

# A Year in Review 2021–22

The environment is  
everyone's business

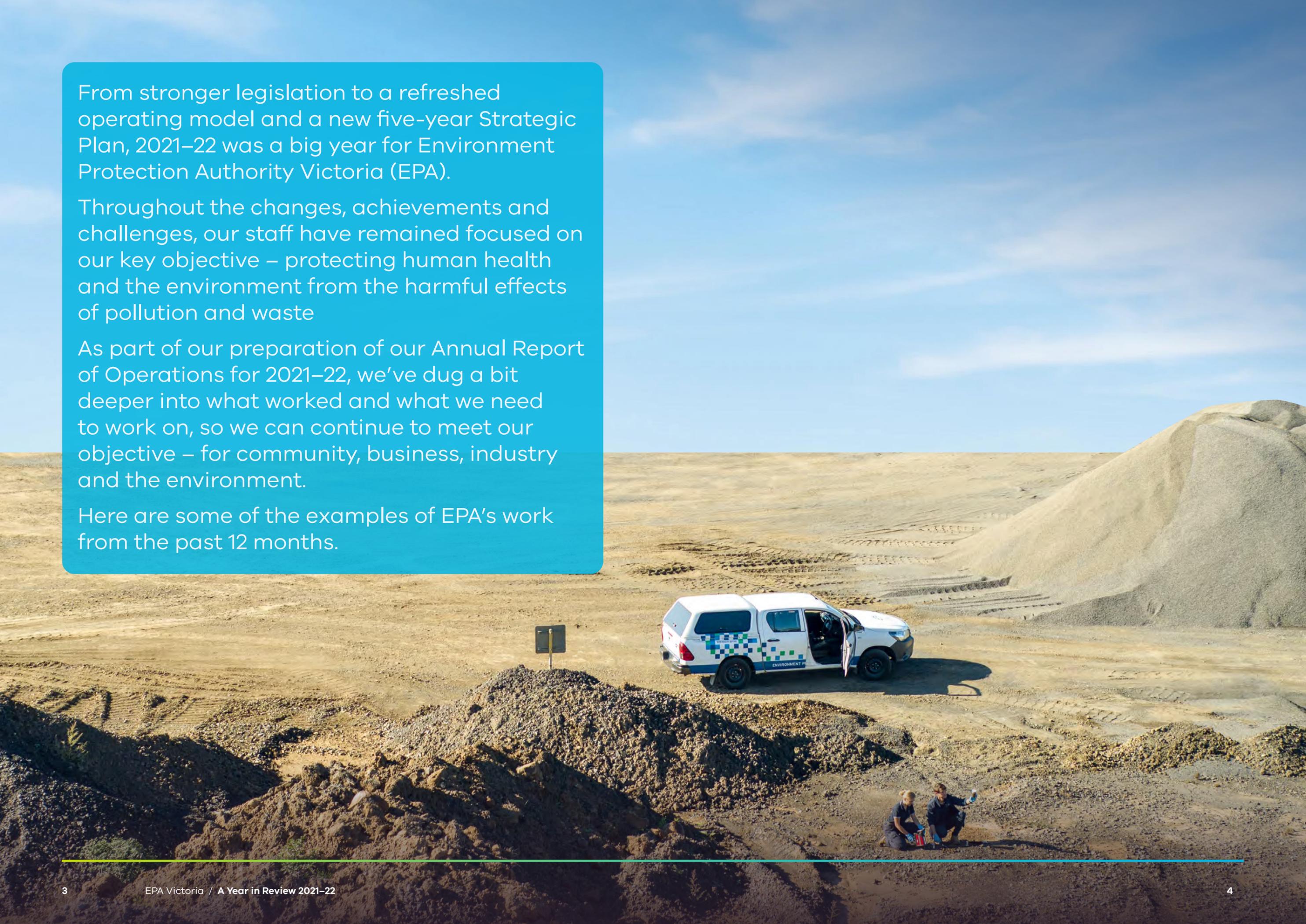


From stronger legislation to a refreshed operating model and a new five-year Strategic Plan, 2021–22 was a big year for Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA).

Throughout the changes, achievements and challenges, our staff have remained focused on our key objective – protecting human health and the environment from the harmful effects of pollution and waste

As part of our preparation of our Annual Report of Operations for 2021–22, we've dug a bit deeper into what worked and what we need to work on, so we can continue to meet our objective – for community, business, industry and the environment.

Here are some of the examples of EPA's work from the past 12 months.



# New legislation, new powers, better ways of protecting the environment

The launch of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (EP Act 2017) on 1 July 2021 was an historic moment for EPA, for Victoria and for environmental protection. With a clear focus on prevention and through the identification of priority risks of harm, we are now able to get ahead of environmental harm before it happens.

The act gives EPA the power to take strong action when and where needed. We've taken necessary measures to investigate and lay charges on a range of matters, many of which are currently before the courts.

We've made great use of science and technology to monitor and investigate, including using drones to access sites and gather intelligence.

This kind of information provides essential evidence should it be required.

## CASE STUDY

### The act in action

The Environmental Crime Branch (ECB) was established in November 2021, amalgamating EPA's Waste Crime Compliance and Enforcement and Major Investigations Unit.

Since it was set up, the ECB has had a major focus on improving investigative capability at EPA, by better incorporating criminal and financial intelligence into its decision making, establishing sophisticated covert, overt and aerial surveillance capabilities and by finding efficiencies and improvements in the preparation of evidence for prosecution.

The ECB conducted 46 investigations in 2021-22, with 20 resulting in further

investigations to gather evidence and further information with 17 going to court for prosecution.

A key investigation was Operation Charger, which looked into illegal disposal of waste from a commercial waste recovery operation spanning the western parts of the state.

EPA successfully prosecuted two offenders from the Geelong area in relation to this case. Both offenders received convictions and as a result are now recorded as Prohibited Person under the EP Act 2017 and are no longer permitted to operate an EPA licensed or permitted business.

### General Environment Duty – a shared responsibility

The General Environmental Duty (GED) is at the heart of the new laws. It requires all Victorians – individuals and businesses – to reduce any harmful impacts of their activities on the environment.

We established programs to help the community and businesses understand the GED is a shared responsibility for all of us, together, as well as the other changes in the legislation that protect Victoria.

This year we have continued to focus on delivering activities associated with our five key organisational goals:

- Prevent harm.
- Equip business and community.
- Be an influential authority.
- Respond to harm.
- Organisational excellence.

## CASE STUDY

### GED and how it's used

Under the *EP Act 1970*, it was difficult for EPA as an environmental regulator to require business or industry to provide adequate training to contractors on how to comply with environmental protection obligations.

However, since the new act came into effect - and with the use of a single statutory tool - EPA can compel a duty holder/large business to provide training and information to a third party, as their contractors, to support compliance with the GED.

This power has been used many times and is helping create greater awareness and compliance among those working both directly and indirectly in industry-related areas.



# New ways of working

## A refreshed EPA operating model

After extensive internal consultation and workshops in early 2021, EPA launched a new operating model on 1 November 2021, to ensure we were well positioned to deliver under the new act and meet our key objectives.

The new model was designed to ensure we are always focused on:

- Community and prevention of harm
- Regulatory excellence and continuous improvement
- Dealing with local issues at a local level
- Uplifting capability and capacity
- Simplification and streamlining to deliver results.

Our structure and processes were improved, place-based decision making was strengthened and our on-the-ground and frontline response and effectiveness was enhanced.



# EPA's Strategic Plan 2022–27

EPA's Governing Board developed and introduced our five-year Strategic Plan, defining our purpose and outcomes.

Aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set up by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, our plan represents the future for EPA and Victoria.

The *EPA Strategic Plan 2022-27* defines our purpose as well as the outcomes we aim to achieve by 2027.

It shows how we came to these decisions and how we will measure them to keep ourselves accountable.

By 2027 we want to ensure:

- Our environment is cleaner and communities are healthier
- All Victorians reduce their environmental risks
- We have impact and influence.

Victoria – and the world – is facing multiple challenges pertaining to climate change, post-pandemic economic recovery, technology development and population growth. EPA must be adaptable as we tackle the complex and ever-changing needs of our community and our environment. We are also dedicated to our commitment to partner with Traditional Owners to further self-determination.

The plan was developed with these key factors in mind, and we will continue to work collaboratively with our partners to deliver its outcomes and improve our communities and the environment.



# Accountability for us all

This year we have created better foundational systems, guidance and processes for administration and oversight, so we can all understand and implement our accountabilities under the act.

## Site Management Orders (SMOs)

EPA created SMOs, a new tool that allows us to establish long-term controls to ensure the safe management of sites that would otherwise pose an ongoing risk to human health and the environment.

## Better Environment Plans (BEPs)

Statutory-based voluntary agreements between EPA and duty holders – those people we hold legally responsible for the care of the environment – BEPs help improve the way people comply with the law. Duty holders can test innovative solutions to environmental issues or agree to ways in which they can exceed their environmental obligations.

## Waste levy audit program

Reform of this program was completed this year, with the release of guidelines for duty holders to help them calculate waste levy and recycling rebate claims, and waste mass balance reporting. The new landfill licence permission condition, requiring waste mass balance reporting with quarterly waste levy statements, will help landfill permission holders to comply with their levy obligations and enable EPA to verify appropriate waste levies are paid, only allowable rebates are claimed and that each tonne of all types of waste received at the permissioned landfill is reconciled.

## Authorised officer training

To support our Coordinated Prevention and Response Framework, EPA developed tools for authorised officers to enable early notification to all agencies of potential risks associated with sites prior to detailed analysis and joint regulatory actions. Using these tools at sites in Laverton North and Derrimut provided information for intelligence that helped identify the main issues present and informed what would be included on our watchlist.

## Quality control

This financial year EPA has implemented quality control checks for high-risk regulatory activities and oversight of the assurance categories and endorsement framework for authorised officer decisions. We conducted an audit of regulatory tools that were created under the new act to see which tools were being used most often and if appropriate. The audit found that the increased use of compliance advice, improvement notices and environmental action notices showed strong progression toward the prevention model the act was designed to achieve.

# Science at the heart of our decision-making

EPA is a science-based regulator – data, evidence and highly credentialed research drives our decision making and actions. This science-based thinking also contributes to sound, measured and usable guidance for people to follow in upholding their obligations in protecting the environment and human health.

## CASE STUDY

### At the beach and on the river

EPA's daily forecast programs, Beach Report and Yarra Watch, are two community focused activities run by EPA to help people make informed decisions about swimming and other recreational water-based activities.

The programs are conducted at 36 beaches in Victoria's Port Phillip Bay and four sites along the Yarra River.

Previously, monitoring was from 1 December 2021 to 14 March 2022. We will now run monitoring all year round so we can support the community in activities not confined to summer.

Yarra Watch is delivered in partnership with Melbourne Water and Beach Report is a joint program with Life Saving Victoria (LSV), with water quality information displayed on forecast signs at LSV clubs around Port Phillip Bay.

Beach Report had more than 15,000 subscribers to its daily SMS service and more than 13,000 Twitter followers.

Weekly microbial sampling results are compared to the Environment Reference Standard (ERS) short-term microbial objectives to assess if they are suitable for recreation.

In 2021-22, Beach Report weekly sampling results showed that 93% of samples had microbial levels that met ERS short-term objectives. For Yarra Watch, 63% of the samples met the short-term objectives. For both Beach Report and Yarra Watch sites, higher microbial levels were mostly associated with rainfall.

Beaches remain the safest place to swim in the Port Phillip Bay catchment and Warrandyte was the safest place to swim in the Yarra River. More 'Good' forecasts were issued this summer than the previous year.

To provide ongoing and valued public health information to the community, EPA continues to improve Beach Report and Yarra Watch by updating forecasting models, conducting sanitary inspections and researching the sources of pollution at Yarra Watch sites.

# Strengthened regulatory approach

Combining elements of education, support and deterrence, EPA's new regulatory approach motivates action and delivers improved outcomes for Victorian communities and the environment.

We apply a risk-based approach using science, intelligence and evidence to prioritise our efforts to where we can make the biggest impact.

When we make decisions under the act we are guided by the principles of environmental protection, and when we use our regulatory tools we ensure they are focused on the problem and desired outcome. We are committed to applying these tools in a way that is consistent, transparent and proportionate.

Our regulatory approach involves the following key elements:



**Inform and educate**



**Set standards**



**Support to comply**



**Monitor compliance**



**Enforce the law**



**Encourage higher performance**

# Our risk-based approach to managing harm

The new laws have given us the framework to minimise the risk of harm to human health and the environment from pollution and waste because the community and businesses now have an obligation to notify us about pollution incidents.

These reports help us to identify, assess, monitor and respond to harm or risks. People also need permission to undertake any activities that may cause harm – a licence for a high-risk prescribed activity, a permit for medium-risk prescribed activities or registration for a low-risk activity.

Permissions work alongside the GED and the act requires them to be made as soon as practicable after the duty holder becomes aware – or reasonably should have been aware – of the incident/s.

The act also details the environmental protection principles that, along with our incident response principles detailed in our *Environmental Protection Incident Management System Framework*, underpin our regulatory decision making.

This includes prioritising pollution reports and notifications to ensure our responses are consistent.

## Thinking strategically about organisational risk

A comprehensive review of EPA's Organisational Strategic Risks was done during 2021–22, driven by EPA's new laws, new operating model and the Strategic Plan.

In December 2021, our executive team participated in a risk workshop and proposed a range of strategic risks for consideration by our Risk and Audit Committee and approval by our Governing Board.

We developed risk appetite statements and tolerances to support organisational strategic risks.

These statements reflect the amount and type of risk EPA is willing to pursue or retain to achieve its strategic objectives before action is deemed necessary to reduce the risk and are an effective decision-making tool. The implementation and maturing of the risk appetite statements, risk tolerances and strategic risks is continually reviewed and refined.

# Research and development

This year, EPA defined a new research and development program that has reinvigorated our science partnerships. The program focuses on high priority areas to deliver new knowledge, technology and data on environmental and human health conditions, interventions and treatments.

New program objectives were defined to focus on four high priority areas:

- 1** Environmental monitoring, including emerging contaminants and water sensors 
- 2** Emerging issues, including biosolids and ultrafine particles 
- 3** Air quality and climate, including real-time air quality data from AusPost vehicles 
- 4** Environmental public health, including psychological health and public health tracking network 

## CASE STUDY

### Real-time water quality

We launched a new research project to find more diverse opportunities for expanding our water quality monitoring network.

Existing surface water quality monitoring techniques involve field staff collecting samples for laboratory analysis or water quality meters, both of which provide information only for a point in time the samples are taken. This is usually conducted following a pollution incident.

In order to move our water monitoring to match our new focus on prevention, while evolving to keep pace with existing and developing technologies and systems the new project focused on real-time always on monitoring.

We set up the project to understand if these real-time and low-cost water sensors could be used as a reliable and accurate information source to guide and support our strategic and operational decision making.

It includes integrating the water sensor data into data management systems to inform pollution identification, prioritisation and response.

The project used a combination of water sensors in high-risk areas of pollution within one or two selected catchments in Melbourne and we're assessing their efficacy for incorporating into our suite of water quality monitoring tools in the future.

# Prevention first

## Fire prevention

The Fire Prevention Program, which started in January 2021, continued to be delivered throughout 2021–22.

New guidance for the safe storage and handling of batteries – including lithium-ion batteries, a key ignition source for fires in waste and resource recovery facilities – was published and promoted.

This year more than 556 inspections, 196 statutory notices and 727 pieces of compliance advice were issued during site inspections (noting that some were for issues associated with other risks observed onsite).

These inspections, across 260 premises, have ensured targeted duty holders in the waste and resource recovery industry are controlling their fire risks in line with their obligations under the act, and reducing the overall risk of fires across the sector.

During the year one of the most non-compliant activity we saw was a duty holder's failure to identify their fire risks, thereby increasing these risks across waste and resource recovery facilities.

Fire risk identification is a crucial first step in a duty holder's understanding to effectively prevent or, where prevention is not possible, reduce the risk of fire.

## Preventing waste crime

The Waste Crime Prevention Program focuses on the detection, prevention and disruption of waste crime – that is, illegal waste disposal and associated waste crime operations. Using surveillance, intelligence and specialist investigative teams, major operations were conducted on the illegal disposal and storage of tyres, illegal disposal and storage of waste by skip bin operators, illegal disposal of asbestos, and illegal dumping of large volumes of contaminated soil.

Our investigations this year resulted in multiple charges being laid, statutory remedial notices issued to duty holders to rectify their waste disposal practices, and Information Gathering Notices to compel duty holders to provide evidence of the correct disposal of asbestos from demolition.

As of 30 June 2022, there were 21 active criminal investigations underway relating to illegal waste disposal and waste crime across metropolitan and regional Victoria, and a further 12 waste crime matters that are before the courts.

Forty potential waste crime incidents proceeded to an investigation, an increase of 15 from the previous year. We are implementing a National Disruption Program to detect, prevent and disrupt fraud risk within the waste industry that uses it as a front for other criminal activities. This program is an end-to-end process from detection, intelligence and investigation to pre-prosecutions.

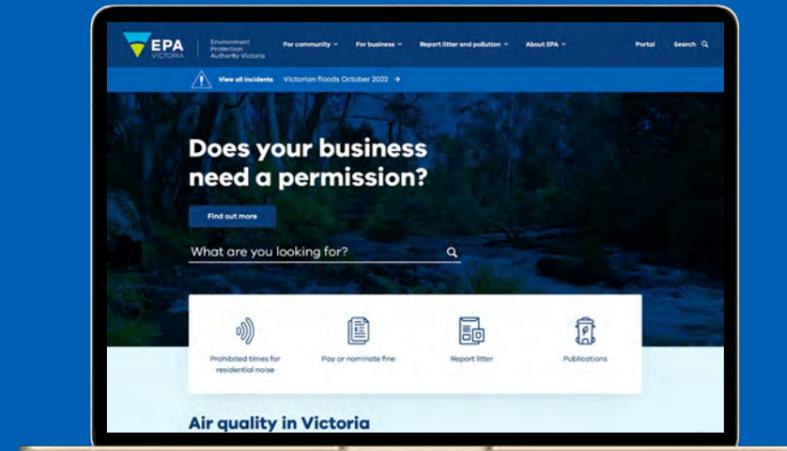
New joint intelligence, investigation and data sharing relationships have been established with other state EPAs and federal government departments through the Waste Crime Community of Practice and a new National Prevention Waste Crime Working Group to tackle the problem of waste crime.

# Environment protection in a digital world

As a result of the new laws, Waste Tracker, our system to track reportable priority waste, transitioned from a paper-based to an electronic system.

During 2021-22 we engaged with industry about Waste Tracker, who provided us with detailed feedback about suggested improvements.

Those improvements have and will be incorporated into our Waste Tracker digital channels, with a positive response from industry on the changes.



## The Go Live Command Centre: supporting industry transition to our new act

To support our people and our external stakeholders through the transition – or ‘go live’ – to the new *Environment Protection Act*, a Go Live Command Centre operated from 20 May until 31 September 2021. It played an important support role for the organisation, enabling us to manage the increase in the volume and complexity of internal and external queries relating to the new laws.

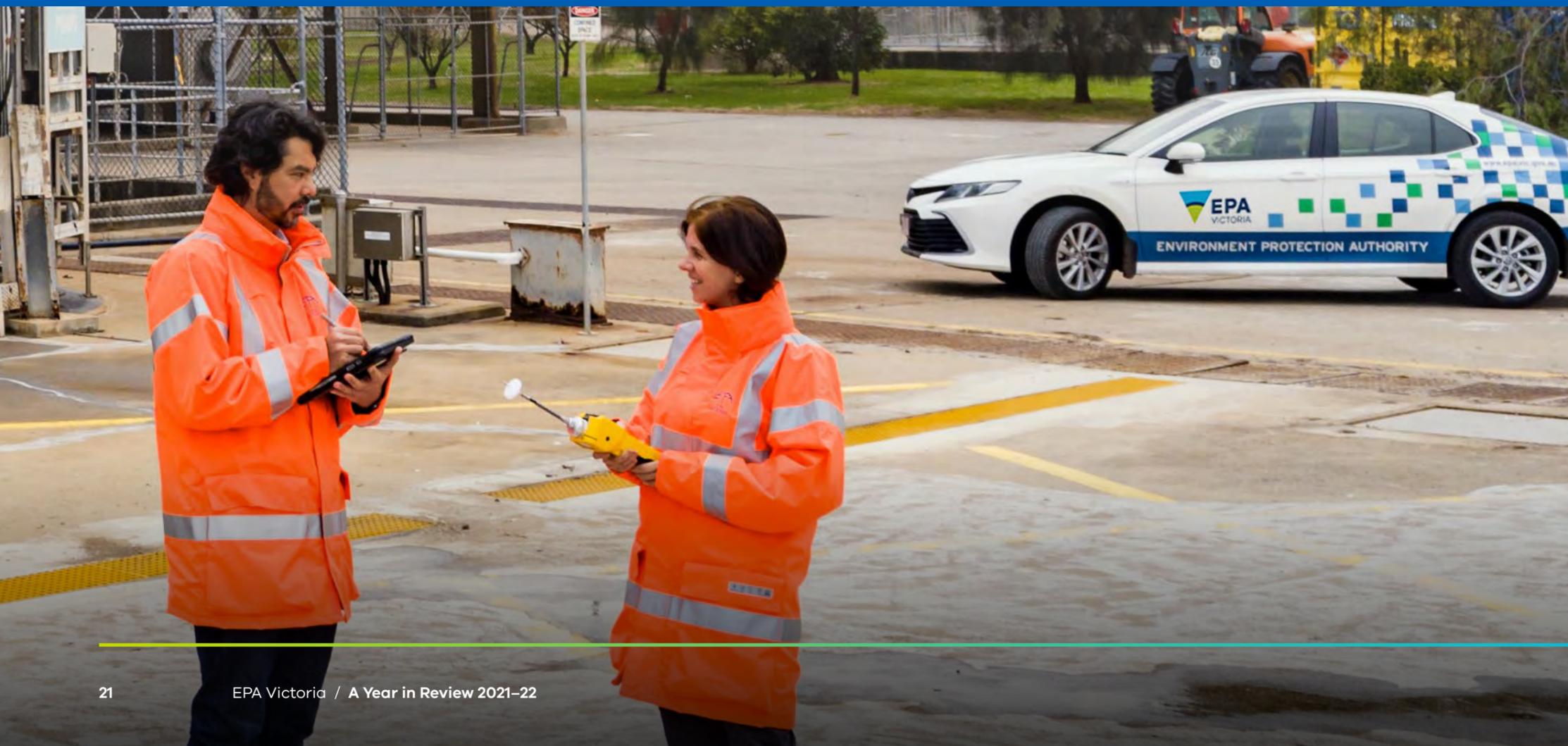
The centre addressed issues in relation to:

- receiving, processing and responding to technology, procedural and operational queries and issues about transitioning to the new act
- providing rapid responses to requests for support and guidance
- implementing crisis controls to ensure operations continue in the event of any system failures.

The Go Live Command Centre received more than 3,159 queries and resolved 2,748 of those. Eighty-nine per cent of queries came from external stakeholders with the most common related to Waste Tracker, user and sign-in issues, and questions about permissions.

## Transition of IT services to modernise our delivery

We conducted a thorough audit of our IT services and delivery model resulting in a decision to move providers. We transitioned our IT services to Capgemini, a major change for the organisation that matured our IT delivery model and delivered contracted service level agreements.



# Education and awareness raising

With new duties in the act, EPA needed to ensure responsible community members and duty holders were made aware of what they needed to do under the law.

The new Duty to Notify requires EPA to be notified about certain types of land and groundwater contamination.

This requires a person in management or in control of land that meets the definition of 'notifiable contamination' to tell us.

To assist with this change, a notification response framework was set up.

EPA field specialists worked with internal stakeholders to develop a process, identifying more than 60 improvements to the way we collect and manage contaminated land information. These include earlier detection of incomplete notices; ability to identify high-risk notifications within 24 hours; and other improvements outlined in an updated EPA guidance.

Another sector impacted by the new legislation, particularly the new environment protection framework, was environmental auditors.

Our support/advice included:

- Guidance for the clean-up and management of contaminated groundwater
- Environmental auditor guidelines – providing statements and reports for environmental audits and preliminary risk screen assessments
- A guideline for conducting preliminary risk screen assessments
- Transition guidance for environmental auditors

- Environmental auditor guidelines for appointment and conduct
- Guidelines for conducting environmental audits.

We provided support for and advice about the new legislation, landfills, wind energy facility verifications and contaminated land queries, including the new Preliminary Risk Screen Assessments.

EPA also hosted the annual auditors conference in June 2022, focusing on implementation of legislation; preliminary risk screen assessments and advice on scoped audits.



# Collaboration is key

Directly engaging across government and with industry and the community about the issues that matter to them is essential to EPA being a modern and effective regulator.

Engagement and collaboration is a vital tool for EPA to meet its own expectations and drive beneficial outcomes for communities and the environment. It is important that people know how they can contribute to preventing harm to our environment and community.

Here are just some of the ways we engaged and connected across Victoria.

## Kids Teaching Kids

Earthwatch Institute's Kids Teaching Kids program promotes positive wellbeing and helps build resilience in young people. It raises awareness and drives action on local and global environmental issues, bringing communities together to solve common challenges, inspiring the next generation of leaders who will take collective responsibility for our future. EPA has been in partnership with this program for several years and in 2021, we sponsored Spotswood Primary School to participate in the virtual Kids Teaching Kids Annual Conference. Supporting programs such as this help raise awareness of current and emerging environmental issues in school communities



## Breathe Melbourne

Led by Deakin University, EPA was a contributing partner on this research project, with the Department of Transport, Department of Health and Dyson. Based on Breathe London, the project featured primary school children from Melbourne's inner west as the citizen scientists, as they tracked air quality on their routes to and from school via wearable monitors built into Dyson backpacks. Data is still being collected and will be shared in late 2023.



## Farm World

In March 2022, EPA – and our small boat, the *Corinalla* which is used for marine sampling in Western Port Bay – attended one of Victoria's largest agricultural trade shows, Farm World, at Lardner in West Gippsland. We hosted an information booth and EPA's Chief Environmental Scientist and staff spoke with industry, community, businesses and schools. The show was also an opportunity to engage with children through science activities, promote EPA's citizen science program and recruit new citizen scientists for Latrobe Valley and the Gippsland region. Results from a survey taken during the event showed the community identified water quality concerns and school education projects as priorities, with 54% of participants requesting more education in schools. We are working with schools in the Latrobe Valley to educate students about their local waterways



## Incident intel

EPA provided scientific and technical advice to emergency services to support decision making in real time and informed the community about impacts to their environment and health. We worked with the Victorian State Emergency Service (VICSES), the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Fire Rescue Victoria and Melbourne Water to continually improve our partnerships for collaboration before, during and after incidents. We expanded our relationship with VICSES through a pilot program of smoke monitoring at regional SES units across Victoria. EPA provided real-time monitoring data to the community during and after emergencies via our website, EPA AirWatch and officers in the field



EPA regularly meets and communicates with external agencies such as the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and the Department of Treasury and Finance. We discuss strategic issues and operational and environmental factors affecting the implementation of our legal and program responsibilities. Depending on the nature of the risks and issues involved, we may provide reports to our Governing Board, its sub-committees and the Senior Executive Committee (SEC). EPA has appropriate governance arrangements in place to ensure clear accountability and oversight of any shared and state-significant risks.

## Our Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plan

In 2019, EPA started work on a three-year *Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plan* with the overarching vision of "embedding Traditional Owner cultural values within EPA's approach to environmental protection". The plan identified four priority areas of investment to achieve its objectives:

1. Cultural competency
2. Engagement and relationship building with Traditional Owners
3. Regulatory inclusion of cultural values
4. Workforce inclusion.

During this financial year we have continued to deliver a cultural competency program and developed a regulatory framework for engagement and guidance on how to apply Traditional Owner cultural values under the new act. We established an Aboriginal Strategy and Partnerships Unit to coordinate the program of work across EPA. Our activities have included:

- Cultural awareness and safety training under the service agreement with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), conducting 36 workshops attended by 508 EPA staff members
- 15 on Country sessions with 9 Traditional Owner corporations involving all 7 EPA regions and a total of 130 EPA staff
- Starting a cultural safety audit by VACCHO
- Engagement and partnerships with Traditional Owner Corporations.

# Our greatest asset – our people

With a workforce of more than 650 people we know that our investment in culture, inclusion and building capability helps support a productive and enjoyable environment for our people.

## Some of our 2021–22 highlights:

### Denison Organisational Culture Survey

In May 2022, we invited all staff to participate in the Denison Organisational Culture Survey, which designed to gauge staff members' underlying beliefs, values and assumptions, as well as the practices and behaviours that illustrate and reinforce them. More than 77% of staff participated in the survey which focused on the aspects of EPA's culture that have a direct link to performance. Culture action planning has happened across the organisation, with annual surveys to measure and track results.

### Leadership Development Program

EPA partnered with the NeuroLeadership Institute in April 2022 to scope, plan, implement and evaluate a leadership development program that was focused on looking after self and others and prioritising effectively. Leaders across EPA took part in the program and their feedback helped shape our new Leadership Capability Framework that will help guide and support leadership throughout the organisation.

### Gender Equality Action Plan

In order to truly represent, understand and serve Victorians, we need to reflect what they look like across all areas. It is for these reasons, in June 2022 we finalised our Gender Equality Action Plan. Tangible initiatives in this plan will be embedded in EPA's ways of working over the coming years. Following its finalisation the plan was provided to external stakeholders to ensure it met best practice standards. Diversity, inclusion and gender equity will ensure we draw on different ways of thinking to make the best decisions for our environment and communities.



# Our greatest evaluators – community and stakeholders

We are only as good as our service delivery, which is why we actively seek feedback from our community and stakeholders.

As part of this focus, EPA engaged research company RepTrak in early 2022. This was the first year this data has been collected from our community and stakeholders – those who have interacted with EPA in the past 12 months and have a general awareness of the organisation.

A series of questions focusing on seven core drivers of trust and satisfaction were provided to community and stakeholders; including their assessment of their and our responsibilities when it comes to environmental protection.

With a benchmark score of 78.6 which is in the high end of the 'strong' range, EPA has a solid foundation on which to continue to build levels of trust and respect within the community. For stakeholders, a score of 64.5 in the average range, there is opportunity for improvement and growth.

Targets have been embedded into our Strategic Plan 2022–27 to ensure we always work with the community and stakeholders in a constructive and effective way. Data from both groups will be collected and assessed on an annual basis.

# High risk sites and our clean-up work

The four-year *Circular Economy* program enhances EPA's ability to reduce harm to the Victorian community and the environment from high-risk and hazardous waste.

During 2021–22, key achievements in this program included:

- A reduction in the number of high-risks sites and entities
- New specialist capabilities embedded into EPA
- Improved coordination between agencies
- Establishment of a multi-agency Waste Intelligence Network to share intel on illegal waste activity.

## CASE STUDY

### Lemon Springs

In March 2021, we began remediation works at a property located in Lemon Springs, near Kaniva in the Wimmera district.

The site is an alleged waste dump with around 32 separate waste burial areas.

A variety of waste types was discovered, with more than 1,300 tonnes removed so far.

As of June 2022, waste removal has been completed in 25 of the 32 sites. Many acetylene cylinders continue to be discovered which are being safely excavated and stored until they can be removed from the area.

As a result of the waste, there was also a large volume of contaminated soil, most of which is being treated on site for safe reuse in backfilling excavated areas.



## CASE STUDY

### David Barry Logistics

An interagency team comprised of EPA, DELWP, WorkSafe Victoria, Victoria Police, Fire Rescue Victoria, Greater Dandenong Council and Melbourne Water reviewed the effectiveness of the David Barry Logistics consequence plan.

The company is located at Berends Road, Dandenong South, and minor improvements were included in a revised plan to enhance incident management planning, and information supporting emergency response and cross-agency preparedness.

In March 2022 EPA started operations to remove 1,163 intermediate bulk containers (IBCs) of liquid chemical waste stored at David Barry Logistics, Berends Rd, Dandenong South.

The IBCs each contained about 1,000 litres of liquid and were relocated to Dandenong South in 2018 from the former Bradbury Industrial Services chemical facility in Campbellfield and from an unlicensed warehouse in Campbellfield in 2019.

Following a fire at Bradbury's Campbellfield site in 2019, the company went into liquidation and denied responsibility for the IBCs.

Recognising the potentially serious risk to the community and the environment from the stored chemicals, we stepped in to oversee the clean up using our powers under the act.



Working closely with David Barry Logistics and the onsite contractor we ensured removal works were carried out safely and with minimal impact on the community, local businesses and the environment.

The liquid chemical waste in the IBCs was sampled and classified prior to its removal and EPA tracked all waste to its final destination. Clean-up was completed in June 2022.

Consequence and emergency plans were included on a register of high-risk sites to ensure cross-agency preparedness in the event of an emergency.

We established a review program with the key response agencies to assess the effectiveness of these plans and have progressively improved them to ensure their usefulness in the event of an incident.

We also piloted a joint inspection program in partnership with WorkSafe Victoria, Fire Rescue Victoria and local council representatives.

# Looking ahead

EPA's organisational Objectives and Key Results (OKR) annual goal setting methodology laid out ambitious and significant goals for the 2022-23 financial year.

Aligning with the five-year Strategic Plan, they strive to focus our resources on where we can make the biggest impact in reducing the risks of harm to our communities and the environment.

## Four key objectives were identified in this process

- 1** Make Victorians aware of their responsibilities to prevent harm to human health and the environment
- 2** Target priority risks of harm so our efforts are optimised to make the biggest difference
- 3** Integrate environmental public health into everything we do
- 4** Strengthen our culture and capability to achieve organisational excellence.

This work will be supported throughout the organisation with prioritisation and branch level delivery plans and reviewed quarterly to ensure we're continuing to focus our efforts and resources in the most impactful areas.

After significant changes in 2021-22, the next 12 months are about embedding new ways of working and continuing to meaningfully engage with communities, industry and businesses to ensure we protect the health of Victoria's people and environment.



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