



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority



Reef
Authority

CORPORATE PLAN

2023-24



Statement of preparation

I, Josh Thomas, as the Accountable Authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, present the Reef Authority's Corporate Plan 2023–24, which covers reporting periods 2023–24 to 2026–27, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The plan is prepared in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

The Reef Authority's Board has endorsed the plan, as it is responsible for implementing the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

Josh Thomas

Chief Executive Officer / Accountable Authority

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised this publication may contain names and images of deceased persons.

The Reef Authority acknowledges the expertise, wisdom, and enduring connections that have informed the guardianship of the Reef for millennia. We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners as the first managers of this Land and Sea Country, and value their traditional knowledge which continues to inform the current management and stewardship of the Reef for future generations.



The Great Barrier Reef at a glance



2300km long and **344,400** square kilometers in area



Approximately **2,400,000** catchment residents



The **world's largest coral reef ecosystem**, about **10% of the world's coral reef ecosystems**

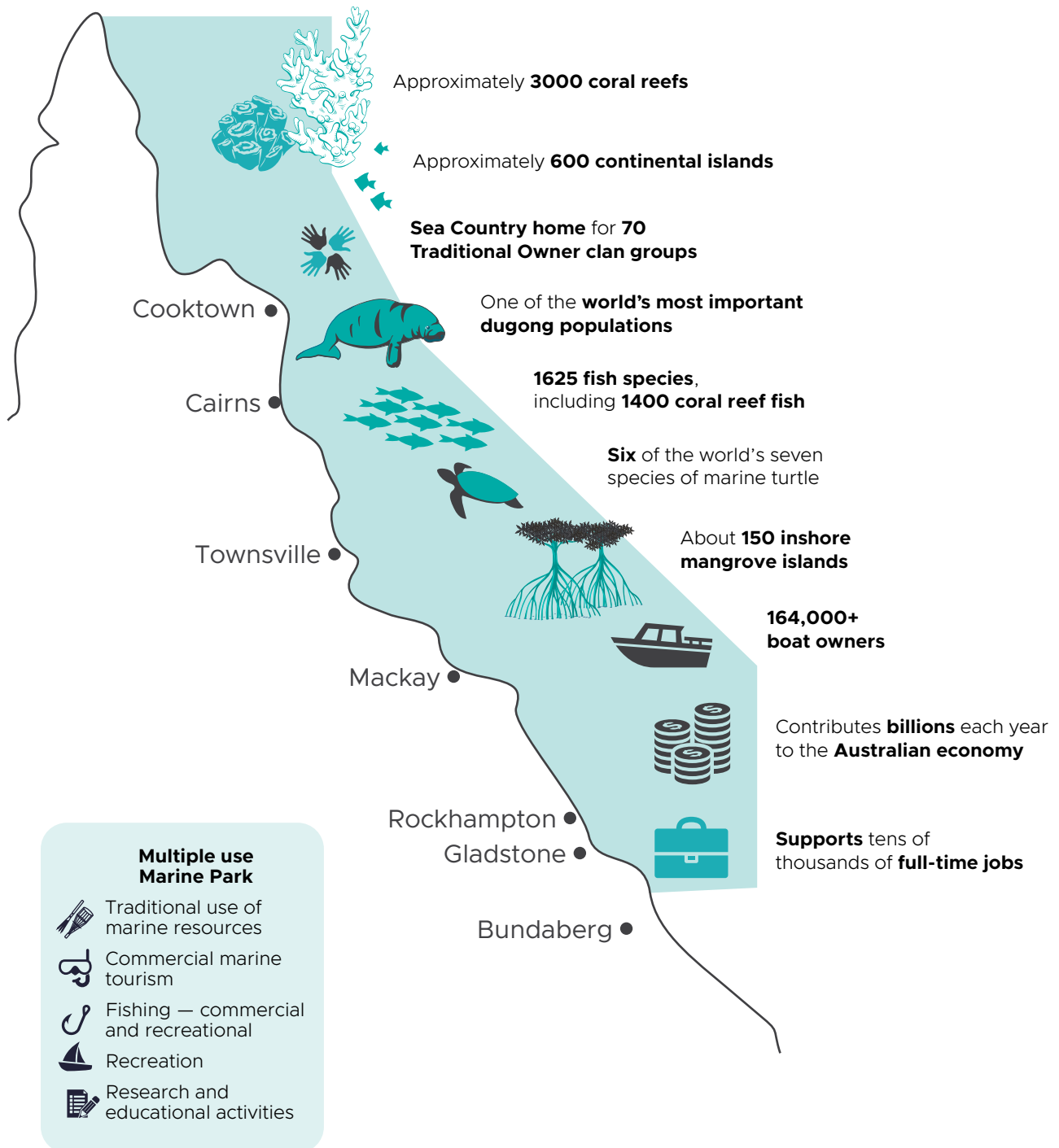


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Chairman's opening statement



The Great Barrier Reef (the Reef) is a global icon with a profound cultural, historical, economic, and emotional significance to the world. The Reef is a place of immense biodiversity and beauty, and an economic powerhouse contributing billions of dollars and tens of thousands of jobs to Australia's national economy.

Compared to previous summers, cumulative impacts were low in 2022–23 and effective crown-of-thorns starfish control saw welcome coral cover recovery. However four recent mass bleaching events and the third warmest year on record in 2022 are strong evidence of the shift in our climate and highlight the urgency of both Reef management and global actions to address greenhouse gas emissions.

As Australia's lead manager of the Reef, it is critical the Reef Authority remains at the forefront of Marine Park management to protect the environment, biodiversity, and heritage values of the Reef.

The Reef Authority, in carrying out its management responsibilities, is strategically guided by the Marine Park Authority Board and *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*. Two Reef Advisory Committees provide advice to the Board — the Indigenous Reef

Advisory Committee and the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee.

The Reef Authority's programs and activities continue to be based on the best and latest available science, and be driven through ongoing partnerships with Traditional Owners, all levels of government, Reef industries and local communities.

The Australian Government's Reef Protection package provided an additional \$260 million to 2030 for Reef management and conservation through the Reef Authority, enabling a substantial uplift to key programs that will significantly enhance Reef management.

In addition to in-water Reef protection, the Reef Authority continues its strong foundational work program that spans international engagement, partnerships and outreach education, as well as policy and planning that is critical to supporting Reef resilience.

There is broad support, and indeed urgent need, for protecting our unique and special Great Barrier Reef. It is our great privilege and responsibility to do this on behalf of all Australians and people around the world.

Dr Ian Poiner
Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer's foreword



As Australia's lead management agency for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, we lead a global effort to preserve and protect one of the planet's most iconic, diverse and breathtaking natural wonders. This natural World Heritage property is a complex ecosystem, comprising almost 3000 coral reefs, non-reef habitats, and iconic animal species. The Reef is culturally significant to 70 Traditional Owner groups, and important for Reef industries and communities.

Like all reefs around the world, the Reef is under pressure from climate change. This pressure is compounded by other threats such as land-based run-off, coastal development, overfishing of some species, and illegal fishing. In this context, we continue to act in the Marine Park and throughout the Reef region to strengthen Reef resilience, reduce cumulative impacts, and protect and enhance Reef habitats — when required we will facilitate reef restoration activities.

The Reef Authority must be clear and targeted in directing our effort and resources to ensure we deliver in the best interests of the Reef. Our top 15 key priorities for 2023–24 cover a range of activities, programs, and projects and are focused on addressing the Reef's key risks. Over the next year we will be focusing on these deliverables while continuing to be proactive in considering and preparing for new challenges. Importantly, these priority activities will be supported by critical enabling functions across our business operations.

The centrepiece of our activities will be our new Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for Climate Resilience and Adaptation. The Blueprint will drive how we adapt our management under a changing climate. It will help us innovate and evolve how we protect the Reef's resilience and remain global leaders in Marine Park management.

Our flagship Reef resilience program, our crown-of-thorns starfish control, is suppressing outbreaks of these coral predators and protecting coral on high value reefs throughout the Marine Park. The program will continue to expand to make it more flexible, adaptive and responsive.

A key focus for the year ahead is delivering the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2024, which will play an important role in guiding our work. Published every five years, it provides a comprehensive update on the Reef's health, pressures, and the likely future. Scientific experts, partners, and stakeholders are involved in developing this evidence-based report.

We will continue to enhance and expand our Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements (TUMRAs) Program and progress Traditional Owner co-management through implementing our *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park*. The strategy supports alignment to elements of Closing the Gap and guides our work with Traditional Owners to collaboratively protect Indigenous heritage values within the Marine Park. We are also aligning to Close the Gap Priority Reform 3 - Transforming Government through the release of our own Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan in 2024.

We continue to develop the Southern Great Barrier Reef Plan of Management. In addition to Reef-wide zoning, plans of management are site-specific to protect and conserve the outstanding values of the Marine Park, while allowing sustainable use and visitor experiences. The plan will be co-designed with Traditional Owners and will consider current and future uses of the area. We expect it will set a high benchmark for how future in-water planning is carried out.

Our Reef Joint Field Management Program, jointly delivered with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, continues to evolve to protect the Reef and respond to emerging threats, while delivering in-field operations within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

The Reef is globally significant, and we engage strategically at key international forums and build partnerships, nationally and internationally, to achieve positive outcomes for the Reef and reefs globally. Through our strong connections we will continue to be the voice of the Reef.

Design is underway for our Great Barrier Reef Aquarium in Townsville, north Queensland — this includes a partnership with the Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba peoples and other Reef Traditional Owners to improve the understanding of cultural knowledge and the protection and promotion of Indigenous heritage. The redeveloped aquarium will help ensure Australia remains at the forefront of global reef education.

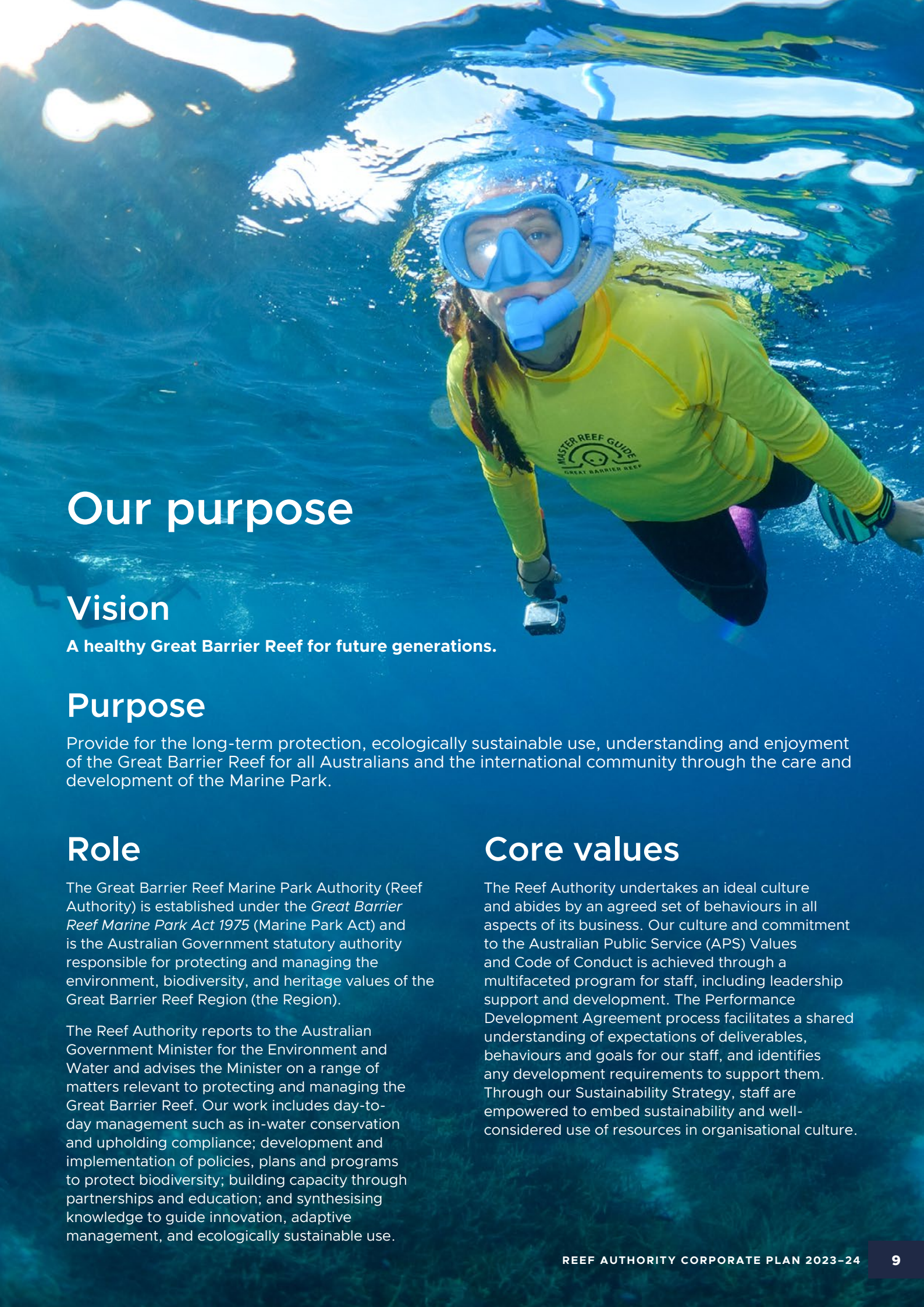
As an organisation, we are strongly committed to sustainability and meeting the Australian Government's requirements for Net Zero by 2030. Under our Sustainability Strategy, we are improving our environmental performance in several key areas, including the transition to GreenPower and electric vehicles.

Underpinning all our Reef protection work is our dedicated staff who work tirelessly to protect this great natural wonder. We continue to invest in building a future-focused workforce, with a focus on being more flexible and adaptive, to enable us to respond quickly to the most significant threats to the Reef.

The expertise, dedication and passion of our people plays a key role in helping the Reef Authority to maintain its position as a world leader in marine park management. We continue to invest in the capability development of our people, while building a strong cohesive culture. Our year ahead presents many opportunities for us — from our flagship reef programs to our outreach education — and we are delighted to present our plan for 2023–24.

Josh Thomas
Chief Executive Officer





Our purpose

Vision

A healthy Great Barrier Reef for future generations.

Purpose

Provide for 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.

Role

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (Reef Authority) is established under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Marine Park Act) and is the Australian Government statutory authority responsible for protecting and managing the environment, biodiversity, and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef Region (the Region).

The Reef Authority reports to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Water and advises the Minister on a range of matters relevant to protecting and managing the Great Barrier Reef. Our work includes day-to-day management such as in-water conservation and upholding compliance; development and implementation of policies, plans and programs to protect biodiversity; building capacity through partnerships and education; and synthesising knowledge to guide innovation, adaptive management, and ecologically sustainable use.

Core values

The Reef Authority undertakes an ideal culture and abides by an agreed set of behaviours in all aspects of its business. Our culture and commitment to the Australian Public Service (APS) Values and Code of Conduct is achieved through a multifaceted program for staff, including leadership support and development. The Performance Development Agreement process facilitates a shared understanding of expectations of deliverables, behaviours and goals for our staff, and identifies any development requirements to support them. Through our Sustainability Strategy, staff are empowered to embed sustainability and well-considered use of resources in organisational culture.



Our strategic objectives

We are the lead manager for protecting the environment, biodiversity, and heritage values of the Reef under the vision of ‘a healthy Great Barrier Reef for future generations’.

With a broad remit — including as Reef stewards, policy makers and advisors, and science-led managers — we provide expert knowledge, manage and regulate the park, and build capacity through partnerships and education.

We deliver toward our four objectives, as outlined in the 2023–24 Portfolio Budget Statement.

- 1. Enhancing Reef resilience by providing expert knowledge to advise key decision makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef.**
- 2. Enhancing Reef resilience through innovation, management and regulation of the Marine Park and our in-field presence.**
- 3. Enhancing Reef resilience through partnerships, collaboration and education.**
- 4. Supporting a high-performing organisation.**

Our approach to planning and reporting

Planning approach

When setting the Reef Authority's strategic direction, or developing programs or strategies, the Reef Authority is responsive to:

- government and ministerial plans, priorities and direction
- *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* and other relevant legislation
- key external influences
- the needs of responsible Reef users
- future capability needs of the Reef Authority
- key partnership strategies
- research information to inform evidence-based decision making.

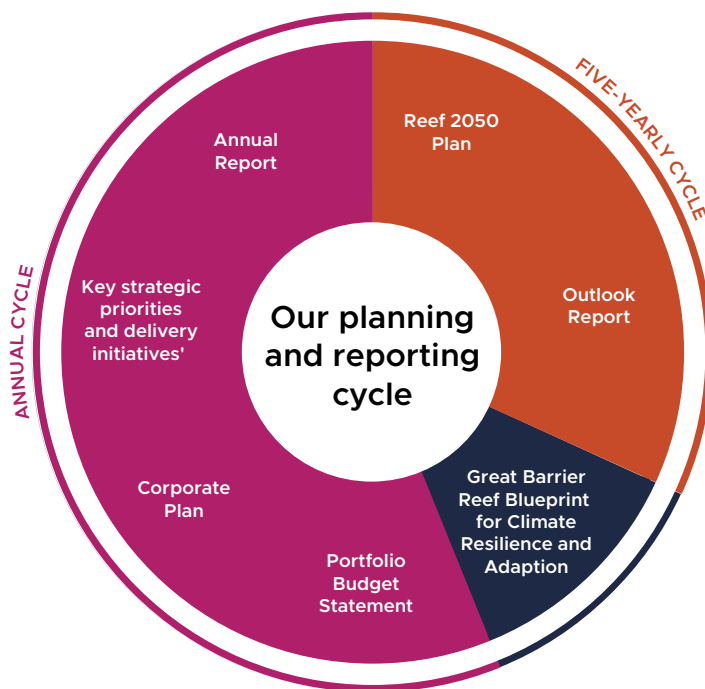
The following key strategies guide work programs, initiatives, and reports to ensure actions are delivered:

The **Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan** (Reef 2050 Plan) provides a framework for the Australian and Queensland governments to work together to protect the Great Barrier Reef.

The new **Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for Climate Resilience and Adaptation** will drive how we adapt our management under the impacts of climate change. It will push us to innovate and evolve so we can continue to protect the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef and remain global leaders in marine park management.

Great Barrier Reef Outlook reports (Outlook reports), provided to the Minister every five years, contain an assessment of the health, use, risks, resilience, current management, values, and long-term outlook for the Great Barrier Reef Region.

The **Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS)** together with the Corporate Plan complement each other to provide a consistent performance story, with the aim of a clear line-of-sight from vision to action and outcomes. The PBS informs Members of the Parliament and the public of the proposed allocations of resources for government outcomes by entities within the portfolio.



The **Corporate Plan** outlines the Reef Authority's purpose, key strategic priorities and performance criteria against intended results for the year in the context of a four-year strategic planning cycle.

The **Annual Operating Plan** will set the direction of the Reef Authority, which are represented by the **key strategic priorities and delivery initiatives** — focusing our programs, projects and activities over 2023–24.

Annual reports inform Parliament and other stakeholders of our performance in relation to the PBS and Corporate Plan.

The Reef Authority's **Program Management Office (PMO)** supports the delivery of projects and programs for the organisation. We use a tiered management portfolio, program and project approach to ensure strategic alignment between our strategic objectives and program and project deliverables.

Legislation

Our work to protect the Marine Park is guided through a range of legislation, plans and policies. Our approach to regulation includes the following fundamentals:

1. developing regulatory solutions that take a risk-based approach to achieve the intended outcome in a timely manner
2. implementing an effective and efficient regulatory system
3. encouraging leading practices in responsible use of the Reef
4. responding through enforcement activities proportionate to the risk, severity, and attitude
5. continuously improving our regulatory practice to achieve outcomes for the Reef.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park specific legislation

The main object of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (the Marine Park Act) is to provide for the long-term protection and conservation of the environment, biodiversity and heritage values of the Region.

The objective of the Marine Park Act allows for ecologically sustainable use of the Region for purposes including: public enjoyment and appreciation, and research in relation to the natural, social, economic and cultural systems and value of the Region; to encourage engagement in protecting and managing the Region by interested persons and groups (including Queensland and local governments, communities, Traditional Owners, business and industry); and to assist in meeting Australia's international responsibilities in relation to the environment and protection of world heritage. The Marine Park Act sets out the Reef Authority's role and, through its objectives, provides the basis for the Region's management.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 2019 is a legislative instrument made under the Marine Park Act and provides rules that give effect to the Marine Park Act.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003 (Zoning Plan) is the main planning instrument for the conservation and management of the Marine Park. Each zone has different objectives and rules for certain activities allowed 'as of right' and those purposes for which specific permission under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 2019* is required.

In addition to the Zoning Plan, plans of management are in place for intensively used, or particularly vulnerable groups of islands and

reefs, and for the protection of vulnerable species or ecological communities in the Marine Park. Plans of management complement Marine Park zoning by addressing issues specific to an area, species or community in greater detail than can be accomplished by the broader Reef-wide zoning plans.

The Zoning Plan expressly acknowledges the rights and interests of Traditional Owners in the Marine Park by providing for the management of the traditional use of marine resources, including traditional hunting, in accordance with Traditional Owner custom and tradition. The Zoning Plan also explicitly states that it is not intended to affect the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Other Commonwealth legislation and agreements relevant to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

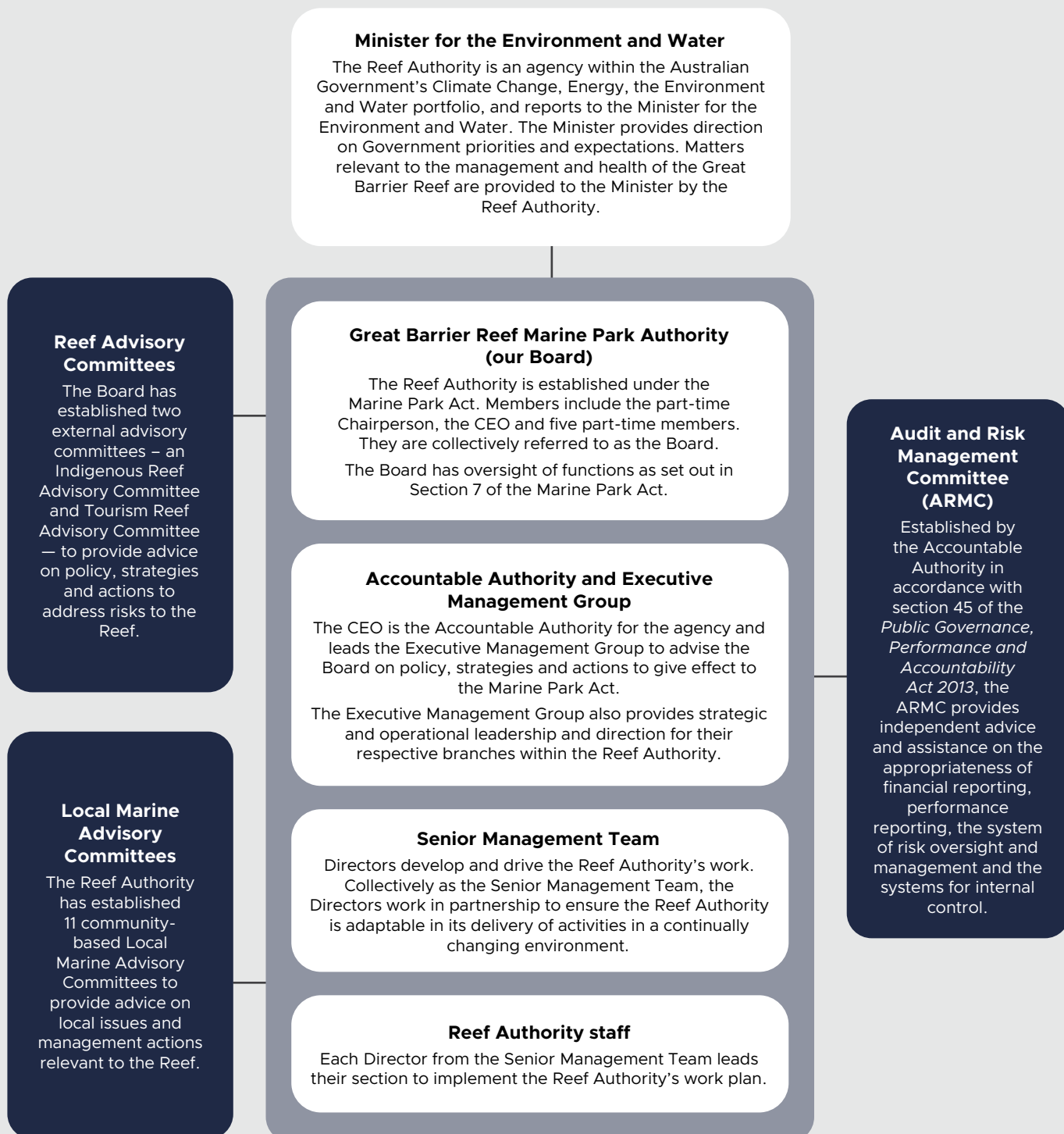
- *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Environmental Management Charge-Excise) Act 1993*
- *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Environmental Management Charge-General) Act 1993*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981*
- *Native Title Act 1993*
- *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018*
- *Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983*
- *Sea Installations Act 1987*
- *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2015*
- *Crimes Act 1914*
- *Criminal Code Act 1995*

Organisational legislation

- *Public Service Act 1999*
- *Public Service Regulations 1999*
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*
- *Archives Act 1983*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Privacy Act 1988*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

Our operating environment

Governance framework



Partners and stakeholders



The Reef Authority continues to partner with Traditional Owners, Australian and Queensland government agencies, non-government organisations, science institutions, industry, community organisations, and individuals.

Our partnering approach with Traditional Owners is evolving to support the Reef Authority to align to *Priority Reform One – Formal partnerships with shared decision making* under the Australian Government’s Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

This partnering approach is also the mechanism for the Reef Authority to deliver co-management of the Reef with Traditional Owners.

The Reef Authority’s partners and stakeholders will continue to be informed about the Reef’s management and health through multiple channels, including our committees, face-to-face engagement, briefings and information we share through media, websites, social media, newsletters, reports, and publications.



Formal partnership arrangements

The current Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement was entered into by the Australian and Queensland governments in 2015. This agreement continues the complementary and cooperative approach between the Australian and Queensland governments to manage the jurisdictional complexity of the Reef including managing the Marine Park (Commonwealth) and adjoining Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park (Queensland).

Memorandums of understanding (MoU) articulate the mutually agreed expectations for cooperation or information sharing. An MoU allows each partner to make the most of the other's specialist skills, knowledge or jurisdiction. Current high-level agreements exist with:

- **Australian Government**
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; Department of Defence; Parks Australia, and the Australian Institute of Marine Science.
- **Queensland Government**
Department of Environment and Science through the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to give effect to the Intergovernmental Agreement 2015 to cooperatively plan, fund, and deliver an integrated, strategically-planned and co-ordinated Reef Joint Field Management Program.

Tourism and Events Queensland partner with us to deliver the Master Reef Guide Program, as part of our Reef Education and Engagement Implementation Plan.
- **Local governments**
Various local councils to deliver action plans under the Reef Guardian Councils Program and Townsville City Council has an agreement with the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium for more street-art installations.
- **Industry**
We partner with the Queensland Ports Association and the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators partner to deliver the Master Reef Guides Program, as part of our Reef Education and Engagement Implementation Plan.
- **Non-government entities**
Ecotourism Australia and EarthCheck support delivery of our High Standard Tourism Operator Program. We provide in-kind support, skills interchange, cooperative research, and other forms of collaboration to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

Data sharing and research agreements

- **Australian Government**
Australian Institute of Marine Science; Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO); and Parks Australia.
- **Queensland Government**
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (compliance information, including access and use of vessel tracking for commercial fishing vessels) and Department of Transport and Main Roads (vessel registration information).
- **Non-government organisations**
Reef and Rainforest Research Centre and Great Barrier Reef Foundation.
- **Tertiary education institutions**
James Cook University — partner to deliver the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in Marine Science (ATSIMS) program, as part of our Reef Education and Engagement Implementation Plan. University of Queensland, Central Queensland University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Sydney, University of Technology Sydney and University of Tasmania.

Other types of agreements

- The Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement (TUMRA) Program consists of 11 TUMRAs covering 43 per cent of the Great Barrier Reef coastline. These TUMRAs maintain valuable partnerships with Traditional Owner groups who hold a spiritual connection and cultural authority to speak for Sea Country in partnership with the Reef Authority and the Department of Environment and Science.
- Terms of reference have been agreed with Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba Traditional Owner representatives to co-design and deliver some key exhibits with the Reef Authority as part of the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium transformation.
- A cultural heritage assessment and cultural Referral protocol with the Woppaburra Traditional Owners for consideration of heritage values in the Woppaburra Sea Country.
- A cultural heritage assessment and cultural referral protocol with the Mandubarra Traditional Owners for consideration of heritage values in the Mandubarra Sea Country.

- Permits and permit deeds with various users of the Reef including universities, industry, science institutions, and education institutions.
- A master services agreement with the Australian Institute of Marine Science.
- Collaboration agreement with Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program partners.
- Collaboration agreement with the CSIRO.

Collaboration to deliver on other work programs

There are many organisations and institutions that contribute to monitoring and protecting the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and we work with these stakeholders to support delivery of their programs and ensure alignment of effort to deliver positive outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef.

Some key initiatives where we collaborate include:

- Annual post-summer Reef Snapshot reports
- Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Monitoring Program
- National Marine Ecosystem Accounts
- National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies
- North-East Shipping Management Plan
- Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program
- The Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan
- Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan 2017–2022
- Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program
- Social Science Community for the Great Barrier Reef
- Tourism and Protected Areas Forum
- Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan
- Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017–2027
- Wetlands in the Great Barrier Reef Catchments Management Strategy 2016–2021

Influences affecting our operating environment



There are several key influences affecting our operating environment including environmental factors, broader economic and global shifts, environmental law reforms, social changes, and technological advancements.

Climate change is impacting all coral reefs worldwide. All Reef habitats and species are under pressure, with corals and coral reef habitats the most vulnerable. Climate change impacts ripple through the whole Reef ecosystem — from its ability to recover from disturbances to amplifying the effects of other threats, such as water quality, fishing, and marine debris. The Reef is a spectacular natural ecosystem with a complex mosaic of habitats, however, the vast size of the Reef is providing less of a buffer against broadscale and cumulative threats due to the increasing effects of climate change.

The summer of 2022 saw the sixth mass coral bleaching event on record, and the first under La Niña conditions. Fortunately, summer rainfall and cloud cover meant only minor coral bleaching occurred. While sea surface temperatures in the lead up to summer 2022-23 were well above average, summer rainfall and cloud cover meant only minor coral bleaching occurred. These environmental conditions — coupled with no cyclones, minimal flood plume impacts, and the suppression of crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks provided further opportunity for coral recovery from previous impacts.

As a result of the worldwide COVID pandemic, economic and global trends continue to impact on Reef industries. While domestic tourism numbers are positive, the international tourism market is yet to fully recover. The economic landscape is uncertain and there are increasing costs for suppliers, particularly for major capital works. Social shifts, likely from the pandemic and other factors, are

seeing pressures in the labour market. Australia-wide this is impacting the ability of companies to attract candidates, particularly in specialist roles.

Rapid technological advancements — such as artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and digital transformation — bring both opportunities and risks. This includes potential challenges in adapting to new technologies, ensuring privacy and data protections, and addressing potential impacts on the workforce and service delivery.

For the Reef itself, social research from the Social and Economic Long-term Monitoring Program shows the Reef continues to be a source of pride and wellbeing for catchment residents. Over 90 per cent of catchment residents surveyed are proud the Reef is a World Heritage site and highly value the Reef's biodiversity. This research also showed catchment residents rate climate change as the biggest threat to the Reef.

Out on the water, recreational use of the Reef continues to increase, and patterns of use are changing. Vessel registration records suggest that recreational use of the Reef has trended towards either smaller personal watercraft (like jetskis) or larger craft capable of going further out and staying overnight on the Reef.

At a national level, environmental laws are under reform to deliver the Australian Government's Nature Positive Plan. These reforms will apply to the Reef's regulatory context, particularly for assessing future proposals that may impact matters of National Environmental Significance which include the Marine Park and the World Heritage Area.

Key influences

Climate change and environment



Increasing global greenhouse gas emissions



Environmental disturbances — mass coral bleaching, cyclones, storms, and declining water quality



Biological stresses e.g. crown-of-thorns starfish



Changes in physical oceanography e.g. ocean temperature

International and government



Global and domestic climate change policy and action



Other policy, regulatory and legislative changes



Changes of government



Funding and resources

Society, industries and communities



Use of the Reef and social licence for activities



Shifting societal views and behavioural change



Global crisis e.g. COVID-19



Growth and contraction of industries

Media and technology



Information and reporting by Australian and international media



Social media



Technological changes in use of the Marine Park



Interventions that improve Reef resilience

Achieving our purpose

Key Strategic Priorities and Key Delivery Initiatives

The Reef Authority identified 15 key strategic priorities to achieve our purpose in 2023–24, advancing our four corporate objectives:

1. Corporate objective	
Enhancing Reef resilience by providing expert knowledge to advise key decision makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef.	
KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY	KEY DELIVERY INITIATIVES 2023–24
1.1 Mitigate the effects of climate change on the Reef	1.1.1 Update the Climate Change Position Statement.
	1.1.2 Deliver nine priority projects under the Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting partnership.
	1.1.3 Publish the <i>Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for Climate Resilience and Adaptation</i> .
	1.1.4 Scenario test our Reef health framework for future climate impacts.
	1.1.5 Support the Australian Government's Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program to trial an innovative suite of safe, acceptable interventions to help the Great Barrier Reef resist, adapt to, and recover from the impacts of climate change.
1.2 Deliver the 2024 Outlook Report	1.2.1 Finalise and submit Outlook Report 2024 to the Minister for Environment and Water.
1.3 Take action to address threats from fishing	1.3.1 Update our Fishing Position Statement.
	1.3.2 Deliver conservation expertise through the Queensland Fisheries working groups.
	1.3.3 Increase recreational and commercial fishing compliance with Marine Park rules through activities in the Reef Joint Field Management Program Annual Business Plan.
	1.3.4 Increase recreational and commercial fishing compliance with Marine Park rules through targeted communications under a fishing communications strategy.
1.4 Be active in the World Heritage system	1.4.1 Provide expert advice in relation to World Heritage site management.
	1.4.2 Implement any Australian Government commitments to World Heritage Committee recommendations.
2. Corporate objective	
Enhancing Reef resilience through innovation, management and regulation of the Marine Park and our in-field presence.	
KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY	KEY DELIVERY INITIATIVES 2023–24
2.1 Develop new approaches to marine spatial planning	2.1.1 Draft a plan of management with Traditional Owners, Queensland State and Local Government, communities, business and industry for the Southern Great Barrier Reef.
2.2 Deliver strong legislative and governing arrangements for the Great Barrier Reef	2.2.1 Support the Australian Government's Environmental Law Reform agenda, ensuring alignment of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park legislation.
	2.2.2 Develop five new policies, as directed by the Marine Park Authority Board, to conserve the World Heritage values and improve reef resilience of the Marine Park.
	2.2.3 Deliver a new risk management framework for the Reef Authority.
	2.2.4 Review compliance offence and penalties framework and identify improvements.
	2.2.5 Deliver the permissions system in accordance with the service charter.
	2.2.6 Host and participate in relevant Reef governing and advisory bodies to advance Reef protection.
2.3 Deliver the Reef Joint Field Management Program	2.3.1 Deliver the priorities outlined in the Reef Joint Field Management Program Annual Business Plan to enhance the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.
	2.3.2 Trial new technologies that might improve conservation or compliance outcomes.
2.4 Implement Reef health and resilience interventions	2.4.1 Complete the Douglas Shoal Remediation Project.
	2.4.2 Deliver the expanded Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program.



3. Corporate objective

Enhancing Reef resilience through partnerships, collaboration and education

KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY	KEY DELIVERY INITIATIVES 2023–24
3.1 Be a partner of choice in Reef protection	3.1.1 Hold the Pacific Coral Reef Forum to build capacity in Pacific nations to manage their marine estate.
	3.1.2 Deliver the Tourism Reef Protection Initiative.
3.2 Partner with Traditional Owners in management of Sea Country	3.2.1 Deliver a roadmap to work with Traditional Owners in support of co-management in the Great Barrier Reef.
	3.2.2 Work with partners to implement Reef Authority actions outlined in the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Implementation Plan.
3.3 Expand the Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements (TUMRAs) Program	3.3.1 Maintain 10 accredited TUMRAs.
	3.3.2 Progress four emerging TUMRAs candidate groups.
	3.3.3 Hold two TUMRA Coordinator workshops.
	3.3.4 Deliver two new emerging Sea Country Values Mapping projects.
3.4 Provide world-class education	3.4.1 Finalise the design and commence construction of the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium.
	3.4.2 Deliver the Reef Education and Engagement Implementation Plan 2021–2025.
	3.4.3 Implement actions in the Communications Strategy.

4. Corporate objective

Supporting a high-performing organisation

KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY	KEY DELIVERY INITIATIVES 2023–24
4.1 Modernise key activities with digital solutions	4.1.1 Upgrade the Eye on the Reef platform to consolidate and communicate our data.
	4.1.2 Enhance the Reef Knowledge System to increase public usage.
	4.1.3 Implement a project to modernise the compliance system to improve its efficiency.
	4.1.4 Improve the Reef Authority's Information and Communication Technology capabilities to support a high performing organisation.
4.2 Implement the Reef Authority's Sustainability Strategy	4.2.1 Release the Reef Authority's Sustainability Strategy.
	4.2.2 Transition corporate fleet to electric vehicles.
	4.2.3 Deliver the Reef Authority's Sustainability Strategy.
4.3 Support our people	4.3.1 Negotiate a new Enterprise Agreement.
	4.3.2 Finalise and implement the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).
	4.3.3 Introduce graduate-level recruitment.
	4.3.4 Deliver the Strategic Workforce Plan (2021–2026) and maintain investment in learning and development.

Managing our risks

The Reef Authority recognises the importance of effective risk management to achieve its objectives and fulfil its responsibilities as the custodian of the Marine Park. The Reef Authority maintains a robust and comprehensive risk management oversight framework, in accordance with the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy. This framework identifies, assesses, mitigates, and monitors risks to ensure the Reef's sustainable management and protection. It is reviewed and updated to manage emerging risks, and we work closely with several Traditional Owner groups and stakeholders across Reef researchers and industries, and the community to collaboratively identify and address risks.

We are dedicated to continuous improvement by incorporating lessons learned from incidents and near-misses and adapting risk management accordingly. We promote a culture of risk awareness and encourage all employees to contribute to identifying and managing risks. Regular risk assessments are carried out, and we put in place practical and meaningful risk controls and treatments appropriate to the business need. This is further supported by the internal audit program that provides assurance on our business processes and

performance, and our compliance with relevant statutory requirements under the PGPA Act. Audit topics are informed by our risk profile.

Areas of focus continue to be on internal risk culture, tailoring risk tools and approaches to our needs, better risk management end-to-end, and meaningful engagement with risk and risk taking. The Board, in consultation with the Executive Management Group (EMG), identified specific sources of strategic risk for the Reef Authority.

The Reef Authority's Audit and Risk Management Committee is active in these areas by engaging with senior leaders around risk management and advising the Chief Executive Officer and EMG on the appropriateness of the Reef Authority's system of risk oversight and management. Overall, the Reef Authority is taking a proactive approach to monitoring and addressing emerging risks to ensure the ongoing protection of the Marine Park and its biodiversity.



Strategic risks

Risk and description	Risk owner	Controls
<p>1 Reef-wide / regional-scale environmental event(s) including climate change impacts</p> <p>The ability of the Reef Authority to anticipate and respond to potential impacts of a catastrophic, system-wide event or the incremental impact of a series of events leading to the collapse of the ecosystem across significant regions of the Reef.</p>	<p>General Manager Strategic Policy and Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program • Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program • Reef Joint Field Management Program • Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program • Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap • Incident response framework
<p>2 Business resilience challenged due to major external event</p> <p>The Reef Authority operates in a global context and is exposed to a range of significant external (non-ecological) events beyond its control which could have significant operational and financial impacts on the Reef Authority. This would include impacts of pandemics, natural disasters or warfare on tourism and Reef visitation.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, management and regulatory actions • Future scenario planning, starting with Board planning cycle • Long-Term Financial Strategy and Plan • Business Continuity Plan • Incident management framework
<p>3 Reef Authority priorities/directions is out of step with community expectations</p> <p>Management of the Reef attracts a high degree of attention and scrutiny from across the global community including government (federal and state), the public, non-government organisations and other interested stakeholder groups. The Reef Authority should set priorities/directions for the Marine Park, but needs to balance its policies and practices with community expectations.</p>	<p>General Manager Strategic Policy and Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External engagement and communication on key programs, plans and proposals • Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap • Reef Joint Field Management Program • Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program • Formal governance committee engagement (including Reef Advisory Committees, and TUMRA Steering Committees) • Douglas Shoal Remediation Project
<p>4 Unable to adapt to evolving (current and future) rights and aspirations of Traditional Owners</p> <p>The Reef Authority has to balance the role and contribution of Traditional Owners in the way that the Reef is managed which may have implications for strategy, regulation and day-to-day operations noting this is an area of increasing focus.</p>	<p>General Manager Marine Park Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering on co-management • Continue to deliver TUMRAs and innovate TUMRA governance arrangements to develop partnerships • Embed the Closing the Gap Implementation Plan in the way the Reef Authority works with Traditional Owners • Continue to improve Traditional Owner involvement through the permission system • Formal governance committee engagement (including Reef Advisory Committees, TUMRA Steering Committees) • Reef Joint Field Management Program — Indigenous Partnership Strategy • Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Implementation Plan engagement • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy
<p>5 Financial governance and sustainability of programs</p> <p>The Reef Authority's ability to effectively flex in response to increases or decreases in funding (resources) and to make informed decisions when committing resources in both the short and longer-term to the delivery of programs that protect and enhance the health of the Reef.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-Term Financial Strategy and Plan • Corporate reporting • Portfolio planning and performance approach • Corporate Services Enabling Framework • Intergovernmental Agreement 2015
<p>6 Inability to effectively influence policy and legislation</p> <p>The Reef Authority plays a central role in driving policy and regulation at a federal and state level. The inability to influence and coordinate stakeholders and partners in developing an effective 'whole-of-government' approach has significant potential implications for the Reef and for the Reef Authority.</p>	<p>General Manager Strategic Policy and Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External engagement and communication on key programs, plans and proposals • Formal governance committee engagement • Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for Climate Resilience and Adaptation • Communications Strategy 2021–24 • Reef Joint Field Management Program — Compliance Program • Outlook Report (including synthesis and reporting).

Risk and description	Risk owner	Controls
<p>7 Project execution</p> <p>Failure to deliver major projects on scope, on time and within budget. NB. This relates specifically to larger-scale projects including Douglas Shoal Environmental Remediation Project, Great Barrier Reef Aquarium and UNESCO response.</p>	<p>General Manager Major Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services Enabling Framework (Agile Ways of Working Rollout, Workforce Plan and Project Management Framework review) • Specific project management committees • Long-Term Financial Strategy and Plan • Portfolio planning and performance tools • Reef Joint Field Management Program Business Strategy 2022–2026 • Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program • Douglas Shoal Environmental Remediation Project Advanced Project Planning
<p>8 Innovation and technology enablement</p> <p>Failure to adopt and apply innovative data and system solutions to support decision-making and delivery of services.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT Stabilisation and remediation program of work • Corporate Service Enabling Framework • Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program • Sustainability Strategy
<p>9 Ability to execute change</p> <p>The Reef Authority's ability to drive improvement in service outcomes and to adopt a performance culture.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services Enabling Framework • Performance Development Agreement Policy and Procedure • Strategic Workforce Plan 2021–2026 • The Reef Authority Culture and Behaviour • Reef 2050 Traditional Owners Implementation Plan • Closing the Gap Implementation Plan
<p>10 Reliance on third parties for delivery of core services</p> <p>The Reef Authority is reliant on third parties for both funding and delivery of services that are integral to deliver core obligations and programs of work. The Reef Authority relies on funding committed through partnerships (potential shared risk).</p>	<p>General Manager Major Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reef Joint Field Management Program Business Strategy 2022–2026 • Great Barrier Reef Aquarium Master Plan • Property management and maintenance services • Douglas Shoal Environmental Remediation Project • Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program • Corporate Services Enabling Framework • Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program
<p>11 Cyber threats</p> <p>Loss of data and systems arising from unauthorised access to and use of the Reef Authority's systems and data.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity protocols and Information Security Manual • ICT cloud and cyber security training • ICT Incident response plan, Security risk management plan • Mandatory Cybersecurity at Work training • Annual Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF) assessment • Technical controls and processes
<p>12 Preventable safety/wellbeing event</p> <p>The nature of activities that the Reef Authority engages in poses an ongoing risk to those who work, visit or are located in the vicinity of our facilities and work environments, as well as through exposure to members of the public (potential shared risk).</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dive Operation Manual • Work Health Safety Committee • Dive Safety Committee • Corporate Services Enabling Framework • Reef Joint Field Management Program Business Strategy 2022–2026 • Work Health Safety reporting — to Executive Management Group and Audit and Risk Management Committee
<p>13 The Reef Authority's business operations, including management actions, unintentionally amplifies the effects of climate change on the Great Barrier Reef.</p> <p>The policies, decisions and operational activities of the Reef Authority may have climate change impacts, leading to consequences for the overall wellbeing and condition of the Great Barrier Reef.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In development – new Reef Authority risk identified

Risk mitigation

Our risk management framework

The Reef Authority recognises risk management is critical for good regulatory and corporate governance. A risk management framework supports risk-based decision making across the Reef Authority's operations. It also provides confidence to the Marine Park Authority Board and the Reef Authority's Audit and Risk Management Committee

(ARMC) in delivering their oversight function. The Reef Authority's approach to Risk Management is aligned with the AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk management – Guidelines (Guidelines).

The following graphic details the different types of strategic, operational, and project risks managed by the Reef Authority and the areas of the organisation with the responsibility to manage these. The Reef Authority's strategic risk management framework outlines the mechanisms for reporting on emerging strategic risks as well as the process for escalating or de-escalating risks.

Overview of the Reef Authority's risk profiles



- Executive Management Group**
- Senior Management Team**
- Program Management Office/Project Managers**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p> Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (s16) Commonwealth Risk Management Policy Accountable Authority Instructions and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Risk Management Policy Framework evaluation, assurance and improvement | <p> Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Risk Management Framework Guideline Process/project specific risk assessments (e.g. fraud, security, safety, compliance) Risk reporting and escalation Incident/near miss investigation | <p> Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Strategic and Operational Risk Registers Risk assessment and management templates Hazard, incident and near miss reporting forms/templates Control assurance process |
|--|--|---|

Our capability

The Reef Authority works towards a vision for ‘a healthy Great Barrier Reef for future generations’. Our people are our greatest asset — their expertise, dedication, and passion are the key enablers in maintaining the Reef Authority’s position at the forefront of Marine Park management.

We will continue to focus on building a future-focused workforce, that is flexible and adaptive, to ensure we are an agile and responsive organisation.

We will also continue to advance transformative initiatives to ensure we have the most up-to-date tools, systems, and processes to enhance our capability and deliver on operational and delivery excellence.



People

The Reef Authority’s Strategic Workforce Plan 2021–2026 builds on our three core elements to sharpen our focus, ensure we are more agile, and invest in our people for future challenges. The Reef Authority will provide a focus on the strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in respect of their attraction, development, and retention.

The Plan also focuses on the five key elements of the Australian Public Service (APS) Strategic Workforce Plan, identifies our challenges and a series of actions to align us with the one public service ethos, and seeks to position us as a high performing organisation.

We are continuing to align our skills as a workforce to be:

- Agile, collaborative, responsive, and able to navigate complexity.
- Skilled, knowledgeable, and committed to life-long learning.
- Maximising data and technology and digital engagement.
- Professional, engaged, and committed to integrity.
- Citizen-centred in approach, inclusive, and representational of our diverse communities.

The Reef Authority’s Enterprise Agreement notionally expired in early 2021. Prior to this, Reef Authority staff voted in favour of a determination in accordance with subsection 24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999* in lieu of bargaining for a new enterprise agreement. This meant that employment conditions would be retained for a further three years with remuneration and allowances being adjusted for the first two years. The Public Sector Interim Workplace Arrangements 2022 replaced the 2020 policy, and remuneration and allowances were increased by three per cent on and from 30 March 2023. The Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy 2023 (2023 Policy) was subsequently released and outlines the Australian Government’s plan for APS-wide bargaining — expected to be concluded by mid-2023.

Reef Authority culture

Our Culture Champion Network is passionate about positive change in the workplace and is working with other staff to further embed our culture. Our leadership group continues to support the Culture Champion Network in their work and with staff

more generally through the agency's transformation journey. These combined initiatives support connectivity across the agency and deliver on our shared purpose with impact.



Staffing statistics

Headcount



Previous
30 June 2022
257

Current
30 June 2023
258

Staffing allocation



Proposed
2024-25
272

Proposed
2025-26
272

Diversity and equality



Men
35.27%

Women
64.73%



First Nations people
7.36%



Identify with a disability
1.55%



Men in executive roles
11.63%

Women in executive roles
17.05%



Employees under 30
7.75%



Employees over 55
18.99%



Average age of employees
45

Retention



Over 10 years of service
33.3%



Average years of service
7.5

Flexibility



Full-time
89.15%



Part-time
10.85%

Work, health, and safety (WHS)

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of our staff and continue to drive initiatives to further improve our WHS processes. This enables us to be more responsive to safety incidents and risk management matters.

Under the banner of 'Safety by Choice, Not Chance' we have adopted a proactive approach to emergent safety issues. We use information feeds, developmental collective training, and streamlined reporting. We seek to actively engage staff to improve how safety is applied in the workplace.

Improvements in reporting have fostered a strategic approach to monitoring and evaluating WHS metrics for relevant stakeholders, and to inform subsequent decision-making and address emergent issues.

The WHS team within People Services has deployed comprehensive and increasingly robust workplace health and safety management and administration systems (such as the implementation of an interim WHS Reporting System allowing for online incident reporting and management across the Reef Authority). A commercial off-the-shelf WHS information management and reporting system is currently being procured as a permanent solution for Reef Authority-wide use.

Dive operations are more rigorous, with additional oversight to further mitigate risks and an upgrade to the classification of the Dive Officer position. This recognises the position's scope, scale of governance, and span of control.

The WHS team works collegially and cooperatively with the Manager of Field Health and Safety to ensure best practice is applied at every opportunity across the Reef Authority, including Field Management and Marine Park operations.

Reconciliation Action Plan

We are proud of our relationships and agreements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to manage and protect their Sea Country. The Reef Authority is developing its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) with Reconciliation Australia. The Innovate RAP focuses on developing and strengthening our relationships with First Nations peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and developing and piloting innovative strategies that empower First Nations peoples. The RAP will also include actions and deliverables supporting organisational change and further aligning us to deliver on the Closing the Gap priority reforms.

Asset management and sustainability

The Reef Authority's asset base is heavily focused on the buildings associated with the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium. The written down values of major asset categories include \$11.645 million in buildings, \$1.851 million in plant and equipment, \$607,000 in computer software, and \$49,000 in leasehold improvements.

We use a lifecycle approach to manage our assets, underpinned by a Strategic Management Plan.

The Reef Authority has continued the transformational journey to promote financial sustainability and lift the financial maturity of the organisation through contemporary financial systems, and support and reporting includes technology, business process improvement, and culture aspects. The Reef Authority is also exploring systems to manage the operational and maintenance requirements for assets, including those at the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium.

The Reef Authority has a sustainability strategy in place which identifies key action areas and our roadmap to Net Zero by 2030. The Sustainability Strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure specific targets and actions align with the APS Net Zero commitments. This will build on previous reduction initiatives such as the transition to GreenPower and electric vehicles, sustainable construction and leasing, and further support the circular economy and Nature Positive principles (where nature is being repaired and is regenerating rather than being in decline). Our new uniforms are sustainable, with the polo shirt made of 100 per cent organic cotton, and at the end of its life, it will be recycled into a new product or composted.



Infrastructure

Our workplaces

The Reef Authority's Townsville presence is moving to new interim accommodation in 2023. The new office will enable the Reef Authority to collaborate, innovate, manage growth, and engage with the community and stakeholders in a modern, fit-for-purpose environment.

Our staff based in Cairns, Airlie Beach, Yeppoon, Gladstone, and Canberra support our in-field presence and our connections with communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, government agencies, non-government organisations, industry, science and research bodies, and education facilities.

Great Barrier Reef Aquarium

Design, taking into account budget parameters, is underway for our Great Barrier Reef Aquarium in Townsville, north Queensland. This includes a partnership with the Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba peoples and other Reef Traditional Owners to improve the understanding of cultural knowledge and the protection and promotion of the Indigenous heritage values of the Reef. The Aquarium redevelopment will help ensure Australia remains at the forefront of global reef education.

Vessels

The Reef Joint Field Management Program is essential for delivering the Reef Authority's key in-field operations, including conservation actions, monitoring, incident response, engaging with Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area users, and upholding compliance. Due to its vessel fleet, the program is uniquely positioned to collaborate and work on-country with Traditional Owners.

Vessel capability is managed through the Reef Joint Field Management's rolling five-year business strategy. This process is designed to ensure that field officers have the capacity to be in the field at the place, time, and durations necessary to deliver activities that make the most difference. The program will maintain a vessel fleet of around 21 vessels. The composition of the fleet has changed to support the program's expansion and delivery of more field activities across the World Heritage Area, guided by the five-year vessel replacement program. A new 20-metre barge will replace the current 11.9-metre barge *Island Ranger* in Townsville, and a new 11.3-metre compliance-focused vessel will be based in Rosslyn Bay.

The program worked consistently across many years to achieve a safe, fit-for-purpose vessel fleet capable of operating across the World Heritage Area, particularly in remote locations. Notably this capability was enhanced further in 2021 with delivery of the program's second 24-metre vessel, the *Reef Resilience*. Having a second large multi-purpose vessel allows for simultaneous deployments in the northern and southern Great Barrier Reef.

Information communications technology

Strategy

The Reef Authority is implementing the Information Communications Technology Strategy (ICT Strategy), while taking into account the Corporate Plan and other government initiatives, enabling the Reef Authority to increase its digital services capability over the next six years. The Reef Authority uses ongoing staff, contractors and commercial providers to deliver these services.

The ICT Strategy will position the Reef Authority to deliver these services with some fundamental principles in mind such as:

- get the basics right
- set a clear direction
- smart partnering
- accelerate innovation.

The Reef Authority is targeting the move to, and use of, cloud-based services — providing the building blocks to build modern, reliable and secure ICT services. This also allows us to invest in machine

learning, artificial Intelligence and advanced analytics to accelerate innovation in Marine Park management. These capabilities are essential to further the Australian Government's public data agenda, and to further the use of data resources in national and international collaborative research and educational initiatives in which the Reef Authority is involved.

We adhere to mandated whole-of-government standards and services when the opportunity arises for replacement, or choice of product and service.

The Reef Authority is safeguarding the digital assets by partnering with whole-of-government initiatives to improve our security posture to meet the current cyber threat landscape. We continue to lift our cyber security literacy through all-staff mandatory training and a continual adherence to the Australian Government's cyber security Essential Eight Maturity Model.

Co-investment

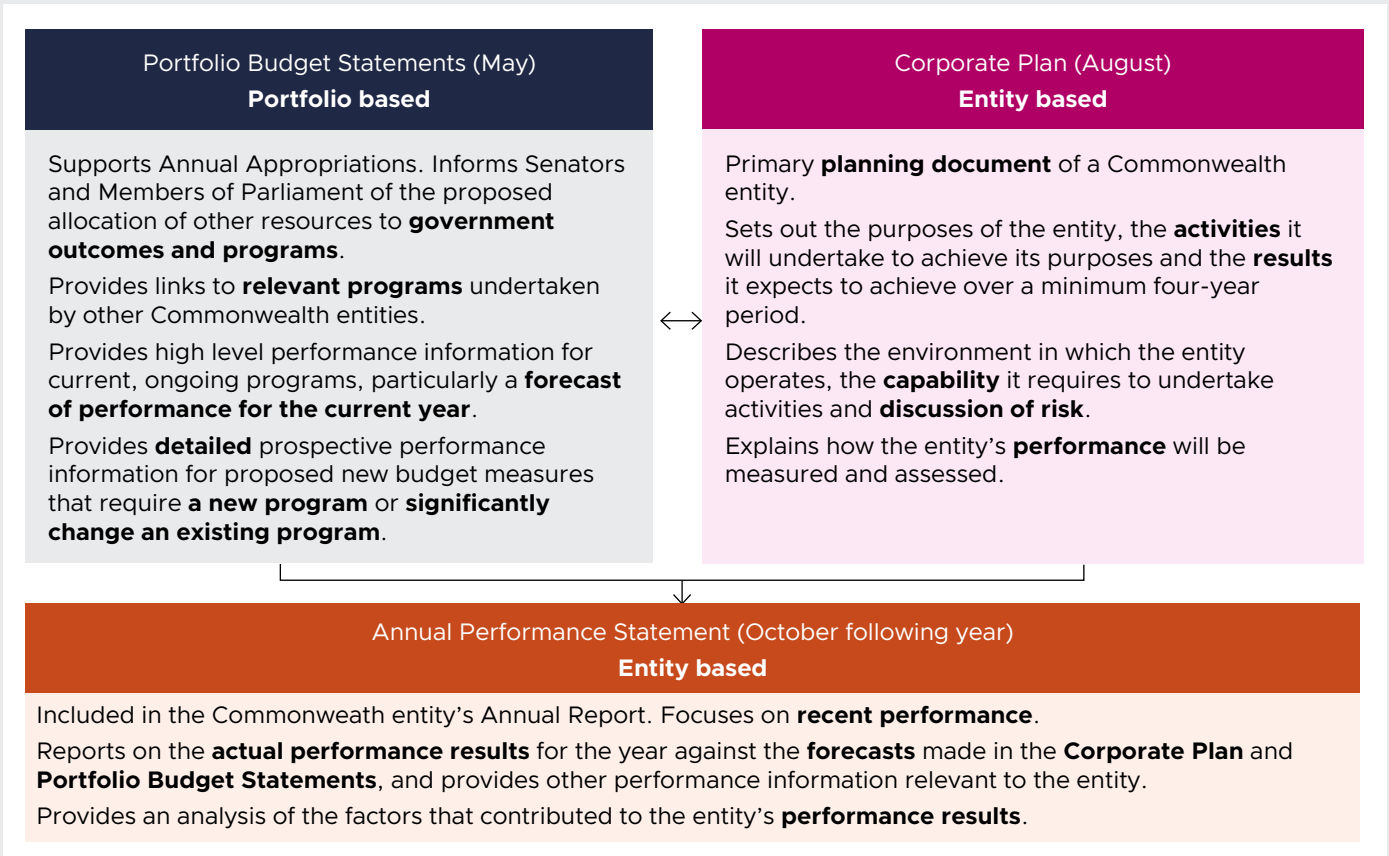
The Reef Authority maintains a current memorandum of understanding with the Queensland Government under the Reef Joint Field Management Program. The Reef Authority provides shared information technology systems and services to ensure the continued business operations with our partners in the management of the Marine Park.



Our performance

Commonwealth Performance Framework

At a corporate and operational level, the Reef Authority has an integrated planning and reporting approach that continues to evolve over time. Part of our approach is based on the Commonwealth Performance Framework, as detailed below.



Structure of performance section of this Corporate Plan

The performance information within the Portfolio Budget Statements is underpinned and delivered through the Reef Authority's Key Strategic Priorities and Key Delivery Initiatives, as previously identified within this Plan.

In this section, performance information for each objective comprises:

- Performance criteria – measures used to track progress towards a corporate result.
- Targets – specific descriptions of what success against each performance criterion looks like.
- Rationale – provides explanation of the performance criteria, helping to connect it with the corporate result.
- Data sources – the information we will draw on as evidence for our performance against the target.
- Delivery strategies – our primary, high-level strategies for achieving the corporate results.

The Reef Authority is continuing to review and improve our performance information. As a result, performance criteria in Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been updated, added or removed.

Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report

The Outlook Report is published every five years and is an evidence-based report, which looks at the Reef's health, management, pressures and likely future. Outlook reports are a regular and reliable means of assessing the overall performance of all measures to protect and manage the Great Barrier Reef.

Linking to the Portfolio Budget Statements performance information

The Australian Government's Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) outline how government will allocate resources to achieve their outcomes.

Under the 2023–24 PBS, our outcome 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.**

The Reef Authority continues to review and monitor its performance, including the use of 11 performance measures.

The performance information identified in the 2023–24 Portfolio Budget Statements is below.

The outcome statement in the Portfolio Budget Statements is the same as the Reef Authority's purpose statement, on page nine of this plan.

Performance measures	Planned performance results
1. Crown-of-thorns starfish densities area at sustainable levels in the cull sites on targeted reefs.	• 75%
2. Proportion of coral trout biomass in Marine Park Green Zones compared with General Use Blue Zones, as an indicator for reef health.	• 95% or greater
3. Proportion of Reef Joint Field Management Program Annual Business Plan targets achieved or with significant progress in 2023–24.	• 85%
4. Participants in Reef Authority education and engagement programs are taking actions that support the Reef's long-term protection.	• 85%



1 Objective

Enhancing Reef resilience by providing expert knowledge to advise key decision makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef.

Criteria 1.1

Reef Authority policies, strategies, and position statements that effectively address the High or Very High risks identified in the latest Outlook Report.

Result	Targets			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
61%	80%	Maintain		

Rationale	An annual inventory of active policies, strategies, and position statements will identify if the Reef Authority is making decisions and/or influencing management responses that align with expert knowledge synthesised in the 2019 Outlook Report. Note this does not include corporate policies or strategies.
Data	Collected and reported annually by the Reef Authority through informal reporting. *Targets for 2024-25 and 2025-26 will be revised following the release of 2024 Outlook Report.
Delivery strategies	The Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for Climate Resilience and Adaptation and implementation, the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap and position statements.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure:	1.1 Mitigate the effects of climate change on the Reef. 1.2 Deliver the 2024 Outlook Report. 1.3 Take action to address threats from fishing. 2.2 Deliver strong legislative and governing arrangements for the Great Barrier Reef.

Criteria 1.2

Improved trust level sentiment score

Result	Targets			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
8.36	8.4	Maintain or improve		

Rationale	Using sentiment analysis allows evaluation of the attitudes of our stakeholders that could affect the Reef Authority's reputation, particularly as the authoritative voice of the Reef. An annual omnibus survey is conducted, with a representative portion of the Australian Census population, to gauge the level of trust sentiment stakeholders have in relation to the Reef Authority. The original trust level sentiment score, conducted in 2016, was 6.6. In 2020-21 it was 7.4.
Data	Survey results collected annually by an external research consultancy. Total number of participants in the survey is over 1000. The sentiment scores range from 0 = low trust sentiment, to 10 = high trust sentiment.
Delivery strategies	Communications Strategy 2021-2024.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	1.2 Deliver the 2024 Outlook Report. 1.4 Be active in the World Heritage system. 3.1 Be a partner of choice in Reef protection. 3.4 Provide world-class education. 4.3 Support our people.

Future measure	Criteria 1.3: Cumulative number of citations of Reef Authority publications.
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2

Objective

Enhancing Reef resilience through innovation, management and regulation of the Marine Park and our in-field presence.

Criteria 2.1

Crown-of-thorns starfish densities are at sustainable levels in the cull sites on targeted reefs.

Result	Targets			
2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
New measure	75%	Maintain or improve		

Rationale	The Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program monitors and protects coral by culling crown-of-thorns starfish numbers down to ecologically sustainable levels on reefs of high ecological and economic value in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The target represents the percentage of the cull sites at sustainable levels.
Data	Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program, Eye on the Reef Program.
Delivery strategies	Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	2.4 Implement Reef health and resilience interventions. 2.3 Deliver the Reef Joint Field Management Program.

Criteria 2.2

Percentage of coral trout biomass in Marine Park Green Zones exceeding that of General Use Blue Zones, as an indicator for Reef health.

Result	Targets			
2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
New measure	95%	Maintain or improve		

Rationale	Reef-wide zoning outlines what activities can take place in each location and helps to manage and protect the values of the Marine Park that people enjoy. Independent research indicated coral trout populations continue to increase in no-take marine reserves in which fishing is prohibited. This measure compares biomass between take and no-take zones. This measure may be impacted from year to year by external factors, including cyclones and coral bleaching.
Data	AIMS Long Term Monitoring Program (LTMP) database.
Delivery strategies	AIMS.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	1.3 Take action to address threats from fishing. 2.1 Develop new approaches to marine spatial planning. 2.4 Implement Reef health and resilience interventions. 4.1 Modernise key activities with digital solutions.

Criteria 2.3

- (a) Number of offences detected in the Marine Park.
- (b) Number of high and very-high risk offences detected in the Marine Park.
- (c) Number of dedicated compliance days completed in the Marine Park.

Result	Targets			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
(a) 1583	(a) decreasing trend	(a) and (b) decreasing trend		
(b) 794	(a) decreasing trend			
(c) 1101	(c) 1000	(c) Reach or exceed target		

Rationale	<p>(a)(b) The Reef Joint Field Management Program’s (RJFMP) Compliance Program has a risk-based, intelligence-driven approach that utilises a wide range of compliance tools to promote compliance with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act and Regulations. Compliance tools include communication and education, monitoring of commercial and recreational vessels through vessel tracking, targeted compliance operations, and prosecutions.</p> <p>(c) The RJFMP compliance team works in partnership with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, and Queensland Police Service to use risk and intelligence analysis to identify surveillance priorities and plan compliance activities. Compliance operations provide an effective presence in the World Heritage Area to detect, deter, and respond to illegal activity, and provide an effective means of engaging with and educating users of the World Heritage Area. It should be noted that the Program’s capacity to delivery dedicated compliance days can be impacted by responses to natural or human derived disasters.</p>
Data	<p>(a)(b) Collected through the compliance database and reported on through the RJFMP Compliance Quarterly Reports and Annual Report, and the Great Barrier Reef Annual Report.</p> <p>(c) Collected quarterly through the Field Reporting System.</p>
Delivery strategies	<i>Reef Joint Field Management Program Business Strategy 2022-2026, Permissions System.</i>
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	<p>1.3 Take action to address threats from fishing.</p> <p>2.3 Deliver the Reef Joint Field Management Program.</p> <p>4.1 Modernise key activities with digital solutions.</p>
Future measure	<p><i>Criteria 2.4: Timely response to customer and stakeholder requests:</i></p> <p>(a) <i>Permit applications</i></p> <p>(b) <i>Events and incidents reported to the Reef Authority.</i></p>

3 Objective

Enhancing Reef resilience through partnerships, collaboration and education.

Criteria 3.1

Participants in Reef Authority education and engagement programs are taking actions that support the Reef's long-term protection.

Result	Targets			
2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
New measure	85%	Maintain or increase		

Rationale	If the Reef Authority has worked effectively with our Reef Guardian council and school partners, they will demonstrate caring for the Reef, learning about the Reef and the risks it faces, implementing actions that address those risks, and sharing their positive actions with others.
Data	The Reef Authority surveys program participants.
Delivery strategies	Education and Engagement Implementation Plan 2021-25.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	2.1 Develop new approaches to marine spatial planning. 2.3 Deliver the Reef Joint Field Management Program. 3.4 Provide world-class education. 4.1 Modernise key activities with digital solutions.

Criteria 3.2

Reef Authority online communication tool usage.

(a) Websites

(b) Social media channels

Result	Targets			
2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
New measure	(a) 383,800	Maintain		
	(b) 3,500,000			

Rationale	(a)(b) Our website and social media channels are key tools in sharing information on the management, health and resilience of the Reef, and support the Reef Authority's communication, engagement and education needs. To ensure our audience remains engaged on our website, we will continue to produce high quality content so the Reef Authority can maintain an average number of engaged sessions (the number of sessions that lasted longer than 10 seconds, or had a conversion event, or had two or more screen or page views).
Data	(a)(b) Google Analytics as well as custom internal and external service provider analytics on www.gbrmpa.gov.au , https://reefknowledgesystem.gbrmpa.gov.au/ , greatbarrierreefaquarium.au and https://www.reefed.edu.au/ and social media platforms including LinkedIn, X (formally Twitter), Facebook, Instagram.
Delivery strategies	(a)(b) Communication Strategy 2021-2024.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	1.1 Mitigate the effects of climate change on the Reef. 3.4 Provide world-class education. 4.1 Modernise key activities with digital solutions.

Criteria 3.3

- (a) Number of Traditional Owner groups with formal partnerships in place.
- (b) Percentage of Marine Park coastline covered by Traditional Owner agreements.

Result	Targets			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
(a) New measure	(a) 2	(a) Increase		
(b) 43%	(b) 43%	(b) Maintain or increase		

Rationale	<p>(a) Formal partnerships are co-designed partnerships with shared decision making and governance.</p> <p>(b) The Reef Authority has established impactful and mutually beneficial Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements and Indigenous Ranger sectors through the Reef Joint Field Management Program.</p>
Data	<p>(a) Number of formal partnership agreements we have in place.</p> <p>(b) Based on number of agreements in place and their area of coverage against proportion of coastline, reported annually by the Reef Authority.</p>
Delivery strategies	<i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy, Reef Joint Field Management Program Business Strategy 2021-25, Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Implementation Plan, Closing the Gap Implementation Plan and the Reef Authority Engagement and Participation Framework.</i>
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	<p>2.1 Develop new approaches to marine spatial planning.</p> <p>2.3 Deliver the Reef Joint Field Management Program.</p> <p>3.2 Partner with Traditional Owners in management of Sea Country.</p> <p>3.3 Expand the Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements Program.</p> <p>4.3 Support our people.</p>

4

Objective

Supporting a high-performing organisation.

Criteria 4.1

Improvement in our employee engagement score.

Result	Targets			
2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
New measure	Maintain or increase	Maintain or increase		

Rationale	Employee engagement is the extent to which employees are motivated, inspired, and enabled to improve the Reef Authority's outcomes. For 2021-22 the engagement score was 72 per cent.
Data	Annual Australian Public Service Employee Census.
Delivery strategies	Corporate Services Enabling Framework.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	4.1 Modernise key activities with digital solutions. 4.3 Support our people.

Criteria 4.2

Percentage variance of the Reef Authority budget.

Result	Targets			
2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
New measure	Less than 5%	Less than 5%		

Rationale	Monitoring budget performance drives service delivery outcomes.
Data	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Internal Financial Management System.
Delivery strategies	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Long-Term Financial Plan.

Criteria 4.3

Minimise Reef Authority direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions.

Result	Targets			
2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
New measure	Decrease	Decrease		

Rationale	The Reef Authority Sustainability Strategy will set new targets with enabling initiatives that move us towards net zero emissions in our operations by 2030 (for Scope 1 – Direct and 2 – Indirect Owned) including the development of a plan for net zero for Scope 3 – Indirect Not Owned emissions.
Data	Annual emissions data calculations.
Delivery strategies	Reef Authority Sustainability Strategy.
Strategic priorities supporting this measure	4.2 Implement the Reef Authority's sustainability strategy.

Future measure	<i>Criteria 4.4: Service level standards for all internal systems are met. Criteria 4.5: Transparency of program and project scope, progress and expenditure.</i>
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