	2015	Original <sup>1</sup>	Budget Estimate	2015	2015	2015	2015	Original <sup>1</sup>	Budget Estimate	2015	2015
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance												
Balance carried forward from previous period	(8,580)	(8,462)	(8,462)	(8,579)	(118)	(118)	13,633	22,209	22,209	22,209	(8,576)	(8,576)
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	<b>(8,580)</b>	<b>(8,462)</b>	<b>(8,462)</b>	<b>(8,579)</b>	<b>(118)</b>	<b>(118)</b>	<b>13,633</b>	<b>22,209</b>	<b>22,209</b>	<b>22,209</b>	<b>(8,576)</b>	<b>(8,576)</b>
<b>Comprehensive income</b>	<b>(2,386)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>(465)</b>
Surplus for the period												
Other comprehensive income												
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>(2,386)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>(465)</b>
Total comprehensive income attributable to Australian Government	(2,386)	(1,180)	(1,180)	(3,180)	(1,206)	(1,206)	(465)	-	-	-	(465)	(465)
Transactions with owners												
Contributions by owners												
Equity injection - Appropriations												
Departmental capital budget												
<b>Total transactions with owners</b>	<b>(10,966)</b>	<b>(9,642)</b>	<b>(9,642)</b>	<b>(11,759)</b>	<b>(1,324)</b>	<b>(1,324)</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>22,209</b>	<b>22,209</b>	<b>22,209</b>	<b>(9,041)</b>	<b>(9,041)</b>
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**Statement of Changes in Equity (cont)**  
*for the period ended 30 June 2015*

	Actual		Contributed equity/capital		Variance <sup>3</sup>		Actual		Total equity		Variance <sup>3</sup>	
	2015	2015	Original <sup>1</sup>	Budget Estimate	2014	2015	2015	2015	Original <sup>1</sup>	Budget Estimate	2014	2015
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance												
Balance carried forward from previous period	21,592	13,016	13,016	13,016	8,576	8,576	26,645	26,763	26,763	26,646	(118)	(118)
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	<b>21,592</b>	<b>13,016</b>	<b>13,016</b>	<b>13,016</b>	<b>8,576</b>	<b>8,576</b>	<b>26,645</b>	<b>26,763</b>	<b>26,763</b>	<b>26,646</b>	<b>(118)</b>	<b>(118)</b>
<b>Comprehensive income</b>	<b>(2,386)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>
Surplus for the period												
Other comprehensive income												
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>(2,386)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(1,206)</b>	<b>(465)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,180)</b>	<b>(3,180)</b>	<b>(1,671)</b>	<b>(1,671)</b>
Total comprehensive income attributable to Australian Government	(2,386)	(1,180)	(1,180)	(3,180)	(1,206)	(1,206)	(465)	-	(1,180)	(3,180)	(1,671)	(1,671)
Transactions with owners												
Contributions by owners												
Equity injection - Appropriations												
Departmental capital budget												
<b>Total transactions with owners</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>22,367</b>	<b>13,791</b>	<b>13,791</b>	<b>13,791</b>	<b>8,576</b>	<b>8,576</b>	<b>24,569</b>	<b>26,368</b>	<b>26,368</b>	<b>24,241</b>	<b>(1,769)</b>	<b>(1,769)</b>

1. The GBRMPA's original budgeted financial statement that was first presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 13 May 2014 being the GBRMPA's 2014-15 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

2. The GBRMPA's revised budgeted financial statement that was presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 12 May 2015 being the GBRMPA's 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

3. Between the actual and the revised budgeted amounts for 2015. Explanations of major variances are provided further below.

**Note 31: Budgetary Reports and Explanations of Major Variances (cont)**

Cash Flow Statement  
for the period ended 30 June 2015

	Actual 2015 \$'000	Budget Estimate		Variance <sup>3</sup> 2015 \$'000
		Original <sup>1</sup> 2015 \$'000	Revised <sup>2</sup> 2,015 \$'000	
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Cash received</b>				
Appropriations	27,145	26,072	27,655	1,073
Receipts from Government	11,478	10,300	10,650	1,178
Permit assessment fees	350	350	350	-
Reef HQ admission fees	1,363	990	987	373
GST received	112	1,200	1,200	(1,088)
Payments from Queensland Government for Field Management Program	8,372	8,372	8,372	-
Section 72 receipts transferred from OPA	1,303	-	1,303	1,303
Other	1,957	1,800	1,800	157
<b>Total cash received</b>	<b>52,080</b>	<b>49,084</b>	<b>52,317</b>	<b>2,996</b>
<b>Cash used</b>				
Grants	12	35	20	(23)
Employees	21,899	20,344	21,861	1,555
Suppliers	16,250	15,544	17,275	706
GST paid	1,525	120	120	1,405
Payments to Queensland Government for Field Management Program	12,457	12,521	12,521	(64)
Section 72 receipts transferred to OPA	-	-	-	-
<b>Total cash used</b>	<b>52,143</b>	<b>48,564</b>	<b>51,797</b>	<b>3,579</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) operating activities</b>	<b>(63)</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>(583)</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Cash used</b>				
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	904	1,295	1,295	(391)
<b>Total cash used</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>(391)</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) investing activities</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>(391)</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Cash received</b>				
Contributed equity	775	775	775	-
<b>Total cash received</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Cash from/(used by) Financing activities</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash held</b>	<b>(192)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(192)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	324	480	324	(156)
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>(348)</b>

1. The GBRMPA's original budgeted financial statement that was first presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 13 May 2014 being the GBRMPA's 2014-15 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).
2. The GBRMPA's revised budgeted financial statement that was presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 12 May 2015 being the GBRMPA's 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).
3. Between the actual and the revised budgeted amounts for 2015. Explanations of major variances are provided further below.



**Note 31: Budgetary Reports and Explanations of Major Variances (cont)**

**Note 31B: Departmental Major Variances for 2015**

Explanations of major variances	Affected line items and statement
<p><b>Expenses</b>                      GBRMPA received additional \$0.449m appropriation funding from Department of Finance for redundancies in the revised budget however the expense was incurred in 2013/14 as per normal accrual accounting                      Crown of Thorns Starfish MOU renewal signed with the Department of Environment and contract signed with supplier to undertake work in June 2015 for \$0.800m. Additional MOU with the Department of Environment for Marine Debris program of \$0.350m was signed after PBS was published. Legal expenses of approx. \$1.400m was incurred for cases currently before Federal Court                      Cost of Goods Sold is not included in PBS and will be updated at next available opportunity                      Additional funding was provided to QLD Government Field Management program for the purchase of additional marine vessels and related equipment</p>	<p>Employee expenses, Revenue from Government and Cash Received Appropriations                      Supplier expenses, Other Revenue and Trade and Other Receivables, Supplier Payables, Cash Receipts from Government and Cash Suppliers                      Cost of Goods Sold                      Payment to QLD, Cashflow payments to QLD</p>
<p><b>Revenue</b>                      Reef HQ aquarium received lower admission revenue for the 2014/15 year as more visitors purchase yearly memberships and there were further reduction in tourist groups. Furthermore revenue of \$0.065m received in 2013/14 from overseas university, was recognised as per AASB 1004, funding activities in the July/August 2014.                      Additional monies was received from tourism operators for Environmental Management Charge \$0.660m</p>	<p>Sale of Goods and Services, Supplier expenses                      Revenue from Government - Special Appropriation, Other Payables and Cashflow - Appropriations</p>
<p><b>Equity</b>                      Capital and Reserves amount in the PBS were incorrectly stated in both original and revised budgets and will be adjusted at next available opportunity transferring \$8.576m to Capital from Reserves                      Revaluations of Fixed Assets are not budgeted in the PBS</p>	<p>Equity - Capital &amp; Reserves                      Equity - Reserves, Assets</p>
<p><b>Assets</b>                      IT and Reef HQ Projects were not started due to resourcing availability                      Payroll payment made to external payroll provider on 30 June 2015 for provision of salaries and wages to be paid to employees on 2nd July 2015                      Live fish disposed from Fixed Assets Register and added as Inventory</p>	<p>Purchase of Property, Plant &amp; Equipment and Cashflow                      Prepayments                      Inventory</p>
<p><b>Liabilities</b>                      Permit Bonds held on behalf of Permittees are not budgeted as monies reside in the CRF                      Redundancy provision was included in budget but this was paid over the course of the financial year                      Make good provision for Townsville main office building was removed as it is not required under lease</p>	<p>Permit Bonds                      Employee provisions                      Other Provisions and Building and Leasehold Improvements</p>
<p><b>Cashflow</b>                      GST entered incorrectly in PBS                      Funds held in OPA are not budgeted to drawdown in the current year. GBRMPA had higher Legal costs and leave payouts associated with terminations that was required to be drawn from previous financial years appropriation</p>	<p>GST Cash received and GST Cash used                      Appropriation and Section 72</p>

**Note 31: Budgetary Reports and Explanations of Major Variances (cont)**

Note 31C: Administered Budgetary Reports

Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income  
for the period ended 30 June 2015

	Actual 2015 \$'000	Budget Estimate		Variance <sup>3</sup> 2015 \$'000
		Original <sup>1</sup> 2015 \$'000	Revised <sup>2</sup> 2015 \$'000	
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>				
<b>INCOME</b>				
Revenue				
Non-taxation revenue				
Rent from island properties	245	285	285	(40)
Fines and infringement notices	232	-	-	232
Environmental management charge	5,660	5,000	5,000	660
<b>Total non-taxation revenue</b>	<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>852</b>
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>852</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>852</b>
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>	<b>6,137</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>852</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation surplus	(5,270)	-	-	(5,270)
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>	<b>(5,270)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(5,270)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss)</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>5,285</b>	<b>(4,418)</b>

1. The GBRMPA's original budgeted financial statement that was first presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 13 May 2014 being the GBRMPA's 2014-15 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

2. The GBRMPA's revised budgeted financial statement that was presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 12 May 2015 being the GBRMPA's 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

3. Between the actual and the revised budgeted amounts for 2015. Explanations of major variances are provided further below.

**Note 31: Budgetary Reports and Explanations of Major Variances (cont)**

Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities  
as at 30 June 2015

	Actual 2015 \$'000	Budget Estimate		Variance <sup>3</sup> 2015 \$'000
		Original <sup>1</sup> 2015 \$'000	Revised <sup>2</sup> 2015 \$'000	
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Financial Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	-	-	-	-
Receivables - Environmental management charge	1,649	1,000	1,000	649
Receivables - GST input tax credits	-	-	-	-
Receivables - CDPP Court ordered fines	729	740	740	(11)
<b>Total financial assets</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>638</b>
<b>Non-Financial Assets</b>				
Island properties	3,880	9,150	9,150	(5,270)
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>(5,270)</b>
<b>Total assets administered on behalf of Government</b>	<b>6,258</b>	<b>10,890</b>	<b>10,890</b>	<b>(4,632)</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>Payables</b>				
Suppliers	-	-	-	-
Environmental management charge payable to Commonwealth	1,649	1,000	1,000	649
CDPP court ordered fines payable to Commonwealth	729	740	740	(11)
Other payables	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payables</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>638</b>
<b>Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>638</b>
<b>Net assets/(liabilities)</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>9,150</b>	<b>(5,270)</b>

- The GBRMPA's original budgeted financial statement that was first presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 13 May 2014 being the GBRMPA's 2014-15 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).
- The GBRMPA's revised budgeted financial statement that was presented to parliament in respect of the reporting period on 12 May 2015 being the GBRMPA's 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).
- Between the actual and the revised budgeted amounts for 2015. Explanations of major variances are provided further below.

**Note 31D: Administered Major Variances for 2015**

<u>Explanations of major variances</u>	<u>Affected line items and statement</u>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Dent Island currently has a reduction in Rent offsetting improvements the lessee has completed on the island	Rental revenue
Infringement Fees and Fines are not budgeted in the PBS	Rental revenue
Higher than expected revenue received from tourism operators visiting to the GBR	Infringement Fees and Fines Environmental Management Charge
<b>Receivable</b>	
Charges from 1 April 2015 have increased back to normal level \$6.00 per person with payments due to GBMRPA on or before 31 July 2015	Environmental Management Charge
<b>Assets</b>	
Revaluations were conducted on Island Properties	Island Properties Asset and Equity



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# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A: AGENCY RESOURCE STATEMENTS AND RESOURCES FOR OUTCOMES

Table 22 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority resource statement 2014–15

		Actual available appropriation for 2014–15 \$,000	Payments made 2014–15 \$,000	Balance remaining 2014–15 \$,000
		(a)	(b)	(a) – (b)
<b>Ordinary annual services<sup>1</sup></b>				
Departmental appropriation <sup>2</sup>		46,579	36,384	10,195
<b>Total</b>		<b>46,579</b>	<b>36,384</b>	<b>10,195</b>
<b>Administered expenses</b>				
Outcome 1 <sup>3</sup>		0	0	
<b>Total</b>				
<b>Total ordinary annual services</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>46,579</b>	<b>36,384</b>	
<b>Other services<sup>4</sup></b>				
<b>Departmental non-operating</b>				
Equity injections		0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total other services</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total available annual appropriations and payments</b>		<b>46,579</b>	<b>36,384</b>	
<b>Special appropriations</b>				
<b>Special appropriations limited by criteria/entitlement</b>				
Special appropriation Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act		5660	5660	
<b>Total special appropriations</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>5660</b>	<b>5660</b>	

		Actual available appropriation for 2014–15 \$,000	Payments made 2014–15 \$,000	Balance remaining 2014–15 \$,000
<b>Special accounts<sup>5</sup></b>				
Opening balance		1347		
Appropriation receipts <sup>6</sup>		8372		
Non-appropriation receipts to special accounts		8463		
Payments made			16,870	
<b>Total special account</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>18,182</b>	<b>16,870</b>	<b>1,312</b>
<b>Total resourcing and payments</b>				
A+B+C+D		70,421	58,914	
Less appropriations drawn from annual or special appropriations above and credited to special accounts		8372	8372	
<b>Total net resourcing and payments for GBRMPA</b>		<b>62,049</b>	<b>50,542</b>	

- <sup>1</sup> Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2014–15. This may also include Prior Year departmental appropriation and S.74 relevant agency receipts.
- <sup>2</sup> Includes an amount of \$0.775m in 2014–15 for the Departmental Capital Budget. For accounting purposes this amount has been designated as ‘contributions by owners’.
- <sup>3</sup> Includes an amount of \$0m in 2014–15 for the Administered Capital Budget. For accounting purposes this amount has been designated as ‘contributions by owners’.
- <sup>4</sup> Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2014–15
- <sup>5</sup> Does not include ‘Special Public Money’ held in accounts like Other Trust Monies accounts (OTM). Services for other Government and Non-agency Bodies accounts (SOG), or Services for Other Entities and Trust Monies Special accounts (SOETM).

**Table 23** Expenses and resources for outcome 1

EXPENSES AND RESOURCES FOR OUTCOME 1			
Outcome 1: (The long term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park)	Budget*	Actual expenses	Variation
	2014-15 \$'000	2014-15 \$'000	2014-15 \$'000
	(a)	(b)	(a) – (b)
<b>Program 1.1: (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority)</b>			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	0	0	0
<b>Departmental expenses</b>			
Departmental appropriation <sup>1</sup>	25,873	27,957	-2,084
Special appropriations	5000	5660	-660
Special accounts	16,784	16,870	-86
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year	1748	1963	-215
<b>Total for program 1.1</b>	49,405	52,450	-3045
<b>Total expenses for outcome 1</b>	<b>49,405</b>	<b>52,450</b>	<b>-3045</b>
	2014-15	2014-15	
<b>Average staffing level (number)</b>	200	200	

\* Full year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2014-15 Budget.

<sup>1</sup> Departmental Appropriation combines 'Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Bill No.1)' and 'Revenue from independent sources (s74)'.



## APPENDIX B: STAFFING OVERVIEW

Table 24 Employee overview as at 30 June 2015

Classification	ONGOING EMPLOYEES					NON-ONGOING EMPLOYEES				
	Female		Male		Total	Female		Male		Total
	Full time	Part time	Full time	Part time		Full time	Part time	Full time	Part time	
APS1	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
APS2	1	5	2	0	8	5	0	1	0	6
APS3	12	2	2	0	16	0	0	0	0	0
APS4	11	2	6	0	19	2	0	0	0	2
APS5	19	1	4	1	25	1	0	1	0	2
APS6	24	2	15	1	42	6	0	1	0	7
EL1	20	4	19	0	43	1	2	0	0	3
EL2	4	0	9	0	13	0	0	1	0	1
SES1	1	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
CEO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>

As at 30 June 2015 the total number of employees = **193**

The total number of employees in 2013–14 was 214, while the total number in 2012–13 was **222**.

The agency's main offices are in Townsville, where 174 employees were based as at 30 June 2014. In addition, there were 11 employees in the Cairns office, two employees in Mackay, two employees in Rockhampton and four employees in Canberra.

**Table 25** Workplace diversity figures as at 30 June 2015

Classification	Total	Women	ATSI	NESB	NESB1	NESB2	PWD
APS1	2	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
APS2	14	11 (79%)	0 (0%)	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)
APS3	16	14 (88%)	2 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (27%)	0 (27%)	0 (0%)
APS4	21	15 (71%)	1 (5%)	3 (14%)	4 (19%)	4 (19%)	0 (0%)
APS5	27	21 (78%)	0 (0%)	4 (15%)	4 (15%)	4 (15%)	0 (0%)
APS6	49	32 (65%)	5 (10%)	5 (10%)	2 (4%)	4 (8%)	1 (2%)
EL1	46	27 (59%)	1 (2%)	4 (9%)	1 (2%)	3 (7%)	3 (7%)
EL2	14	4 (29%)	1 (7%)	2 (14%)	2 (14%)	2 (14%)	0 (0%)
SES1	3	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
CEO	1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>126 (65%)</b>	<b>10 (5%)</b>	<b>20 (10%)</b>	<b>14 (7%)</b>	<b>18 (9%)</b>	<b>4 (2%)</b>

ATSI (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander)

NESB (Non-English speaking background)

NESB1 (Non-English speaking background, second generation (mother))

NESB2 (Non-English speaking background, second generation (father)) PWD (People with a disability)

## APPENDIX C: ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

During 2014–15 the agency conducted advertising campaigns. Details of costs are included in Table 26

**Zoning education:** The agency ran print advertisements in the monthly recreational fishing magazine, *Fish & Boat*, to raise awareness about the zoning rules in place in the Marine Park. This advertising was placed through Adcorp.

In addition, the agency ran zoning awareness advertisements in nine regional newspapers along the Great Barrier Reef coast in the two weeks prior to the June 2015 school holidays,

and developed and ran a radio advertisement on 11 radio stations along the coast at the same time. The advertisements were placed by Adcorp and the radio advertisement developed by Adcorp.

Additionally, a zoning awareness advertisement was placed in the 2015–2016 edition of the *Queensland Recreational Boating and Fishing Guide*.

**Promotion of Reef HQ Aquarium:** A range of promotional advertising was undertaken to promote Reef HQ Aquarium, the national education centre for the Great Barrier Reef. This included mainstream and social media, direct mail-outs and Yellow Pages.

Table 26 Media advertising organisations used in 2014–15

Advertising campaign	Amount 2014–15	Amount 2013–14
Zoning education, Queensland Seafood Industry Association		\$7326
Reef HQ marketing, Mitchell & Partners	\$37690	
Reef HQ marketing, Townsville Enterprise	\$8370	
Marine Park Compliance, Mitchell & Partners	\$8799	
Reef HQ marketing, Universal McCann		\$30,795
Zoning education, Sign Time		\$3446
Zoning education, Adcorp		\$4117
Strategic Assessment, Adcorp		\$25,850
Joint Strategic Assessment, QLD Government		\$8547

## APPENDIX D: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

*The Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) provides the community with the right of access to documents held by Australian Government agencies.

This right of access is limited only by certain exceptions and exemptions which are contained in the FOI Act. Under the FOI Act, to request access to information an application must:

1. be made in writing
2. state that the request is an application for the purposes of the FOI Act
3. provide enough information about the document(s) for a responsible officer of the agency to identify it (them)
4. provide an address in Australia at which notices under the FOI Act may be sent to the applicant.

FOI requests should be sent to:

The FOI contact officer  
c/- Legal Services  
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
PO Box 1379  
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810  
Australia

Alternatively, they can be lodged via email to [FOI@gbrmpa.gov.au](mailto:FOI@gbrmpa.gov.au).

Freedom of information requests can also be delivered to the agency's Townsville office at 2-68 Flinders Street, Townsville QLD 4810.

If the applicant decides to proceed with a request, charges may also be payable for the time spent searching for and retrieving relevant documents, decision-making time, photocopying and postage, etc. In the event that the agency decides that an applicant is liable to pay a charge for processing a request, the applicant would be notified of the preliminary assessment of the charge and have the opportunity to contend that the charge should not be imposed, or should be reduced.

If any difficulty arises in identifying a document or in providing access in the form requested,

an officer of the agency will contact the applicant with a view to resolving the difficulty. In consultation with the applicant, documents will be made available by mail to the address specified by the applicant or at the official freedom of information access point.

The authorised decision-makers in respect of a request made under the FOI Act for the agency are the Chairman, the general managers, the director legal services and the senior legal officers.

Documents released under the FOI Act are listed on the agency's disclosure log, located at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au/home/freedom-ofinformation-requests/foi](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/home/freedom-ofinformation-requests/foi). This does not include those documents excepted under section 11C of the FOI Act.

### Freedom of information operations

During the 2014-15 financial year, the agency received eight requests for access to documents under the FOI Act. Of those, two applications were granted partial access, one was granted full access, nil were refused, four were withdrawn and one was deemed invalid.

There were no internal review applications received for decisions made under the FOI Act during 2014-2015.

Two applications were made to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner for review of two decisions made under the FOI Act during 2014-15. The two decisions were varied by the agency under section 55G of the FOI Act to release documents in part and the two applications for review were subsequently withdrawn by the applicant.

One application was made to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for review of a decision made under the FOI Act during 2014-15.

There were no applications to amend records under the FOI Act during 2014-15.

A total of \$2122.51 was received in charges under the FOI Act during 2014-15.

### Part II of the FOI Act — Information Publication Scheme

Amendments to the FOI Act which took effect on 1 May 2011 require that certain information

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about the agency is to be published through an Information Publication Scheme under Part II of the FOI Act. Since 1 May 2011, that information has been available on the agency's website [www.gbrmpa.gov.au/home/ips](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/home/ips).

Information required to be published under this scheme includes an agency's corporate details such as the agency's structure, functions, official appointments, annual reports, consultation arrangements for specific policy proposals, information routinely provided in response to requests and orders from the Parliament, and operational information.

The agency strives to embrace a pro-disclosure culture and has therefore published additional information to that required under the scheme. The agency's Information Publication Scheme register is located at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au/home/ips/ips-document-register](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/home/ips/ips-document-register).

The Chairman, general managers and directors have power to publish information in accordance with the Information Publication Scheme under Part II of the FOI Act.

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## APPENDIX E: ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) requires Australian Government organisations to report on the organisation's contribution to ecologically sustainable development as well as the environmental performance of the organisation. Section 516A also promotes development of a framework that integrates environmental, economic and social considerations and helps improve the environmental and ecologically sustainable development performance of Australian Government agencies.

The following is a summary of activities by the agency in 2014–15 in accordance with section 516A of the EPBC Act.

### **1. How the activities of the organisation and the administration of legislation by the organisation accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development (section 516A(6)(a))**

The following activities of the agency accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development:

- administering and enforcing the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, which explicitly recognises these principles
- working with the Department of the Environment, other agencies and stakeholders to promote ecologically sustainable development focused on:
  - ensuring the long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community through the control, care and development of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
  - providing policy advice to the Environment Minister to ensure the agency's environment policies are mutually supportive.

The Australian and Queensland governments have worked together to complete a comprehensive strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and the adjacent coastal zone. The strategic assessment has collectively looked at the Great Barrier Reef Region, development proposals in the area and decision-making processes. It has assessed the effectiveness of management and made recommendations to improve how the Region is managed.

The agency led the marine component of the strategic assessment, which looked at the arrangements in place to manage and protect the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and World Heritage Area.

During 2014–15 the agency has also completed the Outlook Report 2014.

The Australian and Queensland governments' have developed the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan*. The plan provides an overarching strategy for managing the Great Barrier Reef — it coordinates actions and guides adaptive management to 2050.

The plan has been developed in close consultation with partners, including Traditional Owners and the resources, ports, fishing, agriculture, local government, research and conservation sectors.

Public input occurred through a six-week consultation period, with more than 6000 submissions received.

The plan responds to the challenges facing the Reef and presents actions to protect its values, health and resilience while allowing ecologically sustainable use.

It addresses the findings of the agency's Outlook Report 2014 and builds on the comprehensive strategic environmental assessment.

The range of activities presented in the Performance chapter of this annual report include activities that accord with the principle of integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations. In addition, the day-to-day business of the agency in ensuring the long-term sustainability of biodiversity of the Great Barrier Reef is achieved by managing

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the Zoning Plan introduced on 1 July 2004, in consultation with stakeholders, communities and agencies.

The following activities accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development, especially by employing or promoting the use of the precautionary principle:

- making decisions under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*
- releasing publications on climate change and the Great Barrier Reef
- making information readily available on the agency's external website
- working with the Department of the Environment and other agencies to undertake a strategic assessment
- working with the Department of the Environment and other agencies to develop the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* for the Great Barrier Reef.

The following activities accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development by aiming to promote conservation of the environment for the benefit of future generations:

- Contributing to the conservation of biodiversity, including:
  - the development of the *Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2013*
  - a focus on encouraging integrated coastal management and improving knowledge on the role that coastal ecosystems play in the health of the Great Barrier Reef
  - continuing to address the remaining impacts of fishing and illegal fishing and poaching
  - improving the quality and extent of information on the Great Barrier Reef's water quality
  - continued implementation of the marine monitoring programme – a component of the Paddock to Reef program under Reef Plan
  - contributing to the conservation of biodiversity in marine ecosystems including through continued implementation of the Representative Areas programme

- Protecting the World Heritage values of Australia's Great Barrier Reef through:
  - regulation, including the consideration of proposed actions predominantly in, or adjacent to, the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics of Queensland
  - communication and education, including the active promotion of the World Heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef
- Working in partnership with stakeholder groups, including:
  - continuation of the Reef Guardians programme including fishers and farmers
  - continuation of the Reef Guardian Councils programme to encourage councils to get involved in environmental projects
  - working with Traditional Owners to develop sustainable traditional use of marine resources practices
  - operating various advisory groups to assist in the management of particular issues in marine park locations and operational programmes.

The following activities accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development by aiming to improve valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms:

- Implementing an accreditation programme for tourism operators
- Working in partnership with Great Barrier Reef businesses and industry to improve valuation by industry to include environmental and social costs and benefits. Activities in 2014–15 included:
  - having an accounting framework to measure the commercial values of the Great Barrier Reef
  - continuing the partnership with industry associations through community monitoring programmes
  - consultation on offsets that provide a net environmental benefit.

## **2. How the outcomes specified in a relevant Appropriations Act contribute to ecologically sustainable development (section 516A(6)(b))**

The outcome for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is:

*The long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park.*

This outcome is explicit in providing for ecologically sustainable use of the Marine Park and is achieved through the delivery of three objectives:

1. To protect and restore the Great Barrier Reef's ecosystem health and biodiversity;
2. To safeguard the Reef's heritage; and
3. To ensure use of the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable and benefits current and future generations

A comprehensive assessment of work undertaken under these three objectives during 2014–15 is provided in the *Performance chapter* of this annual report.

### **3. Effect of the organisation's activities on the environment (section 516A(6)(c))**

The agency is responsible for managing one of the world's premier natural resources through the care and development of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The agency manages the Marine Park as a multiple-use area, and permits such uses as are ecologically sustainable, and as are permitted by legislation.

In conjunction with its partners, the agency maintained compliance and enforcement activities during 2014–15, with funding provided by both Australian and Queensland governments for field management.

The agency worked with volunteer Local Marine Advisory Committees and Reef Guardian schools to undertake rubbish removal from sensitive sites, reduce dumping and encourage positive environmental behavior.

### **4. Measures being taken by the organisation to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment (section 516A(6)(d))**

The agency maintains a strong commitment to continuous improvement of its own environmental performance. The agency conducts environmental audits of its

operations to maximise efficient use of resources, reduction of waste, and building of environmental awareness among its employees and volunteers.

Reef HQ Aquarium has benefited from the implementation of three stages of energy reduction including installation of energy efficient lighting, addressing peak demand reduction and investing in renewable energy. The installation of a 153 kilowatt peak photovoltaic system was completed and commissioned in 2011–12 and phase two (44 kw) was commissioned in early 2013–14. The system generated 299, 222 kWh for the 2014–15 financial year. This equates to 299 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-e avoided for the year. For the 2014–15 financial year ReefHQ Aquarium reduced its power consumption by 50 per cent from the 2006 baseline year. It is expected the target of 50 per cent will be exceeded in future years with continued measures to increase energy efficiency. During the year there were also improvements to machinery including Wave Machine compressors, and a review of the five year energy management plan.

Other measures in place in the last year include:

- continued use and implementation of the environmental management system
- continued utilisation of waste handling systems to reduce the volume of recycling going to landfill
- maintenance of an automated office lighting system in the main Townsville building to reduce energy consumption
- operating a green office committee to raise awareness of environmental management within the office
- maintaining Ecotourism Australia certification of Reef HQ Aquarium for Advanced Ecotourism, Climate Action Business and Respecting our Culture
- choosing building materials used in Reef HQ Aquarium exhibits from environmentally sustainable products
- taking Australian Greenhouse Office specifications on fuel consumption targets into account when making vehicle leasing decisions
- using hybrid energy vehicles for fleet use and using only ethanol inclusive fuels (E10) in those vehicles



- undertaking pest control using methods designed to minimise environmental impacts
- using energy efficient multi-function devices (photocopiers/printers/scanners) and programming them to duplex documents to reduce paper usage
- sending photocopier toner cartridges, disused desktop phones and disused mobile phones for recycling
- collecting fluorescent tubes, batteries and cardboard waste for recycling
- actively encouraging staff to recycle office paper and cardboard, which is collected by a local recycling company
- recycling packaging and envelopes
- placing used paper hand towel with cardboard recycling
- printing corporate publications on recycled paper if feasible
- providing documents electronically where possible to reduce paper usage
- using recycled toilet paper and hand towels in toilets, and using dual flush toilets as a water conservation measure
- Significant fuel efficiencies in use of the new Field Management compliance vessel 'Reef Ranger'.

##### **5. Mechanisms for reviewing and increasing the effectiveness of these measures (section 516A(6)(e))**

Close analysis of the energy performance helps the agency determine how it can most effectively adopt the minimum energy performance measures to meet its needs and the Australian Government's targets. In future this information will be provided directly to the portfolio Minister.

In considering future office accommodation lease arrangements the agency is taking into account the need to include a green lease schedule to improve and be accountable for energy efficiency in the premises and building for any new leases over 2000 square metres or major refurbishment.

The environmental management system provides the foundation for managing the significant environmental aspects and compliance with legal and other requirements,

and is a mechanism for continuous improvement in environmental performance.

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy is based on the agency's acknowledgment that climate change is a major threat to the long-term resilience of the Reef and its commitment to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint.

The environmental management system and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy focused on the agency's business practices, including alterations to:

- waste disposal
- building operations
- business processes
- employee practices
- air conditioning
- travel
- chemical use.

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## APPENDIX F: PAPERS, REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS BY AGENCY STAFF

The following staff papers were either published or presented by agency staff during 2014–15. Copies may be obtained at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au).

### Published papers and reports

Anthony, K.R.N., Marshall, P.A., Abdullah, A., Beeden, R., Bergh, C., Black, R., Eakin, M., Game, E., Gooch, M., Graham, N., Green, A., Heron, S., van Hooideonk, R.J., Knowland, C., Mangubhai, S., Marshall, N., Maynard, J., McGinnity, P., McLeod, E., Mumby, P.J., Nyström, M., Obura, D., Oliver, J., Possingham, H., Presseby, B., Rowlands, G., Tamelander, J., Wachenfeld, D. and Wear, S. 2015, Operationalizing resilience for adaptive coral reef management under global environmental change, *Global Change Biology* 21(1): 48-61.

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Beeden, R., Maynard, J., Johnson, J., Dryden, J., Kininmonth, S. and Marshall, P. 2014, No-anchoring areas reduce coral damage in an effort to build resilience in Keppel Bay, southern Great Barrier Reef, *Australasian Journal of Environmental Management* 21(3): 311-319.

Beeden, R.J., Maynard, J., Puotinen, M.L., Marshall, P., Dryden, J., Goldberg, J. and Williams, G. 2015, Impacts and recovery from severe tropical Cyclone Yasi on the Great Barrier Reef, *PLoS ONE* 10(4): e0121272.

Beeden, R.J., Turner, M.A., Dryden, J., Merida, F., Goudkamp, K., Malone, C., Marshall, P.A., Birtles, A. and Maynard, J.A. 2014, Rapid survey protocol that provides dynamic information on reef condition to managers of the Great Barrier Reef, *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* 186(12): 8527-8540.

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Bohensky, E., Curnock, M., Gillet, S., Goldberg, J., Gooch, M., Lankester, A., Pert, P., Marshall, N., Newlands, M., Tobin, R., Scherl, L. and Stone-Jovicich, S. 2014, *The Social and Economic Long Term Monitoring Program (SELTMP) 2013: Drivers of change in the Great Barrier Reef*, Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited, Cairns.

Curnock, M., Parker, J., Marshall, N., Tobin, R., Stone-Jovicich, S., Bohensky, E., Pert, P., Gooch, M. and Goldberg, J. 2014, *The Social and Economic Long Term Monitoring Program (SELTMP) 2014: Ports and shipping in the Great Barrier Reef*, Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited, Cairns.

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# APPENDIX G: QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT FINANCIALS

Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Statement of Revenue and Expenditure**  
**for the year ended 30 June 2015**

QAO  
 certified statements

		2015	2014
		\$'000	\$'000
	Notes		
<b>Revenue for the year</b>			
Grants and contributions	2	12,520	14,894
Revaluation increment		82	25
Other revenue		24	15
Gains on disposal of assets		327	31
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>12,953</b>	<b>14,966</b>
<b>Expenditure for the year</b>			
Employee expenses	3	7,413	7,549
Supplies and services	4	4,745	4,276
Depreciation	5	1,223	886
Other expenses		165	41
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>13,546</b>	<b>12,752</b>

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*



### Purpose and Principal Activities

Through the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009* the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments have agreed to co-operatively plan, fund and deliver an integrated, strategically planned and co-ordinated program of field management of marine and national parks within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

The Joint Field Management Program will be directed at achieving the following outcomes:

- Protection and conservation of the natural and cultural resources;
- Protection of key vulnerable species, their habitats and ecosystems;
- Effective compliance with relevant Commonwealth and Queensland laws related to protection and management of the environmental and cultural values, including through education and understanding;
- Effective permitting systems and associated operational policies under relevant Commonwealth and Queensland laws related to protection and management of the environmental and cultural values;
- Ecologically sustainable public use;
- Understanding and enjoyment of Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area natural and cultural resources and values by the public;
- Effective engagement of Traditional Owners in management;
- Increasing the effectiveness of the program and the efficient use of resources through the use of technology, analysis of data and the monitoring of trends, including for scientific, biological, recreational and commercial matters; and
- Capacity to respond to environmental incidents, including through coordinated clean up and rehabilitation programs.

The Commonwealth and Queensland governments agree to provide ongoing base funding (recurrent and capital) for this Joint Management Field Program shared on a 50:50 basis. The contributions by both parties will be administered by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

### 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

#### (a) Statement of Compliance and basis of preparation

The Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing has prepared these special purpose financial statements in accordance with the Treasurer's determination whereby compliance with certain provisions of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009* issued under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* was exempted. These statements have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the relevant Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the disclosure requirements of the prescribed accounting standards. It is assessed that as there are limited intended users of the financial statements, the format and content is appropriate to meet the information needs of the specific users.

#### (b) The Reporting Program

The special purpose financial statements include the value of all income, expenses, assets and liabilities of the reporting program, managed by the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing on behalf of the Queensland Government.

#### (c) Cash

For the purposes of the Statement of Assets and Liabilities, cash assets include all cash and cheques received but not banked at 30 June.

#### (d) Receivables

Trade debtors are recognised at the amounts due at the time of sale or service delivery. Settlement of these amounts is required within 14-30 days from invoice date. The collectability of receivables is assessed periodically with provision being made for impairment. All known bad debts were written-off as at 30 June.

#### (e) Payables

Trade creditors are recognised upon receipt of the goods or services ordered and are measured at the nominal amount. Amounts owing are unsecured and are generally settled on 30 day terms.

**(f) Issuance of Financial Statements**

The financial statements are authorised for issue by the Executive Director, Regional Operations East and Chief Finance Officer for the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing at the date of signing the Management Certificate.

**(g) Rounding and Comparatives**

Amounts included in the financial statements are in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or, where the amount is \$500 or less, to zero.

	2015	2014
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>2. Grants and other contributions</b>		
Grants *	12,457	12,227
Assets Transferred in #	63	2,697
Assets Transferred out #	-	(30)
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,520</b>	<b>14,894</b>

Grants and contributions that are non-reciprocal in nature are recognised as revenue in the year in which the department obtains control over them which is generally obtained at the time of receipt.

\* The Commonwealth and Queensland Governments provide funding to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority on a 50:50 basis. The Authority then provides a grant to the Queensland Department of National Parks, Sport & Racing to deliver its components of the joint field management program. To the extent that the department does not spend the grant in the financial year to which it is allocated, the monies are to be reallocated in the next financial year by the Joint Field Management Program Strategy Group.

# Minor plant and equipment of \$63K (2014: \$2.7 million) was transferred into the program from Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing. No asset transfers out of the program to the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing occurred in 2015 (2014: \$30K).

**3. Employee expenses**

Employee benefits	7,356	7,235
Employee related expenses	57	315
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,413</b>	<b>7,549</b>

Employer superannuation contributions, annual leave levies and long service leave levies are regarded as employee benefits. Workers' compensation insurance is paid to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee compensation. This is a consequence of employing employees but is not counted in an employee's total remuneration package, therefore, it is recognised separately as employee related expenses.

*Wages, Salaries and Sick Leave*

Wages and salaries due but unpaid at reporting date are recognised as liabilities at the current undiscounted salary rates expected to be wholly settled within the next 12 months.

Prior history indicates that on average, sick leave taken each reporting period is less than the entitlement accrued which is expected to continue in future. Accordingly, no liability for unused sick leave entitlements is recognised. As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised for this leave as it is taken.

*Annual and Long Service Leave*

No provision for annual leave or long service leave is recognised in these financial statements as the liabilities are held with the Queensland Government's Annual Leave Central Scheme and Long Service Leave Scheme, respectively.

*Superannuation*

Employer superannuation contributions are paid to QSuper, the superannuation scheme for Queensland Government employees, at rates determined by the Treasurer on the advice of the State Actuary. Contributions are expensed in the period in which they are paid or payable. The department's obligation is limited to its contribution to QSuper.



	2015	2014
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>4. Supplies and services</b>		
Program costs	1,497	1,374
Corporate support contribution*	790	715
Asset maintenance	1,007	849
Operating leases	239	361
Travel	672	554
Fuel and oil	540	423
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>4,745</u></u>	<u><u>4,276</u></u>

\* This cost represents an annual contribution to the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing to meet administrative costs such as accounting services and external audit fees.

**5. Depreciation**

Depreciation on property, plant and equipment	<u>1,223</u>	<u>886</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>1,223</u></u>	<u><u>886</u></u>

Property, plant and equipment is depreciated on a straight-line basis so as to allocate the net cost or revalued amount of each asset, less its estimated residual value, progressively over its estimated useful life.

Assets under construction (work-in-progress) are not depreciated until they reach service delivery capacity. Service delivery capacity relates to when construction is complete and the asset is first put to use or is installed ready for use in accordance with its intended application. These assets are then reclassified to the relevant classes within property, plant and equipment.

Where assets have separately identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned useful lives distinct from the asset to which they relate and are depreciated accordingly.

Any expenditure that increases the originally assessed capacity or service potential of an asset is capitalised and the new depreciable amount is depreciated over the remaining useful life of the asset.

For each class of depreciable asset the following depreciation rates were used:

Asset class	Rate %
Buildings	3.0 - 10.0
Infrastructure	3.3 - 6.7
Heritage and cultural assets	1.0
Plant and equipment	6.6 - 33.3

	2015 \$'000	2014 \$'000
<b>6. Property, plant and equipment</b>		
Buildings: at fair value		
Gross	4,968	4,508
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(3,125)</u>	<u>(2,965)</u>
	1,844	1,543
Heritage and Cultural Assets: at fair value		
Gross	15	15
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(2)</u>
	13	13
Plant and equipment: at cost		
Gross	12,166	13,335
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(4,180)</u>	<u>(5,464)</u>
	7,986	7,871
Infrastructure: at fair value		
Gross	670	663
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(321)</u>	<u>(287)</u>
	349	376
Capital work in progress: at cost	486	791
<b>Total</b>	<u><b>10,678</b></u>	<u><b>10,595</b></u>

Items of property, plant and equipment with a cost or other value equal to or in excess of the following thresholds are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition:

Buildings	\$10,000
Infrastructure	\$10,000
Other (including heritage and cultural)	\$5,000

Items with a lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition.

Building and infrastructure assets are comprehensively valued using a rolling revaluation program. The valuation is at fair value and is undertaken independently by the State Valuation Service, Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

Plant and equipment is valued at cost in accordance with Queensland Treasury's *Non-current Asset Policies for the Queensland Public Sector*.

The non-current physical assets (excluding motor vehicles) are insured through the Queensland Government Insurance Fund. Motor vehicles are insured through commercial insurers

**CERTIFICATE OF**

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**

**In relation to the Joint Field Management Program for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area**

These special purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to the relevant agreements dated 10 May 1988 between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the decisions of the Field Management Strategy Group dated 17 December 2014 (allocation of carryover from 2013–14 and variation to the services and fees paid to NPSR), 31 March 2015 (variation to the services and fees paid to NPSR) and 29 May 2015 (variation to the services and fees paid to NPSR). In accordance with these agreements we certify that in our opinion:

- (a) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
- (b) the financial statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing in relation to the operation of the Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program for the financial year ended 30 June 2015 and of the financial position of the program at the end of that year; and
- (c) financial assistance received has been expended in accord with the purposes for which it was given in the financial year.



**Duncan Anson FCPA; B.Bus (Acc)**  
Chief Finance Officer  
Department of National Parks,  
Sport and Racing



**Neil Cambourn**  
Executive Director, Regional Operations East  
Department of National Parks,  
Sport and Racing

Date 28.08.15

Date 28-08-15

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Director – General of the Department of National Parks Sport and Recreation

### Report on the Financial Report

I have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of the Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program managed by the Department of National Parks Sport and Recreation, which comprises the statement of assets and liabilities as at 30 June 2015, a statement of revenue and expenditure for the financial year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and certificates given by the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director, Regional Operations East of the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing.

#### *The Department's Responsibility for the Financial Report*

The Department is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1a is to meet the requirements of the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009* and is appropriate to meet the needs of the users of this financial report. The Department's responsibility also includes such internal control as the Department determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### *Auditor's Responsibility*

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. The audit was conducted in accordance with the *Auditor-General of Queensland Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require compliance with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and that the audit is planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Department, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

#### *Independence*

The *Auditor-General Act 2009* promotes the independence of the Auditor-General and all authorised auditors. The Auditor-General is the auditor of all Queensland public sector entities and can be removed only by Parliament.

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The Auditor-General may conduct an audit in any way considered appropriate and is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which audit powers are to be exercised. The Auditor-General has for the purposes of conducting an audit, access to all documents and property and can report to Parliament matters which in the Auditor-General's opinion are significant.

*Opinion*

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*:

- (a) I have received all the information and explanations which I have required
- (b) in my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program managed by the Department of National Parks Sport and Recreation as at 30 June 2015 and its financial performance for the financial year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 and the financial reporting requirements of the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement.

*Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting*

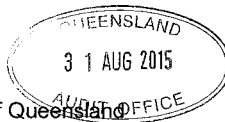
Without modifying my opinion, attention is drawn to Note 1a to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Department's financial reporting responsibilities under the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

**Other Matters - Electronic Presentation of the Audited Financial Report**

Those viewing an electronic presentation of these financial statements should note that audit does not provide assurance on the integrity of the information presented electronically and does not provide an opinion on any information which may be hyperlinked to or from the financial statements. If users of the financial statements are concerned with the inherent risks arising from electronic presentation of information, they are advised to refer to the printed copy of the audited financial statements to confirm the accuracy of this electronically presented information.



JOHN WELSH FCPA  
as Delegate of the Auditor-General of Queensland



Queensland Audit Office  
Brisbane



ANNUAL REPORT 2014–15

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# ACRONYMS AND INDEX

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## ACRONYMS

AASB	Australian Accounting Standards Board
CSS	Commonwealth Superannuation Plan
CDPP	Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
DNPRSR	Queensland Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing
EMC	Environmental management charge
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
FMA Act	<i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i>
FMOs	Finance Minister's orders
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
GIS	Geographic information system
GST	Goods and services tax
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NESP	National Environmental Science Programme
LMACs	Local Marine Advisory Committees
OPA	Official public account
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PSS	Public Sector Superannuation Scheme
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
REEFVTS	Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait Vessel Traffic Service
SES	Senior Executive Service
SELTMP	Social and Economic Long-term Monitoring Programme
SPER	State Penalties Enforcement Registry
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation



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## GLOSSARY

**Appropriation** — public funds appropriated for a specific purpose

**Biodiversity** — the variability among living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part

**Bycatch** — the unwanted fish, sea creatures, etc., caught in nets along with the targeted species

**Ecosystem resilience** — the capacity of an ecosystem to recover from disturbance or withstand ongoing pressures

**Environmental management charge** — a charge associated with some commercial activities in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, including tourism operations, non-tourist charter operations, and facilities. The activities are undertaken with permission granted by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

**Matters of national environmental significance** — defined under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 as listed threatened species and ecological communities, migratory species protected under international agreements, Ramsar wetlands of international importance, the Commonwealth marine environment, world heritage properties, National Heritage places, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and nuclear actions. Any action that will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance requires approval from the Australian Environment Minister.

**Outstanding universal value** — Under the World Heritage Convention a property is considered to have outstanding universal value if it is of ‘cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity’

**Photovoltaic** — a potential source of electric current under the influence of light or similar radiation.

**Plan of management** — a plan prepared for intensively used, or particularly vulnerable, groups of islands and reefs and for the protection of vulnerable species or ecological communities

**Portfolio Budget Statement** — a statement to inform Senators, Members of Parliament and the public of the proposed allocation of resources to government outcomes by agencies within the portfolio

**Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement** — a formal agreement which describes how a Traditional Owner group works in partnership with the Australian and Queensland governments to manage traditional use activities on their sea country

**Vulnerability assessment** — a risk assessment and decision-support tool that evaluates sensitivity, exposure, and adaptive capacity of systems to inform adaptation planning

# COMPLIANCE INDEX (LIST OF REQUIREMENTS)

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## MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Corporate governance

Agency heads are required to certify their agency's actions in dealing with fraud.	Mandatory	116, 120
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### Management of human resources

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The annual report must include a summary statement detailing the number of new consultancy services contracts let during the year; the total actual expenditure on all new consultancy contracts let during the year (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing consultancy contracts that were active in the reporting year; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting year on the ongoing consultancy contracts (inclusive of GST). The annual report must include a statement noting that information on contracts and consultancies is available through the AusTender website.	Mandatory	123–124
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