



**Australian Government**

**Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority**

GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

2016-17

A N N U A L R E P O R T



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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.

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## **Australian Government**

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# LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

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Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
PO Box 1379  
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5 October 2017

The Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP  
Minister for the Environment and Energy  
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 2017.

The report has been prepared for the purposes of section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), which requires that an annual report be given to the entity's responsible minister for presentation to the Commonwealth Parliament.

It 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 subsection 70(2) of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

This annual report has been prepared in line with the *Resource Management Guide No. 135 – Annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities*, updated by the Department of Finance in July 2016. In accordance with Section 10 of the PGPA Rule 2014 (Fraud Rule) and the Commonwealth Fraud Control Policy (Fraud Policy), the Authority has prepared fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans and has in place appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection processes and procedures. We have also taken all reasonable measures to minimise the incidence of fraud and to investigate and recover the proceeds of fraud against the Authority.

Yours sincerely



Dr Russell Reichelt  
Chairman



Figure 1: Map of the Great Barrier Reef Region

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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THIS ANNUAL REPORT

The *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Annual Report 2016–17* complies with the requirements for annual reports outlined by the Australian Government Department of Finance in its *Resource Management Guide No. 135 — Annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities*.

This annual report includes the annual performance statements of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, detailing the Authority's performance against criteria as published in the Department of the Environment and Energy *Portfolio Budget Statements 2016–17* (Portfolio Budget Statements) and the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Corporate Plan 2016–17* (Corporate Plan).



The annual report is comprised of seven parts:

- **Part 1 Introduction**  
Outlines the purpose and structure of the report, and presents the Chairman's review of the Authority's activities and performance for the 2016–17 reporting period.
- **Part 2 Overview**  
Provides corporate background to the Authority, including its role and functions. Also provides a summary of financial performance and a staff overview.
- **Part 3 Performance**  
Details the actions taken by the Authority in 2016–17 to meet its stated purpose 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, reporting against key performance indicators outlined in the Authority's performance documents.
- **Part 4 Management and accountability**  
Covers the delivery of the management framework that supports effective functioning of the Authority including corporate governance, statutory and advisory committees, management and training, work health and safety, asset management, corporate services, and management of consultants.
- **Part 5 Finances**  
Delivers an analysis of financial performance and a detailed financial statement.
- **Part 6 Appendices**  
Comprises the Authority's resource statement; a staffing overview; information on advertising and marketing, freedom of information and ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance; a list of staff papers and presentations; and Queensland Government financials.
- **Part 7 Acronyms and index**  
Includes a list of acronyms, a glossary, list of reporting requirements, and an alphabetical index.



## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW



It has been a challenging year for the Great Barrier Reef and for tropical coral reefs around the world. Many have been affected by human-induced global warming causing mass coral bleaching and significant losses of live coral cover.

Corals are particularly sensitive to above-average temperatures in the region where they live. Marine heatwaves in the past two summers have killed large areas of coral to an extent not seen in the past 400 years — the longest time series of coral growth known for the Great Barrier Reef.

The 2016–17 reporting period has been a defining time for the Reef's health and management. The cumulative impact of multiple disturbances affected most of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and redefined our operating environment. It has highlighted the urgent need to look at what measures — in addition to the suite of actions already underway — can be undertaken to further build the Reef's resilience in the face of pressures coming largely from outside the Marine Park. The conclusion of our Great Barrier Reef Summit in May 2017 was that there is hope for the Reef if we act strongly now on all the pressures confronting the Reef.

The Authority reported the impacts of the mass bleaching in 2015–16 in the Marine Park, identifying long-term ocean warming as the underlying cause. We also pointed to the need to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions — in particular the need to deliver the

commitments of the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

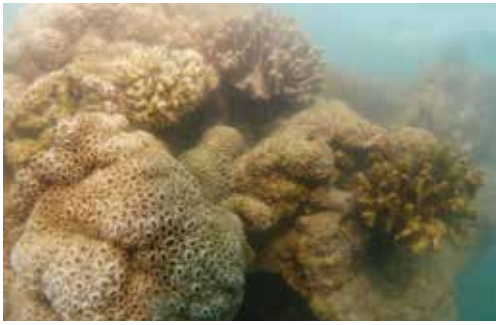
Mass coral bleaching in late summer 2016 led to an estimated 29 per cent loss of shallow coral across the Great Barrier Reef. Winter sea surface temperatures in 2016 remained above average; by the beginning of the 2016–17 summer the accumulated heat stress on the Reef resulted in a second wave of mass coral bleaching. The significant impacts were in the central and northern Reef regions.

Media reporting of this large-scale event was confusing because the impacts were highly variable across the 344,400 square kilometre Marine Park — an area bigger than Italy. Even in the most severely affected areas there are patches of surviving corals. In the southern third of the Reef there were only minor impacts from the heatwaves.

The Authority attended a number of high-profile tourism industry events to explain the impacts on the Reef in a factual way and that the Reef remains a beautiful, resilient system in the face of these pressures. In particular, the Authority and the Australian Government as a whole are taking all possible actions to build the Reef's resilience.

Outbreaks of coral disease and crown-of-thorns starfish have been ongoing. It is likely the increase in coral disease is a symptom of physiological stress after coral bleaching. The crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks, in contrast, are likely to be a result of elevated nutrient levels boosting reproduction of this coral predator. The elevated nutrients are derived mainly from floodwaters after extreme rainfall events often during La Niña years. Agricultural land use over the past 150 years has elevated the nutrients in these floodwaters above natural levels.

Adding to these impacts, severe tropical cyclone Debbie crossed the coast at Airlie Beach in late March 2017, with an estimated 28 per cent of the Marine Park's total reef area being within the cyclone's 'catastrophic damage zone'. This tropical cyclone was very large, powerful and slow-moving, causing massive waves that break coral into rubble. These category 4 and 5 storms are not unprecedented but are increasing in frequency, with more occurring in the past 12 years than occurred in the previous 100 years.



*Almost 30 per cent of the Marine Park's reef area was in cyclone Debbie's catastrophic damage zone*

Against this backdrop, the strong and shared commitment of Reef stakeholders to work together has come to the fore more than ever before. There is strong consensus for significant actions to protect the Reef, and for our collective efforts to motivate people to act at local, regional and global levels.

As Australia's lead manager of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, our key objective is the long-term protection of this iconic natural wonder to ensure future generations can continue to experience and enjoy this World Heritage marine environment.

We continue to work with government, industry and the community to manage this multiple-use marine area through a combination of on-ground park management, policies, partnerships and regulation, to ensure its protection while enabling sustainable use.

## MANAGING FOR A RESILIENT REEF

Responding to the mass bleaching and cumulative impacts on the Reef, the Authority hosted the *Great Barrier Reef Summit – Managing for Resilience* in May 2017. This two-day event involved more than 70 regional, national and international delegates representing marine park managers, Traditional Owners, government agencies, research institutions, industry groups, Reef users and other stakeholders.

The Summit's key objective was to develop a blueprint for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and its partners in response to mass bleaching and cumulative impacts, with a key aspect being to build resilience.

The collective years of Reef knowledge at the event — and the diversity of representatives and their experiences of the Reef — ensured a broad range of perspectives and solutions. It allowed us to explore a range of new areas, including the role of intervention in marine management.

There was a very strong and shared commitment that the Reef belongs to us all and we all have a role in ensuring its future. The resulting blueprint for change, to be developed after the summit, will include actions and ways to communicate the challenges facing the Reef.



*The wealth of knowledge at the Summit ensured a broad range of solutions*

## REEF PROTECTION ACTIONS ARE WELL COORDINATED

While the Reef Summit explored new options for management, the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* (Reef 2050 Plan) remains the Australian and Queensland governments' 35-year plan for the Great Barrier Reef.

The plan brings together government and non-government sectors in a framework to implement and improve protection measures for the Reef to achieve outcomes and targets for ecosystem health, biodiversity, heritage, water quality, community benefits, economic benefits and governance.

The Authority is implementing many of the foundation programs and more than half of the actions in the Reef 2050 Plan. This includes working with the Queensland Government to develop and implement the Reef 2050

Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, which received \$8 million in establishment funding through the Australian Government's Reef Trust in 2015–16.

This new knowledge system for the Reef is central to assessing the effectiveness of the Reef 2050 Plan. It covers all aspects of the Reef's environment, including its biophysical attributes, heritage, social, economic and cultural values. The Authority leads the marine component of the program, while the Queensland Government is focused on the catchment.

This is the first time Reef monitoring and reporting has been considered with an integrated, region-wide approach, which is crucial to informing management across the Reef and its catchment. It will provide a sound basis for reporting on the health of the Reef and the progress towards achieving the goals of the Reef 2050 Plan in the coming decades.

The Authority remains firmly committed to the Reef 2050 Plan and delivering the actions to build Reef resilience.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION AFTER SHIP GROUNDING

After six-and-a-half years of protracted negotiations, the Authority was successful in litigation against the ship owners responsible for the grounding of *Shen Neng 1* on Douglas Shoal.

The owners and insurers of the Chinese bulk carrier accepted responsibility to compensate for damage caused to the Reef in April 2010, with an agreed payment of \$39.3 million to the Commonwealth. Restoring the damage to the Reef was my highest priority in pursuing this claim and it is good news for the ecosystem that settlement was agreed.

With an impact area of more than 100 hectares, this is the largest ship grounding scar known in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and possibly the largest reef-related impact in the world.

I am pleased our 2013 decision to pursue a legal claim for damages led to an agreement to make funds available to clean-up Douglas Shoal. Planning commenced this financial year on the work to remediate the site.

## CROWN-OF-THORNS STARFISH

The Authority has approved culling of the coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish to prevent loss of coral and maintain resilience of the ecosystem. The government-funded program was strengthened in early 2017 when a second control vessel was launched.

While the program has been in place for more than 10 years, it is only in the past few years that the effectiveness was significantly increased with faster methods of removal. Since September 2015 the control program has successfully protected coral cover on 21 priority reefs, which equates to 75 per cent of the coral habitat in the Cairns region where 50 per cent of Reef tourism visitation occurs.

Protecting coral from predation by crown-of-thorns starfish represents a feasible and cost-effective way to address cumulative impacts and support coral resilience. This means the Reef will regain its coral more rapidly after other events such as cyclones and heatwaves.

These efforts were enhanced this year with a new weapon against the coral-eating starfish — vinegar. Field trials by the Authority and James Cook University at Arlington Reef, off Cairns, confirmed a dash of household vinegar is lethal to the voracious starfish, when administered via injection.

Vinegar promises to be a valuable and cost-effective tool in Australia and overseas and will greatly enhance the ability of tourism operators, isolated communities and developing island nations to contribute more effectively to crown-of-thorns starfish control.



*Culling crown-of-thorns starfish protects coral*

## PROTECTING HERITAGE

There are more than 70 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owner clan groups that maintain heritage values for their land and sea country. These values may be cultural, spiritual, economic, social or physical, and demonstrate continuing connections with the Great Barrier Reef and its natural resources.

In a first for the Great Barrier Reef, new guidelines developed in partnership with the Traditional Owners further protect the values of the Woppaburra people when permit applications for the Keppel Islands area of the Marine Park are assessed.

The guidelines recommend permit applicants consider how their activities impact on Traditional Owner values. They go beyond the recognition of sites and structures and include intangible values such as stories, songlines, totems and languages specific to the area.

With respect to historic heritage, the development of a conservation management plan for the *HMCS Mermaid* strengthened its protection by providing best practice guidelines for the site. The maritime surveying of the historic shipwreck *Valetta* allowed its situation to be considered in the Whitsundays Plan of Management review.

I met in August 2016 with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Centre and representatives of 40 marine site managers. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is recognised in these forums as setting the benchmark for protected area management. I presented the suite of measures we have taken to build Reef resilience and manage direct human impacts very carefully.

## WHITSUNDAYS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

This year we continued our review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management 1998.

Plans of management complement zoning by addressing specific issues in greater detail than can be accomplished by the broader Reef-wide zoning plan. They are prepared for intensively used or particularly vulnerable groups of islands and reefs, and for the protection of vulnerable species or ecological communities.

The Whitsundays Plan of Management is one of four such plans for the Great Barrier Reef. It has been amended progressively to ensure it remains relevant to current environmental and user needs.

With its vast network of offshore coral reefs, 74 tropical islands, migrating whales and beautiful Whitehaven Beach and Hill Inlet, the Whitsunday region is one of the most spectacular areas in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, attracting more than 40 per cent of the more than two million visitors who come to the Reef each year. It is vital that we continue to safeguard this unique environment while allowing for a range of experiences and types of use that sustain a healthy tourism industry.

The proposed amendments to the Whitsundays Plan of Management were released for public consultation in early 2017 and the subsequent regulation amendments are underway.

## PROTECTING HABITATS

Our focus is the long-term protection of the Reef, and we work daily to reduce other incremental changes and accumulating impacts on the Reef.

After the disposal of spoil from capital dredging works (such as building new shipping channels) was prohibited in the Marine Park last year, further efforts are underway to protect habitats. This year, in response to unprecedented coral bleaching, the Authority Board approved an additional policy to protect coral reef habitats from dredging — that is, avoiding direct impacts when considering new marine infrastructure or the expansion of existing marine infrastructure. These new policies are actions under the Reef 2050 Plan to reduce the impacts of ports and dredging. Work is also progressing on a major project to strengthen permissions compliance, which will have a long-term positive effect on Marine Park values.

## FIELD MANAGEMENT

Delivered jointly with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), our Field Management Program delivers practical on-ground actions aimed at protecting and maintaining well-functioning marine and island ecosystems, and supports ecotourism opportunities and

commercial industries. The program's core activities include monitoring of ecological and heritage values, responding to incidents and upholding compliance.

Across the agencies that participate in compliance under the program, there were 674 dedicated compliance patrol vessel days, 10 land-based days and 71 days of targeted chartered flights during the 2016–17 reporting period.

Program officers were also trained and obtained approval from the Civil Aviation Safety Authority to use unmanned aerial vehicles (drones). The drones will assist with surveillance and evidence collection.

Recreational fishing in no-fishing zones continues to be the most frequently detected offence in the World Heritage Area. The upward trend in recreational fishing non-compliance was first identified through intelligence analysis in 2012. Despite concerted effort and focus on this issue since 2012, illegal recreational fishing offence numbers remain high.

During 2016–17 we commenced a project to improve recreational fishing compliance with marine parks zoning. Strategies were developed to address the ongoing number of recreational fishing offences and apparent growing complacency and negligence among recreational fishers around zoning compliance.

A communications trial was undertaken in the Cairns area. This included developing recreational fishing-targeted communication and education strategies, and products with stronger enforcement and ecological benefit



*Recreational fishing in no-fishing zones is the most frequently detected offence in the World Heritage Area*

messaging. The trial will be reviewed during 2017–18 to identify the effectiveness of the new approach. Other components of the project to improve recreational fishing compliance rates will be prioritised and further developed for implementation during 2017–18.

Under the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement, every five years there is a periodic review of the joint Field Management Program's performance and its capacity to deliver future investment priorities. These priorities are focused on meeting Australia's obligations to the World Heritage Committee and the international community committed through the Reef 2050 Plan.

An independent assessment by consultants found — despite a challenging operational environment — the Field Management Program is proficient in delivering vital monitoring and protection programs to a consistently high standard. Recommendations to enhance the program will be considered at the Ministerial Forum in July 2017.

## PERMISSION SYSTEM

Work continued on improving the permission system for commercial operators. This five-year project involves revising key policies and guidelines. It will also result in new guidance material and updates to our Environmental Impact Management Policy to make the basis for decisions clearer to permit applicants and the public.

The improved permission system will also ensure better integration with processes relating to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and address Australian National Audit Office recommendations to improve transparency and consistency in decision-making.

During the first round of public consultation we received valuable feedback that was used to inform our work to improve the system. Further consultation will occur next financial year.

Day-to-day work in managing permits also continued — at the end of the reporting period, the agency was managing 5856 permissions. Most of the permissions granted this year were for tourist programs, charter vessels and aircraft, research, moorings and facilities.

## SCIENCE FOR MANAGEMENT

We use the best available knowledge to manage the Great Barrier Reef and ensure it remains healthy for future generations.

Scientific information — one major source of knowledge that underpins our management decisions — comes from a wide range of research institutions, government agencies, universities, commercial companies and consultants, stakeholders, Traditional Owners and community members.

We engage with research providers and major research programs through a number of long-standing formal relationships, including participation in relevant boards and committees, and formal membership in research teams, as well as through one-on-one communication between individual staff members and the scientific community.

Our Science for Management Awards provided financial support to more than 200 postgraduate students over the past 30 years. In 2016–17, the Authority awarded 10 grants to 10 postgraduate students to continue their important research.

## WORKING TOGETHER

With an area spanning 14 degrees of latitude to manage, working with others is critical to protecting the Reef's resilience and continues to be a strong focus for us.

We value working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who are the Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef Region. We acknowledge their continuing social, cultural, economic and spiritual connections to the Great Barrier Reef Region. We foster Indigenous community engagement through membership on the Authority Board and the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee, science and management workshops for Traditional Owners, compliance training, monitoring and traditional ecological knowledge projects.

We work with government, community and reef industries who live and work in Queensland coastal communities. Our 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees provide us with advice and information on local issues related to the Reef. Through our Reef Guardians program we work with schools, councils, farmers, fishers

and graziers who go above what's required to protect the Reef.

The Queensland Government is a key partner in delivering the operational management of the Marine Park through its environment and fisheries portfolios. The head of the Queensland Premier's Department is a member of the Authority Board.

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

In October 2016, the Authority received \$35 million as part of the Commonwealth's settlement from *Shen Neng 1* litigation in the Federal Court of Australia.

As part of the 2016–17 Mid-Year Economic Fiscal Outlook, the Authority received additional appropriation to stabilise funding levels for the Authority now and into the future. The funding commitment provides \$34.2 million over four years from 2016–17 and \$15 million each year from 2020–21. It supports ongoing programs essential for the long-term protection of the Great Barrier Reef; ongoing delivery of the Government's Reef 2050 Plan; and provides increased capital funding to support the operation of the Authority's national education centre for the Great Barrier Reef, Reef HQ Aquarium to update infrastructure and exhibits.

During 2016–17, the Authority also received additional funding to deliver key government initiatives for the Reef, including an additional \$1.03 million for the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, an additional \$2 million per year for three years from 2016–17 for a second vessel for controlling crown-of-thorns starfish, and an additional \$1.195 million as the first instalment of a total \$6 million investment for a second *Reef Ranger* vessel for field management of the Marine Park. The Authority is also administering a grant on behalf of the Australian Government for the Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef.

The 2016–17 financial report shows that the Authority's final financial position was a surplus of \$2.6 million due to grants received from government where suppliers were not able to be contracted during 2016–17, higher than expected special appropriation and discounting of the Douglas Shoal provision in accordance with accounting standards.



## THE YEAR AHEAD

The Authority will continue improving our existing Reef protection measures and begin implementing both policy reforms and active intervention to protect and, where possible, hasten repair of damaged parts of the ecosystem.

We will contribute to the planned review of the Reef 2050 Plan and improve wherever possible the measures being taken to build the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef in the face of risks posed by global warming and other climate change-related pressures.

## THANK YOU

In presenting this annual report, I acknowledge and thank all our staff, executive management team and the Authority Board for their efforts over the last year.

We are fortunate to have highly committed staff with strong and diverse skills who apply their knowledge and experience to our work in protecting this great natural icon.

I also extend that same thanks to our management partners, Traditional Owners, scientists, researchers, Reef industries and communities who work with us towards a common goal.

Thank you for your continued support of the Reef and your support of the Marine Park Authority. The Reef belongs to us all and our efforts to protect it are more important now than ever before.



**Dr Russell Reichelt FTSE**  
*Chairman*

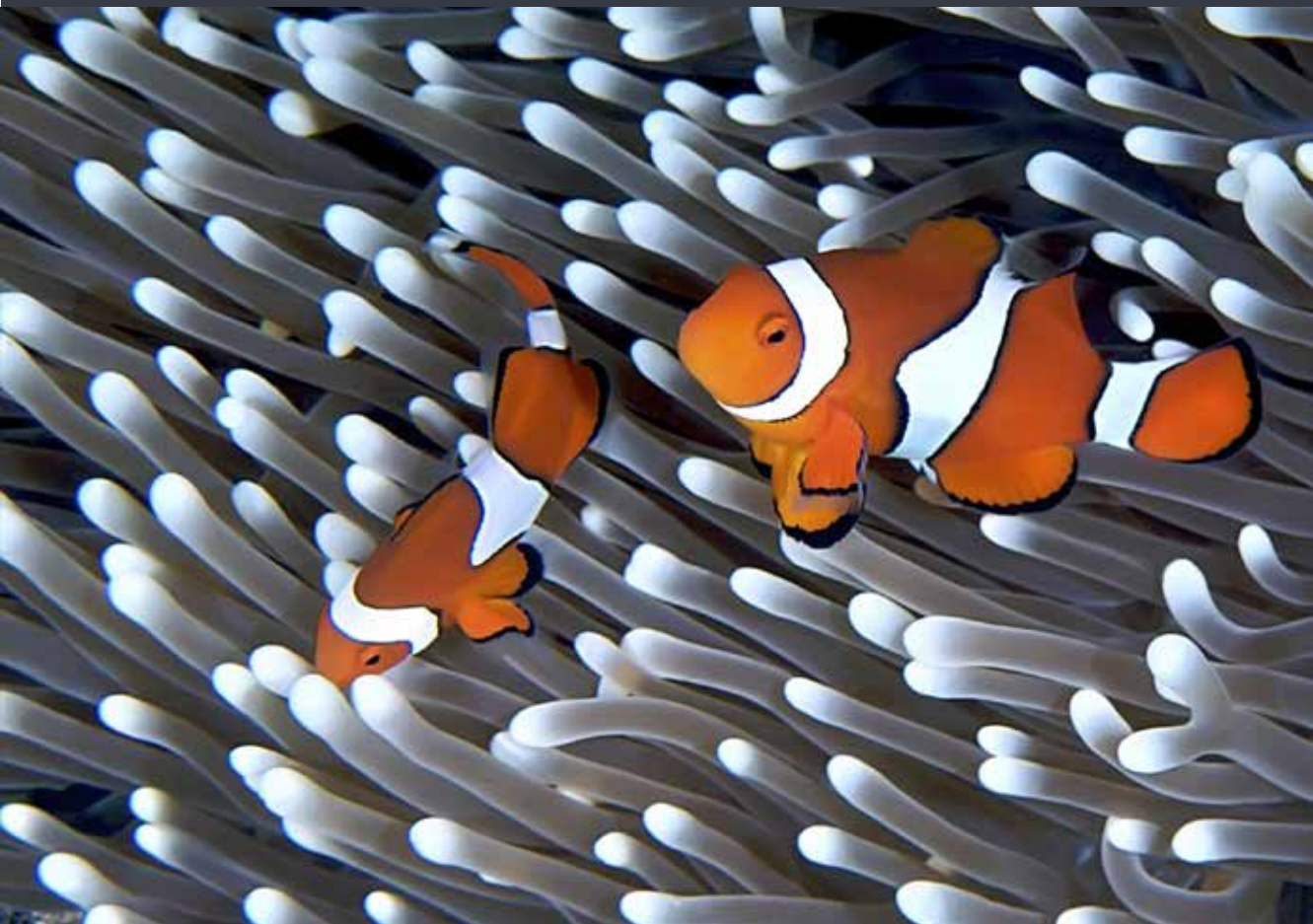


# OVERVIEW

## ABOUT THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity and is a statutory agency operating under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Marine Park Act). The Authority sits within the Australian Government Environment Portfolio and reports to the Minister for the Environment and Energy.

The Authority is responsible for managing one of the world's premier natural resources, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The vision that drives the Authority's work is a **healthy Great Barrier Reef for future generations.**



The Authority implements a range of policies and programs, management strategies and legislative measures to work towards its primary outcome – or purpose:

**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.** (Outcome 1)<sup>1</sup>

To fulfil this outcome, the Authority focuses on achieving four goals:

1. Protect and restore the Reef's ecosystem health and biodiversity
2. Safeguard the Reef's heritage
3. Ensure ecologically sustainable use and benefits for current and future generations
4. Reduce cumulative impacts.<sup>2</sup>

To deliver the four goals, the Authority uses a number of tools, including zoning plans, plans of management, permissions, policies and strategies, formal agreements and site management arrangements

Various management approaches are used, including education and awareness, planning, environmental impact assessment, monitoring, stewardship programs, habitat protection and restoration works, and compliance and enforcement.

Management is enhanced through partnership arrangements with Traditional Owners, the community, business, industry, scientists and government. The Field Management Program is a jointly funded, cooperative partnership with the Queensland Government. It operates in the Commonwealth Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Queensland Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park, as well as on Commonwealth islands and Queensland island national parks.

The joint program provides a constant, in-park presence, delivering practical conservation actions, checking for change, responding to incidents, welcoming people and upholding compliance across the far reaches of the World Heritage Area.

In essence, our field management actions provide the safety net for the Reef to ensure all Australians and international visitors can enjoy its benefit now and into the future.

The Authority's management program continues to build on the strong foundational arrangements it has put in place to protect biodiversity and heritage values and provide for ecologically sustainable use. The Authority draws on the recommendations of the 2014 *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment: Strategic assessment report* — it is committed to adopting a suite of measures to strengthen management and the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem. The Authority's actions to protect and manage the Great Barrier Reef contribute to the delivery of the Australian and Queensland governments' Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan).

To attain its purpose and achieve its goal, the Authority structures its activities under three main program areas:

- **Program area 1:** Ensure the best available knowledge is captured and used to inform management decisions aimed at reducing cumulative impacts
- **Program area 2:** Effective and efficient environmental regulation to set the standards necessary to provide certainty about where uses may occur, the types of activities allowed and the conditions under which activities may proceed in the Marine Park
- **Program area 3:** Strengthen engagement with community, industry and other government stakeholders to maintain a balance between protecting the Reef, managing competing demands and supporting sustainable use.

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1 The purpose in the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Corporate Plan 2016–2017* (Corporate Plan) is consistent with Outcome 1 of the Department of the Environment and Energy *Portfolio Budget Statements 2016–17* (Portfolio Budget Statements).

2 Corporate Plan, p 3.

# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

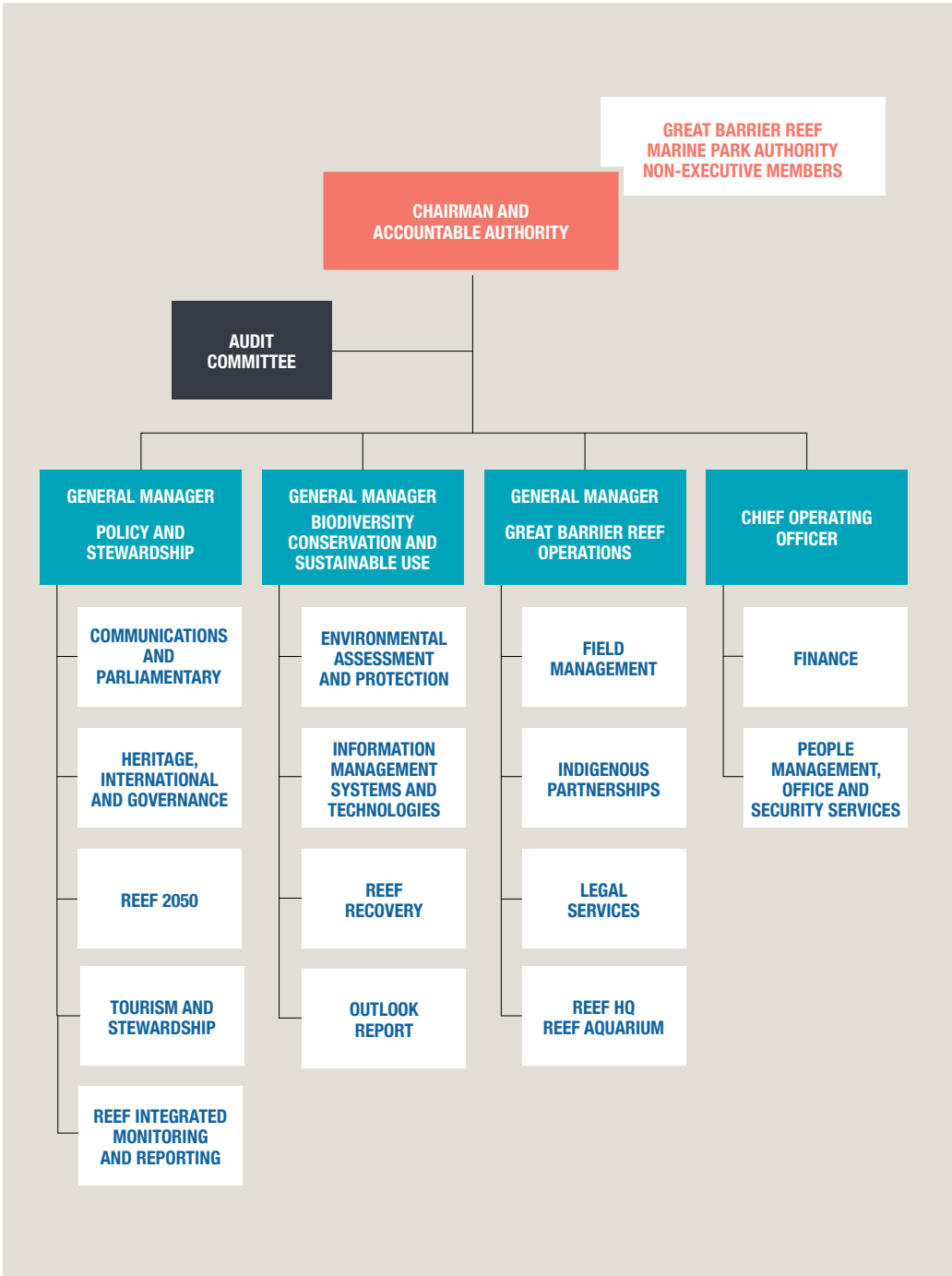


Figure 2: Organisational structure as at 30 June 2017

## RESPONSIBLE MINISTER

As Minister for the Environment and Energy, the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP was responsible for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority as at 30 June 2017.

## LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

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

Other Acts administered by the Authority are:

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

Regulations in force under the Marine Park Act:

- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983.

The Authority 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 2016–17

There were no amendments to legislation administered by the Authority in the 2016–17 financial year.

## FINANCES OVERVIEW

In 2016–17, the Authority continued to successfully deliver key Reef initiatives including the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, Marine Monitoring Program, Land and Sea Country Partnerships Program, field management activities and stewardship programs.

In October 2016, the Authority received \$35 million as part of the Commonwealth's settlement from *Shen Neng 1* litigation in the Federal Court of Australia. In accordance with Accounting Standards, the Authority recognised this revenue and established a provision for Douglas Shoal remediation. As part of the Australian Government's 2016–17 Mid-Year Economic Fiscal Outlook, the Authority received additional appropriation to stabilise funding levels for the Authority now and into the future. The funding commitment provides \$34.2 million over four years from 2016–17 and \$15 million each year from 2020–21 and supports ongoing programs essential for the long-term protection of the Great Barrier Reef; ongoing delivery of the government's Reef 2050 Plan; and provides increased capital funding to support the operation of the Authority's national education centre for the Great Barrier Reef, Reef HQ Aquarium to update infrastructure and exhibits.

In 2016–17, the Authority also received additional funding to deliver key government initiatives for the Reef, including an additional \$1.03 million for the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, an additional \$2 million per year for three years from 2016–17 for a second vessel for controlling crown-of-thorns starfish, and an additional \$1.195 million as the first instalment of a total \$6 million investment for a second *Reef Ranger* vessel for field management of the Marine Park. The Authority is also administering a grant on behalf of the Australian Government for the Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef.

Not including the *Shen Neng 1* litigation settlement, the total operating revenue for 2016–17 was \$61.807 million, compared with \$51.789 million for 2015–16. This difference was a result of additional funding provided to the Authority. Revenue by source is outlined in Figure 3.

Own source income includes support for continuing the Authority’s work and measures to improve the outlook for the Great Barrier Reef being funded from the National Landcare Programme and Reef Trust. This is included in funding from ‘related entities’. Related entities are bodies that either form part of or are controlled by the Australian Government. In Figure 3, ‘related entity’ refers primarily to funds received from the Department of the Environment and Energy. Own source income for 2016–17 was \$29.492 million, \$5.975 million more than in 2015–16. Significant funding was received for ‘ensuring the resilience of the Reef’, for the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, Marine Monitoring Program and the Land and Sea Country Partnerships Program, as part of the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme. Funding was received from Reef

Trust for targeted crown-of-thorns starfish control and for specialised compliance training for Indigenous rangers.

The Australian and Queensland governments provided matching funding for field management of the Marine Park, which the Authority implemented in partnership with the Queensland Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing. During 2016–17, the Australian and Queensland governments jointly provided an additional \$0.788 million to index the funding for the Field Management Program. The Authority provided \$1.2 million to the Queensland Government to expand the vessel management system in the Marine Park.

Not including the Douglas Shoal remediation provision, the operating expense for managing the Marine Park in 2016–17 was \$60.452 million compared with \$54.351 million for 2015–16. Expenses for suppliers were \$4.777 million more than 2015–16, with significant expenditure on litigation. The expenses by category are outlined in Figure 4.

The Authority’s final financial position was \$2.6 million surplus due to grants received from Government where suppliers were not able to

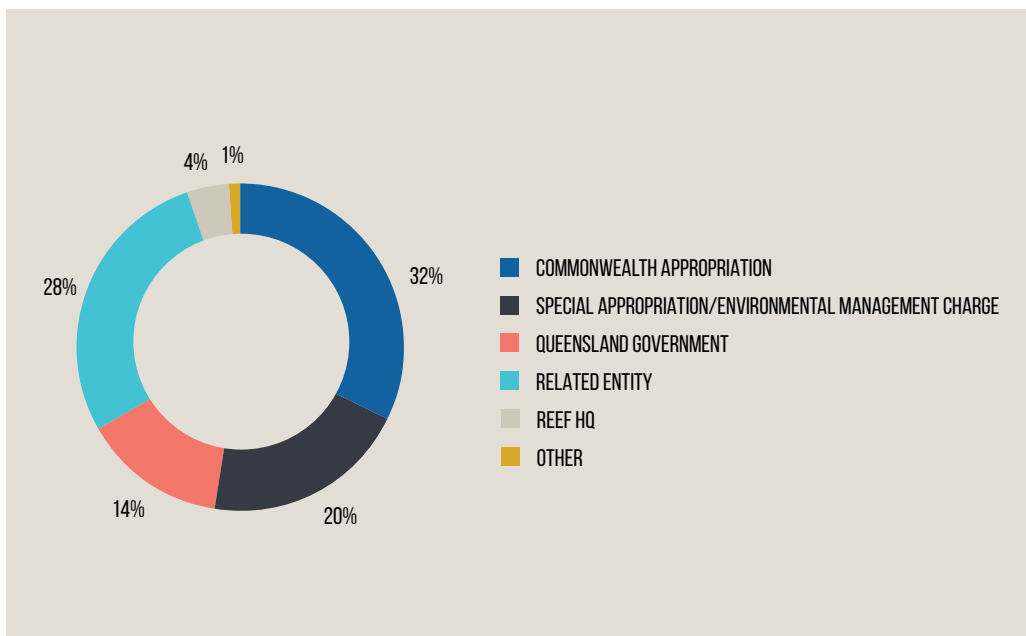


Figure 3: Revenue by source 2016–17

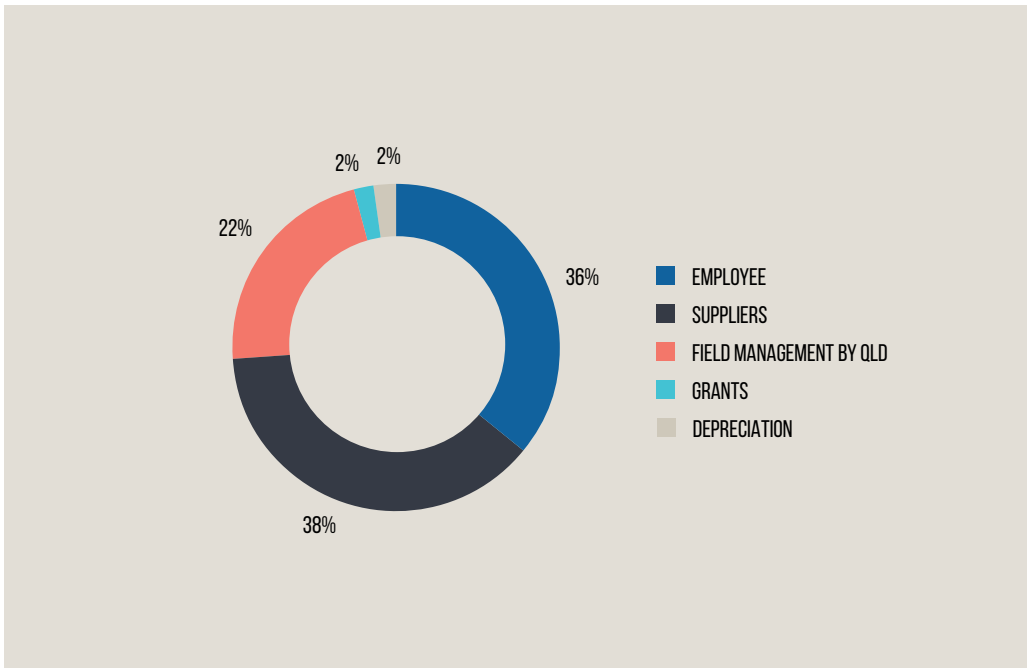


Figure 4: Expenses by category (excl Douglas Shoal remediation)

be contracted during 2016–17, higher than expected special appropriation and discounting of the Douglas Shoal provision in accordance with accounting standards.

**STAFF OVERVIEW**

The Executive Management Group consists of the full-time Chairman and three Senior Executive Service Band 1 General Managers:

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

The Chief Operating Officer, an Executive Level 2 officer, is also a member of the Executive Management Group.

The number of employees in the Authority was 207 at 30 June 2017, a decrease from 208 at 30 June 2016. (See Appendix B for an overview

of staffing, employee numbers, and staff composition and location as at 30 June 2017).

The staff figure for 30 June 2017 includes fixed-term and non-ongoing positions.

The Authority also employs casual staff to work in the Reef HQ Aquarium, which operates seven days a week. In addition, 144 volunteers assist in the day-to-day operation of the aquarium.

The annual performance statement of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is based on the Department of the Environment and Energy *Portfolio Budget Statements 2016–17*<sup>3</sup> (Portfolio Budget Statements) and the aligned strategies in the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Corporate Plan 2016–2017*<sup>4</sup> (Corporate Plan).

3 As identified in the Department of the Environment and Energy Portfolio Budget Statements 2016–17 (Portfolio Budget Statements), p 219.

4 As identified in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Corporate Plan 2016–2017 (Corporate Plan).



# PERFORMANCE

## INTRODUCTION

I, as the accountable authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, present the 2016–17 annual performance statement of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). In my opinion, this annual performance statement is based on properly maintained records, accurately reflects the performance of the entity, and complies with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act.



Dr Russell Reichelt  
Chairman



## PURPOSE

The Authority’s primary purpose 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. (Outcome 1)<sup>5</sup>

The Authority also works to protect and conserve the World Heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef.

Outcome 1 is delivered through the **Improving the Outlook for the Great Barrier Reef Program** (Program 1.1)<sup>6</sup>, which is supported by the four goals detailed in the Corporate Plan:

- 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.<sup>7</sup>

The Portfolio Budget Statements summarise how Program 1.1 is delivered and detail the performance criteria, targets and purposes

associated with Outcome 1.<sup>8</sup> The Corporate Plan identifies the Authority’s key priorities and activities for achieving these four goals.

To fulfil its purpose and achieve the associated goals, the Authority structures its activities under three main program areas:

- **Program area 1:** Ensure the best available knowledge is captured and used to inform management decisions aimed at reducing cumulative impacts
- **Program area 2:** Effective and efficient environmental regulation to set the standards necessary to provide certainty about where uses may occur, the types of activities allowed and the conditions under which activities may proceed in the Marine Park
- **Program area 3:** Strengthen engagement with community, industry and other government stakeholders to maintain a balance between protecting the Reef, managing competing demands and supporting sustainable use.<sup>9</sup>

5 Portfolio Budget Statements, p 231.  
 6 Portfolio Budget Statements, p 231.  
 7 Corporate Plan, p 3.  
 8 Table 2.1.2: Performance criteria for Outcome 1, Portfolio Budget Statements, p 231.  
 9 Corporate Plan, p 4.

Table 1: Purpose, goals and approach

<b>PURPOSE</b>	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			
<b>GOALS</b>	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
<b>APPROACH</b>	PROGRAM AREA 1		PROGRAM AREA 2	PROGRAM AREA 3
	Ensure the best available knowledge is captured and used to inform management decisions	Effective and efficient environmental regulation	Strengthen engagement	

In 2016–17, the Authority delivered a range of policies and programs, strategies and legislative measures to implement its purpose. The performance statement in this annual report groups these activities under the Authority's three program areas and reports against outcomes, measures and targets detailed in both the Portfolio Budget Statements and Corporate Plan.

## RESULTS

The performance outcomes, measures and targets set out for each program area in the Authority's Corporate Plan align with the three performance criteria and their associated targets in the Portfolio Budget Statements. This

annual report uses the terms 'performance outcome' and 'performance measure' to report against each program area.

This section of the report provides performance statements for the Authority's activities within each program area, and for each activity:

- the performance results of the activity against the performance measures
- an analysis of progress against purpose for each activity.

The Authority diverted resources to respond to two significant incidents impacting the Great Barrier Reef: the second consecutive mass coral bleaching event and severe tropical cyclone Debbie, which made landfall in the Whitsunday Islands in late March 2017.

Table 2: Relationship between key performance documents

<b>PORTFOLIO BUDGET STATEMENTS</b>	
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	
PROGRAM 1.1	
Improving the Outlook for the Great Barrier Reef	
<b>CORPORATE PLAN</b>	
PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES	
Authority decisions and actions are informed by the best available knowledge and information, and contribute to the attainment of outcomes for the Reef's values	
The impacts of human activity on the Great Barrier Reef are reduced through effective environmental regulation	
Environmental outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef are improved through the communication and adoption of sustainable best practices	
<b>ANNUAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENTS</b>	
PROGRAM AREA 1: Ensure the best available knowledge is captured and used to inform management decisions	Report against performance outcome – page 21
PROGRAM AREA 2: Effective and efficient environmental regulation	Report against performance outcome – page 35
PROGRAM AREA 3: Strengthen engagement	Report against performance outcome – page 62

Table 3: Summary of performance results

<b>PROGRAM AREA 1:</b> Ensure the best available knowledge is captured and used to inform management decisions	
PERFORMANCE OUTCOME: Authority decisions and actions are informed by the best available knowledge and information, and contribute to the attainment of outcomes for the Reef's values	
Measures	Result
75% of the Authority's science needs to inform management decisions and actions are being addressed	Achieved
<b>PROGRAM AREA 2:</b> Effective and efficient environmental regulation	
PERFORMANCE OUTCOME: The impacts of human activity on the Great Barrier Reef are reduced through effective environmental regulation	
Measures	Result
85% reported permission compliance allegations where an action was taken	Achieved
740 dedicated compliance vessel patrol days funded, or partially funded by the Field Management Program, are undertaken in the World Heritage Area	Not achieved
<b>PROGRAM AREA 3:</b> Strengthen engagement	
PERFORMANCE OUTCOME: Environmental outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef are improved through the communication and adoption of sustainable best practices	
Measures	Result
An increase in the number of participants taking part in stewardship initiatives, including become high standard tourism operators, Reef Guardians, Eye on the Reef users, and forming Sea Country Indigenous partnerships	Achieved
55% of visitors to the Reef use tourism operators which have been accredited as 'high standard operators'	Achieved

## PROGRAM AREA 1: ENSURE THE BEST AVAILABLE KNOWLEDGE IS CAPTURED AND USED TO INFORM MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Every decision made in protecting the Reef needs to be underpinned by sound, reliable and timely knowledge. The Authority strives to reduce cumulative impacts by building a holistic understanding of ecological processes over different spatial scales and time. This means accessing and capturing the best available science and up-to-date information from a network of science providers, both nationally and internationally.

As the Authority continually builds understanding to inform decision-making, it draws on other forms of valuable information acquired over many years by those with strong social, cultural and economic connections to the Reef. This includes traditional ecological knowledge and information from the wider community.

Filling key information gaps through targeted research is critical, while integrated modelling with predictive capacity is needed to provide greater certainty about cause-and-effect relationships.



## PROGRAM AREA 1: RESULTS AGAINST PERFORMANCE MEASURES

**Performance outcome:** Authority decisions and actions are informed by the best available knowledge and information, and contribute to the attainment of outcomes for the Reef's value

**Source:** Portfolio Budget Statements, p 232; Corporate Plan, p 10

**Performance measure:** 75% of the Authority's science needs to inform management decisions and actions are being addressed

**Result:** Achieved

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This outcome has been achieved through the following programs, strategies and activities:

- an active science coordination and engagement program
- Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
- maintaining the Reef Health Incident Response System
- protecting and managing heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- implementing the Reef 2050 Plan
- Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program
- Marine Monitoring Program
- gathering scientific evidence to inform the Outlook Report 2019
- Eye on the Reef Program
- crown-of-thorns starfish control program.

## SCIENCE COORDINATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Authority's *Science Strategy and Information Needs 2014–19* was published in October 2014 to communicate priority science information needs to inform management of the Great Barrier Reef. It provides a framework for integrating science into the management of the Marine Park, including facilitating discussions between scientists and managers.

The Great Barrier Reef Summit held in late May 2017 (see page 24) and development of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program identified new requirements that will be included in the Authority's science needs register.

Scientific information, generated through investments guided by our existing science information needs, will be important inputs to the Outlook Report 2019. Key research includes support for the crown-of-thorns starfish control program, understanding cumulative impacts, mitigating water quality impacts, development of water quality metrics, quantifying aesthetic values, and understanding the health of the Reef's governance systems.

The Authority works with key science providers – including the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), James Cook University, the University of Queensland and Queensland University of Technology and the Queensland Government.

It is represented on many scientific-related committees, boards and panels. This has been captured in a register and the Authority is currently analysing this membership to determine the most appropriate representation.

There is a vast array of scientific information being generated of relevance to management of the Reef. Key papers and reports are captured in the Authority's electronic systems and National Environmental Science Programme outputs are made available to staff through an easily navigable intranet site.

## GREAT BARRIER REEF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY

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.

In 2016–17, the Authority continued to support biodiversity-related science projects on marine turtles and inshore dolphins, and engaged in a range of biodiversity conservation and management activities related to at-risk species.

The Authority finalised the underwater noise discussion and options paper developed by its expert consultants. The paper summarises a



*The Authority continued to support biodiversity-related science projects on marine turtles*

range of leading practice policies and provides information on underwater noise and its effects on some species. It is the first step towards developing underwater noise guidelines for the Great Barrier Reef.

The Authority provided advice and practical contributions to fieldwork on biological markers for turtle health checks for the Rivers to Reef to Turtles project, and on the structure (age and gender) of inshore dolphin populations.

Staff participated in a review to determine whether a group of hammerhead sharks should be listed as nationally threatened. They also participated in a key multi-stakeholder workshop on the conservation and management of hawksbill turtle populations and advised on and facilitated an expert workshop to inform the development of the national marine turtle recovery plan finalised in early June 2017.

As well as reviewing its policy on managing research in the Marine Park and developing draft guidelines that present contemporary information, the Authority began a review of policy on the take of protected species.

## REEF HEALTH INCIDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM

The Reef Health Incident Response System helps the Authority detect reef health incidents such as coral bleaching events or disease outbreaks. The system also provides information to guide management actions following incidents.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park experienced a severe and prolonged mass coral bleaching event over summer 2015–16 and the following months, with a warmer than average summer followed by a warmer than average winter. As a result, at the start of the 2016–17 financial year the coral bleaching incident response was ongoing, and surveys of the resultant coral mortality continued until November 2016.

As part of the annual pre-summer workshop, held in December 2016, Authority staff worked with partners and key experts to generate the 2016–17 seasonal risk assessment. Based on international climate models, which

indicated neutral conditions, this assessment predicted average sea temperatures for the Great Barrier Reef. However, ongoing thermal stress throughout 2016 resulted in a second consecutive year of mass coral bleaching for the first time on record.

During March 2017, the Authority collaborated with AIMS staff to undertake aerial surveys between Cairns and Townsville to document the extent and severity of coral bleaching. It also took part in aerial surveys undertaken by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence in Coral Reef Studies in the southern region of the Reef. In-water spot checks by the Field Management Program are a regular part of responding to these incidents.

In addition to bleaching pressures, coral disease was recorded on reefs in the central Great Barrier Reef. Authority staff worked with a coral disease expert to document the extent of the disease and to track its impact on coral colonies over time in the Mission Beach area.

The Authority in partnership with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) through the Field Management Program delivered the in-water response to severe tropical cyclone Debbie, which impacted the Whitsunday region in late March 2017.

Throughout summer 2016–17 the Authority provided regular environmental condition reports to internal and external stakeholders. This included multiple internal briefings, contributions to situation reports, regular news releases and online updates. Six detailed current conditions reports were published on the Authority's website between December 2016 and May 2017.

The Authority worked with the Bureau of Meteorology and other partners to improve early-warning tools, such as Reef Temp modelling and predictive tools, to support this environmental condition reporting, resulting in joint publications related to the bleaching event.

In June 2017, a 2016 coral bleaching report was published.

## MANAGING FOR RESILIENCE – RESPONDING TO MASS CORAL BLEACHING

A blueprint to respond to coral bleaching and other recent impacts on the Great Barrier Reef was the focus of a two-day summit hosted by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in Townsville on 24 and 25 May 2017.

The first of its kind for the Great Barrier Reef, the summit — Managing for resilience — was a response to unprecedented back-to-back coral bleaching events on the Reef and the urgent need for action to slow coral decline.

It involved more than 70 leading marine experts from around the world and sought to evaluate existing tools and scope new approaches to managing the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in the era of climate change. An important aspect was developing resilience initiatives, with a focus on coral reef habitats, acknowledging they are a foundational component of the broader Reef ecosystem.

Summit participants voiced their strong concern about the need for global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the driver of climate change.

They strongly supported existing measures to safeguard the Reef: a robust Marine Park management framework, widely recognised as world standard, and concerted action through the Australian and Queensland governments' Reef 2050 Plan — both central to building Reef resilience and supporting ecosystem recovery following extreme events such as coral bleaching and cyclones.

More than 20 key initiatives were identified at the summit, with a number of these discussed in detail to identify intended outcomes, barriers and enablers, partners and resourcing, and practical actions to be taken in 2017. These initiatives included actions to enhance resilience and restore function and empowering people to be part of the solution. They included:

- protecting the 'bright spots'/refugia — places of key ecological and socio-economic value
- an 'all-out attack' on crown-of-thorns starfish
- dramatically enhancing compliance
- protecting herbivores and other key species
- active, localised restoration
- partnerships and stewardships, and critically influencing climate change.

Policies and approaches that support interventions and innovation, real-time monitoring and forecasting tools, and effective communication were seen as key enablers.

The summit's final session — 'Ensuring effective communication' — was particularly successful in generating positive discussion on the need to 'think global', provide consistent communication to the public, and deliver targeted messages that engender hope and action in the community.

Key themes also emerged from the workshops, including:

- *protect* (for example, from anchor damage), *defend* (for example cull more coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish), *restore* (for example, establish coral nurseries)
- start small and scale up — trial strategies at the local level and implement at the Reef-wide scale
- identify Marine Park policy enablers to facilitate immediate responses and transformative change
- use tried-and-tested technologies parallel to blue-sky solutions.

The event reaffirmed a shared commitment by all participants to protecting the Reef and building resilience. A strong message from the summit was **'together we can secure the future of the Reef — we have to try harder, do more and act now'**.

It highlighted that our response to the mass bleaching event and cumulative impacts must not only build on the strong foundation of past and current programs of action, but bring new tools and innovative approaches that can transform the outlook for the Reef.

The outcomes of the summit are being incorporated into a blueprint for action for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.



## HERITAGE VALUES

One of the Authority's key goals is to safeguard the Marine Park's heritage. It also has obligations under the Australian Heritage Strategy as well as heritage listings — World Heritage, National Heritage and Commonwealth Heritage Lists. The Authority engaged with partners and stakeholders, including Traditional Owners, other government departments and heritage experts, to deliver a number of projects to meet this goal and obligations.

A draft *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Commonwealth Heritage List Places and Properties Heritage Strategy* has been prepared for the Minister, as required under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). This document, also an action under the Reef 2050 Plan's heritage theme, is accompanied by a review of the previous strategy and a web-based heritage register. This suite of products details how the Authority protects the heritage values at the Commonwealth heritage-listed properties it owns or manages.

*Heritage in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park* has been developed to consolidate heritage information and explain the Authority's heritage values, heritage listings, tools to manage the protection of heritage values and how the Authority will protect heritage values into the future.

Guidelines to inform Marine Park permittees and assessors about requirements when assessing places with heritage value have been finalised. These include the Maritime Cultural Heritage Protection Special Management Area Guidelines, the Other Places of Historic and Social Significance Guidelines, the World War II Features and Sites, and Voyages and Shipwrecks Guidelines, and the Traditional Owner Heritage Assessment Guidelines.

In consultation with a number of Traditional Owner groups, an *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy* was drafted. It improves understanding of Indigenous heritage values and provides a pathway for heritage conservation and protection into the future.

Through the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, the Authority engaged an external contractor to prepare a protocol for managing culturally sensitive information. It

will inform how the Authority negotiates data sharing agreements with Traditional Owners to help safeguard significant heritage places and values. The protocol will also advise on appropriate storage and handling of this information.

The Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program's Indigenous heritage expert theme group is developing indicators to enable the Authority to better monitor and report on the state of Traditional Owner heritage values.

The Authority is working with the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to draft the *HMCS Mermaid* conservation management plan. Work on the *HMCS Foam* conservation management plan has started. Maritime surveying of the historic shipwreck *Valetta* allowed its situation to be considered in the Whitsundays Plan of Management review.

Underwater footage in 360-degree format of the *Yongala* shipwreck was uploaded onto the Authority's Facebook page to help promote the wreck's historic heritage value. At 30 June 2017 the footage had been viewed more than 7000 times.

Staff spent three days onboard the patrol vessel *Reef Ranger* surveying shipwrecks in the Whitsundays for a 13-part pilot television documentary series on day-to-day management of the Reef. Drones, supplied and operated by WaspNQ, augmented shallow wreck surveys and diver propulsion vehicles surveyed large wreck sites, up to 1000 metres x 60 metres. Four historic shipwrecks were surveyed and monitored. If the pilot *Reef Rangers* documentary is accepted, the protection of valued historic heritage will be publicly promoted through multiple media outlets.

Heritage staff participated in the World Heritage workshop in Canberra during April 2017. This event provided a platform to share expertise, best practice and success stories with other Australian World Heritage property managers.

A week-long series of public talks addressing natural, Indigenous and historic heritage values for the general public and staff was hosted at Reef HQ Aquarium to celebrate National Heritage Week in April 2017.

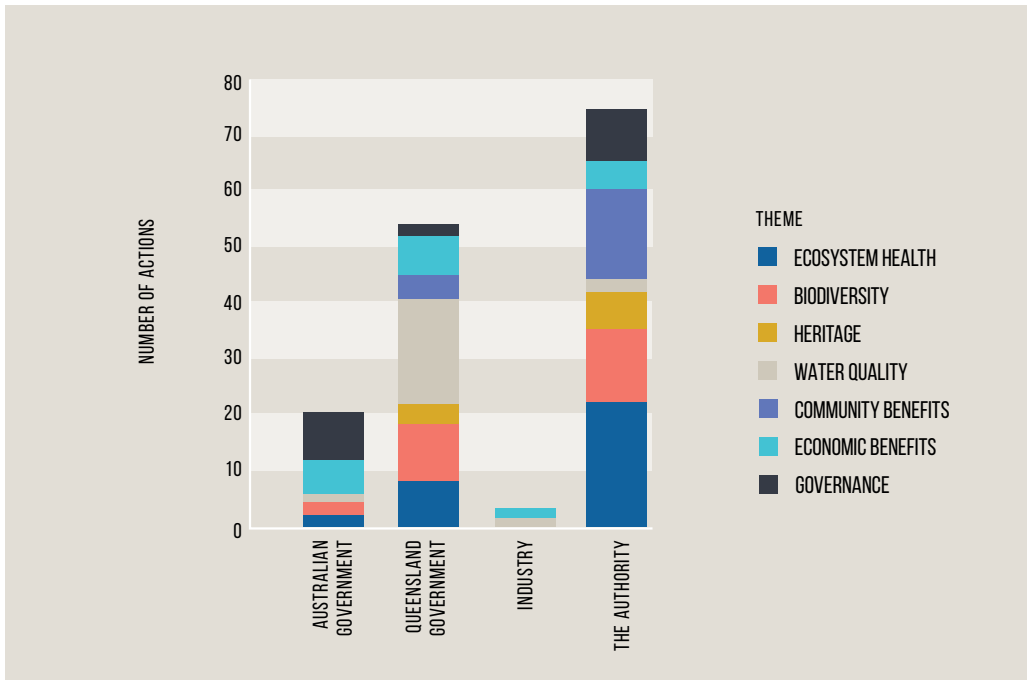


Figure 5: Overview of Reef 2050 Plan actions and reporting leads, by theme

## REEF 2050 PLAN

In partnership with the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy and the Queensland Government’s Office of the Great Barrier Reef, the Authority continued to oversee the implementation of the Reef 2050 Plan in 2016–17.

The Reef 2050 Plan, released by the Australian and Queensland governments in March 2015, is the overarching framework for protecting and managing the Reef until 2050. This 35-year plan contains actions across seven different themes: ecosystem health, biodiversity, heritage, water quality, community benefits, economic benefits, and governance. It contains 151 actions to build Reef resilience — the Authority is the lead agency for delivering and reporting on 74 of these actions. Figure 5 details actions and reporting leads.

In September 2016 the Australian and Queensland governments released the first Reef 2050 annual report and the third edition of the *Reef 2050 Plan Implementation Strategy*. The Authority provided significant input to the development of these reports together with

the Reef 2050 Plan Investment Framework. These reports accompanied the *Reef 2050 Plan Update on Progress* report, which was presented to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Centre on 1 December 2016.

Consistent with commitments in the Reef 2050 Plan, the Investment Framework establishes existing investment, identifies six investment priorities for the future and sets out strategies for boosting investment and diversifying its sources. The Authority is leading three of the six priority areas:

- Field Management Program
- Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program
- crown-of-thorns

The Authority also plays a key role in the following three areas:

- Traditional Owner actions
- actions associated with the review of current fisheries management
- water quality-related actions.

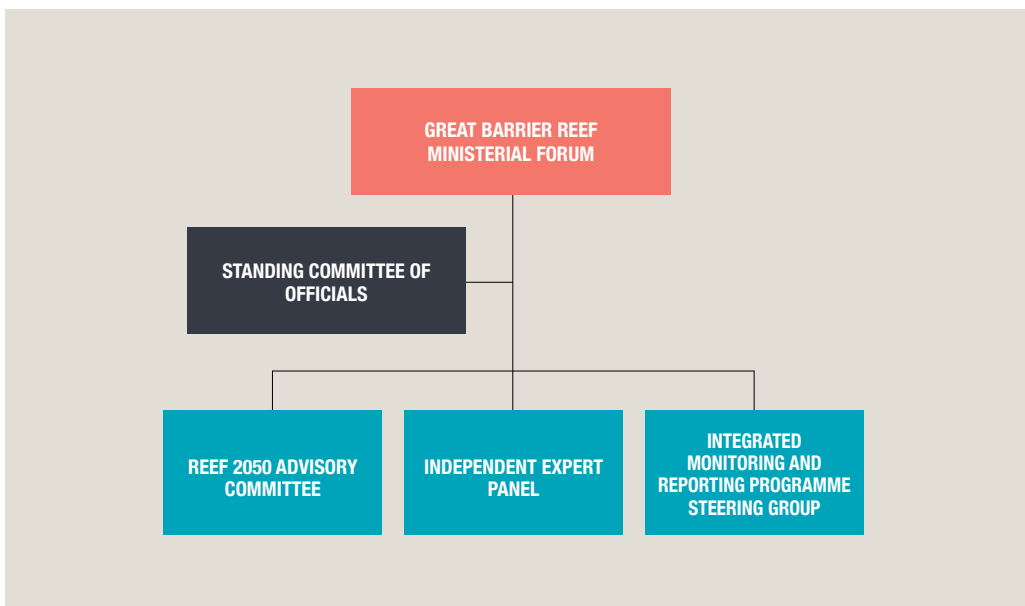


Figure 6: Reef 2050 Plan governance arrangements

Central to the delivery of the Reef 2050 Plan actions was adhering to the governance arrangements formalised during 2015–16 (figure 6) and reported in detail in the Authority’s 2015–16 annual report.

The Authority is currently working with these governance partners to improve the system for reporting delivery of Reef 2050 Plan actions ahead of the next Reef 2050 annual report, planned for release in December 2017.

## REEF 2050 INTEGRATED MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

The Authority is leading the development of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, which informs adaptive management under the Reef 2050 Plan. Currently the program is in the design phase, and has been making progress across its three working groups: program design, synthesis and reporting, and data management and systems.

The program design expert working groups met to identify and prioritise key monitoring indicators and how these will be integrated into a fit-for-purpose program. Market research was conducted to determine how stakeholders use Reef-related information to inform and support

adaptive management decisions at a strategic and operational level. The outcomes from the market research will be used to inform future synthesis and reporting products.

The system for managing and visualising data required for an operational program was assessed by the data management and systems working group. Data sharing protocols are being produced for information handling, including culturally sensitive information.

The Marine Monitoring Program is driving the program’s initial integration of information for water quality and some aspects of biodiversity within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

Outputs from projects funded by the National Environmental Science Programme and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation are informing the development of the monitoring and reporting program. The Authority has worked closely with the National Environmental Science Programme Tropical Water Quality Hub and other partners to identify and guide critical areas of research.

While the program design process is underway, critical monitoring gaps were funded. These included:

- zoning plan effectiveness (mid-offshore) — AIMS
- zoning plan effectiveness (inshore) — James Cook University
- dugong surveys (five-yearly Reef-wide surveys) — James Cook University
- social and economic long-term monitoring program — CSIRO
- southern shoals monitoring — CSIRO, Queensland Museum, James Cook University.
- Marine Monitoring Program — AIMS, CSIRO, James Cook University, University of Queensland, QPWS, Reef Catchments.
- intensive water quality monitoring in four high-risk areas – AIMS and James Cook University
- inshore coral data from the long-term monitoring program – AIMS
- data from Seagrass Watch – James Cook University
- a greater range of pesticides monitoring – University of Queensland
- additional sub-tidal seagrass sites – QPWS and James Cook University
- meteorological data monitoring – Bureau of Meteorology
- links to pressures such as cyclones, temperature stresses, crown-of-thorns starfish predation, disease and poor water quality.

## MARINE MONITORING PROGRAM

The Marine Monitoring Program monitors water quality and the health and resilience of inshore seagrass meadows and coral reefs. It is a key component of the *Reef Water Quality Protection Plan* (Reef Plan) Paddock to Reef Integrated Monitoring, Modelling and Reporting Program. The goal of the Reef Plan is to ensure that by 2020 the quality of water entering the Reef from broadscale land use has no detrimental impact on the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef. The Marine Monitoring Program is the primary mechanism for evaluating improvements in water quality in the Marine Park as a result of actions undertaken through the Reef Plan.

The Reef Plan is now part of the Reef 2050 Plan, which provides the overarching framework for the integrated management of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and its catchments.

The Marine Monitoring Program is co-funded by the Authority, the Department of the Environment and Energy, and research partners including AIMS, James Cook University, the University of Queensland and CSIRO.

Following the review of the Marine Monitoring Program in 2013, the program was expanded to include significant improvements. Information from the expanded program — based on the driver–pressure–state–impact–response (DPSIR) framework — was available this year for the first time. This includes integrated data from the following:

During 2016–17, the Authority established water quality monitoring sites in five major catchments in Cape York. Baseline information on the condition of marine values in Cape York has been a major knowledge gap. This work is being carried out in collaboration with James Cook University and local and Indigenous communities.

This integrated information enables managers to more effectively respond to the pressures affecting the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

Annual technical reports (inshore water quality, pesticides, coral and seagrass) from the Marine Monitoring Program support effective management of the Reef's inshore area based on the best available science between the five-yearly Outlook Report cycles. These reports underpin the annual Reef Report Card and the Marine Monitoring Program summary report. The reports also informed other initiatives, including Reef recovery plans, development of standards and thresholds, and regional report cards for Mackay Whitsundays and the Wet Tropics. The reporting has been restructured to align with the Outlook Report requirements.

As part of its commitment under the Reef Plan, the Authority began work on a joint project funded by the National Environmental Science Programme and key partners to refine existing tools for assessing water quality condition and trend. This will be used in future Reef report cards.

Another project funded by the National Environmental Science Programme has developed ecologically relevant targets for sediment to support healthy seagrass meadows. This will inform the development of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program and its reporting products.

The data used in report cards has been consolidated into a centralised database to improve accessibility and transparency.

An annual two-day workshop was held during December with internal and external end users for continuous program evaluation, review and improvement of the Marine Monitoring Program. Outcomes from the workshop will link to work from the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program.

## OUTLOOK REPORT 2019

Every five years, the Authority publishes an Outlook Report that examines the Great Barrier Reef's health, pressures and likely future. The report is required under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (section 54) and aims to provide a regular and accountable way to assess Reef health and manage it effectively.

Delivery of the Outlook Report is a key priority for the Authority. In light of the critical role the Outlook Report 2019 will play in reporting on the condition and trend of values, and informing a forthcoming review of the Reef 2050 Plan, a dedicated director was appointed to lead development of the next report.

The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area is considered to be of outstanding universal value because it meets all four natural World Heritage criteria, including integrity, and an adequate protection and management system to ensure its safeguarding.<sup>10</sup> For the first time, the Outlook Report 2014 included an assessment of heritage values, including World Heritage values and benchmarking outstanding universal value. The Outlook Report 2019 will build on this framework to provide an assessment grade for these values and how it has changed since 2014.

The project team has been established and the project plan is complete.

## EYE ON THE REEF

Eye on the Reef is a reef monitoring and assessment program run by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The program enables anyone who visits the Great Barrier Reef to contribute to its long-term protection by collecting valuable information about Reef health, marine animals and incidents.

The Eye on the Reef program and its associated data management and reporting system currently stores 32,921 surveys of reef health and 15,121 records of protected species and significant event sightings. More than 500 people have been trained in Eye on the Reef methods since the program expanded in 2009.

In 2016–17 more than 4500 surveys of Reef health and 2859 sightings of protected species and significant events were received.

The system was heavily used throughout the 2016 and 2017 bleaching events and during assessments of damage caused by severe tropical cyclone Debbie. It continues to store all Reef health data collected by the Field Management Program and the crown-of-thorns starfish control program.



*More than 4500 surveys of Reef health were received during the reporting period*

<sup>10</sup> UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 2012, Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO.

A new three-year maintenance contract was completed with external database developers and the system is functioning and delivering standard reporting.

Data requests continue to be received regularly from research institutions and universities, confirming the scientific value of the data. A number of international requests have been received for advice and guidance in replicating the program in other coral reef locations; again highlighting the value of the program.

Eighteen tourism operations are contributing data to the program.

The Authority conducted two in-water training days for tourism staff in Port Douglas and Cairns in November 2016 and March 2017. One in-water training day was held in the Whitsundays in November 2016. Quarterly workshops were provided in Port Douglas, Cairns and the Whitsundays in August and November 2016 and March 2017, with good attendance and interest from tourism representatives. More than 400 tourism staff have been trained in Eye on the Reef monitoring protocol.

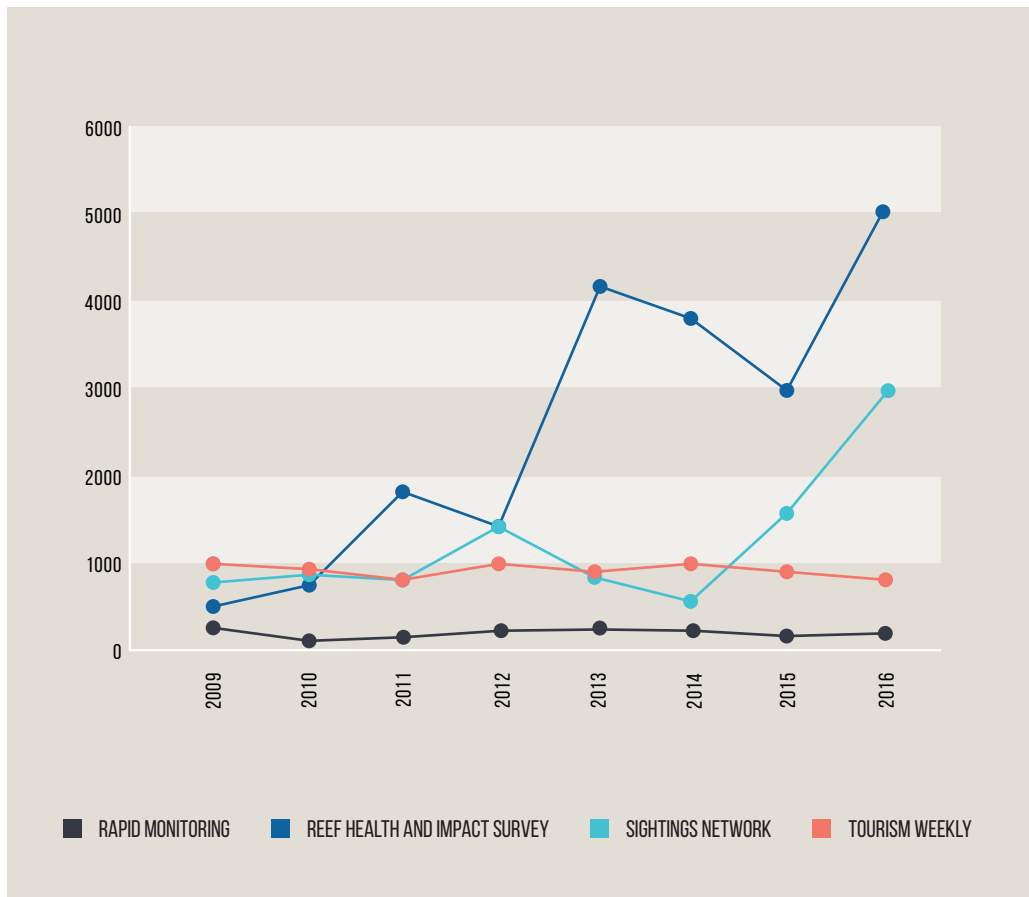


Figure 7: Number of Eye on the Reef surveys

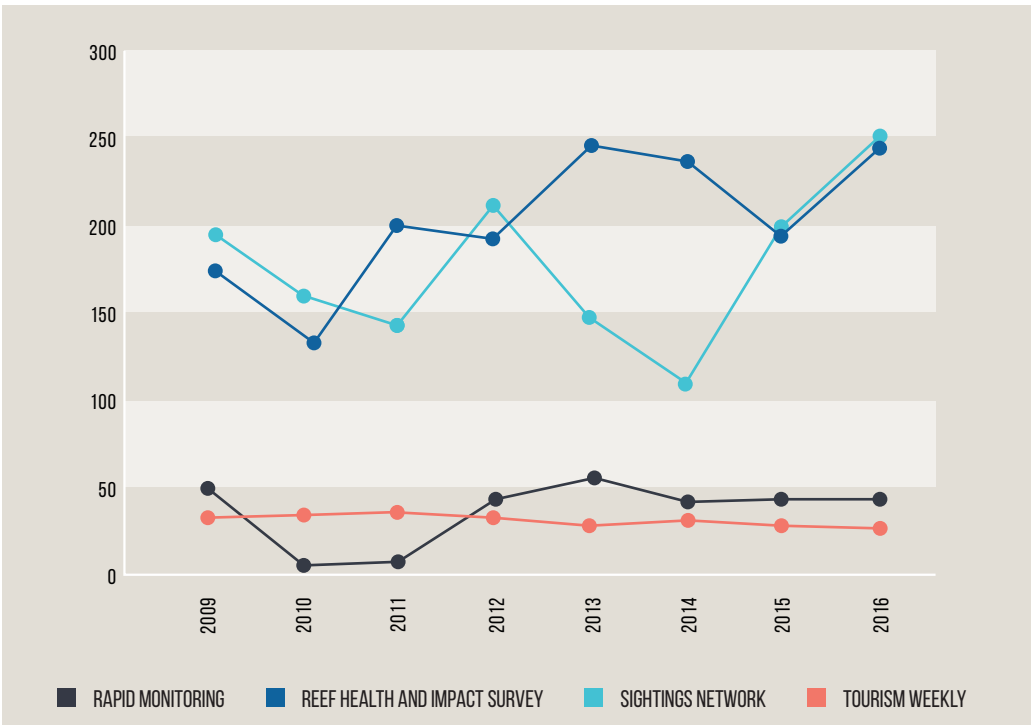


Figure 8: Number of reefs surveyed

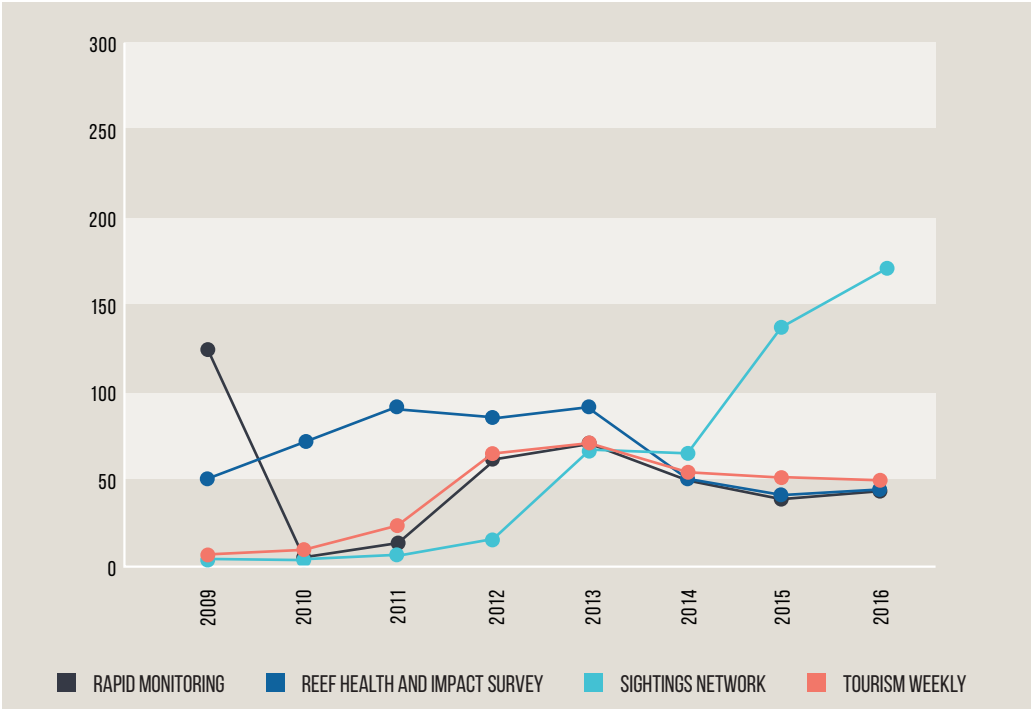


Figure 9: Number of Eye on the Reef participants

## CROWN-OF-THORNS STARFISH CONTROL

The crown-of-thorns starfish control program is one of the Authority's key actions to protect coral cover and enhance the capacity of the Reef to recover from impacts such as coral bleaching and tropical cyclones.

To deliver the control program, the Authority has met the six-monthly and annual reporting requirements under the Reef Trust Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of the Environment and Energy. In addition, the Authority successfully conducted an AusTender process for \$5.61 million (GST inclusive) in late 2016 to secure a second vessel for the culling program until June 2019. The second vessel started in-water work in January 2017, allowing two vessels to tackle the starfish outbreak by targeting 57 priority reefs between Port Douglas and Townsville.

The two three-year in-water culling contracts are being managed effectively, with culling voyages undertaken and reporting requirements met. Since 2012 the control program has culled more than 450,000 starfish, with more than 53,000 culled during 2016–17. Eye on the Reef monitoring on 21 priority reefs offshore Cairns and Port Douglas has shown that the outbreak



*Household vinegar is a cheap and accessible new injection method for the protection of coral*

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has been successfully reduced to ecologically sustainable levels, with live coral cover maintained at 20 per cent despite the impacts of coral bleaching.

The Authority continues to provide strategic oversight of crown-of-thorns starfish management based on the current Marine Park Authority policy. A crown-of-thorns starfish strategic management and contingency plan has been drafted, with approval from the Marine Park Authority Board to be sought in early 2017–18.

After rigorous environmental impact testing, the Authority approved household vinegar as an injection solution for use in crown-of-thorns starfish control in the Marine Park. This provides small tourism operators with a cheap and readily accessible new injection method for protecting coral at their dive sites.

The Eye on the Reef database continues to be used to store and analyse control program data.

## PROGRAM AREA 1: ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST PURPOSE

During the reporting year, two severe events impacted the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park: a second consecutive coral bleaching event and the category 4 severe tropical cyclone Debbie, which made landfall in the Whitsundays in late March 2017. Responding to these events shifted the Authority's resourcing and focus from other strategic priorities, particularly affecting programs requiring technical and scientific expertise in monitoring and scientific data analysis. Nevertheless, key programs were maintained and progress achieved in priority areas such as the Reef 2050 Plan where all but one of the Authority's 74 actions were assessed as in place or on track.

## SCIENCE COORDINATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Staff turnover has affected progress of work for this program. Science coordination is becoming increasingly complex as a result of the great number of points of contact between staff and the scientific community, and the increasing number of information providers and stakeholders requiring scientific information.



## GREAT BARRIER REEF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2013 provides a framework for improving biodiversity conservation in the Great Barrier Reef Region. The strategy incorporates many of the Authority's resilience-based management, engagement, stewardship and knowledge improvement activities. Specific projects conducted under the strategy this year included collaborative research projects into turtle health and inshore dolphins.

The underwater noise discussion and options paper delivered last year was reviewed and prepared for publication. It provides a platform for developing guidelines for considering underwater noise during management assessment of potential activities in the Marine Park.

## REEF HEALTH INCIDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM

The Reef Health Incident Response System was maintained and implemented throughout 2016–17. Improvements were achieved in areas such as data management and training. The Authority provided expert advice and serviced numerous information requests to internal and external stakeholders on matters relating to the system.

The prolonged period of incident response (such as reporting, briefings, analyses, logistics, training and field work) throughout 2016 and early 2017 was resource and labour-intensive, limiting resourcing for other tasks.

## HERITAGE VALUES

Dedicated resourcing to progressing heritage projects including the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy* has resulted in exciting progress towards heritage goals. The Authority's capacity to protect heritage values has also been informed by the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program's Indigenous expert theme group. The use of drones, high resolution satellite imagery, side scanning sonar, magnetometers and multi-beam technology is improving the Authority's ability to survey wrecks under water.

## REEF 2050 PLAN

As noted in the Reef 2050 Annual Report, all but one of the 74 actions where the Authority is lead report are either in place or on track to be completed within the identified timeframe. Action GA7b – 'create a Great Barrier Reef plan register with all management plans recorded to simplify understanding of management arrangements' – was delayed due to resourcing constraints but is expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

## REEF 2050 INTEGRATED MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

The 2016 and 2017 coral bleaching and cyclone events presented an opportunity to optimise the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program design, information analysis, and test how the program will inform and support management decisions in the future. Lessons learned from the response to these events are being integrated into the program design process.

## MARINE MONITORING PROGRAM

The Marine Monitoring Program design, budgets and contracts covering 2016–19 were improved to support the Authority in delivering Reef 2050 Plan and Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program requirements. Additional resources provided by the Department through the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program will support delivery of some of the outstanding high-priority actions identified in the 2013 program review. These include the expansion of water quality monitoring to Cape York, and integrating program components to provide a framework for the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program.

The program has participated in activities associated with the production of regional report cards, led by the Queensland Office of the Great Barrier Reef. However, this participation has been constrained by the need to prioritise delivery of the Marine Monitoring Program, which provides detailed analysis of the condition and trend of the inshore marine environment of the six report card regions, as well as the Reef.

A major highlight of the revised program is the improved alignment of monitoring sites. The increased sampling effort has, however, been at the cost of the broader spatial coverage of the program.

### OUTLOOK REPORT 2019

An Outlook Report section has been established to progress planning for this priority document. The report's 'existing protection and management' chapter has already been scoped with the aim of commissioning independent reviewers early in the 2017–18 financial year.

### CROWN-OF-THORNS STARFISH CONTROL

The Australian Government's Reef Trust funding of the crown-of-thorns starfish control program enabled the Authority to contract a



*Since 2012, the control program has culled more than 450,000 crown-of-thorns starfish*

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second culling vessel program during 2016–17. This extends the culling effort to address the southern movement of the outbreak towards Townsville, while maintaining follow-up culling schedules on reefs offshore Port Douglas and Cairns.

The Authority is able to improve its overarching management of the program through:

- the Field Management Program, which has conducted 1070 manta tow surveys (covering 212 kilometres) and 247 Reef Health and Impact Surveys at 12 reefs
- the Eye on the Reef database, which is used to maintain records of sightings of crown-of-thorns starfish, the health of the coral cover at reefs where control is occurring, and the number of starfish culled
- working with partners to ensure tactical in-water control is undertaken in areas of high value. This has included establishing priority reefs based on connectivity modelling to identify crown-of-thorns starfish and coral larvae source reefs.

## PROGRAM AREA 2: EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION

The Authority is the primary environmental regulator for protecting the Great Barrier Reef Region. Its role is to set the standards necessary to achieve its goals and objectives, and provide certainty about where uses may occur, the types of activities allowed and the conditions under which activities may proceed.

The Authority will continue to do this by using a combination of management tools and approaches including zoning plans, plans of management, permits, economic mechanisms, education, compliance and enforcement. The Authority adopts a risk-based approach when carrying out its regulatory functions.

The Authority continues to look for opportunities to streamline and reduce regulatory burden, while maintaining the high environmental standards protecting the Reef's outstanding universal value.

### PROGRAM AREA 2: RESULTS AGAINST PERFORMANCE MEASURES

**Performance outcome:** The impacts of human activity on the Great Barrier Reef are reduced through effective environmental regulation

**Source:** Portfolio Budget Statements, p 232; Corporate Plan, p 12.

**Performance measure 1:** 85% reported permission compliance allegations where an action was taken

**Result:** Achieved

**Performance measure 2:** 740 dedicated compliance vessel patrol days funded, or partially funded by the Field Management Program, are undertaken in the World Heritage Area.

**Result:** Not achieved — 674 completed

**Performance measure 3:** 23% of the Marine Park managed in accordance with an accredited Traditional Use of Marine Park Resources Agreement or Indigenous Land Use Agreement

**Result:** Achieved

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This outcome was mostly achieved through the following programs, strategies and activities:

- implementing and strengthening the permission system and reviewing the

cost recovery impact statement for permissions-related fees

- strategically managing dredge material disposal
- delivering the Whitsundays Plan of Management
- delivering the Field Management Program to protect cultural heritage, respond to incidents, manage marine and island conservation and manage recreation and tourism facilities
- coordinating and delivering a compliance program for and contributing to effective compliance of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area
- delivering legal services that:
  - \* provide timely administrative law and litigation services, commercial services and fraud liaison in accordance with statutory requirements
  - \* ensure effective legislation for Marine Park management
  - \* ensure the Authority's compliance with legislation and policy through legal advice and reporting
- policy and regulatory reform
- tourism management and stewardship.

## PERMISSION SYSTEM

The Authority's permission system is established under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Marine Park Act). 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'.

### IMPLEMENTING THE PERMISSION SYSTEM

#### **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 Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The system allows internal staff and external permission holders to manage a range of legislative and regulatory requirements.

Key achievements for phase four development of the Reef Management System during 2016–17 include:

- migration of the system to a new database platform
- automation of the publication process for reviewable permit decisions, with decision search functionality available on the Authority's external website
- significant development of an online tool to support Marine Park users to apply for and manage their permissions, including the ability to submit information to comply with permit requirements, update contact details and update vessel, aircraft, facility and equipment information.

#### **Permits managed**

Each permit can include multiple permissions, and each permission may have multiple conditions. As at 30 June 2017, 1329 permits were being managed. Of these, almost 80 per cent are categorised as lower risk, level-one permits, such as those for commercial tourism operations that provide scuba diving and non-motorised water sports activities. The remaining 20 per cent of permits are categorised as level two (for example, heli-pontoons), level three (for example, sewage and aquaculture discharge) or

level four (complex or large-scale projects that may have a significant impact on the Marine Park) assessments. All permits and applications under assessment are published on the Authority's website.

Many of the current permits require several post-permit management actions, which is time-intensive. For example, some of the more complex level-three and 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 will require an assessment, negotiation and, ultimately, written approval by the delegate within the Authority.

#### **New applications**

During 2016–17, the Authority received 378 applications and granted 360 permits. About 62 per cent of permits issued were lower risk, standard level-one permits. During the reporting period, no new level-four applications were received, and one level-four decision was made.

#### **Multiple permissions**

At the end of the reporting period, the Authority was managing 6163 permissions. Figure 10 represents the total number of current permissions in the Marine Park. Most of the permissions granted were for tourist programs, charter vessel and aircraft, research, moorings and facilities. Facilities include structures such as barge ramps, boat ramps, jetties, marinas, pipelines, pontoons, snorkel trails and marker buoys.

Of the 360 permits granted during the reporting period, 1007 individual permissions were issued.

#### **Annual permissions compliance plan**

The Authority undertook a suite of monitoring and administrative compliance activities in 2016–17, including:

- performing targeted field inspections
- monitoring permitted use
- ensuring permitted facilities were well maintained
- delivering education designed to promote self-regulation.

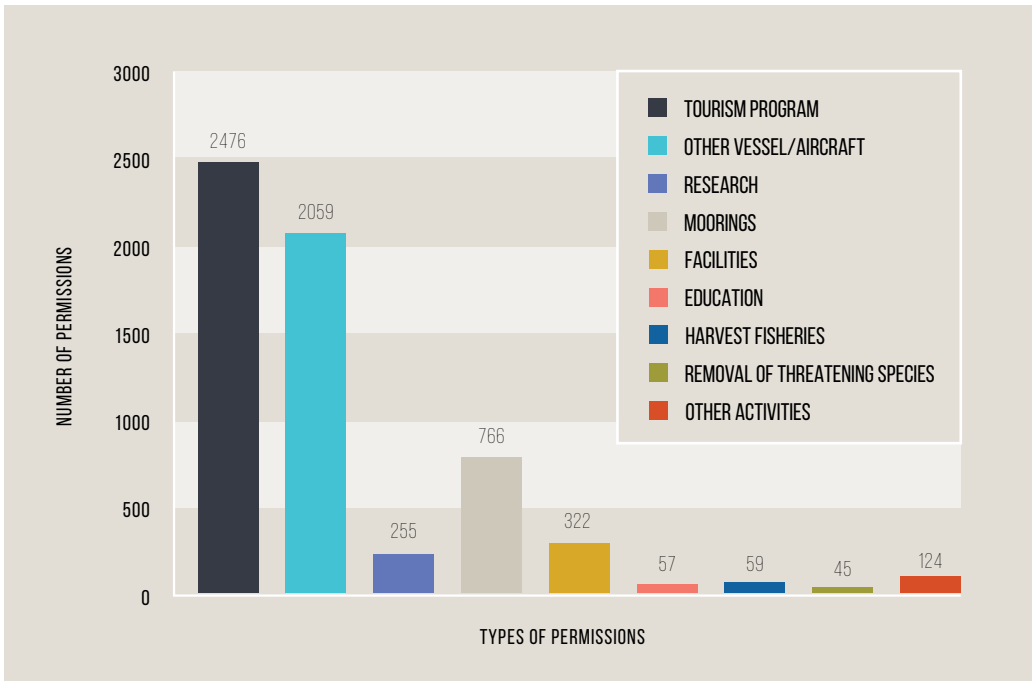


Figure 10: Type and number of current permissions managed by the Authority, as at 30 June 2017

The Authority recorded one or more administrative compliance action/s against 95 per cent of allegations received during 2016–17.

Key administrative compliance activities in 2016–17:

- compliance audits of all nine tourism pontoons in the Marine Park against the conditions of their permission and associated environmental management plans. The audits identified that most pontoon sites were largely compliant with requirements. Most non-compliance incidents related to practices not reflecting approved environmental management plans.
- completed an operations audit for tourism and mooring permissions in the Marine Park: 434 actions were taken to manage non-compliance ranging from surrender of permission, permittee education, extension of time and intention to revoke notices.

- educated permit holders about their compliance obligations for the more than 750 permitted moorings in the Marine Park.
- educated more than 50 permittees who operate in the sensitive area of Low Isles in the Cairns Area Plan of Management about their permit obligations when visiting that location.

Environmental supervision was also conducted at priority sites and was typically linked to an approved schedule of works, an environmental management plan, or to supervise and ensure permit condition compliance.

Table 4 and Table 5 summarise the permissions-related, reported non-compliances and actions taken to address non-compliant behaviour.

Table 4: Alleged permission non-compliances reported to the Authority

PERMIT NON-COMPLIANCE (ALLEGED)	NUMBER
Exceeding permit limits (locations, zones volumes, quantities, species)	25
Failure to maintain eco-certification	5
Failure to allow for ESS or comply with ESS direction	1
Failure to commence operations	356
Failure to comply with MNA/VNA/FNA/ENA	3
Failure to comply with plan of management	12
Failure to comply with Queensland/Australia legislation	4
Failure to display AIN/VIN/BIN, permit or research	18
Failure to display mooring reference number	6
Failure to execute a deed	10
Failure to install a facility	3
Failure to maintain a facility	8
Failure to make a booking	14
Failure to provide evidence of insurance	1
Failure to remove equipment	0
Failure to report/notify	12
Failure to submit a bond	4
Failure to submit a schedule of works	3
Failure to submit/comply with management plan/SOW	13
Failure to use permitted methodology	0
Other permit condition contravention	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>

*AIN = aircraft identification number; BIN = bareboat identification number; ENA = equipment notification approval; ESS = environmental site supervision; FNA = facility notification approval; MNA = mooring notification approval; VIN = vessel identification number; VNA = vessel notification approval; SOW = schedule of works*

Table 5: Actions taken to resolve reported permission non-compliances

COMPLIANCE ACTIONS TAKEN	NUMBER
Advisory letter	31
Caution notice	0
Commencing operations — extension of time	159
Commencing operations — 1st intention to revoke letter	190
Commencing operations — 2nd intention to revoke letter	1
Commencing operations — revocation of permission	10
Commencing operations — no further action	74
Direction under deed/use of bond	0
Education of permittee	143
ESS or field audit	0
Request for information — pending suspension	6
Investigation — suspension of permission	2
Investigation — revocation of permission	0
Modification of permit condition, review EMP or update MNA	1
No action — alleged non-compliance unsubstantiated/other	34
Penalty infringement notice	0
Reconsideration request of a decision — permission compliance	1
Reinstatement of a permission — permission compliance	2
Referral to assessments delegate — under a process	37
Referral to FMCU, EHP or QPWS to action	12
Removal of property — order to remove	0
Surrender of permission	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>726</b>

*EMP = environmental management plan; ESS = environmental site supervision; MNA = mooring notification approval; FMCU = Field Management compliance unit; EHP = Queensland Department of Environment Heritage and Protection; QPWS = Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service*

### **Notifications and directions**

During the reporting period, the Authority was notified of, or gave directions for 12 Part 5 activities under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003, as outlined in Table 6.

### **Environmental management charge**

Implementing the environmental management charge, which is placed on most commercial activities, including visitors using tourism operations in the Marine Park, continues to be a priority. To ensure best practice and transparent management of the revenue, the Authority provides guidance material relating

Table 6: Part 5 activities notified or directions granted

ACTIVITY	NUMBER
defence activities	2
maintenance of navigational aids	2
management activities	7
urgent works on essential public services	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

to the environmental management charge for permittees.

In 2016–17 the standard tourist program charge per person per day remained at \$6.50, and \$3.25 for part-day tours of less than three hours.

During the year, the Authority undertook 829 environmental management charge administrative compliance actions. Of note this reporting period is a large increase in

permission holders paying their environmental management charge obligation late (see Figure 11). Further, guideline changes made this financial year regarding when a late payment penalty is not applied resulted in an overall increase in compliance actions taken. Compliance actions taken that have resulted in suspension or revocation of permissions remains largely consistent with previous years.

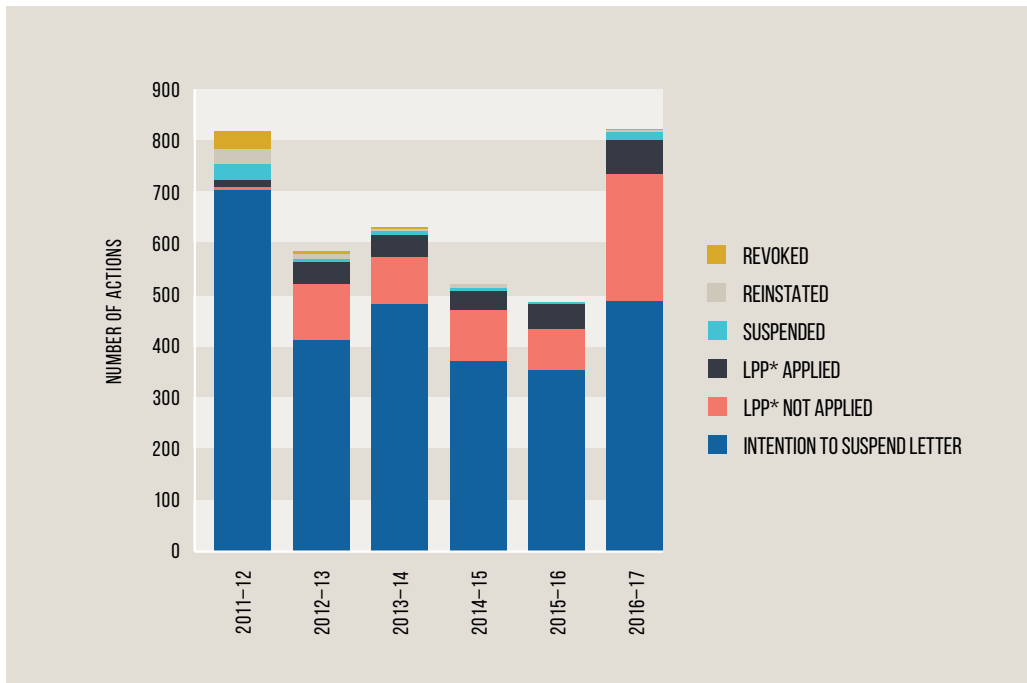


Figure 11: Administrative actions taken for environmental management charge non-compliance, 2011–12 to 2016–17

\* Late Payment Penalty



### ***Coordination with EPBC Act***

The Authority has continued to implement the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy, in relation to the integration and application of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the Marine Park Act.

This memorandum helps integrate and streamline the application and assessment processes when approvals and permissions are required under both Acts, through establishing agreed-to administrative arrangements.

In 2016–17 the Authority advised the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy on 14 pre-referrals, referrals, approved projects and compliance matters.

### ***Applications refused, reconsidered and appealed***

The number of refusal decisions is low because the Authority works closely with applicants to ensure they apply for a permission that is acceptable to the Authority. As such, many applications change and evolve during the assessment period into applications that are eventually approved.

During the reporting period, one permit application was refused by the delegate. The application was for entry and use of all Preservation Zones for the purpose of research. The applicant did not request that the decision be reconsidered. A second application was partially refused, being the installation and operation of a new tourist facility in the Whitsunday Planning Area, but the remainder of the application was granted with conditions.

During the reporting period, the Authority received three requests for a reconsideration of an initial permit application decision, and one request for a statement of reasons. One reconsideration resulted in affirmation of the original decision. Another resulted in the affirmation of the permission refused (partial refusal) and also a variation to the conditions placed on the permitted activities. The third reconsideration is ongoing at the time of reporting.

One reconsideration decision affirmed the original decision made during the previous

reporting period on the revocation of permissions, as a result of not commencing operations in the Marine Park within the time specified in the permit.

### ***Administrative Appeals Tribunal***

Two applications were made to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal during the reporting period:

- an application for review of a decision to revoke permissions for failing to commence operations in the Marine Park within a specified timeframe. The matter was finalised and resolved through a mediation process.
- an application for review of decisions to grant permissions for a program to take animals that pose a threat to human life or safety and to conduct a research program. The matter is ongoing at the time of reporting.

One application made before 2016–17 remained outstanding at 30 June 2017: an application for review of a decision to refuse an application made for a secondary-service determination under regulation 137 of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983* (Marine Park Regulations). It is expected that a hearing will take place in 2017–18.

### ***Strengthening the permission system***

Improving the permission system is a five-year project to streamline the administrative process for users of the Marine Park, while maintaining high environmental standards.

Under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003, the Marine Park is managed as a multiple-use area. The plan aims to protect and conserve the biodiversity within a network of highly protected zones, while providing opportunities for ecologically sustainable use.

As part of these arrangements, many activities cannot be conducted without written permission from the Authority. For each permit application, the Authority assesses the nature and scale of activities and makes a determination based on the potential impact of those activities on the values of the Marine Park.

The project to improve the permission system started in January 2015 to enhance consistency and to make the basis for decisions clearer to permit applicants and the public. It seeks to address commitments in the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment Program Report* to improve the permission system, and recommendations from the Australian National Audit Office in August 2015.

Between September and November 2016 an updated permission system policy was released for public comment along with a suite of associated guidance materials. A summary of the results of public consultation was published in February 2017 with 83 per cent of respondents finding the documents to be useful or somewhat useful.

Most respondents provided feedback around the current application, assessment and approval processes, supporting the proposed improvements and making suggestions for further improvements.

Areas identified by respondents as needing improvement included transparency of decision-making, availability of information on how decisions are made, and consistent application of compliance actions.

The Authority estimates the proposed streamlining measures to the permission system should generate about \$3 million in savings annually to businesses, individuals and communities.

The permission system policy and associated guidelines are expected to be released early in the 2017–18 financial year, coinciding with the amendments to the Marine Park Regulations taking effect and new policy and guidance material being released.

### **Permission compliance**

When permission for activities in the Marine Park is granted, it is subject to conditions that the Authority is responsible for enforcing. Strategies or actions to enforce compliance range from education and assisted self-regulation, to stronger mechanisms. There are also formal delegations or authorisations in place which the Authority can use to take action in response to a breach of permit conditions.

The Authority's *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment Program Report* and

Corporate Plan commit to strengthening monitoring and management of compliance risks associated with permission requirements, and complement recommendations made by the Australian National Audit Office audit.

During 2016–17, the Authority continued to implement its Strengthening Permissions Compliance Action Plan 2015–2020, which focuses on the following key areas:

- legislation and permission systems
- education and communication
- monitoring and reporting
- enforcement (including administrative and educational actions).

Key achievements against this plan during 2016–17 included:

- development and review of the Authority's annual permissions risk assessment and compliance plan to identify the resources available for permission-related compliance activities and to prioritise the compliance risks associated with permissions, notifications and accreditation. This planning process is now considered foundational business for the Authority and is done as part of the Authority's annual business planning cycle.
- drafting internal policy for the Authority's permissions compliance framework, including associated procedures and templates to be completed during 2017–18.
- continued development of systems to support permission compliance activities, including document management and reporting; anticipated completion during 2017–18.

### **Cost Recovery Implementation Statement**

To fulfil Australian Government requirements outlined in its charging framework and its cost recovery guidelines, the Authority developed a *Cost Recovery Implementation Statement* outlining the Authority's current cost recovery measures in relation to permit application and administration fees.

The Authority's Statement for the permission system fees was approved by the Minister and published on the Authority's website.

The statement is limited to justifying existing cost recovery arrangements. As required under the Australian Government's charging framework and cost recovery guidelines, it does not provide a review of these arrangements, or seek to identify improvements. The Authority is proposing to commence a review of permission system fees next financial year. Permit system fees were last reviewed to align with commencement of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003.

Public comment on the draft statement was sought from 24 March to 24 April 2017. Seven submissions were received. Key issues raised included:

- more equitable charging of users of the Marine Park
- research contributes to management and understanding of the Marine Park and should be exempt from fees
- perception the tourism industry funds more than its fair share of costs associated with the Reef
- confusion that this cost recovery implementation statement was proposing new arrangements when it was setting out the existing arrangements
- that fees should be benchmarked against other jurisdictions to ensure value for money.

Some issues were raised that were beyond the scope of cost recovery measures for the permission system. This included comments about:

- concern there are already too many fees charged by government and that fees are duplicated across governments for what is perceived to be similar activities
- charging for people to use and access the Marine Park even if they do not need a permit (for example, a levy on recreational watercraft registration; commercial and recreational fishing activities)
- improving the environmental management charge arrangements
- developing service level agreements with proponents for major projects

- the need for further guidance material for each permission type and assessment level to explain how the assessment process operates.

The Authority intends to update the statement annually, early each calendar year, once its annual report is tabled in Parliament with audited financial details and consumer price index increases in permission system fees, which take effect in January each year.

## DREDGE MATERIAL DISPOSAL

The Authority provided input to guiding documents being developed during 2016–17, in accordance with commitments made under the Reef 2050 Plan:

- a maintenance dredging strategy and guidelines for the development of long-term maintenance dredging management plans, led by the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads
- a strategy for managing transshipping in the Great Barrier Reef, led by the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

Requests for information or advice on dredge material disposal were provided within agreed timeframes.

## WHITSUNDAYS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The Authority continued its review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management 1998, which sets out the rules for specific activities in this area of the Marine Park.

Significant targeted consultation undertaken in 2016 and early 2017 with stakeholders and partners — including Traditional Owners, the tourism industry, recreational users, government agencies and the Authority's Advisory Committees — shaped the proposed amendments for formal public consultation.

Other key information sources that informed the amendments included the Outlook Report 2014 and 2012 Strategic Assessment (extensive documents that plan for the future state of the Reef), as well as technical papers, site-specific Reef health data (long-term monitoring and Reef health impact surveys), seabird monitoring, animal stranding data and valuable local knowledge.



*The Authority continued its review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management*

The formal public consultation period ran from 6 March 2017 to 7 April 2017. During this time, severe tropical cyclone Debbie impacted the Whitsunday region and extensions to 28 April 2017 were given to those affected by this event.

Some changes to the proposed amendments were made in response to public comment and findings from field assessments. The final amending instruments to the Whitsundays Plan of Management and the consequential amendments to the Marine Park Regulations were prepared and provided to the Authority Board on 30 June 2017 for consideration out-of-session.

The majority of amendments took effect from 2 August 2017. This followed final approvals by the Authority Board for the Whitsundays Plan of Management, and the Minister and Governor General in Council for the Marine Park Regulations. Staged implementation of the amendments will occur in 2017-18.

**FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The Field Management Program is delivered jointly by the Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). It delivers practical on-ground actions aimed at protecting and maintaining well-functioning marine and

island ecosystems, and supports ecotourism opportunities and commercial industries. The program’s core activities include delivering conservation actions, monitoring ecological and heritage values, responding to incidents, educating and engaging with Marine Park users and upholding compliance.

Performance was independently assessed and found, despite the challenging operational environment, the program was proficient in delivering vital compliance, surveillance and protection programs across the World Heritage Area. However, the independent assessment identified continuing decline in Reef and island health without the appropriate level of future investment in the Field Management Program.

Twelve key investment areas were identified for immediate implementation to assist in arresting decline in the reef and over the next five years to support resilience of the Reef. The required funding to enable the Joint Field Management Program to continue to deliver optimal Reef protection during this critical time was also identified in the periodic review.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION

The Authority conducted annual inspections of all Commonwealth Islands with Commonwealth heritage significance.

The Authority worked with the Dent Island and Lady Elliot Island lessees to implement the respective lightstation heritage management plans to ensure Commonwealth heritage-listed lightstation buildings are being maintained to a high standard to retain heritage values.

The Authority worked with the Low Isles caretaker to ensure the Commonwealth heritage listed lightstation buildings were being maintained to a high standard to retain heritage values.

The Lady Elliot Island commercial lease was renewed for a further 10 years, until 2025, allowing for continued tourism use while protecting and enhancing the island's natural and cultural values.

Through an open tender process, the Authority awarded the Low Isles caretaker contract for two years, with a further two-year option, up until 2021.

The European cultural heritage component of the Low Isles Heritage Management Plan was completed; however, the Indigenous Tradition component has not been completed. Low Isles has not been determined under Native Title and both Traditional Owner groups Yirrganydji and Kuku Yalanji are currently in the native title mediation process for the Low Isles area.

## INCIDENT RESPONSE

In 2016–17, the Authority responded promptly to environmental incidents such as oil spills, groundings, coral bleaching, and cyclones, with the following outcomes achieved:

- 100 per cent of spills notified to the program were risk assessed
- 100 per cent of incidents were responded to upon request
- 100 per cent of vessel groundings notified to the program were risk assessed
- 100 per cent of vessel groundings were responded to upon request
- 100 per cent of removal orders for grounded vessels were issued at no cost.

The Authority assessed 134 maritime events with the potential to cause environmental harm, including 84 groundings/sinking and 12 spills.

The Authority responded to 23 vessel incidents following severe tropical cyclone Debbie in late March 2017.

Three Field Management Program staff participated in a Queensland pollution response exercise.

The maritime incident database recorded 134 maritime events with the potential to cause environmental harm. A desktop risk assessment was undertaken for each event. This resulted in seven official joint Commonwealth/Queensland 'order to remove notices', 17 in-field responses including five site assessment of damage being undertaken.

Sixteen events involving vessels over 50 metres, with some potential to result in environmental impact, were recorded. Eight of these were notifications of main engine breakdowns, where the vessels were generally distant from danger and posed a low risk to the World Heritage Area.

Severe tropical cyclone Debbie crossed the coast around Airlie Beach in late March 2017, causing considerable damage. The Authority responded to the event with staff fulfilling roles in the incident management team and conducting in-water and on-island surveys and recovery operations.

Of the nearly 100 vessels that sank or grounded during the cyclone, 23 were in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area or adjacent mainland national park and were risk assessed by Field Management Program staff. Collaborative efforts by Maritime Safety Queensland, QPWS, the Authority, insurance providers and vessel owners led to most vessels being removed without the need to issue a formal 'order to remove'.

At 30 June 2017, four vessels remain in the World Heritage Area: two sank in deep water and have been deemed unrecoverable, and two large vessels aground on national park islands are yet to be removed.

Table 7: Maritime events and actions taken from 2014–15 to 2016–17

	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
Maritime incident database events	35	93	134
Groundings/sinking	27	54	84
Spills	3	9	12
Orders to remove	4	6	7
Field response	8	17	35
Site assessment of damage	-	5	5



Seabird monitoring remains a major focus for the Field Management Program

**MARINE AND ISLAND CONSERVATION**

Reef Health and Impact Surveys and seabird monitoring continue to be a major focus for the Field Management Program’s marine and island conservation management.

The program undertook 1943 Reef Health and Impact Surveys in 2016–17. Of these:

- 247 were associated with crown-of-thorns starfish
- 663 related to coral bleaching
- 259 were associated with the severe tropical cyclone Debbie response.

These surveys produce a Reef-wide picture of the condition of the Great Barrier Reef and help direct crown-of-thorns starfish control activities.

The program carried out 203 bird surveys — 110 at essential locations and 18 at significant locations. An additional 75 incidental or opportunistic surveys were conducted at 123 locations. This comprised 92 per cent of annual seabird monitoring identified in the Coastal Bird Monitoring and Information Strategy.

A contract with the Australian Institute of Marine Science for the ecological assessment of Reef Health and Impact Surveys has been drafted and the schedule for products to be delivered under this contract was still being negotiated at the end of the financial year. The contract is to be executed by September 2017 and output delivery date is deferred to December 2017.

#### RECREATION AND TOURISM FACILITIES

As at 30 June 2017, 95 per cent of public moorings and 95 per cent of reef protection markers were operational, including 87 of 89 public moorings in the Whitsundays following severe tropical cyclone Debbie.

There were 147 public moorings and 170 reef protection markers in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area at the end of the 2016–17 financial year. This includes 20 new public moorings and 25 new reef protection markers installed as part of the Queensland Government's \$2.3 million investment under the Significant Regional Infrastructure Projects Program.

Planning and site assessments for additional moorings and reef protection markers were also undertaken, with more installations to occur in the Whitsundays, Capricorn Cays and other southern Great Barrier Reef locations during 2017–18.

Engineering checks of 89 public moorings and numerous reef protection markers were undertaken in the Whitsundays within weeks of severe tropical cyclone Debbie, with repairs undertaken to ensure facilities were operational.

A capital investment program was developed and taken into account in preparing the Periodic Review Report.



*The joint Field Management Program carries out vessel, aerial and land-based surveillance across the World Heritage Area*

#### COMPLIANCE

Compliance with Marine Park and other environmental legislation in the World Heritage Area is undertaken and coordinated by the Field Management compliance unit. Australian and Queensland government agencies that participate in the compliance and surveillance program include the Authority, QPWS, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, Queensland Water Police and Maritime Border Command.

#### SURVEILLANCE

The joint Field Management Program undertakes and coordinates vessel, aerial and land-based surveillance activities across the World Heritage Area. A cooperative multi-agency approach to patrolling allows a broad range of compliance management tools to be applied in an efficient whole-of-government manner.

A total of 674 dedicated compliance patrol vessel days, 10 land-based days and 71 days of targeted chartered flights were achieved in 2016–17. The Field Management Program funded, tasked and coordinated through the compliance unit almost all of the dedicated marine protected area compliance listed.

The key performance indicator of 740 dedicated vessel compliance days was not achieved for the 2016–17 reporting period. The shortfall in dedicated vessel compliance days was mitigated to a degree through undertaking additional charter aerial surveillance missions. The effectiveness of aircraft surveillance and the wider areas of operation have a multiplying effect on outcomes.

The vessel surveillance program failed to achieve the number of required days largely through competing business priorities of the two key partners, QPWS and Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol. The patrol output of QPWS was severely reduced due to the incident response and ongoing effects of severe tropical cyclone Debbie's impact on the Whitsunday region.

Program officers have been trained and obtained approval from the Civil Aviation Safety Authority to use unmanned aerial vehicles (drones). The drones are currently being trialed for use in targeted surveillance operations where traditional means of surveillance are known to be ineffective.

**INCIDENTS AND OFFENCES**

During the reporting period, 905 possible offences were reported from across the Commonwealth and Queensland jurisdictions of the World Heritage Area. All offences reported were actioned.

Of these, 58 per cent were handled through compliance actions such as advisory letters, caution notices and warning notices. More serious matters resulted in infringement notices or court action.

Figure 12 shows the number of possible offences reported each year since 2006–07. Table 8 shows the 715 possible Commonwealth offences that occurred in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

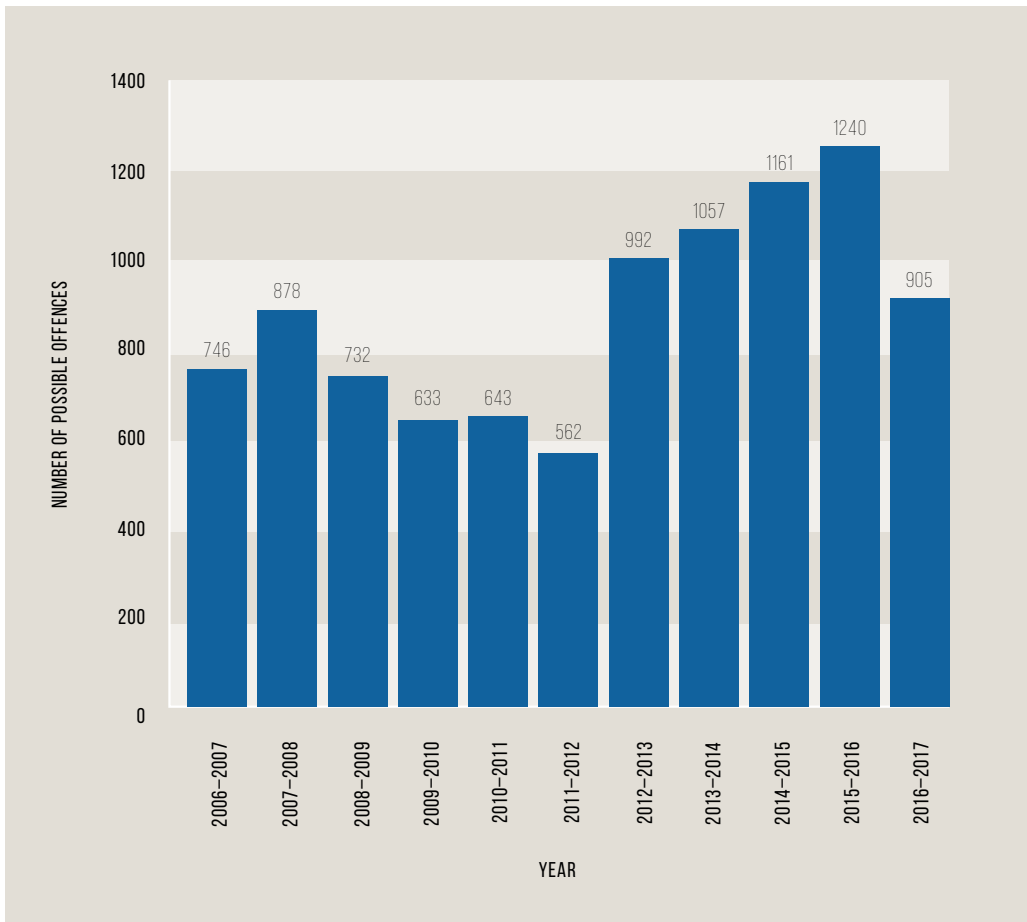


Figure 12: Number of possible Commonwealth and State offences reported to the Field Management Program



Table 8: Commonwealth offences reported in the Marine Park, by management area

SUMMARY OF COMMONWEALTH OFFENCES REPORTED (BY MANAGEMENT AREA)			FAR NORTHERN	CAIRNS- COOKTOWN	TOWNSVILLE- WHITSUNDAY	MACKAY- CAPRICORN	OTHER	TOTAL
ACTIVITY								
Commercial fishing	Fishing	Crabbing	4	0	0	2	0	6
		Line fishing	0	0	2	1	0	3
		Netting	0	2	0	1	0	3
		Trawling	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Unattached dory – collecting	2	0	0	0	0	2
		Unattached dory – line fishing	0	0	0	2	0	2
	Unpermitted activity	Collecting	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Littering	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Restricted access areas	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Wildlife	Non Traditional take	0	1	1	0	0	2
Foreign fishing	Fishing	Collecting	0	0	0	1	0	1
		Netting	0	1	0	0	0	1
Government	Maritime incident	Pollution discharge	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Moorings offence	Other	0	0	1	0	0	1

SUMMARY OF COMMONWEALTH OFFENCES REPORTED (BY MANAGEMENT AREA)			FAR NORTHERN	CARMS – COOKTOWN	TOWNSVILLE – WHITSUNDAY	MAACKAY – CAPRICORN	OTHER	TOTAL
ACTIVITY								
Recreational	Fishing	Collecting	0	2	1	1	0	4
		Crabbing	0	0	1	1	0	2
		Line fishing	0	139	130	147	0	416
		Spearfishing	0	24	12	17	0	53
	Historical shipwrecks							
	Maritime incident	Abandonment	0	0	0	1	0	1
		Groundings	2	0	2	4	0	8
		Sinkings	0	0	3	1	0	4
	Moorings Offence	Unpermitted	0	1	0	2	0	3
		Other	0	0	5	1	0	6
	Plan of Management	Hinchinbrook	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Whitsunday	0	0	6	0	0	6
	Unpermitted activity	Commercial activity (tourist)	0	0	3	0	0	3
		Domestic animals in a protected area	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Restricted access areas	1	2	0	27	0	30
		Other	0	2	0	1	0	3
Wildlife	Hunting	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Interaction with cetacean	0	0	8	0	0	8	
	Unknown take type	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Research	Unpermitted Activity	Littering	0	0	0	1	0	1
		Unlawful take	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Wildlife	Non Traditional take	0	0	0	3	0	3
Shipping	Breach of Permit	Operating outside permitted zones or locations	2	1	0	0	0	3
	Maritime incident	Conduct in zone	2	3	1	1	0	7
		Pilotage	0	1	0	0	0	1

## SUMMARY OF COMMONWEALTH OFFENCES REPORTED (BY MANAGEMENT AREA)

ACTIVITY			FAR NORTHERN	CAIRNS- COOKTOWN	TOWNSVILLE- WHITSUNDAY	MACKAY- CAPRICORN	OTHER	TOTAL	
Tourism industry	Breach of Permit	Failure to make a booking	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Fishing	Line fishing	0	9	0	1	0	10	
	Maritime incident	Groundings		0	6	8	3	0	17
		Pollution/ discharge		0	2	0	1	0	3
		Sinkings		0	0	2	1	0	3
	Moorings offence	Unpermitted		0	0	6	0	0	6
		Other		0	3	4	0	0	7
	Plan of Management	Whitsunday	0	0	6	0	0	6	
	Unpermitted activity	Commercial activity (tourist)		0	2	3	3	0	8
		Littering		0	0	1	1	0	2
		Restricted access areas		1	1	0	0	0	2
		Unlawful take		0	1	0	0	0	1
	Wildlife	Interaction with cetacean		0	1	18	0	0	19
Non Traditional take			0	1	3	0	0	4	
Traditional activity	Wildlife	Hunting	0	2	0	0	0	2	
		Non Traditional take	9	5	0	4	0	18	
Other	Maritime incident	Abandonment	0	0	1	0	0	1	
		Pollution/ discharge	0	1	0	0	0	1	
		Sinkings	0	1	2	0	0	3	
	Moorings offence	Unpermitted	0	0	1	0	0	1	
		Other	0	0	1	0	0	1	
	Unpermitted activity	Littering	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Other		0	0	1	0	0	1	
TOTAL			25	219	241	230	0	715	

**Table 9: Compliance actions (not prosecutions), by management area**

ACTION	FAR NORTHERN	CARNS- COOKTOWN	TOWNSVILLE- WHITSUNDAY	MACKAY- CAPRICORN	OTHER/ UNSPECIFIED/ REEF-WIDE	TOTAL
Advisory letter (CDPP*)	0	0	0	1	0	1
Advisory letter (The Authority)	11	117	111	148	0	387
Advisory letter (QLD gov)	0	5	14	5	0	24
Ceased by Executive	0	2	1	1	0	4
Caution notice (Cwth)	0	29	43	16	0	88
Infringement notice (Cwth)	0	10	11	11	0	32
Infringement notice (state)	0	2	6	3	0	11
Insufficient evidence	2	1	4	3	0	10
No further action – CDPP	1	2	2	2	0	7
No further action other	1	16	11	18	2	48
No offence	0	7	4	4	0	15
Public education process	0	0	0	2	0	2
Recorded for information	0	1	0	1	0	2
Referred to other agency	1	3	1	1	1	7
State warning notice	0	0	8	6	0	14
Unable to locate offender	0	10	6	8	0	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>676</b>

\* Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions

## INFORMATION REPORTS

During the reporting period, 278 information reports were submitted for intelligence analysis, relating to a variety of issues and activities and enabling a greater understanding and enhanced response to ongoing compliance issues and emerging trends in the World Heritage Area. Of these, 89 related to illegal recreational fishing activity, which continues to be highly represented.

## COMPLIANCE ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

Table 13 details the assessments and compliance actions (other than prosecutions) undertaken in 2016–17. The individual circumstances of each matter are assessed and considered before a decision on appropriate action is made.

There continues to be a strong use of the caution notice system by Marine Park inspectors, with 88 notices being issued for conservation park zone fishing offences (regulation 73 under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983) and Marine National Park Zone trolling of fishing line offences (regulation 73BA). This system was introduced in 2015–16 to empower inspectors to be involved in decision-making, provide immediate consequences for alleged non-compliant behaviour and reduce the double handling of information.

The Australian Government Director of Public Prosecutions accepted 34 briefs of evidence, resulting in 32 successful prosecutions totaling fines of \$90,400. These prosecutions related to illegal commercial fishing activities, including

collecting, line fishing and unattached dories, vessel groundings and recreational fishing offences.

More significant offences included the following outcomes:

- The master of a commercial line vessel was convicted and fined \$8000 for fishing in a Marine National Park Zone. This offence was detected during a Maritime Border Command aerial surveillance flight.
- The master of a recreational vessel was convicted and fined \$4000 for spearfishing in a Marine National Park zone near Lady Musgrave Island. The offender was issued with an infringement notice, which he failed to pay. The offence was detected during a Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service vessel patrol.
- Four commercial dory operators were convicted and fined \$4500 each in relation to having their dories unattached in a Marine National Park Zone. These offences were detected during a Maritime Border Command aerial surveillance flight.
- A dory operator from a commercial line vessel was convicted and fined \$10,000 for fishing in a Marine National Park Zone near Ron Taylor Reef. This offence was detected by a Maritime Border Command aerial surveillance flight. The offender was previously convicted and fined \$4500 for being unattached in a Marine National Park Zone.
- The master of a commercial tourist vessel was convicted and fined \$7500 in relation to the vessel grounding at Bait Reef. The maximum fine for this type of offence is \$10,800. The master pleaded guilty to the offence, which caused significant damage to the reef, including two large scars from the catamaran's hulls.

## RECREATIONAL FISHING

During 2016–17, the Field Management Program introduced a project to improve recreational fishing compliance with marine parks zoning. Strategies were developed to address the ongoing number of recreational fishing offences and apparent growing

complacency and negligence among recreational fishers around zoning compliance. A communications trial was undertaken in the Cairns area; this included development of recreational fishing-targeted communication and education strategies, and products with stronger enforcement and ecological benefit messaging. The trial will be reviewed during 2017–18 to identify the effectiveness of the new approach. Other components of the project to improve recreational fishing compliance rates will be prioritised and further developed for implementation during 2017–18.

## COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM

This joint project with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is working towards expanding vessel monitoring capability to all commercial fisheries operating in the World Heritage Area. The Queensland Government's Sustainable Fisheries Strategy released in June 2017 contains a commitment to require installation of a vessel monitoring system on all commercial fishing vessels by 2020, with a priority for net, line and crab vessels by 2018.

Progress has included installation of vessel monitoring system units on all field management vessels and 13 commercial fishing vessels as a voluntary trial. These trials have demonstrated that vessel monitoring system units can operate effectively on small commercial fishing vessels including dories. Field trials of other low-cost units that may be suitable for small vessels will continue to assess whether they are suitable for use on a large number of small vessels in 2018. Joint Field Management Program funds previously held in reserve to assist with the vessel monitoring system expansion have now been provided to the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to support implementation of the system.

## COMPLIANCE TRAINING AND MENTORING

Throughout the reporting year, the Authority worked closely with the Indigenous compliance team to undertake dedicated compliance management activities in the World Heritage Area, including supporting compliance training, mentoring Indigenous rangers and engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within communities and on the water.

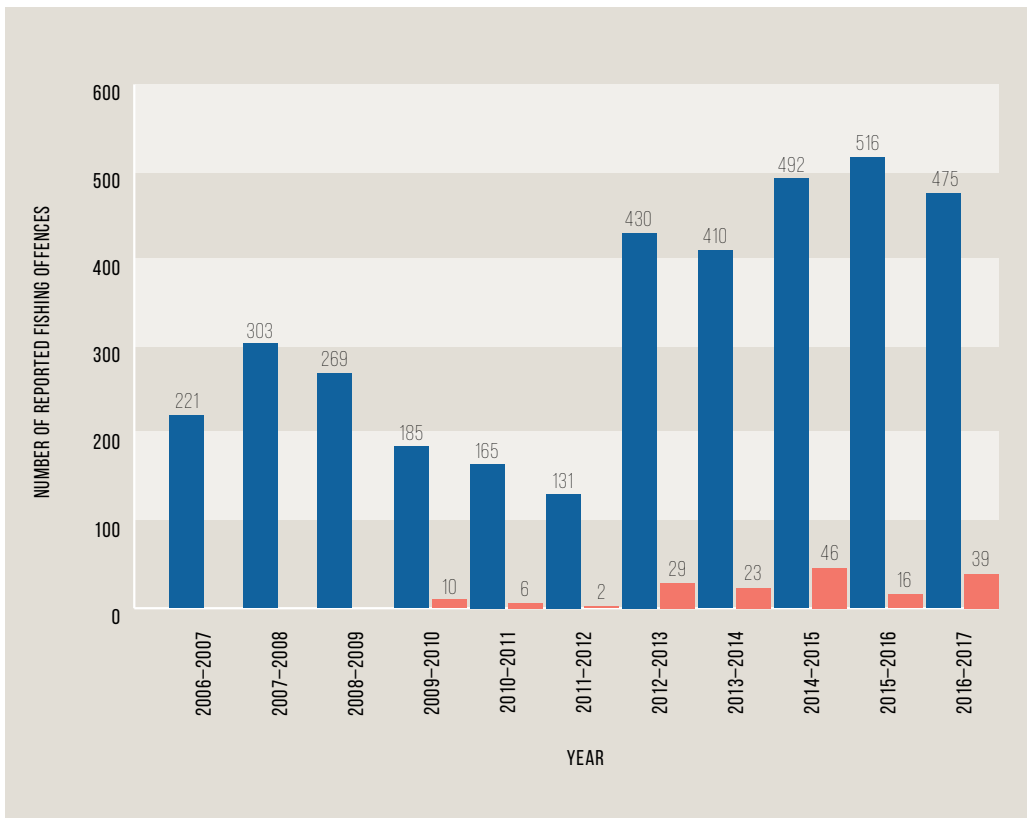


Figure 13: Illegal recreational fishing incidents in Marine National Park Zones

One of four new Indigenous compliance team members engaged under the Indigenous Ranger Compliance Enhancement Program has been seconded to the Field Management compliance unit for mentoring and on-the-job training in investigations.

**FIELD REPORTING TOOL**

Joint Field Management Program field officers use a field reporting system to report day-to-day activities and events that occur while conducting planned field activities such as compliance incidents, public contacts, sightings, permit checks and compliance information reports.

During 2016–17, 925 trips were entered into the field reporting system, comprising 2276 activities and 2867 events. The system recorded 1481 vessel days at sea across the program’s 20 vessels. The two primary vessels,

*Reef Ranger* and *Reef Heron*, recorded 266 and 118 days respectively.

Uptake, data entry and reporting capability for the field reporting system continues to improve since its introduction in 2014.

**LEGAL SERVICES**

The Authority’s legal services team provides administrative law and litigation services, commercial services and fraud liaison, and ensures the Authority’s compliance with legislation and policy through legal advice and reporting.

During 2016–17, the legal services team received 165 requests for advice and 151 contracts for approval, including three memorandums of understanding and three deeds of variation to three existing memorandums of understanding.



*Sheng Neng 1 ran aground on Douglas Shoal in April 2010, causing extensive damage*

In September 2016, the Commonwealth of Australia, acting through the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, won a significant legal challenge and reached a \$35 million out-of-court settlement plus its legal costs against the owners of Chinese coal carrier the *Shen Neng 1*, which ran aground on Douglas Shoal in April 2010, causing the largest known direct impact on the Great Barrier Reef. In addition to the \$35 million settlement paid to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, a further \$4.3 million was paid to the Australian Government to cover costs incurred in the immediate aftermath of the grounding.

In the reporting period, one application for review of a decision by the Authority was made to the Administrative Appeal Tribunal. This matter was resolved between the parties without the need to proceed to a hearing. As at 30 June 2017 the Authority was continuing to defend an application that was lodged in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal in February 2017. It is likely that this matter will proceed to a hearing in October 2017. Both matters concern decisions relating to permittees.

The Authority received eight requests for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). Of those, two applications were granted full access; two applications were granted partial access; one application was withdrawn; one application was refused at first instance and again on review; and one was still in progress as at 30 June 2017. One of the applicants was granted partial access and sought an Information Commissioner Review, which was still in progress as at 30 June 2017.

There were no amendments made to legislation administered by the Authority in the 2016–2017

financial year however, significant progress has been made towards three legislation amendments and one sunset project for completion in 2017–18.

The *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Amendment Bill 2017* was introduced to the House of Representatives on 15 June 2017. The purpose of the Bill is to make a minor technical amendment to the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, which will prevent plans of management made under the Act from being automatically revoked when regulations giving effect to the enforcement provisions of such plans are repealed. In particular, the amendment will prevent existing plans of management from being inadvertently revoked when the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983 are repealed and remade to address the sunset regime established under the *Legislation Act 2003*. It is intended that the Bill will be debated and passed by both houses of Parliament in the spring 2017 sitting period.

Pursuant to the *Legislation Act 2003* the Marine Park Regulations will 'sunset' or cease to have effect on 1 April 2018. In the 2016–17 financial year the Authority carried out a fit-for-purpose review of the Marine Park Regulations to determine whether the Regulations should be allowed to sunset, or whether they should be remade. The review found that the Marine Park Regulations are fit-for-purpose. In response to the review the Authority decided on 5 April 2017 to recommend to the Minister that the Marine Park Regulations be remade in substantially the same form prior to the sunset date. The Minister provided in-principle approval to this proposal on 25 May 2017. The Authority is now taking steps to ensure the Marine Park Regulations are remade prior to the sunset date.

## POLICY REFORM

The Authority led the development of draft Reef 2050 policies on cumulative impact management and net benefit, and is also preparing a Reef 2050 guideline on the application of offsets for the Great Barrier Reef.

The draft cumulative impact management policy and the net benefit policy complement each other by working to both reduce threats and restore and improve condition.

The desired policy outcome for management of cumulative impacts is to reduce pressures on Reef values and improve consistency in assessment and decision-making. For net benefit, the desired policy outcome is a coordinated and integrated approach to the restoration of Reef values and enhanced stewardship with the broadest range of stakeholders contributing to the delivery of net benefits.

The draft offset guideline will outline considerations and steps for the design of offsets to achieve a no net loss outcome in the condition of Reef-related values affected by development actions.

The draft cumulative impact management and net benefit policies were released for public comment in late June 2017. It is expected that the draft guideline will be released for comment later in 2017.

Draft cumulative impact management and net benefit policies have been developed collaboratively with Australian and Queensland government agencies with input from Traditional Owners and key stakeholders including members of the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee and Independent Expert Panel. Documents also incorporate relevant feedback from public consultation on the Reef 2050 Plan and Great Barrier Reef Strategic Assessment.

The delivery of net benefits, management of cumulative impacts and the application of offsets — particularly in a marine environment — are complex and challenging tasks. Case studies were prepared to illustrate how Traditional Owners and stakeholders may use policies in their decision-making to reduce impacts and deliver improvements to the health of the Reef across jurisdictions.

In line with the Reef 2050 Plan's adaptive management approach, the effectiveness of policy implementation will be evaluated as a component of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, as well as through the independent review of management effectiveness to be undertaken for the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019*.

## REGULATORY REFORM

The Authority completed its first Regulator Performance Framework Self-assessment Report (2015–16) as part of a whole-of-government commitment to reduce regulatory burden. The report is publicly available on the Authority's website.

The Authority undertook targeted consultation with Traditional Owners, together with the tourism and fisheries sectors as part of its assessment.

For the Authority, the framework covers its permission system, Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements, plans of management and compliance activities under the Marine Park Act; and its administration, as delegate, under the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981*.

The report uses a four-point rating scale to assess performance against each of the six key performance indicators. The scale is consistent with that used for the independent assessments of management effectiveness conducted for both the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Reports and the Strategic Assessment of the Great Barrier Reef Region, with ratings of:

- a) effective (81–100 per cent of optimum)
- b) mostly effective (51–80 per cent of optimum)
- c) partially effective (21–50 per cent of optimum)
- d) ineffective (1–20 per cent of optimum)

The Authority was graded as effective for two key performance indicators, mostly effective for three, and a combination of partially effective and mostly effective for one. The partially effective rating is due to the need to update charters of operations to reflect current governance arrangements for a number of advisory committees (Refer to table 10).

Work to update the charters of operations for advisory committees will be considered as part of the development of the Authority's 2017–18 Annual Operating Plan process and prioritised accordingly.



Table 10: Regulator performance self-assessment framework report

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	EFFECTIVE	MOSTLY EFFECTIVE	PARTIALLY EFFECTIVE	INEFFECTIVE
The Authority does not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities				
The Authority's communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective				
Actions undertaken by the Authority are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed				
The Authority's compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated				
The Authority is open and transparent in dealings with regulated entities				
The Authority actively contributes to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks				

## TOURISM MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

The Authority works closely with the tourism industry to encourage stewardship of the Reef. This partnership facilitates the adoption of environmentally sustainable best practices and knowledge and information sharing to achieve critical environmental outcomes for the Reef.

During 2016–17, the Authority continued to develop, review and implement its tourism policies.

To continue to ensure sustainable use of the Marine Park, the Authority reviewed its cruise ship policy including a six-week public consultation process starting in June 2017. Once finalised, the draft policy will be submitted to the Marine Park Authority Board for decision.

Scoping the review of the 'Managing tourism permissions (including Allocation, latency and tenure)' policy was completed; this process included input from the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee in April 2017. The review is planned for 2017–18.

The Authority was active in providing advice and information to stakeholders on all tourism

matters. This was particularly evident in the coordination of Marine Tourism Incident Response Group meetings to discuss the impact of coral bleaching on operators and to ensure consistent and sensitive messaging. Members include Queensland Tourism Industry Council, Tourism and Events Queensland, the Association of Marine Tourism Operators and representatives from the tourism industry, QPWS and the Authority.

Environmental management charge figures were analysed on a six-monthly basis and were provided to the Authority's Executive Management Team, the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee and updated on the Authority's website.

The Authority is committed to ensuring improved conservation outcomes in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park through the High Standard Tourism program. The program was established in 2004 and originally Great Barrier Reef tourism operators were recognised as high standard tourism operators when they achieved independent (and voluntary) ECO certification through Tourism Australia.

In 2016 the Authority formally recognised a second scheme run by EarthCheck through a deed of agreement. This provides operators with a choice of certification schemes. At 30 June 2017 there were 69 operators recognised as high standard and they carried 63 per cent of visitors to the Reef, thereby achieving the Portfolio Budget Statement objective.

During 2016–17, the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee provided advice on key Authority work including the Whitsundays Plan of Management amendments, improving the permission system, and Reef 2050 policies, tourism policies and tourism programs.

There were two two-day Tourism Reef Advisory Committee meetings held in 2016–17. The first meeting held in September 2016 in the Whitsundays focused on the committee’s consideration and advice relating to the proposed amendments to the Whitsundays Plan of Management. A second meeting held in April 2017 in Cairns included advice from the committee on the impacts of coral bleaching and severe tropical cyclone Debbie on the tourism industry. Cost recovery measures relating to the permission system were also discussed as well as tourism facility guidelines, scoping the latency review within the permission system, and Reef 2050 policies relating to principles around cumulative impact assessment and net benefits. In addition, a one-day workshop was held in June 2017

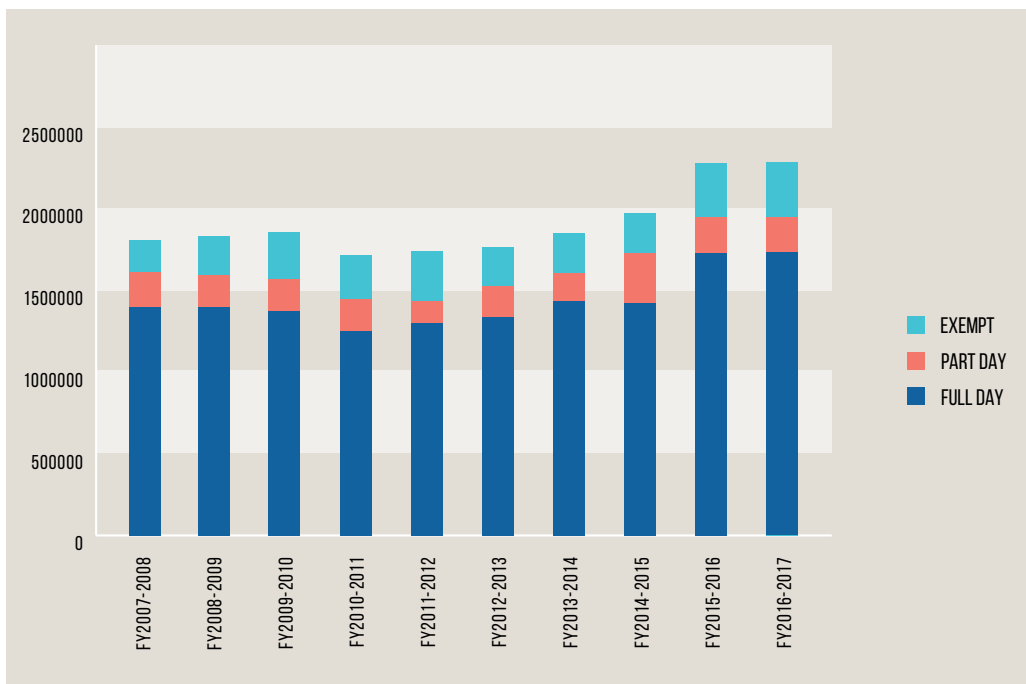


Figure 14: Tourism visits\* to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park since 2007-08. This includes full-day and part-day visitors, and passenger exempt from the environmental management charge.

\* These figures do not include stand-alone coral viewing activities and scenic-flights. Source: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority environmental management charge records.

where the Committee endorsed the outcomes of the Authority's Great Barrier Reef Summit and provided specific input on how tourism could help deliver some of the suggested actions.

The Authority continues to engage productively with the tourism industry. This was especially important in the Whitsunday region post severe tropical cyclone Debbie. In May 2017, the Authority worked with the local tourism industry and Whitsundays community to determine the impact of the cyclone on operations and establish some short, medium and long-term actions to assist the Reef's recovery. In June 2017, the Authority provided Eye on the Reef survey training for the volunteers from the Order of Underwater Coral Heroes, and Ocean Rafting provided a crewed vessel to enable these volunteers to undertake surveys.

Two editions of the e-newsletter *From the Deck* were circulated to all tourism permittees. This is distributed to more than 450 operators and provides updates on policies and guidelines,

relevant public consultations, Reef health information and other tourism-related activities in the Marine Park.

The Reef Discovery Course is being transitioned to a purely online platform, and has been expanded from four to 10 modules. As at 30 June 2017, four modules were in draft stages and one module was completed. The environmental management charge figures were analysed on a six-monthly basis and provided to the Executive Management Group to inform management, the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee and updated on the corporate website. Visitation to the Marine Park remains high at 2.3 million for 2016–17.

As at June 2017, there were 69 operators recognised as high standard and they carried 63 per cent of visitors to the Reef, thereby achieving the Portfolio Budget Statement objective. The decrease of five per cent from the previous year may be accounted for by the overall increase in visitation to the Reef being spread across all permitted operators.

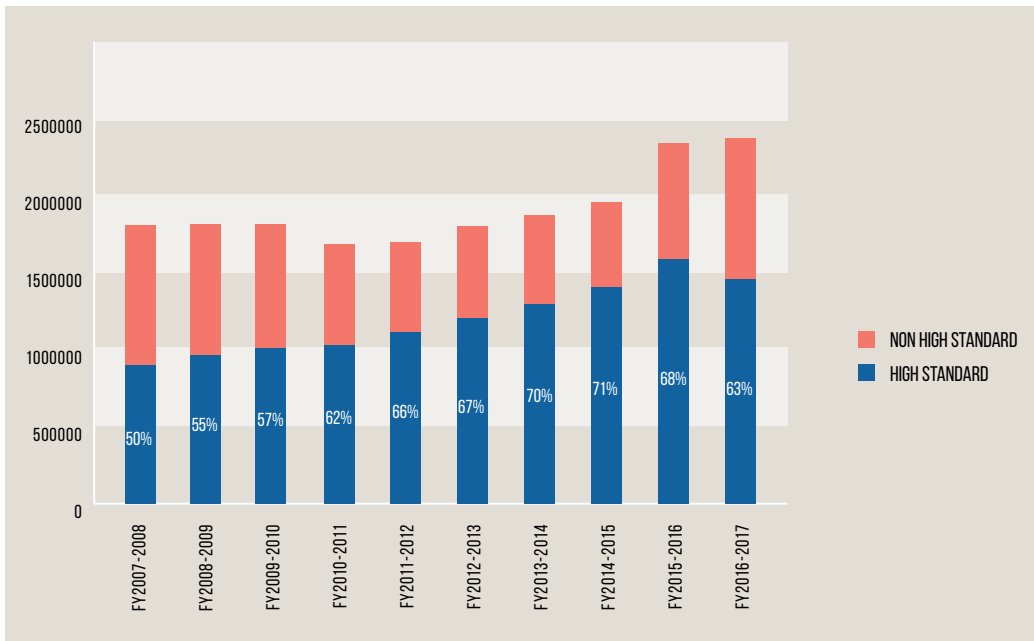


Figure 15: Percentage of visits\* to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park undertaken on high standard tourism operations.

\*Excludes stand-alone coral viewing activities and scenic flights. Source: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority environmental management charge records.

## PROGRAM AREA 2: ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST PURPOSE

### PERMISSION SYSTEM

#### IMPLEMENTING THE PERMISSION SYSTEM

The number of permits issued had decreased during the previous four years and slightly increased in 2016–17. There were a number of factors that contributed to the Authority's performance to achieve its purpose.

The increase in number of permits granted reflects concerted effort to resolve policy or other assessment issues that applied to a large number of applications allowing assessments to be completed. Examples include finalisation of the crown-of-thorns starfish control guidelines, new class assessments for several harvest fisheries, and staff overtime days to progress the high volume of level one applications.

A significant amount of time is spent on engaging with permittees to ensure the best outcome for the Marine Park. In some cases this engagement has resulted in the merging of many permits held by the same permittee into a single permit, streamlining their reporting obligations, providing consistency of permit conditions across their operations, aligning renewal dates and reducing assessment fees. The merged assessment requires less internal administration in the long-term and can better consider their operations in a holistic manner. One example of this was a single umbrella research permit granted, which encompassed the continuation of seven existing permits and three new research projects.

Staff resources have slightly increased and vacant positions are filled more consistently. Staff who commenced during 2016 are gaining experience and more effectively fulfilling those assessment roles over time.

#### STRENGTHENING THE PERMISSION SYSTEM

Competing workloads contributed to the section's performance in achieving its purpose for improving the permission system.

Progress depends on the development of supporting tools (for example, ecological standards and thresholds), cumulative impact management policy, environmental offsets guidelines and integrated monitoring.

### WHITSUNDAYS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Timeframes for delivery of products were achieved despite unexpected occurrences during 2016–17, including expansion of the scope review, hiring and training of new staff, and severe tropical cyclone Debbie.

The operating environment supported the delivery of the program through positive working relationships across branches of the Authority as well as through the joint Field Management Program with QPWS staff.

### FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

#### CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION

The complexity of Traditional Owner interest at Low Isles has delayed completion of the Low Isles Heritage Management Plan in relation to the Indigenous Tradition component.

#### INCIDENT RESPONSE

While the reported statistics indicate a 70 per cent increase in maritime incidents between 2015–16 and 2016–17, more than half are directly attributable to severe tropical cyclone Debbie. The most significant threats to the Great Barrier Reef remain a major ship grounding or oil spill. In the reporting period there were no major shipping incidents that resulted in harm to the Great Barrier Reef, although two near misses involving ships more than 100 metres in overall length were reported: one resulting from mechanical breakdown, one associated with human error.

#### MARINE AND ISLAND CONSERVATION

The five-yearly ecological review of the Reef Health and Impact Survey data was delayed due to other priorities such as the coral bleaching response.

#### RECREATION AND TOURISM FACILITIES

The Field Management Program's responsiveness continues to ensure that public moorings are in good order and operational. The fine-tuning of reef protection marker locations continues to raise awareness of and protect coral communities under threat from coral damage.

The Periodic Review Report prepared in 2016–17 will inform the five-year periodic review of the program's performance and its capacity to deliver future priorities.



## COMPLIANCE

Overall, dedicated compliance vessel patrol days did not meet the 740 target due to adverse weather including a cyclonic event and subsequent incident response in the last quarter of 2016–17. The number of dedicated compliance aircraft charter flights exceeded the 60-day target.

The joint discussion paper on vessel monitoring for commercial fishing vessels in Queensland has not been progressed and is no longer considered necessary given the Queensland Government's Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017.

## TOURISM MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

Work on the transition of the Reef Discovery Course to an online platform was delayed due to staff resources being required for industry response to coral bleaching and severe tropical cyclone Debbie. In May 2017, the project officer responsible was taken offline to focus on the completion of this project.

Implementation of the Reef Guide program was delayed due to competing priorities and limited

resources. As at 30 June 2017, a contract for developing the bulk of the program was being negotiated.

Due to competing priorities the Tourism Management Strategy was delayed but will be a priority for 2017–18.

## PROGRAM AREA 3: STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT

The Authority recognises that protecting the Great Barrier Reef requires local, national and international effort. It continues to work with Traditional Owners, the community, business, industry and government to influence best practice and find pragmatic solutions to achieve the primary goal of long-term protection of the Reef. By establishing ongoing and collaborative working relationships, the Authority instils a sense of collective stewardship. This approach creates a strong foundation for maintaining a balance between protecting the Reef, managing competing demands and supporting sustainable use.

### PROGRAM AREA 3: RESULTS AGAINST PERFORMANCE MEASURES

**Performance outcome:** Environmental outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef are improved through the communication and adoption of sustainable best practices

**Source:** Portfolio Budget Statements, p 232; Corporate Plan, p 14.

**Performance measure 1:** An increase in the number of participants taking part in stewardship initiatives, including high standard tourism operators, Reef Guardians, Eye on the Reef users, and forming Sea Country Indigenous partnerships

**Result:** Achieved

**Performance measure 2:** 55% of visitors to the Reef use tourism operators which have been accredited as 'high standard operators'

**Result:** Achieved

**Performance measure 3:** 70% of visitors to Reef HQ Aquarium participate in talks and tours that deliver key messages about risks to the Great Barrier Reef

**Result:** Achieved

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This outcome was achieved through the following programs, strategies and activities:

- mitigating priority threats to water quality, climate change and coastal development as identified in the Outlook Report 2014

- managing defence agencies and activities
- implementing the North East Shipping Management Plan
- developing regional Reef recovery plans
- supporting ecologically sustainable fisheries
- managing communication, education and stewardship, and Indigenous engagement through the Field Management Program
- strengthening and focusing our Indigenous partnerships and related programs
- delivering high-standard Reef education programs and experiences
- coordinating and managing Reef HQ Aquarium's business and technical operations
- managing communications that promote the Reef's values and the Authority's management of the Marine Park
- strategically managing the Authority's international obligations and engagement
- supporting best practice and stewardship through Local Marine Advisory Committees, the Reef Guardians program and other strategic engagement.

## MITIGATING PRIORITY THREATS

### WATER QUALITY PRIORITY THREATS

Significant progress was made, in partnership with the Queensland Government's Office of the Great Barrier Reef, in addressing the priority water quality threats as described in the Authority's *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*. Defining water quality objectives for all Reef waters allows relevant water quality targets to be set.

The Authority assisted Queensland's Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to finalise four healthy waterways management plans for the Fitzroy, Burdekin–Haughton–Don–Abbot Point, Mackay–Whitsunday (estuarine–marine) and East Cape York catchments. Once gazetted, all eight Great Barrier Reef catchment areas will have healthy waterway management plans that describe environmental values and associated water quality objectives required to ensure healthy aquatic ecosystems in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

The Authority's Water Quality Guidelines for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park were incorporated in the Australian Government's review of the Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality 2000.

The Authority participated in the review of the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan 2013, including: delivery of the Marine Monitoring Program, development of the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan program logic, participating in the Executive Steering Committee and the Coordination and Advisory Group.

Provision of expert advice has ensured all proposed development adjacent to and within the Marine Park takes all relevant measures to avoid, mitigate and offset all residual impacts. Some of the advice provided was used to support prosecutions for illegal developments in the catchment that could affect the health of Reef ecosystems.

The Authority responded to more than 20 external and 10 internal requests for expert advice, within specified timeframes.

### CLIMATE CHANGE PRIORITY THREATS

The Authority undertook an initial internal review of the Great Barrier Reef Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (2012–2017) and prepared a paper noting progress and suggestions for the future direction of the Authority's climate change work.

Collaboration with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and other partners on the Resilient Reefs project continued to progress well. The collaboration under the Advance Queensland Fellowship focused on reef resilience.

During the 2016–17 reporting period, the Authority provided advice and information to internal and external stakeholders on matters related to climate change implications for the Reef and principles for adaptation, including to government colleagues and into various processes and briefings. Input into various other Reef recovery initiatives and discussions is also ongoing.

### COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY THREATS

During the 2016–17 reporting period, the coastal ecosystems position statement was finalised and submitted to the Authority Board for approval. Public comment will be sought in late 2017.

Coastal ecosystems are key habitats connecting the land and sea, and the way they function can have a big impact on the long-term health of the Great Barrier Reef. The Authority has been working over the past five years to develop tools to support land managers in planning and decision-making that preserves the functions of coastal ecosystems.

The tools include hydrological connectivity maps (blue maps), which illustrate coastal processes and aquatic connectivity along the Great Barrier Reef catchment. The dataset for these maps was made live on the Queensland Government's online spatial catalogue, QSpatial, in May 2017, providing improved public access to this tool. The method for generating these maps has also been published on the Authority's website.

Another tool, the ecological process calculator, has been finalised and the methods are being trialled for adoption by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the System Experimental

Environmental Accounting. This should allow further development of the tool and linkages to ecosystem services valuations.

Work continued with the Queensland Government and other key stakeholders to identify the key services coastal ecosystems provide — to support and build the resilience of the Reef while enabling sustainable use of the Marine Park.

The Authority continues to participate in the Queensland Wetlands Program's governance group and Wetland Network. This includes working collaboratively with key stakeholders to develop a whole-of-catchment understanding to help prioritise investment.

As at 30 June 2017, vulnerability assessments for estuaries and freshwater wetlands had been completed and were available on the Authority's website. Vulnerability assessments for forested ecosystems were still being finalised.

## MANAGEMENT OF DEFENCE ACTIVITIES

The Authority maintained a strong working relationship with the Australian Department of Defence throughout the 2016–17 reporting year.

Staff provided advice to the Department of Defence on ways to avoid or minimise impacts from a number of defence operations and exercises in the Marine Park, including the joint Australian and United States training activity, Talisman Sabre. The department seeks to reinforce its awareness and understanding of the importance of operating in a World Heritage Area to visiting militaries during joint exercises.

The Authority updated the memorandum of understanding with the Department of Defence for 2016–2020. This formalises commitments to ensure ongoing communication and cooperation on the conduct of defence activities within the Marine Park.

## NORTH EAST SHIPPING MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 2016–17, the Authority continued to work with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, the Department of the Environment and Energy, and Maritime Safety Queensland to implement the North East Shipping Management Plan. The

Authority leads a number of initiatives relating to improving knowledge of impacts from shipping (wake, noise and copper leaching), remediation of impacts, and incident response.

Key engagement forums include representation on the North East Shipping Management Group and North East Water Space Management working group to oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of actions within the North East Shipping Management Plan, which is led by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

The Authority supported a Maritime Safety Queensland-led action to determine the future relevance of introducing a new vessel class for bulk carriers operating in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Support to date has involved using the Authority's advisory networks and knowledge of the Marine Park to identify areas prone to turbidity issues from vessel wake and propeller wash.

The Authority finalised the underwater noise discussion and options paper developed by its expert consultants (contributing to Action 40 of the North East Shipping Management Plan).

The Authority continues to monitor and review opportunities to facilitate research for the North East Shipping Management Plan's focus areas, and to document key learnings from reef restoration and rehabilitation activities.

The Authority normally reports against actions in the North East Shipping Management Plan through the North East Shipping Management Group, however no management group meetings were held during 2016–17.

## REGIONAL REEF RECOVERY PLANS

The proof of concept Mackay–Whitsunday–Isaac (local) Reef recovery plan reached an initial graphic design stage with the help of key stakeholders. The recovery plan was aimed at guiding managers and Reef stakeholders in implementing locally relevant actions to reduce impacts and restore, maintain and enhance the condition of habitats, species and ecosystem processes important for a healthy Great Barrier Reef.





The plan blended technical robustness with community input and provided a useful demonstration of format, content and communication style. The approach used could form a sound basis for development of Reef recovery plans in the future. The process of preparing the draft plan also helped build understanding of the resourcing support that would be required to get such a plan up and running in practice.

The Authority's work in the second half of the year to deliver critical foundational activities and strategic planning considerations led to the discontinuation of the pilot project and so a final version was not delivered.

## ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

The Authority hosted and financially supported a Queensland Seafood Industry Association-led workshop involving commercial fishing industry representatives, Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy, and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority. The workshop focused on the requirements of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* relating to the ecological sustainability of fisheries operating in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and World Heritage Area.

The Authority made a detailed submission to the Queensland Government's green paper on proposed fisheries management reform. The Queensland Government's Sustainable Fishing Strategy released in June 2017 incorporated many priorities identified in the Authority's submission, including the expanded implementation of vessel monitoring systems on commercial fishing vessels.

In 2016 the Authority became aware of the use of trawl spikes, ploughs, rippers and other similar devices that attach to trawl sleds, boards or beams in the East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery. During 2016-17, the Authority worked closely to assist Fisheries Queensland to prohibit the use of such apparatus amid concerns about the impact they could have on the seafloor in the Marine Park and the dependent fishery.

The Authority advised the Department of the Environment and Energy on ecologically sustainable management arrangements for fisheries operating in the Marine Park, including the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery, the Coral Reef Fin Fish Fishery and the East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery.

A joint meeting with Fisheries Queensland discussed and coordinated respective management actions consistent with the fisheries schedule of the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement.

The Authority continued to work cooperatively with commercial and recreational fishing industry stakeholders operating in the Marine Park. Informal discussions were held with these stakeholders to develop a position statement on fishing in the Marine Park. However the Authority decided not to actively progress its position statement on fishing in the Marine Park while the Queensland Government delivered its important Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy.

The Authority participated in the Fisheries Queensland-led Coral Reef Fin Fish Fishery Working Group, providing advice on the total allowable commercial catch of coral trout, and the Hammerhead Shark Working Group, discussing improved conservation measures for these shark species.

The Authority participated in workshops, providing expert input to Fisheries Queensland on the development of a Queensland Fisheries Monitoring and Research Plan, the revised east coast Spanish mackerel fishery stock assessment and the annual Queensland fishery stock status reporting. It also worked closely with Fisheries Queensland on a variety of fishing-related matters including consideration of the impacts of widespread coral bleaching on fisheries, reports of diseased coral trout, commercial use of live fish holding cages, the

commercial sea cucumber fishery and various permitting matters.

The Authority peer-reviewed six chapters of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation's *Status of Australian Fish Stocks Report 2016*.

Advice was provided as part of the Queensland Fisheries Research Advisory Committee to guide investment by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation in fisheries-related research.

## FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

For many Marine Park users, the public face of the Australian and Queensland governments' management of the Great Barrier Reef are the officers they meet when out using the Reef and islands in the World Heritage Area.

The joint Field Management Program recognises the important role of providing effective communication with park users. It provides contemporary, user-friendly information to assist visitors to adopt 'Reef-friendly' behaviours and follow the Marine Park rules. The Program continues to encourage and build partnerships with volunteers, conservation organisations and research institutions to assist with conservation initiatives and monitoring programs.

There has been a dedicated focus on communicating directly with recreational fishers during the reporting period, including messaging and tools that explain the penalties and environmental impacts of fishing in green zones, which have been coupled with the distribution of zoning maps.

Knowing the zoning rules and the impact of illegally poaching from green zones was also the subject of 11 media releases sent in 2016–17, resulting in approximately 66 news items and reaching a total audience of about 1.4 million.

During 2016–17 there were 1629 recorded public contacts through the Field Management reporting system.

Online training relating to marine animal stranding became available in 2016–17 and will form the baseline for assessing stranding trends over time. This training was designed

to equip volunteers with the skills they need to complete lower-risk rescues, therefore allowing field management officers to focus on other key priorities.

Of the 143 individuals who sought access to the online training, 49 per cent completed: 52 were volunteers (30 within or adjacent to the World Heritage Area), and 18 were government employees and Giringun Land and Sea Rangers. Feedback on the online training is being sought to identify new ways to increase uptake and completion rates.

Community groups, volunteers and Traditional Owners responded to 99 marine animal strandings out of 171 reports (58 per cent) requiring response in 2016–17. This level of response is consistent with a stable to increasing trend.

Traditional Owners spent 420 days on joint Field Management Program vessels, participating in management activities such as vessel patrols, island or marine management projects, Raine Island trips, incident response and site inspections.

## INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIPS

### RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

A draft Reconciliation Action Plan was submitted to Reconciliation Australia in June 2017. The plan will be finalised in 2017–18.

### COMPLIANCE PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMS

#### *Training*

During the 2016–17 reporting period, 125 Indigenous persons received compliance training: 59 participants received 'Eyes and Ears' compliance training, 12 received community compliance training, five received permit training, 24 received legislation training, and 25 participants from the Torres Strait received training.

In line with Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements, and to support new rangers, compliance training was delivered to the Gidarjil, Giringun and Gunggandji rangers within the Marine Park. Training was also delivered to the Olkola rangers in central Cape York (under the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Lands joint management arrangements). This

training fostered greater working relationships between agencies and rangers who have connection to the Great Barrier Reef.

A hunting permit workshop was conducted with the Mackay Traditional Owner Reference Group to support Traditional Owners in the greater Mackay area to consolidate hunting permission systems.

A one-day community compliance workshop was delivered to Juru Traditional Owners in Bowen to support them to better identify and report issues of non-compliance in the Cape Upstart Bay area.

The Authority co-facilitated two Certificate IV compliance workshops in the Torres Strait in partnership with the Torres Strait Regional Authority.

### ***Compliance patrols***

Thirty-one compliance patrols totalling 59 patrol days, involving Indigenous compliance officers and Indigenous rangers were undertaken. Land-based four-wheel-drive patrols were also conducted with Indigenous rangers along beaches and coastlines.

### ***Compliance plans***

Compliance management plans are in place for each of the Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement groups with the exception of Gunggandji.

### ***Incident reporting***

Reporting by Indigenous ranger groups is now captured in the Authority's compliance information management system, improving Indigenous ranger and community reporting processes.

Many matters reported about Indigenous activity in the Marine Park are incorrectly reported as illegal activity. In many instances the activity is a legitimate expression of rights under the *Native Title Act 1992*. To acknowledge legitimate Traditional Owner use of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and to properly reflect offence statistics, the compliance information management system now captures Indigenous activity reported within the Marine Park. This allows for legitimate use of the Marine Park by Traditional Owners to occur without public reports automatically being deemed possible

offences. The change allows offence statistics about illegal Indigenous use to be properly recorded.

### ***Indigenous Ranger Compliance Enhancement Project***

The Indigenous Ranger Compliance Enhancement Project was delivered in accordance with a memorandum of understanding with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. This two-year intensive program providing dedicated training and mentoring to Indigenous rangers is specifically tailored for compliance and enforcement activities. This program is a key Government election commitment under the Specialised Indigenous Ranger program, a component of the Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan.

As part of the initiative 26 participants completed a Certificate IV in Government Investigations (Regulatory Compliance) with legislation training allowing the group to be appointed as Marine Park inspectors. The Authority employed four Indigenous compliance officers in 2016–17.

The Authority supports participants in maintaining this qualification through the workplace competency log books and ongoing participation in compliance training and activities.

## **TRADITIONAL OWNER ENGAGEMENT**

The Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee comprises a Chair and 12 members (including 10 Traditional Owners), who have extensive experience and involvement in land and sea country matters. Committee members have been appointed for the period 18 March 2015 to 30 June 2018. The committee provides the Authority with considered advice on matters referred to it involving Authority policies and strategies to improve the overall health of the Reef and address the involvement of Traditional Owners in Marine Park management.

In the two meetings convened in 2016–17, the committee provided the Authority with invaluable information which has led to collaboration with Traditional Owners through projects such as the Indigenous Heritage Values Guidelines and the Reef 2050 Plan.



*The Lama Lama junior rangers learn about the use of drones in the Marine Park*

#### TRADITIONAL USE OF MARINE RESOURCES AGREEMENT

As at 30 June 2017, eight Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements were accredited and being implemented within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, covering nearly 25 per cent of the coastline.

Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement development contracts were negotiated with two Traditional Owner groups: Mandubarra (Innisfail area) and Hopevale.

Most Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement groups meet their contract deliverables, with some exceptions as a result of internal governance or administration matters. Some contract adjustments have also been negotiated.

The Gidarjil Development Corporation Ltd has submitted a renewal application for the Port Curtis Coral Coast Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement.

Wuthathi Aboriginal Corporation has requested an extension to the submission date of its new Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement to mid-2019.

Girringun Aboriginal Corporation has requested and been granted an extension to the submission date of its new Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement to mid-2017 to continue negotiations toward agreement on hunting protocols in the group's sea country.

#### INDIGENOUS HERITAGE STRATEGY

The Authority undertook extensive engagement with Indigenous groups throughout the Great Barrier Reef to obtain input for the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy*. This included seven workshops involving more than 20 Traditional Owner groups and 80 individuals across all Great Barrier Reef regions. Drafting of the strategy has commenced.

Protocols for managing culturally sensitive information and data sharing agreements are being developed under the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program. The outcomes of this project will support implementation of the Indigenous Heritage Strategy.

The Authority has contracted a consortium of Indigenous, legal and data management experts led by Markwell and Associates to assist with this project.

#### ADVICE ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Significant resources were invested to provide advice to the Authority's review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management. This included coordination of two on-country site visits with Ngaro Traditional Owners as part of the consultation process.

#### INFORMATION SHARING AND PARTNERSHIPS

The contract for an independent review of the Land and Sea Country Partnerships Program was awarded during the reporting period. The review will determine the strengths and weaknesses of the current program and provide advice on improvements to increase the benefits to Traditional Owner groups and management of the Marine Parks.

Further development of the Cultural Knowledge Management System occurred to allow appropriate collection, storage and use of information from Traditional Owners and engagement by Authority staff with Traditional Owners. The Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program will progress protocols with four groups regarding storage and use of information.

All Reef 2050 Plan actions that specifically included Traditional Owner aspirations or other actions that involve or are being delivered

by Indigenous groups were reviewed and mapped by Authority staff in partnership with Commonwealth and state government colleagues. This identified areas for alignment, strengthening and possible duplication (between actions). This information will be considered in any review of the Reef 2050 Plan.

Reporting and financial management under the Land and Sea Country Partnerships Program has been completed in accordance with the memorandum of understanding with the Department of the Environment and Energy.

Annual reporting against Reef 2050 Plan actions was completed, with a large number of actions being delivered through the Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement program.

## REEF HQ AQUARIUM

Reef HQ Aquarium is the national education centre of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Its Reef education programs and experiences provide opportunities for people to learn how they can help to protect and conserve the Reef. Through presenting world-class living exhibits, complemented by thematic and interactive educational experiences, Reef HQ Aquarium ensures that 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.

### REEF EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND EXPERIENCES

#### *Aquarium visitors*

Reef HQ Aquarium welcomed 142,610 visitors during 2016–17, a 5.3 per cent increase in visitation. Of the total visitors during the reporting period, more than 70 per cent participated in the aquarium’s talks and tours that deliver key messages about risks to the Reef.

Reef HQ Aquarium uses an electronic survey tool to gauge guest satisfaction, thoughts and options. In 2016–17, 1642 guests responded to this visitor survey, with positive feedback including:

- 86 per cent of respondents rated their overall aquarium experience as good or very good
- 74 per cent of respondents rated their talk as good or very good

- 73 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had an improved understanding of Reef issues because of their visit to the aquarium
- 72 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had a better understanding of how they can help the Reef because of their visit to the aquarium
- 76 per cent of respondents indicated they thought the aquarium’s living exhibitions were good or very good.

#### *Reef education programs*

Participation in formal education programs increased by 19.75 per cent to 9969 students:

- day programs: 5242 students, an achievement that exceeded the target by 39 per cent
- Reef sleeps: 430 students
- EduTourism: 257 students, exceeding the target by 22 per cent
- Videoconferences: 4040 students, an outcome that more than doubled the annual target.



*Reef HQ welcomed 142,610 visitors in 2016– 17*

In addition to being recognised by Ecotourism Australia for its commitment to quality and environmental responsibility, while maintaining a triple-tier ECO Certification (Advanced Ecotourism, Climate Action Business and Respecting Our Culture certification), Reef HQ Aquarium this year received accreditation from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council. The Council is an independent body that establishes and manages global standards for sustainability in travel and tourism with the aim of increasing sustainable tourism knowledge and practices. Reef HQ Aquarium rounded out the year with a 2017 Certificate of Excellence from TripAdvisor.

The EduTourism program continued to be an area with opportunities for growth. Three new programs were facilitated at Reef HQ Aquarium this year and the trend of new clients and programs is expected to continue in 2017–18.

The aquarium’s videoconferencing program also continues to grow, providing virtual outreach to nearly every corner of the globe. Used as an educational tool, the Reef videoconferencing is cutting-edge technology that enables a living reef to be virtually projected into classrooms around the world, with live sessions delivered by a marine biologist from the aquarium. The interactive program also enables students to learn firsthand about issues affecting the Reef.

In 2016–17, 90 Reef videoconferences were delivered to 4040 students around Australia and the world, including the United States, Canada, Korea and the United Arab Emirates. In recognition of its high-quality content and delivery, the outreach education program received a Pinnacle Award from the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration in the United States, the 9th consecutive Pinnacle Award for the aquarium.

Reef HQ Aquarium continues to take a lead role in an initiative to position Townsville and the North Queensland region as a destination of excellence for faculty-led study-abroad teaching and learning. During 2016–17, the aquarium helped deliver specialised study-abroad programs to 257 students from American universities and Japanese super science high schools. This involved providing students with specialist presentations about the Marine Park and its inhabitants, as well as a number that included in-water training on the rapid reef health indicator survey methodology, using the aquarium’s 2.5 million-litre coral reef exhibition.

Of the approximately 40 educators surveyed about the relevance of Reef HQ Aquarium’s education programs, 83 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that their Reef education program was highly beneficial and met their teaching and learning needs.

Reef HQ Aquarium has strong links to the community and continues to support a volunteer program that has contributed more than 406,000 hours since being established in 1987. This contribution has added a value of more than \$7.4 million in supporting the delivery of programs, talks and tours. During 2016–17,



*Around 10,000 students participated in formal education programs*

29 new volunteers were recruited and trained, with the program contributing 12,786 hours.

The aquarium's membership program continues to benefit from effective marketing and public relations activities in 2016–17. As at 30 June 2017, the aquarium had 14,275 financial members, across 4383 financial memberships. Reef HQ Aquarium also has an active social media presence that supports the delivery of key reef messages and education.

Reef HQ Aquarium's turtle hospital continued to play a key role in raising community awareness about threatened species and encouraging behavioural change that will benefit these animals. It promotes the C.A.R.E (Conserve. Act. Rehabilitate. Educate) philosophy. More than 30,840 people participated in the turtle hospital tour during 2016–2017, taking the total number of participants since the hospital opened in 2009 to 213,517.

As at 30 June 2017, the hospital had four turtles in care. Since the hospital opened, 221 marine turtles have received care, with a total of 91 turtles rehabilitated and released.

Reef HQ Aquarium celebrated its 30th birthday on 24 June 2017. A very successful community day event was held with almost 1900 guests attending.

Aquarium staff also conducted a successful turtle hospital community release of a rare hybrid turtle, with more than 800 people in attendance. This event provided a great opportunity for people of all ages to learn about turtle conservation and the work of the turtle hospital.

The birth of our leopard shark pup Cleo generated significant media interest both nationally and internationally.

Rarely documented in captivity, a female leopard shark, Leonie, within the glass walls of the aquarium, produced pups without a father. Leonie had previously produced sexual offspring but was separated from her mate over two years ago. Reef HQ Aquarium welcomed babies Cleo, CeCe and Gemini. Genetic testing of Cleo showed conclusively that she was the parthenogenic offspring of Leonie. There are only a few recorded examples of 'virgin births' in captivity in the world. Within leopard



*Sick and injured turtles are cared for at Reef HQ Aquarium's turtle hospital*

sharks, this process means that the mother can give birth to only female offspring. Reef HQ Aquarium waited until early 2017 to release this story to monitor the health of both Cleo and mum Leonie to ensure both were doing well.

Reef HQ Aquarium installed new 'marine-friendly' carpet flooring throughout the facility. The carpet tiles selected were 100 per cent recycled, with some of the material coming from discarded ghost fishing nets. The carpet supplier also offers a full lifecycle certification of their products — including manufacturing, transport to end of use disposal. At the end of their life the company accepts the tiles back to be recycled again.

## TECHNICAL OPERATIONS

### **Energy consumption**

The Aquarium continues to be recognised as a Climate Action Business, leading the way through targeted and innovative infrastructure investment. A key achievement has been the full payback (during 2016–17) of all sustainability measures that led to the reduction in energy consumption.

The Aquarium's energy consumption continues to measure at 50 per cent less than the 2005–06 baseline, when energy saving retrofit actions began. During 2016–17, the aquarium used 1187 megawatt-hours of electricity from the grid. The aquarium's solar power station produced 321 megawatt-hours, offsetting total energy consumption by 20 per cent.

### **Research projects**

Mutually beneficial research partnerships and projects are established, delivered and well documented. Among the research was a collaboration with the University of Queensland to document the first shark recorded to change from sexual to asexual reproduction. While sharks could reproduce without a mating partner, none with a recorded sexual mating history had ever made the change to asexual reproduction.

## COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT

The communications, parliamentary and engagement section supports the Authority's core objectives by providing strategic

communication advice and planning, and liaising with the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy and the Minister's office. The section is responsible for event management, media and issues management, digital communication, producing key publications, and internal communication activities. The team also includes engagement professionals who are based in our regional offices in Cairns, Mackay and Rockhampton and work closely with stakeholders.

## PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES

The Minister for the Environment and Energy and the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy are key stakeholders. The Authority maintains strong relationships with each by providing formal briefings, responses to correspondence, and advice on the management and protection of the Great Barrier Reef.

During 2016–17, the Authority prepared 31 briefs and submissions for the Minister on a variety of issues. Topics included the review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management, Marine Park issues, crown-of-thorns starfish and amendments to the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* and Regulations. The Authority provided draft responses for 14 letters to the Minister from people interested in the status, health and protection of the Reef.

The Authority works with the department and regularly contributes to portfolio responses, questions on notice and related matters. In 2016–17, the Authority provided responses to 36 questions on notice, with topics including climate change, coral bleaching, the shark control program and the Great Barrier Reef Summit. The Authority contributed to 230 coordination requests from the department, including responses to requests from other government departments for input.

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

A corporate communication strategy provides a high-level framework on the key activities, audiences, tools and channels used by the organisation to communicate about Reef health and management.

Specific communication plans for major programs and activities fall under the overarching corporate communications plan.



These specific plans outline the objectives, audiences, channels and tactics, to ensure the communication team's efforts are coordinated and strategic in supporting the Authority's work.

In implementing these strategies, the Authority works collaboratively with communication and engagement professionals from other government, industry and community organisations to promote consistency of messaging and leverage its reach to broader audiences. For example, we collaborated closely with Tourism and Events Queensland to share social media posts and messaging to facilitate consistent messages about the state of the Reef – in the wake of back-to-back bleaching events and a severe cyclone – to overseas audiences.

We work with organisations such as the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and the Australian Institute of Marine Science to provide national and regional media with newsworthy stories and spokespeople to promote positive management activities to protect the Great Barrier Reef.

## MARKET RESEARCH

In 2016 the Authority embarked on a repositioning project that included a phased approach:

- Phase 1: research to inform where we are now, where we should be and how to get there (complete and final report developed by 30 June 2017)
- Phase 2: developing a communication and engagement strategy including a refreshed brand and style guide (to commence next financial year)
- Phase 3: phased implementation (to commence next financial year).

As part of the first phase of the project, the Authority engaged market research consultants Pollinate to undertake research on current attitudes towards the Reef and its management and provide recommendations on how the organisation can strengthen its communication, engagement and position.

This comprehensive research — commissioned through a competitive procurement process — involved a range of internal and external stakeholders and was well-received by staff.

Pollinate's final report on the project included the results on qualitative (focus groups and in-depth interviews) and quantitative research (an online survey of 1200 members of the public and almost 400 stakeholders).

It identified a number of recurring themes, segmented our audience, and provided actionable recommendations on branding, voice, position, and stakeholder engagement.

The information will be used to develop a new communication and engagement strategy for the organisation.

As part of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, market research was also undertaken to understand how Traditional Owners, partners and stakeholders use Reef-related information to inform and support adaptive management decisions on a strategic and operational level.

From February to June 2017, qualitative and quantitative research was undertaken by external consultancy Enhance Research. A total of 38 in-depth interviews were conducted as well as three focus groups. The focus groups were held with representatives from regional report card working groups, and the Authority's senior management, and with the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee. In June 2017, an online survey consisting of quantitative and qualitative questions was sent to more than 500 stakeholders and a total of 160 responses were received.

The results will be used to guide the development of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting program to ensure they meet the needs of our stakeholders. Results will also assist in addressing any critical information gaps. The final report for this project, including recommendations, is scheduled for delivery next financial year.

## KEY PUBLICATIONS

The Authority's publications team continued to deliver targeted published materials, including zoning maps, the corporate plan and the annual report. The team also delivered various Reef Guardian publications for councils and schools and provided publication support to the Whitsundays Plan of Management team.

Advertisements, display materials, posters, flyers, stickers and other merchandising material were developed to trial a compliance campaign in the Cairns area, targeting illegal fishers. The results of this trial are being analysed with a view to rolling out similar campaigns in other identified non-compliance hotspots along the Great Barrier Reef catchment.

### DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Online channels are key channels for the Authority to reach a geographically dispersed audience interested in the health and management of the Reef. The Authority has five active channels — Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube — with a combined total following of more than 60,000 users, in addition to our website (more than 500,000 visits each year) and e-newsletters.

A more clearly defined approach to digital communications took place in 2016–17, with a new digital communications strategy outlining key activities for online channels and engagement. This strategy outlined how the Authority would improve the use of the existing website and social media channels and outlined broader principles for online communication. It was based on research about the Authority's channels as well as general research on social media best practice and included qualitative and quantitative goals along with an evaluation plan.

Among the goals:

- revised approach to content on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn — an emphasis on a consistent voice, understanding our audience and producing engaging content
- new-look *Reef in Brief* e-newsletter and niche e-newsletters
- continuing transitioning to 'digital first' to keep abreast of best practice and user expectations — first considering online presentation and access to information, instead of traditional channels.

Overall, the strategy for social media was successful in bringing greater cohesion and consistency to the channels, which was reflected in the level of growth and engagement.

Aspects of the website development did not progress due to resourcing issues. A full evaluation of the strategy will be undertaken before developing the 2017–18 strategy.

Diversified e-newsletters were also rolled out, with the Authority now distributing three:

- *Reef in Brief* — more than 2170 subscribers receive the Authority's primary stakeholder e-newsletter that summarises hot topics, key work being done and programs and achievements. In 2016–17, 11 editions were distributed.
- *Tracking Trends* — provides updates on the marine component of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program to more than 550 subscribers. Four editions were distributed in 2016–17.
- *From the Deck* — shares the latest news, training opportunities and profiles for tourism operators in the Marine Park working towards a sustainable commercial Reef tourism industry. It has more than 400 subscribers. Two editions were distributed in 2016–17.

### MEDIA AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Media interest in the future of the Great Barrier Reef and its management remained high in 2016–17, particularly during the second consecutive year of coral bleaching.

During the past 12 months, the Authority distributed 78 news releases and alerts to local, state and national media. Topics covered extensively included drones being used by Indigenous rangers, compliance and illegal fishing, and Reef health.

Among the most successful media activities was a proactive press conference with the Australian Institute of Marine Science in early 2017 to formally announce a second consecutive year of coral bleaching. It resulted in more than 70 news articles in a range of national and international media, along with considerable online engagement on Twitter. The press conference was cross-promoted on social media, including via a Facebook Live broadcast.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION UNIT

The public information unit provides information services to the Authority, the public and stakeholders through publications, responses to email and phone enquiries and receiving visitors at its head office.

In 2016–17, the public information unit answered 12,748 phone calls. The most common enquiries were requests for zoning maps, information on Marine Park permits and visiting the Reef.

Some 4380 emails were received, covering a range of topics — most commonly these included requests for zoning maps, and enquiries about coral bleaching and health of the Reef. A high number of these emails were from students; however, there was also considerable interest from the general public, which included ideas about how to protect the Reef. More than 3550 customers presented to the front office counter at Townsville headquarters.

The Authority distributed 80,223 zoning maps and tools to help Marine Park users comply with zoning rules and permitted activities. These were supplied to recreational users and community access points — a network of marine outlets and visitor information centres along the central and north Queensland coast.

The most requested maps covered the Cairns, Innisfail, Townsville and Whitsunday regions. The most requested Reef management publications were the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014* and publications around the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan and Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community engagement and education via event attendance enables the Authority to share information about Reef health, management and zoning, and engage with people interested in the Reef. Events at which the Authority had a booth or presence included:

- Malaysia Dive Industry Expo
- Love the Reef — Community Day — Cairns
- National Tree Planting Day Mackay

- Whitsunday Reef Festival Family Day
- Village Festival — Too Lovely to Litter
- Whitsunday LMAC Nature Forum
- Take a Kid Fishing Day — Mackay
- Tight Lines Fishing Competition — Yeppoon
- Five Rock Beach Clean-up
- Kurrimine Beach Fishing Competition
- Conway Beach Coastal Activity
- Coast Care Mackay — School Holiday Event
- Moranbah Home Show
- Capricorn Film Festival
- Global Eco Asia-Pacific Tourism Conference
- MWI Climate Sustainability Plan launch
- Mackay Botanical Gardens Wetlands day
- Boyne Tannum Hook-Up
- Australian Tourism Exchange
- Cairns Ecofiesta
- Ecofest — Rockhampton
- Walking to the Lighthouse
- Whitsunday Boat Show
- Seaforth Community Day

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Authority established a framework for internal communication, which identifies key strategies and includes actions to facilitate consistent and accurate information flow across the workplace.

These include the production of an internal e-newsletter, with 23 editions distributed in 2016–17. This newsletter focuses on providing updates from the executive and information for staff relevant to their work. The internal seminar series continued as a popular forum to share knowledge and information about the Authority's work managing the Reef. Nineteen internal seminars took place, covering a range of topics. This included presentations from three external presenters on the QPWS moorings project, a guest presentation on Indigenous astronomy and a presentation on the Queensland Government Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017–2027.

## INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

### INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND CORPORATE COMMITMENTS

The Authority contributed to major international networks focused on coral reefs and marine protected area management, including through its founding membership of the International Coral Reef Initiative. Authority representatives attended the International Coral Reef Initiative's 31st General Meeting and provided a presentation on its response to the 2016 coral bleaching event on the Great Barrier Reef. Representatives helped develop the France–Madagascar Secretariat Action Plan 2016–2018, which was endorsed by all members of the International Coral Reef Initiative.

Strong international interest in the work of the Authority continued during 2016–17. The Authority hosted 13 delegations seeking to build capacity and deepen their understanding of coral reefs and associated ecosystems, with particular interest in: ecosystems-based adaptive management approaches, zoning and spatial planning approaches, sustainable fisheries management, stewardship, tourism management, the Authority's Reef Health Incident Response framework, and the crown-of-thorns control program.

Authority staff attended the quadrennial International Union for Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress, Planet at the Crossroads, held in Hawaii during September 2016 and presented on the Reef 2050 Implementation Plan.

The Authority led a visit to the Reef offshore Cairns for 75 Canberra-based ambassadors and High Commissioners participating in a Diplomatic Corps event during May 2017. The visit was jointly hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop MP and the Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Senator the Hon. Concetta Fierravanti-Wells. The diplomats had the opportunity, many for the first time, to experience the beauty of the Reef firsthand and to learn about the work being done to protect the Reef as well as the science behind it.

The diplomats, who collectively represented more than two-thirds of the world's population,

were briefed by Authority staff together with partners from the Australian Institute of Marine Science, the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, and the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators.

### WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION OBLIGATIONS

In August 2016, the Chairman represented the Authority at the Third United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Marine Managers Conference, Navigating the Future, in the Galapagos Islands.

Conference objectives included building capacity for site management, facilitating cooperation between marine world heritage sites and promoting the world heritage 'brand'. Managers from 41 sites attended. Workshop sessions included climate change, unsustainable fisheries, fundraising, communication and planning. There was a strong theme of enhancing communication between sites and public promotion of world heritage status, and the world heritage component of UNESCO. Coral bleaching was raised in a number of sessions as a risk to coral health in more than 10 sites.

*The Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* (Reef 2050 Plan) responds to the World Heritage Committee's recommendation that Australia develop a long-term plan for sustainable development to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the Reef.

In 2015 the Reef 2050 Plan was unanimously endorsed by the World Heritage Committee at its 39<sup>th</sup> Session in Bonn, Germany. In decision 39 COM 7B.7, the Committee requested Australia 'Submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2016, an update on progress with implementation of the 2050 LTSP to confirm that the inception of the plan has been effective, and the Investment Strategy has been established, for examination by the World Heritage Centre and IUCN'.

The progress update reflects the first 18 months of a 35-year plan, and is not a report on the state of conservation of the Reef. Rather, it responds to the Committee's specific request and demonstrates the effective inception of the Reef 2050 Plan that builds on the management foundations laid over the past 40 years.

## LOCAL MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

There are 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees, which meet five times a year. An Authority Director is assigned to each committee and attends the meetings.

For a second year, many of the March 2017 Local Marine Advisory Committee meetings were held in conjunction with the Reef Guardian Networking meetings held in the regions. These meetings allowed for networking of the participants in the Reef Guardian Schools and Reef Guardian Councils programs, Local Marine Advisory Committee members as well as key stakeholders.

Some of the Local Marine Advisory Committee meetings were held in conjunction with a community information presentation on coral bleaching.

Each Local Marine Advisory Committee has project funding of up to \$2000 for local community activities and events. Some Local Marine Advisory Committees use all of the money for one project; other Local Marine Advisory Committees have multiple projects using smaller amounts.

All of the projects had been identified by the end of November 2016 and many of the activities were completed before May 2017.



Some of the initiatives that the Local Marine Advisory Committees' project funds were used for include:

Bowen-Burdekin	Had a stall at the Bowen Lighthouse celebration to raise awareness of sustainable practices when reef walking and promote the local committee. This event coincided with a low tide, allowing people to walk to the lighthouse and back to the mainland.
Burnett	Purchased fish tags to allow the Bundaberg Sports Fishing Club to continue with their project.
Cairns	Supported Cairns and Far North Environment Centre Mangrove Watch Program to purchase kit to undertake community monitoring.
Cape York	Video training provided to secondary school students to help them undertake a video project about how the Reef has changed since Captain Cook arrived and what the community is doing to help the reef.
Capricorn Coast	Supported the development of an app that will link with the Australian Marine Debris Initiative database and allow citizens to upload marine debris information to the organisation.
Cassowary Coast	Supported a Seabed Watch Project to monitor change since the removal of inshore trawling in the area. The local committee has supported this long-term project for several years.
Douglas	Advertising and editorial in local media to promote sustainable netting practices.
Gladstone	Developed and produced a video that promotes the local committee and the projects that it has been associated with.
Hinchinbrook	Reprinted and revised a 'Marine Wonders of Hinchinbrook' booklet that showcases the region.

Mackay	Provided fishing gear (rods, reels, tackle) for the Mackay Recreational Fishing Alliance to use as part of its Angler Education Program.
Townsville	Supported the engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from remote areas of Palm Island and Cape York communities in career pathways through field science.
Whitsunday	Purchased reusable bags that can be given to community members to promote recycling and reduce reliance on single-use plastic bags.

## REEF GUARDIANS

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



*The artwork Bulmba Maminga (love and care for the country) by artist Zane Saunders is displayed at the Kuranda visitors centre*

Program highlights for 2016–17 include:

- Finalised the completion and installation of artworks created by 13 councils with support from the Australian Government’s Reef Trust. This element of the project

was aimed at raising awareness in the local community and empowering people to expand their efforts to stop marine debris at its source

- Empowered 23 Reef Guardians, High Standard Tourism operators and representatives from Local Marine Advisory committees to influence community stewardship through a day of training in ‘Communicating with influence’. Feedback revealed all participants:
  - \* had increased motivation to protect the Reef
  - \* learnt skills that would help them be more effective Reef Stewards
  - \* intended to do something new or different to help the Reef
  - \* felt empowered to share their knowledge and encourage others to protect the Reef
- Each of the Authority’s regional offices has a portable refill water station available for loan by schools and community; continuing our education about reducing single use plastic bottles.

## STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

In the 2016–17 reporting period, the Authority strengthened stewardship opportunities between Reef Guardian Schools and Reef Guardian Councils through collaborations and combined events including Reef Guardian Networking Meetings, Future Leaders Eco Challenges and working group meetings.

Internal and external consultation identified opportunities and issues for integrating activities — across the Reef Guardian sub-programs and more broadly across the Authority — that promote and enable community stewardship of the Reef.

A model for integrating the Reef Guardian sub-programs and some other stewardship activities was developed.

The use of four common stewardship principles — learn, care, act and share — was phased into the planning and evaluation of some activities.

### REEF GUARDIAN COUNCILS

The Reef Guardian Council program has 17 active councils covering more than 60 per cent of the Great Barrier Reef catchment area.

The Authority facilitated ongoing engagement with council officers by hosting two working group meetings: one face-to-face and one by videoconference to four regional locations. The council mayors (or their representatives) also met to workshop Reef Guardian Council ideas at a steering committee meeting hosted by the Authority.

To enhance engagement with Reef Guardian Councils the Authority undertook a number of Reef Guardian briefings to council meetings; this activity reconfirmed commitment to the program and provided a number of networking opportunities.

The Authority helped the councils develop annual action plans and produce a highlights report, which covered Reef-friendly activities undertaken by each council. Council implementation of the action plans is a strong demonstration of Reef conservation to their communities.

### REEF GUARDIAN FARMERS AND GRAZIERS

As at 30 June 2017, there were 33 Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers between Cairns and Gladstone, spanning the sugar, horticulture and beef industries. These farmers continue to be role models and leaders in their communities and industries. Some are members of Local Marine Advisory Committees and attend Reef Guardian Schools networking meetings. They also host international and other visitors to the Great Barrier Reef catchment to gain insight into the Authority's Reef management programs.

### REEF GUARDIAN FISHERS

The Reef Guardian Fishers program now includes 22 fishing operations, one a major sea cucumber collector. The range of commercial fishing operations occurring in the Marine Park is now well covered. In 2016–17, two fishing operations left the program (a) dissatisfied with

progress in reform of Queensland's fisheries; and (b) no longer actively involved in fishing.

Reef Guardian fishers have been willingly trialling vessel monitoring system equipment in collaboration with the Field Management Program and continue to foster best practice across the range of fisheries.

Focused activity with respect to recreational fishing included progress in the Rockhampton and Mackay net-free areas. Recreational fishing tourism strategies that are developing in the areas have a strong stewardship focus and a 'sign on' pledge to adhere to a code of conduct is in development with Rockhampton Council — a Reef Guardian council. Consistent monitoring by recreational fishers using a tag and release method is progressing across the three net-free areas under the leadership of Infofish, which reports on current catch and effort information. This monitoring data provides managers and fishers with information on fish stock levels and informs modelling in these areas. Infofish have developed a 'Track my fish' app that provides near real-time catch and effort information as well as providing instantaneous feedback to users. In June, the Authority and Infofish participated in a workshop facilitated by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries assessment and monitoring team. The workshop objective was to evaluate the potential of the app being expanded and integrated with the existing Department of Agriculture and Fisheries app. The Authority is involved in this project in an advisory role. The aim is to expand regional monitoring along the



*Reef Guardian students participate in Marine Park zoning games, as part of the 2016 Future Leaders Eco-Challenge*

Reef coast on a wider range of key recreational species yet to be agreed, and to provide capacity for near real-time feedback to build on the stewardship initiatives and strategies developing in the Rockhampton and Mackay net-free areas. This level of recreational fishing information is recognised as a gap in Reef 2050 Plan monitoring.

### REEF GUARDIAN SCHOOLS

As at 30 June 2017, 127,863 students and 7896 teachers across 300 schools were actively participating in Reef stewardship in Queensland.

There were 14 Future Leaders Eco Challenges across the Great Barrier Reef catchment. There were 880 participants, including 96 schools and 84 partner representatives.

At the 14 Reef Guardian Networking meetings held across the Reef catchment, there were 473 participants including 114 schools, 13 Reef Guardian Councils with 33 representatives and 241 partner representatives.

Reef Guardian Schools and Reef Guardian Councils developed a closer, more integrated delivery of the Reef Guardian Networking meetings in 2017. This has enabled both programs to enhance relationships and work collaboratively on projects, activities and events.

Twenty Ripples of Change grants were delivered in 2017, with several projects being showcased on television and print media. With the four-year approval for this grants program concluding this year, a new proposal for Reef Guardian grants from 2017 to 2021 is underway.

Reef Guardian Schools education resources have been updated to include a new education poster, the four pillars of Reef guardianship poster and a Reef Guardian Schools showcase poster. The Authority's education resources webpage has been updated with options to sort by theme, Reef Beat education series and by grade.

Reef Guardian Schools is continuing to deliver and encourage the marine debris messages through drain stencilling activities, source reduction workshops, beach and river clean-ups and the loan of a portable refill station to reduce single-use plastic water bottles at schools and community events.

### STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

Many of the stakeholder engagement activities are reported under Reef Guardians and regional engagement. They all contribute to the Authority's strategic engagement with the community and are part of the critical operational support for the Reef Resilience project, funded by the Australian Government Reef Program. Project milestones for the Reef Program memorandum of understanding were satisfactorily managed in 2016–17.

Strategic engagement activities used to promote the agency's work, focused on:

- sharing knowledge
- encouraging leadership and innovation
- facilitating improved compliance with legislation, zoning, policy and permits
- creating and maintaining partnerships

*Table 11: Strategic engagement activities*

EVENT TYPE	NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Consultation	10	93
Event	64	9,447
Meeting	192	3,191
Presentation	58	3,912
Training	5	65
Workshop	38	937
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>17,645</b>



Table 12: Community engagement activities and participants

EVENT TYPE	NUMBER OF RELEVANT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Strategic engagement (whole of agency relevance)	119	7861
Reef Guardian Schools	111	6822
Reef Guardian Councils	28	908
Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers	3	52
Reef Guardian Fishers and recreational fishing	44	1943
Marine debris	24	1007
Community access points (for zoning information)	13	452
Local Marine Advisory Committees	75	1411
Eye on the Reef	25	622
Tourism stewardship	28	3985
High Standard Tourism Operators	14	3833
Crown-of-thorns starfish control	17	372

*\*Many events contribute to multiple projects, hence sum of data from individual projects is greater than annual total number of events*

- developing community capacity to support the Authority.

Staff from the Tourism and Stewardship section were involved in 367 community and stakeholder engagement activities across the Great Barrier Reef region. Over 17,600 participants were engaged in activities to raise awareness about the health of the Great Barrier Reef and encourage community participation in stewardship of the Reef.

A more consistent approach to data collection from engagement activities across programs has enabled improved evaluation of efforts to strengthen long-term engagement. Monitoring, evaluation and communication of Tourism and Stewardship projects continues to be improved through the use of an events calendar and communications plan.

Community Access Points are ‘shop fronts’ throughout the Great Barrier Reef catchment

— such as local bait and tackle shops, service stations — where community members can collect information such as zoning maps, guides explaining zoning and responsible Reef practices. They are a key mechanism for getting information to Reef users. Community Access Points are contacted each year by the Authority’s staff at least twice by phone and generally at least once face-to-face. Servicing Community Access Points involves replenishing stock of zoning maps and guides, answering common enquiries being received at these locations and exchanging information on local and Reef-wide management issues such as coral bleaching. Local compliance issues and concerns raised have been relayed to the Authority’s Field Management compliance unit. This locally-specific, two-way communication of current information assists with targeting messaging and compliance education.

### CITIZENS OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

As part of the government's 2016 election commitments \$1.3 million was allocated for the Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef.

The Authority is managing the contribution which includes \$1 million to implement a digital campaign promoting the Great Barrier Reef, and \$300,000 to support creation of a public artwork feature on the Cairns Esplanade.

The initiative includes the development of a digital portal and associated collateral to empower people to become 'citizens' of the Great Barrier Reef. The project has been established and the implementation plan will be delivered over the next financial year.

Key deliverables:

- A digital portal to showcase Great Barrier Reef education programs, tourism resources, benefits and enable people to apply for membership
- A program to raise funds to assist with management, research and volunteer programs that support the conservation of the Great Barrier Reef.
- Artwork project – part of \$1.1 million development on the Cairns foreshore with contributions from Cairns Regional Council, Arts Queensland and Commonwealth Games Australia.

## PROGRAM AREA 3: ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST PURPOSE

### MITIGATING PRIORITY THREATS

#### WATER QUALITY PRIORITY THREATS

Cross-agency support and delivery from the Reef Recovery, Reef 2050 and Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program groups contributed to the success of this activity.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE PRIORITY THREATS

Limited resources contributed to reduced progress on climate change work overall, however, deliverables met expectations.

### NORTH EAST SHIPPING MANAGEMENT PLAN

As a result of resource constraints and competing priorities there has been a reduced capacity within the Authority during 2016–2017 to deliver specific actions. The future role of the Authority against actions identified in the North East Shipping Management Plan needs to be further considered.

### REGIONAL REEF RECOVERY PLANS

Few internal resources were available to assist the pilot plan project this year. Additionally, the operational review involves a prioritisation process for the Authority under which the Reef recovery plan project has been given low priority.

The pilot plan and any future Reef recovery plans contribute to the Reef 2050 Plan action EHA13: Identify and prioritise key sites of high ecological value and implement recovery programs (Reef Recovery Plans) under the Reef 2050 Plan:

- EHA13 is not included in the 'Key areas for implementation' in the 2016 Reef 2050 Plan — Annual Report and Implementation Strategy.
- the addendum document gives action EHA13's priority as 'Medium (June 2018)' (determined by the Independent Expert Panel / Reef Advisory Committee and intended to mean work starts in 2018).

It is unlikely that progress on the Reef recovery plan concept will be able to be reinvigorated until after mid-2019, given the resourcing requirements of the Authority's other work, including the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program and the Outlook Report 2019.

### ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

The unprecedented coral bleaching events in the Great Barrier Reef required internal staff transfers and meant that only a single full-time-equivalent position worked on fishing-related matters for most of the year.

There was limited ability to directly address very high and high fishing-related risks described in the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*.

Opportunities to address these risks will be considerably heightened in coming years under the Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy.

## FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The program continues to work with Traditional Owners and Indigenous ranger groups to increase collaborative field management of the World Heritage Area.

While the 305 days spent on Field Management vessels is a decline from 348 days in 2014–15, it is higher than the 143 days recorded in 2013–14.

The field reporting system is only being used to record the number of days Traditional Owners spend on joint Field Management Program vessels. For this reporting period the number of days related to other non-marine engagement activities is not being captured. The field reporting system is capable of fully capturing data relating to this performance indicator but at present is only being used in a limited capacity for activities not directly related to program vessels.

## INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIPS

A draft *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy* has been developed and will be finalised in 2018–19. This strategy sets out how the Authority will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to care for their culture and heritage in the Marine Park.

## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The Reconciliation Action Plan will be finalised in 2017–18.

## COMPLIANCE PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMS

During the reporting period the International Centre for Compliance Management was engaged to assist with a review of the compliance management plans and the associated risk assessments and action plans. The results of the review will be implemented during the 2017–18 period and will provide greater clarity for Traditional Owners holding Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements and link outcomes to the Authority's coordinated compliance program for the Reef.

## TRADITIONAL USE OF MARINE RESOURCES AGREEMENT

The Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement incorporates specific management strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of key species and habitats; restoring and maintaining waterways and coastal ecosystems; maintenance and protection of significant heritage values including important places, traditional ecological knowledge, culture and language; research and monitoring of sea country including partnerships with the Authority and other leading scientific institutes and individuals; leadership and governance including knowledge management; education and information exchange; and compliance. Some key activities that specifically contributed to 'Reduce impacts affecting condition of key species and habitats' include:

- monitoring of key seagrass habitats and mangroves
- monitoring seabirds, turtles, dugongs and snubfin dolphins in partnership with managers and researchers
- rescue and rehabilitation of stranded turtles
- mapping and protection of cultural heritage sites
- education around Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement hunting systems and strengthened compliance
- compliance training and participation in joint patrols (air, water and land) to identify and report non-compliant activities occurring within Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement areas (for example, illegal fishing and poaching).

## INFORMATION SHARING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Sponsorships under the Land and Sea Country Partnerships Program were scaled back for operational reasons. However, several Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners were supported to attend conferences through funding provided in contracts. Among those were Traditional Owners attending the IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Hawaii in September 2016.

## INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Completion of the Authority's international engagement strategy has been delayed until the 2017–18 financial year. The global coral bleaching events that unfolded in 2016 and 2017 brought about significant change in the manner and nature of the Authority's engagement with other Marine Park and protected area managers around the world, which needs further consideration for potential implications on the Authority's resources.

## REEF GUARDIANS

The Reef Guardians program has effectively continued to build a sense of collective stewardship within Reef communities through activities that foster people's desire to care for the Reef. These activities have enabled people to learn about the Reef and build knowledge and skills to take action that will contribute to its long-term protection. Networking, facilitating and supporting collaboration sustains and

develops new relationships that help balance the need for protection of the Reef and sustainable use.

A key activity for 2016–17 to enhance performance of the Reef Guardians program was to develop a model and plan more effectively to integrate the current sub-programs. This model was developed and some elements, such as use of common 'stewardship principles', have been integrated into activity design and evaluation. However, operational planning and implementation of the integration was put on hold, pending outcomes of the Authority's operational review. As a result, minimal activity occurred with Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers.

# MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's governance framework for the 2016–17 reporting period is based on the legislative requirements of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Marine Park Act), the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and the *Public Service Act 1999*.

The Authority reports to the Australian Minister for the Environment and Energy. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Board (Authority Board) oversees the Authority, which is structured into three branches:

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

The Authority 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 Authority's main office is in Townsville, Queensland, with regional offices in Cairns, Mackay and Rockhampton to ensure a close connection with those Queensland communities. A small office in Canberra (Australian Capital Territory) provides a key liaison function with the Minister's office and the Department of the Environment and Energy, and other Australian Government agencies.



## GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY BOARD

The Chairman and members of the Authority Board are chosen by the Australian Minister for the Environment and Energy and are appointed by the Governor-General.

The Marine Park Act requires that the Authority Board includes a member with knowledge of, or experience in, the tourism industry; a member nominated by the Queensland Government; and an Indigenous person with knowledge of, or experience concerning, Indigenous issues relating to the Marine Park.

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY BOARD



DR RUSSELL REICHELT

Russell Reichelt is Chairman and accountable authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

He joined the Authority in 2007 as Chairman and Chief Executive. Dr Reichelt is a board member of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. He began diving on the Great Barrier Reef in 1968 and 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.

He has a PhD in marine science and has served as CEO 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, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Wealth from Oceans Flagship Advisory Committee and Seafood Services Australia Ltd.

He 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.

Honorary positions include: Adjunct Professor in the College of Marine and Environmental Sciences at James Cook University, and at the University of Queensland. He was reappointed Chairman of the Authority Board on 1 November 2012 for a second five-year term, concluding on 31 October 2017.

MS 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. Ms George has been a member of the Indigenous Advisory Committee (*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*) since 2002 and Chair since 2006.

She was reappointed as a member of the Authority Board on 22 November 2012 for a five-year term, concluding on 21 November 2017.



#### **PROFESSOR EMMA JOHNSTON**

Emma Johnston is an award-winning scientist, educator and communicator and a Professor of marine ecology and ecotoxicology at the University of New South Wales. Professor Johnston investigates human impacts on marine ecosystems, with a particular emphasis on stress ecology, invasion biology and the development of biomonitoring tools. She has published more than 100 refereed papers in coastal ecology. She graduated with a BSc (Hons) from the University of Melbourne in 1997 and a PhD from the University of Melbourne in 2002.

Professor Johnston has led more than 20 major research projects for industry, government, the Australian Research Council and the Australian Antarctic Science Program. From 2010 to 2014 she was an Australian Research Fellow for the Australian Research Council, and in 2012 became the inaugural Director of the flagship Sydney Harbour Research Program for the Sydney Institute of Marine Science. She is currently the lead author of the Federal Government State of Environment Report for the Australian Coast and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of New South Wales.

Professor Johnston has received a string of awards including the inaugural Australian Academy of Science Nancy Millis Medal (2014), the Eureka Prize for the public communication of science (2015) and the Hynes Award from the Canadian Rivers Institute (2016). Professor Johnston is a senior advisor to both government and industry, and is Vice-President of Science and Technology Australia (STA).

She was appointed as a member of the Authority Board on 5 May 2016 for a five-year term, concluding on 4 May 2021.



#### **MRS MARGIE MCKENZIE**

Margie McKenzie has extensive senior managerial and ownership experience in the Queensland marine tourism industry. She is currently the managing director of a marine tourism consulting company in Cairns; has been a scuba diving instructor for 30 years, most of which was on the Great Barrier Reef; and is still an active instructor examiner with RAID (an online diver training program). Mrs McKenzie was a working partner in one of Australia's largest dive training and reef experience companies based in Cairns; has for 18 years been the general manager of Dive Queensland, a non-profit association committed to promoting and developing the diving industry in Queensland; and spent seven years as the general manager of Scuba Schools International.

As a Certified Practising Accountant, Mrs McKenzie has specialised in assisting tourism and small business to develop into profitable enterprises.

She was appointed as a member of the Authority Board on 16 May 2013 for a five-year term, concluding on 15 May 2018.



**MR DAVE STEWART**

Dave Stewart was appointed Director-General of the Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet in February 2015.

Prior to this role he was the Secretary for Transport for New South Wales, where he led around 27,000 people shaping planning, policy and delivery of public transport, roads and freight across New South Wales.

After a long career in local government, and engineering construction in Australia and the United Kingdom, Dave joined the Queensland Government in 2006 as Deputy Coordinator-General within the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, where he was responsible for delivering major water and road projects.

From June 2008 he was the Director-General of Queensland Transport and then the Department of Transport and Main Roads, overseeing the integration of organisations to a new customer-focused model. His primary responsibility was transport leadership including strategic policy and planning, system stewardship, infrastructure delivery and service delivery.

One of his highlights as the Director-General has been participating in the community champions program for Indigenous communities, where he regularly visited Gulf communities and assisted them with accessing much-needed government services.

He is passionate about regional Queensland and engaging directly with residents, business, government and community leaders.

He is a civil engineer and holds Masters Degrees in Business and Engineering Science. He completed an executive program at Harvard University looking at private sector involvement in infrastructure delivery. He is a Fellow of Engineers Australia and an Honorary Fellow, Chartered Institute of Transport and Logistics.

He was appointed as a member of the Authority Board on 23 July 2015 for a three-year term, concluding on 22 July 2018.

**AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE**

During 2016–17, the Authority Board held four meetings (Table 13).

*Table 13: Meetings of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Board, 2016–17*

MEETING	DATE	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE
MPA 243	7 September 2016	Townsville	Russell Reichelt, Melissa George, Emma Johnston, Margie McKenzie, Dave Stewart
MPA 244	7 December 2016	Brisbane	Russell Reichelt, Melissa George, Emma Johnston, Margie McKenzie, Dave Stewart
MPA 245	5 April 2017	Townsville	Russell Reichelt, Melissa George, Emma Johnston, Margie McKenzie
MPA 246	29 June 2017	Brisbane	Russell Reichelt, Emma Johnston, Margie McKenzie, Dave Stewart

MPA = Marine Park Authority



## SENIOR EXECUTIVE



**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
- Outlook Report.



**Simon Banks** — 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
- Heritage, International and Governance
- Reef 2050
- Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting
- Tourism and Stewardship.

An organisational chart depicting the senior executive roles and their responsibilities is in Part 2 Overview in this annual report (see Figure 2).

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Authority's Chairman as the accountable authority has established an Audit Committee in compliance with section 45 of the PGPA Act and Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule) section 17 Audit Committees for Commonwealth Entities.

The Audit Committee provides independent assurance and assistance to the accountable authority and the Authority Board on the Authority's risk, control and compliance framework, and its financial and performance reporting responsibilities.

The Audit Committee comprised the following members during 2016–17:

- Roy Peterson, member and Chairman (term ended 30 November 2016)
- Ian Rodin, member and Chairman (appointed 7 March 2017)
- Phillip Fogarty, member and Queensland Government nominee (Department of the Premier and Cabinet)
- Margie McKenzie, member and Authority Board representative
- Michael O'Keeffe, member.

*Table 14: Meetings of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Audit Committee, 2016–17*

MEETING	DATE	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE
AC 72	25 August 2016	Townsville	Roy Peterson, Phillip Fogarty, Margie McKenzie, Michael O’Keeffe
AC 73	3 November 2016	Townsville	Roy Peterson, Phillip Fogarty, Margie McKenzie, Michael O’Keeffe
AC 74	15 March 2017	Townsville	Ian Rodin, Phillip Fogarty, Margie McKenzie, Michael O’Keeffe
AC 75	26 May 2017	Townsville	Ian Rodin, Phillip Fogarty, Margie McKenzie, Michael O’Keeffe

AC = Audit Committee

## FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Functions and responsibilities are set out in the Audit Committee’s Charter of Operation, reflecting requirements under the PGPA Act and Regulations. The charter covers the Audit Committee’s functions in relation to:

- financial reporting
- performance reporting
- risk oversight and management
- systems of internal control.

Members of the Audit Committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the PGPA Act and Regulations. Members are also expected to:

- act in the best interests of the 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 provided meeting papers.

## INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

During 2016–17, internal audits undertaken in accordance with the strategic internal audit plan included:

- enterprise and operational risk management

- environmental management charge processes
- non-financial corporate reporting
- Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreement program governance.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The Authority continued its work in 2016–17 to improve the risk management framework by integrating a new policy, framework guideline and risk assessment tools into the everyday business activities of the Authority.

Improvement work is continuous, with progress regularly monitored by the Audit Committee.

The internal and external audit functions continue to provide independent assurance to the Authority on the integrity and reliability of operational and financial risk mitigation arrangements in place.

## FRAUD CONTROL

The fraud control policy and plan is consistent with the Australian Government fraud control framework, and gives effect to the fraud control provisions of the PGPA Act and Rule 10 of the PGPA Rule.

The fraud control policy and plan is also aligned to AS8001–2008 Fraud and corruption control, and the better practice guidance developed by the Australian National Audit Office.

In 2016–17, the Authority concluded implementation of treatments to give effect to

its fraud control policy and plan, seeking to minimise the incidence of and opportunity for fraud. Progress updates were collated every three months and provided to the Authority's Audit Committee for oversight.

Collectively, the fraud risk assessment and corresponding fraud control policy and plan, continue to:

- facilitate appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection in a way that meets the specific needs of the Authority
- reduce the incidence of fraud in the Authority as much as is reasonably practicable
- facilitate the process to recover the proceeds of fraud against the Authority.

Two enquiries regarding suspected fraud were made to the Authority's fraud liaison officer during 2016–17. One was resolved through recovery of funds; there was no evidence to support the other allegation.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Authority has a number of committees that provide support and strategic advice, including two Reef Advisory Committees and 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 Authority. Their composition and membership is reviewed as necessary.

The Authority's Reef Advisory Committees were established to provide advice about actions that could be taken to address risks to the Marine Park.

The Tourism Reef Advisory Committee met on 14–15 September 2016 and 6–7 April 2017. In addition to these meetings, a one-day workshop that responded to the Authority's Reef Summit was held on 22 June 2017.

The Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee met on 18–19 October 2016 and 16–17 May 2017.

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 representatives of particular groups or sectors (for example, industry, recreational, government), or for their linkages to Traditional Owner groups. Staff of relevant branches and sections work closely with the Reef Advisory Committees to ensure policy and strategic direction are developed in consultation with stakeholders.

In addition, 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees operate along the Great Barrier Reef catchment. Representing community interests from Cape York south to the Burnett region, Local Marine Advisory Committees provide an avenue for local communities to discuss areas of concern directly with the Authority. The committees also have input into the management of the Marine Park, and undertake activities that contribute to its long-term protection.

Each Local Marine Advisory Committee meets five times a year. Members are appointed for a three-year term, with the current term beginning in July 2015 and ending at the end of June 2018.

## CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLANS

The Authority undertakes planning at corporate and operational levels. In 2016–17, the Authority's corporate and operational planning was influenced by the commitments in the *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* (Reef 2050 Plan), the recommendations in the *Great Barrier Reef Region Strategic Assessment*: and the findings of the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014*. The corporate and operational planning process is shown in Figure 16.

### CORPORATE PLAN 2016–2017

The *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Corporate Plan 2016–2017* outlines the Authority's purpose, activities, performance criteria and other information as required under the PGPA Act. It focuses on delivering outcomes required by legislation, especially the Marine Park Act, through the achievement of four goals:

- Protect and restore the Reef's ecosystem health and biodiversity
- Safeguard the Reef's heritage

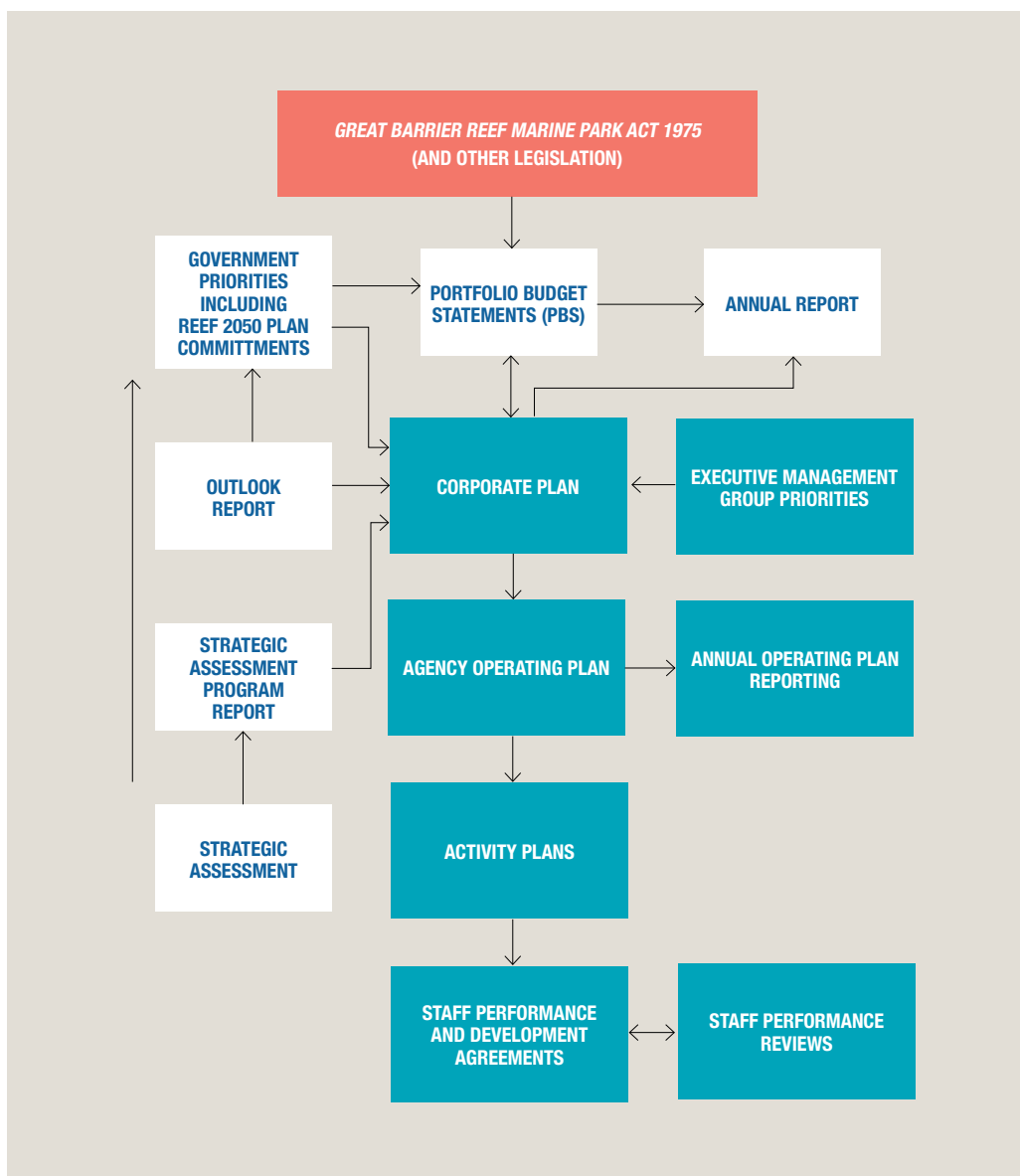


Figure 16: Corporate and operational planning process

- Ensure ecologically sustainable use and benefits for current and future generations
- Reduce cumulative impacts.

To achieve these goals, the Authority delivers its management program under three main program areas:

- **Program area 1:** Ensure the best available knowledge is captured and used to inform management decisions aimed at reducing cumulative impacts
- **Program area 2:** Effective and efficient environmental regulation to set the standards necessary to provide certainty about where uses may occur, the types of activities allowed and the conditions under which activities may proceed in the Marine Park

- **Program area 3:** Strengthen engagement with community, industry and other government stakeholders to maintain a balance between protecting the Reef, managing competing demands and supporting sustainable use.

## ANNUAL OPERATING PLANS

The Corporate Plan is supported by an annual operating plan. This plan sets out detailed actions to achieve the Authority's goals.

## SERVICE CHARTER 2011–2015

The Service Charter outlines the Authority's goals, aims and customers, and its commitments to customers. The Authority aims to provide appropriate services to meet all of its commitments and continue to develop services as new issues arise. The Service Charter will be reviewed regularly in line with these changes.

The Service Charter is available on the Authority's website.

## ETHICAL STANDARDS

The Authority is committed to the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct set out in the Public Service Act, which is an integral part of the people management framework. It is incorporated in the Authority's Corporate Plan and the Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014.

Information on ethical standards is provided to staff through the Authority's intranet, induction procedures and the internal newsletter, Chairman's Update.

## EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Audit Committee Charter of Operation and other documents reflect the requirements for audit committees under the PGPA Act.

O'Connor Marsden & Associates Pty Ltd was contracted in January 2017 to provide internal audit services for the remainder of 2016–17. Internal audit work was undertaken in accordance with an agreed strategic internal audit plan.

In line with the Australian Government's focus on accountability and corporate governance, audit activity concentrated on areas of potential

high risk, and sought to provide assurance regarding the adequacy of existing control frameworks and compliance with the provisions of relevant legislation.

## JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Damages of \$8000 were awarded against the Authority by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for interfering with a person's privacy. (see EQ and Office of the Australian Information Commissioner [2016] AATA 785 (6 October 2016))

While litigation had commenced in the Federal Court, the Authority was successful in negotiating an out-of-court settlement with the owners and insurers of the Chinese bulk carrier, *Shen Neng 1*, for damages caused to Douglas Shoal in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in April 2010. An agreed payment of \$39.3 million plus costs was awarded to the Commonwealth Government with \$35 million received by the Authority to clean-up the site.

There were no other judicial decisions that significantly affected the Authority's operations during 2016–17.

## AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE REPORTS

RSM Australia Pty Ltd, under contract to the Australian National Audit Office, undertook the external audit of the Authority's 2016–17 financial statements (see Part 5 Finances).

The following Auditor-General reports of 2016–17 may contain recommendations of relevance to the Authority:

- No. 6 – Corporate Planning in the Australian Public Sector
- No. 8 – Controls over Credit Card Use
- No. 22 – Government Advertising: March 2013 to June 2015
- No. 25 – The Shared Services Centre
- No. 27 – Reef Trusts – Design and implementation
- No. 35 – Indigenous Advancement Strategy
- No. 36 – Monitoring Compliance with Environment Protection and Biodiversity

Conservation Act 1999 Conditions of Approval: Follow-on Audit

- No. 47 – Strengthening Australia's Tourism Industry
- No. 52 – Managing Underperformance in the Australian Public Service
- No. 54 – Corporate Planning in the Australian Public Sector
- No. 58 – Implementation of the Annual Performance Statement Requirements 2015-16

## COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN

No complaints were made to the Ombudsman in the 2016–17 financial year.

## MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

### PEOPLE MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

The People Management, Office and Security Services section provides a range of services for:

- payroll
- recruitment
- work health and safety
- learning and development
- dive operations and training
- security management
- office and facility services
- workplace relations management, which includes high-level advice and assistance to managers and supervisors regarding workforce planning, performance management and case management matters.

The section proactively supports line areas to meet business objectives as outlined in the annual operating plan.

### TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Authority invested \$348,000 on learning and development in 2016–17. This included the costs of training courses, conference attendance, formal qualifications, study fee reimbursements and professional memberships.

The year saw expansion of our ongoing program to systematically reinforce fundamental

Public Service values through our mandatory corporate training delivered through eLearning modules. This year the target was compliance with the PGPA Act and *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* as well as awareness of public sector security obligations. In-house corporate (face-to-face) training programs contributed to the enhancement of 'soft' skills such as leadership and workplace behaviours as well as technical skills in Microsoft Office software and project management. Specialised in-house training included first aid, dive and resuscitation, emergency response, health and safety, and a variety of field-based skills.

The Authority 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 Authority's working environment varies from contemporary office to remote camping. Officers conduct extensive fieldwork that includes boat patrols, in water reef health surveys, engineering and water quality management. The Authority's broad community consultation involves officers liaising with schools, landholders, tourism operators, the fishing industry and Traditional Owners (including in remote locations).

During 2016–17, 52 incident reports were submitted by employees. Of those reported, nine were classified as notifiable to Comcare as a serious or dangerous illness or incident, and therefore reported to Comcare. Two claims for compensation were submitted to, and accepted by Comcare during the same period.

The Authority continues to provide an employee assistance program to enable support for work and family matters, with 21 staff and family members using this service (totalling 52.50 clinical delivery hours) between 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2017.

Quarterly workplace inspections have been conducted by the Authority's work units, which were reported to the Authority Consultative Group, Work Health and Safety Committee, Executive Management Group and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Board.

During the reporting period, significant investment was put into revising and updating general work health and safety arrangements, including providing an evacuation chair (for assisting disabled or injured people to navigate fire stairs) for Reef HQ, an additional oxygen resuscitation kit for the main Townsville office and multiple sit-stand desks were provided to various staff. Employees are continuing to receive training for the safe and effective use of the new equipment.

Training was provided for emergency response and first aid officers, and Health and Safety Representatives. Training was also organised to assist Managers, Supervisors and Work Health and Safety committee members to better understand their responsibilities as required under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Emergency procedures were reviewed, and emergency evacuation drills were conducted in accordance with the Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008.

The Skin and Cancer Foundation awarded the Authority with a 2017 Healthy Skin Award on 25 May 2017. The Healthy Skin Awards acknowledge and recognise individuals and organisations throughout Australia who support and encourage “best practice” in skin health. The Authority’s health and wellbeing program aim is to support staff to create healthy habits.

The programs are directed towards forming habits around simple things like working in the shade where possible, and wearing UV sun smart shirts, 50+ sunscreen, wide brim hats and sun glasses with UV protection.

In April 2017, sixty five employees received a free influenza vaccination as part of our health and wellbeing program. We will continue to work on new initiatives that complement and build on what is already in place, to continue to help and encourage our staff to be and stay healthy.

## DIVE SAFETY AND OPERATIONS

A suite of in-house training courses was introduced in the 2014-2015 financial year in an effort to increase the percentage of divers with current qualifications on the Authority’s dive register. Since its introduction in November 2014, the currency rate on the register has

increased from 49 per cent to 81 per cent. Over the past few years, additional courses have been added to the scope of training, and a partnership has been formed with an Australian Diver Accreditation Scheme (ADAS) accredited school in Melbourne in order to facilitate internationally recognised Occupational Diver training. In-house training has expanded from a suite of first aid and annual skills refresher related courses to include specialist, occupational, and technical dive training courses.

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. A planned partnership with a South Pacific Underwater Medicine Society-qualified doctor will mean that in the coming financial year, all requirements will be able to be met in-house. This efficiency gain is being rolled out to non-divers in an effort to widen the first responder capabilities of all staff. Further courses are being added as demand dictates.

Two revisions of the Dive Operations Manual this year have seen the Authority comply with the Work Health and Safety legislative changes for minimum qualifications for occupational divers, and to bring the Authority into conformity with the Australian Standard governing occupational diving regarding dive supervisors. The attainment of higher diving qualifications was facilitated through North Queensland’s first ADAS accredited training course in over a decade being run on-site with our partner training organisation.

Closer ties with partners, including the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, have been forged through the reciprocal appointment of the Authority’s Dive Officer and the QPWS Dive Officer onto each other’s Dive Safety Committees. These closer inter-relationships have been strengthened through ongoing cooperation and conformity of dive practices and procedures.

## STAFFING STATISTICS

The Authority had 202 employees as at 30 June 2017. Of these, 137 people were employed at Australian Public Service levels 1–6; 59 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.

## WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Workplace diversity data for the Authority's employees is in Appendix B. The Authority's workplace diversity program seeks to ensure:

- annual operating plans (section) and long-term strategic plans (corporate) acknowledge the diverse backgrounds of employees and their current and potential contribution to the Authority
- the suite of terms and employment conditions enshrined in the Authority's Enterprise Agreement assists employees to balance their work, family, caring and lifestyle responsibilities and preferences
- the Australian Public Service values remain central to the Authority's culture.

## PROVIDING ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Authority's disability action plan includes applying the principle of reasonable adjustment to office access and accommodation. Ergonomic assessments are conducted, and equipment is provided, to suit the needs of the individual.

The Authority's main building in Townsville, which includes the field management office, conference room, meeting rooms and Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium, are wheelchair accessible. The Rockhampton and Canberra offices are also wheelchair accessible.

The 2016–17 workplace diversity data identified that 1.9 per cent of employees have some form of disability. The Authority's workplace diversity policy is available at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)

## EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENTS

The Authority'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 2017.

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 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 Level 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

At 30 June 2017, all Senior Executive Service employees were remunerated by way of section 24(1) determinations under the Public Service Act. The average salary for employees covered by section 24(1) determination was \$199,999.

More information on senior executive remuneration is included in Part 5, Finances.

## PERFORMANCE PAY

The Authority does not operate a performance pay scheme.

## ASSETS MANAGEMENT

There are five significant components of the Authority's asset management:

- office fit-out
- Reef HQ Aquarium
- Commonwealth islands land and properties
- field management equipment
- information management systems and technology.

During the reporting period, work on the aquarium was funded and completed under the departmental capital budget. Work continued



on the implementation of major information management systems and technology projects.

The Authority has capital management plans in place for the aquarium, office fit-out, information management systems and technology, and field management equipment.

## **PURCHASING**

### **DELEGATIONS**

The PGPA Act and Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rules confer powers and functions on 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 subdelegate 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 Australian Government resources, including relevant money and property by officials in their agency.

Our Accountable Authority instructions comply with requirements of the PGPA Act and ensure compliance with Australian Government 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.

### **CONSULTANCIES**

During 2016–17, 31 new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$1,232,618. In addition, 31 ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the reporting period, involving total actual expenditure of \$8,516,689.

Consultants are engaged when specialist expertise is not available within the Authority or where an independent assessment is considered desirable. In 2016–17, this included

marine research, organisational management advice, information systems management and technology services, the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, services for the crown-of-thorns starfish management program, the Marine Monitoring Program and development and implementation of Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements.

### **COMPETITIVE TENDERING AND CONTRACTING**

In accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules 2014, whole of government policies including the Indigenous Procurement Policy and the Authority's purchasing guidelines — and depending on the estimated values of the tender — the selection and engagement of consultants may involve open tender, limited tender or, where appropriate, direct engagement of a recognised and pre-eminent expert.

### **EXEMPT CONTRACTS**

During 2016–17, no contract was exempted by the Accountable Authority from publication in AusTender.

### **ACCESS BY AUDITOR-GENERAL**

All contracts were provided for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises.

### **PROCUREMENT INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES**

The Authority supports small business participation in the Australian Government procurement market. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and small enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website.

The Authority 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 PROGRAMS

Information on grants awarded by the Authority during 2016–17 is available at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)

During 2016–17, the Authority administered the following grants programs:

- Reef Guardian School award
- Science for Management awards
- Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef

# FINANCES

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for the Environment and Energy

### Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for the year ended 30 June 2017:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements 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 2017 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, which I have audited, comprise the following statements as at 30 June 2017 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements.

### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997* (the Code). I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

### Accountable Authority's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority the Accountable 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 – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the rules made under that Act. The Accountable Authority is also responsible for such internal control as the Accountable Authority determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Accountable Authority is responsible for assessing the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Accountable Authority is also responsible for disclosing matters related to going concern as applicable and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Kristian Gage

Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

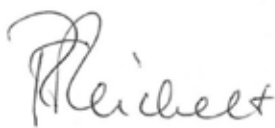
4 September 2017

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 2017 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

04/09/2017



Belinda Jago  
Chief Financial Officer

04/09/2017

**Statement of Comprehensive Income**  
for the period ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Revised Budget \$'000
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>					
<b>Expenses</b>					
Employee Benefits	1.1A	21,690	21,242	21,462	21,762
Suppliers	1.1B	23,038	18,261	17,936	26,061
Provision for Douglas Shoal	3.4A	33,681	-	-	-
Grants		1,129	75	10	1,110
Depreciation	3.2A	1,218	2,118	1,900	1,900
Write-down and impairment of financial assets		-	2	-	-
Losses from asset disposal	3.2A	13	16	-	-
Cost of goods sold		235	196	-	-
Payments to Queensland Government for Field Management Program	5.4	13,129	12,441	12,226	12,341
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>94,133</b>	<b>54,351</b>	<b>53,534</b>	<b>63,174</b>
<b>Own-source Income</b>					
<b>Own-source revenue</b>					
Sale of goods and rendering of services	1.2A	2,953	3,004	2,970	2,970
Receipts from Queensland Government for Field Management Program	5.4	8,766	8,372	8,372	8,372
Grants received from Government	1.2B	17,362	12,014	13,617	17,116
Other revenue	1.2C	411	127	4,450	250
<b>Total own-source revenue</b>		<b>29,492</b>	<b>23,517</b>	<b>29,409</b>	<b>28,708</b>
<b>Gains</b>					
Douglas Shoal litigation settlement	3.4A	35,000	-	-	-
Reversal of make good provision		83	-	-	-
Other	1.2D	54	55	55	55
<b>Total gains</b>		<b>35,137</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Total own-source income</b>		<b>64,629</b>	<b>23,572</b>	<b>29,464</b>	<b>28,763</b>
<b>Net cost of services</b>		<b>(29,504)</b>	<b>(30,779)</b>	<b>(24,070)</b>	<b>(34,411)</b>
Revenue from Government	1.2E	32,178	28,217	27,090	31,031
<b>Total Revenue from Government</b>		<b>32,178</b>	<b>28,217</b>	<b>27,090</b>	<b>31,031</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to the Australian Government</b>		<b>2,674</b>	<b>(2,562)</b>	<b>3,020</b>	<b>(3,380)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) attributable to the Australian Government</b>		<b>2,674</b>	<b>(2,562)</b>	<b>3,020</b>	<b>(3,380)</b>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

Budget Variances Commentary	Affected line items and statement
<b>Statement of Comprehensive Income</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>	
Douglas Shoal litigation settlement occurred in October 2016 and was not included in the original or revised budget.	Provision for Douglas Shoal
GBRMMPA paid QLD Government \$1.195m to build a new Reef Ranger vessel and \$1.200m to expand the vessel management system. GBRMMPA paid \$2.000m to the Reef & Rainforest Research Centre to fund a second vessel for the ongoing management of the Crown of Thorns Starfish. GBRMMPA's underspend compared to the revised budget in the Reef Integrated Marine and Reporting Program (RIMReP) by approx. \$2,000m and legal fees \$0.400m.	Suppliers
Grant payment of \$1.100m for Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef was not included in original budget.	Grants
Payment to QLD for Field Management Program was indexed in June with both Australian and QLD Governments contributing an extra \$0.394m each.	Payments to QLD Government
<b>Revenue</b>	
GBRMMPA received additional funding in revised budget: \$2,000m for a second vessel for the ongoing management of the Crown of Thorns Starfish and an additional \$1,030m toward the RIMReP. Both these items were included in the revised budget.	Own Source Income - Grants received from Government
The original budget included \$4,400m for the expected recovery of legal fees pertaining to the Douglas Shoal litigation however this has been revised to be received in 2017/18 financial year. GBRMMPA received \$0.200m from the Great Barrier Reef Foundation as a contribution towards Coral Bleaching surveys.	Own Source Income - Other Revenue
<b>Gains</b>	
Douglas Shoal litigation settlement occurred in October 2016 and was not included in the original or revised budget.	Douglas Shoal
A property lease was renewed and the make good provision was removed from the lease.	Make Good provision
<b>Revenue from Government</b>	
GBRMMPA received appropriation for a Grant payment of \$1.100m to Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef and \$1.195m to fund a new Reef Ranger vessel in the revised budget that was not included in the original budget. GBRMMPA received \$2.147m in Special Appropriation above original budget and \$1.147m above revised budget due to increase in Tourism numbers and small scheduled increase in Environment Management Charge (EMC).	Revenue from Government
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>	
The original budget included \$4,400m for the expected recovery of legal fees pertaining to the Douglas Shoal litigation however this was changed in the revised budget to be received in 2017/18 financial year. GBRMMPA was underspent for 2016/17 financial year against revised budget. The underspends were in RIMReP by approx. \$2,000m, \$0.400m in legal fees and \$0.700m in Depreciation. GBRMMPA received higher than expected revenue; \$1,100m in Special Appropriation from EMC revenue, \$0.250m in Grants from Government and \$0.200m in other revenue. Douglas Shoal provision was discounted in accordance to AASB137 however the full amount was receipted as revenue in accordance to AASB1004.	Comprehensive income

**Statement of Financial Position**  
as at 30 June 2017

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Revised Budget \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>					
<b>Financial Assets</b>					
Cash and cash equivalents	3.1A	35,741	1,713	1,820	36,713
Trade and other receivables	3.1B	12,934	10,403	11,198	8,403
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b>48,675</b>	<b>12,116</b>	<b>13,018</b>	<b>45,116</b>
<b>Non-Financial Assets</b>					
Buildings	3.2A	16,193	16,774	16,369	16,329
Leasehold improvements	3.2A	21	33	-	-
Plant and equipment	3.2A	2,872	2,206	2,128	2,420
Computer software	3.2A	2,282	2,218	2,237	2,258
Reef HQ shop inventory		114	73	89	73
Prepayments		529	290	1,269	290
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>		<b>22,011</b>	<b>21,594</b>	<b>22,092</b>	<b>21,370</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>70,686</b>	<b>33,710</b>	<b>35,110</b>	<b>66,486</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>					
<b>Payables</b>					
Suppliers		3,519	4,370	3,661	4,451
Other payables	3.3A	181	155	-	-
Permit bonds	3.3B	306	258	263	258
<b>Total payables</b>		<b>4,006</b>	<b>4,783</b>	<b>3,924</b>	<b>4,709</b>
<b>Provisions</b>					
Employee provisions	6.1A	6,392	6,059	6,203	6,133
Provision for Douglas Shoal remediation	3.4A	33,590	-	-	35,000
Provision for make good		-	83	74	-
<b>Total provisions</b>		<b>39,982</b>	<b>6,142</b>	<b>6,277</b>	<b>41,133</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>43,988</b>	<b>10,925</b>	<b>10,201</b>	<b>45,842</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>26,698</b>	<b>22,785</b>	<b>24,909</b>	<b>20,644</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>					
Contributed equity		24,384	23,145	24,067	24,384
Reserves		13,168	13,168	13,168	13,168
Retained surplus (accumulated deficit)		(10,854)	(13,528)	(12,326)	(16,908)
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>26,698</b>	<b>22,785</b>	<b>24,909</b>	<b>20,644</b>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

Budget Variances Commentary	Affected line items and statement
<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>	
<b>Assets</b>	
Douglas Shoal litigation settlement occurred in October 2016 and was not included in the original budget. GBRMPA's underspend was in cash by \$4.000m with approx. \$2.000m in Appropriation and \$2.000m in Grants received from Government. These funds are held in the Official Public Account with most of the monies to be expended during the 2017/18 financial year. Expected \$4.400m in legal fees included in original budget has been transferred to the 2017/18 budget in-line with expected settlement.	Financial Assets - Cash Financial Assets - Trade and Other Receivables
Solar panels valued at \$0.709m was transferred from Buildings to Plant & Equipment during the reporting period.	Non-Financial Assets - Buildings and Plant & Equipment
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Douglas Shoal litigation settlement occurred in October 2016 and was not included in the original budget. A property lease was renewed and the make good provision was removed from the lease.	Provision - Douglas Shoal remediation Provision - Make good
<b>Equity</b>	
Refer to Statement of Changes in Equity commentary	Equity



Statement of Changes in Equity  
for the period ended 30 June 2017

Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Revised Budget \$'000
<b>CONTRIBUTED EQUITY</b>				
<b>Opening balance</b>				
Balance carried forward from previous period	23,145	22,367	23,145	23,145
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	<b>23,145</b>	<b>22,367</b>	<b>23,145</b>	<b>23,145</b>
<b>Transactions with owners</b>				
<b>Contributions by owners</b>				
Equity injection - Appropriations	467	-	150	467
Departmental capital budget	772	778	772	772
<b>Total transactions with owners</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>1,239</b>
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>24,384</b>	<b>23,145</b>	<b>24,067</b>	<b>24,384</b>
<b>RETAINED EARNINGS</b>				
<b>Opening balance</b>				
Balance carried forward from previous period	(13,528)	(10,966)	(15,346)	(13,528)
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	<b>(13,528)</b>	<b>(10,966)</b>	<b>(15,346)</b>	<b>(13,528)</b>
<b>Comprehensive income</b>				
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	2,674	(2,562)	3,020	(3,380)
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>(2,562)</b>	<b>3,020</b>	<b>(3,380)</b>
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>(10,854)</b>	<b>(13,528)</b>	<b>(12,326)</b>	<b>(16,908)</b>
<b>ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE</b>				
<b>Opening balance</b>				
Balance carried forward from previous period	13,168	13,168	13,168	13,168
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>13,168</b>
<b>Comprehensive income</b>				
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>13,168</b>	<b>13,168</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>				
<b>Opening balance</b>				
Balance carried forward from previous period	22,785	24,569	20,967	22,785
<b>Adjusted opening balance</b>	<b>22,785</b>	<b>24,569</b>	<b>20,967</b>	<b>22,785</b>
<b>Comprehensive income</b>				
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	2,674	(2,562)	3,020	(3,380)
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>(2,562)</b>	<b>3,020</b>	<b>(3,380)</b>
<b>Transactions with owners</b>				
<b>Contributions by owners</b>				
Equity injection - Appropriations	467	-	150	467
Departmental capital budget	772	778	772	772
<b>Total transactions with owners</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>1,239</b>
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>26,698</b>	<b>22,785</b>	<b>24,909</b>	<b>20,644</b>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

<b>Accounting Policy</b>
<u>Equity injections</u>
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.
<u>Restructuring of Administrative Arrangements</u>
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.

<b>Budget Variances Commentary</b>	
<b>Statement of changes in Equity</b>	<b>Affected line items and statement</b>
<b>Equity</b>	
The original budget included \$4.400m for the expected recovery of legal fees pertaining to the Douglas Shoal litigation however this was changed in the revised budget to be received in 2017/18 financial year. GBRMPA was underspent for 2016/17 financial year against revised budget. The underspends were in RIMReP by approx. \$2.000m, \$0.400m in legal fees and \$0.700m in Depreciation. GBRMPA received higher than expected revenue; \$1.100m in Special Appropriation from EMC revenue, \$0.250m in Grants from Government and \$0.200m in other revenue. Douglas Shoal provision was discounted in accordance to AASB137 however the full amount was receipted as revenue in accordance to AASB1004. GBRMPA received an additional \$0.317m in the revised budget for Reef HQ capital expenditure.	Retained Surplus
	Contributed Equity

**Cash Flow Statement**  
for the period ended 30 June 2017

Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Revised Budget \$'000
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Cash received</b>				
Appropriations	29,683	27,839	22,690	33,031
Receipts from Government	17,368	12,014	13,617	17,116
Sale of Goods and rendering of services	2,836	3,320	3,140	2,970
GST received from debtors	117	106	120	120
Receipts from Queensland Government for Field Management Program	8,766	8,372	8,372	8,372
Receipts from other	459	-	4,400	370
Section 72 receipts transferred from OPA	-	1,733	-	-
Douglas Shoal litigation settlement	35,000	-	-	35,000
<b>Total cash received</b>	<b>94,229</b>	<b>53,384</b>	<b>52,339</b>	<b>96,979</b>
<b>Cash used</b>				
Grants	1,128	75	10	1,110
Employees	21,699	21,313	21,167	21,467
Suppliers	21,894	17,040	16,796	24,921
GST paid to suppliers	2,222	1,747	1,620	1,620
Payments to Queensland Government for Field Management Program	13,129	12,441	12,226	12,341
<b>Total cash used</b>	<b>60,072</b>	<b>52,616</b>	<b>51,819</b>	<b>61,459</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) operating activities</b>	<b>34,157</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>35,520</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Cash used</b>				
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	1,368	1,312	1,442	1,759
<b>Total cash used</b>	<b>1,368</b>	<b>1,312</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>1,759</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) investing activities</b>	<b>(1,368)</b>	<b>(1,312)</b>	<b>(1,442)</b>	<b>(1,759)</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>				
<b>Cash received</b>				
Contributed equity	1,239	778	922	1,239
<b>Total cash received</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>1,239</b>
<b>Net Cash from/(used by) Financing activities</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>1,239</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash held</b>	<b>34,028</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>35,000</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	1,713	1,479	1,820	1,713
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<b>35,741</b>	<b>1,713</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>36,713</b>

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

<b>Budget Variances Commentary</b>	
<b>Cash flow statement</b>	<b>Affected line items and statement</b>
<b>Cashflow</b>	
The original budget included \$4.400m for the expected recovery of legal fees pertaining to the Douglas Shoal litigation however this has been revised to be received in 2017/18 financial year. GBRMPA received \$0.200m from the Great Barrier Reef Foundation as a contribution towards Coral Bleaching surveys.	Appropriation and Receipts other
GBRMPA was underspent in 16/17 and the full cash appropriation was not drawn down from the OPA. Accruals entered in June will be paid in July whereby 16/17 appropriation cash will be drawn down to pay the suppliers.	Appropriations
GBRMPA received additional funding in revised budget: \$2,000m for a second vessel for the ongoing management of the Crown of Thorns Starfish and an additional \$1,030m toward the RIMReP.	Receipts from Government and Suppliers
Douglas Shoal litigation settlement occurred in October 2016 and was not included in the original budget.	Douglas Shoal litigation settlement
Grant payment of \$1.100m for Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef was not included in original budget.	Suppliers
GBRMPA paid QLD Government \$1.195m to build a new Reef Ranger vessel and \$1.200m to expand the vessel management system. GBRMPA paid \$2,000m to the Reef & Rainforest Research Centre to fund a second vessel for the ongoing management of the Crown of Thorns Starfish.	Purchase of property, plant and equipment
GBRMPA received an extra \$0.317m in capital funding in the revised budget however due to tender processes and construction work in Reef HQ, the funding was not all spent this financial year. It is scheduled to be completed in 17/18 the financial year. A number of IT equipment purchases scheduled for expenditure in 16/17 have been transferred to 17/18 financial year due to resourcing requirements.	Contributed Equity
GBRMPA received an additional \$0.317m in the revised budget for Reef HQ capital expenditure.	

**Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income**  
for the period ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Revised Budget \$'000
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>					
<b>INCOME</b>					
<b>Revenue</b>					
<b>Non-taxation revenue</b>					
Environmental management charge	Z.1A	12,147	10,856	10,000	11,000
Infringement notices	Z.1A	127	89	-	105
Rent from island properties	Z.1A	364	339	285	345
<b>Total non-taxation revenue</b>		<b>12,638</b>	<b>11,284</b>	<b>10,285</b>	<b>11,450</b>
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>12,638</b>	<b>11,284</b>	<b>10,285</b>	<b>11,450</b>
<b>Total income</b>		<b>12,638</b>	<b>11,284</b>	<b>10,285</b>	<b>11,450</b>
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>					
		<b>12,638</b>	<b>11,284</b>	<b>10,285</b>	<b>11,450</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>					
<b>Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services</b>					
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		-	-	-	-
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss)</b>		<b>12,638</b>	<b>11,284</b>	<b>10,285</b>	<b>11,450</b>

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

Budget Variances Commentary	Affected line items and statement
<b>Statement of Comprehensive Income</b>	
<b>Revenue</b>	
Environmental Management Charge increased on 1st April 2016 from \$6.00 to \$6.50. Tourism numbers also increased during the financial year.	Environmental Management Charge
Infringements are not usually a budget item which GBRMPA expects to receive any income from however, as the amount has been steady for the past few years, a budget amount was included in revised budget.	Infringement notices
CPI increases for 2016 & 2017 rental income was not included in the original budget.	Rent from Island properties

**Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities**
*as at 30 June 2017*

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Revised Budget \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>					
<b>Financial Assets</b>					
Receivables - Environmental management charge	4.1A	1,852	2,331	1,638	2,317
Receivables - CDDP Court ordered fines	4.1A	714	706	740	740
Receivables - Rental Income	4.1A	-	20	-	-
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>3,057</b>
<b>Non-Financial Assets</b>					
Island properties	4.2A	4,086	3,982	3,880	3,982
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>		<b>4,086</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>3,982</b>
<b>Total assets administered on behalf of Government</b>		<b>6,652</b>	<b>7,039</b>	<b>6,258</b>	<b>7,039</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>					
<b>Payables</b>					
Environmental management charge payable to Commonwealth	4.3A	1,852	2,331	1,638	2,317
CDDP court ordered fines payable to Commonwealth	4.3A	714	706	740	740
Rental income payable to Commonwealth	4.3A	-	20	-	-
<b>Total payables</b>		<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>3,057</b>
<b>Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government</b>		<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>3,057</b>
<b>Net assets/(liabilities)</b>		<b>4,086</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>3,982</b>

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

Budget Variances Commentary	Affected line items and statement
<b>Statement of Financial Position</b> <b>Assets</b> The original budget was not updated for the Environmental Management Charge increase on 1st April 2016 from \$6.00 to \$6.50. Due to the impact of Cyclone Debbie crossing the Whitsundays in April 2017, the amount of EMC due by 31st July 2017 for the April to June 2017 quarter is lower than the revised budget.	Receivables - Environmental Management Charge
<b>Liabilities</b> The original budget was not updated for the Environmental Management Charge increase on 1st April 2016 from \$6.00 to \$6.50. Due to the impact of Cyclone Debbie crossing the Whitsundays in April 2017, the amount of EMC due by 31st July 2017 for the April to June 2017 quarter is lower than the revised budget.	Payables - Environmental Management Charge

### Administered Reconciliation Schedule

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July</b>		<b>3,982</b>	3,880
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>			
Income		12,638	11,284
<b>Transfers (to)/from the Australian Government:</b>			
Appropriation transfers to Official Public Account			
Transfers to OPA		(12,534)	(11,182)
<b>Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June</b>		<b>4,086</b>	3,982

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

### Accounting Policy

#### *Administered Cash Transfers to and from the Official Public Account*

Revenue collected by the GBRMPA for use by the Government 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.

### Administered Cash Flow Statement

for the period ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Rent from island properties		260	237
Infringement notices		127	89
Environmental management charge		12,147	10,856
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>12,534</b>	11,182
<b>Net cash flows from/(used by) operating activities</b>		<b>12,534</b>	11,182
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		-	-
<b>Cash to Official Public Account</b>			
Environmental Management Charge		12,147	10,856
Other		387	326
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>		<b>12,534</b>	11,182

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the overview and accompanying notes.

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## Overview

### Objectives of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) is an Australian Government controlled non-corporate entity. It is a not-for-profit entity. Under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, the Authority is responsible for managing one of the world's premier natural resources - the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

The GBRMPA is included in the Department of Environment Portfolio: Program 1.1: Improving the outlook for the Great Barrier Reef.

The GBRMPA has only one outcome: 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. All financials are reported under this one outcome.

This outcome is supported by the Program: Improving the Outlook for the Great Barrier Reef.

The GBRMPA and the Queensland Government jointly manage the Marine Park and this close collaboration is critically important for effectively managing such a large, diverse and complex marine area. The GBRMPA continues to work closely with other Australian Government entities, particularly the Department of Environment and the Energy and the Queensland Government to implement the Reef 2050 Plan.

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:

- Collection of the Environmental Management Charge (EMC) and Infringements; and
- Management of Commonwealth Islands land, heritage buildings and lease revenue.

### 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:

- Financial Reporting Rule (FRR) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2016; and
- Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements.

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.

The FRRs Section 48 - Special Accounts was changed in 2016/17 to ensure that there is a consistent approach throughout Commonwealth entities for the reporting and treatment of cash held in the OPA. GBRMPA has restated as per AASB108.29 the Field Management Special Account - cash held in the OPA as Cash and Cash equivalents held in the entity. This has affected balance sheet and cash flow statements and prior year and opening balances were adjusted (see note 3.1).

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.

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 unquantifiable are reported in the contingencies note.

### 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.

## Overview (cont)

### 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:

*AASB13 Fair Value Measurement - July 2015 (Compilation)*

*AASB124 Related Party Disclosures - July 2015 (Principal)*

GBRMPA has adopted AASB1053 Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards for the reporting period. In the preparation of the financial statements, GBRMPA has applied Tier 2 reporting requirements. Primary financial statements and supporting notes will continue to be prepared and audited however certain technical information in accordance with Reduced Disclosure Requirements (RDR) will be reduced to improve the readability of the financial statements for users.

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 signing of the financial statements and are applicable to the current and future reporting periods did not have a material effect, and are not expected to have a future material effect, on the GBRMPA's financial statements.

### Budgetary Reporting of Major Variances (AASB1055)

The Budget variances reporting commentary provides a comparison between the original budget provided to Parliament in May 2016, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2016-17 and the final financial outcome in the 2016-17 financial statements. The budget is not audited and does not reflect the revised budget provided as part of the 2017-18 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS). However, major changes in budget have been explained as part of the variance analysis where relevant.

Variances are considered to be 'major' where:

- (a) the variance between budget and actual is greater than +/-10% of the budget for the line items; and
- (b) the variance between budget and actual is greater than +/-2% of the relevant budget base.

The relevant budget bases are:

#### **Departmental**

- Total Expenses

#### **Administered**

- Total Income

Variance explanations will also be provided where there have been major changes to business activities that may not be numerically material but by nature may assist users in understanding underlying business changes that may have occurred since the original budget was released.

Where a revised budget has been presented to Parliament, the GBRMPA may include variance explanations of major variances between the revised budget and actual amounts where they are considered relevant to an assessment of the discharge of accountability and to an analysis of the performance of the GBRMPA.

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.

### 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 for \$1.

### Insurance

The GBRMPA is insured for risks through the Governments insurable managed fund Comcover. This includes insurance cover for the operation of Reef HQ aquarium. Workers compensation is insured through Comcare Australia.

### 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.



## Financial Performance

This section analyses the financial performance of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for the year ended 2017.

### 1.1: Expenses

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>1.1A: Employee Benefits</b>			
Wages and salaries		16,448	15,934
Superannuation			
Defined contribution plans		1,255	1,652
Defined benefit plans		1,740	1,272
Leave and other entitlements		2,127	2,310
Other Employee benefits		104	65
Fringe Benefit Tax		16	9
<b>Total employee benefits</b>		<b>21,690</b>	<b>21,242</b>

#### Accounting Policy

Accounting policies for employee related expenses is contained in the People and relationships section.

### 1.1B: Suppliers

#### Goods and services supplied or rendered

Consultants	9,110	5,768
Contractors	3,072	966
Travel	1,703	1,746
IT Services	657	643
Utilities	665	625
Employment agency temporary staff	610	422
Aircraft and vessel charter costs	926	992
Telephone and communications	683	731
Legal fees	1,671	2,118
Reef HQ general expenses	801	604
External audit fees	54	55
Other general expenses	1,580	2,089
<b>Total goods and services supplied or rendered</b>	<b>21,532</b>	<b>16,759</b>

Goods supplied	803	840
Services rendered	20,729	15,919
<b>Total goods and services supplied or rendered</b>	<b>21,532</b>	<b>16,759</b>

#### Other Suppliers

##### Operating lease rentals in connection with

External Parties		
Minimum lease payments	1,273	1,296
Workers compensation premiums	233	206
<b>Total other suppliers</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>1,502</b>
<b>Total suppliers</b>	<b>23,038</b>	<b>18,261</b>

#### Leasing commitments

The GBRMPA in its capacity as lessee has seven (7) Commercial Property leases throughout Queensland. Under the WOAG procurement program, GBRMPA lease fleet vehicles and multi-function photocopiers.

#### Commitments for minimum lease payments in relation to non-cancellable operating leases are payable as follows:

Within 1 year	452	628
Between 1 to 5 years	202	374
More than 5 years	-	-
<b>Total operating lease commitments</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>1,002</b>

#### Accounting Policy

Leased assets are amortised over the period of the lease. Lease payments are allocated between the principal component and the interest expense.

Operating lease payments are expensed on a straight-line basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

## 1.2 Own-Source Revenue and Gains

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Own-Source Revenue</b>			
<b>1.2A: Sale of Goods and Rendering of Services</b>			
Sale of goods		383	380
Rendering of services		2,312	2,352
Permit Assessment Fees	5.2	258	272
<b>Total sale of goods and rendering of services</b>		<b>2,953</b>	<b>3,004</b>

### Accounting Policy

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when:

- the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer; and/or
- the entity retains no managerial involvement or effective control over the goods;

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account.

Collectability of debts are reviewed at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

### 1.2B: Grants received from Government

Crown of Thorns Starfish Control <sup>1</sup>		4,300	1,600
Ensuring the Resilience of the Great Barrier Reef <sup>2</sup>		4,000	4,000
Land & Sea Country Partnership <sup>1</sup>		2,000	2,000
Marine Monitoring Program <sup>1</sup>		2,550	2,350
Marine Debris <sup>1</sup>		-	350
Reef Integrated Marine Monitoring and Reporting Program <sup>1</sup>		2,369	1,114
Specialised Indigenous Ranger Program <sup>2</sup>		600	600
Curtis Island Offsets Program <sup>1</sup>		319	-
Field Management Programme Indexing <sup>1</sup>		194	-
National Landcare Reef Integrated Marine Monitoring and Reporting Program <sup>1</sup>		1,030	-
<b>Total grants received from Government</b>		<b>17,362</b>	<b>12,014</b>

1. Funding received directly from Department of the Environment and Energy

2. Funding received directly from Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

### 1.2C: Other Revenue

Other revenue		397	113
Sale of assets		14	14
<b>Total other revenue</b>		<b>411</b>	<b>127</b>

### 1.2D: Gains

Resources received free of charge - external audit services		54	55
<b>Total gains</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>55</b>

### Accounting Policy

#### Resources Received Free of Charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue 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.

#### Sale of Assets

Gains from disposal of assets are recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

### 1.2E: Revenue from Government

<b>Appropriations</b>			
Departmental appropriation		10,264	8,989
Departmental special appropriation		12,147	10,856
Field management program	5.4	9,767	8,372
<b>Total revenue from Government</b>		<b>32,178</b>	<b>28,217</b>

### Accounting Policy

#### 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 the entity 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.

#### Special Appropriation

The GBRMPA, as agent for the Commonwealth, collects an Environmental Management Charge (EMC) from permit holders who collect on behalf of individual tourists and remit to the GBRMPA. Amounts collected are paid into the Official Public Account (OPA). The GBRMPA receives an equivalent amount via a special appropriation (*GBRMP Act s65A*) 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.

## Income and Expenses Administered on Behalf of Government

This section analyses the activities that the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority does not control but administers on behalf of the Government. Unless otherwise noted, the accounting policies adopted are consistent with those applied for departmental reporting.

### 2.1 Administered - Income

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<b>2.1A Non-Taxation Revenue</b>			
Environmental management charge		12,147	10,856
Infringement notices		127	89
Rent from island properties		364	339
<b>Total non-taxation revenue</b>		<b>12,638</b>	<b>11,284</b>
<b>Rental income commitments</b>			
The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in its capacity as lessor manages two leases on behalf of the Commonwealth.			
Dent Island 15 year lease to Hamilton West Pty Ltd expiring 31 January 2029 with an option to extend for 2 terms at 15 years each term			
Lady Elliot Island 10 year lease to Reef Resort Management Pty Ltd expiring 30 November 2025 with an option to extend for another 10 years			
<b>Commitments for rental income are receivable as follows:</b>			
Within 1 year		385	371
Between 1 to 5 years		1,593	1,484
More than 5 years		2,166	1,725
<b>Total rental income commitments receivable</b>		<b>4,144</b>	<b>3,580</b>

#### Accounting Policy

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 permit holders who collect on behalf of individual tourists and remit to the GBRMPA. Amounts collected are paid into the Official Public Account (OPA). The GBRMPA receives an equivalent amount via a special appropriation (*GBRMP Act s65A*) 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.

Other revenue received is from QLD Government State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER) that administer the recovery of infringement debts.

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.

## Financial Position

This section analyses the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's assets used to conduct its operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result. Employee related information is disclosed in the People and Relationships section.

### 3.1 Financial Assets

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>3.1A: Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>			
Field Management special account - cash at bank <sup>1</sup>	5.4	34,909	-
Field Management special account - cash held in the OPA	5.4	352	1,224
Cash on Hand or on deposit		480	489
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>35,741</b>	<b>1,713</b>

1. Refer to Note 3.4 Provision Douglas Shoal

#### Accounting Policy

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents includes:

- cash on hand;
- cash held by outsiders; and
- bank accounts.

#### 3.1B: Trade and Other Receivables

##### Goods and services receivables

Goods and services receivables		138	60
<b>Total goods and services receivables</b>		<b>138</b>	<b>60</b>

##### Appropriations receivable

Appropriations receivable held in the OPA	5.1C	12,512	9,969
<b>Total appropriations receivable</b>		<b>12,512</b>	<b>9,969</b>

##### Other Receivables

GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office (net)		282	353
Other		2	21
<b>Total other receivables</b>		<b>284</b>	<b>374</b>

##### Total trade and other receivables (gross)

<b>Total trade and other receivables (gross)</b>		<b>12,934</b>	<b>10,403</b>
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<b>Total trade and other receivables (net)</b>		<b>12,934</b>	<b>10,403</b>
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Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2016: 30 days).

#### Accounting Policy

##### 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, 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.

### 3.2 Non-Financial Assets

#### 3.2A: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment and Computer Software

##### Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment and computer software 2017

	Buildings \$'000	Leasehold Improvements \$'000	Plant & Equipment \$'000	Computer Software \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2016</b>					
Gross book value	17,111	493	2,774	5,041	25,419
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(337)	(460)	(568)	(2,823)	(4,188)
<b>Net book value 1 July 2016</b>	<b>16,774</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2,206</b>	<b>2,218</b>	<b>21,231</b>
<b>Additions</b>					
Purchase or internally developed	502	-	525	341	1,368
Transfers between classes	(709)	-	709	-	-
Depreciation	(374)	(12)	(555)	(277)	(1,218)
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	(13)	-	(13)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2017</b>	<b>16,193</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>2,282</b>	<b>21,368</b>
<b>Net book value as of 30 June 2017 represented by</b>					
Gross book value	16,903	410	3,944	5,328	26,585
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(710)	(389)	(1,072)	(3,046)	(5,217)
<b>Net book value 30 June 2017</b>	<b>16,193</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>2,282</b>	<b>21,368</b>

Impairments recognised of \$158 (2016: \$0) for property, plant and equipment.

GBRMPA is disposing of IT equipment in July but is not expecting to recoup any monies for them due to cost of disposal.

#### Revaluations of non-financial assets

In the current year a desktop valuation review was completed by Pickles Valuation Services (PVS) who completed the comprehensive valuation in 2015. For assets classified as having Level 2 inputs, PVS compared the Written Down Value (WDV) of the assets against similar assets in the most appropriate active market. This enabled PVS to ascertain that the WDV was materially in line with observable market data. For assets that PVS were unable to be valued by identifiable observable market data an alternative approach was utilised. These assets were valued by the cost approach method, a depreciated replacement cost (DRC) approach, utilising Level 3 inputs. In doing so, the PVS review ensured the estimated replacement cost, total useful lives (TUL), and remaining useful lives (RUL) were in line with industry standards to ensure the DRC calculation was reliable. PVS have relied upon previous valuation and asset lives data to conduct this review.

No changes were made in 2015/16 and 2016/17 for property, plant and equipment.

The next scheduled revaluations of Property, Plant and Equipment is in 2017/18 by an independent valuer (PVS).

All increments and decrements are transferred to the asset revaluation surplus by asset class and included in the equity section of the statement of financial position.

No increment/decrement was expensed (2016: Nil).

### 3.2 Non-Financial Assets (cont)

#### Accounting Policy

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.

#### 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 such as IT equipment).

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.

#### Make Good

The GBRMPA currently has nil (2016: 1) 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.

#### Revaluations

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. Revaluations 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:

	2017	2016
Buildings	5 - 50 years	5 - 50 years
Leasehold improvements	Lease Term	Lease term
Plant and equipment	3 to 20 years	3 to 20 years

#### Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2017. 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.

### 3.2 Non-Financial Assets (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.

#### Computer software

These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Computer software costing less than \$5,000 are expensed in the year of acquisition.

Computer software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful lives of the GBRMPA's software is 3 to 10 years (2015-16: 3 to 10 years).

All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2017.

#### Inventory

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.

### 3.3 Payables

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>3.3A: Other payables</b>			
Wages and salaries		123	62
Superannuation		20	12
Amounts owed to Commonwealth		38	81
<b>Total other payables</b>		<b>181</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>3.3B: Permit bonds</b>			
Cash Bonds held on behalf of Permit Holders		306	258
<b>Total permit bonds</b>		<b>306</b>	<b>258</b>

### 3.4 Provisions

#### **3.4A Provisions for Douglas Shoal Remediation**

Provision for Douglas Shoal remediation <sup>1</sup>	5.4	33,590	-
<b>Total provisions</b>		<b>33,590</b>	<b>-</b>

1. Discounting model based on 2% CPI over a 3 year spend.

On 3 April 2010, the Chinese owned bulk carrier, *Shen Neng 1*, grounded on Douglas Shoal within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Douglas Shoal is a reef shoal located 90 kilometres off the central coast of Queensland. The *Shen Neng 1* traversed a significant area of Douglas Shoal over 3-12 April 2010 before being re-floated. The damage to Douglas Shoal comprises both physical and contaminant damage. The grounding created large depressions of rubble across Douglas Shoal as well as leaving behind large concentrations of toxic anti-fouling paint, in particular tributyltin (TBT) (banned in Australia since 2008).

The Commonwealth of Australia, acting through the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, commenced proceedings in March 2013 against the shipowner of the *Shen Neng 1*. The Commonwealth claimed damages for remediation of Douglas Shoal. The hearing was held in the Federal Court however it was settled out of court for \$35,000,000 with payment made in October 2016.

Revenue was recognised in accordance to *AASB1004* and a Provision was recognised in accordance to *AASB137*. The settlement monies must only be used for the remediation of the Douglas Shoal. The restoration of the Douglas Shoal will take approximately 3 – 5 years and is dependent upon weather conditions and availability of contractors, staff and equipment. GBRMPA is in the process of establishing the project team, developing the project plan and appropriate governance arrangements.

## Assets and Liabilities Administered on Behalf of the Government

This section analyses assets used to conduct operations and the operating liabilities incurred. As a result the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority does not control but administers on behalf of the Government. Unless otherwise noted, the accounting policies adopted are consistent with those applied for departmental reporting.

### 4.1 Administered - Financial Assets

Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>4.1A Fees and Fines Receivables</b>		
Receivables - Environmental management charge	1,852	2,331
Receivables - CDPP Court ordered fines	714	706
Receivables - Rental Income	-	20
<b>Total fees and fines receivable</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>
<b>Receivables are aged as follows</b>		
Not Overdue	1,852	2,351
Overdue by more than 90 days	714	706
<b>Total receivables</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>

#### Accounting Policy

##### Loans and receivables

The GBRMPA, as agent for the Commonwealth, collects an Environmental Management Charge (EMC) from permit holders who collect on behalf of individual tourists and remit to the GBRMPA. Amounts collected are paid into the Official Public Account (OPA). The GBRMPA receives an equivalent amount via a special appropriation (*GBRMP Act s65A*) 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. Fees and fines payable to the Commonwealth are administered by QLD Government State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER).

### 4.2 Administered - Non-Financial Assets

#### 4.2A: 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 2017

	Land & Buildings \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>As at 1 July 2016</b>		
Gross book value	3,982	3,982
<b>Total as at 1 July 2016</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>3,982</b>
Additions	104	104
<b>Total as at 30 June 2017</b>	<b>4,086</b>	<b>4,086</b>
<b>Total as at 30 June 2017 represented by</b>		
Gross book value	4,086	4,086
<b>Total as at 30 June 2017</b>	<b>4,086</b>	<b>4,086</b>

No indications of impairment were found for the Island properties.  
The Island properties are not expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

#### Revaluations of non-financial assets

During 2015, an independent valuer (Pickles) conducted the revaluations.  
No revaluations were conducted in 2016 or 2017 for Island properties.  
All increments and decrements are transferred to the asset revaluation surplus by asset class and included in the Administered Reconciliation Schedule. No increment/decrement was expensed (2016: Nil).

#### Accounting Policy

##### 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 2015, the islands are valued in accordance with their restricted use under lease agreements.



### 4.3 Administered - Payables

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>4.3A: Suppliers</b>			
Environmental management charge payable to the Commonwealth		1,852	2,331
CDPP court ordered fines payable to the Commonwealth		714	706
Rental income payable to the Commonwealth		-	20
<b>Total suppliers</b>		<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>

Settlement was usually made within 30 days (2016: 30 days)

#### Accounting Policy

##### *Liabilities*

The GBRMPA, as agent for the Commonwealth, collects an Environmental Management Charge from permit holders who collect on behalf of individual tourists and remit to the GBRMPA. Amounts collected are paid into the Official Public Account. The GBRMPA receives an equivalent amount via a special appropriation (*GBRMP Act s65A*) 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. Fees and fines payable to the Commonwealth are administered by QLD Government State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER).

This section identifies the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's funding structure.

## Funding

### 5.1 Appropriations

#### 5.1A: Annual Appropriations (Recoverable GST exclusive)

##### Annual Appropriations for 2017

	Annual Appropriation <sup>1</sup> \$'000	Adjustments to Appropriation <sup>2</sup> \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2017 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance <sup>3</sup> \$'000
<b>Departmental</b>					
Ordinary annual services	20,031	29,492	49,523	47,522	2,001
Capital Budget <sup>4</sup>	772	-	772	772	-
Other services					
Equity injections	467	-	467	467	-
<b>Total departmental</b>	<b>21,270</b>	<b>29,492</b>	<b>50,762</b>	<b>48,761</b>	<b>2,001</b>

#### Notes

- In 2016-2017, there were no appropriations that have been quarantined under section 51 of the PGPA Act.
- In 2016-2017, adjustments are for section 74 of the PGPA Act.
- In 2016-2017, there were no material differences.
- Departmental 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.

#### 5.1A: Annual Appropriations (Recoverable GST exclusive)

##### Annual Appropriations for 2016

	Annual Appropriation <sup>1</sup> \$'000	Adjustments to Appropriation <sup>2</sup> \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2016 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance <sup>3</sup> \$'000
<b>Departmental</b>					
Ordinary annual services	17,361	23,572	40,933	40,106	827
Capital Budget <sup>4</sup>	778	-	778	778	-
Other services					
Equity injections	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total departmental</b>	<b>18,139</b>	<b>23,572</b>	<b>41,711</b>	<b>40,884</b>	<b>827</b>

#### Notes

- In 2015-2016, there were no appropriations that have been quarantined under section 51 of the PGPA Act.
- In 2015-2016, adjustments are for section 74 of the PGPA Act.
- In 2015-2016, there were no material differences.
- Departmental 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.

## 5.1 Appropriations (cont)

### 5.1B: Unspent Annual Appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Departmental</b>		
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2014-15	-	5,644
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2015-16	5,545	4,276
Special Appropriation Act (s65A GBRMP Act) 2015-16	-	49
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2016-17	4,230	-
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2016-17	150	-
Supply Act (No. 1) 2016-17	2,587	-
<b>Total departmental</b>	<b>12,512</b>	<b>9,969</b>

### 5.1C: Special Appropriations Applied ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

	Appropriation applied	
Authority	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act s.65A, Departmental	12,147	10,856
Unlimited Amount		
Operations of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority		
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,147</b>	<b>10,856</b>

## 5.2 Regulatory Charging Summary

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Expenses</b>		
Departmental	2,239	2,254
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>2,239</b>	<b>2,254</b>
<b>Amounts applied</b>		
Own source revenue	258	272
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>272</b>

### Cost recovered activities

1. Managing the Permission System under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

The Cost Recovery Implementation Statement is available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/11017/3167>

## 5.3 Net Cash Appropriation Arrangements

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) less depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriations</b>	<b>3,892</b>	<b>(444)</b>
Plus depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriation	(1,218)	(2,118)
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) - as per the Statement of Comprehensive Income</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>(2,562)</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.

## 5.4 Field Management Special 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, Sport and Racing (DNPSR).

Establishing Instrument: *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*; section 49

Purpose: *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*; section 51(2):

- a) the management, protection or maintenance of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area;
- b) purposes incidental to the management, protection or maintenance of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area;
- c) meeting the expenses of administering the account.

The guiding principles agreed between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments under the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2015* 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 including its Outstanding Universal value;
- 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 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 environment of the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem, including its Outstanding Universal Value 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; and
- 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.

	Great Barrier Reef Field Management Account <sup>1</sup>	
	2017	2016
	\$	\$
<b>Departmental</b>		
<b>Balance brought forward from previous period</b>	<b>1,224,214</b>	<b>1,311,997</b>
<b>Increases</b>		
Payments received from Queensland Government	8,766,000	8,372,000
Appropriation <sup>1</sup>	9,767,000	8,372,000
Contribution by the Department of the Environment and Energy	194,000	-
Offsets revenue	319,010	-
Douglas Shoal remediation settlement	35,000,000	-
Receipts from external parties	90,225	66,536
Sale of assets	14,273	12,727
<b>Total increases</b>	<b>54,150,508</b>	<b>16,823,263</b>
<b>Available for payments</b>	<b>55,374,722</b>	<b>18,135,260</b>
<b>Decreases</b>		
Payments made to Queensland Government for field management program	13,129,202	12,441,202
Payments made to Queensland Government for second Reef Ranger vessel and VMS	2,395,000	-
Payments made to employees and suppliers	4,385,285	4,386,664
Payments made to employees and suppliers related to Offsets delivery	39,972	-
Payments made to employees and suppliers for Douglas Shoal remediation	91,010	-
Bank Fees	23	55
Capital expenditure	72,853	83,125
<b>Total decreases</b>	<b>20,113,345</b>	<b>16,911,046</b>
<b>Total balance carried to the next period</b>	<b>35,261,377</b>	<b>1,224,214</b>
<b>Balance represented by:</b>		
Cash held in the Official Public Account	352,161	1,223,963
Cash held in GBRMPA bank account	34,909,216	251

1. Appropriation: *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* section 80.

### Accounting Policy

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, Sport and Racing (DNPSR) for the Field Management Program are fully expensed in the year of payment.

## People and relationships

This section describes a range of employment and post employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people.

### 6.1 Employee Provisions

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>6.1A: Employee Provisions</b>			
Leave		6,379	6,056
Other		13	3
<b>Total employee provisions</b>		<b>6,392</b>	<b>6,059</b>

#### Accounting Policy

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.

#### Superannuation

The GBRMPA staff are members of the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS) or the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap).

The PSS is a 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.

## 6.2: Key Management Personnel Remuneration

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of the entity. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has determined the following people are Key Management Personnel during the reporting period:

### Board (*Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*)

Dr. Russell Reichelt - Chairman - appointed under s10(2)  
 Ms Margie McKenzie - Member - appointed under s10(6B)  
 Ms Melissa George - Member - appointed under s10(6A)  
 Ms Emma Johnston - Member - appointed under s10(6)  
 Mr Dave Stewart - Member - appointed under s10(2-4)

### Executive Management Group (*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*)

Dr. Russell Reichelt - Accountable Authority  
 Ms Margaret Johnson - General Manager Policy and Stewardship  
 Mr Bruce Elliot - General Manager Biodiversity  
 Dr Simon Banks - General Manager Great Barrier Reef Operations  
 Ms Belinda Jago - Chief Operating Officer/Chief Finance Officer

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Short-term employee benefits	1,186,466	1,099,772
Post-term employee benefits	170,511	185,552
Other long-term employee benefits	103,947	105,508
<b>Total senior executive remuneration benefits</b>	<b>1,460,924</b>	<b>1,390,832</b>

The total number of senior management personnel that are included in the above table are 9 individuals (2016: 10 individuals).

1. The above key management personnel remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the Portfolio Minister. The Portfolio Minister's remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by the entity.

## 6.3 Related Party Disclosures

### Related party relationships

The GBRMPA is an Australian Government controlled entity.

Board members are appointed under section 10 of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

Board members and their related parties may hold positions in other entities that result in them having control or significant influence over the financial or operating policies of those entities.

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the Government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of Environmental Management Charge, receipt of Medicare rebate or Higher Education loans. These transactions have not been separately included in this note. Certain entities transacted with the GBRMPA in the reporting period. The terms and conditions of those transactions with key management personnel and their related parties were no more favourable than those available, or which might reasonably be expected to be available, on a similar transactions to non-related entities on an arm's length basis.

### Loans to Key Management Personnel or Key Management Personnel-Related Entities

In 2016-17, no loans were made to key management personnel or key management personnel-related entities.

### Other Transactions with Key Management Personnel or Key Management Personnel-Related Entities

In 2016-17, a tender process for Crown of Thorns Starfish control was advertised through AusTender and Reef Rainforest and Research Centre (RRRC) was selected through this process. A related party to a key management personnel is part of the RRRRC board as a non-executive Director. Total payments made to RRRRC during the reporting period was \$4,000,000 covering two separate service delivery contracts.

In 2016-17, the GBRMPA received \$200,000 from the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) for contribution to Coral Bleaching Surveys. The GBRMPA paid GBRF \$69,300 for services provided during the reporting period. A key management personnel is a member on the GBRF Board of Directors.

### 7.1A Contingent Assets and Liabilities

#### Contingent assets

The GBRMPA has no Contingent assets for the 2016-17 financial year (2015-16: Nil)

#### Contingent Liabilities

The GBRMPA has no Contingent liability for the 2016-17 financial year (2015-16: Nil)

#### Unquantifiable Contingent Assets

On 3 April 2010, the Chinese owned bulk carrier, *Shen Neng 1*, grounded on Douglas Shoal within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Douglas Shoal is a reef shoal located 90 kilometres off the central coast of Queensland. The *Shen Neng 1* traversed a significant area of Douglas Shoal over 3-12 April 2010 before being re-floated. The damage to Douglas Shoal comprises both physical and contaminant damage. The grounding created large depressions of rubble across Douglas Shoal as well as leaving behind large concentrations of toxic anti-fouling paint, in particular tributyltin (TBT) (banned in Australia since 2008).

The Commonwealth of Australia, acting through the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, commenced proceedings in March 2013 against the shipowner of the *Shen Neng 1*. The Commonwealth claims damages for remediation of Douglas Shoal. The hearing was held in the Federal Court however it was settled out of court for \$35,000,000 with payment made in October 2016.

Legal services expenditure during the 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 financial years may be recoverable through a costs order against the shipowner. The legal services expenditure is disclosed as an unquantifiable contingent asset for the purposes of these financial statements.

#### Unquantifiable Contingent Liabilities

The GBRMPA has no Unquantifiable Contingent Liabilities for the 2016-17 financial year (2015-16: 1)

#### Significant Remote Contingencies

The GBRMPA has no Significant Remote Contingencies for the 2016-17 financial year (2015-16: Nil)

### 7.1B Administered - Contingent Assets and Liabilities

#### Contingent Assets and Liabilities

The GBRMPA has no Contingent assets and Liabilities for the 2016-17 financial year (2015-16: Nil)

#### Accounting Policy

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.

## 7.2 Financial Instruments

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>7.2A: Categories of Financial Instruments</b>		
<b>Financial Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	35,741	1,713
<b>Loans and receivables</b>		
Receivables for goods and services	138	60
Other receivables	2	21
<b>Total loans and receivables</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Total financial assets</b>	<b>35,881</b>	<b>1,794</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>		
<b>Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b>		
Trade Creditors	3,519	4,370
Other	181	155
<b>Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>4,525</b>
<b>Total financial liabilities</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>4,525</b>

### Accounting Policy

#### Financial Assets

The GBRMPA classifies its financial assets in the following category:

- a) cash and cash equivalents; and
- b) 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.

#### Financial Assets

*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.

#### 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'.

Suppliers and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (irrespective of having been invoiced).

## 7.3 Administered - Financial Instruments

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>7.3A: Categories of Financial Instruments</b>		
<b>Financial Assets</b>		
<b>Loans and receivables</b>		
Receivables - Environmental management charge	1,852	2,331
Receivables - CDPP Court ordered fines	714	706
Receivables - Rental Income	-	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>
<b>Carrying amount of financial assets</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>3,057</b>



## 7.4 Fair Value Measurements

### Accounting Policy

The GBRMPA deems transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy to have occurred at 30 June 2017.

#### 7.4A: Fair Value Measurements

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period	
	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Non-financial assets</b>		
Buildings - Level 3	16,193	16,774
Leasehold improvements - Level 3	21	33
Plant and equipment - Level 2	725	910
Plant and equipment - Level 3	2,147	1,296
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>	<b>19,086</b>	<b>19,013</b>
<b>Total fair value measurements of assets in the statement of financial position</b>	<b>19,086</b>	<b>19,013</b>

1. The following valuation techniques were used:

Cost approach: based on the amount required to replace the service potential of an asset

Market approach: based on market transactions involving identical or similar assets or liabilities

The GBRMPA procured valuation services from Pickles Valuation Services (PVS) and relied on valuation models provided by PVS. PVS re-tests the valuation model every 12 months and has provided written assurance to the GBRMPA that the model developed is compliant with AASB 13.

## 7.5 Administered - Fair Value Measurements

#### 7.5A: Administered Fair Value Measurements

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period	
	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Non-financial assets</b>		
Land & Buildings - Level 3	3,476	3,372
Buildings - Level 2	610	610
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>	<b>4,086</b>	<b>3,982</b>
<b>Total fair value measurements of assets in the statement of financial position</b>	<b>4,086</b>	<b>3,982</b>

1. The following valuation techniques were used:

Income approach: based on future amounts (eg cash flows or income and expenses) that are converted (discounted) to a single present value

Market approach: based on market transactions involving identical or similar assets or liabilities

The GBRMPA procured valuation services from Pickles Valuation Services (PVS) and relied on valuation models provided by PVS. PVS re-tests the valuation model every 12 months and has provided written assurance to the GBRMPA that the model developed is compliant with AASB 13.



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## APPENDIX A: AGENCY RESOURCE STATEMENT AND RESOURCES FOR OUTCOMES

Table 15 shows the resource statement for 2016–17 for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Authority's expenses and resources for outcome 1 are listed in Table 16.

Table 15: Authority resource statement

RESOURCES	ACTUAL AVAILABLE APPROPRIATION FOR 2016–17 \$'000 (A)	PAYMENTS MADE 2016–17 \$'000 (B)	BALANCE REMAINING 2016–17 \$'000 (A) – (B)
<b>Ordinary annual services<sup>1</sup></b>			
Departmental appropriation <sup>2</sup>	45,462	32,950	12,512
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,462</b>	<b>32,950</b>	<b>12,512</b>
<b>Total ordinary annual services (A)</b>	<b>45,462</b>	<b>32,950</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Other services<sup>3</sup></b>	-	-	-
<b>Departmental non-operating</b>	-	-	-
Equity injections	467	467	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total other services (B)</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total available annual appropriations and payments</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>45,929</b>	<b>33,417</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Special appropriations</b>	-	-	-
<b>Special appropriations limited by criteria/entitlement</b>	-	-	-
Special appropriation Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act	12,147	12,147	-
<b>Total special appropriations (C)</b>	<b>12,147</b>	<b>12,147</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Special accounts<sup>4</sup></b>	-	-	-
Opening balance	1,224	-	-
Appropriation receipts <sup>5</sup>	9,767	-	-
Non-appropriation receipts to special accounts	44,383	-	-
Payments made	-	20,113	-
<b>Total special account (D)</b>	<b>54,374</b>	<b>20,113</b>	<b>35,261</b>
<b>Total resourcing and payments</b>			<b>-</b>
A+B+C+D	112,450	65,677	-
Less appropriations drawn from annual or special appropriations above and credited to special accounts	9,767	9,767	-
<b>Total net resourcing and payments for GBRMPA</b>	<b>102,683</b>	<b>55,910</b>	<b>-</b>

- <sup>1</sup> Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2016–17. This may also include Prior Year departmental appropriation and S.74 relevant agency receipts.
- <sup>2</sup> Includes an amount of \$0.772 million in 2016–17 for the Departmental Capital Budget. For accounting purposes, this amount has been designated as ‘contributions by owners’.
- <sup>3</sup> Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2016–17
- <sup>4</sup> Does not include ‘Special Public Money’ held in accounts like Other Trust Monies accounts. Services for other government and non-agency Bodies accounts, or Services for Other Entities and Trust Monies Special accounts.
- <sup>5</sup> Appropriation receipts from GBRMPA annual and special appropriations for 2016–17 included above.

*Table 16: Expenses and resources for outcome 1*

<b>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)</b>	<b>BUDGET*</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>VARIATION</b>
	<b>2016–17</b>	<b>2016–17</b>	<b>2016–17</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
	<b>(A)</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>(A) – (B)</b>
<b>Program 1.1: (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority)</b>			
Departmental expenses	31,435	26,907	4,528
Departmental appropriation <sup>1</sup>	11,000	12,147	-1,147
Special appropriations	16,784	20,113	-3,329
Special accounts	3,955	34,966	-31,011
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year	-	20,113	-
<b>Total for program 1.1</b>	<b>63,174</b>	<b>94,133</b>	<b>30,959</b>
<b>Total expenses for outcome 1</b>	<b>63,174</b>	<b>94,133</b>	<b>30,959</b>
	<b>BUDGET*</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>	
	<b>2016–17</b>	<b>2016–17</b>	
Average staffing level (number)	210	207	

Full year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2016–17 Budget.

- <sup>1</sup> Departmental appropriation combines ‘Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Bill No.1)’ and ‘Revenue from independent sources (s74)’.

## APPENDIX B: STAFFING OVERVIEW

The following tables provide an overview of full-time and part-time, ongoing and non-ongoing employees at all classification levels (Table 17), and workplace diversity figures (Table 18), as at 30 June 2017.

*Table 17: Employee overview*

### A. ONGOING EMPLOYEES

CLASSIFICATION	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL
	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	PART-TIME	FULL-TIME	
APS1	1	0	1	0	2
APS2	9	4	2	0	15
APS3	11	1	3	0	17
APS4	15	2	8	1	26
APS5	13	2	7	1	23
APS6	21	8	25	1	55
EL1	16	7	16	0	39
EL2	7	0	6	0	13
SES1	1	0	2	0	3
CEO	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>193</b>

### A. NON-ONGOING EMPLOYEES

CLASSIFICATION	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL
	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	PART-TIME	FULL-TIME	
APS1	0	0	1	0	1
APS2	0	0	0	0	0
APS3	0	0	0	0	0
APS4	2	0	2	0	4
APS5	1	0	0	0	1
APS6	3	1	1	0	5
EL1	0	0	2	0	2
EL2	0	0	0	0	0
SES1	0	0	0	0	0
CEO	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>

APS = Australian Public Service; CEO = Chief Executive Officer; EL = Executive Level; SES = Senior Executive Service

As at 30 June 2017, the total number of employees was **207**. The total number of employees in 2015–16 was **208**, while the total number in 2014–15 was **193**.

The Authority's main offices are in Townsville (Queensland); 182 employees were based here as at 30 June 2017. In addition, there were 16 employees in the Cairns office, three employees in Mackay, one employee in Rockhampton and five employees in Canberra (Australian Capital Territory).

*Table 18: Workplace diversity figures*

CLASSIFICATION	TOTAL	WOMEN		ATSI		NESB		NESB1		NESB2		PWD	
		NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
APS1	3	1	33	0	0	0	0	1	33	0	0	0	0
APS2	15	13	87	0	0	0	0	1	7	1	7	0	0
APS3	17	14	82	2	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS4	30	19	64	5	17	2	7	3	1	4	13	0	0
APS5	24	16	67	0	0	1	4	1	4	1	4	0	0
APS6	60	33	55	3	5	4	7	5	8	3	5	1	2
EL1	41	23	56	2	5	2	5	3	7	5	12	3	7
EL2	13	7	54	2	15	2	15	1	7	2	15	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>207</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

APS = Australian Public Service; ATSI = Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; CEO = Chief Executive Officer; EL = Executive Level; NESB = Non-English speaking background; NESB1 = Non-English speaking background, second generation (mother); NESB2 = Non-English speaking background, second generation (father); No. = number; PWD = People with a disability; SES = Senior Executive Service

## APPENDIX C: ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

During 2016–17, the Authority undertook advertising campaigns. Details of costs are summarised in Table 19.

**Zoning education:** The Authority ran zoning awareness advertisements in regional newspapers and on radio along the Great Barrier Reef coast, plus digital and social media advertising, in the days before the June– July 2016 school holidays. Additionally, a zoning awareness advertisement was placed in the 2016–17 edition of the Queensland Recreational Boating and Fishing Guide.

**Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium marketing:** A range of promotional advertising was undertaken to promote the aquarium, the national education centre for the Great Barrier Reef. This included mainstream and social media promotions, email newsletters and a Yellow Pages listing.

**Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium 30th Anniversary event:** The agency promoted the 30th anniversary of ReefHQ Aquarium through local radio, television, social media and newspaper advertising.

**Reef Guardians program:** To promote the success of local stewardship initiatives, a one-page advertisement and one-page advertorial were placed in the Qantas Spirit of Australia magazine. This was booked through Adcorp.

Table 19: Media advertising organisations used in 2016–17

ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN AND MEDIA ORGANISATIONS	AMOUNT 2016–17	AMOUNT 2015–16
Zoning education, Dentsu Mitchell	\$9,146	\$3,327
Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium marketing, Dentsu Mitchell	\$40,234	\$46,425
Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium marketing, Townsville Enterprise	\$0	\$3,080
Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium marketing, Southern Cross Austereo	\$1,001	\$0
Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium 30th Anniversary, Southern Cross Austereo	\$5,563	\$0
Reef Guardians program, <i>Qantas Spirit of Australia</i> magazine	\$0	\$6,600
Great Barrier Reef Clean-up, Adcorp Australia	\$0	\$40,026
Great Barrier Reef Clean-up, Dentsu Mitchell Media Australia	\$0	\$9,316
Celebrate the Reef event, Mitchell Communications Group	\$0	\$10,368
Drive the Great Barrier Reef Map & Itinerary Guide 2017 – GSDM Marketing Design Digital	\$1,995	\$0
Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium Turtle Hospital marketing, Dentsu Mitchell	\$4,659	\$0



## 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 contained in the FOI Act.

Under the FOI Act, to obtain access to information the request for information must:

- be made in writing
- state that the request is an application for the purposes of the FOI Act
- provide enough information about the document/s for a responsible officer of the agency to identify it/them
- provide details of how notices under the FOI Act may be sent to the applicant (for example, an email address).

Freedom of Information requests should be sent to:

Freedom of Information 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@gbmpa.gov.au](mailto:foi@gbmpa.gov.au).

Freedom of information requests can also be delivered to the Authority's office at 2–68 Flinders Street, Townsville, Queensland.

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 Authority 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 Authority 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 Authority 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 Authority's disclosure log, located at [www.gbmpa.gov.au/home/freedom-of-information-requests/foi](http://www.gbmpa.gov.au/home/freedom-of-information-requests/foi). This does not include those documents excepted under section 11C of the FOI Act.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OPERATIONS

During the 2016–17 financial year the Authority received eight requests for access to documents under the FOI Act. Of those:

- two applications were granted full access
- two applications were granted partial access
- one application was withdrawn
- one application was refused at first instance and on reconsideration
- one application was granted partial access; the applicant subsequently sought an Information Commissioner Review, which was still in progress at 30 June 2017
- one application was still in progress at 30 June 2017.

## 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 Authority in 2016–17 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 Authority accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development:

- administering and enforcing the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Marine Park Act), which explicitly recognises these principles
- working with the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy, 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 Authority's environment policies are mutually supportive.

During 2016–17, the Authority further progressed development of an integrated Reef-wide monitoring and reporting program. This program underpins delivery of the Australian and Queensland governments' *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* (Reef 2050 Plan), which provides an overarching strategy for managing the Great Barrier Reef. The program's purpose is to evaluate whether management actions are on track to meet targets, objectives and outcomes set out in the Reef 2050 Plan.

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 Authority — ensuring the long-term sustainability of biodiversity of the Great Barrier Reef — is achieved by managing the Zoning Plan, which was 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 Marine Park Act
- releasing amendments to the Whitsundays Plan of Management
- releasing publications on managing cumulative impacts and implementing actions to improve the condition of the Reef's values and the key threats to the Great Barrier Reef
- promoting the protection of key species for reef resilience through stewardship activities and voluntary measures
- making information readily available on the Authority's external website
- working with the Department of the Environment and Energy and other agencies to progress implementation of the Reef 2050 Plan for the Great Barrier Reef.

The following Authority 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:
  - \* develop the Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2013
  - \* encourage integrated coastal management and improve knowledge on the role that coastal ecosystems play in the health of the Great Barrier Reef
  - \* continue to address the remaining impacts of fishing and illegal fishing and poaching
  - \* improve the quality and extent of information on the Great Barrier Reef's water quality
  - \* continue the implementation of the Marine Monitoring Program — a component of the Paddock to Reef program under the Reef Plan
  - \* contribute to the conservation of biodiversity in marine ecosystems, including through continued implementation of the Representative Areas program.
- 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 World Heritage Area
  - \* communication and education, including the active promotion of the world heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef.
- working in partnership with stakeholder groups, directly or through programs, including:
  - \* the Reef Guardians program, which includes fishers and farmers
  - \* the Reef Guardian Councils program, which aims to encourage councils to get involved in environmental projects
  - \* the Traditional Owners, by developing sustainable traditional use of marine resources practices
  - \* the advisory groups, which assist in the management of particular issues in Marine Park locations and operational programs.

The following Authority activities accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development by aiming to improve valuation,

pricing and incentive mechanisms:

- implementing an accreditation program for tourism operators
- working in partnership with Great Barrier Reef businesses and industry to improve their acceptance and valuation of environmental and social costs and benefits; activities in 2016–17 included:
  - \* partnership with industry associations through community monitoring programs
  - \* targeted 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 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
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 2016–17 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 Authority 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 Authority 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 Authority maintained compliance and enforcement activities during 2016–17, with funding provided by both the Australian and Queensland governments for field management.

The Authority worked with the community, local councils, schools, farmers, fishers, graziers, and volunteer Local Marine Advisory Committees to promote sustainable practices and encourage positive environmental behaviour.

**4. Measures being taken by the organisation to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment (section 516A(6)(d))**

The Authority maintains a strong commitment to continuous improvement of its own environmental performance. The Authority conducts environmental audits of its operations to maximise efficient use of resources, reduce waste, and to build environmental awareness among its employees and volunteers.

Reef HQ Aquarium has benefited from the implementation of three stages of energy reduction, resulting in the installation of energy efficient lighting, the reduction of peak energy demand, and the investment in renewable energy.

The installation of a 153 kilowatt peak photovoltaic system was completed and commissioned in 2011–12, while phase two (44 kilowatts) was commissioned in early 2013–14.

The aquarium continues to be recognised as a Climate Action Business, leading the way through targeted and innovative infrastructure investment. A key achievement has been the full payback (during 2016–17) of all sustainability measures that led to the reduction in energy consumption.

The aquarium’s energy consumption continues to measure at 50 per cent less than the 2005–06 baseline, when energy saving retrofit actions began. During 2016–17, the aquarium used 1187 megawatt-hours of electricity from the grid. The aquarium’s solar power station produced 321 megawatt-hours, offsetting total energy consumption by 20 per cent.

Other measures in place in the last year include:

- using the environmental management system
- using waste handling systems to reduce the volume of recycling going to landfill
- using an automated office lighting system in the main Townsville building to reduce energy consumption
- maintaining the triple-tier Ecotourism Australia’s ECO Certification of Reef HQ Aquarium for Advanced Ecotourism, Climate Action Business and Respecting our Culture — the aquarium is one of only 15 organisations nationwide to achieve this
- choosing environmentally sustainable building materials for Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium exhibits
- 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 impact
- using energy efficient multi-function devices (photocopiers, printers, scanners) and programming them for duplex printing 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 towels 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

- achieving significant fuel efficiencies through use of the 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 Authority 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 lease arrangements for future office accommodation, the Authority is taking into account the need to include a green lease schedule.

The Authority is due to review its environmental management system, to ensure it encompasses all significant environmental aspects and compliance with legal and other requirements, and supports continuous improvement in environmental performance.

The Authority continues to pursue environmental business practices, and improvements for:

- waste disposal
- building operations
- business processes
- employee practices
- air conditioning
- travel
- chemical use.

## APPENDIX F: PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS BY AUTHORITY STAFF

### PUBLICATIONS

- Albright, R., Anthony, K.R.N., Baird, M., Beeden, R., Byrne, M., Collier, C., Dove, S., Fabricius, K., Hoegh-Guldberg, O., Kelly, R.P., Lough, J., Mongin, M., Munday, P.L., Pears, R.J., Russell, B.D., Tillbrook, B. and Abal, E. 2016, Ocean acidification: Linking science to management solutions using the Great Barrier Reef as a case study, *Journal of environmental management* 182: 641-650.
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- Edison, K. and Gilbert, R. 2016, 'Permit application, compliance, incident reporting and plan of management matters', Joint Marine Industry Information Forum, Airlie Beach, 16 November 2016.
- Elliot, B. and Wachenfeld, D. 2016, 'Coral bleaching', Brief to Reef Water Quality Protection Plan Partnership Committee, 30 August 2016.
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- Gibson, J. 2017, 'Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program', update to Independent Expert Panel meeting, Brisbane, 28 March 2017.
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- Hoey, J., Banks, S. and Tapim, J. 2016, 'Land and Sea Country Partnerships Program', Department of Environment and Energy Seminar Series, Canberra, 11 August 2016.
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- Vains, J. 2016, 'Reef 2050 update', Reef Guardian Council Working Group, 1 December 2016.
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- Wachenfeld, D. 2017, 'Coral bleaching update', Marine Tourism Industry Response Group, Cairns, 17 February 2017.
- Wachenfeld, D. 2017, 'Coral bleaching', Brief to Marina Industries Association Networking Meeting, Townsville, 16 February 2017.
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- Wachenfeld, D. 2017, 'State of the Reef', update to the Reef 2050 Plan Reef Advisory Committee, Reef 2050 Plan Reef Advisory Committee, Brisbane, 19 May 2017.
- Wachenfeld, D. 2017, 'The potential role of coral restoration in the future management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park', Australian Institute of Marine Science Coral Restoration Workshop, Townsville, 2 March 2017.
- Wachenfeld, D. and Reichelt, R. 2017, 'Implications of climate change for Reef 2050 Plan', Reef 2050 Plan Independent Expert Panel Meeting, 28 March 2017.
- Wachenfeld, D., Hatley, T. and Cameron, D. 2016, 'Sustainable fishing in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park', Queensland Seafood Industry Association Workshop, GBRMPA Conference Room, Townsville, 21 August 2016.

## APPENDIX G: QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT FINANCIALS



Your ref:  
Our ref: 2017-0850  
John Welsh 3149 6126

### IN-CONFIDENCE

13 September 2017

Ms T O'Shea  
Director-General  
Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing  
PO Box 15187  
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Ms O'Shea

#### **Special Purpose Financial Statements—2016–17**

#### **Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing – Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program**

I enclose for your information the original certified Special Purpose Financial Statements as required by s.40 (4) of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*.

I have issued an unmodified auditor's report.

Yours sincerely

John Welsh  
Sector Director

Enc.

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing  
Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program**

**Financial Statements**

**2016-2017**

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2017**

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Management Certificate	9

**General information**

These special purpose financial statements cover the Joint Field Management Program for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area for the financial year 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is an Australian Government Statutory Authority that manages the contributions for this Program.

The head office of business is:

Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing  
Level 34  
1 William St  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

The principal place of business:

Joint Field Management Program for  
The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services  
2-68 Flinders Street  
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810

A description of the nature of the program's operations and principal activities is included in the notes to these financial statements.

For information in relation to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority financial statements please call (07) 3338 9313, email [info@npsr.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@npsr.qld.gov.au) or visit the authority's website at <http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au>.

Amounts shown in these special purpose financial statements may not add to the correct sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Statement of Income and Expenses**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2017**

	Notes	2017 Actual \$'000	* Restated 2016 Actual \$'000
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>			
<i>Revenue</i>			
User charges and fees		24	19
Grants and other contributions	3	14,419	12,645
Revaluation increment		-	32
Other revenue	4	414	385
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>14,857</b>	<b>13,081</b>
<i>Gains</i>			
Gains on disposal/re-measurement of assets		36	47
<b>Total income from continuing operations</b>		<b>14,893</b>	<b>13,128</b>
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>			
Employee expenses	5	8,182	7,864
Supplies and services	6	3,678	3,398
Grants and subsidies		-	3
Depreciation and amortisation		1,219	1,169
Other expenses	7	845	839
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>		<b>13,925</b>	<b>13,272</b>
<b>Net surplus (deficit)</b>		<b>968</b>	<b>(144)</b>

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

\* 2016 balances have been re-stated to align with 2017 methodology (Refer to Note 2 (g) *Rounding and Comparatives*).

Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Statement of Assets and Liabilities**  
**As at 30 June 2017**

		2017 Actual \$'000	* Restated 2016 Actual \$'000
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents		1,189	237
Receivables	8	354	323
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>1,543</b>	<b>560</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	9	10,784	10,519
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>10,784</b>	<b>10,519</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>12,327</b>	<b>11,079</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Payables	10	85	71
Accrued employee benefits		321	310
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>406</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>11,921</b>	<b>10,698</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

\* 2016 balances have been re-stated to align with 2017 methodology (Refer to Note 2 (g) *Rounding and Comparatives*).

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Notes to and forming part of the financial statements 2016-17**

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**1. 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 (the 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 funding (recurrent and capital) for this Joint Field Management Program shared on a 50:50 basis. The contributions by both parties will be administered by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

**2. Summary of significant accounting policies**

**a) Statement of compliance**

The Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (the Department), a not-for-profit entity, has prepared these special purpose financial statements (the 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 exempt. These statements have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the relevant Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations including relevant disclosure requirements of the prescribed accounting standards. It is assessed that as there are limited intended users of these statements, the format and content is appropriate to meet the information needs of the specific users.

**b) The Reporting Program**

The Statements include the value of all revenue, expenses, assets and liabilities of the reporting program, managed by the Department on behalf of the Queensland Government.

**c) Cash**

The cash balance represents the cash receipts not spent as at 30 June. This amount forms part of the Program's cash balance.

**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 Statements are authorised for issue by the Executive Director, Regional Operations East and the Chief Finance Officer for the Department at the date of signing the Management Certificate.



**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Notes to and forming part of the financial statements 2016-17**

**2. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)**

**g) Rounding and Comparatives**

Amounts included in the Statements are in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or, where the amount is \$500 or less, to zero.

The 2016-17 reported figures include transactions relating to the Great Barrier Reef joint Field Management Program only. Transactions relating to the *Raine Island Recovery Project – BHP* have been eliminated and therefore not included in this report. Based on this change in methodology, the comparative information have been restated to be consistent with the methodology adopted in the current reporting period.

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>3. Grants and other contributions</b>		
Grants	14,419	12,341
Assets Transferred In #	-	359
Assets Transferred Out #	-	(55)
	<b>14,419</b>	<b>12,645</b>

Grants, contributions, donations and gifts that are non-reciprocal in nature are recognised as revenue in the year in which the Department obtains control over them (control is generally obtained at the time of receipt). Reciprocal grants and contributions are progressively recognised as they are earned, according to the terms of the funding arrangements.

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 Department 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.

# No Plant and equipment were transferred into the Program in 2017 (2016: \$359K) nor Buildings transferred out from the Program in 2017 (2016: \$55K)

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>4. Other revenue</b>		
Recoveries	6	3
Insurance recoveries	399	310
Other	10	72
	<b>414</b>	<b>385</b>

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>5. Employee expenses</b>		
<i>Employee benefits</i>		
Salaries and wages	6,383	6,202
Employer superannuation contributions	810	785
Annual leave expense	673	651
Long service leave levy	141	145
Other employee benefits	-	17
<i>Employee related expenses</i>		
Workers' compensation premium	82	80
Other employee related expenses	92	(16)
	<b>8,182</b>	<b>7,864</b>

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Notes to and forming part of the financial statements 2016-17**

**5. Employee expenses (continued)**

**Employee Benefits**

Employer superannuation contributions, annual leave levies and long service leave levies are regarded as employee benefits.

Workers' compensation insurance are a consequence of employing employees, but are not counted in an employee's total remuneration package. They are not employee benefits and are recognised separately as employee related expenses. The Department pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee compensation.

**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 Leave and Long Service Leave**

Under the Queensland Government's Annual Leave Central (ALCS) and Long Service Leave (LSL) Schemes, levies are made on the department to cover the cost of employees' annual leave (including leave loading and on-costs) and LSL. The levies are recognised as expense in the period in which they are payable. Amounts paid to employees for annual leave and LSL are claimed from the schemes quarterly in arrears. No provisions for annual leave and LSL are recognised in the department's financial statements as the liabilities are held on a whole-of-government basis and reported in those financial statements.

**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.

**6. Supplies and services**

Consultants and contractors		575	551
Operating lease rentals		(99)	276
Repairs and maintenance		1,222	768
Shared service provider expenses		1	-
Computer services		12	8
Office accommodation		97	70
Travel		697	619
Motor vehicle costs		494	563
Utilities		199	170
Minor plant and equipment		149	157
Supplies and consumables		223	128
Recreation centre catering expenses		-	1
Land maintenance		34	41
Other		76	47

	2017	2016
	\$'000	\$'000
<hr/>		
	575	551
	(99)	276
	1,222	768
	1	-
	12	8
	97	70
	697	619
	494	563
	199	170
	149	157
	223	128
	-	1
	34	41
	76	47
	<b>3,678</b>	<b>3,398</b>

**7. Other expenses**

Special payments			
Ex-gratia payments		1	1
Bad and impaired debts		-	3
Other		845	835

	2017	2016
	\$'000	\$'000
<hr/>		
	1	1
	-	3
	845	835
	<b>845</b>	<b>839</b>

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Notes to and forming part of the financial statements 2016-17**

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>8. Receivables</b>		
Trade debtors	54	70
Less: Allowance for impairment loss	-	(3)
	54	67
GST receivable	82	104
GST payable	-	(1)
	82	103
Annual leave reimbursements	121	98
Long service leave reimbursements	9	55
Other	87	-
	<b>354</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>9. Property, plant and equipment</b>		
	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Buildings: at fair value		
Gross	3,814	5,035
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(1,970)	(3,296)
	1,843	1,739
Heritage and Cultural Assets: at fair value		
Gross	15	15
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(3)	(3)
	13	13
Plant and equipment: at cost		
Gross	13,027	12,656
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(5,067)	(4,213)
	7,960	8,443
Infrastructure: at fair value		
Gross	674	681
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(386)	(358)
	288	323
Capital work in progress: at cost	679	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,784</b>	<b>10,519</b>

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 & Cultural)	\$ 5,000

Items with lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition. Property, plant and equipment acquisition were \$1.229m (FY 2016: \$0.881m).

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.

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Notes to and forming part of the financial statements 2016-17**

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>10. Payables</b>		
<i>Current</i>		
Trade creditors	85	67
Taxes payable	-	1
Other	-	3
	<b>85</b>	<b>71</b>

Trade creditors are recognised upon receipt of the goods or services ordered and are measured at the nominal amount i.e. agreed purchase or contract price, gross of applicable trade and other discounts. Amounts owing are unsecured and are generally settled on 30-day terms.

**Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing**  
**GREAT BARRIER REEF JOINT FIELD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**Notes to and forming part of the financial statements 2016-17**

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**Certificate of the 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 agreement 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 23 November 2016 (allocation of carryover from 2015-16 and variation to the services and fees paid to the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing). 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;
- 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 2017 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.



Brad Lang  
Chief Finance Officer  
Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing

Date // September 2017



Neil Cambourn  
Executive Director  
Great Barrier Reef, Marine, Coastal and Islands  
Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing

Date // September 2017

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Director-General of the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing

### Report on the audit of the financial report

#### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program managed by the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing.

In my opinion, the financial report:

- a) gives a true and fair view of the entity's statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 30 June 2017, and its financial performance for the year then ended
- b) complies with the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009* and the financial reporting framework described in Note 2.

The financial report comprises the statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 30 June 2017, and the statement of Income and Expenses for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including summaries of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the management certificate.

#### Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General of Queensland Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report.

I am independent of the entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General of Queensland Auditing Standards*.

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

#### Emphasis of matter – basis of accounting

I draw attention to Note 2 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the financial reporting responsibilities of the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing under the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

#### Responsibilities of the entity for the financial report

The Department is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009* and the financial reporting framework described in Note 2, and for such internal control as the Department determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Department determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 2 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009*.

The Department is also responsible for assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report**

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the entity.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the entity's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. I base my conclusions on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

  
John Welsh  
as delegate of the Auditor-General



Queensland Audit Office  
Brisbane





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# ACRONYMS AND INDEX



## ACRONYMS

APS	Australian Public Service
ATSI	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
C.A.R.E	Conserve. Act. Rehabilitate. Educate.
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>
GBR	Great Barrier Reef
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
GST	Goods and services tax
NESB	Non-English speaking background
MNP	Marine National Park
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PWD	People with a disability
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
SES	Senior Executive Service
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

## GLOSSARY

**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'

**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 that 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

## LIST OF REQUIREMENTS

PART OF REPORT	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENT	PAGES
Letter of transmittal	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by accountable authority on date final text approved	Mandatory	iii
Aids to access	Table of contents	Mandatory	v
	Alphabetical index	Mandatory	169–181
	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms	Mandatory	162–163
	List of requirements	Mandatory	164
	Details of contact officer	Mandatory	ii
	Entity's website address	Mandatory	ii
	Electronic address of report	Mandatory	ii
Review by accountable authority	Review by the accountable authority	Mandatory	3–9
Overview of the entity	Role and functions	Mandatory	12
	Organisational structure	Mandatory	13
	Outcomes and programmes	Mandatory	19–20
	Purposes	Mandatory	18
	Portfolio structure	Portfolio departments – mandatory	1–2,17
	Where the outcomes and programmes administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change	If applicable, Mandatory	18–20
<b>REPORT ON PERFORMANCE</b>			
Annual performance statements	Annual performance statement	Mandatory	18–84
Report on financial performance	Discussion and analysis of financial performance.	Mandatory	14, 99–130
	Table summarising total resources and total payments	Mandatory	132–133

PART OF REPORT	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENT	PAGES
	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results	If applicable, Mandatory	8, 14–15

## MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Corporate governance	Compliance with fraud systems	Mandatory	90
	Fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans	Mandatory	90–91
	Mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud	Mandatory	91
	Measures taken to deal with fraud	Mandatory	91
	Structures and processes to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance	Mandatory	92
	Significant issues reported to Minister on non-compliance with finance law and remedies taken	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a
External scrutiny	Most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response	Mandatory	93
	Judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner	If applicable, Mandatory	93
	Reports by the Auditor-General a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman	If applicable, Mandatory	93
	Capability reviews	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a
Management of human resources	assessment of effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives	Mandatory	94–96
	Statistics on APS employees	Mandatory	95, 134–135

PART OF REPORT	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENT	PAGES
	Enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations	Mandatory	96
	Number of SES and non-SES employees	Mandatory	134–135
	Salary ranges for APS employees	Mandatory	134
	Non-salary benefits for employees	Mandatory	96
	Performance pay	If applicable, Mandatory	96
Assets management	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management	If applicable, Mandatory	96
Purchasing	An assessment of entity performance against the Commonwealth Procurement Rules	Mandatory	97
Consultants	A summary statement detailing the number of new contracts engaging consultants entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all new consultancy contracts entered into during the period (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting year on the ongoing consultancy contracts (inclusive of GST)	Mandatory	97
	A statement that “During [reporting period], [specified number] new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]”	Mandatory	97
	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged	Mandatory	97

PART OF REPORT	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENT	PAGES
	A statement that “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.”	Mandatory	97
Australian National Audit Office access clauses	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than \$100 000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor-General with access to the contractor’s premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract	If applicable, Mandatory	97
Exempt contracts	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than \$10 000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusTender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters	If applicable, Mandatory	97
Small business	A statement that “[Name of entity] 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.”	Mandatory	97
	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises.	Mandatory	97
	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature—a statement that “[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury’s website.”	If applicable, Mandatory	97

<b>PART OF REPORT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>PAGES</b>
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	If no advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a
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	Mechanisms for disability reporting, including reference to website for further information	Mandatory	96
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