

Australian Government Director of National Parks



Director of National Parks

Annual Report 2012–13

Managing the Australian Government's protected areas

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Credits

Front cover

Acacia alata photographed at the Australian National Botanic Gardens – David Woltschenko Sunrise at Booderee National Park, looking out to Bowen Island

Little kingfisher, Kakadu National Park – *Louise Denton* Red crab, Christmas Island National Park Kakadu ranger Samantha Deegan with baby northern quoll Background image: sea urchin – *Margarita Goumas* Maps – Environmental Resources Information Network Designer – Papercut Editor – Byron Smith for Embellish Creative Indexer – Barry Howarth Printed by – Union Offset Co. Pty Ltd

Map data sources

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Projection: Albers Equal Area Datum: GDA 1994



Australian Government Director of National Parks



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Annual Report 2012–13

Managing the Australian Government's protected areas



Figure 1: Locations of Commonwealth parks and reserves which are the responsibility of the Director of National Parks in 2012–13

Reserve Name	Map Label
Terrestrial Reserve	
Australian National Botanic Gardens	А
Booderee National Park	В
Christmas Island National Park	С
Kakadu National Park	D
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	E
Pulu Keeling National Park	F
Uluṟu–Kata Tjuṯa National Park	G
Marine Reserve	
Abrolhos	1
Apollo	2
Arafura	3
Argo-Rowley Terrace	4
Arnhem	5
Ashmore Reef	6
Beagle	7
Boags	8
Bremer	9
Carnarvon Canyon	10
Cartier Island	11
Central Eastern	12
Cod Grounds	13
Coral Sea	14
Dampier	15
East Gippsland	16
Eastern Recherche	17
Eighty Mile Beach	18
Flinders	19
Franklin	20
Freycinet	21
Gascoyne	22
Geographe	23
Gifford	24
Great Australian Bight	25
Gulf of Carpentaria	26
Heard Island and McDonald Islands	27
Hunter	28
Huon	29

Reserve Name	Map Label
Jervis	30
Joseph Bonaparte Gulf	31
Jurien	32
Kimberley	33
Limmen	34
Lord Howe	35
Macquarie Island	36
Mermaid Reef	37
Montebello	38
Murat	39
Murray	40
Nelson	41
Ningaloo	42
Norfolk	43
Oceanic Shoals	44
Perth Canyon	45
Roebuck	46
Shark Bay	47
Solitary Islands	48
South-west Corner	49
South Tasman Rise	50
Southern Kangaroo Island	51
Tasman Fracture	52
Twilight	53
Two Rocks	54
Wessel	55
West Cape York	56
Western Eyre	57
Western Kangaroo Island	58
Zeehan	59



Our mission

To assist the Minister and the Minister's department in the conservation and appreciation of Australia's biological diversity and associated cultural heritage through leadership and cooperation in the management of Australia's protected areas, building knowledge of Australia's biodiversity and working with Indigenous Australians.

Our values and approaches

As part of the Environment portfolio, Parks Australia is committed to professionalism as a major public service institution serving the Australian Government and Minister in accordance with the values of the Australian Public Service and specific departmental values including:

- caring for the environment
- respecting and responding to the values of Indigenous landowners and other partners
- engaging with and responding to stakeholders
- providing leadership and being active team contributors
- · committing to learning and development
- · committing to excellence in operations
- accepting responsibility and being accountable
- acting with integrity and achieving results.

We achieve our objectives by:

- basing our work on the best available information and analysis
- working in partnerships to improve environmental, cultural and heritage outcomes
- communicating and influencing effectively
- · valuing and investing in our people to develop their capabilities
- effectively managing risks
- · developing and delivering high-quality policies and programs
- · managing change in a strategic and flexible manner
- monitoring and managing performance to ensure cost-effective outcomes.

Managing the Australian Government's protected areas

An organisational snapshot

The Director of National Parks is the statutory agency responsible for the Australian Government's terrestrial and marine protected area estates. The Director is assisted by Parks Australia, a division of the environment department, in managing terrestrial and marine reserves. The department's Australian Antarctic Division is responsible for one marine reserve.

In 2012–13 the Director of National Parks:

- managed seven terrestrial reserves comprising six national parks and the Australian
 National Botanic Gardens
- managed 59 marine reserves and one conservation zone
- managed Calperum and Taylorville Stations through a contract with Austland Services Pty Ltd
- employed 260 full-time equivalent staff around Australia
- recorded a total price output of \$72.0 million.

Major highlights for 2012–13

- Proclamation of the world's biggest network of marine reserves which now protects more than 2.8 million square kilometres of ocean environment. The declaration of the new marine reserves represents a major achievement for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of Australia's oceans. The final management plans for the marine reserve network were tabled in Parliament in March 2013.
- Koongarra was incorporated into Kakadu National Park in February 2013 ending the prospect of uranium mining in this area. This decision supports the wishes of Djok traditional owner Jeffrey Lee to secure protection of his country for future generations.
- Three new premier ecotourism destinations—the Wet Tropics, Tasmania's Island Heritage and Sydney Harbour—were added to Australia's iconic National Landscapes collection.
- Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park won the Qantas Australian Tourism Award for best major tourism attraction. This award recognises the park as a world-class tourism destination based on efforts to protect threatened species and keep alive traditional cultural ties to the country.

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1 Director's review

The year in review

A period of organisational change Conserving biodiversity Supporting tourism Improving infrastructure International developments Business and financial management Our people Looking ahead

Certification

← Many of Australia's beautiful and diverse flora are growing in the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Photo: David Woltschenko

The year in review

Our work took a major new focus this year, with the declaration of 40 new Commonwealth marine reserves in November 2012 creating the world's most comprehensive, representative and largest marine reserves network. With the preparation, approval and tabling in Parliament in early 2013 of six management plans covering the network, the responsibility for implementing new management arrangements commenced with the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network management plan coming into effect on 1 July 2013. The remaining management plans are scheduled to commence on 1 July 2014.

Of huge cultural significance was the passage of legislation through Parliament that incorporated the Koongarra area into Kakadu National Park. This marked the end of a very long campaign led by Djok traditional owner Jeffrey Lee to bring his country into the park and protect it forever from uranium mining.

A period of organisational change

The 2012–13 financial year has been a period of significant structural change for Parks Australia. The marine reserves management team joined us in early 2013 and two protected area teams departed when responsibility for administering the National Reserve System and Indigenous Protected Area programs transferred to the department.

Taken together, these two highly successful programs have resulted in a doubling of Australia's terrestrial protected area estate since their inception.

The commitment to establish a national reserve system was made in the early 1990s with the groundwork laid with the creation of two major national datasets—the national biogeographic regionalisation or IBRA, and the national database of protected areas or CAPAD. From these beginnings, innovative thinkers committed to working with Indigenous land owners on conservation and looking after culture and country, pioneered the concept of Indigenous Protected Areas.

The formal establishment and inclusion of the National Reserve System program, initially through the Natural Heritage Trust and subsequently through the Caring for our Country Program, provided a major investment that supported the purchase or expansion of over 300 national parks and reserves across the country. By 30 June 2013 there were also 59 Indigenous Protected Areas declared, comprising more than a third of the National Reserve System.

We're proud of the role we have played over the past two decades developing and administering these programs, and of the significant contribution they have made to protecting Australia's biodiversity and landscapes.

Conserving biodiversity

Comments from prominent environmentalists on the ongoing decline of native mammal populations across northern Australia led to a lively and timely debate on the role and effectiveness of reserves in protecting species from extinction. In common with all reserve managers, our park managers are only too well aware of the intensifying pressures on native species—from climate change, weeds and feral animals just to name a few—and we manage our parks to maintain functional ecosystems and support resilience against threatening processes.

We continue to look for new ways to tackle biodiversity challenges. This year Kakadu National Park hosted leading scientists, researchers, traditional owners and on-ground conservation staff at a workshop designed to update the park's threatened species strategy with the latest scientific thinking. On Christmas Island, a further successful aerial baiting program provided relief from the impacts of invasive crazy ants, while a promising long-term control solution is getting closer to on-ground testing. Recently completed research indicates that biological control is feasible and we are about to embark on a trial control program in partnership with La Trobe University.

The pressures on our biodiversity in the wild mean that rescue and insurance operations are sometimes required, such as the collection and storage of seed from endangered plants by the Australian National Botanic Gardens and captive breeding or translocation of threatened animals.

Pulu Keeling National Park this year translocated Cocos buff-banded rails to a rat-free island to establish an insurance population for this species that for many years only survived in the park. Previous successful interventions include the captive-breeding of two of Christmas Island's drastically declining native reptiles and the re-introduction of the endangered and culturally important mala or rufous hare-wallaby to Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park. These successes and the investments that underpin them highlight an important issue. With finite resources, can we afford to save everything and, if we can't, what do we try to save and on what do we base those difficult decisions? This is clearly a controversial matter but one which we are increasingly being forced to face—this debate will undoubtedly continue for some time yet.

While we have many challenges with declining biodiversity there are also successes. Our ongoing fox control effort at Booderee National Park has been rewarded with healthy populations of birds and mammals subject elsewhere to fox predation, including stable numbers of the endangered eastern bristlebird. Research undertaken at Kakadu through the Australian Government's National Environmental Research Program has doubled the number of records of the speartooth shark and highlighted the importance of the park's tidal rivers and estuaries for this critically endangered species. At Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a, control efforts in biodiversity-rich areas of the park have led to a reduction in the number of feral animals recorded.



Supporting tourism

A key continuing challenge for both our parks and our tourism partners is how to best to arrest the decline in domestic and international visitors, and the resultant revenue impacts on park budgets. While this decline is generally held to be a flow-on effect of the global financial crisis and the high value of the Australian dollar, changing patterns of leisure travel have resulted in shorter trips, and lower visitation to regional and remote areas. For the two parks in the Northern Territory where these issues are most pronounced, a high priority continues to be working closely with the tourism industry and tourism organisations to encourage and facilitate the development of new visitor experiences to attract, educate and immerse domestic and international tourists in the natural and cultural riches of these parks.

To help assess visitor needs and guide visitor management planning, we conducted visitor experience assessment workshops with our tourism stakeholders on Christmas Island and the Jim Jim/Twin Falls precinct of Kakadu. The workshops kick-started the production of visitor experience plans to enhance existing experiences and identify potential new ones. Collaborative work with traditional owners, local communities, the tourism industry, the Central Land Council, and Tourism NT continues at Uluru–Kata Tjura to identify new visitor experiences and bring them to market.

This year our partnership with Tourism Australia continued to flourish with the launch of the Wet Tropics, Tasmania and Sydney Harbour as part of Australia's National Landscapes program, completing the suite of 16 National Landscapes. Eleven experience development strategies are finalised, with the remaining five underway. The strategies are a vital tool for the tourism industry in each Landscape to identify, encourage and guide the development of new experiences and conservation initiatives.

We were all very proud when Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a was recognised as Australia's best major tourist attraction in the 2012 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards. This is the first time a national park has won this award and confirms Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a as an outstanding hallmark attraction, providing international and domestic tourists with a world-class experience in one of Australia's most iconic World Heritage sites. The award also recognises the commitment by traditional owners and our staff to offer visitors the opportunity to engage with a complex story of culture and connection to country.

At Booderee, two tourism businesses run by traditional owners from the Wreck Bay Community continue to thrive and broaden their product offering. Improved website information, and refreshed brochures and signs resulted in the park's best ever camping revenue. In Kakadu, the Indigenous-owned Yellow Water Cruises continued its success, awarded Best Major Tour in the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards. At Uluru–Kata Tjuta over 300 new interpretive and information signs were installed, providing a greater insight into the park's natural and cultural values. This year's visitor surveys continued to record very high visitor satisfaction levels in our national parks.

Our staff at Kakadu have worked hard over the year to transition a range of tourism activities from permits to more flexible commercial activity licences. New licence arrangements are set to commence on 1 April 2014. The revised commercial arrangements pave the way for commercial operators and traditional owners to introduce new visitor experiences at Uluru–Kata Tjura and Kakadu, particularly for tourism products that involve a degree of exclusivity.



We work hard to maximise opportunities to promote our parks across the media. This year we have reached many more potential visitors via our improved web and social media presence. Regular use of Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and a Parks Australia blog is building interest in our parks. We have strategically arranged web content to better market our parks to an international audience—bringing foreign language visitor guides and other information to the home page of each of our parks is one example. We have also added new features such as a learning guide for Indigenous languages spoken at Uluru–Kata Tjura, more educational materials for kids and schools, audio tours, and five birdwatching apps to educate and enhance the experience for visitors.

Improving infrastructure

Managing infrastructure effectively is another challenge for our reserves. During the year we began implementing our new strategic management asset framework which allows for asset planning and forecasting over a three to five year period. The framework links asset procurement and management with relevant risk, work, health and safety considerations. QR asset barcodes are attached to most assets allowing more efficient stocktake processes.

Work on the new Red Centre Garden at the Australian National Botanic Gardens is well underway. It will be a spectacular addition to our Gardens when opened later in 2013.

We have completed our planning and design for the replacement of Murray's Wharf at Booderee with construction scheduled for the second half of 2013.

We've upgraded the 'Pink House' research centre on Christmas Island to provide better facilities for researchers and expanded our dedicated housing for captive populations of the island's threatened native reptiles. Norfolk Island National Park completed a purpose-built 'Discovery Centre' which is set to be a drawcard for all visitors to the island, featuring hands-on displays about the park, its plants, animals and history.

International developments

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organisation and Australia is a significant contributor to its work. In September I was privileged to lead the Australian delegation to the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Korea where IUCN's priorities and work program are set for the next four years.

A key issue discussed in Korea was planning for the sixth World Parks Congress which Australia is hosting in Sydney in November 2014. Held at 10-year intervals since 1962, this major global forum is the world's largest and most influential gathering of parks and protected area experts. The Congress helps set a positive policy agenda for protected area management around the world, establishing the priorities and new commitments for protected areas over the coming decade. Some 3000 delegates from around 160 countries are expected to attend, many of whom will get to visit and experience our national parks. We're working closely with our co-hosts, IUCN and the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, on planning for the Congress.



Australia is a signatory to the Nagoya Protocol, an international treaty which promotes ethical and sustainable use of genetic resources in a rapidly expanding multi-billion dollar industry. Under the framework of this treaty, Parks Australia manages Australia's globally recognised access and benefit-sharing system covering Commonwealth land and waters. In November we continued our capacity-building work in the Pacific Region by hosting the first ever Oceania Biodiscovery Forum. The forum provided an opportunity for researchers and policy officers from across the South Pacific to exchange ideas about the sustainable use of biodiversity and how best to implement this new international regime in the region.

As well as participating in key global forums, our parks hosted a number of international visitors this year. In October Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a hosted the German State Minister for Culture and Media, Bernd Neumann, who visited the park's cultural centre and met local A<u>n</u>angu artists. A high-level delegation from Papua New Guinea, headed by the Minister for Environment and Conservation, the Hon John Pundari MP, visited the Australian National Botanic Gardens in November as part of consultations with government officials in Canberra. Following the World Indigenous Conference in May, Kakadu hosted a delegation from New Zealand led by distinguished Maori leaders Sir Tumu Te Heu heu, the eighth paramount chief of the Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Tā Mark Solomon, Kaiwhakahaere Chair, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, and Mr Kevin Prime. National delegates from Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Solomon Islands and other countries also visited Kakadu following the conference. In June we shared knowledge on management of national parks and protection of cultural sites with visiting officials from East Timor.

Business and financial management

The Minister for Finance and Deregulation approved an operating loss of \$9.80 million for the 2012–13 financial year, which had arisen primarily as a result of our asset revaluation in 2010–11. The actual operating loss for 2012–13 was \$9.69 million.

Our financial control framework remains sound and is well regarded by internal and external auditors, continuing our history of good financial performance. This year was the fifth consecutive year with no adverse audit findings. I would like to acknowledge the contribution from all of our staff involved in financial management and control for this excellent result.

Overall entry fee revenue was below budget projections, largely as a result of the continued decline of visitation at Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a. We are actively working with Tourism Australia and Tourism NT to promote and increase visitation.

Revenue from Government (Grants from Portfolio Agency) was lower than the previous financial year primarily due to reduced ongoing new policy funding and the impact of the efficiency dividend.

I'm delighted we received a highly commended (small agency) in the Comcover Awards for Excellence Enterprise-wide category recognising our achievements in risk management. The award, and our continuing above average performance in risk management for Australian Government agencies, reflects how important this issue is and I thank all staff for their contribution to this great result.

Our people

Our capacity to meet our challenges and commitments each year directly relies on our skilled and dedicated staff. While we've had the benefit of a stable management structure for several years, the addition of a new branch led by Charlton Clark and dedicated to the management of Commonwealth marine reserves has strengthened our core capabilities, especially in areas of protected area management, operations and compliance and enforcement. However the transfer out from Parks Australia of staff responsible for the two protected area funding programs was keenly felt.

The Parks Australia Forum, where our senior managers meet to discuss doing our business better, was again held at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in August. The forum guides decision-making for the year and reinforces the relationships that make our organisation strong. The Parks Australia Science Forum and its associated network has been very successful in enhancing our use of science, especially in relation to biodiversity and natural resource management. The department's National Environmental Research Program is also providing invaluable scientific expertise, contributing to better diagnosis and treatment of the factors behind biodiversity decline at several of our national parks.

A key issue for us is employment of Indigenous people, particularly at the three jointly-managed national parks. This year we recorded a slight increase in the number of Indigenous staff. While this is pleasing, we clearly have much more to do, especially in capacity-building. In that regard, we were successful in gaining a \$92,000 investment from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to deliver an Indigenous leadership program in the West Arnhem Region in which Kakadu traditional owners will play a key role as mentors for participants. Kakadu's successful community ranger program, which provides a clear pathway to employment in the park, has secured funding for a further four years from the Australian Government's Working on Country Program.

The departmental Australia Day awards honour our highly skilled and professional staff. This year Murray Fagg was recognised for his outstanding and sustained commitment to the understanding and promotion of Australian flora and botanic gardens, and for innovation in public science and natural history communication through the visual and electronic media. Although recently retired, Murray continues to contribute to the work of the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

Bernie McLeod at Booderee National Park won the award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievements by a Community Member in the Nanga Mai Awards which celebrate Indigenous excellence in public schools in New South Wales. Nanga Mai is an Eora word meaning 'to dream' and Bernie helps making dreams a reality for the park and the community—we are delighted to see him awarded for his work.

Hezekiel Jingoona, an ambassador of the Mutitjulu Community Ranger Program at Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park, won the 2012 NAIDOC Senior Aboriginal Elder of the Year award for long-term commitment to keeping culture strong, teaching culture and language and working with park staff and his community. Hezekiel makes a contribution to the cultural education of park visitors, park staff and Anangu youth.

Uluru–Kata Tjuta staff and board members past and present were saddened by the passing of Kunmanara, a key senior Anangu elder in the fight for the handback of title to the park. Involved from the beginning of joint management, he used his knowledge of place and *Tjukurpa* to make sure park business was done the right way. Kunmanara was a strong law man who guided our staff by his generous sharing of his knowledge. He stayed involved with the park for many years, serving both as board member and chairman; his legacy is now being carried on by his daughter Pantjiti, a current board member.

Looking ahead

While operational funding pressures remain, in the year ahead we will focus on tackling many of the biodiversity challenges in our parks and reserves, improving training and employment opportunities for Indigenous staff and helping to provide unique and sustainable nature-based visitor experiences through stronger partnerships with the tourism industry. We have developed a new approach to assessing our performance in managing our parks and reserves, focussing on statements of their values against which programs to protect and conserve those values can be better evaluated.

Planning and preparing for the upcoming IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney in November 2014 is intensifying. We are working closely with our co-hosts, IUCN and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, to ensure this globally significant event exceeds the expectations of participants and is a credit to all parties.

On a personal note, this is my last annual report as Director of National Parks as I have decided not to seek reappointment to the position I have held since October 1999. It has been a hard decision to leave a job I am so passionate about but, with my current appointment ceasing in December, the time is right to seek new challenges and to allow someone else the opportunity to head this wonderful agency.

I will leave with treasured memories and great pride in our many achievements. I thank all my colleagues, traditional owners and our partners in industry, government and the non-government sector who over many years have made this position so remarkable, unique, important and rewarding.

Certification

This annual report was prepared in accordance with the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, Finance Minister's Orders under that Act and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The Director's review and the rest of this annual report, except the financial statements for the Australian National Parks Fund and the Auditor-General's report on those financial statements, constitute the Director of National Parks' report of operations.

The holder of the office of the Director of National Parks is responsible under section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* for the preparation and content of the report of operations in accordance with Finance Minister's Orders.

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Peter Cochrane Director of National Parks 3 October 2013



Peter Cochrane signs a Memorandum of Understanding for the World Parks Congress 2014 with Sally Barnes, chief executive of the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage. Photo: Office of Environment and Heritage



2 Corporate overview and financial summary

The Minister

The Director of National Parks Statutory functions Non-statutory functions

Financial summary

Overview of the Director of National Parks' responsibilities Joint management of nationally significant protected areas Protecting unique island ecosystems Calperum and Taylorville Stations Protecting the marine environment Understanding and studying Australia's biodiversity Planning for the IUCN World Parks Congress Australia's National Landscapes *Case study: An historic moment Case study: Proclaiming the world's biggest system of marine reserves Case study: Getting fire fit at Booderee Case study: Innovation at Australia's top tourism attraction Case Study: Giving our plants a future Case Study: Bush Blitz—Species discovery — inspiring school kids and their teachers*

 \leftarrow A blue-banded bee found during the Hiltaba Bush Blitz in South Australia.

The Minister

During 2012–13 the Hon. Tony Burke MP continued as the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, with responsibility for the Director of National Parks.

The Minister's responsibilities in relation to the Director include assessing proposals for establishing Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*; approving management plans for Commonwealth reserves; establishing and appointing members to boards of management for Commonwealth reserves jointly managed with Aboriginal owners; resolving disputes between the Director and boards of management; and approving Commonwealth reserve use fees and other charges.

During 2012–13 the Minister:

- announced the world's biggest network of marine reserves in November 2012. Today Commonwealth marine reserves protect more than 2.8 million square kilometres of ocean environment, a major achievement for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of Australia's oceans. The final management plans for the marine reserve network were tabled in Parliament in March 2013
- completed the final step to end the prospect of uranium mining at Koongarra and incorporate this area into Kakadu National Park. This decision supports the wishes of Djok traditional owner Jeffrey Lee to secure protection of his country for future generations
- added the Wet Tropics, Tasmania's Island Heritage and Sydney Harbour to Australia's National Landscapes collection. The National Landscapes Program is a partnership between Parks Australia and Tourism Australia, showcasing Australia's premier ecotourism destinations to visitors wanting to connect with world-class nature and cultural experiences.

The Director of National Parks

The Director of National Parks is a corporation sole established under Division 5 of Part 19 of the EPBC Act, and a Commonwealth authority for the purposes of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (CAC Act). The corporation has a single director—the person appointed to the office named the Director of National Parks.

The current office holder is Peter Cochrane, who was first appointed as Director in October 1999 and was reappointed to the position by the Governor-General on 12 December 2008 for a period of five years.

The EPBC Act requires the Director to perform functions and exercise powers in accordance with any directions given by the Minister, unless the Act provides otherwise. The Minister responsible for the CAC Act may, via a General Policy Order, also notify the Director under the CAC Act of general government policies that apply to the Director. No General Policy Orders were issued to the Director in 2012–13.

The EPBC Act provides for the proclamation and management of Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones. The term 'Commonwealth reserve' includes all areas proclaimed under the EPBC Act with names such as national parks, Commonwealth marine reserves and botanic gardens. This report generally uses the term 'reserves' to encompass all types of Commonwealth reserves under the EPBC Act. Three reserves, Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a, Kakadu and Booderee national parks, are established on Aboriginal-owned land and are managed by the Director of National Parks in conjunction with a board of management established under the Act with a majority of members being Indigenous persons nominated by the traditional Aboriginal owners.

The Director of National Parks is responsible under the EPBC Act for the administration, management and control of Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones. The Director is assisted by staff of Parks Australia—a division of the environment department. In this report, reference to Parks Australia means the Director of National Parks and Parks Australia staff members.

Statutory functions

The Director is responsible for the administration of Divisions 4 and 5 of Part 15 of the EPBC Act (Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones) and regulations made for the purposes of those divisions.

The functions of the Director as set out in subsection 514B(1) of the EPBC Act are to:

- administer, manage and control Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones
- protect, conserve and manage biodiversity and heritage in Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones
- contribute to the protection, conservation and management of biodiversity and heritage in areas outside Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones
- cooperate with any country in matters relating to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves in that country
- provide, and assist in the provision of, training in knowledge and skills relevant to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves
- carry out alone, or in cooperation with other institutions and persons, and arrange for any other institution or person to carry out research and investigations relevant to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves
- make recommendations to the Minister in relation to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves
- administer the Australian National Parks Fund
- undertake any other functions conferred on the Director under the EPBC Act or any other Act
- do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the functions mentioned above.

As at 30 June 2013 seven Commonwealth terrestrial reserves (national parks and botanic gardens), 59 Commonwealth marine reserves and one conservation zone were declared under the EPBC Act and were the responsibility of the Director.

The terrestrial reserves and 58 of the 59 marine reserves are managed by staff of Parks Australia. In 2012–13, under delegation from the Director, staff of the department's Australian Antarctic Division managed the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve and the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Conservation Zone. The locations of the Commonwealth reserves and conservation zone are shown in Figure 1.

In addition to managing Commonwealth reserves, the Director is in a partnership with Tourism Australia to identify and promote national landscapes that capture the essence of Australia and offer distinctive natural and cultural experiences. Parks Australia's interest in the program is to enhance and promote the role of protected areas in the social and economic wellbeing of regional Australia.

Non-statutory functions

The Director has been delegated functions and powers by the Minister and the secretary of the department for programs that complement the Director's statutory functions. Under these delegations, the Director administers the National Reserve System Program and the Indigenous Protected Areas Program, both of which are significant components of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative. During 2012–13 these functions were transferred to the department's Biodiversity Conservation Division and are reported in the department's annual report.

The Director manages the Australian Biological Resources Study and the development of Australian Government policy on management of Australia's genetic resources, including regulating access to such resources in Commonwealth areas. The outputs of these non-statutory functions are reported in the department's annual report.

Financial summary

A \$9.69 million operating loss was recorded for 2012–13, predominately as a result of the asset revaluation in 2010–11 which increased depreciation expenses across the organisation. The Director has received approval from the Minister for Finance and Deregulation for this operating loss, along with further deficits forecast over the next three financial years.

Overall, for 2012–13 income and expenditure had minor variances to budget, with a variance of one per cent for income and less than one per cent for expenditure. An analysis of the variances is in Table 1.

Table 2 summarises income and expenses information for the Director of National Parks. Audited financial statements are in Chapter 6 of this report.

Table 3 shows a five-year overview of financial, staffing and area information for Commonwealth terrestrial and marine reserves and Table 4 provides an overview of individual reserves for 2012–13.

An Agency Resourcing Statement was introduced to Portfolio Budget Statements for government departments in 2008–09 to provide information about the various funding sources that CAC Act agencies draw upon during the year. An Agency Resourcing Statement that reconciles to cash reserves in the financial statements for the Director of National Parks is provided at Appendix A.

Business area	Income	Expenses
Jointly managed parks	Down \$0.235 million due to lower than expected entry fees at Uluru–Kata Tjura and Booderee and lower than anticipated staff recoveries at Kakadu. These amounts are partially offset by an increase in permit revenue at Kakadu.	Up \$0.430 million due to overspends in depreciation and repairs and maintenance. In addition, each of the jointly managed parks recorded a loss on the sale of assets that was not originally budgeted for. These overspends are partially offset by underspends in employee expenses, acquisitions of goods and consultants.
Other parks and reserves	Up \$0.074 million due to higher than budgeted sales of goods and services at Christmas Island.	Up \$0.401 million as a result of higher than anticipated depreciation and employee expenses.
Governance, corporate services and executive	Down \$0.240 million due to lower than anticipated interest revenue.	Down \$0.325 million due predominately to underspends on audit fees and conference and employee expenses.

Table 1: Analysis of variance against budget 2012–13

Table 2: Overview of financial results 2012–13

		2012 Actuals \$000s	2013 Actuals \$000s	2013 Budget \$000s	2013 Variance \$000s
Jointly managed parks ^(a)	Income	35,999	34,223	34,458	(235)
	Expenses	(47,831)	(43,463)	(43,033)	(430)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(11,832)	(9,240)	(8,575)	(665)
Other terrestrial parks	Income	15,837	16,711	16,637	74
and reserves ^(b)	Expenses	(16,379)	(17,536)	(17,135)	(401)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(542)	(825)	(498)	(327)
Total for terrestrial	Income	51,836	50,934	51,095	(161)
parks and reserves	Expenses	(64,210)	(60,999)	(60,168)	(831)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(12,374)	(10,065)	(9,073)	(992)
Governance, corporate	Income	10,418	11,351	11,595	(244)
services and executive ^(c)	Expenses	(10,477)	(10,970)	(11,295)	325
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(58)	381	300	81
Total for Director	Income	62,254	62,285	62,690	(405)
of National Parks	Expenses	(74,687)	(71,969)	(71,463)	(506)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(12,433)	(9,684)	(8,773)	(911)

(a) Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Booderee national parks.

(b) Includes Calperum and Taylorville Stations which are not formal reserves.

(c) Governance, corporate services and executive includes administration, finance, legal, insurance, planning, interest income and bank charges.

Table 3: Five-year overview of terrestrial and marine Commonwealth reserves

	2008–09	2009–10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Number of staff (full-time equivale	nt)				
Management of terrestrial reserves	293	290	281.4	261	260
Management of marine reserves ^(a)	16	15	13.7	18.2	18.2
Area of Commonwealth reserves (h	ectares)				
Terrestrial reserves area (number of reserves)	2,130,774 (7)	2,130,774 (7)	2,130,774 (7)	2,130,774 (7)	2,132,002 (7)
Marine reserves area (number of reserves)	49,844,075 (26)	49,844,075 (26)	49,844,075 (26)	49,844,075 (26)	282,773,335 (59)
Visitors to Commonwealth terrestr	ial reserves				
Number of visitors	1,410,021	1,445,381	1,368,868	1,364,714	1,300,309
Safety incidents recorded in Comm	onwealth terre	estrial reserves	(including sta	ff, contractors,	visitors)
Minor injury or near miss	101	126	126	171	86
Moderate injury	52	41	54	37	24
Major injury	8	20	25	6	4
Death	4	2	4	2	2
Compliance and enforcement—Co	mmonwealth t	errestrial rese	rves		
EPBC Act incidents detected	126	203	105	125	116
Warnings and cautions issued	56	147	58	62	59
Infringement notices issued	20	38	42	87	67
Cases taken to court	0	2	1	0	1
Court convictions	1	0	0	0	0
Court cases pending at year end	1	2	0	0	0
Financial summary—Commonwea	Ith terrestrial r	eserves (\$ milli	ions)		
Operations					
Total operating expenditure ^{(b)(c)}	61.25	58.88	54.64	64.21	60.99
Total operating revenue ^(c)	62.63	59.04	67.07	51.83	50.93
Financial position ^(d)					
Current assets	29.30	29.30	44.91	45.35	44.79
Non-current assets	149.48	41.67	219.73	208.12	200.47
Current liabilities	10.90	151.54	12.17	13.30	14.75
Non-current liabilities	0.50	17.80	0.59	0.73	0.76
Total equity	167.38	0.54	251.87	239.44	229.75
Financial summary—Commonwea	Ith marine rese	erves (\$ million	s)		
Total operating expenditure	4.55	2.80	3.51	3.32	7.20
Total operating revenue	4.55	2.80	3.51	3.32	6.97

(a) In addition, in the 2012–13 financial year an additional 24.6 staff transferred to the Director following the proclamation of new Commonwealth marine reserves. Staff numbers for management of marine reserves for 2013–14 will reflect all staff of the Commonwealth Marine Reserves Branch.

(b) Includes the management contract for Calperum and Taylorville Stations which are not Commonwealth reserves. Excludes governance, corporate services and executive, which can be found in table 2.

(c) Includes revenue from all sources including grants from portfolio agency and externally raised revenue.

(d) Changes in accounting policy had prior year impacts.

Reserve name	Area (hectares)	Year declared	IUCN category ^(a)	Operating cost (\$000s)	Capital expenditure ^(b) (\$000s)	External revenue ^(c) (\$000s)	Payment to traditional owners (\$000s)
Jointly managed national parks							
Booderee National Park	6,379	1992	=	7,300	803	1,509	632
Kakadu National Park	1,980,995	1979	=	21,084	2,197	3,082	1,706
Uluru–Kata Tjurta National Park	132,566	1977	=	15,079	1,561	6,281	1,666
Other Commonwealth terrestrial reserves							
Australian National Botanic Gardens	85	1991	≥	10,645	1,793	1,421	
Christmas Island National Park	8,719	1980	=	5,024	1,358	3,208	
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	656	1986	=	988	169	47	
Pulu Keeling National Park	2,602	1995	=	492	0	15	
Commonwealth marine reserves ^(d)							
On 17 November 2012, 40 Commonwealth marine reserves were proclaimed reserves were amended. Associated with declaration of the new reserves was re	under the <i>Envii</i> :vocation of sev	onment Pro en reserves	tection and Bio and one conse	diversity Conse rvation zone a	<i>rvation Act 1999</i> a s the areas are inc	nd the name: cluded in the r	s of four existing lew marine reserves.
Argo-Rowley Terrace	14,609,910	2012	II, VI				
Ashmore Reef (formerly Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve)	58,337	1983	la, II				
Carnarvon Canyon	617,669	2012	≥				
Cartier Island (formerly Cartier Island Marine Reserve)	17,237	2000	<u>e</u>				
Dampier	125,158	2012	II, VI				
Eighty Mile Beach	1,078,521	2012	\geq			:	
Gascoyne	8,176,611	2012	II, IV, VI	293.5		North-w Marir	est Commonwealth a Beservies Network
Kimberley	7,446,857	2012	II, IV, VI				
Mermaid Reef (formerly Mermaid Reef Marine National Nature Reserve)	53,987	1991	<u>e</u>				
Montebello	341,279	2012	\vdash				
Ningaloo (formerly Ningaloo Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters))	243,513	1987	=				
Roebuck	30,370	2012	M				
Shark Bay	744.254	2012	>				

Table 4: Overview of individual reserves in 2012–13

2 | Corporate overview and financial summary

Reserve name	Area (hectares)	Year declared	IUCN category ^(a)	Operating cost (\$000s)	Capital expenditure ^(b) (\$000s)	External revenue ^(c) (\$000s)	Payment to traditional owners (\$000s)
Arafura	2,292,416	2012	VI				
Arnhem	712,486	2012	N				
Gulf of Carpentaria	2,377,453	2012	II, VI				
Joseph Bonaparte Gulf	859,704	2012	N	c		No	rth Commonwealth
Limmen	139,919	2012	N	D		Marin	e Reserves Network
Oceanic Shoals	7,174,328	2012	N				
Wessel	590,807	2012	II, VI				
West Cape York	1,601,223	2012	II, VI				
Central Eastern	7,005,406	2012	II, IV, VI				
Cod Grounds (includes former Cod Grounds Commonwealth Marine Reserve)	407	2012	=				
Gifford	582,851	2012	≥				
Hunter	625,737	2012	N				
Jervis	247,342	2012	N	278.7		Temperate E	ast Commonwealth
Lord Howe (includes former Lord Howe Island Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) and Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Marine National Nature Reserve)	11,013,878	2012	II, IV, VI				Keserves Network
Norfolk	18,844,343	2012	II, IV, VI				
Solitary Islands (includes former Solitary Islands Marine Reserve (Commonwealth Waters))	15,232	2012	II, VI				

Reserve name	Area (hectares)	Year declared	IUCN category ^(a)	Operating cost (\$000s)	Capital expenditure ^(b) (\$000s)	External revenue ^(c) (\$000s)	Payment to traditional owners (\$000s)
Abrolhos	8,812,598	2012	II, IV, VI				
Bremer	447,230	2012	II, VI				
Eastern Recherche	2,057,403	2012	II, VI				
Geographe	97,665	2012	II, VI				
Great Australian Bight (includes former Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters))	4,592,550	2012	II' <i< td=""><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></i<>				
Jurien	185,089	2012	II, VI				
Murat	93,777	2012	=	88.3		South-w	est Commonwealth
Perth Canyon	740,923	2012	II, IV, VI			MIdIII	e keserves inelwork
Southern Kangaroo Island	62,994	2012	⊳				
South-west Corner	27,189,789	2012	II, IV, VI				
Twilight	464,131	2012	=				
Two Rocks	88,225	2012	II, VI				
Western Eyre	5,794,609	2012	II, VI				
Western Kangaroo Island	233,533	2012	II, VI				

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Reserve name	Area	Year	IUCN	Operating	Capital	External	Payment to
	(hectares)	declared	category ^(a)	cost (\$000s)	expenditure ^(b) (\$000s)	revenue ^(c) (\$000s)	traditional owners (\$000s)
Apollo	118,360	2007	M				
Beagle	292,758	2007	N				
Boags	53,748	2007	M				
East Gippsland	413,664	2007	N				
Flinders	2,704,306	2007	la, VI				
Franklin	67,077	2007	M				
Freycinet	5,794,248	2007	la, II, VI	31010		South-e	ast Commonwealth
Huon	999,074	2007	la, VI	C.と C		Marin	e Reserves Network
Macquarie Island	16,189,466	1999	la, IV				
Murray	2,580,312	2007	la, VI				
Nelson	612,311	2007	N				
South Tasman Rise	2,770,437	2007	M				
Tasman Fracture	4,250,056	2007	la, VI				
Zeehan	1,989,697	2007	N				
Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve (includes former Coral Sea Conservation Zone, Coringa–Herald National Nature Reserve and Lihou Reef National Nature Reserve) ^(e)	98,984,225	2012	II, IV, VI	0			
Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve ⁽¹⁾	6,465,845	2002	la	30.0			

(a) The IUCN protected area classification system comprises seven management categories, not all of which have been applied to reserves declared under the EPBC Act. Sections of some reserves are zoned a different IUCN category from the reserve as a whole, to reflect the management strategy for those sections.

(b) Includes assets recognised for the first time as part of the asset revaluation process.

(c) External revenue represents total revenue from the income statement less grants from portfolio agency and assets recognised for the first time.

provided under MOUs or business agreements by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and costs across all reserves that (d) Operating costs for the 58 marine reserves managed by Parks Australia include relevant annual business agreement, aerial surveillance and incident management costs and exclude services are not attributable by region.

(e) Services provided by the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service are not included.

(f) Managed by the Australian Antarctic Division under delegation from the Director.

Overview of the Director of National Parks' responsibilities

Joint management of nationally significant protected areas

Parks Australia has a long and proud history of working with Indigenous Australians in the joint management of protected areas. The Director, together with traditional owners, jointly manages three national parks—Kakadu and Uluru–Kata Tjura national parks in the Northern Territory, both World Heritage listed, and Booderee National Park in the Jervis Bay Territory.

Traditional owners maintain strong links to their country in these parks, links that are demonstrated through their cultural and spiritual beliefs and traditional use and management of their country. Parks Australia supports traditional owners in maintaining their living culture and incorporates traditional land management practices into park management.

Kakadu National Park is an Aboriginal living cultural landscape. A strong relationship exists between Bininj and their country in ongoing traditions, cultural practices, beliefs and knowledge. An estimated 15 000 rock art sites and innumerable artefacts and sites of cultural, archaeological and historic significance in the Kakadu region contribute to archaeological evidence indicating that people have lived continuously in the region for at least 50 000 years.

Kakadu contains almost an entire major tropical river catchment (the South Alligator River catchment) and large representative examples of the wet-dry tropical ecosystems of northern Australia. The park is ecologically and biologically diverse, encompassing the sandstone plateau and escarpment, monsoon forests and extensive areas of savanna woodlands as well as riverine environments such as billabongs and floodplains. The entire park is listed under The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention) and many species in the park are protected under international agreements.

In June 2011 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's World Heritage Committee included Koongarra—a 1200 hectare site surrounded by, but excluded from, Kakadu National Park—as part of the Kakadu World Heritage Area. The process of fully protecting Koongarra under the EPBC Act was completed in February 2013 with its incorporation in the park.

Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park is the physical and metaphoric heart of Australia. A key part of Australia's iconic Red Centre, this living cultural landscape is a world-class visitor destination and, along with Kakadu, was one of the first areas identified in the National Landscape program. Parks Australia works with the Anangu traditional owners to protect, conserve and document the cultural and natural heritage of the park using *Tjukurpa* (traditional law and culture) as a guiding influence. Located in the Greater Sandy Desert bioregion, which includes parts of the Northern Territory and Western Australia, the park contributes significantly to long-term biodiversity conservation in the region. The park has a particularly rich and diverse suite of arid environment species and supports populations of a number of rare and endemic species. Booderee National Park at Jervis Bay is of great significance to its traditional owners, the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council, who are increasingly involved through a unique and evolving joint management model in running and servicing the park. The service contract between the Director and the Council is worth \$20 million over 10 years and is a significant employer of community members. Jervis Bay is one of the major biogeographic nodes in Australia and contains a variety of relatively undisturbed marine and terrestrial habitats. The park protects most of the bay's southern Bherwerre Peninsula, Bowen Island and the waters and seabed in the southern part of the bay.

Booderee staff work cooperatively with the adjoining New South Wales Jervis Bay National Park and Jervis Bay Marine Park to protect the region's biodiversity. Intensive control of foxes and other invasive species has led to the recovery of species such as the endangered eastern bristlebird. This has paved the way for the planned reintroduction of several species of small mammals long extinct in the area.

Parks Australia's relationship with Indigenous communities in the jointly managed parks continues to develop. Staff are building business models and providing opportunities for Indigenous employment and enterprises in these parks. The overall objective is to have the parks self-managed by traditional owners. In building a knowledge-based approach to management, Parks Australia is committed to ensuring that traditional knowledge is used effectively.

Parks Australia works with the Northern Territory Government, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in implementing the Australian Government's Northern Territory Emergency Response and the Closing the Gap initiative. The jointly managed parks in particular support Indigenous owned and operated enterprises and provide training and employment for Indigenous communities.

Protecting unique island ecosystems

Parks Australia manages three national parks in Australia's ocean territories. Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the Indian Ocean and Norfolk Island in the Pacific Ocean are home to unique and fragile endemic flora and fauna that have evolved over a long period in isolation. These remote island parks have immense scientific, educational and conservation value and Parks Australia is working to develop more holistic models for their management.

Christmas Island supports a wide range of unusual species and habitats, some found only on the island, and is of great international conservation and scientific interest. Although the island has been mined for phosphates since the late 1890s, most of its rainforest ecosystem remains relatively intact and Christmas Island National Park now protects about two-thirds of the island environment, including two wetlands listed as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. The island's marine waters supports more than 650 tropical fish species, including hybrid fish not found anywhere else in the world and habitat for juvenile migrating whale sharks.

The island has the most diverse and abundant land crab fauna on earth, most notably an estimated 45 million red crabs which are the island's 'keystone' species as they influence the structure and species composition of the island's rainforest. Red crabs are renowned for their annual wet season breeding migration, where tens of millions migrate to the sea to release

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An historic moment

Emotions ran high this year as Koongarra officially became part of Kakadu National Park, protecting it forever from the possibility of mining.

The shady woodlands of Koongarra lie in the shadow of Nourlangie Rock, one of Kakadu's most popular visitor destinations.

On its other side, Koongarra faces Lightning Dreaming, home of Namarrgon or Lightning Man, the creation ancestor responsible for the dramatic electrical storms on the Arnhem plateau.

This stunning country was excluded from Kakadu National Park's original boundaries in 1979 because of its potential uranium resources.

Koongarra's senior custodian, Djok man Jeffrey Lee has led a decades-long campaign to protect this land as part of Kakadu.

Along the way, Jeff turned down a substantial amount of money in potential mining royalties for the sake of looking after his cultural land.

Jeff's fight took him to Darwin, Sydney—even Paris to successfully argue for the area to be World Heritage listed.

He came to Canberra on Wednesday 6 February this year to hear then Environment Minister Tony Burke introduce legislation in the Australian Parliament to repeal the *Koongarra Project Area Act*, a law created in 1981, to make uranium mining economically feasible at Koongarra.

"Today—this is the day. This is the moment that I was waiting for, (for a) very long, long time," Jeff said at the time.

And it was the day. Jeff sat with former Prime Minister Bob Hawke in the gallery and Kakadu traditional owner Stewart Gangali to hear the reading, the emotion from Jeff and everyone else watching proceedings was intense. The Bill passed with the support of all parties.

Then on the stroke of midnight on Thursday 14 February 2013, the fight was finally over, when the proclamation signed by Governor-General Quentin Bryce to add Koongarra to Kakadu National Park came into force.

This proclamation completed a three year process by the Australian Government to protect these spectacular ancestral lands.

It ensures Koongarra can never be mined, giving it permanent protection under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.



Koongarra traditional owner Jeffrey Lee.

their eggs. The island also provides the last remaining nesting habitat for two threatened seabird species (Abbott's booby and the Christmas Island frigatebird) and supports many endemic plant and animal species.

The island's geology, unique rainforest and spectacular views are well represented in the park. But its establishment has not prevented continuing incursion and impacts of exotic species, which have disrupted the island's natural ecological processes. Yellow crazy ants have severely reduced numbers of red crabs and pose a significant threat to many other species. The ants are the subject of a major control program which includes researching and implementing biological control as a long-term alternative to current baiting techniques.

The Australian Government's response to the recommendations of the final report of the Christmas Island Expert Working Group, first established in response to the dramatic decline of the endemic pipistrelle bat, was released in November 2011. The response provides the basis for a more integrated approach to tackling pressures on the island's biodiversity; the collaborative feral cat and rat control that is currently under way provides a great example of what is possible. While resources remain a challenge, expanding cat and rat control, improvements to biosecurity procedures and enhanced monitoring of biodiversity (particularly determining the threats leading to some native species' declines) are the focus of further work. Although the pipstrelle is now presumed extinct, further implementation of the working group's recommendations will help shape effective measures to stem further decline in the island's unique biodiversity.

North Keeling Island is an isolated coral atoll in the Territory of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and its relatively untouched environment is a valuable biological resource. It is one of the few tropical islands in the Indian Ocean to have largely escaped the damaging effects of human settlement.

Pulu Keeling National Park consists of North Keeling Island and its marine area extending 1.5 kilometres from the shore. The park is listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. It is an internationally recognised seabird rookery and supports one of the world's largest remaining populations of the red-footed booby. The park also provides critical habitat for the threatened Cocos buff-banded rail. Pulu Keeling's forests and other flora are examples of the original vegetation of the region and include a number of species now not found elsewhere in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The park's waters are one of the last areas of pristine reef systems in the world.

Norfolk Island National Park is jointly proclaimed under Commonwealth and Norfolk Island legislation. Set in the south-west Pacific Ocean, the Territory of Norfolk Island provides a link between tropical and temperate oceanic island environments and is home to unique flora and fauna.

The park covers 19 per cent of the Norfolk Island Group, comprising remnant areas of subtropical rainforest and viney hardwood forest that once covered the island before human settlement. The park is habitat for a range of threatened plants, birds and other species. Neighbouring Phillip Island, which is included in the park, is free of damaging introduced species such as cats and rats and is home to large numbers of nesting seabirds.

Management of Norfolk Island National Park is strongly focused on habitat restoration through controlling invasive species, planting native vegetation and controlling erosion. The park and adjacent Norfolk Island Botanic Garden also provide educational, scientific, cultural and recreational opportunities for Norfolk Island residents and visitors and are a valuable resource for the Norfolk Island tourism industry.

Calperum and Taylorville stations

The Director also manages Calperum and Taylorville stations, adjoining pastoral leases located near Renmark in South Australia. The properties comprise more than 300 000 hectares of predominantly open mallee bushland and Murray River floodplains and form part of the Riverland Biosphere Reserve. They include wetlands recognised as internationally significant under the Ramsar Convention and large areas of intact mallee which are habitat for several nationally endangered species.

The Director holds the leases for the properties which are managed for conservation purposes consistent with trust arrangements established when they were acquired with funds contributed by the Australian Government. The properties have been managed for a number of years on behalf of the Director by Austland Services Pty Ltd (a company owned by the Australian Landscape Trust).

Protecting the marine environment

Australia's vast coastal waters and oceans contain some of the greatest marine biodiversity on Earth. Australia is the world's largest island, with a coastline stretching more than 32 000 kilometres. Australia's marine jurisdiction is larger than the mainland and covers around 14 million square kilometres of ocean.

In 2012–13 the department completed an extensive consultation process to extend Australia's network of marine reserves: networks of Commonwealth marine reserves in the South-west, North-west, North and Temperate East marine regions and the Coral Sea were developed as the end result of the detailed marine bioregional planning process. During the year the department developed the statutory tools to ensure the reserves are managed effectively and efficiently.

Following consideration of approximately 80 000 submissions received in response to an invitation for public comment on a proposal to establish new reserves, 40 new Commonwealth marine reserves were proclaimed under the EPBC Act in November 2012. Associated with the declaration was revocation of seven existing marine reserves and one conservation zone as these areas are included in the new reserves.

The new reserves cover more than 2.3 million square kilometres of ocean and expands the marine environment under protection to some 2.8 million square kilometres. With the new declarations, the Director is responsible for a network of 59 Commonwealth marine reserves that extend from southern sub-Antarctic waters through temperate southern waters to the tropical north.

Most Commonwealth marine reserves are managed by staff of Parks Australia. The management of the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve is delegated to the Australian Antarctic Division, in recognition of the division's responsibilities for the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Territory and its expertise in working in the remote sub-Antarctic environment. Outside the Director's responsibility is the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park which is managed by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority under separate legislation.

Protecting Australia's marine environment

In November 2012 the Australian Government declared a new national network of Commonwealth marine reserves which protects more than 2.8 million square kilometres of Australia's marine environment.

The forty new Commonwealth marine reserves are spread around Australia, adding to a small number of existing reserves and the fourteen reserves in the South-east regional network that were proclaimed in 2007. The system now consists of 57 separate marine reserves grouped in five regional networks plus the large Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve.

How the reserves are managed and the type of activities allowed are set out in management plans that cover each network and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve.

The development of the marine reserves networks and the plans that underpin them, have involved a lengthy public consultation process which included public meetings around Australia and resulted in an unprecedented public response. At the end of four years of consultation more than 745,000 submissions were received.

Parks Australia is now working with industry and stakeholders to ensure they are informed and stay up to date with the management of the new marine reserves.

Existing management arrangements for former reserves, including those areas subsumed into new reserves, will remain in place until the new management plans come into effect.

Australia's significant marine reserves network plays a central role in the ecosystem-based management of the marine environment, providing for ecologically sustainable use as well as the protection of habitats and species.

The **South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network** has a range of shallow shelf, slope and deep water ecosystems that provide important habitats for a variety of bird and sea life. Migratory whales make their way through these waters on their journey to and from Antarctica along Australia's east coast twice a year. Beneath the waves, iconic species such as white sharks, southern bluefin tuna and blue whales roam. In the deep sea, there are a diverse range of fishes and other creatures, such as crabs, coral, sea urchins and sponges that have bizarre and fascinating adaptations to survive in the dark depths. There are three historic shipwrecks in marine reserves of the South-east contributing to the heritage and cultural values of the network.

Several endangered or vulnerable species can be found within the **Temperate East Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network** including the critically-endangered east coast population of grey nurse shark and the vulnerable white shark. Scientists have recently discovered that several significant seamount ridges in the region support hundreds of species, including some previously unknown to science. The network also includes important offshore reef habitats that support the threatened black cod; the southernmost extent of many reef-building coral species; as well as important breeding, foraging and feeding areas for several species of seabird including the little tern. There are a number of historic shipwrecks,
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a World Heritage Place, National Heritage Places and a Ramsar site that contribute to the values of the Temperate East network.

The **Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve** provides for the protection of many endangered or vulnerable species, including endangered loggerhead and leatherback turtles and the critically endangered herald petrel.



Whale Shark in the Ningaloo Marine Park. Photo: Erik Schlogl

The reserve also supports the world's only confirmed spawning aggregation area for black marlin. Areas of high productivity in the reserve, such as those around seamounts, are important aggregation sites for a range of species including lanternfish, albacore tuna, billfish and sharks. Large marine mammals journey hundreds or even thousands of kilometres to breed in the reserve, or travel through it en route to breeding areas. In addition to being adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, there are five important and historic shipwrecks, several other listed historic shipwrecks and a Ramsar site that contribute to the heritage and cultural values within the Reserve.

Six of the world's seven species of marine turtles can be found within the **North Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network**, as well as migratory birds of international significance such as the common noddy, bridled tern, roseate tern and the crested tern. A number of unique seafloor features as well as habitats for other species such as dugongs, whales, dolphins, sea snakes and sharks are included in the North network.

Six of the world's seven species of marine turtle can be found within the **North-west Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network**, along with dugongs, sawfish and many species of sea snake. The world's largest fish – the whale shark – aggregates every year off the World Heritage-listed Ningaloo Reef, while the world's largest population of Humpback whales migrates every year from Antarctica to breed in the warm waters off the Kimberley coast. There are three historic shipwrecks, the Ningaloo World Heritage Area, National Heritage Place and a Ramsar site that contribute to the values of the North-west network.

The South-west Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network provides protection for the habitat of species endemic to Australia's South-west, including the Australian sea lion and the Australian lesser noddy. Several threatened species that travel long distances and visit the region during important stages of their life cycles, such as the endangered southern right whale, blue whale and humpback whale. The iconic biodiversity hotspots of the Abrolhos, Perth Canyon, Geographe Bay, the Naturaliste Plateau, Diamantina Fracture and Recherche Archipelago are all included in the South-west network. In addition to being adjacent to the Shark Bay World Heritage Area the South-west network includes an historic shipwreck.

Getting fit at Booderee

Fire-fighting is strenuous and demanding work. Every year Booderee National Park staff undergo fitness training to make sure they are ready for the fire season.

Booderee is fire prone and receives most of its 400,000 annual visitors during the summer months when fire risk is high and working conditions hot. Fires can burn for weeks, often needing a long fire-fighting campaign to bring under control.



Booderee staff undergo fire fitness training.

Booderee has introduced an eight-week fitness program to improve staff's health and resilience.

The program can take someone who does not undertake any exercise to the aerobic fitness level required to fight fires. Booderee adopted standardised fitness levels in 2009, categorising them as light, moderate and arduous.

The moderate test is the mandatory starting point for Booderee staff to become active fire-fighters. The test requires staff to walk 3.2 km in 30 minutes while carrying 11.3 kg.

Staff also receive regular, good advice about their health with medicals undertaken every one to three years.

Training manager Brenda Duffy said there had been some initial apprehension, but staff had embraced the opportunity to improve fitness at work, with many now taking up regular swimming and exercise at the local sports centre.

Around 90 per cent of Booderee staff have passed medicals and can participate in the program. The level of staff participation is excellent and includes 100 per cent of Indigenous staff in the park.

Indigenous staff member Anthony Roberts says everyone is enthusiastic about the program.

"The benefit of a regular fitness program and the ongoing support provided by the park has been a positive initiative to improve Indigenous health," he said.

"Many of us have become more aware of health risks in the workplace and have made improvements to include regular exercise."

2

The new marine reserves will be managed as five regional reserve networks. The management plan for the South-east Network applies from 1 July 2013. The management plans for the remaining networks and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve come into effect on 1 July 2014. Transitional management arrangements were put in place during 2012–13 to allow for a period of adjustment prior to the new management plans coming into effect.

As the largest system of marine reserves in the world, these networks of reserves will play an important role in the long-term conservation of marine ecosystems and the biodiversity of our oceans. They also meet Australia's international and national commitments to establish a national representative system of marine protected areas by 2012.

Understanding and studying Australia's biodiversity

Commonwealth botanic gardens

Parks Australia is the custodian of three botanic gardens: the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Norfolk Island Botanic Garden and Booderee Botanic Gardens.

The Australian National Botanic Gardens is a major national scientific, educational and recreational resource located in Canberra. It was among the first botanic gardens in the world to adopt the study and display of indigenous species as a principal goal. The living collection currently contains one-third of the nation's known flowering plant species which makes the Gardens the custodian of one of the largest collections (in terms of species) of Australian plants with an emphasis on threatened species. The Gardens provides a diverse range of education and public programs to raise awareness of the value of Australia's unique flora.

Norfolk Island Botanic Garden maintains a living and herbarium collection of Norfolk Island's flora and contributes to raising awareness in the local community and for visitors to the island through education and interpretation programs.

Formerly an annex to the Australian National Botanic Gardens and now part of Booderee National Park, Booderee Botanic Gardens represents the regional biodiversity of south-east coastal New South Wales with a strong focus on the relationship between plants and the park's Indigenous owners, the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community.

A knowledge bank of Australia's biodiversity

Parks Australia's work to enhance and share knowledge of Australia's biodiversity is delivered via the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research and the Australian Biological Resources Study.

The Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research is a joint venture between the Australian National Botanic Gardens and the CSIRO's Plant Industry Division. Its principal function is to document the identity, origin, occurrence, distribution and human impact of Australia's native and introduced plant species. The Centre's cornerstone is the Australian National Herbarium which houses approximately 1.2 million plant specimens, documenting the diversity of Australian flora and providing voucher specimens for research, environmental studies and for the Gardens' living collection. The herbarium is a major contributor to national projects that disseminate biodiversity information, notably Australia's Virtual Herbarium and the Atlas of Living Australia, as well as international projects such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility.

The Australian Biological Resources Study collects and disseminates information on plants, animals and other organisms found in Australia. Its range of taxonomic work and databases provides authoritative national references for species' names. The program funds research and training in taxonomy through the National Taxonomy Research Grant Program—the only ongoing source of funding for taxonomic research in Australia. Accurate naming of species and understanding their relationships is critical for biodiversity conservation, biosecurity and a range of industry uses such as agriculture, horticulture and forestry.

In partnership with BHP Billiton, the Australian Biological Resources Study manages the Bush Blitz species discovery program that, since 2009, has undertaken 17 biodiscovery expeditions to more than 60 National Reserve System properties totalling more than 3 million hectares. The program to date has discovered more than 650 new species and provided baseline scientific data to help manage and protect biodiversity regionally and nationally.

Outputs of the Australian Biological Resources Study, including performance results for 2012–13, are reported in the department's annual report.

Innovation at Australia's top tourism attraction

The iconic Ulu<u>r</u>u-Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park took out the top prize at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards in 2012, being named the country's best major tourist attraction.

Our park beat a strong field of some of Australia's most popular institutions such as the National Gallery of Australia, Tasmania's Port Arthur Historic Site and Melbourne Museum in Victoria.

It's the first time one of our Commonwealth parks has received the prestigious award well-deserved recognition for Ulu<u>r</u>u's traditional owners and rangers.

Ulu<u>r</u>u traditional owner and board member Sammy Wilson collected the award on the night, speaking passionately in his traditional language of Pitjantjatjara and in English.

"This is everybody's award. It says 'we're here' to Australia, we're from the centre of Australia, and we thank everybody from Australia for this award," he said.

"We're working together, the Australian Government, the park, the board, the people, we're all working together to welcome visitors to come and see us, see what we're doing, sharing our place with people from around the world."

The breadth of work going on in the park today is astonishing. Everything from cultural tours and dot painting workshops in the Cultural Centre, to maintaining rock art and sacred sites, to keeping visitors' safe and looking after Ulu<u>r</u>u's stunning landscapes, plants and animals contributes to the park's success.

More than 250,000 people visit Ulu<u>r</u>u each year, many of them from overseas, delivering economic benefits back to the communities of Central Australia.

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Our park helps support the many and varied jobs at Ayers Rock Resort and tourist spending on flights, hotel rooms, local artworks, souvenirs, groceries and petrol.

Today we're continuing to innovate to support our programs. We hate waste as much as the next person, so we were pretty excited when one of our park staff, Sharon Davies, came up with a brilliant idea to recycle waste and help raise funds for our mala (rufous-hare wallaby) project—mala poo paper.

The mala is a small and critically endangered wallaby, no longer found in the wild. It survives in a few feral proof enclosures scattered around Australia and some islands off the West Australian coast. Ulu<u>r</u>u's mala enclosure covers 170 hectares and is surrounded by a cat and fox proof fence. Inside, the mala live a fairly natural life, apart from the provision of supplementary food in drier times.

Providing this supplementary food and water costs us \$22,000 per year. Selling mala poo paper to our visitors contributes to this cost. Mala poo is removed from feeding stations to decrease the risk of food contamination and disease. Sharon then uses it to make plain and floral paper, cards and a mala photo card.

Visit the park today to get your own mala poo paper or email uluru.info@environment.gov.au to find out how you can help support our mala.



From left, the park's visitor manager Chris Martin, Anna Morgan and board member Sammy Wilson celebrate Ulu<u>r</u>u-Kata Tju<u>t</u>a's win at the national tourism awards.

Giving our plants a future

Tucked away quietly in our Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra is one of the city's most important institutions—the National Seed Bank.

Home to a large and increasing collection of Australian native seeds, the seed bank is playing a key role in our fight to safeguard native plants against threats such as climate change and disease.

The National Seed Bank currently holds around 5900 seed collections from more than 3000 different species, dating back to the 1960s.

Holding seeds in the short-term supports the living collections of our Gardens and its nursery, making sure we have readily available native plants for display, research and education. Collections in long-term storage are a significant resource for threatened species recovery and scientific research.

These seeds hold the genetic information needed to reproduce a plant, making them an efficient way to insure against the loss of species in the wild. Stored safely in our bank, seeds can remain viable for hundreds of years. Making use of these seeds in the future is

Managing access to genetic resources

The Director is responsible for developing Australian Government policy for the management of Australia's genetic resources, including regulating access to resources in Commonwealth areas and benefit-sharing arrangements. Parks Australia works with state and territory agencies to support a nationally consistent regulatory approach for access to, and use of, Australia's native genetic and biochemical resources, and promotes best practice in managing access to genetic resources. Queensland and the Northern Territory, along with the Australian Government, have enacted measures to implement a nationally consistent approach to access and benefit sharing, with other jurisdictions working towards that goal.

The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization was adopted at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010, and Australia signed the Nagoya Protocol on 20 January 2012. In consultation with key stakeholders, including regional and other international partners at the first Oceania Biodiscovery Forum, an implementation model for the Nagoya Protocol has been developed to enable an informed decision by government on its ratification. When it enters into force, the protocol will establish a legally-binding framework for access to genetic resources for biotechnology research and development and other research activities. It also provides a framework for sharing benefits arising from the use of genetic resources or associated traditional knowledge.

Outputs of the program to manage access to genetic resources, including performance results for 2012–13, are reported in the department's annual report.



Annette Harry, Australian National Botanic Gardens Seedy Volunteer, and Tom North, the Gardens' National Seed Bank Manager, collect seeds from the nationally listed, endangered Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory. Photo: J. Fitzgerald, Australian National Botanic Gardens

the key to using the seed bank as a tool in plant conservation.

The National Seed Bank has focused its seed collecting efforts on nationally listed plant communities and species endemic to Canberra's local alpine, subalpine, grassy woodland and grassland regions. For example, between 2007 and 2013 more than 570 alpine and subalpine seed collections have been banked with us in association with a range of partners such as the ACT Government, Australian National University and the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

Not only have these partnerships significantly expanded the number of alpine species held in the National Seed Bank, research into the collection is helping determine the impacts of climate change on reproductive ecology and the demography of alpine flora. Seeds collected from endangered alpine and subalpine *Sphagnum* bogs and fens are helping us to better understand ecological drivers of seed germination in this community so that the knowledge is available for management and restoration.

The National Seed Bank and Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research are providing seeds and expertise to help restore the Australian Capital Territory's grassy

woodlands. They are also collecting and storing seed, and developing propagation protocols, for rare and threatened orchids to help the Territory government's species recovery programs.

A project collecting rare and threatened species from Norfolk Island National Park is part of a national effort, the Australian Seed Bank Partnership's 1000 Species program, supported by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew's Millennium Seed Bank. The Australian National Botanic Gardens is one of nine institutions across the country working together to add 1000 species not previously collected, to Australia and Kew's seed banks.

The National Seed Bank is one of the unsung heroes of Parks Australia's conservation efforts, an astonishing resource for researchers from around Australia and the world.

Providing national leadership

The Australian National Botanic Gardens supports a national role for Australia's botanic gardens in conserving biodiversity through national forums such as the Council of Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens and the National Seedbank Partnership. Collaboration with partners in Melanesia and South-East Asia on biodiversity informatics has also strengthened scientific and conservation relationships in the region.

The Director is the national focal point for a number of key thematic areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the Global Taxonomy Initiative, the Global Strategy on Plant Conservation, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing and for Protected Areas. These national leadership roles represent a significant contribution to the implementation of Australia's obligations under that convention, and to the scientific knowledge underpinning the management and conservation of our biological diversity.

The Director is an active participant in the work of IUCN and in September 2012 led the Australian Delegation to the IUCN World Conservation Congress, which sets the priorities and work program for IUCN for the next four years.

Planning for the IUCN World Parks Congress

With New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Parks Australia will co-host the IUCN World Parks Congress. The congress will be held at Sydney Olympic Park from 12 to 19 November 2014 with 3000 delegates from around 160 countries expected to attend.

Parks Australia has been working closely with partners to set the strategic direction for the congress, its program and plan for delivery. To realise the purpose of the congress—to position parks and protected areas within broader goals of economic and community wellbeing—we are working to bring together not only leaders in the parks and protected areas sector but also business, government and influential individuals beyond it.

Bush Blitz—Species discovery—inspiring school kids and their teachers

BushBush Blitz is the cornerstone of our national efforts to discover and protect terrestrial biodiversity. Since it began in 2009, some of Australia's top researchers and scientists have had great success discovering more than 650 species on 17 expeditions across Australia.

The Australian Biological Resources Study within Parks Australia has played the lead role in delivering this logistically complex and demanding program. Due to its success the Australian Government and BHP Billiton (through its Sustainable Communities Program) have committed further funding of \$12 million to support a second four-year Bush Blitz partnership.



Totally Wild presenter Pip Russell lends Brad Wilken from Alfred Deakin High School and Dane Trembath from EcOz Environmental Services a hand trapping snakes. Photo: Jo Harding

Bush Blitz TeachLive will be an important addition to the second phase of the program. It was piloted in May 2013 at Henbury Station in the Northern Territory. Bush Blitz TeachLive encourages Australian school teachers and kids to get interested in biodiversity science.

Mady Colquhoun from Armadale Primary School in Perth was one of five teachers invited to be part of the first TeachLive project. She spent eight days and nights scouring Henbury Station, near Alice Springs, for new plant and animal species—and she loved every moment.

"Bush Blitz has given me the chance to work with some of Australia's top scientists searching for native snails and collecting plant specimens. I got to 'do' science all day and night," Mady said.

"The highlight for me was being able to Skype and blog my experiences back to the students in the classroom. The kids loved the interaction. They could ask scientists questions directly and get immediate answers.

"Another unexpected benefit was the wider engagement of the teaching community. I developed online class plans for teachers from my school to follow and other schools followed our daily blogs. Since returning to school I have

expanded my skills in the classroom, engaging the kids. We're making bee hotels and setting up a freshwater aquarium for local fish."

Bush Blitz TeachLive is run in partnership with not-for-profit conservation research organisation Earthwatch Australia and the Australian Science Teachers Association.

Network Ten's Totally Wild children's television program also joined in the Henbury Bush Blitz. Two half hour episodes were broadcast in August 2013, reaching an ever-growing audience of potential rangers and researchers.

Species discovery is crucial to helping establish world-class management of our reserves while helping us face the dramatic changes rapidly approaching us, from food security to climate change.

Bush Blitz is a partnership program between the Australian Government, BHP Billiton and Earthwatch Australia. It highlights the outstanding conservation work that can be achieved through public-private partnerships.

Australia's National Landscapes

Australia's National Landscapes program is a dynamic, ground-breaking initiative. It is a long-term strategy to enhance regional tourism and conservation outcomes. Since 2005, Tourism Australia and Parks Australia have been actively working together to identify and differentiate Australia's iconic natural and cultural destinations and improve the quality of visitor experiences in those regions, in turn, increasing support for their conservation. The program provides a framework to consider tourism infrastructure, conservation and marketing together, encouraging partnerships between the tourism industry and conservation sectors to improve environmental, social and economic outcomes for each landscape.

In February 2013, Sydney Harbour became the 16th and final national landscape to be identified under the current program. The Wet Tropics and Tasmania's Island Heritage were also launched in the past 12 months and join Australia's Red Centre, Flinders Ranges, the Australian Alps, the Great Ocean Road, Australia's Coastal Wilderness, Australia's Timeless North, Australia's Green Cauldron, Greater Blue Mountains, the Kimberley, Kangaroo Island, the Great South West Edge, Ningaloo–Shark Bay and Great Barrier Reef national landscapes to complete this exclusive list of iconic Australian places.



Figure 2: National Landscapes of Australia as at 30 June 2013

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With the full suite of landscapes established the foundations of the program have largely been set. In future, the focus of the program will be in seeing results including more high quality experiences for visitors; building strategic partnerships and leveraging investment to create additional employment in nature-based tourism; building and profiling conservation successes; and promoting national landscape opportunities to key tourism segments and markets.

Significant progress has been made in marketing the national landscapes to increase awareness among consumers, finalising and implementing visitor experience development strategies, building networks and partnerships and creating and refining tools to assist stakeholders. The national landscapes' philosophy, content and priorities are increasingly embedded in the work of state and territory partner agencies in all states and territories. Networks developed at regional, state and national levels provided impetus and opportunity to identify new partnerships and tourism enterprise opportunities and to explore ways to increase awareness of existing conservation activities among the tourism industry and the wider community. There has been significant on-ground successes with the development of nature-based experiences and associated products and services. Some of these projects have been supported by a \$1 million Strategic Tourism Investment Grant administered by the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism.

In the year ahead, visitor experience development strategies will be completed for all national landscapes and the priority projects arising from those strategies will be implemented. Further areas of focus will include inspiring the tourism industry to assist with conservation initiatives in a way that enhances the visitor's experience as well as the environment; strengthening steering committees to improve their regional connections and resilience; and working with stakeholders to enhance the value of regional tourism and protected areas in those economies.



3 Organisational structure

The executive team Senior management team

Staffing overview

Boards of management Booderee National Park Kakadu National Park Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park

← Kakadu National Park Njanjma ranger Manbiyarra Nayinggul shows visitors the Ubirr rock art gallery. Ubirr's rock art depicts traditional foods and tells stories about law and creation.



from the Director of National Parks.

Figure 3: Parks Australia organisational chart as at 30 June 2013



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The executive team



Peter Cochrane

Director of National Parks

Peter was first appointed Director of National Parks in October 1999 and has since been reappointed three times by successive governments. As Director, he places a strong focus on stakeholder relationships, especially with the traditional owners of jointly managed parks, the tourism industry and scientific researchers. In managing Parks Australia, Peter continues to place

a high priority on the way the agency works—improving accountability and risk management, performance and reporting, and corporate governance. Emerging priorities include the links between healthy parks and healthy people and working at a whole-of-landscape scale.

Peter is a member of the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas and an inaugural member of the World Protected Areas Leadership Forum. He has worked for the oil and gas industry on national environment and competition policy issues and as an adviser to two Australian Government ministers on environment and natural resources issues.

Peter has a Masters degree in Public Policy and a Bachelor of Science degree. He has a background in field ecology and the eco-physiology of native plants.



Dr Judy West

Executive Director, Australian National Botanic Gardens Assistant Secretary, Parks and Biodiversity Science Branch

Judy oversees Parks Australia's science and natural resource management activities. Judy has more than 25 years experience in scientific research and policy, as a research scientist in CSIRO Plant Industry and as director of the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research and the Australian

National Herbarium. She holds an adjunct professorial position at the Australian National University. For her contributions to Australian plant systematics and Australia's Virtual Herbarium, she was awarded the Nancy Burbidge Memorial Medal in 2001 and an Order of Australia in 2003. Judy's scientific expertise is in plant systematics and phylogenetics, biodiversity informatics and conservation biology. Her skills developing partnerships linking science and policy are deployed in building an active science and knowledge management network in Parks Australia.



Mark Taylor

Assistant Secretary, Parks and Protected Areas Programs Branch

Mark Taylor brings 25 years experience in Commonwealth government agencies to his current role overseeing the strategic policy direction of Parks Australia. He has long worked in complex sectors with many stakeholders, working closely with Indigenous communities, the commercial sector and third parties, and overseas, negotiating

international treaties and trade and cultural agreements. He has delivered innovative programs in the Indigenous arts, the National Reserve System and Indigenous Protected Areas, and now oversees the management of two national parks. As well as a range of corporate functions, Mark has particular responsibility for implementing Australia's commitments under the Nagoya Protocol. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Literature and a Graduate Diploma in Education.



Anna Morgan

Assistant Secretary, Parks Operations and Tourism Branch

Anna oversees the management of Australia's World Heritage listed national parks, Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a, both jointly managed with their traditional owners. Anna joined the federal environment department in 2000, having worked as a cultural heritage consultant and a conservation officer in Queensland. Anna has held a variety of positions

in the department, gaining extensive policy and program-management experience in heritage conservation, legislative reform, stakeholder engagement and the delivery of protected area programs. Prior to her current role, Anna established the Working on Country program in the Northern Territory and led the implementation of the Australian and Northern Territory governments' bilateral agreement—Healthy Country Healthy People. Anna has a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours in History and Archaeology and a Masters degree in Cultural Heritage Studies in anthropology and archaeology.



Charlton Clark

Assistant Secretary, Commonwealth Marine Reserves Branch

Charlton has responsibility for the effective management of Australia's network of Commonwealth marine reserves. Before moving to marine reserves in 2008, Charlton managed the aviation operations at the Australian Antarctic Division, including establishing an air service between Australia and Antarctica. He has a background in program and

risk management, having spent 10 years in a variety of logistics, operations and management roles in the Australian Army, both domestically and overseas. Charlton has a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours and a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration.

Senior management team

The executive team and senior staff meet regularly to address strategic directions and current issues. The Assistant Secretary of the Parks Operations and Tourism Branch (based in Darwin) and the Assistant Secretary of the Commonwealth Marine Reserves Branch (based in Hobart) take part in the meetings via video link. Where appropriate, video and telephone links are used to liaise with executive and senior staff of the Australian Antarctic Division in Tasmania on the management of the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve.

Staffing overview

Human resources and related corporate services are provided to the Director through a purchaser–provider arrangement with the department. Detailed information on human resources management, employment conditions and remuneration is contained in the department's annual report for 2012–13.

As at 30 June 2013, the Director employed 260 full-time equivalent staff. The majority are located at Booderee, Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks and the Australian National Botanic Gardens and there are also small offices in the remote locations of Norfolk Island,

Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The central office of Parks Australia is in Canberra and an office in Darwin supports park operations.

From March 2013 the Director assumed responsibility for staff engaged in the management of Commonwealth marine reserves, whose principal office is based in Hobart and are supported by personnel located in Canberra, Darwin, Perth and Brisbane. Full integration of marine reserve staff to Parks Australia will take effect from 1 July 2013.

Parks Australia participates in the department's graduate recruitment program and school-leaver traineeship program and in 2012–13 hosted a number of placements in Canberra and on the reserves.

Parks Australia is committed to providing staff with the necessary skills to effectively and safely undertake their duties, both in the field and in the office. Internal and external training is available on a range of subjects including conservation and land management, horticulture, Indigenous skills and languages, rescue skills, customer service, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, fire control and suppression, leadership development, heavy vehicle and four-wheel drive operation, record keeping and business systems. The department offers a study support scheme for staff to complete formal external training.

Staff on remote islands are given opportunities to travel to the mainland for training and development and departmental staff visit reserves to provide training on issues such as occupational health and safety and geographic information system applications. Online study programs offered by a number of educational institutions are making tertiary study more accessible for staff in remote areas.

In the jointly managed parks, staff work with traditional owners, local Indigenous communities and schools to share knowledge. Traditional land management skills and the application of Indigenous knowledge are fundamental for managing these parks. Staff encourage interest from school children in park management and conservation through Junior Ranger programs where primary school students are introduced to aspects of park management including land management, plant and animal identification and working safely. The island parks also work closely with local schools to encourage appreciation of the national parks and their place in the local environment.

Indigenous trainees and apprentices are employed in the three jointly managed parks. Trainee programs are designed to improve the skills of local people, particularly in conservation and land management. Trainees complete nationally accredited certificates and are provided with on-the-job experience such as assisting with ranger duties and natural resource management. Each of the three jointly managed national parks have a specified Indigenous trainee position. Booderee and Kakadu national parks employ three and two Indigenous school-based apprentices respectively. These apprentices complete secondary school through paid apprenticeships, gaining nationally accredited training in conservation and park management.

The Kakadu Indigenous Ranger Program, funded by Working on Country, also provides resources allowing the national park to host 11 community rangers in the park's visitor services and natural and cultural heritage management programs.

Table 5: Staffing (full-time and	part-time)	profile at 30) June 2013
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		APS 1–3	APS 4	APS 5	APS 6	EL 1	Park managers, section heads	Technical, legal, public affairs	SES	Total
Canberra (incl. ANBG)	Male	10	8	2	8	11	2	3	2	46
	Female	11	7	8	15	12	3	6	1	63
	Total	21	15	10	23	23	5	9	3	109
Booderee	Male	4	6	3	2	2	1	0	0	18
	Female	4	3	1	1	2	0	0	0	11
	Total	8	9	4	3	4	1	0	0	29
Christmas	Male	16	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	24
Island	Female	5	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	8
	Total	21	2	6	2	0	1	0	0	32
Darwin	Male	0	0	0	3	3	1	0	0	7
office	Female	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	9
	Total	3	2	1	4	4	1	0	1	16
Kakadu	Male	20	5	9	2	2	0	0	0	38
	Female	14	4	2	7	2	1	0	0	30
	Total	34	9	11	9	4	1	0	0	68
Norfolk	Male	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Island	Female	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
	Total	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
Pulu	Male	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Keeling	Female	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Total	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Ulu <u>r</u> u–Kata	Male	6	2	6	0	2	0	0	0	16
Iju <u>t</u> a	Female	8	4	4	1	1	1	0	0	19
	Total	14	6	10	1	3	1	0	0	35
Grand total		103	45	43	42	38	11	9	4	295

Note: Figures represent individual staff members, including those working part-time, and are not expressed as full-time equivalents. Figures do not include Commonwealth Marine Reserves Branch staff members.

Boards of management

Boards of management have been established under the EPBC Act for Booderee, Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks. Tables 6, 7 and 8 show members of each board at 30 June 2013.

In conjunction with the Director, each board prepares management plans for its reserve, makes decisions about the management of the reserve in accordance with the management plan, monitors management and advises the Minister on future development.

Booderee National Park



Craig Ardler

Chair, Booderee National Park Board of Management

Craig has worked in management, policy and community development with several organisations in the south-coast region of Australia. He is the current Chief Executive Officer of the South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation. Craig has been employed at Booderee National Park as a Legal and Education Officer and Contracts and Facilities

(Management) Officer. Craig has also worked for the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council as Policy and Liaison Manager and has a building and construction background.

Board positions

- · Current Chairman of the Booderee National Park Board of Management
- Current Chairman of the Wreck Bay Council Board (elected October 2010)
- Current Director of the New South Wales Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council
- Elected to the Wreck Bay Council Executive on a number of occasions since 1989
- Previous member of the Wreck Bay Council Audit Committee
- Deputy Chairman of the Wreck Bay Council from October 2008 to October 2010
- Previous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Regional Councillor

Table 6: Booderee National Park Board of Management

Chair	Mr Craig Ardler (traditional owner nominee)
Members	Ms Annette Brown (traditional owner nominee)
	Vacant (traditional owner nominee) (approval of nominee pending)
	Vacant (traditional owner nominee) (approval of nominee pending)
	Vacant (traditional owner nominee) (approval of nominee pending)
	Vacant (traditional owner nominee) (approval of nominee pending)
	Vacant (traditional owner nominee) (approval of nominee pending)
	Captain Brett Chandler (Commanding Officer HMAS Creswell)
	Ms Sheryl Klaffer (Regional Australia)
	Dr Todd Minchinton (conservation science expert)
	Vacant (ecotourism expert) (approval of nominee pending)
	Mr Peter Cochrane (Director of National Parks)

Kakadu National Park



Ryan Baruwei

Chair, Kakadu National Park Board of Management

Ryan has been actively involved with the Kakadu National Park Board of Management since 2007. Ryan is a traditional owner of the Wurkbarbar clan group, which is one of the three clan groups of the Jawoyn people covering the Gunlom land trust area in the southern part of Kakadu.

Table 7: Kakadu National Park Board of Management

Chair	Mr Ryan Baruwei (traditional owner nominee)
Members	Mr Jonathan Nadji (traditional owner nominee)
	Mr Alfred Nayinggul (traditional owner nominee)
	Mr Michael Bangalang (traditional owner nominee)
	Mr Graham Kenyon (traditional owner nominee)
	Ms Yvonne Margarula (traditional owner nominee)
	Ms Violet Lawson (traditional owner nominee)
	Mr Jeffrey Lee (traditional owner nominee)
	Mr Joshua Hunter (traditional owner nominee)
	Ms Maria Lee (traditional owner nominee)
	Vacant (nature conservation expertise)
	Mr Rick Murray (tourism industry expertise)
	Vacant (Northern Territory Government nominee)
	Mr Peter Cochrane (Director of National Parks)
	Ms Anna Morgan (Parks Australia)

Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park



Harry Wilson

Chair, Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park Board of Management

Harry has been the Chair of the Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park Board of Management since the beginning of 2009. Harry is the grandson of Paddy Ulu<u>r</u>u, a senior custodian of Ulu<u>r</u>u. Harry is keen to continue the good work of the previous chair in maintaining *Tjukurpa* (traditional Aboriginal law in the western desert region) and supporting A<u>n</u>angu

(western desert Aboriginal people) and the park in working together to keep *Tjukurpa* strong.

Table 8: Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park Board of Management

Chair	Mr Harry Wilson (traditional owner nominee)
Members	Ms Alison Hunt (traditional owner nominee)
	Ms Pantjiti Windlass (traditional owner nominee)
	Mr Sammy Wilson (traditional owner nominee)
	Ms Judy Trigger (traditional owner nominee)
	Ms Malya Teamay (traditional owner nominee)
	Mr Bruce Breaden (traditional owner nominee)
	Vacant (traditional owner nominee) (approval of nominee pending)
	Vacant (Northern Territory Government nominee) (approval of nominee pending)
	Mr John King (Minister for Tourism nominee)
	Mr Peter Cochrane (Director of National Parks)
	Vacant (Minister for the Environment nominee) (nomination pending)



4 Planning, reporting and performance

Director of National Parks strategic planning and performance

Portfolio Budget Statements 2012–13 Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities Strategic Plan 2012–16 Parks Australia Divisional Plan 2010–14 Management plans Management plan prescriptions not implemented

Performance outcomes

Case study: Back from the brink Case study: National Landscapes goes from strength to strength Case study: Moving our buff-banded rails Case study: Come discover Norfolk Island National Park Case study: Biodiscovery—a Pacific approach Case study: Reducing red tape for industry in marine reserves

 \leftarrow An anemone found in the beautiful waters of Christmas Island National Park.

Director of National Parks strategic planning and performance

This annual report is one element in the strategic planning and performance assessment framework for the Director of National Parks. Other elements are described in this chapter, including a summary of performance for 2012–13.

Portfolio Budget Statements 2012–13

These documents detail Budget initiatives and appropriations against specific outcomes and outputs. The annual report completes the budget cycle by reporting on achievements for outcomes and outputs in the year under review. The Director of National Parks was included in the 2012–13 Portfolio Budget Statements for the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and contributes to the achievement of Outcome 1:

The conservation and protection of Australia's terrestrial and marine biodiversity and ecosystems through supporting research, developing information, supporting natural resource management, and establishing and managing Commonwealth protected areas.

The Director contributes to meeting this outcome through:

Conservation and appreciation of Commonwealth reserves through the provision of safe visitor access, the control of invasive species and working with stakeholders and neighbours.

Performance outcomes for Program 1.1: Parks and Reserves, as identified in the Portfolio Budget Statements, follow.

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities Strategic Plan 2012–16

The department's strategic plan is the basis for its business planning and is reviewed annually to assess progress against priorities. Management of Commonwealth reserves in accordance with internationally agreed principles is identified as a priority in the plan.

Parks Australia Divisional Plan 2010-14

This plan sets out the long-term outcomes and shorter-term outputs for the Director of National Parks against seven key result areas (KRAs) as follows:

- KRA 1—Natural heritage management
- KRA 2—Cultural heritage management
- KRA 3—Joint management and working with Indigenous communities
- KRA 4—Use and appreciation of protected areas
- KRA 5—Stakeholders and partnerships
- KRA 6—Business management
- KRA 7—Biodiversity science, knowledge management and use.

Not all key result areas are equally relevant to all reserves. For example, KRA 3 joint management and working with Indigenous communities—applies largely to the three jointly managed reserves: Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a, Kakadu and Booderee national parks.

Strategies to achieve the outcomes described in the Parks Australia Divisional Plan and the department's strategic plan are detailed in Parks Australia branch, section, team and individual work plans, and in schedules for implementing management plans.

Management plans

Section 366 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* requires the Director (or in the case of a jointly managed park, the Director and the relevant board of management) to prepare management plans for Commonwealth reserves for the reserve's protection and conservation. Management plans have a maximum life of 10 years and must set out how the reserves are to be managed consistent with the relevant Australian IUCN Reserve Management Principles.

As at 30 June 2013, the Director is responsible for managing seven Commonwealth terrestrial and 59 Commonwealth marine reserves. Marine reserves were formerly managed by the department's Marine Division under delegation from the Director. This delegation ended in March 2013 and marine reserves were transferred to the Director.

Four terrestrial reserve management plans are in place as at 30 June 2013. Draft management plans for Booderee National Park and Christmas Island National Park have been released for public comment and are in the process of being finalised, taking into account public submissions. Draft management plans are currently under preparation for Pulu Keeling National Park and Kakadu National Park, which are expected to be released for public comment in 2013–14.

Following the proclamation of 40 new Commonwealth marine reserves on 17 November 2012, the Director invited public comment on the proposed management plans for four new marine reserves networks (the south-west, north-west, north and temperate east) and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve. More than 80 000 submissions were received and taken into account to finalise the management plans. Public consultation on the preparation of a management plan for the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network was undertaken between July and August 2012 and generated approximately 20 000 submissions. The Minister approved management plans for five marine reserves networks and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve on 3 March 2013.

The management plan for the South-east Marine Reserves Network will come into effect on 1 July 2013. The management plans for the south-west, north-west, north and temperate east networks and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve will come into effect on 1 July 2014. The remote Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve management plan expired in August 2012 and a draft second plan is currently being prepared by the department's Australian Antarctic Division.

The Director is responsible for implementing these management plans and collaborates with Commonwealth and state agencies, including the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service to ensure compliance and enforcement of the plans.

Management plan prescriptions not implemented

During the life of a management plan some prescriptions may not be implemented due to redundancy, impracticality or a lack of resources. There were no prescriptions in any management plan in the 2012–13 year that were designated as 'not to be implemented'.

Back from the brink

Christmas Island National Park is working hard to bring back two reptiles at risk of extinction—blue-tailed skinks and Lister's geckos.

Our captive breeding program for these reptiles has two centres, one within the park and one at Taronga Zoo, as a safety measure against any on-island disasters.

Reptile numbers in both centres continue to grow. Since 2011–12 the on-island population of blue-tailed skinks has increased by 46 per cent and Lister's geckos by 59 per cent. Today there are 343 skinks and 111 geckos on the island.

To make room we've built a new reptile house. We're building eight predator-proof exclosures on the island in 2013, with the help of a grant from the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife. These new exclosures can hold up to about 1000 skinks.

Our captive breeding program began in 2009. Taronga Zoo came on board in 2011, through an agreement funded by Parks Australia.

The nationally-vulnerable Lister's gecko was thought extinct on Christmas Island for more than 20 years. A wild population was rediscovered in 2009.

Despite being widespread and common up until the 1990s, blue-tailed skink numbers have seriously declined, mostly due to introduced species, like the yellow crazy ant, giant centipede, Asian wolf snake, cats and rats.

Today we're working to reduce these threats through aerial baiting of yellow crazy ants and working with several other agencies to help control cats and rats on Christmas Island.

Our next step is to identify and address other specific threats to the blue-tailed skink and Lister's gecko before we can release our captive populations back into the wild.



Taronga Zoo's Lisa Cavanagh spent time on Christmas Island this year, helping look after our endangered reptiles.

Performance outcomes

The following performance outcomes for 2012–13 use key result areas, outcomes and indicators identified in the Parks Australia Divisional Plan and key performance indicators and deliverables identified in the 2012–13 Portfolio Budget Statements (marked 'PBS').

KRA 1—Natural heritage management

Objective

• The Commonwealth protected area estate contributes to the long-term viability of Australia's biodiversity.

Actions

- Undertake monitoring, research and conservation activities to maintain or improve the status of natural values for which Commonwealth reserves were declared and/or recognised.^{PBS}
- Minimise the impacts of threats to natural values of Commonwealth reserves.^{PBS}

2012–13 results

Botanic gardens management

- Construction works for the new Red Centre garden at the Australian National Botanic Gardens were undertaken throughout the year and will be completed in August 2013. The works included approximately 4500 tonnes of sand, a viewing platform, concrete path network and timber bridges, interpretation hub and pavement artwork. Plant species which have been propagated and planted include desert oaks, grass trees, chenopods, acacias and various ephemerals; a mature eight-metre Central Australian cabbage palm (*Livistona mariae*), propagated in Queensland, was also planted.
- Entrances to the Sydney Region garden were upgraded with extensive use of sandstone landscape materials and the garden was enhanced with more than 100 new plants gained from field collections, including 20 listed threatened species.
- Planning and preparation for a stocktake of the living collections of the Gardens in 2013–14 was completed. Priority areas were identified in line with visitor expectations and operational requirements.
- Over the summer season the Gardens' National Seed Bank made 109 collections of 61 grassland species, with the aim of making multiple collections of key species from different populations to increase genetic diversity in the seed bank: 15 species were collected from three or more populations, 14 species were collected from two populations and 36 species were collected from a single population.

- Funded by the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership, Kew, in Britain, and coordinated by the Australian Seed Bank Partnership, the Gardens contributed to the 1000 species project via collection and research of Norfolk Island's endemic, rare and threatened plant species. Two collecting trips to Norfolk Island were undertaken and 80 collections were made from 45 species of flowering plants (including 19 threatened species) and 24 species of ferns (including six threatened species).
- The Gardens hosted a myrtle rust workshop in December 2012 bringing together researchers and land managers to share information on the myrtle rust situation and future management.
- The Gardens' conservation program focused on plants from grassy woodland communities and sub-alpine flora. Specific conservation projects were undertaken associated with the following threatened species: *Zieria obcordata, Z. baeuerlenii, Swainsona recta, Eucalyptus imlayensis, Lepidium ginninderense, L. hyssopifolium, Plinthanthesis rodwayi, Dampiera fusca, Pultenaea baeuerlenii* and *Hakea pulvinifera*.
- The Gardens was a partner in a successful precinct rabbit-control program that included Australian Capital Territory Parks and Conservation, the Australian National University, the CSIRO, the National Museum of Australia and the National Capital Authority.
- The Gardens contracted the Australian Capital Territory government to undertake a hazard reduction burn on the southern annex in May 2013.
- Management of invasive morning glory (*Ipomea cairica* and *I. indica*) at the Norfolk Island Botanic Garden has resulted in an 80 per cent reduction in occurrence.

Habitat management

- The Christmas Island Minesite-to-Rainforest Rehabilitation Program continued under a renegotiated memorandum of understanding between the Director and the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport. Earthworks were conducted over five hectares of former mine fields with around 19 200 seedlings planted, comprising primary plantings on five hectares of bare mine fields and secondary plantings on 14 hectares of already established fields. Around 120 hectares of previously planted fields were maintained (weeding and fertilising). Based on the program's framework for selection of priority rehabilitation sites, Christmas Island National Park collaborated with a researcher to develop spatial decision support tools to assist with rehabilitation site selection which will result in more effective and efficient rehabilitation.
- A workshop covering marine conservation activities on Christmas Island, coordinated by the University of Western Australia and the Director, was conducted with marine researchers and managers. The workshop identified major conservation values and threats and recommended some broad research and management directions for the marine environments of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.
- Kakadu National Park's prescribed burning program continued, with the implementation of the Stone Country fire management strategy successfully preventing broad-scale late-dry-season wildfires in this landscape unit. Fine-scale fire plans are in development to address the specific requirements of particular species or communities that will be managed more intensively.

- Six climate change research projects funded by the department's National Environmental Research Program continued in Kakadu's wetland and coastal environments, including investigation of floodplain values and threats and analysis of patterns and processes of aquatic biodiversity. The knowledge gained from these projects will be used to assess potential effects on northern Australia's aquatic biodiversity caused by climate change, sea-level rise and other threatening processes in the region, and to design management strategies to minimise their impact. Specific activities undertaken as part of the projects included:
 - sampling of fish biodiversity in the lowlands and estuary of the South Alligator River at 70 dry-season locations and 50 wet-season locations
 - a workshop was held with Bininj to identify culturally important wetlands and to record changes that may have been noticed in the floodplain environments.
- Kakadu hosted a remote-sensing and high-resolution aerial photography workshop in January 2013 bringing together researchers, park staff and traditional owners to better understand how these tools can help in managing the park.
- Erosion and soil compaction were monitored in the South Alligator Valley containment rehabilitation area of Kakadu (an area affected by previous uranium-mining activity), particularly for any impact on groundwater and vegetation. Minor rehabilitation works were undertaken to remediate erosion adjoining the containment cap.

Significant species management

- Park managers nominated 46 species across six terrestrial reserves to determine whether viable populations of these significant species have been maintained in those reserves. Of the selected species the populations of two are increasing, 18 remain steady, nine are decreasing, one may be extinct, two are locally extinct and population data are deficient for 14^{PBS} (further information on species monitoring is provided in Appendix B: Portfolio Budget Statements reporting 2012–13).
- Long-term monitoring at Booderee National Park shows key indicator species increased rapidly during the early 2000s in the first few years of fox baiting and have now declined to a new and stable equilibrium abundance. Stable or increasing population trends for threatened eastern bristlebirds (*Dasyornis brachypterus*) and shorebirds were recorded, likely in response to low fox numbers.
- Despite a wetter than normal year, no green and golden bell frogs (*Litoria aurea*) were detected at Booderee—this listed threatened species has not been detected in the park for eight years and is regarded as locally extinct. Nocturnal surveys again failed to detect the greater glider (*Petauroides volans*) which has not been recorded in the park since 2007; natural re-introduction through a narrow corridor is possible as the species persists in nearby forest.
- Booderee continued to work with Jervis Bay Marine Park on baited remote underwater video monitoring of fish populations and on tracking of selected fish species using surgically inserted devices within park waters. This is improving understanding of the potential impact of fishing in the park over time.



Bike riding is a popular activity in the Sydney Harbour National Landscape. Photo: Anson Smart for Tourism Australia

National Landscapes goes from strength to strength

It has been a milestone year for our National Landscapes program - we reached our goal of recognising 16 iconic landscapes across Australia.

This national initiative, led by us with our partners Tourism Australia, invites Australia's visitors to immerse themselves in our country's natural wonders—from snorkelling on the Great Barrier Reef to hiking through the Australian Alps.

National Landscapes are about giving Australia's visitors an experience of the heart and soul of this country—our natural environment, while learning how we can all make sure these special places are conserved forever.

Sydney Harbour, the Wet Tropics in Queensland and Tasmania's Island Heritage all signed up as National Landscapes this year.

For nearly 42 per cent of our international visitors, it's the Sydney Harbour National Landscape that first greets them when they land in Australia. It's an easily accessible landscape full of natural surprises, particularly attractive to our growing market of Chinese visitors.

For a long time small tourism businesses and conservationists have driven eco-tourism in the Wet Tropics, from the Daintree rainforests to Townsville, to help build a sustainable future for the region.

By being part of the National Landscapes partnership, the local community is refocusing and redefining what they offer to visitors, marketing their natural competitive advantage to the world. Tasmania's Island Heritage offers an experience found nowhere else on earth. A pristinely beautiful but accessible wilderness of dramatic coastlines, thick forests and snow-capped mountains, this is a living museum of some of the world's oldest and rarest plants and animals.

Just one example of our National Landscapes combining outstanding visitor experiences with conservation is the Conservation Ecology Centre and its social enterprise, the Great Ocean Ecolodge, on Victoria's famous Great Ocean Road.

The Great Ocean Ecolodge, recognised by National Geographic as one of the top eco-lodges in the world, was established by the Conservation Ecology Centre, to support an environmental trust. Using profits from the Ecolodge, private sector contributions and government grants, the trust is helping protect local habitat and supporting research on endangered species such as the tiger quoll.

Founder Lizzie Corke is a former winner of the Prime Minister's Environmentalist of the Year award in 2005.

"National Landscapes combine the best of both worlds, engaging visitors to the region in ensuring the future of its landscapes and wildlife and, in doing so, providing a deeply meaningful experience which provides opportunities for visitors to leave a legacy of conservation," she said.

For more on Australia's National Landscapes visit: http://www.australia.com/campaigns/ nationallandscapes/australiasnationallandscapes.htm

For more on the work of the Great Ocean Ecolodge and Great Ocean Road National Landscape visit: http://www.greatoceanecolodge.com/

- The Christmas Island National Park captive-breeding program for native terrestrial reptiles, undertaken in partnership with Sydney's Taronga Zoo, continued to result in increasing captive populations of Lister's gecko (*Lepidodactylus listeri*) and blue-tailed skink (*Cryptoblepharus egeriae*), with on-island captive populations of the former increasing by 59 per cent (to 111 individuals) and the latter by 46 per cent (to 343 individuals), supplemented by smaller off-island populations at Taronga. Two of the three captive non-breeding forest skinks (*Emoia nativitatis*) died. Construction of a new reptile housing and captive-breeding facility to cater for expanding on-island populations was completed.
- A reptile survey involving Christmas Island National Park staff and independent researchers conducted in October 2012 and in March-to-May 2013 reaffirmed that the island's native reptiles are under serious threat of extinction in the wild, although the giant gecko (*Cyrtodactylus sadleiri*) persists and one Lister's gecko was detected from a previously unknown population. A meeting of the Christmas Island Reptile Advisory Panel was held following these surveys.
- Nominations for the listing of Christmas Island's endemic terrestrial reptiles and the Christmas Island flying-fox (*Pteropus melanotus natalis*) as critically endangered under the EPBC Act were prepared and submitted.

- Road-management activities resulted in a reduction in mortality of red crabs (*Gecarcoidea natalis*) during the 2012–13 annual breeding migration when compared to previous years. A total of 677 deaths of robber crabs (*Birgus latro*) from vehicles was recorded in 2012, compared with 667 in 2011 and 854 in 2010. These figures suggest Christmas Island National Park's program of providing education materials to the community about the impact of traffic on robber crabs is helping to raise awareness of the issue, given the significant increase in vehicles and vehicle trips since monitoring commenced in January 2010. However, there were 113 robber crab deaths in May 2013—the highest monthly number on record.
- A survey of the Christmas Island flying-fox using the same survey methods previously adopted showed a reduced detection rate at fixed monitoring points in comparison to a 2006 survey, indicating a possible population decline—the survey is being repeated in 2013. Several likely threats to the flying fox were found by a scientific workshop (facilitated by the department's National Environmental Research Program) in November, which will be used in continuing threat identification and mitigation programs.
- Island-wide surveys for the Christmas Island hawk-owl (*Ninox natalis*) conducted in-conjunction with flying-fox surveys indicated the hawk-owl population appears to be stable and is not a conservation concern.
- Kakadu National Park hosted a three-day threatened species workshop in March 2013 to support the development of a threatened species strategy to guide management of the park's threatened species—development of the strategy has commenced.
- Survey work in the South Alligator River undertaken via the department's National Environmental Research Program doubled the number of records for the critically endangered speartooth shark (*Glyphis glyphis*), highlighting the importance of Kakadu for this species.
- Biodiversity hotspot research surveys continued to be conducted in Kakadu in conjunction with the Northern Territory Government's Biodiversity Unit. Projects included:
 - a three-night survey of Gardangarl (Field Island) for the vulnerable water mouse (*Xeromys myoides*)—while no individuals were trapped, evidence of their presence was observed
 - three surveys each of six-days duration in December 2012, March 2013 and June 2013 for the little-known Oenpelli python (*Morelia oenpelliensis*) and the threatened giant rock skink (*Bellatorias obiri*) at Nourlangie Rock, Koongarra and Nawurlandja—a single giant rock skink was recorded
 - one survey for Leichhardt's grasshopper (*Petasida ephippigera*) conducted in the Nourlangie area with 28 individuals recorded.
- Kakadu continued its collaborative project with the University of Sydney and the Territory Wildlife Park monitoring the impact of cane toads (*Rhinella marina*) on a population of northern quolls (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) at East Alligator Ranger Station. Eighty-eight captive-bred quolls trained to avoid cane toads were released at the site in the 2009–10 wet season and follow-up trapping in 2011–12 showed that 66 per cent of the population was descended from this group. Twenty-two quolls were trapped at the site between November 2012 and February 2013.

- Monitoring confirmed steady numbers of estuarine crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus*) with numbers in Kakadu estimated at between 8000 and 12 000 animals or 10 per cent of the total Northern Territory population.
- Ongoing survey of the nesting activity of vulnerable flatback turtles (*Natator depressus*) on Gardangarl produced similar results in 2012 to those of previous years, with 65 turtles and 51 nests recorded during the 20-night survey period.
- Plant and animal experts from Charles Darwin University and the Northern Territory Government worked with Kakadu staff and traditional owners on the park's five-yearly flora and fauna fire plot surveys. Sixty-three fire plots and 20 fauna plots were assessed; the results are currently being collated.
- Following the completion of a risk assessment in 2011–12 and in line with recovery plan recommendations, 39 endangered Cocos buff-banded rails (*Gallirallus philippensis andrewsi*) were successfully translocated in April 2013 from Pulu Keeling National Park to nearby Horsburgh Island as a second insurance population. Park staff worked with scientists from the national recovery team in undertaking the translocation. Post-translocation monitoring confirmed the birds remain present and ongoing monitoring will determine if the population persists and becomes self-sustaining.
- At Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park, monitoring continued to record an increase in numbers
 of the translocated population of the endangered mala or rufous hare-wallaby
 (*Lagorchestes hirsutus*) and the National Mala Recovery Team was re-established to
 improve population management of the species as a whole. Numbers of the vulnerable *tjakura* or great desert skink (*Liopholis kintorei*) were maintained in the park's borefield
 habitat, despite exposure to wildfire.
- Two scientific journal articles (one published, one in press) were prepared reporting the results of surveys of two little-known small mammals in Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a: the Ooldea dunnart (*Sminthopsis ooldea*) and the endangered southern marsupial mole (*Notoryctes typhlops*).
- Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a entered into a new partnership with Alice Springs-based research organisations (CSIRO and Charles Darwin University) to increase research on-park. The park also supported three PhD research programs investigating questions vital to park management decision-making (fire; impact of introduced mammalian carnivores; and condition of Ulu<u>r</u>u waterholes and mesic habitats).
- A program for *ex situ* alpine plant conservation supported by a three-year partnership between the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Australian National University, Australian Research Council, University of Queensland and the Friends of the Gardens concluded. The program studied the effect of climate change on the reproductive ecology and demography of Australian alpine flora and its outcomes are currently being prepared for publication.
- The Gardens initiated a research program to investigate ecological drivers of seed germination and establishment for plants of Australian alpine and sub-alpine bogs and fens. Field trips to multiple bogs were made periodically between December 2012 and April 2013 to collect species with varied fruiting phenology from multiple sites. A total of 118 collections were made including 44 collections of the 15 target taxa.

Invasive species management

- Park managers nominated 24 significant invasive species across six terrestrial reserves and have been monitoring changes in their distribution and abundance. Of the selected species, the populations of six are increasing, four remain steady, eight are decreasing and population data are deficient for six^{PBS} (further information on monitoring of significant invasive species is provided in Appendix B: Portfolio Budget Statements reporting 2012–13).
- Booderee National Park completed the fourth aerial helicopter survey of bitou bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) which has been conducted every three years since 2004. The surveys indicate a steady decrease in density and distribution of bitou bush, especially following spray/burn/spray treatment, with an increase in density in some areas over the past year. Continued treatment by spraying with splatter-guns (88.5 hectares), ground-spraying (9.6 hectares) and hand-pulling (22 hectares) contributed to the general decline of this invasive species in the park.
- Splatter-gun control of 0.5 hectares of invasive kikuyu grass (*Pennisetum clandestinum*) was successfully trialled in penguin habitat on Bowen Island in Booderee; the trial was a follow-up to very successful aerial treatment of kikuyu using ultra-low volume weedkiller Roundup.
- Christmas Island National Park's continued management of yellow crazy ants (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) included:
 - aerial baiting of 1067 hectares of crazy ant supercolonies in September 2012
 - an independent pre and post-baiting off-target and bioaccumulation impact monitoring study of the aerial baiting program which concluded there was no evidence of accumulation of bait in the environment
 - commencing the 2013 biennial island-wide survey to map crazy ant supercolonies and determine red crab population abundance and distribution, as well as to monitor other aspects of the island's biodiversity
 - a three-year research project for the biological control of crazy ants funded by the Director and conducted by La Trobe University, the results of which indicate that biological control of crazy ants appears feasible and would not have any off-target impacts
 - meetings of the Crazy Ant Scientific Advisory Panel in August and December 2012; among other matters the panel provided advice in relation to implementing a biological control program.
- Based on the results of the biological control research and the panel's advice, the Director and La Trobe University entered into a three-year contract (from 1 July 2013) to trial, implement and monitor a biological control program for crazy ants on Christmas Island. The implementation phase has commenced via host-specificity testing in Malaysia and seeking of necessary environmental approvals.

- Christmas Island National Park continued to facilitate and support cross-tenure cat management across the island. Between the program's commencement in May 2010 and August 2012 approximately 450 feral cats were removed, resulting in significant improvement in the nesting success of red-tailed tropicbirds (*Phaethon rubricauda*) at the Settlement nesting colony. Working with the Shire of Christmas Island, the park negotiated a funding agreement with island stakeholders to continue a targeted feral cat and rat control program for 2013–14; however, significant additional long-term funding is needed to eradicate feral cats and effectively control rats.
- Christmas Island continued to control the single known infestation of invasive Siam weed (*Chromolaena odorata*) and island-wide monitoring did not detect any other infestations.
- Kakadu National Park's weed management strategy was revised and reviewed. Monitoring and control programs for invasive weeds continued throughout the year although lower-than-average rainfall reduced airboat access to floodplain environments. Achievements included:
 - monitoring and treatment of 222 known mimosa (*Mimosa pigra*) infestation sites ranging in size from 0.5 square metres to 30 square metres, and the location and treatment of two new infestations—seed viability of 30 years for this species is now suspected as a result of long-term monitoring of an isolated infestation
 - conducting a mapping survey of olive hymenachne (*Hymenachne amplexicaulis*) and para grass (*Brachiaria mutica*) in the Wildman, West and South Alligator River floodplains under the department's National Environmental Research Program which will enable preparation of detailed distribution maps; trials of chemical control methods for para grass were also initiated under the program
 - monitoring and treatment of 30 para grass and olive hymenachne sites in the East, South and West Alligator River catchments
 - removal of 30 new satellite gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*) infestations from the Kakadu and Arnhem highways and monitoring of an historic infestation in the Mudginbardi area; no other gamba infestations were recorded.
- Feral animal achievements at Kakadu comprised:
 - implementation of a wild dog management program for Jabiru township in collaboration with the West Arnhem Shire Council
 - planning for establishment of four cat exclusion areas which will assist researchers to understand the role of cats in the documented decline of small mammals across northern Australia
 - a limited feral animal control program focused on culling of animals affecting public safety including opportunistic culling of pigs and buffaloes and an aerial program conducted in August 2012 in the Yellow Water area.

Moving our buff-banded rails

In a true team effort Pulu Keeling National Park staff joined forces with Christmas Island National Park staff, scientists, the Cocos (Keeling) Island Shire Council and the community to support the recovery of the endangered Cocos buff-banded rail.

This ground-dwelling bird is found only within the park — a tiny atoll in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, which provides critical habitat for a population of around 1000 rails.

The establishment of a second population of the birds on nearby Horsburgh Island is a critical action from the recovery plan for these birds, which were once widespread across the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

A second population will act as an insurance policy, in case threats like disease, cyclones or introduced predators, especially rats, impact on the main population.

In April, the team captured 39 of the rare birds and transported them to their new home on Horsburgh Island. This was a logistically challenging operation. Landing a boat on Pulu Keeling National Park is very difficult so the birds had to be swum out to a waiting boat through breaking surf—in specially designed transport boxes!

All the birds made the journey unharmed and settled in well. It is too early to determine if they will persist and become a self–sustaining, breeding population. So, they will be monitored with tracking devices and through regular field surveys over the coming months.

This project has only been possible because of all our partners including the Cocos Islands Shire Council, Western Australia Government and consultant scientists who co-ordinated the scientific aspects of our capture of the birds.



Park staff banded the rails prior to their release.



Park staff swim the buff-banded rails to shore.



A released Cocos buff-banded rail.
- Woody weeds were removed from approximately 14 hectares of the Mt Pitt section of Norfolk Island National Park and 4.5 hectares of the Phillip Island section, allowing for regeneration of native forest and increased habitat for threatened species. Numbers of feral chickens in the park were significantly reduced through a change in bait used in rat control.
- Monitoring which was instigated in June 2012 continued throughout the year to detect the potential entry of rats to Pulu Keeling National Park from suspected illegal entry vessels shipwrecked on the island. While no rats were detected, bait stations were installed as a precautionary measure and visual impact surveys continued; clean-up of the two wrecks that occurred in the latter half of 2012 was also completed. The threat of rats and other invasive species remains with further vessels continuing to arrive in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Territory.
- Cocos-based staff completed a Caring for our Country Program project which commenced in 2009 and funded a series of activities to protect Pulu Keeling National Park from the impacts of invasive species. During the final weed-control trip in January 2013 an estimated area of 15.4 hectares of the main target weed species, coral berry (*Rivinia humilis*), was treated by herbicide spraying; the four trips completed under the program resulted in a decline of 17 per cent in coral berry distribution. Long-term control is needed to target emerging seedlings. As part of the project, interpretive signage was installed at key departure points for marine vessels in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands region and at the park's landing area to inform residents and visitors of the risk of invasive species and ways to reduce their spread.
- Reduced numbers of feral animals (foxes, cats and rabbits) were observed at Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park after successful control techniques in areas of high biodiversity across the park.

KRA 2—Cultural heritage management

Objective

• Australia's cultural heritage is conserved and effectively communicated to the public.

Actions

- Identify, protect and conserve cultural heritage values for which the parks were declared/recognised.
- Minimise threats to cultural values.
- Work with traditional owners to assess and maintain key cultural sites.
- Provide assistance to traditional owners in recording and maintaining living cultural traditions.
- Assist in the facilitation of on-country activities to encourage intergenerational transfer of knowledge.
- Provide appropriate interpretive material to the public to communicate the cultural heritage of Commonwealth reserves.

2012–13 results

Identification and conservation of cultural sites

- With the involvement of their traditional owners, Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks continued their rock art maintenance programs. Kakadu also continued discussions with the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority and Northern Land Council about a register of sites of significance and access protocols in the park, particularly in relation to public walking routes. Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a's Cultural Site Management System database was upgraded and installed on new hardware.
- A group of park managers, tour guides and rock art conservators from South Africa visited Kakadu in August 2012 to examine rock art conservation techniques and rock art tourism management under an Indigenous rock art conservation exchange program funded and hosted by the Getty Foundation; the visit involved park staff and traditional owners and a reciprocal visit to South Africa is scheduled for August 2013. A PhD study continued to investigate the effectiveness of current and previous rock art conservation techniques used by park staff and results will be provided to park management.
- Booderee National Park liaised with the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council on a number of proposed developments and potential impacts on cultural heritage.
- Pulu Keeling National Park staff participated in organisational arrangements for a proposed event in 2014 to commemorate the centenary of the wreck of the SMS *Emden* on the island during WW1.

Maintenance and promotion of traditional cultural values

- Discussions continued with the Booderee Board of Management regarding broad cultural heritage directions for the draft second management plan. The draft cultural heritage strategy was discussed and considered for endorsement at a meeting of the board.
- Kakadu supported investigations into potential excavation sites for an Australian National University archaeological research project 'Prehistory to History: Landscape and Cultural Change on the South Alligator River'.
- Uluru–Kata Tjuta has commenced development of an annual cultural heritage program derived from the park's Cultural Heritage Action Plan. The program will provide guidance on cultural heritage priorities, timing and activities.
- Construction of a new men's keeping place in the Mutitjulu Community at Uluru–Kata Tjuta is due for completion at the end of July 2013.

Histories, pre-histories and knowledge recording

- Kakadu produced two reports on the life history of significant traditional owners. The park also hosted and supported the Australian National University post-graduate course 'Physical Conservation of Heritage Sites' at Anlarr (Nourlangie Camp), the old Jim Jim pub and the historic town of Pine Creek.
- Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a's oral history collection is being catalogued and archived and traditional ecological knowledge recordings with senior traditional owners are being added to the Cultural Site Management System.

KRA 3—Joint management and working with Indigenous communities

Objectives

- Indigenous communities benefit from, and play a lead role in, the Australian Government's protected-area management program.
- Activities and investments contribute to meeting Closing the Gap targets.

Actions

- Enable effective participation of traditional owners and Indigenous communities in park management.^{PBS}
- Engage Indigenous staff and/or contractors to provide park services.PBS
- Provide opportunities for the establishment of Indigenous-owned enterprises, including those which provide an Indigenous cultural experience to visitors.
- Work together with boards of management, land councils and service-delivery agencies to assist in meeting Closing the Gap targets.

2012-13 results

Indigenous staffing

- The employment level of ongoing Indigenous staff in Parks Australia's three jointly managed national parks was essentially unchanged from 2011–12, with a slight increase in the actual number of ongoing Indigenous staff representing a small decrease in full-time equivalent terms. There is strong Indigenous representation in ongoing roles at Kakadu National Park and Booderee National Park; Indigenous participation at Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park has improved but remains below desirable levels.^{PBS}
- Booderee reinstated a specified Indigenous trainee position to complement the career pathway training initiatives undertaken by the park. Specified trainee ranger positions were maintained at Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a.^{PBS}
- The number of Indigenous staff engaged as intermittent and irregular employees at Kakadu went from 53 to 52. Two Indigenous staff were engaged as intermittent and irregular employees at Booderee's visitor centre.^{PBS}
- The Kakadu Indigenous Ranger Program, funded by the Australian Government's Working on Country program, provided resources allowing Kakadu to host 11 community rangers in visitor services and natural and cultural heritage management programs in the park. Funding for the program was renewed for a further four years.^{PBS}
- The externally funded Mutitjulu Community Rangers Program at Uluru–Kata Tjuta provided for engagement of 49 Anangu in flexible employment arrangements.^{PBS}

Contribution of Aboriginal enterprises to park services

 Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council was contracted to provide \$1.55 million in cleaning, road maintenance, entry station, horticultural and infrastructure maintenance services to Booderee.^{PBS}

- In its 2011–12 annual report, Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council reported that it employed 14 full-time, four permanent part-time and up to 10 casual staff to deliver services to Booderee.^{PBS}
- The Director and Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council finalised a new 10-year service contract for outsourcing of park services worth \$20 million. Five service-level agreements were negotiated as part of the service contract review process including new agreements for infrastructure maintenance and horticultural services.^{PBS}

Training and support

- Junior Ranger programs at the three jointly-managed national parks continued in association with local primary schools. As part of the program at Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a, students designed and created 'keeping safe' signage for visitors on a water tank at the base of Ulu<u>r</u>u.
- Parks Australia supported Indigenous staff and board members from the jointly managed parks to attend the World Indigenous Network Conference in Darwin in May 2013.
- At Booderee National Park, a broad range of training was provided to park staff and Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council members in accordance with the park's new training strategy. Support was provided to two Indigenous staff members to undertake university studies.
- Booderee continued to support work-experience placement for Indigenous students from the Wreck Bay Community, with three new school-based apprentices beginning a two-year placement in the park in November 2012. Booderee also coordinated the placement of a further 11 Indigenous school-based apprentices from the Wreck Bay Community across the Jervis Bay region and, in association with other land-management organisations, assisted in establishing the externally funded Indigenous Ranger Cadet Program at Vincentia High School, targeting year nine and 10 students.
- Kakadu National Park continued to support the placement and employment of two Indigenous school-based apprentices and provided two cross-cultural appreciation and awareness training events.
- A \$92,000 investment was made by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to deliver an Indigenous leadership program in the West Arnhem Region. Kakadu traditional owners are expected to play a key role in mentoring participants and key Indigenous staff will be identified to participate.
- Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park convened a women's governance workshop in June 2013 to facilitate greater engagement between senior female Parks Australia staff and female board members.

Boards of management

- The Booderee National Park Board of Management met twice during the year, together with four meetings of the Training and Interpretation Subcommittee.
- The Kakadu National Park Board of Management met three times and the Kakadu Tourism Consultative Committee met four times to provide advice and information to the board.
- Four meetings of the Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park Board of Management were held, supported by three meetings of the Cultural Heritage and Scientific Consultative Committee to provide advice to the board on natural and cultural heritage issues.

Come discover Norfolk Island National Park

Norfolk Island National Park's new Discovery Centre is well and truly taking shape, with the final interior fit out set to be completed in 2013.

We've designed this purpose-built centre to both welcome and inform our park visitors.

Constructed from locally-sourced Norfolk Island pine, a wide open door and feature skylight flood the centre with natural light and colour, giving our visitors the wonderful feeling of being outside while inside.

From the roof top visitors take in an outstanding view out over our botanic garden, while the centre's interior offers opportunities to explore the history, plants and animals of our

park through a series of creative displays.

Norfolk Island Park Manager Coral Rowston says the Discovery Centre adds value to both visitors and the island's economy.

"This is a major project, a major investment for us and something we've wanted to do for a long time. All of our visitor surveys showed that what people really wanted was more information on our park and botanic garden. This new centre delivers that in a spectacular but environmentally-sustainable way, very much in keeping with the natural look and feel of Norfolk," she said.

"I'm pleased nearly everything you see in the Discovery Centre is the result of local efforts – from the Norfolk Island pine timber, to the construction, to the interior displays themselves.



Norfolk Island National Park's brand new Discovery Centre.

"Our visitors are already enjoying the roof

top walk and views of the botanic gardens, which are a major feature of the island's new tourism campaign, 'There's more to Norfolk Island'.

"We're very much looking forward to opening up the interior of the Discovery Centre to our visitors, seeing them enjoy the results of our hard work.

"We hope that the Discovery Centre will become one of the highlights, not only of our park, but to our visitors' overall experience of Norfolk Island."

The Norfolk Island National Park Discovery Centre is preparing to welcome its first visitors in late 2013.

KRA 4—Use and appreciation of protected areas

Objectives

- Commonwealth reserves are valued for providing broader benefits to society such as a greater appreciation and understanding of Australia's biodiversity, unique habitats and landscapes.
- Australia's protected areas are recognised as significant contributors to tourism.

Actions

- Provide inspirational, satisfying and safe experiences to visitors to Commonwealth reserves.PBS
- Ensure visitor monitoring and reporting methods are consistent across the Commonwealth reserve estate.
- Minimise visitor impacts on natural and cultural values.
- · Improve tourism and conservation partnerships.
- Facilitate National Landscape experience development strategies that promote sustainable and appropriate tourism in protected areas.

2012–13 results

Visitor numbers and satisfaction

- Visitor surveys were undertaken at Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks, with high overall satisfaction levels recorded from respondents (Kakadu at 95 per cent and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a at 94 per cent).^{PBS}
- An estimated 1.3 million people visited Commonwealth terrestrial reserves, a 5 per cent decrease from 2011–12. This reflects a general decline in visitor numbers to regional parks across Australia, fuelled by a substantial increase in Australian outbound tourism and a decline in the Northern Territory's traditional international inbound markets.

Education/interpretation activities

- The Australian National Botanic Gardens hosted 11 195 school and tertiary students from 250 schools in education programs (67 per cent of students participated in programs run by the Gardens and 33 per cent in do-it-yourself programs run by their own teachers). Schools from every state and territory included the Gardens on their Canberra excursion itinerary.
- The Gardens reviewed its school programs in line with the Australian Curriculum and participated in a partnership with the National Capital Education Tourism Project to attract interstate school excursions to Canberra and to the Gardens.
- Booderee National Park conducted approximately 100 cultural interpretation sessions for junior rangers, visiting school groups and other visitors as part of the park's school holiday education programs. While the number of sessions and attendees decreased slightly due to resource constraints, just under 3500 children and adults were beneficiaries of Booderee's cultural education sessions in 2012–13.

- Christmas Island National Park and the Christmas Island Tourism Association jointly prepared a new visitor guide for the park. A free smartphone and tablet computer application for the island's forest and seabirds was also prepared, with highly positive feedback received since its launch at the annual Bird and Nature Week in September 2012.
- Parks Australia conducted a visitor-experience assessment workshop for Christmas Island involving park staff and key on-island stakeholders. The workshop identified additional priority visitor experiences for the island.
- At Kakadu, a record 43 000 visitors participated in more than 1800 seasonal interpretive ranger program activities conducted from May to October, with 100 per cent of those surveyed reporting satisfaction with their experiences. Information and interpretive services were provided to 43 452 visitors at the Bowali Visitor Centre.
- Norfolk Island National Park staff provided educational visits to Phillip Island for students of Norfolk Island Central School and worked with the school in rehabilitating areas of the park and botanic garden.
- Staff in the Territory of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands conducted the annual high school trip to Pulu Keeling National Park which included cultural and environmental information. Three other environmental information sessions were also conducted.
- Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park staff delivered free interpretive events to visitors including the daily ranger-guided Mala Walk at Ulu<u>r</u>u. The park convened a one-day workshop for accredited guides to learn bush skills from A<u>n</u>angu and meet with the park management team to improve the quality and depth of interpretation about the park.

Tourism and visitor facilities

- New information/interpretative signage for the historic Cape St. George Lighthouse in Booderee was completed in June 2013 for installation in July 2013. Marine information signage was also re-designed and is due for roll out in July 2013.
- Booderee purchased and installed new lockable information boards at key visitation locations. The boards provide information on park education/interpretative offerings, conservation and monitoring efforts, recycling and carbon-footprint reduction measures.
- Booderee finalised the contract for supply and installation of a short-term tie-up and loading jetty with disabled access to replace Murray's Wharf which had become unsafe and was demolished due to safety concerns. Construction of the new facility is scheduled from July to November 2013.
- Visitor boardwalk concept designs for The Dales wetlands site in Christmas Island National Park were sought and assessed, resulting in the selection of a facility that will be long-lasting and fitting for the area's status as a wetland of international importance. Key island stakeholders were engaged in the design assessment and selection process which will help facilitate a consistent approach to boardwalks and viewing platforms across the island.
- Norfolk Island National Park completed construction of a new purpose-built 'Discovery Centre' featuring hands-on interpretation of the park and its values.
- Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park, in consultation with Anangu, finalised and installed new interpretive and safety informational signage for the Uluru climb. A free application on the birds of the park was released, joining those for Booderee, Christmas Island and Kakadu national parks.

Awards and Events

- In February 2013 Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park took out top prize in the 2012 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards for major tourism attraction; Indigenous-owned tour guiding operation Yellow Water Cruises, based in Kakadu National Park, was awarded best major tour and/or transport operator. Uluru–Kata Tjura also featured in the Northern Territory's Brolga Awards in December 2012, winning the brolga for major tourism attraction together with an encouragement award for heritage and cultural tourism.
- The Australian National Botanic Gardens hosted an extensive range of popular public programs and events including art and photographic exhibitions, monthly botanical and horticultural workshops and National Science Week displays. The Summer Sounds concert series, held in January 2013 in partnership with the Friends of the Gardens, attracted 6000 people over four weekends while the monthly 'afterDARK' evening tour program attracted 826 visitors, with survey results reporting high visitor satisfaction.
- The Gardens is actively seeking new events that complement the values of the site and enhance visitor experiences. New events for 2012–13 included 'Sunset Cinema' outdoor movies for three evenings a week over six weeks during February and March 2013 which attracted 4650 people; the Craft Beer Festival in March which attracted 1200 people; and in April a 'Family Picnic Day' to celebrate the contribution older Australians make to their community.
- Booderee National Park promoted three main events in which staff participated, with accompanying interpretative information—Clean Up Australia Day, World Environment Day and the annual Whale Census Day.
- Kakadu supported 10 community events including festivals celebrating Indigenous culture and community spirit, such as the Mahbilil Festival in Jabiru and the Stone Country Festival in Gunbalanya, 30th birthday celebrations for Jabiru, the Darwin and Jabiru careers expos, World Parks Day, World Wetland's Day, and Parks Week. A new events policy was introduced for the park, consistent with Tourism Northern Territory's marketing strategy which targets the corporate and incentives market seeking unique locations to host events.
- Kakadu hosted the production company Northern Pictures for 12 months during filming of a four-part documentary series on the park and its people. The series has been purchased by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and will be screened in Australia and worldwide in September 2013.
- Uluru–Kata Tjura facilitated and supported a number of significant media events held in the park including 'Other side of the Rock!', a concert hosted by the Muritjulu Community in October 2012; the free-to-air launch of National Indigenous Television in December 2012; and filming of the feature film *Tracks*. Revised commercial tourism and major events policies were also introduced which are designed to facilitate new and innovative tourism products and events in the park.

Objective

• Parks Australia is recognised as a valued partner nationally and internationally in the conservation of biodiversity and collaborative research.

Actions

- Effectively involve stakeholders and partners in park management activities.PBS
- Form new and effective partnerships with government agencies, neighbours and stakeholders.
- Co-fund research projects with other agencies under equitable funding arrangements.PBS
- Play a leadership role in targeted collaborative biodiversity research, such as through Australia's Virtual Herbarium and the Australian Seed Bank Partnership.

2012–13 results

- Constructive partnerships in managing Commonwealth reserves continued with state and territory government parks agencies; relevant Australian Government agencies including the Department of Defence; the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government and Sport; the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service; and Tourism Australia; industry groups including the Transport and Tourism Forum; and with councils; universities; non-government organisations; and community groups.
- Research partnerships continued with a range of organisations including the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory, CSIRO, Australian Institute of Marine Science, James Cook University, Australian National University, University of Canberra, Charles Darwin University and The University of Sydney.
- Strong partnerships with the IUCN and the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service were formed via joint planning for the IUCN World Parks Congress scheduled for Sydney in November 2014. Hosting this global event provides an opportunity to enhance Australia's reputation as a progressive and effective manager of biodiversity.
- The Director led the Australian delegation to the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Jeju, Korea in September 2012, reinforcing our role as a constructive IUCN member and participant in the congress. The member's assembly voted on 184 draft motions of which 183 were adopted, and voted on 11 statutory reform proposals of which nine were adopted. Australia's focus was on positive outcomes for the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress, marine issues, the Great Barrier Reef, Antarctica and protected areas.
- The successful partnership with Tourism Australia in Australia's National Landscapes Program culminated in the February 2013 announcement of Sydney Harbour as the 16th and final national landscape; the Wet Tropics and Tasmania's Island Heritage were also launched as part of the program during the year. With the foundations of the program now largely set, future activities will concentrate on developing more high-quality experiences for visitors and building strategic partnerships.

Biodiscovery—a Pacific approach

In October 2012, biodiscovery experts from around the world converged on the Eskitis Institute in Brisbane for the Oceania Biodiscovery Forum.

The Director of National Parks has a long association with biodiscovery. This was the third in a series of national biodiscovery forums, designed to bring researchers, governments and industry together to discuss the management of biodiscovery in Australia and beyond.

There is a growing global market in the use of genetic and biochemical resources from plants, animals and microbial life, leading to the development of new products including pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals and alternative fuels.

Research into genetic resources, often sourced from Australia's parks and reserves, can also lead us to a new and better understanding of Australian species, and how to conserve them.

The challenge before us as researchers, industry and all levels of government is to develop, adopt and use global standards for trade in genetic resources.

Hosting the national biodiscovery forum gives us the chance to take forward the discussion of how we will engage with such global standards, and to engage groups that do not traditionally see themselves as having an interest in conservation.

These global standards are being defined through the Nagoya Protocol. The protocol is an international agreement within the Convention on Biological Diversity to establish a global framework to build certainty and transparency in accessing genetic material and sharing the benefits of their use.

Australia signed the Nagoya Protocol last year—to make sure countries benefit from the use of their genetic resources, while giving certainty to business development and ensuring research is carried out in a sustainable way.

Delegates from Papua New Guinea, the European Union, Switzerland, the Cook Islands and Norway joined their Australian counterparts at the biodiscovery forum to discuss how this international framework will operate in Australia, across the region and the world.

They also discussed a key part of the protocol—recognising the value of traditional knowledge and genetic resources held by Indigenous people, making sure they benefit from the use of their knowledge.

The forum was organised by the Australian Government, supported by the multi donor ABS Capacity Development Initiative and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, and hosted by the Eskitis Institute at Griffith University.

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- The Australian National Botanic Gardens became an active member of the Research and Learning Institutes Group that operates under the banner 'THINK CANBERRA' and seeks to build on Canberra's worldwide reputation for leading innovation and research by developing funding proposals, adding value to business events and enabling event organisers direct access to research being conducted in Canberra's tertiary institutions.
- The Friends of the Gardens continued to play an active role in supporting the work of the Gardens including through daily volunteer guided walks, support for major public events and financial support for projects such as the pavement artwork at the new Red Centre Garden and new seed bank equipment. The new 'Seedy Volunteers' group completed its second year of collecting with 18 trips planned and 16 completed.
- Ongoing close collaboration with Greening Australia and the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research included the successful delivery of a project funded by the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program; outcomes included collection of three kilograms of native seed for restoration of endangered grassland communities and support for an industry workshop on establishing seed production areas.
- The Gardens continued to coordinate the Australian Seed Bank Partnership and its national seed collecting program targeting species that are threatened, endemic or have economic potential. The partnership made 38 *ex situ* collections of species susceptible to dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) to support implementation of the national dieback threat abatement plan.
- The Australian Cultivar Registration Authority, which is based at the Gardens, secured further funding from private donors and the horticulture industry to enhance nomenclatorial details of cultivated plants in the Australian Plant Name Index database.
- Under an agreement with the Australian Capital Territory Government to support *ex situ* conservation of the Territory's rare and threatened plants, the Gardens undertook seed collection, seed banking and germination trials of *Arachnorchis actensis, Corunastylis ectopa, Prasophyllum petilum* and *Drabastrum alpestre*, together with seed collection and banking from *in situ* populations of an agreed selection of other native understorey species.
- The Gardens continued its partnership with the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage, Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens and Booderee National Park to collaboratively collect and share new plant material as part of a field program targeting Sydney sandstone and regional flora.
- The Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research continued the contract with New South Wales Roads and Maritime Services to document and manage translocation and conservation of three species of orchids threatened by the Bulahdelah bypass realignment on the Pacific Highway—this very successful project is nearing completion.
- The partnership with James Cook University and the Queensland Herbarium in the Australian Tropical Herbarium in Cairns continued, with the Gardens and the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research providing database services to support the herbarium's collections management. Planning for an interactive key to savanna plants continued, as an extension to the online Key to Rainforest Plants which was launched in 2010.

- Booderee National Park continued its support for volunteers working on natural resource management projects including Booderee Park Care (approximately 550 person hours).
 Booderee also maintained its cooperative arrangements with land-management agencies and tourism bodies in the region and continued to lead regional fox management.
- Christmas Island National Park continued to facilitate the successful partnership for island-wide cat and rat management with the Shire of Christmas Island, Australian Government departments, Western Australian government agencies and Phosphate Resources Ltd. The park also collaborated with the shire in relation to road-management activities designed to help reduce mortality of red crabs during the annual breeding migration; these activities received high levels of stakeholder and community support for on and off-park road-management activities.
- In September 2012, Christmas Island staff convened a working group overseeing preparation of the draft Christmas Island regional (multi-species) recovery plan. Support was also provided to visiting scientists and to Western Australian Government agencies undertaking research projects, off-park weed control work and environmental assessments, resulting in access to better information on the values and threats to the island's natural environment.
- Two school-based trainees were engaged on Christmas Island to provide relevant work experience while helping to assist park management programs.
- A joint program was initiated with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and Serco Group Pty Ltd for volunteer asylum seekers to assist with forest rehabilitation operations on Christmas Island and in doing so gain work experience and skills.
- Kakadu National Park participated in the steering committee for Australia's Timeless North National Landscape which included development of an experience development action plan and investment opportunities document for the landscape.
- Kakadu facilitated a Jim Jim/Twin Falls visitor-experience workshop which involved 30 tourism industry members, traditional owners and park staff; and hosted a workshop to inform the tourism industry on a new commercial licence process to be introduced in 2013–14. Twenty issues of the *Tourism Update* newsletter were issued during 2012–13 to more than 800 subscribers.
- Kakadu continued to work collaboratively across tenure with Northern Territory Government agencies, the Department of Defence, Indigenous Protected Areas and other neighbours to implement fire management at the landscape level.
- The Kakadu Research Advisory Committee was consulted on a range of research issues throughout 2012–13.
- Cocos-based staff secured the support of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council for the translocation of endangered Cocos buff-banded rails from Pulu Keeling National Park to Horsburgh Island in the Territory's southern atoll and established a wide-ranging advisory panel which informed planning for the project. Five local community members were engaged to support the translocation operation as well as weed control on Pulu Keeling. Logistical support was also provided to the council and Western Australian agencies for a rat-eradication program on Direction Island, also in the southern atoll.
- Two meetings of the Pulu Keeling National Park Community Management Committee were held during the year which produced strong support for the buff-banded rail translocation.

- Cocos-based staff worked collaboratively with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service to respond to landings of suspected illegal entry vessels—measures such as joint patrols of Pulu Keeling, information-sharing and orientation to the park for service staff enabled effective responses to landings to be mounted and ensured efficient use of Commonwealth resources regionally.
- Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park worked with key stakeholders and A<u>n</u>angu to facilitate the development of a 'Welcome to Country' message to be played at the Ayers Rock airport.

KRA 6—Business management

Objectives

- Robust and accurate business systems are in place which promote health and safety, maintain park infrastructure integrity and ensure work is undertaken within budget constraints.
- Parks Australia's ecological footprint is minimised through adaptive management and supporting business practices.

Actions

- Base planning and decision making on the best available information, legal obligations and government and agency policies.^{PBS}
- Ensure expenditure does not exceed budget.
- Minimise the number of 'A' or 'B' findings from the annual Australian National Audit Office audit of Director of National Parks financial statements.
- Establish and implement robust and effective management plans for Commonwealth reserves.
- Minimise risks and the number and severity of reportable occupational health and safety incidents involving staff, contractors, volunteers and park users.^{PBS}
- Ensure that accessible assets and infrastructure are maintained in a safe condition.
- Use adaptive management regimes that respond to new information about impacts of climate change and improved technologies.
- Audit energy and water use and waste in Commonwealth reserves and implement actions to provide efficiencies and improvements.

2012-13 results

Management planning

- All Commonwealth reserves were managed in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Australian IUCN Reserve Management Principles set out in the EPBC Regulations.
- Management plans for terrestrial reserves continued to be developed and implemented in line
 with EPBC Act requirements. Management plans are in place for Kakadu, Norfolk Island and
 Uluru–Kata Tjuta national parks and the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Management
 plans for Booderee and Christmas Island national parks are in the process of being finalised,
 taking into account submissions received on draft plans released for public comment.
 Draft management plans are currently under preparation for Pulu Keeling and Kakadu
 national parks which are expected to be released for public comment in 2013–14.

- As part of the Kakadu Tourism Master Plan, the first precinct plan is being developed for the Jim Jim/Twin Falls area of the park. A visitor experience plan is being drafted with the final version to be presented to the Kakadu Board of Management in September 2013.
- Draft management plans for newly established Commonwealth marine reserves networks and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve were released for public comment on 14 January 2013 and the Minister approved management plans for five marine reserves networks and the Coral Sea reserve on 3 March 2013. The management plan for the South-east network will come into effect on 1 July 2013 with those for the South-west, North-west, North and Temperate East networks and the Coral Sea reserve coming into effect on 1 July 2014.
- The management plan for Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve expired in August 2012 and a draft second plan is currently under preparation by the department's Australian Antarctic Division.

Climate change

- Climate change strategies are in place for all terrestrial reserves. Each strategy addresses five key objectives:
 - understanding the implications of climate change
 - implementing adaptation measures to maximise the resilience of Commonwealth reserves
 - reducing each reserve's carbon footprint
 - working with communities, industries and stakeholders to mitigate and adapt to climate change
 - communicating the implications of climate change and Parks Australia's response.
- A decrease in total greenhouse emissions from energy consumption by parks and reserves was recorded in 2012–13 compared with the average over the past three years, confirming the trend of recent years. This represented an 1.7 per cent reduction in the volume of carbon dioxide emissions from stationary sources compared to the average over the past three years and a 14.8 per cent reduction for transport sources.
- Further information on greenhouse gas emissions is provided in the environmental sustainability report in Appendix C.

Financial and business management

• The Auditor-General issued an unqualified audit report for the 2012–13 financial statements of the Director of National Parks. There were no 'A' or 'B' findings from the Australian National Audit Office audit of the financial statements.

Risk and work health and safety

- The Director has participated in the Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking Scheme since 2002–03. In 2012–13 the Director scored 8.0 out of a possible 10 compared to an average score of 6.8 for the 143 participating Australian Government agencies. For the past eight years the Director has consistently scored above the average for all agencies.^{PBS}
- The Director was highly commended (small agency) in the 2012 Comcover Awards for Excellence in Risk Management, enterprise-wide category.

Reducing red tape for industry in marine reserves

Parks Australia is working with Australia's south-eastern commercial fishing industry and Australian Fisheries Management Authority to improve the effectiveness of controls on fishing in marine reserves and, at the same time, cut red tape through a single class approval.

The South-east Marine Reserves Network provides important habitats for a variety of bird and sea life, from migratory whales making their way to and from Antarctica, to iconic species such as white sharks and southern bluefin tuna.

The 10-year management plan provides for the protection of this marine ecosystem, while minimising impacts on recreational and commercial fishing sectors. The plan replaces the approval arrangements with a single class approval that no longer requires commercial fishers to individually register to operate within the reserves. The class approval sets out the management zones where commercial fishing can occur, fishing methods that can be used, and the conditions that commercial fishers need to follow when fishing in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network.

Parks Australia, the agency responsible for Commonwealth marine reserves, has worked closely with Commonwealth and state fisheries management agencies to standardise as much as possible requirements for commercial fishers and to arrange for on-going sharing of information regarding vessel monitoring and compliance.

The class approval for commercial fishing came into effect with the management plan on 1 July 2013 and will remain in effect for the term of the plan. It serves as an important template for other Commonwealth marine reserves networks not only for commercial fishing, but for other sectors, and as a real example of cutting red tape while improving social, economic and environmental outcomes.



Weedy sea dragon. Photo: Erik Schlogl

- Parks Australia recorded 116 work health and safety incidents in 2012–13, a reduction in the number recorded last year. The reduction principally arose from minor incidents previously considered as 'near misses' no longer being regarded as work health and safety incidents.
- Only one major injury was sustained by Parks Australia's staff and contractors. Two park
 visitors died (a drowning in the waters surrounding Booderee National Park and a
 suspected drowning at Jim Jim Falls in Kakadu National Park) and there were three major
 injuries to visitors.^{PBS}

KRA 7—Biodiversity science, knowledge management and use

Objectives

- There is a comprehensive information base across Australia, including for the National Reserve System, that supports effective decision making, spatial management and conservation.
- Threatened native plant species occurring within Commonwealth parks and reserves are conserved in cooperation with national and international institutions.

Actions

4

- Provide high quality, comprehensive and current information to the Australian community through publications and enhanced websites to facilitate and foster understanding of park values and Australia's natural and cultural heritage.^{PBS}
- Undertake research designed to engage with end users and support evidence-based decision making by environmental managers and policymakers.^{PBS}
- Increase knowledge of Australia's biodiversity through research and training.PBS
- Make effective use of research investment in Commonwealth reserves.
- Enhance *ex situ* conservation of Australia's rare and threatened biodiversity, through the activities of the Australian National Botanic Gardens and targeted projects.

2012-13 results

Websites and publications

• Parks Australia websites parksaustralia.gov.au and kakadu.com.au received a 12.6 per cent increase in visitation from the previous year. Our online community saw the biggest growth with traffic to the Parks Australia blog growing by 22 per cent and our Facebook community by 206 per cent. These social channels are proving to be invaluable in providing key tailored information and messages to interested and active parks and conservation audiences.^{PBS}

Biodiversity knowledge

- In partnership with Bioplatforms Australia and the CSIRO, Parks Australia initiated a project to document the biodiversity of Australian soils, beginning with samples from Booderee and other Commonwealth national parks. The product will be a national dataset on soil biodiversity—the Biome of Australia Soil Environments (or BASE)—which will provide better knowledge of soil nutrients and microbial processes around the continent.
- The Gardens deployed its redeveloped living collection information system to better support the operational activities of the nursery, seed bank, horticulture and plant records activities, and to integrate with provenance data in the herbarium system. A special labelling project for the living collection placed 2084 labels on plants in more than 92 sections along parts of the main path and rock garden, significantly improving interpretative use and value of the plant collections for visitors.
- The Gardens and the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research participated in national and international biodiversity information management and technical infrastructure projects in partnership with many important stakeholders including the Council of Heads of Australasian Herbaria, the Council of Heads of Australia's Botanic Gardens and the Atlas of Living Australia.
- Contractual collaboration with the Atlas of Living Australia formally ceased during the year with the conclusion of the initial funding round, however, operational collaboration intensified to build the nomenclature and taxonomic infrastructure for Australian plant and animal species, in association with the Australian Biological Resources Study. The Gardens also collaborated with the Atlas and the Taxonomy Research and Information Network to develop specifications for species' profiles for managing digital biodiversity data.
- The Gardens updated the Australian Plant Image Index to make 4790 additional images accessible on the internet giving a total of 83 758 images widely available. The currency of data for the Australian Plant Name Index and the Australian Plant Census was maintained, including extensive editing of existing data and capture of new data. The Australian Plant Census is approaching the conclusion of the first pass of data compilation and resolution for vascular plants.
- The Gardens maintained the Census of Vascular Plants, Hornworts, Liverworts and Slime Moulds of the Australian Capital Territory, including collation of new data for as-yet unrepresented groups such as lichens and fungi.
- The Australian National Herbarium added data for 8450 herbarium specimens with a total of 898 254 specimens now recorded in the database and available to the public through the internet.
- The Australian National Herbarium's highly successful summer botanical intern program completed its 21st year in February 2013. Second and third-year university students received work experience and formal training in herbarium botany and plant conservation.
- Researchers completed 23 scientific publications resulting from research undertaken at the Australian National Herbarium as part of the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research. Areas of study included Asteraceae (daisies), Orchidaceae (orchids), Myrtaceae and mosses as well as biogeography of Australian flora.



5 Management and accountability

Corporate governance

Ministerial directions Funding Planning documents Executive management Boards of management and advisory committees Other consultative mechanisms Control arrangements External review

Work health and safety

Compliance and enforcement under the EPBC Act

Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance

Social inclusion

Freedom of information

 \leftarrow Fuel reduction burning at Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park.

Corporate governance

The Director of National Parks is responsible, under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, for the management of Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones established over Commonwealth-owned land, Aboriginal land leased to the Director, and Commonwealth marine areas. The Director of National Parks corporation is a Commonwealth authority and is subject to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (CAC Act). The Director is a corporation sole constituted by the person who holds the office that is also named the Director of National Parks.

The Director is responsible to the Minister with responsibility for administration of the EPBC Act. During 2012–13 that person was the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, the Hon. Tony Burke MP.

Ministerial directions

The EPBC Act requires the Director to perform functions and exercise powers in accordance with any directions given by the Minister, unless the EPBC Act provides otherwise. During 2012–13 no Ministerial directions were given to the Director and there were no directions continuing from previous years.

The Director is subject to directions given by the Minister responsible for administration of the CAC Act under section 47A of the Act on matters related to the procurement of property or services. The Finance Minister's (CAC Act Procurement) Directions 2012 require the Director to apply the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines when undertaking a procurement covered by the guidelines.

The Minister responsible for the CAC Act may, under section 48 of the CAC Act, make a General Policy Order specifying a general policy of the Australian Government that is to apply to the Director. No General Policy Orders were made during 2012–13 and there were no orders continuing from previous years.

Funding

The EPBC Act makes provision for funding the Director of National Parks. The department receives the appropriation for the Director of National Parks. In effect, the department purchases services from the Director to manage Commonwealth reserves and to perform the Director's other functions under the EPBC Act, in order to contribute to the department's Outcome 1. The Director is the sole provider of statutory functions and powers for managing Commonwealth reserves under the Act.

The department also has an arrangement to provide corporate services to the Director. The department's Parks Australia division supports the Director's work. During 2012–13 the department provided \$40.2 million to the Director of National Parks under the purchaser–provider arrangement (see the audited financial statements in Chapter 6 of this report). This arrangement was effective, providing resources to enable the Director to meet the targets set in the Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities Portfolio Budget Statements 2012–13.

Planning documents

For information about the strategic planning and performance assessment framework see Chapter 4 of this report.

Executive management

The holder of the office of Director of National Parks and four senior executives provide leadership in Parks Australia (see Chapter 3 of this report). The executive team meets regularly to develop and review policy priorities and strategic and corporate goals.

In addition to the Parks Australia executive team, the Director of the Australian Antarctic Division is responsible for managing one marine reserve.

Parks Australia faces a number of specific administration challenges including widely distributed workplaces in remote areas with many in cross-cultural environments. Coordination between area managers, Canberra-based managers and the executive team is vital. Important communication activities include regular phone link-ups and the annual Parks Australia Forum involving all senior managers.

Staff participate in consultative committees in both regional and Canberra-based workplaces to support internal management.

Boards of management and advisory committees

Kakadu, Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a and Booderee national parks are managed jointly by the Director and the traditional Aboriginal owners, in accordance with the EPBC Act. Each park has a board of management established under the Act, with a majority of Indigenous members who are nominated by the traditional owners of land in the park. Membership of the boards also includes the Director, nominees of the Northern Territory Government (for Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks) and members representing special interest groups or with particular skills relevant to managing the park. See Chapter 3 of this report for details of board members.

The principal functions of a Commonwealth reserve board of management are to prepare management plans for the reserve in conjunction with the Director and to make decisions about management of the reserve consistent with its management plan. A board, in conjunction with the Director, is also responsible for monitoring management of the reserve and advising the Minister on the reserve's future development.

Norfolk Island, Christmas Island and Pulu Keeling national parks have non-statutory advisory or consultative bodies that include community representatives and representatives of the Director.

Other consultative mechanisms

The EPBC Act requires public consultation before the declaration of a Commonwealth reserve and in the preparation of reserve management plans.

For Commonwealth reserves that include Aboriginal-owned land, the EPBC Act provides for both consultation with, and involvement of, representatives of the Aboriginal landowners about management of the reserve. The Director must consult with and have regard to the views of the chair of the relevant land council in relation to the performance of the Director's functions and the exercise of the Director's powers in relation to the reserve. The land council chair must be specifically invited to comment on the preparation of management plans.

Additional consultation with traditional Aboriginal owners of Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjura and Booderee national parks takes place through cultural advisers, Aboriginal staff, community liaison officers, Aboriginal organisations and special consultative committees.

The EPBC Act also requires the Northern Territory Government to be consulted in relation to the performance of the Director's functions and the exercise of the Director's powers in relation to Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks, and to be invited to comment on the preparation of management plans for those parks.

Tourism industry interests are taken into account through the tourism consultative committees of the Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a boards of management and through ad hoc working groups.

Control arrangements

Director of National Parks chief executive instructions

The chief executive instructions direct Parks Australia staff in assisting the Director to carry out the Director's functions under the EPBC Act and ensure the corporation and its officers meet their obligations under the EPBC Act and the CAC Act. The instructions draw on relevant corporate governance rules and policies and guidelines of the Australian Government. They are supported by policies and procedures subject to regular review.

Audit

An audit committee is established for the Director in accordance with the CAC Act. During the year the audit committee met four times and addressed corporate governance issues including risk management and financial management.

During 2012–13 internal audits were undertaken on certificate of compliance, cost recovery, fraud control and a review of corporate services. The committee endorsed the process for preparation of the 2012–13 financial statements.

Members of the committee at 30 June 2013 were:

- Paul Hickey, independent member and chair
- Peter Hoefer, independent member
- Tony Fleming, independent member
- Peter Cochrane, Director of National Parks.

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The assistant secretaries for Parks Australia and the Director of the Business and Financial Management Section were invited to attend committee meetings. Staff from the Australian National Audit Office, the department's Finance Branch and the internal audit service provider attended meetings as observers.

Risk management

Risk watch lists or risk registers for each reserve or business unit are periodically reviewed in accordance with the Director's risk management policy. Incidents in all workplaces, categorised under key result areas, are reported regularly to the executive team which monitors higher level risks for each branch and for Parks Australia as a whole. These risks are reviewed quarterly by the audit committee.

The Director has participated in the Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking scheme since 2002–03. This scheme assesses 10 elements of risk management with performance matched against individual agency target risk maturity levels. In 2012–13 the Director scored 8.0 out of a possible 10 compared to an average score of 6.8 for the 143 participating Australian Government agencies. For the past eight years the Director has consistently scored above the average for all agencies.



Figure 4: Risk management benchmarking scores for the Director of National Parks in 2012–13 compared to the average for 143 Australian Government agencies

A key element of risk management is the business continuity plan covering all Parks Australia sites. The plan was not called on during the year. In 2012–13 the Director was awarded highly commended in the Comcover Awards for Excellence in Risk Management, in the enterprise-wide category.

Source: Comcover 2013

Indemnities and insurance

In 2012–13 the Director maintained comprehensive insurance cover for business operations through Comcover, the Australian Government's general insurance fund, including general liability, professional indemnity, and directors' and officers' liability. No incidents generated a major insurance claim during the year.

The Director also manages risk by requiring all commercial operators, contractors and scientific researchers in Commonwealth reserves to indemnify the Director and the Commonwealth and maintain appropriate levels of insurance for their activities.

Fraud control

The Director has a fraud-control plan and in accordance with the Commonwealth fraud control guidelines, conducts risk assessments to prevent and manage fraud within the agency.

External review

Judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals

There were no judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals during the year that had, or may have, a significant impact on the Director's operations.

Commonwealth Ombudsman

There were no formal reports from the Commonwealth Ombudsman during the year.

Reports by the Auditor-General

The Auditor-General issued an unqualified audit report for the 2012–13 financial statements of the Director of National Parks.

Work health and safety

This section is presented in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 4 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. The department's annual report contains more detailed health and safety information related to departmental employees undertaking the work of the Director of National Parks.

The Director maintains a strong commitment to the health, safety and welfare of Parks Australia workers (employees, contractors and volunteers). Parks Australia was an active participant on the department's health and safety committee which has oversight of all health and safety issues within the portfolio. Health and safety committees in the three mainland national parks, in the Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands territories, at Norfolk Island National Park and at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, considered and addressed local issues, reporting progress to the department's health and safety committee.

Parks Australia workers face a diverse range of hazards. The main hazards are from fieldwork in remote and arduous locations, plant and machinery, chemicals and hazardous substances, managing and handling unpredictable wildlife, driving vehicles and static posture injuries from using desktop equipment.

ParkSafe, Parks Australia's integrated occupational health and safety management system, has been in place since 2004 and complies with the Work Health and Safety Act. It is designed to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all workers and all relevant policy and procedural information is available electronically.

Initiatives and outcomes

Initiative	Outcome
Development of the work health and safety project plan to provide systematic upgrade of ParkSafe	Three year plan to ensure Parks Australia complies with the relevant health and safety legislation
Re-development of the ParkSafe health and safety management system	Framework to guide Parks Australia to ensure compliance with relevant work health and safety legislation
Completion of the co-operative compliance program with ComCare	A coordinated approach to a significant upgrade in work health and safety management, focusing on Kakadu and Ulu <u>r</u> u–Kata Tju <u>t</u> a national parks
Employed a work health and safety professional	Provided greater momentum to work health and safety compliance with relevant legislation
Established an overarching Parks Australia work health and safety committee	Improved safety reporting structure and support to the five local work health and safety committees
Developed and implemented a new internal incident and hazard reporting system	Higher level of reporting and investigation awareness leading to management and staff being able to manage their own risk treatments
Developed and implemented new work health and safety intranet sites	Improved awareness and ability to source information internally, leading to consistent application of work health and safety processes and procedures

Table 9: Work health and safety initiatives and outcomes achieved in 2012–13

Incidents and investigations

No investigations were conducted during 2012–13 relating to the operations of the Director.

Parks Australia recorded 116 work health and safety incidents in terrestrial reserves in 2012–13, a substantial reduction on the number of incidents recorded last year (table 10). The reduction principally arose from minor incidents previously considered as 'near misses' no longer being regarded as work health and safety incidents.

	2008-09	2009–10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Staff, volunteers and contractors					
Minor injury or near miss ^(a)	41	56	67	70	50
Moderate injury ^(b)	31	15	20	14	11
Major injury ^(c)	1	5	7	2	1
Total	73	76	94	86	62
Visitors, permit holders and residents					
Minor injury or near miss ^(a)	60	70	59	101	36
Moderate injury ^(b)	21	26	34	23	13
Major injury ^(c)	7	15	18	4	3
Death	4	2	4	2	2
Total	92	113	115	130	54

Table 10: Five-year overview of safety incidents in terrestrial reserves

(a) Includes near miss, no injury or first-aid treatment only.

(b) Includes treatment by paramedics or at a medical centre/hospital.

(c) Includes significant hospitalisation (more than two days).

During 2012–13 the two highest causes of staff injury were manual handling and slips, trips and falls.

The visitor incidents for 2012–13 included two fatalities. There was one drowning in waters off Booderee National Park and a suspected drowning at Jim Jim Falls, Kakadu National Park. Heat stress and slips, trips and falls remain the predominant risks to park visitors.

Compliance and enforcement under the EPBC Act

The EPBC Act and Regulations prohibit a range of activities in Commonwealth reserves unless authorised in accordance with the Act. Under the regulations, the Director of National Parks may also prohibit, restrict or determine the manner of conduct of certain activities. Failure to comply is a criminal offence and for certain unauthorised actions civil pecuniary penalties may also be imposed.

Wardens and rangers are appointed under the EPBC Act to exercise compliance and enforcement powers in relation to the Act and its regulations. Members of the Australian Federal Police and officers of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service are *ex officio* wardens by force of the Act. In accordance with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines and the Australian Government Investigation Standards, Parks Australia's wardens are trained in Certificate IV in Government (Investigations) and rangers are trained in relevant modules of the certificate.

A whole-of-government approach is taken to compliance and enforcement in Commonwealth marine reserves, supporting aerial and vessel patrols, vessel monitoring and enforcement investigations. In addition to the role of Australian Federal Police and Customs officers, officers from other agencies, including the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, state and territory police and fisheries and conservation agencies can be appointed wardens under the EPBC Act after the required training. These arrangements greatly improve the Director's ability to enforce the EPBC Act in remote and infrequently visited Commonwealth reserves.

The following matter was determined by courts during 2012–13:

• On 4 September 2012 the Federal Court of Australia ordered Venture Fishing Pty Ltd to pay a penalty of \$65 000 (plus costs of \$28 000) and Desmond Woodley to pay a penalty of \$13 000 (and costs of \$17 000) for contravention of section 174(1) of the EPBC Act by carrying on commercial fishing operations in a sanctuary zone of the Tasman Fracture Commonwealth Marine Reserve.

	Members of the public	Tourism operators	Other commercial operators
EPBC Act and Regulation incidents detected	97	19	0
Offenders unknown	15	3	0
Verbal cautions issued	29	12	0
Warning letters issued	11	7	0
Infringement notices issued	66	0	1
Continuing investigations	12	0	1
Permit suspensions	0	0	0
Court cases pending	1	0	0
Cases taken to court	1	0	0
Convictions	0	0	0

Table 11: Compliance and enforcement in terrestrial reserves during 2012–13^(a)

(a) Excludes notices of charges payable issued

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Table 12: Compliance and enforcement in marine reserves during 2012–13

EPBC Act enforcement actions	48
Investigative actions (requests for information)	15
Warnings notices issued	21
Infringement notices issued	6
Formal investigations commenced	1
Cases taken to court (2 criminal; 3 civil)	5
Court outcomes (civil: successful)	1
Court cases pending at year end (2 criminal; 2 civil)	4

Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance

All of the Director's activities have an impact on ecologically sustainable development. Commonwealth reserves are managed to conserve and enhance their natural and cultural values for current and future generations. Only development activities consistent with primary management objectives may be permitted.

The provisions of the EPBC Act ensure that management plans for Commonwealth reserves properly integrate environmental, economic and social considerations and that appropriate environmental monitoring and reporting regimes are in place.

The Director's statement under section 516A of the Act relating to the organisation's contribution to ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance is at Appendix C.

Social Inclusion

A number of the Director's responsibilities contribute to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap objectives. Parks Australia jointly manages three parks with their traditional owners and provides job opportunities for traditional owners and supports Indigenous businesses, especially in sustainable tourism. The Kakadu Indigenous rangers program, funded through the Australian Government's Working on Country program, and the Mutitjulu Community Ranger program are also helping to boost Indigenous job opportunities in the parks by providing salaried and casual job opportunities for Indigenous community rangers. At Booderee, outsourcing to the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council continues to provide a range of employment opportunities.

Freedom of information

Under section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act), the Director of National Parks is required to publish a range of information online as part of an information publication scheme. This requirement is in Part II of the FOI Act and has replaced the former requirement to publish a section 8 statement in an annual report.

The information required to be published online includes an agency plan that describes how the Director of National Parks proposes to comply with its obligations under the information publication scheme—its structure, functions, appointments, annual reports, consultation arrangements and details of a freedom of information contact officer. Information routinely released from freedom of information requests and routinely provided to Parliament must also be published online. This information is available at www.environment.gov.au/parks/ips.html.

Freedom of information procedures and initial contact points

The department handles requests by the public under the FOI Act on behalf of the Director of National Parks. Contact details for the freedom of information contact officer are:

Phone: (02) 6275 9207 Fax: (02) 6274 2837 Email: foi@environment.gov.au

Formal freedom of information requests must:

- be in writing
- state that the request is an application for the purposes of the FOI Act
- provide information about the document(s) to assist us to process your request
- provide an address for reply.

Requests should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Contact Officer Legal Section Department of the Environment GPO Box 787 Canberra ACT 2601 or by email to: foi@environment.gov.au



6 Financial Statements

Director of National Parks financial statements and audit report for the year ended 30 June 2013

← Banksia heliantha, commonly known as oak-leaved dryandra, photographed at the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

Independent Audit Report





INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for the Environment

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Director of National Parks for the year ended 30 June 2013, which comprise: a Statement by the Director and Chief Financial Officer; the Statement of Comprehensive Income; Balance Sheet; Statement of Changes in Equity; Cash Flow Statement; Schedule of Commitments; and Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements, including a Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and other explanatory information.

Director's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Director is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, including the Australian Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view and are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. These auditing standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Director of National Parks' preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view 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 Director of National Parks' internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Director, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

> GPO Box 707 CANBERRA ACT 2601 19 National Circuit BARTON ACT Phone (02) 6203 7300 Fax (02) 6203 7777

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Independence

In conducting my audit, I have followed the independence requirements of the Australian National Audit Office, which incorporate the requirements of the Australian accounting profession.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Director of National Parks:

- (a) have been prepared in accordance with the Finance Minister's Orders made under the Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997, including the Australian Accounting Standards; and
- (b) give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders including the Director of National Parks' financial position as at 30 June 2013 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office

John Jones Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra 28 September 2013

Statement by the Director and Chief Executive Officer

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2013 are based on properly maintained financial records and give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, as amended.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Director of National Parks will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed

Peter Cochrane Director

eptember 2013

Signed allation

Michelle Callaway Chief Financial Officer

September 2013

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

for the period ended 30 June 2013

	Notes	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
EXPENSES			
Employee benefits	ЗA	28,016	28,854
Supplier	3B	27,907	28,465
Depreciation and amortisation	3C	15,764	16,840
Write-down and impairment of assets	3D	2	-
Losses from sale of assets	3E	-	433
Other expenses		100	95
Total Expenses		71,789	74,687
LESS :			
OWN-SOURCE INCOME Own-source revenue			
Sale of goods and rendering of services	4A	15,355	13,995
Contributions from Department of the Environment		40,170	41,485
Interest	4B	1,329	1,590
Other revenue	4C	4,724	4,654
Total own-source revenue		61,578	61,724
Gains			
Sale of assets	4D	526	-
Other gains		-	530
Total gains		526	530
Total own-source income		62,104	62,254
Net cost of services		(9,685)	(12,433)
Surplus (Deficit) attributable to the Australian Government		(9,685)	(12,433)
Total comprehensive income (loss) attributable to the Australian Government		(9,685)	(12,433)

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS

BALANCE SHEET as at 30 June 2013

	Notes	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
ASSEIS			
Financial Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5A	24,847	43,689
Investments	5B	18,000	-
Trade and other receivables	5C	1,400	897
Accrued revenue	5D	229	235
Total financial assets	_	44,476	44,821
Non-Financial Assets			
Land and buildings	6A,C	76,068	77,294
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	6B,C	124,017	130,596
Intangibles	6D,E	387	232
Other non-financial assets	6F	419	530
Total non-financial assets		200,891	208,652
Total Assets	=	245,367	253,473
LIABILITIES			
Payables			
Suppliers	7A	2,381	2,111
Other payables	7B	5,635	4,593
Total payables	_	8,016	6,704
Provisions			
Employee provisions	8	7,571	7,298
Other provisions	_	26	32
Total provisions		7,597	7,330
Total Liabilities	_	15,613	14,034
Net Assets	_	229,754	239,439
EQUITY			
Contributed equity		36,445	36,445
Reserves		125,572	125,572
Retained surplus		67,737	77,422
Total Equity	_	229,754	239,439

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
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	Retained I	Earnings	Asset Revaluat	tion Reserves	Contribute	d Equity	Total E	quity
Opening balance	2013 \$000	2012 \$000	2013 \$000	2012 \$000	2013 \$000	2012 \$000	2013 \$000	2012 \$000
Balance carried forward from previous period	77,422	89,855	125,572	125,572	36,445	36,445	239,439	251,872
Adjusted opening balance	77,422	89,855	125,572	125,572	36,445	36,445	239,439	251,872
Comprehensive income Deficit for the period	(9,685)	(12,433)	·		'		(9,685)	(12,433)
Total comprehensive loss	(9,685)	(12,433)	•				(9,685)	(12,433)
Transactions with Owners Contributions by Owners								
Sub-total transactions with owners Closing balance at 30 June	- 67,737	- 77,422	- 125,572	- 125,572	36,445	- 36,445	- 229,754	- 239,439

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



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CASH FLOW STATEMENT for the period ended 30 June 2013

		2013	2012
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Sale of goods and rendering of services		17,831	17,956
Receipts from Government		40,170	41,485
Interest		849	1,629
Net GST received		752	1,670
Other		655	609
Total cash received		60,257	63,349
Cash used			
Employees		27,635	28,189
Suppliers		26,153	27,745
Other		106	133
Total cash used		53,894	56,067
Net cash from operating activities	9	6,363	7,282
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Interest - Term Deposits		382	-
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		803	34
Total cash received		1,185	34
Cash used			
Investment in term deposits		18,000	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		8,207	5,158
Purchase of intangibles		183	9
Total cash used		26,390	5,167
Net cash used by investing activities		(25,205)	(5,133)
		<u></u>	
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held		(18,842)	2,149
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the reporting period		43,689	41,540
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting			
period	5A	24,847	43,689
		· · · · ·	- ,

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS

as at 30 June 2013

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
BY TYPE	\$ 666	\$ 500
Commitments Receivable		
Sublease rental income	1,125	1,305
Net GST recoverable on commitments ¹	7,741	7,245
Total Commitments Receivable	8,866	8,550
Commitment Payable		
Capital Commitments		
Infrastructure, plant and equipment ²	(1.078)	(3,155)
Total Capital Commitments	(1,078)	(3,155)
	(1,01.0)	(0,000)
Other Commitments		
Operating leases ³	(74,129)	(74,588)
Other commitments ⁴	(11,190)	(4,166)
Total Other Commitments	(85,319)	(78,754)
Total Commitments Payable	(86,397)	(81,909)
Net Commitments by Type	(77,531)	(73,359)
BY MATURITY		
Commitments Receivable		
Other Commitments Receivable		
One year or less	1,029	685
From one to five years	1,271	1,148
Over five years	6,566	6,717
Total Other Commitments Receivable	8,866	8,550
Commitments Payable		
Capital Commitments		
One year or less	(1,078)	(3,155)
Total Capital Commitments	(1,078)	(3,155)
Operating Lease Commitments		
One year or less	(1.035)	(1.028)
From one to five years	(4,140)	(4,112)
Over five years	(68,954)	(69,448)
Total Operating Lease Commitments	(74,129)	(74,588)
Other Commitments		
One year or less	(7,593)	(2,460)
From one to five years	(3,597)	(1,706)
Total Other Commitments	(11,190)	(4,166)
Total Commitments Payable	(86,397)	(81,909)
Net Commitments by Maturity	(77,531)	(73,359)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

as at 30 June 2013

Note

1 Commitments were GST inclusive where relevant.

- 2 Outstanding contractual payments for infrastructure, plant & equipment under construction.
- 3 Operating leases included were effectively non-cancellable.
- 4 Other commitments comprise general consultancy services, utilities and maintenance works.

Nature of Lease / General Description

- Sublease rental income The Director of National Parks has three subleases as follows: cafe within the Australian National Botanic Gardens which is subject to an annual increase of 3%; bookshop within the Australian National Botanic Gardens which has no escalation clauses; and the Aurora Resort at Kakadu National Park which has no escalation clauses

Leases for rent of national parks from Traditional Owners - The Director of National Parks leases Kakadu National Park, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and Booderee National Park from the parks' Traditional Owners. Annual rent is payable in advance. Terms of leases vary up to a maximum of 99 years.

The lease terms with Kakadu National Park and Uluru-Kata Tiuta National Park Traditional Owners provide for a review of the annual rent amount every five years.

The lease terms with Booderee National Park Traditional Owners provide for an annual review of the rental amount.



Note Description

- 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
- 2 Events after the Balance Sheet Date
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- 5 Financial Assets
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Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

1.1 Objectives of the entity

The Director of National Parks is an Australian Government controlled entity. It is a not-for-profit entity. The objective of the entity is to manage Australia's protected areas. The Director of National Parks is structured to meet the following objective:

Conservation and appreciation of Commonwealth reserves through the provision of safe visitor access, the control of invasive species and working with stakeholders and neighbours.

The continued existence of the Director of National Parks in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on Government policy and continuing funding by Parliament for the Director of National Parks' administration and programs.

1.2 Basis of Preparation of the Financial Statements

The financial statements and notes are required by clause 1(b) of Schedule 1 to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act* 1997 (CAC Act) and are general purpose financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- a) Finance Minister's Orders (FMOs) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2011; and
- Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Unless an alternative treatment is specifically required by an Accounting Standard or the FMOs, assets and liabilities are recognised in the Balance Sheet when and only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the Director of National Parks and the amounts of the assets or liabilities can be reliably measured. However, assets and liabilities arising from executor contracts are not recognised unless required by an accounting standard. Liabilities and assets that are unrecognised are reported in the Schedule of Commitments or the Schedule of Contingencies.

Unless alternative treatment is specifically required by an accounting standard revenues 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.

1.3 Significant Accounting Judgments and Estimates

In the process of applying the accounting policies listed in this note, the Director of National Parks has made the following judgements that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements:

a) the fair value of land and buildings has been taken to be the market value or discounted cashflows of similar properties as determined by an independent valuer;

b) the fair value of infrastructure, plant and equipment has been taken to be the market value or depreciated replacement cost of similar items as determined by an independent valuer; and

c) the value of employee leave provisions which involve estimation of various factors used in the calculation as outlined in section 1.8 Employee Benefits.

Reliability of fair value measurement of Heritage and Cultural assets have been assessed whether to include in the financial statements as determined by an independent valuer. Currently these cannot be reliably measured and therefore not included in the financial statements.

1.4 New 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. No new standards, revised standards or interpretations that were issued prior to the signing of the Statement by the Director and Chief Financial Officer and are applicable to the current reporting period have a material financial impact on the Director of National Parks.

Future Australian Accounting Standard requirements

No new standards, revised standards, interpretations, and amending standards that were issued prior to the signing Statement by the Director and Chief Financial Officer and are applicable to future reporting periods are expected to have a material future impact on the Director of National Parks. AASB 13: Fair Value Measurement will impose additional disclosure requirements.

Other revised standards and interpretations that were issued prior to the sign-off of the financial statements date and are applicable to the future reporting periods are not expected to have a future financial impact on the entity.

1.5 Revenue

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when:

- a) the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer;
- b) the seller retains no managerial involvement nor effective control over the goods;
- c) the revenue and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- d) it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Director of National Parks.

Revenue from rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date. The revenue is recognised when:

- a) the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- b) the probable economic benefits with the transaction will flow to the Director of National Parks.

The stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date is determined by reference to the proportion that costs incurred to date bear to the estimated total costs of the transaction.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed at balance date. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

Revenue from the sale of tickets, permits and goods are recognised at the time tickets/permits are issued or goods are delivered to customers. Refunds for ticket sales are accounted for when they occur. An estimate for these refunds is not provided for.

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method as set out in AASB 139 Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement.

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.

The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities provides corporate services under a Service Delivery Agreement to the Director of National Parks.

Revenues from Government

The Director of National Parks received no direct appropriation from the Government for Departmental outputs. Funds are received directly by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and transferred to the Director of National Parks.

1.6 Gains

Sale of Assets

Gains from disposal of non-current assets are recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

1.7 Transactions with the Government as Owner

Equity injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) are received directly by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and are transferred to the Director of National Parks. These amounts are recognised directly in Contributed Equity in that year.

1.8 Employee Benefits

The legal entity of the Director of National Parks has only one employee, being the Director himself. However, under an arrangement with the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, the Director of National Parks has a number of employees of the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities that are assigned to assist the Director. For the purpose of these Financial Statements, such employees are treated as employees of the Director of National Parks.

Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119: Employee Benefits) and termination benefits due within twelve months 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 a net total of the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

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 Director of National Parks is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration, including the Director of National Parks' employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave has been determined using the short-hand method in accordance with the FMOs for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2011. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

Separation and Redundancy

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. The Director of National Parks recognises a provision for termination when it has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out the terminations. The Director of National Parks has a provision for separations and redundancies as at 30 June 2013 (2012: Nil).

Superannuation

Employees of the Director of National Parks are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS) or the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap).

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Commonwealth. 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 and Deregulation as an administered item.

The Director of National Parks makes employer contributions to the Australian Government at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the cost to the Government of the superannuation entitlements of the Director of National Parks' employees. The Director of National Parks accounts for the 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.

1.9 Leases

A distinction is made between finance leases and operating leases. Finance leases effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of leased noncurrent assets. An operating lease is a lease that is not a finance lease. In operating leases, the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits.

Where an asset is acquired by means of a finance lease, the asset is capitalised at either the fair value of the lease property or, if lower, the present value of minimum lease repayments at the inception of the contract and a liability is recognised at the same time and for the same amount.

The discount rate used is the interest rate implicit in the lease. 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.

The majority of operating lease payments relate to arrangements with traditional owners over Kakadu, Uluru Kata-Tjuta and Booderee National Parks.

1.10 Cash

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents include:

- a) cash on hand; and
- b) demand deposits in bank accounts with an original maturity of 3 months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

1.11 Financial Assets

The Director of National Parks classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- held-to-maturity investments; and
- loans and receivables.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

Effective Interest Method

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and of allocating interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

Held-to-Maturity Investments

Non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments and fixed maturity dates that the Director of National Parks has the positive intent and ability to hold to maturity are classified as held-tomaturity investments. Held-to-maturity investments are recorded at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment, with revenue recognised on an effective yield basis.

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'. 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 each balance date.

Financial assets held at amortised cost - if there is objective evidence that an impairment loss has 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.

1.12 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'.

Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss

Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss are initially measured at fair value. Subsequent fair value adjustments are recognised in profit or loss. The net gain or loss recognised in profit or loss incorporates any interest paid on the financial liability.

Other Financial Liabilities

Other financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value net of transaction costs. Other financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective yield basis.

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial liability and of allocating interest expense over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments through the expected life of the financial liability, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

Supplier and other payables

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

1.13 Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but are reported in the relevant notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset, or represent an existing liability or asset in respect of which settlement is not probable or the amount cannot be reliably measured. Remote contingencies are part of this disclosure. Contingent assets are reported when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are recognised when settlement is greater than remote.

1.14 Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and revenues at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor entity's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

1.15 Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment (IP&E)

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of infrastructure plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the Balance Sheet, except for purchases costing less than \$5,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located.

Revaluations

Fair values for each class of asset are determined as shown below:

Asset class	Fair value measured at:
Land	Market selling price or Discounted cashflows
Buildings excluding leasehold improvements	Market selling price
Leasehold improvements	Depreciated replacement cost
Infrastructure, plant & equipment	Market selling price or Depreciated replacement cost

Following initial recognition at cost, infrastructure, plant and equipment are carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets do not materially differ with 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. A revaluation was conducted in 2011.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reverses a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised through operating result. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly through operating result 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 infrastructure, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the Director of National Parks using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation. Leasehold improvements are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the lesser of the estimated useful life of the improvements or the unexpired period of the lease.

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 asset are based on the following useful lives:

	2012-13	2011-12
Buildings	5 to 85 years	5 to 85 years
Infrastructure	7 to 73 years	7 to 73 years
Plant and equipment	2 to 50 years	2 to 50 years
Computer software	4 to 5 years	4 to 5 years

Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2013. 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 Director of National Parks were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Derecognition

An item of infrastructure, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

Heritage and Cultural Assets

The Director of National Parks has various heritage and cultural items which have not been recorded as assets in the financial statements, due to the difficulties associated with the reliable measurement of these items. The items include living collections in the Australian National Botanical Gardens and historic buildings which are managed as ruins. The Director of National Parks has adopted, through consultation with boards of management, where relevant, appropriate curatorial and preservation policies for these items. The Director of National Park's curatorial and preservation policies can be found in the Plan of Management for each national park at http://www.parksaustralia.gov.au.

1.16 Intangibles

The Director of National Parks' intangibles comprise internally developed and purchased software for internal use and water entitlements. Internally developed software is carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful lives of the Director of National Parks' software are 4 to 5 years (2011-12: 4 to 5 years).

All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2013.

Water entitlements are carried at cost where there is no active market. When an active market exists they are carried at fair value. These assets are assessed as having an indefinite useful life.

1.17 Taxation

The Director of National Parks is exempt from all forms of taxation except fringe benefits tax (FBT) and the goods and services tax (GST).

Revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities are recognised net of GST:

- a) except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office; and
- b) except for receivables and payables.

Note 2: Events after the Balance Sheet Date

There were no events that occurred after the balance sheet date that could impact the financial statements.



Note 3: Expenses	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Note 3A - Employee Benefits		
Wages and salaries	21.416	21.844
Superannuation	, -	, -
Defined contribution plans	1,627	1,617
Defined benefit plans	2,377	2,309
Leave and other entitlements	2,244	2,979
Separation and redundancies	352	74
Other employee expenses	-	31
Total employee benefits	28,016	28,854
Note 3B - Suppliers		
Goods and services		
Professional services	3,872	3,083
Property expenses	2,353	2,218
Repairs and maintenance	2,444	3,786
Parks operation & maintenance	3,981	3,881
Employee related expenses	1,238	1,943
Information technology & communication	1,367	1,313
Service delivery charges	3,900	3,900
Other	4,575	4,095
Total goods and services	23,730	24,219
Goods and services are made up of:		
Provision of goods - related entities	42	122
Provision of goods - external parties	2,838	2,987
Rendering of services - related entities	14,330	14,129
Rendering of services - external parties	6,520	6,981
Total goods and services	23,730	24,219
Other supplier expenses		
Operating lease rentals:		
Minimum lease payments	884	884
Contingent rentals	3,293	3,362
Total other supplier expenses	4,177	4,246
Total supplier expenses	27,907	28,465
Note 3C - Depreciation and Amortisation		
Depreciation:		
Buildings	2,974	3,007
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	12,762	13,808
Total depreciation	15,736	16,815
Amortisation:		
Intangibles	28	25
Total amortisation	28	25
Total depreciation and amortisation	15,764	16,840

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Note 3: Expenses (Cont)	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Note 3D - Write-down and impairment of assets		
Financial assets		
Impairment of receivables	2	-
Total write-down and impairment of assets	2	
Note 3E - Losses on sale of assets		
Infrastructure, plant & equipment		
Proceeds from sale	-	(135)
Carrying value of assets sold	-	568
Net loss from sale of assets	-	433
Note 4: Income		
OWN-SOURCE REVENUE		
Note 4A - Sale of goods and rendering of services		
Provision of goods - external parties	32	22
Rendering of services - related entities	5,028	3,588
Rendering of services - external parties	10,295	10,385
Total sale of goods and rendering of services	15,355	13,995
Note 4B - Interest		
Deposits	1,329	1,590
Total Interest	1,329	1,590
Note 4C - Other revenue		
Resources received free of charge - service delivery charges	3,900	3,900
Sublease rental income	173	152
Other revenue	651	602
Total other revenue	4,724	4,654
GAINS		
Note 4D - Sale of assets		
Infrastructure, plant & equipment		
Proceeds from sale	812	-
Carrying value of assets sold	(286)	
Net gain from sale of assets	526	



Note 5: Financial Assets	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 5A - Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash on deposit	24,767	43,616
Cash on hand	80	73
Total cash and cash equivalents	24,847	43,689
Note 5B - Investments		
Term Deposits	18,000	-
Total investments	18,000	-

All investments are expected to be recovered within 12 months.

Term deposits are recognised at their nominal amounts and interest is credited to revenue as it accrues

Note 5C - Trade and Other Receivables		
Goods and Services		
Goods and services - related entities	66	84
Goods and services - external parties	399	347
Total receivables for goods and services	465	431
Other Receivables		
Net GST receivable from ATO	490	-
Other receivables	451	471
Total other receivables	941	471
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	1,406	902
Less: Impairment allowance account		
Goods and services	-	-
Other	(6)	(5)
Total impairment allowance account	(6)	(5)
Total trade and other receivables (net)	1,400	897
All receivables are expected to be received in less than 12 months.		
Receivables (gross) are aged as follows:		
Not overdue	615	537
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	39	32
31 to 60 days	81	22
61 to 90 days	15	13
More than 90 days	656	298
	791	365
Total receivables (gross)	1,406	902

The impairment allowance account is aged as follows:

Overdue by: More than 90 days (6)

(5)

Reconciliation of the impairment allowance account:

Movements	in	relation	to	2013
	••••		•••	

	Goods and	Other	
	services	receivables	Total
	2013	2013	2013
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance	-	(5)	(5)
Increase recognised in net surplus	-	(1)	(1)
Closing balance	-	(6)	(6)

Movements in relation to 2012

	Oulei	
services	receivables	Total
2012	2012	2012
\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
(93)	(5)	(98)
93	-	93
-	(5)	(5)
2013		2012
\$'000		\$'000
229		235
229		235
7,326		7,326
2,089		563
72,629		72,411
(5,976)		(3,006)
68.742	_	60.068
		09,900
	2012 \$'000 (93) 93 2013 \$'000 229 229 229 229 229 229 229	2012 2012 \$'000 \$'000 93 - . (5) 2013 \$'000 229 229 229 229 229 229 (5,976)

No indicators of impairment were found for land and buildings.

No land and buildings are expected to be sold or disposed within the next 12 months.

Note 6B: Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment

Intrastructure, plant and equipment		
- work in progress	4,296	2,026
- fair value	145,620	142,308
 accumulated depreciation 	(25,899)	(13,738)
Total infrastructure, plant and equipment	124,017	130,596

No indicators of impairment were found for infrastructure, plant and equipment.

The Director of National Parks has various heritage and cultural items which have not been recorded as assets in the financial statements, due to the difficulties associated with the reliable measurement of these items. These items include living collections and historic buildings which are managed as ruins. There was no significant acquisition or disposal activity in relation to these items in the current reporting period.

Note 6C - Analysis of property, plant and equipment

Table A - Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment (2012-13)

	Land	Buildings	Total Land & Buildings	Infrastructure Plant & Equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 1 July 2012					
Gross book value	7,326	72,974	80,300	144,334	224,634
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	-	(3,006)	(3,006)	(13,738)	(16,744)
Net book value 1 July 2012	7,326	69,968	77,294	130,596	207,890
Additions					
by purchase	-	1,689	1,689	6,465	8,154
by donation	-	-	-	54	54
Depreciation expense	-	(2,973)	(2,973)	(12,763)	(15,736)
Disposals - by sale	-	(50)	(50)	(222)	(272)
Write-down and impairment recognised through the operating result	-	-	-	(14)	(14)
Transfers	-	108	108	(99)	9
Net book value 30 June 2013	7,326	68,742	76,068	124,017	200,085
Net book value as of 30 June 2013 represented by:					
Gross book value	7,326	74,718	82,044	149,916	231,960
Accumulated depreciation	-	(5,976)	(5,976)	(25,899)	(31,875)
	7,326	68,742	76,068	124,017	200,085

Table A - Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment (2011-12)

	Land	Land Buildings		Infrastructure Plant & Equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 1 July 2011					
Gross book value	6,826	72,114	78,940	140,543	219,483
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	-	-	-	-	-
Net book value 1 July 1 July 2011	6,826	72,114	78,940	140,543	219,483
Additions					
by purchase	-	831	831	4,438	5,269
by recognition*	500	-	500	22	522
Depreciation expense	-	(3,008)	(3,008)	(13,807)	(16,815)
Disposals - by sale	-	(16)	(16)	(553)	(569)
Transfers	-	47	47	(47)	-
Net book value 30 June 2012	7,326	69,968	77,294	130,596	207,890
Net book value as of 30 June 2012 represented by:					
Gross book value	7,326	72,974	80,300	144,334	224,634
Accumulated depreciation	-	(3,006)	(3,006)	(13,738)	(16,744)
	7 326	69 968	77 294	130 596	207 890

Note 6D: Intangibles Computer software	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Purchased - in progress	215	148
Accumulated amortisation	(53)	(25)
Internally developed - in progress	132	16
Total Computer Software	294	139
Water Entitlements	93	93
Total Water Entitlements	93	93
Total intangibles	387	232

No indicators of impairment were found for intangible assets.

No intangibles are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

Note 6E - Analysis of intangibles

Table A - Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of intangibles (2012-13)

	Computer Software Purchased	Computer Computer Water Software Software Entitlements Purchased Developed		Total	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
As at 1 July 2012					
Gross book value					
	148	16	93	257	
Accumulated amortisation	(25)	-	-	(25)	
Net book value 1 July 2012	123	16	93	232	
Additions					
Purchased	60	132	-	192	
Amortisation expense	(28)	-	-	(28)	
Transfers	7	(16)	-	(9)	
Net book value 30 June 2013	162	132	93	387	
Net book value as of 30 June 2013 represented by:					
Gross book value	215	132	93	440	
Accumulated amortisation	(53)	-	-	(53)	
	162	132	93	387	

Table A - Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of intangibles (2011-12)

	Computer Software Purchased	Computer Software Developed	Computer Water Software Entitlements	
	\$'000	\$'000 \$'000		\$'000
As at 1 July 2011				
Gross book value	148	7	93	248
Accumulated amortisation	-	-	-	-
Net book value 1 July 2011	148	7	93	248
Additions				
Purchased	-	9	-	9
Amortisation expense	(25)	-	-	(25)
Net book value 30 June 2012	123	16	93	232
Net book value as of 30 June 2012 represented by:				
Gross book value	148	16	93	257
Accumulated amortisation	(25)	-	-	(25)
	123	16	93	232



	2013	
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 6F: Other Non-Financial Assets		
Prepayments	419	530
Total other non-financial assets	419	530
All other non-financial assets are expected to be recoven No indicators of impairment were found for other non-fi	ered in 12 months. nancial assets.	
Note 7: Payables		
Note 7A - Suppliers		
Trade creditors and accruals	1,587	1,393
Operating lease rentals	794	718
Total supplier payables	2,381	2,111
Supplier payables expected to be settled within 12 mor	nths:	
Related entities	1,002	1,183
External parties	1,379	928
Total supplier payables	2,381	2,111
Settlement is usually made net 30 days.		
Note 7B - Other Pavables		
Salaries and wages	565	524
Separation & Redundancies	313	-
Superannuation	106	93
Net GST Payable to the ATO	-	105
Unearned revenue	4.359	3.428
Other Pavables	292	443
Total other payables	5,635	4,593
All other payables are expected to be settled within 12	months.	
Note 8: Employee Provisions		
l eave	7 571	7 298
Total employee provisions	7,571	7,298
Employee Provisions are expected to be settled in:		0.07
No more than 12 months	3,643	2,871
More than 12 months	3,928	4,427
l otal employee provisions	7,571	7,298

Note 9: Cash Flow Reconciliation

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents per Balance Sheet to Cash Flow Statement		
Cash and cash equivalents as per:		
Cash Flow Statement	24,847	43,689
Balance sheet	24,847	43,689
Difference	-	-
Reconciliation of net cost of services to net cash from oper	rating activities:	
Net cost of services	(9,685)	(12,433)
Adjustments for non-cash items		
Depreciation and amortisation	15,764	16,840
Interest from investments	(382)	-
Take up of assets for the first time	-	(530)
Write down of non-financial assets	-	-
(Gain) / loss on disposal of non-current assets	(526)	433
Changes in Assets and Liabilities		
(Increase)/decrease in net receivables	(118)	1,678
(Increase)/decrease in GST receivables	(490)	399
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	110	(175)
(Increase)/decrease in accrued revenue	6	(94)
Increase/(decrease) in unearned revenue	931	1,497
Increase/(decrease) in employee provisions	504	610
Increase/(decrease) in supplier payables	255	(906)
Increase/(decrease) in other payables	(6)	(38)
Net cash from operating activities	6,363	7,281

Note 10: Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets No contingent assets or liabilities exist for the Director of National Parks for the current financial year (2011-12: Nil).

Note 11: Director's Remuneration

The legal entity of the Director of National Parks has only one Executive Director. Remuneration of the Executive Director is included in Note 13: Senior Executive Remuneration.



NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 12: Related Party Disclosures

Director of National Parks

The Director of National Parks during the year was Mr Peter Cochrane. The aggregate remuneration of the Director is disclosed in Note 13: Senior Executive Remuneration.

Loans to Director and Director related entities

There were no loans made to either the Director or entities related to the Director during 2012-13 (2011-12: Nil).

Other Transactions with Director or Director related entities

There were no other transactions with either the Director or entities related to the Director during 2012-13 (2011-12 Nil).

Note 13: Senior Executive Remuneration

Note 13A: Senior Executive Remuneration Expense for the Reporting Period

	2013	2012
Short-term employee benefits:	\$	\$
Salary	782,629	743,288
Annual Leave Accrual	64,416	62,483
Other	23,991	25,998
Total short-term employee benefits	871,036	831,769
Post-employment benefits:		
Superannuation	171,319	152,969
Total post-employment benefits	171,319	152,969
Other long-term benefits		
Long service leave	19,822	19,222
Total other long-term benefits	19,822	19,222
Total	1,062,177	1,003,960

Notes:

1. Note 13A is prepared on an accrual basis.

2. Note 13A excludes acting arrangements and part-year service where total remuneration expensed for a senior executive was less than \$180,000.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 13B: Average Annual Reportable Remuneration Paid to Substantive Senior Executives During the Reporting Period

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Average annual reportable remuneration ¹	Substantive senior executives No.	Reportable salary ² \$	Contributed superannuation ³ \$	Reportable allowances ⁴ \$	Bonus paid ⁵ \$	Total reportable remuneration \$
Total remuneration (including part-time arrangements):					
Less than \$180,000						
\$180,000 to \$209,999	2	165,633	32,694	-	-	198,327
\$210,000 to \$239,999	1	176,932	46,532	-	-	223,464
\$240,000 to \$269,999						
\$270,000 to \$299,999						
\$300,000 to \$329,999	1	258,300	59,941	-	-	318,241
Total	4					

	2012					
Average annual reportable remuneration ¹	Substantive senior executives No.	Reportable salary ² \$	Contributed superannuation ³ \$	Reportable allowances ⁴ \$	Bonus paid ⁵ \$	Total reportable remuneration \$
Total remuneration (including part-time arrangem	ients):					
Less than \$180,000	1	88,523	10,644	-	-	99,167
\$180,000 to \$209,999	2	164,507	23,251	-	-	187,758
\$210,000 to \$239,999	1	171,782	45,556	-	-	217,338
\$240,000 to \$269,999						
\$270,000 to \$299,999						
\$300,000 to \$329,999	1	240,452	59,695	-	-	300,147
Total	5					

Notes:

1 This table reports substantive senior executives who received remuneration during the reporting period. Each row is an averaged figure based on headcount for individuals in the band.

2 'Reportable salary' includes the following:

a) gross payments (less any bonuses paid, which are separated out and disclosed in the 'bonus paid' column); b) reportable fringe benefits (at the net amount prior to 'grossing up' to account for tax benefits); and c) salary sacrificed benefits.

- 3 The 'contributed superannuation' amount is the average cost to the Director of National Parks for the provision of superannuation benefits to substantive senior executives in that reportable remuneration band during the reporting period.
- 4 'Reportable allowances' are the average actual allowances paid as per the 'total allowances' line on individuals' payment summaries.
- 5 'Bonus paid' represents average actual bonuses paid during the reporting period in that reportable remuneration band. The 'bonus paid' within a particular band may vary between financial years due to various factors such as individuals commencing with or leaving the Director of National Parks during the financial year.

Note 13C: Other Highly Paid Staff

During the reporting period, there were nil employees (2011-12: nil) whose salary plus contributed superannuation, allowances and performance bonuses totalled \$180,000 or more.

lote 14: Remuneration of Auditors	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Financial Statement audit services are provided to Director of National Parks by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).		
Fair value of the services provided		
Financial statement audit services	(81)	(81)
Total	(81)	(81)

No other services were provided by the ANAO.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

9 15: Financial Instruments		2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Note 15A - Categories of financial instruments			
Financial Assets			
Loans and receivables			
Cash	5A	24,847	43,689
Trade and other receivables	5C	910	897
Accrued revenue	5D	229	235
Total Loans and receivables		25,986	44,82
Held-to-Maturity			
Cash in term deposits	5B	18,000	
Total Held-to-Maturity		18,000	
Carrying amount of financial assets		43,986	44,82
Financial Liabilities			
At amortised cost			
Supplier payables	7A	2,381	2,11
Other payables	7B	292	443
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		2,673	2,554
Note 15B - Net income and expense from financial assets	<u>i</u>		
Loans and receivables			
Interest revenue	4B	1,329	1,590
Write down - financial assets	3D	(2)	
Net gain from loans and receivables		1,327	1,590
Net gain from financial assets		1,327	1,590

Note 15C - Net income and expense from financial liabilities

There was no net income and expenses from financial liabilities in 2012-13. (2011-12: Nil).

Note 15D - Fair value of financial instruments

The carrying value of the Director of National Parks' financial instruments are a reasonable approximation of fair value.

Note 15E - Credit risk

The Director of National Parks is exposed to minimal credit risk as the majority of cash equivalents and other receivables are cash or trade receivables. The maximum exposure to credit risk is the risk that arises from potential default of a debtor. This amount is equal to the total amount of trade receivables (2013: \$1,406,003 and 2012: \$902,845). The Director of National Parks has assessed the risk of the default on payment and has allocated \$5,952 in 2013 (2012: \$5,105) to an impairment and allowance account.

The Director of National Parks holds no collateral to mitigate against credit risk.

Credit quality of financial instruments not past due or individually determined as impaired:

	Not Past Due Nor Impaired	Not Past Due Nor Impaired	Past due or impaired	Past due or impaired
	2013	2012	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Cash and cash equivalents	24,847	43,689	-	-
Trade and other receivables	125	537	791	365
Accrued revenue	229	235		
Total	25,201	44,461	791	365

Ageing of financial assets that were past due but not impaired for 2013

<u> </u>	-				
	0 to 30	31 to 60	61 to 90	90+	
	days	days	days	days	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Trade and other receivables	39	81	15	650	785
Total	39	81	15	650	785

Ageing of financial assets that were past due but not impaired for 2012

	0 to 30	31 to 60	61 to 90	90+	
	days	days	days	days	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Trade and other receivables	32	22	13	293	360
Total	32	22	13	293	360

Note 15F - Liquidity risk

The Director of National Park's financial liabilities are payables (due and payable). The exposure to liquidity risk from nonderivative financial liabilities is based on the notion that the Director of National Parks will encounter difficulty in meeting its obligations associated with financial liabilities. This is highly unlikely due to appropriation funding and mechanisms available to the Director of National Parks and internal policies and procedures put in place to ensure there are appropriate resources to meet its financial obligations.

The following tables illustrate the maturities for non-derivative financial liabilities

	On demand	within 1 year	1 to 5 years	> 5 years	Total
	2013	2013	2013	2013	2013
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Trade creditors and accruals	-	2,381	-	-	2,381
Other payables	-	292	-	-	292
Total	-	2,673	-	-	2,673

	On demand	within 1 year	1 to 5 years	> 5 years	Total
	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Trade creditors and accruals	-	2,111	-	-	2,111
Other payables	-	443	-	-	443
Total	-	2,554	-	-	2,554

Note 15G - Market risk

The Director of National Parks holds basic financial instruments that do not expose it to market risks. The Director of National Parks is not exposed to 'currency risk' or 'other price risk'.

Interest Rate Risk The only interest-bearing items on the balance sheet are 'Cash on deposit' which bear interest at a fixed tiered interest rate and 'Cash held in Term Deposits' which bear interest at a fixed rate for the period of the term deposit. The term deposits are not exposed to significant interest rate movements and upon maturity, the Director of National Parks returns the funds into its bank account or invests into further term deposits where they are invested at the best available interest rate and deemed to be low risk.

Note 15H - Financial Assets Reconciliation

		2012	2011
		\$'000	\$'000
Financial Assets			
	Notes		
Total financial assets as per balance sheet		44,476	44,821
Less: Non-financial instrument components			-
GST Receivable	5B	(490)	
Total Non-financial instrument components		(490)	-
Total financial assets as per financial instruments note		43,986	44,821

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 16: Appropriations

The Director of National Parks received no direct appropriation from the Government for Departmental outputs. Funds are appropriated directly to the Department of the Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and transferred to the Director of National Parks. Funds transferred from the Department of the Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities included a \$40.170m CAC Act body payment (2011-12: \$41.485m). The Director of National Parks did not receive an equity injection in 2012-13 (2011-12: NII).

When received by the Director of National Parks, the payments made are legally the money of the Director of National Parks and do not represent any balance remaining in the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Note 17: Compensation and Debt Relief

No payments of the following kind were made by the Director of National Parks during 2012-13 (2011-12: Nil):

- 1) waivers of amounts owing to the Australian Government;
- 2) compensation for detriment caused by defective administration; or
- 3) special circumstances payments relating to APS employment.

Note 18: Reporting of Outcomes

Net Cost of Outcome Delivery

The Director of National Parks is structured to contribute to the following outcome:

Outcome 1

The Director of National Parks has only one outcome - Conservation and appreciation of Commonwealth reserves through the provision of safe visitor access, the control of invasive species and working with stakeholders and neighbours.

	Outcome 1		
	2013	2012	
	\$'000	\$'000	
Departmental			
Expenses	(71,789)	(74,687)	
Own-source income	62,104	62,254	
Net cost of outcome delivery	(9,685)	(12,433)	

The net costs shown include intra-government costs that would be eliminated in calculating the actual Budget Outcome.

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 19: Cost Recovery Policy		
Significant cost recovery arrangements		
Park Use, Educational Services and Parking Fees	9,789	9,937
Total receipts subject to cost recovery policy	9,789	9,937



7 Appendices

Appendix A: Agency Resourcing Statement 2012–13 Appendix B: Portfolio Budget Statements reporting 2012–13 Appendix C: Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance Appendix D: Compliance index

Appendix A: Agency Resourcing Statement 2012–13

The Agency Resourcing Statement was introduced to Portfolio Budget Statements in 2008–09 to provide information about the various funding sources that the Director of National Parks may draw upon during the year.

The Director of National Parks is required to publish the Agency Resourcing Statement in the annual report that reconciles to cash reserves in the financial statements.

	Actual available appropriation \$'000	Payments made \$'000	Balance remaining \$'000
Opening balance/Reserves at bank	43,689	_	43,689
REVENUE FROM GOVERNMENT			
Ordinary annual services ¹			
Outcome 1	_	_	-
Total ordinary annual services	-		_
Other services			
Non-operating	-	_	-
Total other services			-
Total annual appropriations	_	_	-
Payments from related entities ²			
Amounts from the portfolio department	40,170	40,170	-
Total	40,170	40,170	-
Total funds from Government	40,170	40,170	-
FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES			
Interest	1,231	1,231	-
Sale of goods and services	17,831	17,831	-
Other	2,210	3,052	(842)
Total	21,272	22,114	(842)
Total net resourcing for DNP	105,131	62,284	42,847

All figures are GST exclusive.

As per the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, DSEWPaC is directly appropriated the Director of National Parks (DNP) appropriations, which are then allocated to the DNP by the Secretary.

- 1 Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2012-13
- 2 Funding provided by a Government body that is not specified within the annual appropriation bills as a payment to the CAC Act body (for example, a fee for service from an FMA Act agency paid to a CAC Act body would appear here and may be explained within the footnote, as would a payment to a third agency's special appropriation).

Appendix B: Portfolio Budget Statements reporting 2012–13

KEY RESULT AREA 1 – NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

PBS target - Viable populations of selected significant species maintained

Park managers have nominated 46 species across Parks Australia's six terrestrial reserves to determine whether viable populations of selected significant species have been maintained in those reserves. Of the selected species, the populations of two species are increasing; 18 species are remaining steady; nine species are falling; one is likely to be extinct; two may be locally extinct; and population data are deficient for 14 species.

Booderee National Park

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Eastern bristlebird (Dasyornis brachypterus)	Endangered	Early morning survey (calls and sightings).	Ongoing fox control; mosaic burning.	Numbers steady
Sooty oystercatcher (<i>Haemotopus fuliginosus</i>)	Not listed	Boat-based monthly surveys of Jervis Bay.	No specific actions.	Numbers steady
Pied oystercatcher (Haematopus longirostris)	Not listed	Boat-based monthly surveys of Jervis Bay; beach surveys.	Ongoing fox control; education of Wreck Bay Community members about bird-friendly beach use provided by Indigenous staff.	Numbers steady
Little penguin (<i>Eudyptula minor</i>)	Marine	Night counts at landing beach.	No specific actions.	Numbers steady
Long-nosed bandicoot (Perameles nasuta)	Not listed	Trapping at sites across the park.	Ongoing fox control.	Numbers steady
Green and golden bell frog (<i>Litoria aurea</i>)	Vulnerable	Monitoring has ceased.	No specific actions.	Locally extinct
Giant burrowing frog (<i>Heleioporus</i> <i>australiacus</i>)	Vulnerable	Monitoring has ceased.	No specific actions.	Numbers steady Numbers stable when last measured
Common brushtail possum (Trichosurus vulpecula)	Not listed	Trapping at sites across the park.	Ongoing fox control.	▼ Numbers falling
Hooded plover (Thinornis rubricollis)	Marine, nominated for Vulnerable status	Beach counts; nesting sites and breeding success.	Ongoing fox control; education of Wreck Bay Community members about bird-friendly beach use provided by Indigenous staff.	Numbers steady
Greater glider (Petauroides volans)	Not listed	Spotlighting at sites across the park.	No specific actions.	Locally extinct
Eastern chestnut mouse (Pseudomys gracilicaudatus)	Not listed	Trapping at sites across the park.	Ongoing fox control; mosaic burning.	Numbers steady



Christmas Island National Park

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Christmas Island pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus</i> <i>murrayi</i>)	Critically Endangered	Specific targeted monitoring no longer conducted (as per expert working group recommendation that monitoring occur for two years from 2010). Ad hoc deployment of monitoring equipment in response to public reports of microbats but none detected.	No specific actions, however, crazy ant control would have benefits if the species persists in the wild.	Presumed to be extinct
Christmas Island flying-fox (Pteropus melanotus natalis)	Not currently listed but nominated for Critically Endangered status.	Survey of fixed sites on roads/tracks conducted island-wide in 2006 and 2012; survey will be repeated in 2013. Quarterly monitoring of known camp sites and emergence. Searches for other sites to be held during 2013 island-wide survey.	Workshop with researchers in 2012 to investigate threats. Aerial baiting of crazy ants in September 2012 and commencement of biological control implementation program for crazy ants in 2013. Forest rehabilitation program.	▼ Numbers falling Decline may be occurring as 2012 survey results show a 35%–39% decline in detection at fixed points since 2006.
Six native reptiles: Christmas Island blind snake (<i>Ramphotyphlops</i> <i>exocoeti</i>); Lister's gecko (<i>Lepidodactylus</i> <i>listeri</i>); blue-tailed skink (<i>Cryptoblepharus</i> <i>egeriae</i>); forest skink (<i>Emoia nativitatis</i>); coastal skink (<i>Emoia ativitatis</i>); giant gecko (<i>Cyrtodactylus</i> <i>sadleiri</i>)	Only Lister's gecko and blind snake currently listed (both Vulnerable) but all nominated for Critically Endangered status except giant gecko (Vulnerable) and coastal skink (not considered endemic).	Extensive targeted survey conducted in October 2012 (dry season) and March-to-May 2013 (wet season). Only four Lister's geckoes detected at Egeria Point and one at North-west Point (previously unknown location). Reptiles included in biennial island-wide survey.	Continue captive breeding program for blue-tailed skink and Lister's gecko. Nominated Lister's gecko, blue-tailed skink and forest skink for critically endangered status and giant gecko as vulnerable. Aerial baiting of crazy ants in September 2012 and commencement of biological control implementation program for crazy ants in 2013. Ongoing cat control in settled areas.	▼ Numbers falling All now possibly extinct in the wild except giant gecko (relatively common) and blind snake (data deficient). Captive populations of blue-tailed skink and Lister's gecko are increasing. Only one captive forest skink remains (female).
Red crab (Gecarcoidea natalis)	Not listed	Island-wide survey to be repeated in 2013 to monitor red crab abundance and crazy ant supercolonies.	Aerial baiting of crazy ants in September 2012 and commencement of biological-control implementation program for crazy ants in 2013. Reduced mortality rates from vehicles.	▶ Numbers steady Stable (3%–8% increase) from 2009 to 2011 with a population estimate of 40–47 million.



Christmas Island National Park continued

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Abbott's booby (Papasula abbotti)	Endangered; Marine; Migratory	Island-wide survey to be repeated in 2013 includes nesting occupancy monitoring. Helicopter aerial survey of nest sites in 2002 and 2009 by an external researcher. Population surveys of chick survival rates and breeding activity undertaken by an external researcher in 2012.	Forest rehabilitation program and protection under the EPBC Act of nesting habitat from clearing.	► Numbers steady
Christmas Island frigatebird (<i>Fregata andrewsi</i>)	Endangered	Nest recruitment monitoring at (known) nesting colonies. Christmas Island frigatebird will be included in 2013 island-wide survey to search for new nesting colonies.	Although not considered a direct cause of decline, aerial baiting of crazy ants took place in September 2012 and a biological control implementation program for crazy ants commenced in 2013.	▼ Numbers falling Declining at nesting colonies that are monitored, which implies an overall population decline.
Christmas Island hawk-owl (<i>Ninox natalis</i>)	Vulnerable	Survey of fixed sites on roads/tracks conducted island-wide in 2006 and 2012. Survey will be repeated in 2013.	Forest rehabilitation program and protection under the EPBC Act of primary forest nesting habitat from clearing. Ongoing cat control in settled areas.	Numbers steady
Christmas Island emerald dove (Chalcophaps indica natalis)	Endangered	Biennial island-wide survey to be repeated in 2013.	Aerial baiting of crazy ants in September 2012 and commencement of biological control implementation program for crazy ants in 2013.	Numbers steady
			program. Ongoing cat control in settled areas.	



Kakadu National Park

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Northern quoll (<i>Dasyurus</i> <i>hallucatus</i>)	Endangered	Full flora and fauna survey of fire plots has commenced and together with results from current biodiversity hotspot surveys will give an improved understanding of status. Incidental sighting database records any sightings or road kill. Ongoing National Environmental Research Program project examining impact of feral cats on small mammals and reptiles recorded quolls using remote cameras and trapped one live quol which was microchipped. Targeted monitoring at East Alligator Ranger Station ('toad smart' population).	Landscape unit-based fire management to improve habitat quality. Off-shore species relocation program conducted in conjunction with Northern Territory government agencies. Program in place for monitoring survival rates of offspring of captive-bred 'toad smart' quolls trained to avoid cane toads.	? Data deficient Significant population decline occurred following the arrival of cane toads. Reports of sightings throughout the park are received periodically. Monitoring since December 2009 at East Alligator Ranger Station shows that a remnant population persists, albeit in low numbers. A number of captive-bred 'toad-smart' quolls are surviving and reproducing in this area. Five adult female quolls were captured in May 2013, a significant increase from the previous year.
Northern brown bandicoot (<i>Isoodon</i> <i>macrourus</i>)	Not listed	Full flora and fauna survey of fire plots has commenced and together with results from current biodiversity hotspot surveys will give an improved understanding of status. Incidental sighting database records any sightings or road kill. Ongoing National Environmental Research Program project examining impact of feral cats on small mammals and reptiles captured bandicoots using remote cameras and live trapping; individuals are microchipped.	Landscape unit-based fire management to improve habitat quality.	? Data deficient Status likely to be consistent with pattern of small mammal decline across northern Australia.



Kakadu National Park continued

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Northern brushtail possum (<i>Trichosurus</i> <i>arnhemensis</i>)	Not listed	Full flora and fauna survey of fire plots has commenced and together with results from current biodiversity hotspot surveys will give an improved understanding of status. Incidental sighting database records any sightings or road kill.	Landscape unit-based fire management to improve habitat quality.	? Data deficient Status likely to be consistent with pattern of small mammal decline across northern Australia.
Brush-tailed rabbit-rat (<i>Conilurus</i> <i>penicillatus</i>)	Vulnerable	Full flora and fauna survey of fire plots has commenced and together with results from current biodiversity hotspot surveys will give an improved understanding of status. Incidental sighting database records any sightings or road kills. Remote cameras were deployed from late June to early July 2012 in an area last known to support a good population of this species, in association with a National Environmental Research Program project examining the impact of feral cats on small mammals and reptiles. One indistinct image of a possible brush-tailed rabbit-rat was captured, however, due to poor image quality, exact identity could not be known.	Landscape unit-based fire management to improve habitat quality.	? Data deficient Status likely to be consistent with pattern of small mammal decline across northern Australia.
Black-footed tree-rat (Mesembriomys gouldii)	Not listed	Full flora and fauna survey of fire plots has commenced and together with results from current biodiversity hotspot surveys will give an improved understanding of status. Incidental sighting or road kills recorded. Have been detected using remote cameras, in association with work on a National Environmental Research Program project examining the impact of feral cats on small mammals and reptiles. Remote camera work is continuing.	Landscape unit-based fire management to improve habitat quality.	? Data deficient Status likely to be consistent with pattern of small mammal decline across northern Australia.



Kakadu National Park continued

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Pale field rat (Rattus tunnneyi)	Not listed	Full flora and fauna survey of fire plots has commenced and together with results from current biodiversity hotspot surveys will give an improved understanding of status. Incidental sighting database records any sightings or road kill.	Landscape unit-based fire management to improve habitat quality.	? Data deficient Status likely to be consistent with pattern of small mammal decline across northern Australia.
Flatback turtle (Natator depressus)	Vulnerable; Marine; Migratory	Annual survey and capture program (survey conducted since 1995).	No specific actions.	► Numbers steady Monitoring shows population is steady.
Estuarine crocodile (<i>Crocodylus</i> <i>porosus</i>)	Marine; Migratory	Continuation of survey and capture program that has been under way since 1979. Satellite tracking project under way since 2005.	No specific actions.	▶ Numbers steady Researchers estimate number of estuarine crocodiles in the park at between 8000 and 12 000 (10% of total Northern Territory population).

Norfolk Island National Park

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Green parrot or Norfolk Island parakeet (<i>Cyanoramphus</i> <i>cookii</i>)	Endangered; Migratory	Annual monitoring of assisted-breeding nesting sites throughout breeding season (October to June). Monitoring commenced in the 1980s and birth-rate data collected since 1986. Monitoring focus is now moving from individual species to multiple species and ecosystem health. A survey in 2010 indicated species may have recovered past 'endangered' threshold but an island-wide survey is needed to improve the accuracy of this estimate before any change to conservation status is considered. A general bird-monitoring system will be implemented in the park to begin in	Active feral animal control (rats, cats, crimson rosellas) through most of their habitat.	? Data deficient Most recent population estimate of 240 individuals (Dutson, 2010). Possibly stable at present and not likely to increase further until more habitat is available.
		in the park to begin in spring 2013.		



Norfolk Island National Park continued

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Norfolk Island morepork (boobook) owl (<i>Ninox</i> novaeseelandiae undulata)	Endangered; Migratory	Artificial nesting boxes are monitored annually to record breeding activity (October to January). Monitoring focus is now moving from individual species to multiple species and ecosystem health.	Active monitoring of owl nest sites. Rodent and cat-control focused around known breeding nests.	► Numbers steady Current population estimate of 40. In the mid-1980s there was only 1 bird, so there has been an historic increase in population numbers.
Golden whistler (Pachycephala pectoralis xanthoprocta)	Vulnerable	A general bird-monitoring system will be implemented in the park to begin in spring 2013. 2010 survey suggested numbers may be increasing though it should remain categorised as vulnerable.	Weed and feral animal control.	? Data deficient Most recent population estimate of 2200 mature individuals (Dutson, 2010). Insufficient data to estimate trend.
Pacific robin (Petroica multicolor multicolor)	Vulnerable	A general bird-monitoring system will be implemented in the park to begin in spring 2013. 2010 survey did not include population estimate due to bias in data.	Weed and feral animal control.	? Data deficient May be gradual increase which is continuing but too little data to confirm trend.
Wedge-tailed shearwater (Ardenna pacifica)	Marine; Migratory	No monitoring program in place.	Weed and feral animal control.	? Data deficient Unable to determine trend at present.

Pulu Keeling National Park

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Red-footed booby (<i>Sula sula</i>)	Marine; Migratory	Conducted in 2013.	No specific actions.	Numbers steady
Cocos buff- banded rail (Gallirallus philippensis andrewsi)	Endangered	Conducted 2012.	Translocated 39 individuals from the park to Horsburgh Island in April 2013 as an insurance population.	Numbers steady



Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park

Species	EPBC Act status	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
<i>Tjaku<u>r</u>a</i> or great desert skink (<i>Liopholis kintorei</i>)	Vulnerable	Annual monitoring of burrow systems.	Targeted prescribed burning to increase habitat suitability; feral animal control.	Numbers steady
Mala or rufous hare-wallaby (<i>Lagorchestes</i> <i>hirsutus</i>)	Endangered	Annual trap-based monitoring.	Targeted prescribed burning to increase habitat suitability and reduce the risk of bushfire. Feral animal control outside of the enclosure to reduce risk of breach and rabbit control inside the enclosure.	▲ Numbers rising
<i>Murtja</i> or brush-tailed mulgara (<i>Dasycercus blythi</i>)	Not listed ¹	Biannual monitoring of burrow systems and surface sign.	Targeted prescribed burning to increase habitat suitability; feral animal control.	▲ Numbers rising Increasing in 2012, survey not completed in 2013.
<i>Itjariitjari</i> or southern marsupial mole (<i>Notoryctes</i> <i>typhlops</i>)	Endangered	Monitoring methodology currently under development. New methodology currently out for peer review via journal publication process.	Feral animal control.	? Data deficient
Common wallaroo or euro (<i>Macropus</i> <i>robustus</i>)	Not listed	Honours project currently advertised through Charles Darwin University to develop effective monitoring methodology.	No specific actions.	? Data deficient
Striated grasswren (Amytornis striatus)	Not listed	Honours project currently advertised through Charles Darwin University to develop effective monitoring methodology.	No specific actions.	? Data deficient
Rare plant survey	Not listed	Annual monitoring of selected species.	Protection from bushfire; camel control.	? Data deficient Trend varies with species.

PBS target – No net increase in distribution/abundance of significant invasive species

Park managers have nominated 24 significant invasive species across the six terrestrial reserves to identify changes in overall distribution and abundance. Of the selected species, the populations of six species are increasing; four remain steady; eight are falling; and for six, population data are deficient.

1 Current EPBC Act status of two species of mulgara may not accurately reflect their correct conservation status due to taxonomic confusion between the two species.
Booderee National Park

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
European red fox	European red fox Fauna camera surveys. Ongoing intensive fox control via		Numbers steady
(Vulpes vulpes)		baiting and shooting of bait-shy individuals.	Low densities being maintained.
Bitou bush	Bitou bush Triennial aerial survey Continued treatment by spraying with		Numbers steady
(Chrysanthemoides undertaken in June 2013. monilifera)		splatter-guns (88.5 ha), ground-spraying (9.6 ha) and hand-pulling (22 ha).	Small decrease in distribution and small increase in density.

Christmas Island National Park

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Yellow crazy ant (Anoplolepis gracilipes)	Island-wide survey to be repeated in 2013.	Aerial baiting of crazy ants in September 2012 and commencement of biological control implementation program for crazy ants in 2013.	▼ Numbers falling Decline in the area of supercolonies following baiting. Numbers will increase over time without further control.
False curry bush (Clausena excavata)	Island-wide survey to be repeated in 2013.	No specific control efforts.	? Data deficient Data deficient but most likely increasing. The 2013 island-wide survey will provide more data to help determine a trend.
Siam weed (Chromolaena odorata)	Island-wide road monitoring survey.	Removal of existing seedlings from the only known infestation.	▼ Numbers falling
Feral cat (Felis catus)	Monitoring of bait take as part of control works.	Removal of an estimated 450 cats on Christmas Island as part of a collaborative control program from May 2010 to August 2012.	▼ Numbers falling Declining to August 2012 but likely to be increasing since.

Kakadu National Park

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Mimosa (Mimosa pigra)	Long-term annual monitoring program in place with 222 sites identified and mapped.	Integrated eradication program conducted.	► Numbers steady Under control, virtually absent from the park.
Para grass (Brachiaria mutica)	Kakadu weeds team collaborated with Charles Darwin University and the Northern Territory's weed management branch to complete a helicopter-based survey of distribution of para grass and olive hymenachne on the Kakadu floodplains. Ground-truthing of the survey partially completed.	National Environmental Research Program (North Australia Hub) 'Project 3.2. Managing threats to floodplain biodiversity and cultural values' commenced a project to assess cost-effectiveness of fire and herbicide to control para grass. The project is undertaken in association with Energy Resources Australia on the Jabiluka mining lease. It has developed a preliminary rainfall inundation model and commenced models of sea level rise for Kakadu floodplains under climate scenarios.	▲ Numbers rising The range of this species is increasing.



Kakadu National Park continued

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Gamba grass (Andropogon gayanus)	Ongoing monitoring as part of integrated weed program.	Eradication program conducted, particularly on the major road networks in the park where infestations occur as a result of inadvertent seed transport.	► Numbers steady Under control within the park but a large infestation is advancing towards the park's southern boundary and presents a high risk.
Mission grass (Pennisetum polystachion)	Ongoing monitoring as part of integrated weed program.	Treated in a number of strategic areas; opportunistic control elsewhere.	▲ Numbers rising The range of this species is increasing.
Olive hymenachne (Hymenachne amplexicaulis)	Kakadu weeds team collaborated with Charles Darwin University and the Northern Territory weed management branch to complete a helicopter-based survey of distribution of para grass and olive hymenachne on the Kakadu floodplains. Ground-truthing of the survey was partially completed.	National Environmental Research Program (North Australia Hub) 'Project 3.2. Managing threats to floodplain biodiversity and cultural values' developed a preliminary rainfall inundation model and commenced models of sea-level rise for Kakadu floodplains under climate scenarios. Controlled at a number of key locations; opportunistic control elsewhere.	▲ Numbers rising The range of this species is increasing.
Salvinia (Salvinia molesta)	Ongoing monitoring as part of integrated weed program.	No specific actions.	► Numbers steady Extent of infestations varies greatly between locations and over time.
Water buffalo (<i>Bubalus bubalis</i>)	Incidental sightings database maintained.	Opportunistic culling (102 buffalo shot).	▲ Numbers rising
Feral pig (Sus scrofa)	Incidental sightings database maintained.	Opportunistic culling (519 pigs shot).	▲ Numbers rising

Norfolk Island National Park

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Black rat Quarterly survey of (<i>Rattus rattus</i>) presence/absence. Trapping and baiting program provides an indication of presence/absence.		Predation by rodents is listed as a priority threatening process under the Norfolk Island Region Threatened Species Recovery Plan.	? Data deficient Have not assessed impacts on rat populations for 2013.
		More than 1000 bait stations set through the park and baited each month.	
		Trial rat eradication in a small defined area of the park to take place in 2013.	
Feral cat	Trapping program	Predation by feral cats is listed as a	? Data deficient
(Felis catus)	provides an indication of presence/absence. Gut analysis has determined prey composition (e.g. rats, native birds).	priority threatening process under the Norfolk Island Region Threatened Species Recovery Plan.	Unable to quantify population size. Uncertain whether rodent control
		Cat trapping occurs every second month.	program on park is
		Currently investigating the use of baits to substitute trapping.	impacting on feral cat numbers in the park.



Norfolk Island National Park continued

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Red guava (Psidium cattleianum)	Monitoring program recently commenced.	The conservation weeding program is on schedule with approximately one coupe being completed every month. The fourth cycle has commenced in two coupes.	? Data deficient Unable to determine trends at present.
		Invasion of habitat by exotic weeds is listed as a priority threatening process under the Norfolk Island Region Threatened Species Recovery Plan.	
African olive (Olea europaea africana)	Monitoring program recently commenced.	The conservation weeding program is on schedule with approximately one coupe being completed every month. The fourth cycle has commenced in two coupes.	? Data deficient Unable to determine trends at present.
		Invasion of habitat by exotic weeds is listed as a priority threatening process under the Norfolk Island Region Threatened Species Recovery Plan.	

Pulu Keeling National Park

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Yellow crazy ant (Anoplolepis gracilipes)	Island-wide survey in 2012. However, heavy rains affected reliability of survey results.	No specific control efforts.	? Data deficient
Coral berry (Rivina humilis)	Island-wide survey in 2012.	Control work (herbicide spraying) conducted in January 2013.	▼ Numbers falling Declining but will increase without continued control of seedlings.

Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park

Species	Monitoring	Actions	Trend
Buffel grass (Cenchrus ciliaris)	Global positioning system-based survey completed every three years.	Burn/spray control trials, hand-pulling in selected areas plus herbicide application where appropriate.	▲ Numbers rising
Feral cat	Track (six monthly)	Trapping plus rabbit reduction	▼ Numbers falling
(Felis catus)	and remote camera (ongoing) based monitoring.	to reduce food availability.	Decreasing in some areas and stable in others.
European wild rabbit (Oryctolagus cuniculus)	Warren-based monitoring.	Biological control, shooting and trapping.	▼ Numbers falling
European red fox (<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>)	Track (six monthly) and remote camera (ongoing) based monitoring.	Trapping plus rabbit reduction to reduce food availability.	▼ Numbers falling



KEY RESULT AREA 3 – JOINT MANAGEMENT AND WORKING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

PBS target – Five per cent increase in numbers of Indigenous staff and/or contractors directly or indirectly providing park services (jointly managed parks only)

The employment level of ongoing Indigenous staff in Parks Australia's three jointly managed national parks was essentially unchanged from 2011–12, with a slight increase in the actual number of ongoing Indigenous staff representing a small decrease in full-time equivalent terms. There is strong Indigenous representation in ongoing roles at Kakadu National Park and Booderee National Park; Indigenous participation at Uluru–Kata Tjura National Park has improved but remains below desirable levels.

National Park	At 30 Ju	ne 2013	At 30 June 2012		
	Number		Number	Full-time equivalent	
Booderee	14	11.2	11.2	11.2	
Kakadu	26	26.37	29	28.47	
Ulu <u>r</u> u–Kata Tju <u>t</u> a	7	5.9	6	5.37	
TOTAL	47	43.47	46.2	45.04	

Booderee reinstated a specified Indigenous trainee position to complement the career pathway training initiatives undertaken by the park. Specified trainee ranger positions were maintained at Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a.

The number of Indigenous staff engaged as intermittent and irregular employees at Kakadu went from 53 to 52. Two Indigenous staff were engaged as intermittent and irregular employees at Booderee's visitor centre.

The Kakadu Indigenous Ranger Program, funded by the Australian Government's Working on Country program, provided resources allowing Kakadu to host 11 community rangers in visitor services and natural and cultural heritage management programs in the park. Funding for the program was renewed for a further four years.

The externally funded Mutitjulu Community Rangers Program at Uluru–Kata Tjuta provided for engagement of 49 Anangu in flexible employment arrangements.

Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council was contracted to provide \$1.55 million in cleaning, road maintenance, entry station, horticultural and infrastructure maintenance services to Booderee.

In its 2011–12 annual report, Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council reported that it employed 14 full-time, four permanent part-time and up to 10 casual staff to deliver services to Booderee.

The Director and Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council finalised a new 10-year service contract for outsourcing of park services worth \$20 million. Five service-level agreements were negotiated as part of the service contract review process including new agreements for infrastructure maintenance and horticultural services.



KEY RESULT AREA 4 – USE AND APPRECIATION OF PROTECTED AREAS

PBS target – Visitor satisfaction levels greater than 95 per cent

Visitor surveys were undertaken at Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a and Kakadu national parks, with high overall satisfaction levels recorded from respondents (Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a recorded 94 per cent satisfaction and Kakadu was at 95 per cent).

KEY RESULT AREA 6 – BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

PBS target – Comcover risk benchmarking for the Director of National Parks ranks within the top five per cent of Commonwealth agencies

The Director has participated in the Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking Scheme since 2002–03. In 2012–13 the Director scored 8.0 out of a possible 10 compared to an average score of 6.8 for the 143 participating Australian Government agencies. For the past eight years, the Director has consistently scored above the average for all agencies.

PBS target – No major injuries to staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors relating to an undertaking of the Director of National Parks

Only one major injury was sustained by Parks Australia staff and contractors during 2012–13. Two park visitors died (a drowning in the waters surrounding Booderee National Park and a suspected drowning at Jim Jim Falls in Kakadu National Park). Three major injuries were sustained by visitors during 2012–13.

KEY RESULT AREA 7 – BIODIVERSITY KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

PBS target - Five per cent increase in website unique users and publications accessed

Parks Australia websites parksaustralia.gov.au and kakadu.com.au received a 12.6 per cent increase in visitation from the previous year. Our online community saw the biggest growth with traffic to the Parks Australia blog growing by 22 per cent and our Facebook community by 206 per cent. These social channels are proving to be invaluable in providing key tailored information and messages to interested and active parks and conservation audiences.



Appendix C: Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance

Section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* requires Australian Government organisations to include in their annual reports details of their contribution to ecologically sustainable development and their environmental performance. Section 516A also promotes development of a framework that integrates environmental, economic and social considerations and helps improve environmental performance and the ecologically sustainable development of Australian Government agencies.

The following is a summary of activities by the Director of National Parks in 2012–13 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 sustainable development (section 516A(6)(a))

In accord with the principles of integrating environmental, social and economic considerations and with the objective of ensuring the long-term sustainability of biodiversity, the Director:

- managed biodiversity in Commonwealth terrestrial reserves in accordance with management plans prepared under the EPBC Act, which explicitly recognises the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- managed the reserves in consultation with boards of management and advisory committees
- undertook monitoring and assessment programs for plants and animals within the reserves
- undertook compliance operations resulting in detection and fines against illegal activities in the reserves
- worked with traditional owners to implement traditional management and use of resources
- established criteria for preparing tourism master plans which provide for safe and memorable visitor experiences, while improving benefits to local communities and ensuring the environmental values of the reserves were not affected.

The principles of ecologically sustainable development, especially by employing or promoting the use of the precautionary principle, were followed by the Director in:

- making decisions that comply with the EPBC Act (sections 324 to 390A) and in accordance with decision-making and environmental impact assessment procedures for works and new developments in Commonwealth reserves
- adapting management approaches to take account of the Parks Australia Climate Change Strategy and climate change strategies in place in each Commonwealth terrestrial reserve.



The Director worked in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development to promote conservation of the environment for the benefit of future generations by:

- promoting enjoyment and understanding of protected areas and their conservation objectives as set out in management plans for each reserve
- working with traditional owners to ensure traditional knowledge about management and use of the land is incorporated into park management activities and that opportunities are created for young Indigenous people to learn about and contribute to park management.

For a summary of activities undertaken in 2012–13 refer to Chapter 4 of this annual report under 'KRA 3—Joint management and working with Indigenous communities' and 'KRA 4—Use and appreciation of protected areas'.

The following activities accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development by ensuring that conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity is a fundamental consideration in decision-making:

- Commonwealth reserves are managed in accordance with management plans established under the EPBC Act and with the IUCN protected area categories which have as their primary purpose the long-term conservation of nature.
- Management plans set out clear decision-making and environmental assessment procedures for works and new proposals in Commonwealth reserves to ensure the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.

For a summary of activities undertaken in 2012–13 refer to Chapter 4 of this annual report under 'KRA 1—Natural heritage management'.

The following activities accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development by aiming to improve valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms:

- Tour-operator workshops and tour-guide accreditation aim to improve the quality and consistency of visitor experiences.
- Entry and park-use fees at heavily visited reserves ensure visitors contribute to the cost of park management.

2. How the outcomes specified in the relevant Appropriations Act contribute to ecologically sustainable development (section 516A(6)(b))

The Director of National Parks' key outcome as identified in the 2012–13 Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities Portfolio Budget Statements is:

Conservation and appreciation of Commonwealth reserves through the provision of safe visitor access, the control of invasive species and working with stakeholders and neighbours.

The Portfolio Budget Statements describe this outcome as follows:

The conservation and appreciation of natural and cultural values of Commonwealth reserves through best practice management of nationally significant assets, working with traditional owners and stakeholders, providing appropriate recreation and tourism and improving understanding of the values of reserves.

Activities undertaken during 2012–13 to achieve this outcome are described in Chapter 4 of this annual report.



3. Effect of the organisation's activities on the environment (section 516A(6)(c))

The Director is responsible for managing Australia's Commonwealth reserves. Three of these reserves are managed jointly with their Indigenous owners.

Potential large-scale threats to the reserves are managed by statutory protective mechanisms and decision-making and assessment processes set out in management plans. The Director manages commercial activities (such as tourism and camping) within reserves through the EPBC Act and the EPBC Regulations and in accordance with the management plan for each reserve.

4. Measures being taken by the organisation to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment (section 516A(6)(d))

The Director maintains a strong commitment to continuous improvement in environmental performance. The Director conducts environmental audits of operations to maximise efficient use of resources, reduce waste, and build environmental awareness among its employees and volunteers.

Each reserve management plan identifies actions to reduce the ecological impact of the reserve's operations. Office paper, toner cartridges and organic waste are recycled and office machines (photocopiers and printers) are automatically programmed to save power. Where possible, printers are programmed to produce duplex (double-sided) documents to reduce paper use.

In 2012–13 all Parks Australia parks and reserves had climate change strategies in place and continued to implement them.

For a summary of activities undertaken in 2012–13 refer to Chapter 4 of this annual report under 'KRA 6—Business management'.

5. Mechanisms for reviewing and increasing the effectiveness of these measures (section 516A(6)(e))

In accordance with the Australian Government's policy on energy efficiency in government operations, the Director reports on annual energy performance in both the department's annual report and in this report. Public reporting provides a number of benefits to the Director including:

- increasing awareness of energy and greenhouse issues
- measuring relative performance
- providing a benchmarking tool
- tracking changes over time
- identifying high-intensity areas
- encouraging improvement through transparency.

A summary of environmental performance related to greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption is provided in tables C1 and C2, for paper consumption in table C3 and for water consumption in table C4.



Environmental performance

The environmental performance of Parks Australia's metropolitan (Canberra, Darwin and Hobart) office-based staff is included in the department's environmental performance report. This report covers Parks Australia's operations in the following locations:

- Kakadu National Park
- Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park
- Territory of Christmas Island (Christmas Island National Park)
- Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands (Pulu Keeling National Park)
- Jervis Bay Territory (Booderee National Park)
- Territory of Norfolk Island
- Australian National Botanic Gardens.

Operational requirements at each site, such as electricity, transport, developing new infrastructure and managing waste, contribute to the carbon footprint. Some properties have specialised needs—for example the Gardens maintains climate-controlled conditions in many of its glasshouses. The remote location of some reserves limits opportunities to reduce their environmental impact.

Reserve management activities such as revegetation projects and fire and pest management may also have implications for the carbon cycle. Conserving biodiversity is a primary objective for all reserves and careful management of the use of fire and vegetation can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, reliable indicators are not yet available to measure the contribution that Parks Australia's biodiversity management activities make to cutting emissions.

Environmental performance—energy use

Management plans and climate change strategies are in place or in preparation for all Parks Australia sites to ensure environmental, economic and social objectives and considerations are outlined and integrated, which include:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions from park operational activities (such as energy use, transport and waste management) to 10 per cent below 2007–08 levels by mid-2015
- developing environmental management plans identifying actions to reduce the carbon footprint of park operations and the level of carbon emission reductions associated with each mitigation action
- changing existing electric hot water systems to solar hot water, instantaneous gas or heat pumps as replacement becomes necessary
- installing energy-efficient light fixtures and light-controlling devices (such as motion sensors) in all park facilities
- replacing older vehicles with more efficient vehicles.



Despite a slight increase in total energy consumption due to climatic conditions, a slight decrease in total greenhouse emissions from energy consumption by parks and reserves was recorded in 2012–13 compared with the average over the past three years. This was represented in an 1.7 per cent reduction in the volume of carbon dioxide emissions from stationary sources compared to the average over the past three years and a 14.8 per cent reduction for transport sources for the same period (tables C1 and C2).

Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks continue to rely primarily on diesel power generation as they are not on an electricity grid. However, at Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a, the Mu<u>t</u>itjulu powerhouse has recently been upgraded with a switchboard and datalogger system that enables the generators to switch automatically depending on the load required by the community. The switching will ensure generators are running at optimal capacity depending on load needs. Additionally, the dataloggers enable the park to monitor production demands, fuel use and other systems that will enable more informed decisions relating to economical and efficient use of the generators.

The Gardens is constrained in reducing energy consumption due to its business requirements for maintaining constant plant and herbarium conditions. However, the Gardens continues to aim for a 10 per cent offset in its energy usage. In 2012–13 it purchased 112 633 kilowatt hours of GreenPower (approximately 10 per cent of purchased electricity).

Parks and reserves continue to implement and undertake a range of actions to improve energy use. While these actions may not result in a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions they do reflect the efforts being made to improve operations, including those in remote areas where there are limited opportunities for large-impact changes. Actions and improvements include:

- ongoing implementation of a capital works program at Booderee National Park to convert existing electric hot water storage systems in campgrounds to continuous-flow gas hot water; a further section was converted in 2012–13, with one section remaining to be converted
- all amenity blocks at Booderee being fitted with the latest technology low-energy lighting and the closure of some blocks during winter due to low visitation, significantly reducing energy consumption
- dispersal of fertiliser for the Christmas Island forest rehabilitation program continuing to be done by hand instead of using the mechanical fertiliser, reducing diesel fuel use
- replacement survey boat with more fuel-efficient engines being purchased for Pulu Keeling National Park.

Parks staff continue to make a conscious effort to minimise business-related travel, while recognising that face-to-face contact and visits to remote locations are sometimes necessary, particularly for the three parks that are managed jointly with their Indigenous owners. Parks Australia increasingly uses alternatives to air travel such as tele and videoconferencing.



Table C1: Director of National Parks terrestrial reserves greenhouse gas emissions 2009–13 (stationary energy use)

	2009–10 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	2010–11 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	2011–12 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	Annual average 2009–12	2012–13 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	1233.3	1262.1	1287.3	1260.9	1060.5	-15.9
Booderee National Park	178.1	159.2	146.3	161.2	153.1	-5.0
Christmas Island National Park	48.8	47.7	65.6	54.0	76.7	41.9
Kakadu National Park	1263.8	1171.3	903.7	1112.9	1147.6	3.1
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	5.3	3.3	3.1	3.9	3.4	-14.0
Pulu Keeling National Park	14.8	13	10.1	12.6	11.9	-5.7
Ulu <u>r</u> u–Kata Tju <u>t</u> a National Park	1265.3	1165.1	1265.8	1232.1	1320.5	7.2
Total	4009.4	3821.7	3681.9	3837.7	3773.6	-1.7

Table C2: Director of National Parks terrestrial reserves greenhouse gas emissions 2009–13 (transport energy use)

	2009–10 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	2010–11 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	2011–12 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	Annual average 2009–12	2012–13 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	25.0	23.3	32.4	26.9	31.9	18.5
Booderee National Park	73.1	68.5	63.5	68.4	66.7	-2.5
Christmas Island National Park	82.9	83.5	80.4	82.3	89.0	8.2
Kakadu National Park	761.3	571.9	520.4	617.9	507.2	-17.9
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	17.5	12.8	10.8	13.7	12.1	-11.9
Pulu Keeling National Park	3.4	2.8	4.3	3.5	5.3	52.0
Uluṟu–Kata Tjuṯa National Park	171.7	133.8	138.1	147.9	106.3	-28.1
Total	1134.9	896.6	850.0	960.5	818.5	-14.8



Environmental performance—waste

Obtaining accurate measurements of greenhouse emissions from waste remains challenging and estimates were not available in 2012–13 for all reserves.

The Director adopts environmental best-practice principles for resource use and management of waste products. Management plans are in place or in preparation for all sites including provisions to minimise waste production across park operations and may include:

- establishing guidelines to formalise waste-reduction strategies into standard park practices (such as reducing consumption, duplex printing, recycling)
- sourcing consumable items such as office paper from renewable sources
- where possible, providing recycling facilities to visitors or promoting 'rubbish-bin free' sites that encourage the public to take their waste home for recycling
- for island sites such as Norfolk Island, arranging for mainland recycling of consumables such as used printer cartridges.

Ongoing efforts are focused on providing web-based visitor and interpretative materials, which will further reduce printing and paper consumption. The number of reams of paper purchased increased by 12.3 per cent in 2012–13 compared with the average number of reams purchased over the previous three years, representing an average of 4.34 reams of paper per employee (excluding metropolitan office-based staff), well below the 10 reams per person target set for the Australian Public Service. These increases reflect the bulk purchasing patterns of remote parks. Several reserves use 100 per cent post-consumer recycled paper for printing. Over time, technology upgrades at all locations will provide more opportunities to print double-sided, thereby reducing paper wastage further.

Access to regional recycling facilities is gradually improving for more remote locations such as Kakadu and Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a national parks and external territories. Basic recycling facilities are available on Norfolk Island and office paper is being sourced from renewable sources when available. Kakadu National Park is participating in a regional recycling and resource recovery program, and will continue its recycling programs in and around offices for paper, glass and aluminium. Ulu<u>r</u>u–Kata Tju<u>t</u>a National Park is operating the Mu<u>t</u>itjulu waste site facility in line with the Waste Management Guidelines for Small Communities in the Northern Territory—Working Towards Best Practice 2009 and has engaged the services of an appropriate provider to manage the facility. Recycling facilities continue to be available in all Australian National Botanic Gardens offices and on-site facilities, including composting of organic kitchen waste.

The Gardens is a rubbish-bin-free site for the public and they are encouraged to take home their waste for recycling. In 2012–13 approximately 114 cubic metres of plant material was recycled as mulch and used on site.



Table C3: Director of National Parks terrestrial reserves paper consumption 2009–13 (reams of paper)

	Reams of paper 2009–10	Reams of paper 2010–11	Reams of paper 2011–12	Average reams of paper 2009–12	Reams of paper 2012–13	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	300	320	282	300.7	103	-65.7
Booderee National Park	60	45	56	53.7	100	86.3
Christmas Island National Park	50	50	50	50.0	50	0.0
Kakadu National Park	378	227	366	323.7	388	19.9
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	45	40	37	40.7	30	-26.2
Pulu Keeling National Park	3	4	4	3.7	4	9.1
Ulu <u>r</u> u–Kata Tju <u>t</u> a National Park	82	140	66	96.0	300	212.5
Total	918	826	861	868.3	975	12.3

Environmental performance—water

Protecting water quality is a high priority for Parks Australia. Management plans are in place or in preparation for all sites that include provisions designed to ensure water use is minimised and water quality maintained. These plans may include:

- auditing water use in Commonwealth reserves and implementing actions to provide efficiencies and improvements
- implementing water-saving initiatives such as rainwater harvesting, water recycling, the use of water-saving devices and upgrading water-reticulation infrastructure
- providing information to visitors on how to protect water quality.

The quality of surface water, groundwater and water holes in reserves is monitored regularly and activities in each reserve must not interrupt the natural flow of water. The capacity to measure water consumption at each reserve is improving but consistent data are not yet available.

An 8.1 per cent increase in water use recorded across the reserves in 2012–13 reflects a significant increase at the Australian National Botanic Gardens due to the water pump which extracts non-potable water from Lake Burley-Griffin being unavailable for two summer months and a new swimming pool for the Mutitjulu community.

Since 2011 the Gardens has been extracting non-potable water from Lake Burley Griffin for irrigation requirements. In addition, the Gardens continues to use water-saving initiatives such as soil sensors, water-saving irrigation components and priority watering, recycling of water from catchment ponds and use of mulch to reduce evaporation. Norfolk Island National Park operates entirely on harvested rainwater; new tanks with a larger capacity have been installed for the office and the newly constructed information centre. Uluru–Kata Tjuta



National Park has commenced a process to develop and implement a new and improved water-management system for the Mutitjulu community and the park headquarters precinct. This will ensure the quality of drinking water is acceptable and improved data collection to enable the park to better monitor usage.

Parks and reserves continue to upgrade water infrastructure and institute savings where possible. Activities range from upgraded water reticulation infrastructure at Cave Beach in Booderee National Park to modified watering regimes at the Christmas Island forest rehabilitation program nursery.

	2009–10 (kL)	2010–11 (kL)	2011–12 (kL)	Average (kL) 2009–12	2012–13 (kL)	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	172 431	122 178	128 368	140 992	163 833	16.2
Booderee National Park	10 680	10 525	8480	9895	6452	-34.8
Christmas Island National Park	13 242	8148	9473	10 288	9313	-9.5
Kakadu National Park	82 452	40 923	53 507	58 961	55 529	-5.8
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden ^(a)	_	_	_	-	-	-
Pulu Keeling National Park	54	18	14	29	41	43.0
Ulu <u>r</u> u–Kata Tju <u>t</u> a National Park	40 995	50 430	74 782	55 402	62 756	13.3
Total	319 854	232 222	274 624	275 567	297 924	8.1

Table C4: Director of National Parks terrestrial reserves: water consumption 2009–13

(a) Norfolk Island operates entirely on harvested rainwater.



Appendix D: Compliance index

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with the *Commonwealth Authorities* (Annual Reporting) Orders 2011.

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