



Annual Delivery Plan 2024-25

Environment Protection Authority Victoria



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EPA acknowledges Aboriginal people as the first peoples and Traditional Custodians of the land and water on which we live, work and depend. We pay respect to Aboriginal Elders past and present. As Victoria's environmental regulator, we pay respect to how Country has been protected and cared for by Aboriginal people over many tens of thousands of years. We acknowledge the unique spiritual and cultural significance of land, water and all that is in the environment to Aboriginal people and Traditional Custodians – and the continuing connection and aspirations for Country.

EPA prides itself on promoting and celebrating diversity and inclusion in our workplace. We want our organisation to be a reflection of the community we serve. We encourage all of our people to bring their whole selves to work and are committed to ensuring our workplaces are safe for them to do so.

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A message from the CEO



The 2024-25 financial year sees Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) enter the third year of delivering our **5-year strategic plan** and the fourth year of the Environment Protection Act 2017.

Both as Victoria's environmental regulator and as a public sector organisation, we've learned a lot over that period and have continued to improve our performance – and the performance of those we regulate – to protect the health of our communities and environment. This is in no small part because of the dedication, commitment and professionalism of our people.

EPA staff – whether on the frontline or behind the scenes – work with businesses, communities, and governments in an increasingly complex and challenging environment, as population growth, climate change, industry transition, and new and emerging threats put more and different demands on us.

While we are certainly up for the challenge, the simple fact is we can't do it all and need to prioritise our resources to the greatest risks and needs where we can make the biggest difference for the communities we serve.

This 2024-25 Annual Delivery Plan is the result of that prioritisation. To enable us to achieve the strategic outcomes we want to see by 2027, the next 12 months is about consolidation and focus – on our core regulatory role, and on the health and wellbeing of our people.

A focus on our core

To achieve this, we are pursuing opportunities to streamline and improve the delivery of our core services. Whether it's assessing applications for licences and permits, engaging with communities and businesses, administering our budget and finances, enforcing remedial notices, securing and managing data, or improving staff safety – we want everyone at EPA to focus on the basics of being an effective regulator and a great place to work.

We'll partner with others, and draw on our collective knowledge, skills and experience to work smarter, simplify processes, and manage risk get the best outcomes we can with the capability and capacity that we have, – for our communities and our environment.

Walking the talk on environmental performance

We've released our inaugural **Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Statement** outlining our commitment to sustainable and ethical practices, including how we'll meet our general environmental duty over the period to 30 June 2027. The coming 12 months will see us build the foundations we need to achieve this ambition.

We've set targets and will report against them, including to procure 100% renewable energy by 30 June 2025, to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 50% and to divert 80% of operational waste from landfill by 30 June 2027.

We are also committed to developing stronger partnerships and collaborations with First Nations people, and to increasing diversity, equity and inclusion in our workforce.

Causing others to act

In 2024-25, we'll continue our efforts to support the safe remediation of contaminated land to deliver new homes for Victorians, and to address priority harms, including the causes and consequences of climate change. We'll be targeting the biggest polluters – requiring them to do more to reduce their environmental impact. We'll use our regulatory tools to drive emissions reductions and improve climate adaptation across sectors, particularly energy, transport, manufacturing and waste.

The community also has a role to play. In the next year we'll expand our efforts to increase awareness of the general environmental duty, which requires everyone to take all reasonable steps to prevent or minimise harm to the environment and human health from their activities.

Being Victoria's environmental regulator is important work. I'm proud of the way our people front up everyday and rise to the challenges we face. I look forward to supporting and empowering them to be their very best – maintaining a healthy balance of their personal and professional lives – as we implement this 2024-25 Annual Delivery Plan.

It's a privilege to be in a position to make real difference to the quality of life of Victorians. At EPA, we don't take that privilege for granted.

Lee Miezis

Chief Executive Officer
Environment Protection Authority Victoria
1 July 2024



About EPA

Environment Protection Authority
Victoria was established in 1971 as
Victoria’s environmental regulator.

EPA is an independent statutory
authority, with a Governing Board
appointed by the Governor-in-
Council on the recommendation
of the Minister for Environment.

EPA’s role is to prevent and reduce
the harmful effects of pollution
and waste on Victorians and
their environment.

Our purpose

Protecting the health of our
communities and environment.

Outcomes we want to see

The outcomes we want to see over the 5-year period to 2027 are:



Our environment is cleaner
and communities are healthier



All Victorians reduce their
environmental risks



We have influence
and impact

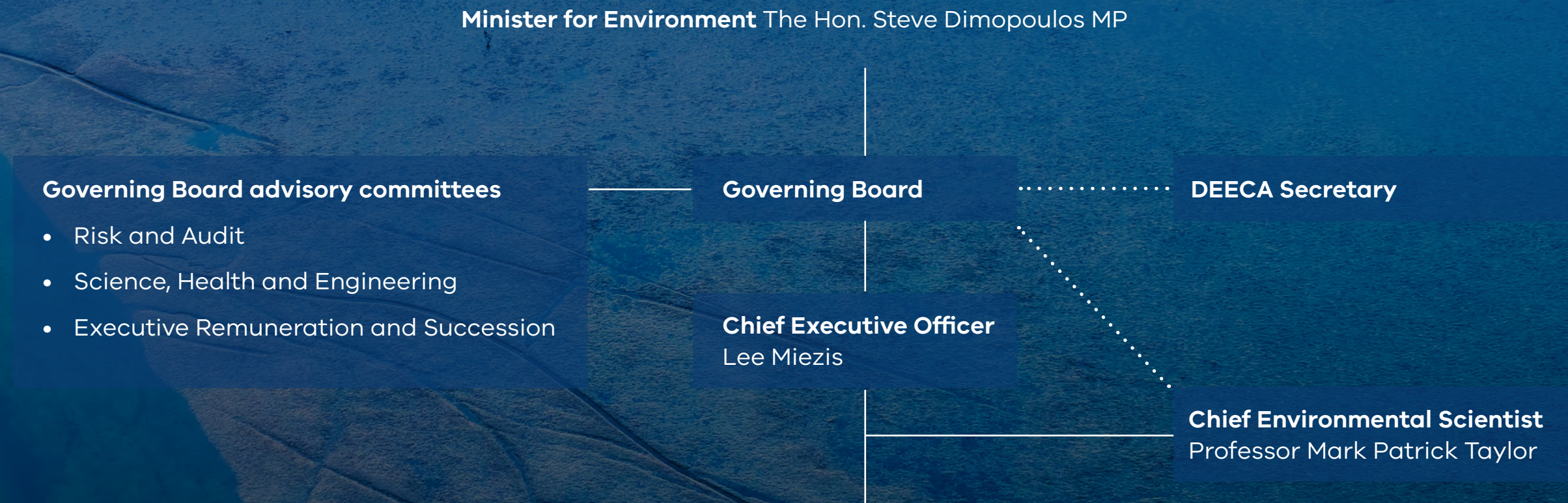
Our values

Every member of the EPA team,
in all aspects of our work, lives
the organisational values of:

We’ll also model the Victorian Public Sector values
of responsiveness, impartiality, accountability,
respect, leadership, and human rights.

	Integrity	We do the right things and encourage others to do the same
	Courage	We’re empowered to step up to our purpose
	Connection	We’re unified, inclusive, transparent and open
	Excellence	Doing the very best we can is our priority
	Tenacity	We’re focused, determined and accountable

Organisational structure



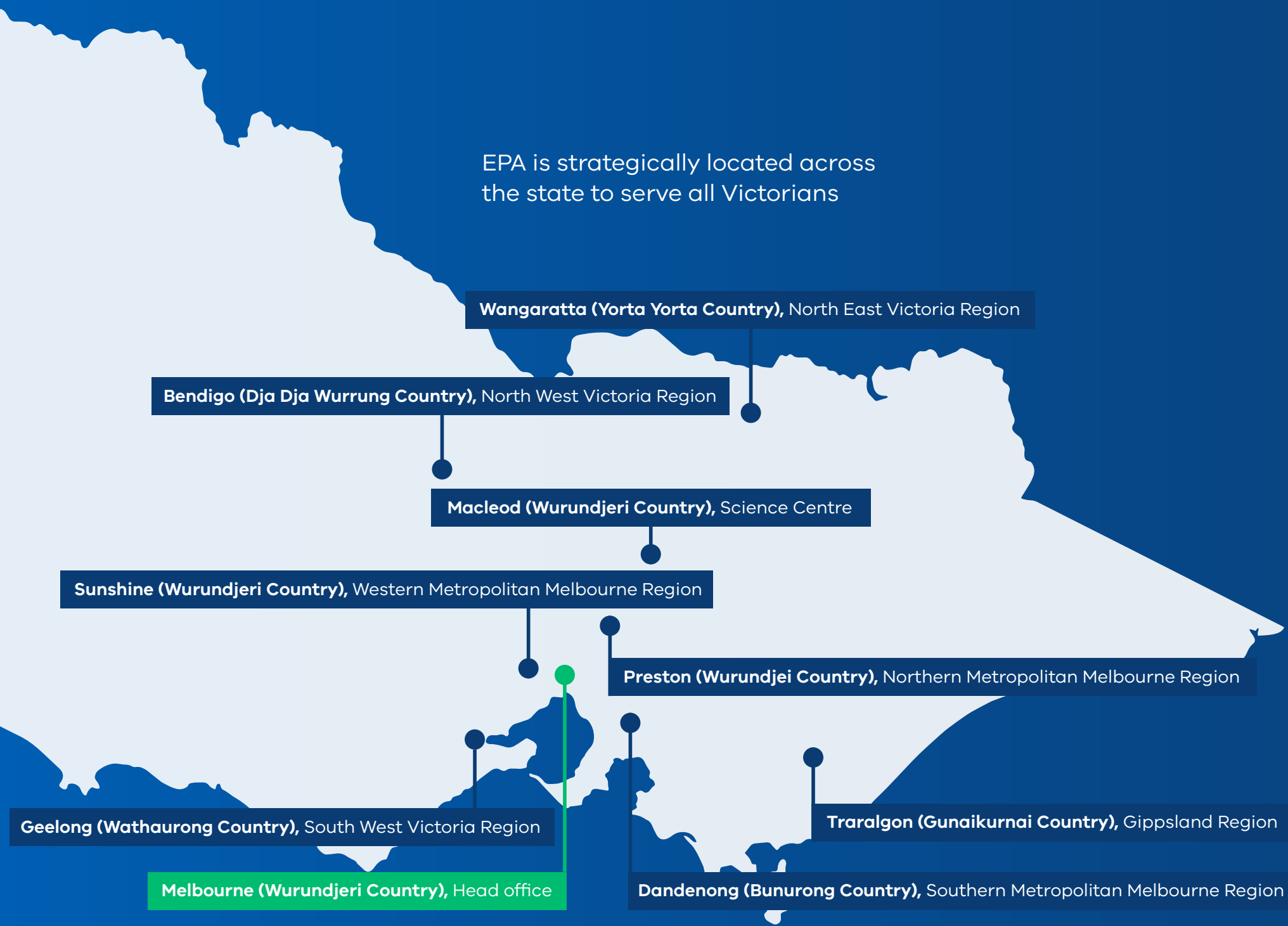
EPA is organised into seven main divisions and branches:



Regional presence

EPA is focused on preventing harm from pollution and waste by working with communities, governments and businesses, to build understanding and ensure compliance with Victoria’s environmental laws.

EPA is strategically located across the state to serve all Victorians



EPA at place

EPA has a place-based delivery model, with our team living and working across Victoria.

This means we can bring a consistent and aligned one-EPA approach to decision making, while tailoring our response to meet local requirements.



Reducing harms

Industrial, commercial, and domestic activities that can be a source of pollution and waste are important to a strong Victorian economy and society. We know that if not properly managed, these activities can cause harm to human health and the environment.

EPA focuses its resources and efforts on the greatest sources of harm. This allows us to make the biggest difference for all Victorians.

To identify these harms, we use science, data and intelligence, drawing on our technical expertise and operational experience. We're also guided by insights from community, industry and other partners, including local government and co-regulators. EPA continually monitors these key sources of harm and assesses our effectiveness in reducing them.

Key sources of harm that we've identified include:

Ongoing point source generators of industrial pollution and waste:

individual sites that emit significant amounts of pollution or generate significant volumes of hazardous waste as an inherent part of their operations.

Potential catastrophic events and other major failures:

hazard management and contingency planning are required wherever there is potential for major pollution events (floods or bushfires) or incidents (chemical release or fires in waste stockpiles).

Cumulative emissions from individual and diffuse sources:

an increasing number of individually small emissions (to air and water from noise, odour and litter) can lead to environmental problems or general reductions in the quality of local environmental, health and amenity values.

Spills and incidents from business and industry:

a large number of commercial and industrial activities can cause numerous incidental or accidental spills and discharges that are individually small but can lead to hot spots or local areas of reduced environmental quality.

Exposure to contaminants and legacy sites:

historical contamination (from known and emerging contaminants) can pose actual and potential health risks to the community.

Hidden and criminal activities creating new long-term risks:

pollution from hidden or covert actors (for example, illegal dumping) can create risks of new contamination or legacy sites and undermine regulatory and market-based frameworks.

Conflicts between adjacent land uses and ongoing encroachment:

incompatible land uses and the encroachment of residential development into buffers around industrial activities can cause environmental and public health impacts.

In developing our 2024-25 Annual Delivery Plan, we scanned known and emerging pollution and waste issues – those that cause current concern as well as those increasing risks to human health and the environment. From this scan, we found 6 areas we will focus on over the coming 12 months:



Managing the risks of harm from the causes and consequences of climate change.



Enabling the safe and sustainable renewal of contaminated land.



Enabling the safe reuse of waste.



Preventing fires at waste and resource recovery activities.



Reducing the risk of harm and impacts from landfills.



Reducing the illegal disposal of asbestos.



Delivering our Strategic Plan 2022-27

Each financial year, EPA produces an Annual Delivery Plan describing what we’re aiming to deliver over the coming 12 months. Our Annual Delivery Plan is aligned to our 5-year Strategic Plan and details how we’ll achieve the outcomes we want to see by 2027.

The 2024-25 Annual Delivery Plan defines our Objectives and Key Results (OKRs), as well as our core services and the projects we are investing in.

To ensure we are aligned and focused, our organisation-wide plan is supported by divisional and branch level planning, and performance and development plans for each individual member of our team.

These plans provide a greater level of detail about where we are putting our efforts for the coming 12 months.

The Annual Delivery Plan, our OKRs, services and projects, are reviewed each quarter considering changes in our operating environment, to make any required adjustments. This will enable us to be responsive in protecting the health of our communities and environment.



Objectives and key results

Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) are a goal setting methodology that align an organisation's efforts and resources to focus on key priorities.

OKRs require ambitious and significant objectives paired with measurable key results. We achieve our OKRs through the delivery of our core services and projects.

EPA has developed OKRs to align the organisation around a clear set of priorities for 2024-25 to drive us forward in achieving our 5-year strategic outcomes.

2024-25 organisational OKRs



Objective 1

Cause Victorians to act to prevent harm to human health and the environment

Key results

- 1.1 Increase the proportion of community members that say they have a high-level knowledge of the General Environmental Duty to 60%.
- 1.2 Increase small to medium enterprises in priority sectors that have confidence in managing their environmental risks by 20%.
- 1.3 Increase enforcement action against non-compliance with remedial notices five-fold.
- 1.4 Deliver six preventative regulatory programs targeting priority harms.



Objective 2

Demonstrate leadership on climate action, sustainability and environmental justice

Key results

- 2.1 Achieve 100% of 2024-25 targets in our Environmental, Social and Governance Statement 2024 to 2027.
- 2.2 Increase the proportion of major emitters and infrastructure operators that understand their obligations for managing the causes and consequences of climate change to 100%.



Objective 3

Enable efficient, effective and environmentally safe land development to provide new homes and other beneficial uses for the Victorian community

Key results

- 3.1 Identify gaps and opportunities to streamline regulatory processes relevant to land development by 30 June 2025.
- 3.2 At least 75% of interactions on land development meet timeliness and quality expectations of proponents.
- 3.3 All identified environmental and human health risks associated with the development of land for housing are appropriately managed by proponents.



Objective 4

Strengthen our culture and capability to achieve organisational excellence

Key results

- 4.1 Achieve an overall staff wellbeing score above 75%.
- 4.2 Increase our data maturity by 20% to enable data-led decision-making.
- 4.3 Manage expenditure within 5% variance (+/-) of budget.

Core services

In 2024-25, we'll continue to deliver our core regulatory and enabling services to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of pollution and waste on Victorian communities and the environment.

Core regulatory services

Inform and educate

We raise awareness of environmental duties, human health and environmental risks and impacts of activities, the importance of environmental quality and our role and jurisdiction.

Activities include:

- Community and business engagement.
- Implementing communication and education campaigns.
- Media management.
- Communication channels management (website, social media and contact centre).
- Environment condition reporting.
- Delivering citizen science programs.

Set standards

We set clear and authoritative environmental and environmental public health standards based on science, community aspirations and industry best practice.

Activities include:

- Developing regulatory instruments.
- Making rulings and determinations.
- Publishing guidance to support industry and community understand and meet their obligations.
- Informing Environmental Reference Standards and other requirements set by the Victorian Government.
- Setting expectations through conditions in permissions - licences, permits and registrations.
- Management of of financial assurance and levies.

Support to comply

We provide advice and guidance – strengthened through partnerships – to help individuals and businesses comply and improve their capability in identifying and managing their risks.

Activities include:

- Providing compliance advice and recommendations.
- Providing scientific advice and recommendations.
- Industry partnerships and program delivery.
- Major project facilitation.
- Providing land use and development advice and responding to referrals.
- Managing regulatory appointments and delegated powers.

Monitor compliance

We determine the level of compliance with duties and standards, and maintain a credible risk of detecting non-compliance.

Activities include:

- Acting on community reports and business notifications.
- Stewardship of the environmental auditor program.
- Compliance program management.
- Compliance and regulatory performance reporting.
- Conducting inspections.
- Conducting investigations and surveillance.

Enforce the law

We address non-compliance with the law by requiring parties to remedy non-compliance, seek redress for harms and, where appropriate, pursue a penalty or punishment.

Activities include:

- Issuing remedial notices, directions, and orders.
- Enforceable undertakings.
- Initiating civil proceedings and criminal prosecutions.
- Managing VCAT applications.
- Responding to third party civil remedies.
- Managing infringement programs.

Encourage higher performance

We work with leaders and partners to encourage higher performance, improve industry practices and inform future standards.

Activities include:

- Preventative program management.
- Environmental monitoring.
- Scientific research and development.
- Managing Better Environment Plans.
- Regulatory assurance and review.
- Program evaluation and lesson learned processes.

Core enabling services

Incident response

We provide support to emergency services in preparation for response to and recovery emergencies.

Activities include:

- Coordinated 24/7 operational response.
- Providing expert and technical advice.
- Undertaking exercising and scenario planning.
- Undertaking incident air and water monitoring.
- Implementing the Coordinated Prevention and Response Framework.
- High risk site clean-up.

Policy and strategy

We develop strategy and policy to support an integrated, modern and agile approach to preventing harm from pollution and waste.

Activities include:

- Providing regulatory policy and strategy.
- Implementing legislative changes to our role.
- Providing legal support and advice.
- Strategic programs and projects.
- Enterprise policies and strategy.
- Briefings and correspondence.

People and culture

We deliver people programs and services that ensure our leaders, and their people have the capability and capacity to foster a positive and high-performing culture.

Activities include:

- Health, safety and wellbeing programs.
- Employee relations, performance and workforce planning.
- Culture, diversity, equality and inclusion programs.
- Talent acquisition, on-boarding, people systems and payroll services.
- Learning and development programs.

Finance and planning

We manage our financial and other resources to deliver public value and are transparent about our performance in doing so.

Activities include:

- Financial and budget management.
- Enterprise risk management.
- Procurement and contract management.
- Facilities and fleet management.
- Enterprise planning.
- Performance reporting.

Data and information

We make sure that our technology, data and information management supports good decision making and drives business efficiencies.

Activities include:

- Managing information technology platforms and devices.
- Cyber security.
- Data governance.
- Data analytics and reporting.
- Freedom of Information.
- Privacy.

Partnerships and governance

We build partnerships to amplify our presence and reach, and ensure our governance processes are best practice.

Activities include:

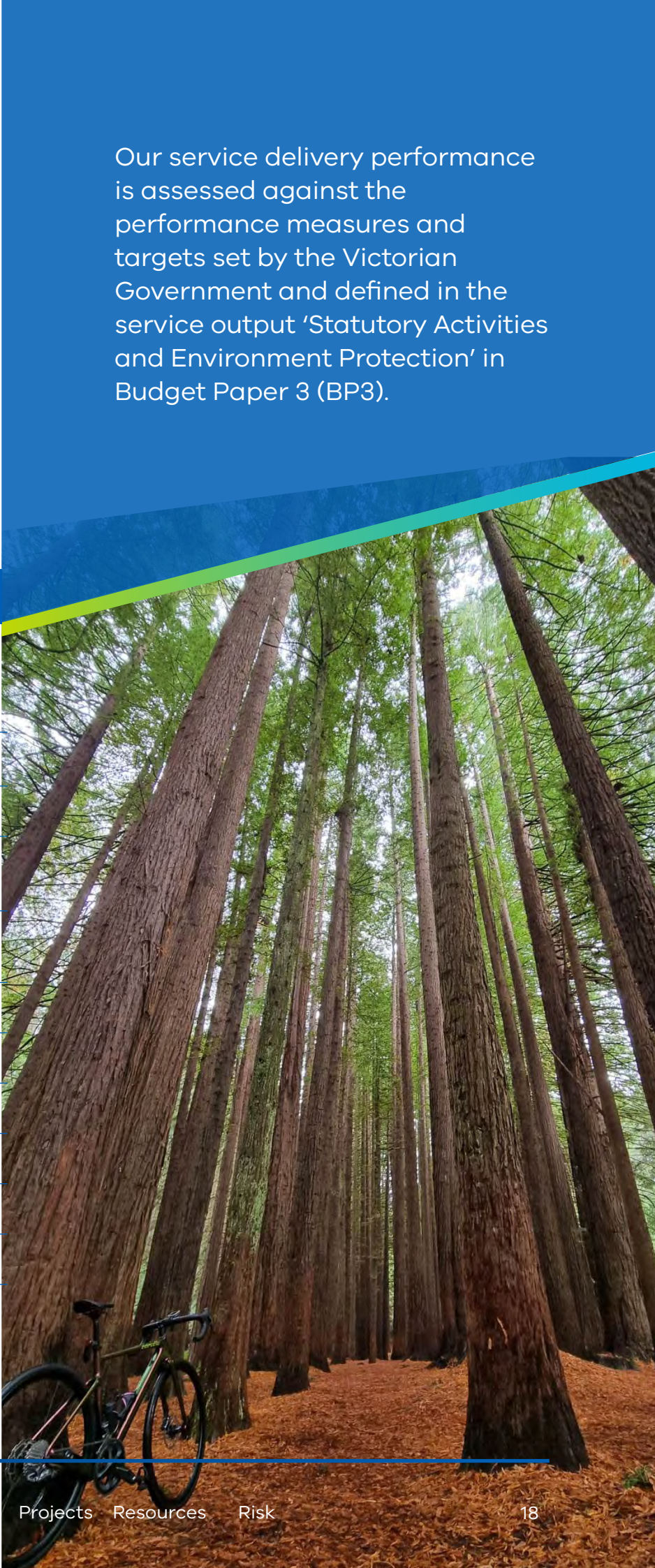
- Aboriginal inclusion and partnerships.
- Government and stakeholder relations.
- Inter-governmental co-ordination.
- Enterprise assurance.
- Internal and external audit.
- Governing Board and advisory committee Secretariat.

Performance measures



Our service delivery performance is assessed against the performance measures and targets set by the Victorian Government and defined in the service output ‘Statutory Activities and Environment Protection’ in Budget Paper 3 (BP3).

Performance measures	2024-25 target
Total inspections of business sites or premises conducted to prevent and respond to risks of harm to human health and the environment	4,000
Environment condition notifications provided to Victorians	>800
Victorian community trust in EPA	70 per cent
Environmental audits and preliminary risk screening assessment reports are reviewed to ensure administrative compliance with legislation and guidelines within 17 days of submission	80 per cent
EPA confirms duty holder compliance with remedial notice requirements, or escalates for further action, within 17 days of the compliance due date	80 per cent
Pollution reporters requesting follow up by EPA receive contact within five working days	75 per cent
Applications for licences and permits completed within statutory timelines	50 per cent
EPA advice on planning matters is provided within required timeframes	65 per cent
Applications for internal review of remedial notices completed within statutory timeframes	100 per cent
EPA provides technical advice to lead agencies within required timelines during emergency incidents	90 per cent
EPA responds to priority waste incidents within 15 hours of notification	90 per cent



Projects

We've identified 22 projects for inclusion in this 2024-25 Annual Delivery Plan. The full complement of the projects to be delivered in 2024-25 are identified in divisional and branch level plans.



1. Improving the management of pollution reports.
2. Reducing impacts to communities and the environment from landfills.
3. Reducing risks of harm from underground petroleum storage systems.
4. Developing a risk-based framework for recreational water quality at Port Philip Bay beaches.
5. Embedding our noise measurement methodology and regulatory approach for Wind Energy Facilities.



6. Developing a national guideline for managing end-of-life lithium-ion batteries.
7. Ensuring regulatory pathways for the safe management of waste in preparation for animal disease emergencies.
8. Implementing our regulatory approach on climate change.
9. Streamlining support and approvals for spoil management.
10. Implementing a new Environmental Auditor appointment program (Year 2).

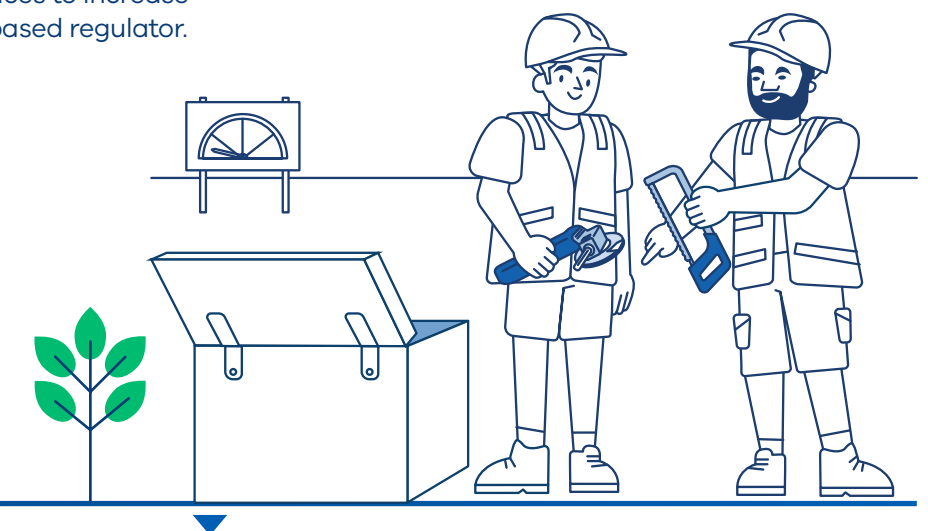


11. Improving our internal and external channels - website, intranet and reporting tools (Year 2).
12. Implementing our new regulatory decision-maker program (Year 2).
13. Uplifting our investigation capability.
14. Making Waste Tracker more efficient for users.
15. Developing a successor to our Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plan in collaboration with Traditional Owners.
16. Streamlining science services to increase our impact as a science-based regulator.



17. Uplifting our integrity framework.
18. Enhancing the wellbeing of our staff.
19. Improving our digital systems capability.
20. Securing our information systems and data (Year 2).
21. Delivering the Environment Protection On Country Program (Year 2).
22. Upgrading our finance system.

We'll also deliver projects that will support us to achieve our objectives by strengthening the culture and capability of EPA. These projects are aimed at creating a great place to work and making us more efficient and effective in fulfilling our role.



Resources

EPA's process for annual planning is holistic, considering its Strategic Plan 2022-27, the Environment Protection Act 2017 and other legislation, Government requirements, strategic risks and financial capacity.

The annual Delivery Plan 2024-25 was developed with organisation-wide involvement and is supported by the allocation of resources to enable its achievement.

Our budget

EPA's revenue for 2024-25 is forecast at \$156.7 million, with expenditure of \$180.2 million.

Due to the timing of when revenue is received, EPA uses its cash reserves to manage cashflows and achieve a balanced budget.

Summary of 2024-25 budget		(\$ million)
Revenue		
Municipal and industrial landfill distribution	81.7	
Prescribed waste levies	65.0	
Fees, fines, licence levies, other	9.8	
Specific project funding and initiative funding	0.2	
Total revenue	156.7	
Operating expenditure		
People costs (salaried and agency staff)	110.7	
Information technology costs	28.6	
Contracted services	18.7	
Accommodation costs	10.4	
Other costs (including legal costs, grants, fees)	11.8	
Total operating expenditure excluding Depreciation	180.2	
Total capital expenditure - scientific equipment	1.2	
Draw down on cash reserves	24.7	
Net result	-	



Our people

As at 1 July 2024, EPA has a total of 773 staff, with 715 ongoing positions in the organisation.

	Ongoing	Fixed term	Total
Operations Division	320	9	329
Science Division	74	10	84
Strategy Division	142	16	158
Corporate Services Division	94	15	109
Legal Branch	27	2	29
Public Affairs Branch	21	0	21
Quality Branch	32	4	36
Office of the CEO	5	2	7

A high-performing culture

Our people are our most valuable asset. We prioritise their safety and wellbeing, creating a positive culture and a great place to work.

We check our organisational culture through biennial cultural surveys that measures critical traits of culture and leadership using the Denison Organisational Culture Survey model, and our quarterly pulse surveys of employee wellbeing and engagement. These surveys enable us to receive direct feedback from staff about how they are experiencing EPA as a workplace and help us to strengthen organisational performance.

Based on our survey results, we developed culture action plans to strengthen a high-performing culture at EPA. In 2024-25 we'll focus on delivering our culture action plans and on ensuring we continue to build the culture our staff have told us they want at EPA.

Risk management

EPA is committed to meeting the requirements of the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework, promoting a positive risk culture, with risk management systematically embedded in annual delivery planning, and all activities and processes across the organisation.

We've identified 7 organisational strategic risks that could impact the achievement of the strategic outcomes defined in our 2022-27 Strategic Plan.

We've established treatment actions to mitigate these risks. Management of organisational strategic risks is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Senior Executive Committee.

The outcomes of this monitoring and review are reported to the Risk and Audit Committee and the Governing Board biannually or as required.

Operational risks are identified and managed through divisional and branch level plans.



Staff health, safety and wellbeing deviates from plan



Funding differs from requirements to deliver core services



Response to pollution and/or waste event deviates from regulatory requirements



Cyber security incidents



Unforeseen significant environmental and/or public health issues



Variation in social licence to operate



Corrupt conduct

Appendix

2022-27 Strategic
Plan Summary

Strategic Plan 2022-27

Environment Protection Authority Victoria

Our purpose

Protecting the health of our communities and environment

Our values

Integrity, courage, connection, excellence, tenacity



The outcomes we want to see We've identified the strategic outcomes we want to see by 2027	 Our environment is cleaner and communities are healthier	 All Victorians reduce their environmental risks	 We have impact and influence
The choices we've made We've made strategic choices to set us on the path to the outcomes we want	<p>We focus on air, water, land and noise pollution that causes the greatest harm</p> <p>We work to understand and respond to current and emerging issues through science, data and intelligence</p> <p>We'll be practical and solution focused to ensure we take the right approach in each circumstance</p>	<p>We embed the environment protection framework ensuring it is widely understood and implemented</p> <p>We're consistent, transparent and proportionate in holding polluters to account</p> <p>We work with communities, industry and businesses so they act to prevent harm to the environment and human health</p>	<p>We build effective partnerships that amplify our knowledge, reach and presence</p> <p>We respect the knowledge and cultural values of Traditional Owners and seek to understand and include those values in our work</p> <p>We employ our full range of regulatory capabilities</p>
What we're aiming to achieve To see the outcomes we want, we've defined what we're aiming to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Improved air and water quality✓ Reduced land contamination and noise pollution✓ Businesses have appropriate permissions in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Increased understanding among communities and businesses of their environmental obligations✓ Increased adoption of environmental and human health risk controls✓ Industrial waste disposed of at a lawful place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Reduction in repeat polluters✓ Increased proactive detection of environmental crime✓ Effective internal review and assurance processes that drive continuous improvement
Our performance measures and targets To monitor our performance against the outcomes we want, we've established measures and targets	<p>Number of days that the maximum concentration standards for one or more of nitrogen dioxide, ozone, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} is exceeded - 2027 target: 0 days</p> <p>Percentage of monitoring sites that meet long-term microbial water quality standards - 2027 target: 93 per cent</p> <p>Percentage of high risk contaminated land sites under active management - 2027 target: 95 per cent</p> <p>Number of premises required to take remedial action because of noise - 2027 target: 35 premises</p>	<p>Percentage of pollution reports requiring a field response by EPA due to possible human health and/or environmental impacts - 2027 target: 4.5 per cent</p> <p>Percentage of permissioned businesses that have appropriate risk controls implemented at their site or premises - 2027 target: 95 per cent</p> <p>Percentage of the Victorian community that know about the general environmental duty - 2027 target: 80 per cent</p>	<p>Percentage of the Victorian community that are aware of EPA - 2027 target: 95 per cent</p> <p>Percentage of the Victorian community that trust EPA - 2027 target: 90 per cent</p> <p>Number of citations of EPA science - 2027 target: 1,275 citations</p>

The drivers of our success

- Our people are our most valuable asset. We prioritise their safety and wellbeing, creating a positive culture and a great place to work.
- We're a learning organisation, committed to continuous improvement.
- We use science, data and intelligence to inform our actions.
- We're agile and responsive, leaning into challenges.
- We're clear about our role and accountable for our actions.
- We engage early, often, and respectfully with those affected by our decisions, seeking to understand their aspirations and concerns.
- We use technology to be more effective and efficient in our work.
- We build appropriate partnerships with industry to achieve compliance with the environmental protection framework.



Interpreter Services



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than English,
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