



Australian Government
Director of National Parks

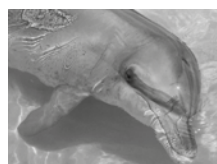
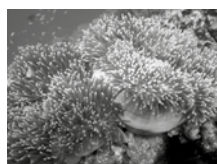
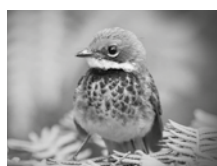


Director of National Parks

Annual Report 2020–21



Australian Government
Director of National Parks



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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and country

We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to their elders both past and present.

Photo credits

Cover: Uluru Sunrise – Parks Australia

Christmas Island Red Crab – Wondrous World Images

Pink Waratah – Parks Australia

Pulu Keeling National Park Beach Scape – Parks Australia

Rufous Fantail – Maree Clout

Murrays Beach – Parks Australia

Father and Daughter – Parks Australia

Family at Ubirr – Parks Australia

Christmas Island Corals – Brendan Tiernan

Norfolk Island Pine – Jitze Couperas

Bottlenose Dolphin – Department of the Environment and Energy

Piti with Mangata (Desert Quandong) – Parks Australia

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Letter of transmittal



Australian Government
Director of National Parks

The Hon Sussan Ley MP
Minister for the Environment
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

As the accountable authority I am pleased to present the annual report on the activities of the Director of National Parks for the reporting period ending 30 June 2021 in accordance with section 46(1) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The Director of National Parks Annual Report 2020–21 has been prepared in accordance with the PGPA Act and includes the:

- Annual financial statements for the Australian National Parks Fund, including the matters required by the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015.
- Matters required by the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 for the reporting period.
- Matters required by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

In accordance with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework, as the accountable authority for the Director of National Parks I have taken all reasonable measures to prevent, detect and deal with fraud. I am satisfied that fraud risk assessments and implemented fraud control plans have been prepared; appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection procedures and processes are in place that meet the specific needs of this entity; and that all reasonable measures to minimise the incidence of fraud and to investigate and recover the proceeds of fraud against have been taken.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jody Swirepik'.

Jody Swirepik
Director of National Parks

5 October 2021

The Director of National Parks

The Director of National Parks is responsible for the conservation and management of the Commonwealth Government's terrestrial and marine protected areas established under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

At 30 June 2021, the area of responsibility included seven terrestrial reserves¹ (six national parks and the Australian National Botanic Gardens) and 58 Australian Marine Parks.

Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta, are leased to the Director by their Traditional Owners. These parks are jointly managed by the Director and a Board of Management and are generously made available by their Traditional Owners to visitors and tour operators to enjoy and appreciate.

The location of all Commonwealth parks and gardens is shown in Figure 1, with further details for each place available in Appendix A.

The Director does not directly employ staff but is supported by staff who are Australian Public Service employees of Parks Australia, a division of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

What we do

The Director's purpose is to protect, conserve and enhance the values of Commonwealth parks and gardens for the use and well-being of all Australians. Nested under this purpose are three performance criteria that support the purpose.

- Sustainable use and enjoyment of Commonwealth parks and gardens by the Australian and international community.
- Opportunities and threats to natural and cultural values are effectively managed for all Australians.
- Partnerships with Traditional Owners and/or other stakeholders enhance the management of Commonwealth parks and gardens for all Australians.

The four 'ways of working' are the ways by which these goals are achieved.

- **Evidence based management** – science, research and traditional knowledge are used to make management decisions.
- **Ecologically sustainable use** – Parks Australia acts to enhance Australia's social and economic well-being through ecologically sustainable use of our places, with awareness of our own environmental footprint.
- **Partnerships and co-investments** – partnerships and working together with our stakeholders to support delivery of innovative programmes that achieve our goals.
- **Responsive organisation** – Parks Australia is an efficient and effective agency with a proud and motivated workforce, supported by efficient business systems.

¹ The Director is responsible for the administration of areas referred to as 'Commonwealth reserves' in the EPBC Act. We acknowledge that this terminology may cause distress to some Indigenous people and have changed these references to 'Commonwealth parks and gardens' in this report when not referring to the legislative responsibilities of the Director.

Our values and approach

As Australian Public Service employees, Parks Australia employees uphold the values of the service. As conservation area managers we strive for an approach that is:

- **Knowledge-based** – we use evidence about our conservation assets and management performance to make decisions about future management activities and investments.
- **Transparent** – we use clear criteria to determine our priorities and we communicate and explain our decisions.
- **Accountable** – we clearly articulate what we seek to achieve through management interventions and measure our progress towards set outcomes.
- **Collaborative** – we seek and support genuine partnerships to deliver conservation and tourism outcomes.
- **Adaptive** – we incorporate lessons and performance information into management and business planning.
- **Innovative** – we create the space for devising creative solutions and promote exposure of our staff to diverse experiences in conservation area management.

Brief history of our parks and gardens

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1977 Uluru (Ayers Rock-Mount Olga) National Park is declared. Name changed to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in 1993. | 2007 South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network is declared comprising fourteen individual reserves. |
| 1979 Kakadu National Park is declared. | 2012 Four Commonwealth Marine Reserves networks, together comprising 43 marine reserves, and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve are first declared. These reserves incorporated 12 pre-existing marine reserves. |
| 1980 Christmas Island National Park is declared. | 2013 Management plan for 14 marine reserves in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network commenced. |
| 1982 Lihou Reef National Nature Reserve and Coringa-Herald National Nature Reserve are declared, the first of 12 individual marine reserves to be declared in Commonwealth waters between 1982 and 2000. | 2017 Commonwealth Marine Reserves are renamed Australian Marine Parks. |
| 1986 Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden is declared. | 2018 Management plans commence for 43 Australian Marine Parks across four networks (the Temperate East, South-west, North-west and North Networks), and the Coral Sea Marine Park. For the first time, management plans are in place for the 58 Australian Marine Parks. |
| 1991 Australian National Botanic Gardens is declared. | |
| 1992 Jervis Bay National Park is declared. Name changed to Booderee National Park in 1995. | |
| 1995 Pulu Keeling National Park is declared. | |
| 2002 Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserves is declared. | |

Figure 1: Location of Commonwealth parks and gardens that are the responsibility of the Director of National Parks in 2020–21

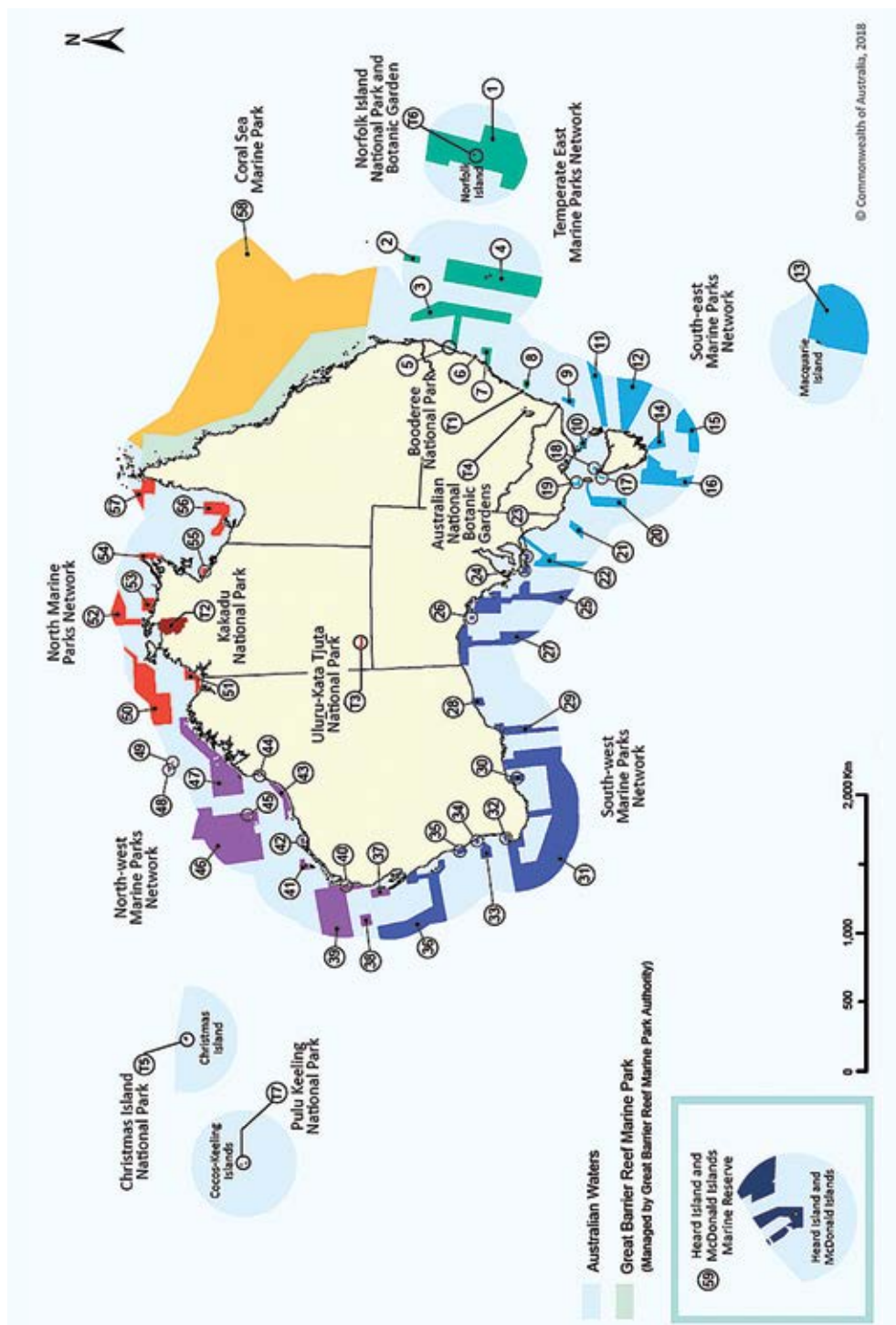


Table 1: Key to the location of the Commonwealth parks and gardens

Reserve Name	Map Label	Reserve Name	Map Label
Terrestrial parks		Murat	26
Booderee National Park	T1	Great Australian Bight	27
Kakadu National Park	T2	Twilight	28
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	T3	Eastern Recherche	29
Australian National Botanic Gardens	T4	Bremer	30
Christmas Island National Park	T5	South-west Corner	31
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	T6	Two Rocks	32
Pulu Keeling National Park	T7	Geographe	33
Temperate East Marine Parks Network		Perth Canyon	34
Norfolk	1	Jurien	35
Gifford	2	Abrolhos	36
Central Eastern	3	North-west Marine Parks Network	
Lord Howe	4	Shark Bay	37
Solitary Islands	5	Carnarvon Canyon	38
Cod Grounds	6	Gascoyne	39
Hunter	7	Ningaloo	40
Jervis	8	Montebello	41
South-east Marine Parks Network		Dampier	42
East Gippsland	9	Eighty Mile Beach	43
Beagle	10	Roebuck	44
Flinders	11	Mermaid Reef	45
Freycinet	12	Argo-Rowley Terrace	46
Macquarie Island	13	Kimberley	47
Huon	14	Ashmore Reef	48
South Tasman Rise	15	Cartier Island	49
Tasman Fracture	16	North Marine Parks Network	
Zeehan	17	Joseph Bonaparte Gulf	50
Boags	18	Oceanic Shoals	51
Apollo	19	Arafura	52
Franklin	20	Limmen	53
Nelson	21	Arnhem	54
Murray	22	West Cape York	55
South-west Marine Parks Network		Gulf of Carpentaria	56
Southern Kangaroo Island	23	Wessel	57
Western Kangaroo Island	24	Coral Sea Marine Park	58
Western Eyre	25	Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve	59



Australian Marine Parks – Coral – Yellow feather star (Image: Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment)

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Director's message 1

1

Director's message

As the Acting Director of National Parks, I am proud to present the collective achievements of Parks Australia, our joint management Boards and our valued partners for 2020–21 in this annual report.



The report presents our results and achievements directly against the strategies and performance indicators set out in the *Director of National Parks Corporate Plan 2020–2021*. The corporate plan is the primary planning tool that guides Parks Australia's people and resources to deliver our main performance criteria:

- Sustainable use and enjoyment of Commonwealth parks and gardens by the Australian and international community.
- Opportunities and threats to natural and cultural values are effectively managed for all Australians.
- Partnerships with Traditional Owners and/or other stakeholders enhance the management of Commonwealth parks and gardens for all Australians.

The ongoing pandemic continues to have implications for our operations but it has not diminished our commitment to the conservation of the natural and cultural values in our protected areas and providing world-class visitor experiences.

Amongst many other things, our achievements include developing new ways to improve our understanding of Australian Marine Park values through the establishment of the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework, forging bushfire recovery partnerships, and continuing the renewal and replacement of infrastructure across our national parks and gardens.

Importantly, we've been taking steps to rebuild our partnerships with the Traditional Owners of our jointly managed national parks, which is critical to delivering our work with a shared vision.

We've harnessed technology and promoted two-way science that brings Indigenous knowledge and western science together to manage country, and assisted with the historic handover of Jabiru township in Kakadu to Mirarr Traditional Owners.

Our people and our partners have been impressive in their ability to pivot and adapt work programs during this period, and I am proud of the many accomplishments during these challenging times.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J Swirepik". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Jody Swirepik
Acting Director of National Parks



Rock art, Kakadu National Park (Image: Parks Australia)





Overview 2

Our Minister

The Hon Sussan Ley MP is the Minister for the Environment (the Minister) with responsibility for the Director of National Parks as set out under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

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. The corporation has a single Director, the person appointed to the office named the Director of National Parks. The current acting office holder is Jody Swirepik.

The Director is assisted by staff employed by Parks Australia, a division of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

The Director is responsible under Divisions 4 and 5 of Part 15 of the EPBC Act for the administration, management and control of 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, and include:

- Administering, managing and controlling Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones.
- Protecting, conserving and managing biodiversity and heritage in Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones.
- Contributing to the protection, conservation and management of biodiversity and heritage in areas outside Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones.
- Cooperating with any country in matters relating to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves in that country.
- Providing, and assisting in the provision of, training in knowledge and skills relevant to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves.
- Carrying out alone or in co-operation with other institutions and persons, and arranging for any other institution or person to carry out, research and investigations relevant to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves.
- Making recommendations to the Minister in relation to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves.
- Administering the Australian National Parks Fund.

The jointly managed parks, Uluru-Kata Tjuta, Kakadu and Booderee, are leased to the Director by their Traditional Owners and managed by the Director in conjunction with a Board of Management established under the EPBC Act. The majority of members on all three Boards are Indigenous persons nominated by the Traditional Owners. See Chapter 3 for details of our current Boards.

The Director of National Parks has delegated all powers and functions under the EPBC Act in relation to the Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) Reserve to the Director of the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD), reflecting the AAD's continuing role and responsibilities for the management and administration of HIMI as an External Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Non-statutory functions

The Minister and the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (the department) have delegated to the Director functions and powers for programs that complement the Director's statutory functions. Under these delegations 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 these resources in Commonwealth areas. The outputs of these non-statutory functions are reported in the department's annual report.

Non-financial performance overview

2020–21 is the first year of reporting using the new performance reporting framework. Some of the targets and measures follow on from previous years and year-on-year data is presented in Chapter 4 for comparison, while other measures are new. We expect that the targets and measures will mature over time and we will review in 2021–22 to ensure they enable a practical and cost-effective measure of progress towards our purpose and three criterion. As for previous years, our ways of working guided how we do business.

Our 2020–21 contribution to the purpose is presented in the annual performance statement at Chapter 4 of this report. Non-financial performance is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of results against the measures by performance criterion

Performance Criterion 1: Sustainable use and enjoyment of Commonwealth parks and gardens by the Australian and international community		
Target 1.1: Number of visitors is within 10 per cent of target total visitor numbers*	Achieved	Page 31
Target 1.2: Maintain or improve visitor satisfaction*	Partially achieved	Page 33
Target 1.3: Maintain or increase number of virtual visitors*	Achieved	Page 34
Target 1.4: 95 per cent of authorisations processed within target timeframe	Partially achieved	Page 35
Target 1.5: 100 per cent of non-compliance reports have an initial assessment within target timeframe	Achieved	Page 36
Target 1.6: Maintain or increase the economic contribution made to local economies	Achieved	Page 37
Target 1.7: Maintain or increase the financial benefit to Traditional Owners through lease arrangements and other avenues in jointly managed parks*	Achieved	Page 38
Target 1.8: Maintain or increase number of peer reviewed publications resulting from research in Commonwealth parks*	Achieved	Page 39
Performance Criterion 2: Opportunities and threats to natural and cultural values are effectively managed for all Australians		
Target 2.1: Maintain or improve the condition of priority natural values in Commonwealth parks and gardens	New baseline	Page 44
Target 2.2: Maintain or improve the condition of priority cultural values in Commonwealth parks	Partially achieved	Page 47
Target 2.3: Review and define priority natural and cultural values for all Commonwealth parks and gardens, by 2023	Partially achieved	Page 49
Performance Criterion 3: Partnerships with Traditional Owners and/or other stakeholders enhance the management of Commonwealth parks and gardens for all Australians		
Target 3.1: Maintain or improve key stakeholder and partner satisfaction*	Partially achieved	Page 57
Target 3.2: Resources delivered through partnerships meet or exceed target level*	Achieved	Page 59
Target 3.3: Maintain or increase the number of people who identify as members of a local or Indigenous community who are employed directly or indirectly*	New baseline	Page 60

*Continuing full or partial target from 2019–20 – year on year data available for comparison

Financial overview

The 2020–21 financial year again saw the impacts of COVID-19 resulting in lower visitor numbers and periods of park closures in some parks. This loss in revenue was predominately mitigated through the stimulus funding provided by the Australian Government; however, the Director still required approval from the Minister for Finance to revise the Portfolio Budget Statements operating loss to \$15.437 million. The Director recorded an operating loss of \$13.461 million in 2020–21.

The Director and Parks Australia has responsibility to deliver the following new policy proposal (NPP) funding investments:

- \$233 million investment in infrastructure updates across the estates
- \$216 million to grow tourism in Kakadu National Park
- \$14.8 million Ghost Nets Initiative
- \$28.3 million, with \$7.8 million ongoing expanding and enhancing management of Australia's Marine Parks
- \$39.9 million to reinforce Australia's position as a world leader in marine park management.

Table 3 presents an overview of income and expenses information for the Director. Audited financial statements for the year can be found in Chapter 6 of this report.

Table 4 presents a five-year financial overview for all terrestrial and marine parks and gardens, while Table 5 provides a financial overview for individual terrestrial parks and gardens. Information is also presented on page 11 that provides a summary of expenditure for the management of Australian Marine Parks for 2020–21.

Explanations on major variances against the Portfolio Budget Statements are identified in the notes to the financial statements (Chapter 6) and provided in line with the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) standard *AASB 1055*.

During 2020–21 no notifications of significant non-compliance were reported to the Minister, or to the Minister for Finance.

An Entity Resourcing Statement was introduced to the Portfolio Budget Statement for Australian Government departments in 2008–09 to provide information about the various funding sources corporate Commonwealth entities draw upon during the year. The Director of National Parks' Entity Resourcing Statement is provided at Appendix B that reconciles to cash reserves in the financial statements for the Director.

Table 3: Overview of financial results 2020–21

		2020 Actuals \$000s	2021 Actuals \$000s	2021 Budget \$000s	2021 Variance \$000s
Jointly managed parks ¹	Income	41,264	44,099	41,329	2,770
	Expenses	(49,094)	(51,175)	(46,218)	(4,957)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(7,830)	(7,076)	(4,889)	(2,187)
Other parks and reserves ²	Income	29,299	33,874	34,649	(775)
	Expenses	(31,819)	(32,619)	(35,694)	3,075
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(2,520)	1,255	(1,045)	2,300
Total for parks and reserves	Income	70,563	77,973	75,978	1,995
	Expenses	(80,913)	(83,794)	(81,912)	(1,882)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(10,350)	(5,821)	(5,934)	113
Governance, parks services and executive ³	Income	8,838	9,459	8,116	1,343
	Expenses	(19,386)	(17,099)	(17,619)	520
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(10,548)	(7,640)	(9,503)	1863
Total for Director of National Parks	Income	79,401	87,432	84,094	3,338
	Expenses	(100,299)	(100,893)	(99,531)	(1,362)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(20,898)	(13,461)	(15,437)	1,976

1 Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks.

2 Includes terrestrial and marine parks and gardens.

3 Governance, parks services and executive includes administration, finance, legal, insurance, planning, interest income and bank charges.

Table 4: Five-year financial summary – terrestrial and marine parks and gardens (\$ millions)

	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Operations					
Total operating expenditure	66.77	72.38	77.28	80.91	83.79
Total operating revenue ¹	77.60	67.28	64.11	70.56	77.97
Financial position					
Current assets	51.16	58.15	60.81	51.68	68.35
Non-current assets	233.86	224.50	216.25	257.70	260.36
Current liabilities	8.76	17.17	24.53	19.34	26.20
Non-current liabilities	9.33	4.82	5.42	45.94	46.47
Total equity	266.93	260.65	247.11	244.10	256.04

1 Includes revenue from all sources including grants from the Department and externally raised revenue.

Table 5: Overview of individual terrestrial parks and gardens in 2020–21

	Operating cost \$000s	Capital expenditure \$000s ¹	External revenue \$000s ²	Payment to Traditional Owners \$000s
Jointly managed national parks				
Booderee National Park	8,150	2,012	1,332	386
Kakadu National Park	23,423	4,577	4,962	1,207
Uluru-Kata Tjuṯa National Park	14,849	5,333	5,615	1,870
Other Commonwealth terrestrial parks and gardens				
Australian National Botanic Gardens	7,899	2,168	1,257	
Christmas Island National Park	4,208	717	1,211	
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	1,618	1,560	282	
Pulu Keeling National Park	487	12	18	

1 Includes assets recognised for the first time as part of the asset revaluation process.

2 External revenue represents total revenue from the income statement, less grants from portfolio agency and assets recognised for the first time.

Overview of marine parks in 2020–21

The marine park management areas of the Marine and Island Parks Branch spent \$12.4 million during 2020–21 on:

- Effective management of 58 Australian Marine Parks:
 - Expanded compliance and enforcement activities
 - Science to support evidence-based and adaptive management
 - Engagement of Indigenous people in management
 - Assessing and issuing authorisations for proposed activities in marine parks.
- Effective engagement with 6 Australian Marine Park Advisory Committees to ensure that interested stakeholders have ongoing input into the management of the parks.
- Delivery of the Our Marine Park Grants program.





Organisational structure

3

About us

Director of National Parks

Jody Swirepik

Acting Director of National Parks



Prior to her appointment as acting Director of National Parks, Jody was appointed as the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder in February 2018. In her role as the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, Jody was responsible for the management of around \$4 billion of water licences managed in the public interest to restore the environmental health of rivers in the basin whilst having regard to Indigenous Cultural values. This was an operational role, working with agencies and communities to achieve on-ground outcomes at a large spatial scale (across 25,000 kms of rivers).

Jody spent 3 years with the Clean Energy Regulator working on carbon farming and emissions reduction (reverse auctions), National emissions reporting, and liability acquittal for Australia's Renewable Energy Target. Jody has over 25 years of experience in the water sector where she has been responsible for driving a range of initiatives at the state and federal level including state water reforms, The Living Murray and parts of the Basin Plan. In her earlier career, Jody worked for NSW EPA for a decade and for the ACT Government in planning, policy and regulatory roles.

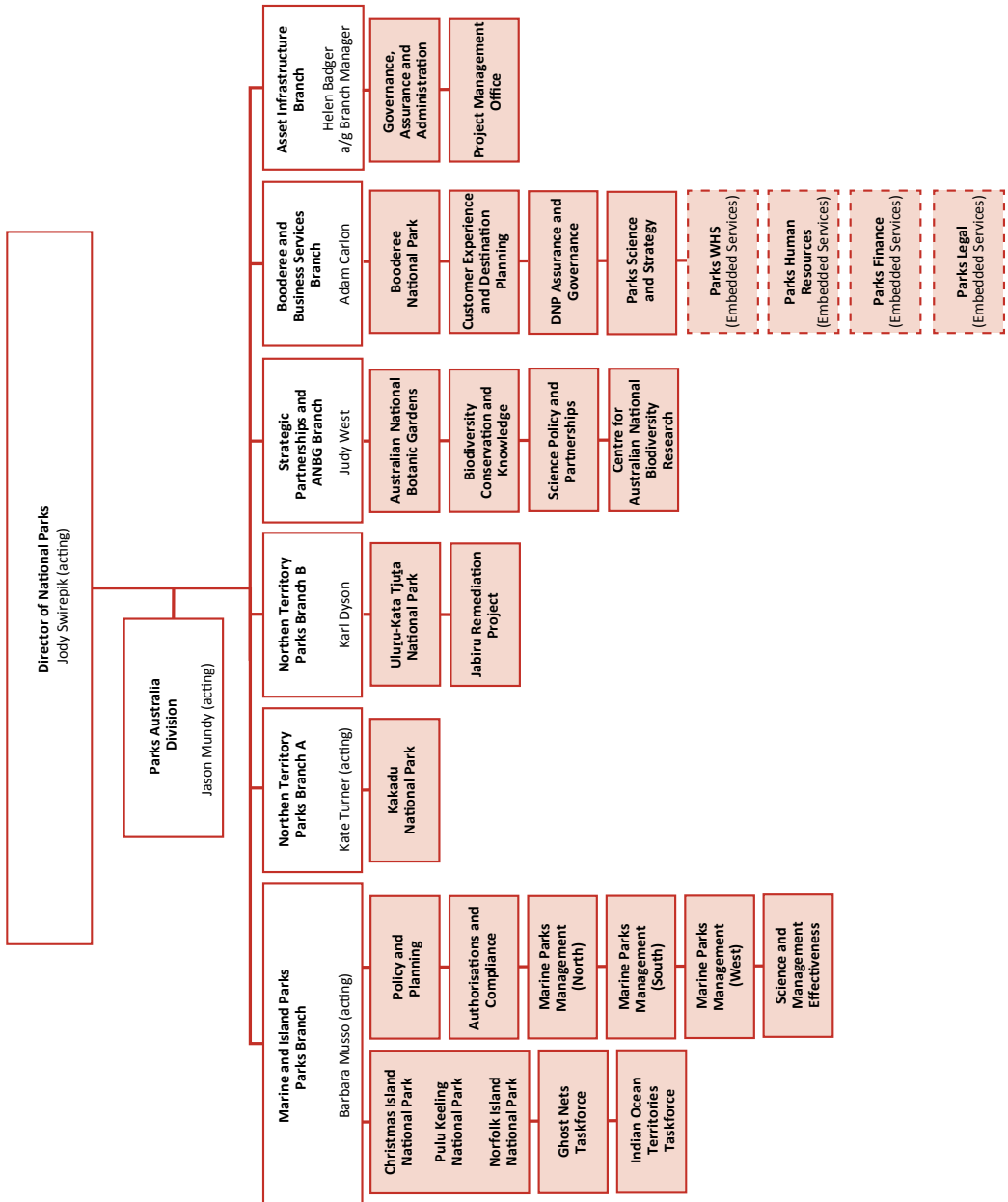
The Director is assisted by staff of Parks Australia, a division of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. Figure 2 shows the Parks Australia organisation structure. The Director of National Parks is responsible for managing the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve, but the Director has delegated all powers and functions under the EPBC Act for the reserve to the Director of the Australian Antarctic Division.

Senior Executive Parks Australia Staff

Parks Australia operates under a six-branch structure, with the Executive team comprising the Director of National Parks, a First Assistant Secretary and five Assistant Secretaries and an acting Branch Manager.

At 30 June 2021 these were Mr Jason Mundy, Mr Karl Dyason, Mr Adam Carlon, Dr Barbara Musso, Ms Kate Turner and Dr Judy West together with Ms Helen Badger, an acting Branch Manager.

Figure 2: Parks Australia organisational chart at 30 June 2021



Jason Mundy

Acting First Assistant Secretary – Parks Australia Division

Jason is currently acting First Assistant Secretary of Parks Australia. He is responsible for assisting the Director of National Parks in managing Australia's Marine and Terrestrial parks. These include 58 Australian Marine Parks, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks in the Northern Territory, Booderee National Park, Island Parks in Norfolk, Christmas and Pulu Keeling Islands and the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra.

Jason recently worked in Environment Protection Division, where he first led a team to implement a national ban on certain waste exports and later acted as First Assistant Secretary for the Division.

Jason was Assistant Secretary of the Marine Parks Branch from 2016–2019, in which he led the finalisation and implementation of management plans for Australia's national network of Australian Marine Parks.

Previously, Jason was General Manager, Strategies Branch at the Australian Antarctic Division from 2011 until January 2016. Prior to that, he worked for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on overseas postings in the Philippines and Thailand, and positions in Canberra, including Director, China Political and External Section. Jason has also worked as a Senior Adviser in the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and as a senior adviser in the International Division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Jason holds an MA (International Relations), a Graduate Diploma (Foreign Affairs and Trade) and did his first degree, a Bachelor of Arts and Law (with First Class Honours in law), at the University of Tasmania.



Dr Barbara Musso

Acting Assistant Secretary – Marine and Island Parks Branch

Dr Barbara Musso is acting Assistant Secretary for the Marine and Island Parks Branch, with responsibility for 58 Australian Marine Parks, and three Island Parks including Christmas Island, Pulu Keeling and Norfolk Island National Park. Barbara is on secondment from the CSIRO, where her position is Program Director for the Marine National Facility.

Barbara has worked for 25 years at the interface between marine and environmental science and policy, planning and conservation. Before joining the CSIRO in 2017, Barbara was with the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy where she worked primarily in marine planning and conservation and in the Office of Water Science.

Barbara has a PhD in Marine Biology from James Cook University and a Master of Public Administration from the Australia National University.



Kate Turner

*Acting Assistant Secretary – Northern Territory Parks Branch A
(Kakadu National Park)*

Kate was the former Director of the Supervising Scientist Branch's Supervision and Monitoring section, responsible for overseeing the regulation of uranium mining in the Alligator Rivers Region, including environmental monitoring and mine audits and assessments. Kate was appointed to the position of Acting Assistant Secretary responsible for Kakadu National Park in August 2020.



Kate's appointment to this Darwin-based position is key to ensuring ongoing positive relationships with Bininj/Mungguy people in Kakadu, including its Traditional Owners, and to support the Australian Government's investment in Kakadu to grow tourism and successfully transition the region from a mining-based economy.

Karl Dyason

*Assistant Secretary – Northern Territory Parks Branch B
(includes Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park)*

Karl oversees the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, a park jointly managed between Anangu Traditional Owners; Uluru-Kata Tjuta and the Director of National Parks.



Karl has had nine years working and living in remote communities in the Northern Territory, the last three years as Chief Executive Officer of the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation in Maningrida. Karl has had extensive experience in engaging with Indigenous communities, working with Traditional Owners, ranger groups and other stakeholders to achieve social, economic, health and environmental outcomes for Indigenous people.

In the past Karl has worked for both the Northern Territory and Australian governments in a range of roles including business management, accounting, system implementation, strategic planning and corporate services.

Dr Judy West AO

*Assistant Secretary – Strategic Partnerships and ANBG Branch and
Executive Director – Australian National Botanic Gardens*

As Executive Director of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Judy provides direction and leadership for this national institution and is the Ex-Officio board member for the National Parks Conservation Trust (NPCT). As Assistant Secretary of the Strategic Partnerships and ANBG Branch, she is also responsible for developing and implementing a program of Parks Partnerships and oversight of Science Policy for Parks Australia.



Judy has more than 30 years' experience in scientific research and policy as a research scientist in CSIRO Plant Industry and 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.

Using her skills developing partnerships that link science and policy, Judy is building an active science and knowledge management network in Parks Australia.

Adam Carlon

Assistant Secretary – Booderee and Business Services Branch

Adam oversees Parks Australia's corporate services and the Booderee National Park, a park managed between the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community and the Director of National Parks. The corporate services for Parks Australia include finance, assurance and governance, human resources, visitor experience and tourism, and executive support.

Adam has over 20 years' experience in the Public Service across a range of policy, regulatory, corporate and evidence-based roles, and most recently was responsible for leading the department's communication and media functions. With almost seven years as an SES Band 1, Adam has led economics, research, evaluation and corporate branches.

Prior to the last machinery of government change, Adam was responsible for leading the department's strategic approach to partnerships, international engagement, Commonwealth-State relations and the Indigenous Advisory Committee, while also holding a statutory position as the National Environment Protection Council Executive Officer.



Helen Badger

Acting Branch Manager – Asset Infrastructure Branch

Helen Badger is the acting Branch Manager of the newly established Asset Infrastructure Branch, responsible for the planning and implementation of capital works. These works are predominantly funded through the Critical Asset Renewal Program NPP and the Growing Tourism in Kakadu NPP.

Helen is an experienced executive manager having recently undertaken roles in Papua New Guinea and Samoa for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Helen has previously held the role of Executive Director at the National Capital Authority, managing the National Capital Estate. Over the past 20 years, Helen has project managed a diverse range of civil infrastructure and construction projects for various state and territory governments and Commonwealth agencies. Helen has diverse experience in the planning and delivery of projects in challenging environments in regional and remote areas.



Boards of Management

Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks are managed jointly by the Director and 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 Aboriginal owners. Board members at 30 June 2021 are listed in Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8.

Booderee National Park Board of Management

The Board of Management for the Booderee National Park has undergone significant change in 2020–21 with the appointment of several new members due to member retirements, as well as internal changes within the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Council (the representative body from which Indigenous members are drawn).

Beverly Ardler

Chair – Booderee National Park Board of Management

Beverly Ardler is a Wreck Bay Traditional Owner born and bred in the area.

Beverly has had many years' experience on the Booderee joint board and is currently serving her second term as Chair.

Beverly has a strong educational background and is committed to furthering the opportunities for Wreck Bay through the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council and the Booderee National Park Joint Board of Management.



Table 6: Booderee National Park Board of Management membership

Chair	Mr Beverly Ardler (Traditional Owner nominee)
Members	Ms Julie Moore (Traditional Owner nominee) Mr Jeffrey Williams (Traditional Owner nominee) Ms Jeffrey McLeod (Traditional Owner nominee) Ms Erica Ardler (Traditional Owner nominee) Mr Paul Ardler (Traditional Owner nominee) Mr Darryn Sturgeon (Traditional Owner nominee) Ms Wendy Hills (Ecotourism expert) Position Vacant (Environmental scientist) Captain Warren Bairstow (Commanding Officer <i>HMAS Creswell</i>) Ms Sarah Vandenbroek (Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Australia) Ms Jody Swirepik (acting Director of National Parks)

Kakadu Board of Management

Over the past year the Kakadu Board of Management underwent significant change. In discussions held between Traditional Owners, the Northern Land Council and the Minister, Indigenous representation on the Kakadu Board of Management was increased from 10 to 16 in May 2021. This increase has created a more representative Board allowing for a greater inclusion of the various clan groups from across the park.

Also, in May the terms of appointment for all current serving Indigenous board members expired, requiring a lengthy selection and reappointment of those positions. These significant changes to board representation are due to be finalised in the last quarter of 2021. Even with these significant changes the Board continued to operate throughout the year. The Board identified below were the members for most of the year.

Maria Lee

Chair – Kakadu National Park Board of Management

Maria Lee has been actively involved with the Kakadu Board of Management since 2011. In recent years, Maria has taken on the challenging role of Chairperson for the Kakadu Board, with a strong commitment to ensuring the voice of Traditional Owners is heard on matters affecting their country. As Chairperson, Maria embraces the responsibility and commitment to work at achieving balance between *Bininj* and non-*Bininj* ways in the joint management of Kakadu.



Maria is actively involved in maintaining a community that is free from the negative effects of alcohol and substance abuse. Maria is often involved in the various community programs that are available and strives to provide a safe and happy environment for the children within the community. Maria is a member of the Jawoyn Association and Werenbun Aboriginal Corporation.

Table 7: Kakadu Board of Management membership

Chair	Ms Maria Lee (Traditional Owner nominee)
Members	Mr Ryan Barrowei (Traditional Owner nominee)
	Mr Alfred Nayinggul (Traditional Owner nominee)
	Mr M. Na-Gangila Bangalang (Traditional Owner nominee)
	Mr Jonathan Nadji (Traditional Owner nominee)
	Ms Yvonne Margarula (Traditional Owner nominee)
	Mr Jeffrey Lee (Traditional Owner nominee)
	Ms Mai Katona (Traditional Owner nominee)
	Ms Bessie Coleman (Traditional Owner nominee)

Members (cont)

Mr Sampson Henry (Traditional Owner nominee)
 Position Vacant (Traditional Owner nominee)-new position
 Position Vacant (Traditional Owner nominee) new position
 Position Vacant (Traditional Owner nominee) new position
 Position Vacant (Traditional Owner nominee) new position
 Position Vacant (Traditional Owner nominee) new position
 Position Vacant (Traditional Owner nominee) new position
 Position Vacant (Tourism Representative)
 Ms Jody Swirepik (acting Director of National Parks)
 Ms Kate Turner (Assistant Secretary, NT Parks Branch A)
 Mr Alastair Shields (Northern Territory Government nominee)
 Prof Michael Douglas (Nature conservation expert)

Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṛa Board of Management

Sidney James

Chair – Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṛa National Park Board of Management

Sidney James is a *Pitjantjatjara* man, born in *Utju* (Areyonga – located about 220 km west of Alice Springs) and moved to *Kaltukatjara* (Docker River – located 670 km west south west of Alice Springs) as a young boy. He began his working career with the local council then worked with the NT Police Force at Mutitjulu and Yulara.

Sidney has had many years' experience on Boards and was a Director for WANA UNGKUNYTJA, an organisation that oversees the management of multiple central desert organisations.

Sidney and his family have strong ties to the *Kata Tjuṛa* area, through his *Tjamu* (grandfather) who also assisted the expedition crew to Harold B. Lasseter's grave site. Over the last 4 years, Sidney has been operating visitor tours reliving Lasseter's fateful trail.

In his role as Chair, Sidney wants to aim for the goals set previously by the Board and run everything 'straight and smooth'. Sidney said 'The aim is to go straight, everything is already set up for us, follow that *iwara* (trail)'.



Table 8: Uluru-Kata Tjuṯa Board of Management membership

Chair	Mr Sidney James (Traditional Owner nominee)
Members	<p>Mr Sammy Wilson (Traditional Owner nominee)</p> <p>Mr Owen Burton (Traditional Owner nominee)</p> <p>Mr Trevor Adamson (Traditional Owner nominee)</p> <p>Ms Selina Kulitja (Traditional Owner nominee)</p> <p>Ms Alison Carroll (Traditional Owner nominee)</p> <p>Ms Teresa Nipper (Traditional Owner nominee)</p> <p>Ms Nyinku Jingo (Traditional Owner nominee)</p> <p>Mr John King (Minister for Tourism nominee)</p> <p>Vacant (Minister for the Environment nominee)</p> <p>Mr Scott Lovett (Northern Territory Government nominee)</p> <p>Ms Jody Swirepik (acting Director of National Parks)</p>



Booderee National Park (Image: Parks Australia)





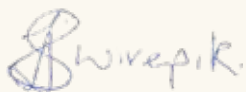
Annual Performance Statement 4

Annual Performance Statement

Section 39 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) requires that Commonwealth entities prepare an annual performance statement as part of their annual report. The intention is to provide a clear link between the planned and actual non-financial performance for the financial year as outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2020–21 (PBS) and the *Director of National Parks Corporate Plan 2020–21*. Chapter 6 presents our 2020–21 financial performance information.

Introductory statement

I, Jody Swirepik, as the accountable authority of Director of National Parks, present the 2020–21 annual performance statements of the Director of National Parks, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the Act.



Jody Swirepik
Director of National Parks

Portfolio Budget Statements 2020–21

The Director of National Parks (the Director) appears in the department's 2020–21 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS). Outcome 1 of the department's PBS is:

Conserve, protect and sustainably manage Australia's biodiversity, ecosystems, environment and heritage through research, information management, supporting natural resource management, establishing and managing Commonwealth protected areas, and reducing and regulating the use of pollutants and hazardous substances.

The Director's contribution to meeting the department's Outcome 1 is:

Management of Commonwealth reserves as outstanding natural places that enhance Australia's well-being through the protection and conservation of their natural and cultural values, supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in managing their traditional land and sea country, and offering world class natural and cultural visitor experiences.

The purpose of our program described in the PBS is:

To protect, conserve and enhance the values of Commonwealth parks and gardens for the use and well-being of all Australians.

Corporate Plan 2020–21

The *Director of National Parks Corporate Plan 2020–2021* was prepared in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule* (Rule) and paragraph 35(1)(b) of the PGPA Act.

The corporate plan is the primary planning document of Parks Australia and provides details on the corporate priorities and result areas for the 2020–21 reporting period. It incorporates the purposes, key performance criteria and deliverables under the PBS and is supported by systems and processes to monitor and report achievements.

The corporate plan includes our three purposes (see Figure 3) and features cross cutting activities that contribute to more than one of our goals. The four 'ways of working' described in Figure 3 set out how we will achieve our goals.

Our Corporate Plan is available at:

www.environment.gov.au/topics/national-parks/parks-australia/publications.

Operating environment

Our estate is vast with varied land and seascapes and dynamic country and culture. As such, the Parks Australia operating environment is subject to external and internal factors that influence the way we work and our ability to achieve our purpose.

External factors

We have varying levels of influence over several external pressures facing our parks, and how others engage with Commonwealth Government decisions, policies and regulations, and the value they place on our role and our work. Key external factors that influenced our work in 2020–21 include:

- The COVID-19 pandemic continued to significantly affect visitation to our parks, impacting on research and consultation activities as well as the delivery of operational projects.
- Unprecedented events occurred in Australia and our places in 2019–20 including drought, storms and 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires. These events have potentially long-lasting impacts on Commonwealth parks and gardens and their associated local communities.
- Pressures on some natural and cultural values from biodiversity loss, wildfire, habitat loss and invasive species, drought, pollution, marine debris and illegal unreported and unregulated hunting and fishing.
- Climate change is predicted to exacerbate existing threats to natural and cultural values and will introduce new challenges that need to be overcome to ensure the ongoing protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage – threat mitigation and climate change adaptation remain a priority for the Director.
- Responding to national, state and territory government priorities has had an impact on our operations, including the need to tackle ghost nets in the Gulf of Carpentaria and expand and enhance the management of Australian Marine Parks.
- Meeting community expectations, many of our programs are long-term and may take many years to fully realise outcomes.

Internal factors

We have the most influence over how we conduct our work, who we engage with, how and where we allocate our resources, our approach to risk, and how we implement practical management under management plans. Key internal factors that influenced our work in 2020–21 include:

- Regional and remote staff are located in diverse and challenging places around the country.
- Specific safety and logistical challenges faced in the delivery of operational programs.

- The changing needs of visitors following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The quality of the relationships with Traditional Owners in our jointly managed parks.
- Other agencies, partner organisations and contractors involved in undertaking upgrades in our parks in line with infrastructure and tourism plans.
- Technological developments and limitations for staff and visitors across our estate.
- The implementation of policies and procedures to ensure the wellbeing of all staff and visitors, for example our work, health and safety policies and our risk framework.

Performance against purposes and criteria

Table 2 summarises the Director of National Parks performance framework for 2020–21.

This framework links what we intended to do (through the PBS and our corporate plan), with what we delivered (this annual performance statement).

Our Corporate Plan links our purpose to our performance criteria. This chapter reports on our three performance criteria.

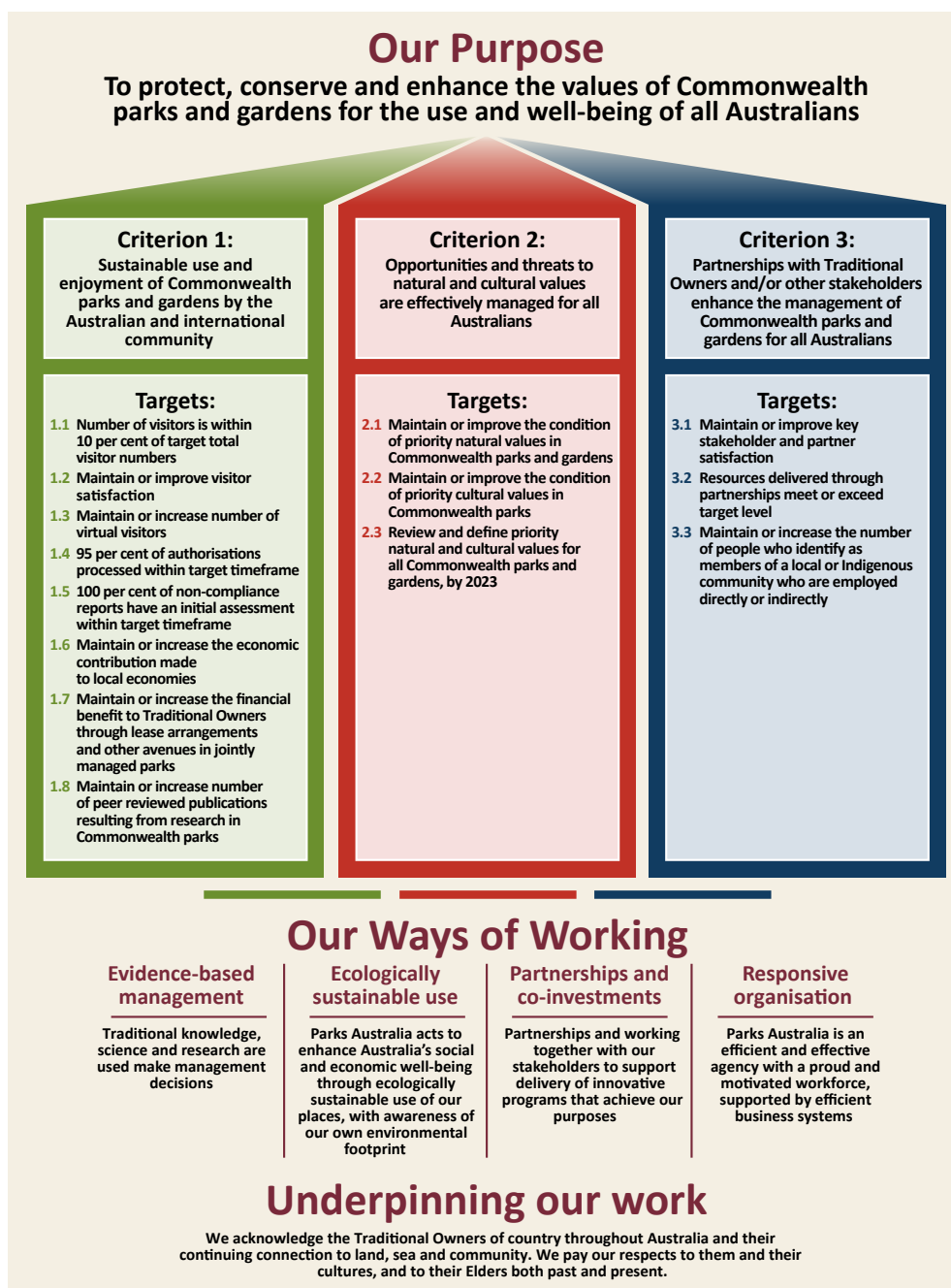
The Director has considered the relative benefits and costs involved to determine the level which performance criteria are reported in this annual performance statement.

2020–21 is the first year we are reporting against our new performance framework. Where possible, we have provided information from previous years to illustrate progress. We expect that the measures and targets will mature over time and the methods are evolving as we reflect on how readily we are able to provide the data and how instructive it is relative to understanding progress against the stated target, criteria and purpose.

To align with the department of Finance’s *Resource Management Guide 132*, from 2021–22 we have changed the nomenclature by swapping the heading of targets for measures and measures for targets. We have retained the original headings in this annual performance statement to align with the corresponding Director of National Parks corporate plan to ensure consistency between the planning and reporting documents for 2020–21.

A summary table of results against the targets can be found in Chapter 2 – Overview on page 8.

Figure 3: Our purpose and performance criteria



Performance Criterion 1: Sustainable use and enjoyment of Commonwealth parks and gardens by the Australian and international community – Results

Target 1.1	Number of visitors is within 10 per cent of target total visitor numbers
Rationale	This target is a measure of how many people visit our parks and gardens and can be used to infer if these places are attracting visitors and being used sustainably.
Method	Achievement of this target is assessed by measuring visitor numbers for six of our seven terrestrial parks and gardens (Booderee, Kakadu, Uluṟu-Kata Tjuta, Christmas Island and Norfolk Island National Parks and the Australian National Botanic Gardens). No reporting occurs for Pulu-Keeling National Park given its remoteness and minimal visitation. Additionally, visitor numbers are not currently collected for our 58 Australian Marine Parks. Visitor numbers are counted through online and physical ticket sales, car counters, camping passes, tour bus numbers and externally sourced data (commercial tour operators and tourism associations). These numbers are aggregated for the six places to produce a total number of visitors in the financial year. A method for capturing location of activity, visitation, pressures and trends to inform management actions will be developed in the 2023–24 reporting year, with the intention of reporting on select marine parks or locations from 2024–25.
Measure	Terrestrial: visitor numbers are +/- 5 per cent of 2019–20 results
Baseline	In 2019–20, 990,939 people visited our terrestrial parks and gardens
Result	Target achieved. The total visitation to Commonwealth terrestrial national parks for the 2002–21 financial year was 1,084,201 visitors. This an overall increase of 9.4 per cent from 2019–20 but an 18.43 per cent decrease from 2018–19.
Analysis	Border closures and travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have varying impacts on visitor numbers across Parks Australia. All parks were closed between 26 March to 23 June 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Park entry fees to Booderee, Kakadu and Uluṟu-Kata Tjuta were waived from 16 March to 31 December 2020. In some parks there has been an upwards trend in visitor numbers due to a resurgence in domestic tourism. Booderee and Kakadu, with their proximity to capital cities and major populations hubs, fared well reporting improved year-on-year visitation. However, visitation to these parks remains below pre-COVID-19 pandemic numbers (2018–19).

Analysis (cont)

The Australian National Botanic Gardens reported an increase in visitation with Canberrans and domestic travellers seeking outdoor, nature-based experiences near to urban centres. In 2020–21 visitation to Australian National Botanic Gardens was 505,274 visitors. This represents a 19.98 per cent increase from 2019–20 (421,117 visitors) and increase of 0.5 per cent from pre-COVID-19 pandemic numbers in 2018–19 (502,777 visitors). Norfolk Island and Christmas Island national parks recorded increased tourism numbers. The greatest impact continues to be felt at Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṛa National Park, which due to its remote location and reliance on aviation, has seen visitor numbers remain down 54 per cent on pre-COVID-19 pandemic numbers (2018–19). The corresponding loss of international tourism has had a significant impact on park revenues for Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṛa National Park.

Additional Information

Table 9: Comparison: year on year overall visitor number data

	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Number of visitors to terrestrial parks and gardens	1,383,979	1,474,108	1,329,185	990,939*	1,084,201*

*COVID-19 pandemic affected visitor numbers in these years

Table 10: Comparison: by park visitor number data (COVID-19 pandemic affected years)

	2019–20	2020–21	Variation
Australian National Botanic Gardens	421,117	505,274	Up 19.89 per cent
Booderee National Park ¹	144,496	260,662	Up 80.39 per cent
Kakadu National Park	137,987	173,584	Up 25.80 per cent
Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṛa National Park	267,109	122,523	Down 54.13 per cent
Norfolk Island National Park ²	18,500	19,585	Up 5.86 per cent
Christmas Island National Park ³	1,730	2,573	Up 48.73 per cent

1 At Booderee, park passes are sold per car, not per visitor. Visitor numbers are extrapolated. Camping has been affected by COVID-19 pandemic closures and restrictions. Since 8 January 2021 Green Patch and Crystal Point camp grounds have been operational at reduced 50 per cent COVID-19 pandemic safe capacity.

2 Norfolk Island National Park visitation is calculated at 85 per cent of airline passenger numbers, provided by Norfolk Island Border Force.

3 Christmas Island visitor numbers are provided by the Christmas Island Tourism Association (CITA) and are based on passenger numbers visiting friends, family and for leisure activities.

Target 1.2	Maintain or improve visitor satisfaction
Rationale	This target is a measure of the visitor enjoyment of experiences in terrestrial parks and gardens. It encompasses the quality of visitor-related management activities including visitor experiences, infrastructure, facilities and maintenance.
Method	Achievement of this target is assessed by collecting visitor satisfaction information for four of our seven terrestrial Commonwealth parks and gardens (Booderee, Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjuta, and the Australian National Botanic Gardens). Christmas Island and Norfolk Island national parks did not have visitor surveys in place for 2020–21. No reporting occurs for Pulu-Keeling National Park given its minimal visitation, or for our 58 Australian Marine Parks. Methods for capturing visitor satisfaction vary between our places to account for their unique operating environments. However, each place uses a 5-point scale (1 = ‘very dissatisfied’, 2 = ‘dissatisfied’, 3 = ‘neutral’, 4 = ‘satisfied’, 5 = ‘very satisfied’) which is delivered via email after online ticket purchases, or through physical on-site surveys. The visitor satisfaction rate for each place is reported as the percentage of the total number of visitors who were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with their experience. The visitor satisfaction rate for each place is then aggregated to obtain an overall visitor satisfaction rate for our parks and gardens in the financial year. A method for capturing visitor satisfaction in Australian Marine Parks will be designed and piloted in reporting year 2023–24, with the intention of reporting on selected marine parks or locations.
Measure	Terrestrial: visitor satisfaction rate is equal to or greater than 2019–20
Baseline	In 2019–20, 95 per cent of visitors were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with their visit to our terrestrial parks and gardens
Result	Partially achieved. Overall, 89 per cent of visitors to parks were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit in 2020–21. This is a 5 per cent decrease compared to 2019–20, when 95 per cent of visitors were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit, and a 4 per cent decrease compared to 2018–19 when 93 per cent of visitors were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit. The slight decline was due to visitors impacted by park closures, camping closures at Booderee National Park and reductions in services and programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 3748 surveys were completed in 2020–21 compared with just over 2000 in 2019–20. This represents an impressive 87 per cent increase in response rate.

Analysis

The slight decline in visitor satisfaction was due to visitors impacted by park closures, camping closures at Booderee National Park and reductions in services and programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional Information

Table 11: Comparison: year on year overall visitor satisfaction data

	2018–19	2019–20*	2020–21*
Visitor satisfaction ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied')	93 per cent	95 per cent	89 per cent

*COVID-19 pandemic affected years

Target 1.3

Maintain or increase number of virtual visitors

Rationale

This target is a measure of digital engagement with the Parks Australia websites and social media channels to assess marketing and media reach. This digital engagement facilitates public enjoyment of the natural and cultural values of Commonwealth parks and gardens by the Australian and international community.

Method

Achievement of this target is assessed by measuring the number of virtual visitors to specific Parks Australia websites and social media platforms (Instagram, Twitter and Facebook). Data is collected through Google analytics. A 'virtual visitor' is defined as an individual view of our website pages, and individual post impressions on our social media platforms. These measures count individual views, not individual persons interacting with Parks Australia in a digital medium.

Measure

Websites: virtual visitor numbers are equal to or greater than 4 million
Social media: virtual visitor numbers are equal to or greater than 7.2 million

Baseline

In 2019–20 the Parks Australia websites and social media platforms had 4 million and 7.2 million virtual visitors respectively.

Results

Target achieved. In 2020–21 we attracted 4,943,484 page views, up from 4,039,403 page views in 2019–20. An increase of 22.38 per cent on the previous year. In 2020–21 we welcomed 14,902,931 virtual visitors (social media post impressions) up from 7,288,969 virtual visitors in 2019–20.

Analysis

Contributing factors that may have encouraged this growth include:

- Ongoing communications on closures and openings for the parks have been distributed on social media and the website. This includes both natural disasters and COVID-19 pandemic related updates.

Analysis (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic interest in local travel has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and people are looking domestically (drive market) for their next escape. • Interest in national parks and outdoor recreation has increased due to social distancing and health benefits of outdoor activities. • We have continued to stay 'top of mind' with our followers throughout the COVID crisis, providing content that is interesting, inspiring and positive in this time of lockdowns and travel restrictions. • For social media we delivered a large increase in content frequency across the platforms; there were stories of viral interest (such as Rain on the Rock, Whale in the East Alligator River); we implemented user generated content which encourages views from the individuals friend groups; and we increased in links back to content on our website. • Examples of improvements to our website include: the Booderee National Park website refresh in August 2020, media releases directing to content on our website for large launches (like the Growing Tourism in Kakadu announcements), and more information being posted on the website in news stories, ongoing projects and tenders.
Target 1.4 Rationale Method	<p>95 per cent of authorisations processed within target timeframe</p> <p>This target is a measure of the time taken by Parks Australia staff to process licences and permits for Commonwealth parks and gardens. This target is a vital measure of internal efficiency, but also seeks to highlight the importance of authorisations in the sustainable use of our places, and the significance of a smooth authorisation transaction for stakeholders.</p> <p>Achievement of this target is assessed by measuring the time taken by Parks Australia to process authorisations, from the point of receipt of application to the point of issue or refusal, not including time taken for 'stop the clock' actions (consultation or requests for further information). Currently this is reported only for Australian Marine Parks. 'Authorisations' are defined as any type of approval or authority that Parks Australia issues to park users, allowing them to undertake an activity in our places. This includes licences and permits for activities including but not limited to tourism, research, recreational activities and media. The target is reported as the percentage of authorisations processed within a target timeframe of 40 business days (not including time for 'stop the clock' actions).</p>

Measure	Marine: 95 per cent of authorisations processed within 40 business days Terrestrial: establish methodologies for authorisation timeframes
Baseline	The proportion of Australian Marine Park authorisations processed within 40 business days in 2020–21 will be set as the baseline.
Result	Partially achieved. In 2020–21, 90 per cent of Australian Marine Park authorisations were processed within the target timeframe. A method for capturing authorisation timeframes for terrestrial Commonwealth parks and gardens was not achieved in 2020–21.
Analysis	146 marine park authorisation applications were received and 132 issued between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021. Several complex applications were received that required more detailed assessment and liaison with internal and external stakeholders to identify risks and to develop effective mitigation strategies in the form of conditions. A consultant was engaged in 2020–21 to explore technology solutions for improving terrestrial and marine park authorisations processing. This work will be completed in 2021–22. A method for capturing authorisation timeframes for terrestrial Commonwealth parks and gardens will be formulated over the 2021–22 reporting year, with the intention of reporting from 2022–23.

Target 1.5	100 per cent of non-compliance reports have an initial assessment within target timeframe
Rationale	This target is a measure of the time taken by Parks Australia to evaluate non-compliance reports within Commonwealth parks and gardens. This target seeks to highlight the importance of compliance within our places to ensure that they are enjoyed sustainably by our Australian and international visitors.
Method	Achievement of this target is assessed by measuring the time taken by Parks Australia staff to evaluate reports of non-compliance, from the moment of receipt to the point at which a decision is made and recorded in the incident register. ‘Non-compliance reports’ are defined as a notification to Compliance Officers of any conduct that is identified as allegedly, apparently, or potentially breaching the law in a Commonwealth park or garden. Initial assessment begins when incidents are either witnessed by or reported to park staff. In cases of ‘no further action’ or ‘immediate resolution’ the initial assessment ends when all details are recorded in a database and the decision noted. For incidents that are ‘escalated’, the initial assessment ends when details of a Penalty Infringement Notice are recorded in a database. The target is reported as the percentage of non-compliance reports initially assessed within a target timeframe of 30 business days.

Measure	100 per cent of Australian Marine Park compliance incident reports initially assessed within 30 business days, terrestrial park information was not collected.
Baseline	The proportion of non-compliance reports assessed within 30 business days during 2020–21 will be set as the baseline.
Result	Target achieved. 100 per cent of Australian Marine Park compliance incidents had an initial assessment within 30 business days.
Analysis	A consultant was engaged in 2020–21 to explore technology solutions for improving terrestrial and marine park compliance reporting and for case management purposes. This work will be completed in 2021–22 and will assist Parks Australia to improve compliance incident reporting. A method for capturing the proportion of non-compliance reports assessed within 30 business days for terrestrial Commonwealth parks and gardens will be formulated over the 2021–22 reporting year.

Target 1.6	Maintain or increase the economic contribution made to local economies
Rationale	This target is a measure of the economic contribution the Director and the Parks Australia Division of the department makes to the local economies where Commonwealth parks and gardens are located. Economic benefits are an indication of the outcome of sustainable use in our places. Additionally, many Commonwealth parks and gardens are in remote locations, where they are a primary contributor to the strength of the local economy.
Method	For 2020–21, we compared performance to 2019–20 using a proxy measure of the Director’s and the Parks Australia Division of the department’s contribution to the local economy through the value of financial investment made at each location. This includes funding for operational budget allocation and local staff salaries, and contracts with local businesses/organisations, through programs and MoU’s, and through amounts paid to employees of the Parks Australia Division of the department (excluding our Canberra and Hobart offices). Dollar amounts were adjusted according to Consumer Price Index where relevant.
Measure	Proxy: based on financial investment made by the Director and the Parks Australia Division of the department. Economic models: develop models
Baseline	The value of financial investment made at each location in 2019–20.
Result	Target achieved. Economic contributions made to local economies in 2020–21 totalled \$65.1 million compared to \$56.2 million in 2019–20

Analysis	<p>Economic contributions were calculated based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments made to suppliers located within the postcode of the managed parks (some uncertainty as there is not always a strong correlation). The Australian National Botanic Gardens has been excluded. • Salary payments made to local staff working in managed parks. The Australian National Botanic Gardens has been excluded. <p>Further work is required to identify suitable measures and data. This may be a key outcome of the transition to TechOne asset management system, which should improve our capability to identify vendors and locations. In 2021–22 we will prepare a forward plan to develop, implement and improve relevant, reliable and repeatable measures of financial and economic contribution.</p>
Target 1.7	Maintain or increase the financial benefit to Traditional Owners through lease arrangements and other avenues in jointly managed parks
Rationale	This target is a measure of the dollar value of financial benefits to Traditional Owners through lease arrangements and other avenues in jointly managed parks. This target reflects one component of Parks Australia's purpose to contribute to the well-being of all Australians.
Method	The partnership between Traditional Owners and the Director in jointly managed parks (Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta national parks) is largely based upon formal lease arrangements. Each lease sets out the financial benefits that will be paid to Traditional Owners for lease (or use) of the land, including an annual lease fee paid by the Director, as well as an agreed proportion of all revenue collected from visitors and the issuance of authorisations for activities conducted in the parks. Our annual lease payments to Traditional Owners are adjusted by annual CPI. The quarterly lease payments relating to the percentage of revenue is not adjusted by CPI and is based on a percentage of our actual revenue. In 2020–21, we measured payments made under the lease arrangement through the Parks Australia finance system. For forward years, other identified avenues may be included.
Measure	<p>Lease arrangement: the financial benefits are equal to or greater than 2019–20</p> <p>Other avenues: avenues of other financial benefits identified</p>
Baseline	In 2019–20 \$4.5 million was paid to Traditional Owners
Result	Target achieved. The financial benefits to Traditional Owners through lease arrangements and other avenues in jointly managed parks in 2020–21 totalled \$5.1 million compared to \$4.5 million in 2019–20.

Analysis	<p>The higher total financial benefits are largely the result of an upwards trend in visitor numbers in parks, excluding Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, due to a resurgence in domestic tourism. Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park has experienced significant impacts from reduced international tourism and relative remoteness of the park with visitor numbers down 54 per cent compared to 2019–20. As a result, fees for park entry and camping are lower than last year. Park entry fees to Booderee National Park, Kakadu National Park and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park were waived from 16 March to 31 December 2020. The Director received a COVID-19 pandemic stimulus grant to replace lost park entry/camping fees. In 2021–22 we will prepare a forward plan to develop, implement and improve relevant, reliable and repeatable measures of financial and economic contribution.</p>
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Target 1.8	Maintain or increase number of peer reviewed publications resulting from research in Commonwealth parks
Rationale	<p>This target is a measure of the number of peer-reviewed publications produced from research conducted in Commonwealth parks. This target is a direct measure of the contribution of our protected areas to academia and is a proxy measure for the improved understanding of values in Commonwealth parks which informs improved management principles and practices.</p>
Method	<p>Publications related to Commonwealth parks are catalogued from Google Scholar alerts of key terms, from targeted searches and from scientific networks. In 2020–21, research was only be catalogued for terrestrial parks (excluding the Australian National Botanic Gardens). In 2021–22, other priority research areas (e.g. marine, cultural heritage, socio-economic) will be identified and appropriate scope and methods developed. The aim will be to report on publication numbers for all parks and gardens and research areas in future years.</p>
Measure	<p>Terrestrial: the number of publications catalogued are equal to or greater than 35</p> <p>Priority research: other priority research areas identified</p>
Baseline	<p>In 2019–20, 35 peer reviewed publications resulting from research in terrestrial Commonwealth parks were published</p>
Result	<p>Target achieved. A total of 49 peer reviewed publications relating to the parks were completed in 2020–21. This covers only the five terrestrial parks (excluding the Australian National Botanic Gardens) and includes only ecological research (for example, archaeological and anthropological research is not currently included in the search).</p>

Analysis

Peer-reviewed publications arise in a number of ways, including through independent research, from government-funded programs such as the National Environmental Science Program (NESP), and through Parks Australia-led or collaborative projects. Of the 49 publications, 30 were the results of independent research, including student research (Honours, Masters PhD) and other academic research programs and 19 were the result of collaborative projects and/or projects targeted towards park priorities (including projects undertaken through the NESP. Parks Australia staff were co-authors on eight publications.

Additional Information

Table 12: Comparison: by park peer reviewed publications data

	Number of publications
Christmas Island	17
Kakadu National Park	15
Booderee National Park	7
Norfolk Island National Park	5
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	2
Multiple parks	2
Pulu-Keeling National Park	1

Performance Criterion 1: Sustainable use and enjoyment of Commonwealth parks and gardens by the Australian and international community – Analysis of performance

Closures of our parks and gardens continued during 2020–21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts varied across our places. To adjust to this operating environment, we focussed on welcoming virtual visitors to help connect people in Australia and across the world to our parks and to the natural environment when visiting in person was not an option. The surge in website visits and interest in social media reflects this focus and demonstrates our success at reaching our audience.

The Director and Parks Australia are privileged to receive unprecedented infrastructure investment to support sustainable use and enjoyment of our Commonwealth parks and gardens. This is to be delivered through the \$233 million investment in infrastructure updates across the estates and \$216 million to grow tourism in Kakadu National Park through new and upgraded infrastructure and improved road access and to secure the future of Jabiru as it transitions to a tourism and regional services hub.

In 2020–21 we commenced infrastructure projects valuing approximately \$26 million, with an additional \$150 million worth of project work scheduled to be delivered over the next three years. We also commenced design of the \$48 million Muṭitjulu essential services upgrade.

On 26 June 2021, following many years of work, the Director relinquished freehold title over the town of Jabiru and it was handed back to its Traditional Owners, the Mirarr. A Memorandum of Understanding² between the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government, Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation and Energy Resources of Australia Ltd was signed in August 2019. Developed by the Mirarr Traditional Owner and supported by the parties, the vision of Jabiru is as a world leading ecologically sustainable, economically and socially vibrant community where traditional Aboriginal culture, all people and nature flourish. The aim is to ensure the township remains the main hub for visitors to the World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park and regional service delivery in years to come.

The \$216 million Growing Tourism in Kakadu funding package provides: \$51.2 million towards tourism projects, \$70 million towards road improvements, \$35 million towards remediation of Jabiru and \$60 million towards a new World Heritage Kakadu Visitor Centre. The Kakadu Tourism Master Plan, which guides the implementation of the Growing Tourism in Kakadu package, was completed and approved by the Kakadu Board of Management in December 2020. Planning and procurement have commenced on the highest priority projects. We invested \$10 million in upgrading Kakadu tourism facilities in 2020–21. The Kakadu Roads Strategy was completed in December 2020 and is guiding the upgrade to Kakadu roads, and the scoping study for the new World Heritage Kakadu Visitor Centre is underway.

To oversee delivery of these two vital investment packages, we established a skilled and experienced Asset Infrastructure Branch that will facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of funding to identified projects, undertake critical consultation with Traditional Owners and other key stakeholders, and sustain appropriate governance, probity and reporting processes. The capacity to progress design and consultation processes and move to construction is dependent on site access which has been much more difficult with COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions.

Two breakout boxes that showcase a portion of the good work being undertaken across our parks in 2020–21 that supports this performance criterion are the Kakadu Tourism Master Plan (Breakout box 1 page 43) and a new viewing platform at Cahill's Crossing, Kakadu National Park (Breakout box 2 page 43).

Progress on other key activities that support this performance criterion are presented below.

- We are implementing a quality management system (QMS) approach to compliance policies, procedures and guidelines that will identify the need for any changes. This activity will continue in 2021–22.
- Due to competing priorities and resource constraints, we made limited progress on updating the *Parks Sustainable Tourism Overview* and developing a visitor research strategy to improve and expand visitor data and insights. Supporting the sustainable use of our parks and gardens and understanding our visitors is important and we intend to reprioritise this work in 2021–22.

2 https://dcm.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/736936/future-jabiru-mou-signed.pdf

- We made solid progress on the Parks Australia Digital Refresh Project that aims to upgrade our digital marketing platforms (including website, visitor apps and digital asset management system). We anticipate that four apps will be published in September 2021. The Project has been extended to December 2021 and we will meet adjusted milestones.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our visitor/cultural centres at Booderee, Kakadu, Uluru Kata Tjuta, and Norfolk Island national parks and the Australian National Botanic Gardens faced unpredictable opening hours and visitation. During this time our innovative staff continued where possible to provide informed and educational experiences for visitors and virtual visitors alike. For example, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park improved its culture centre displays including restoring artifacts and bush food and medicine displays in the Tjukurpa Tunnel. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all school holiday and visiting school group interpretive programs at Booderee National Park were cancelled, so the park pivoted to focus on social media engagement which proved very successful. Despite bushfire smoke, hail and the COVID-19 pandemic with many planned programs postponed or cancelled from January 2020 until September 2020 at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, we welcomed 10,165 students in 2020–21 for educational excursions with 63 per cent of students participating in a Ranger facilitated program.
- A new Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Gardens Management Plan has been completed. The Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Management Plan has been endorsed by the Board of Management, Parks Australia and Central Land Council. At 30 June 2021 the updated plan is being reformatted for printing and tabling for its statutory disallowance period by the Minister.
- The technical audit for the Australian National Botanic Gardens was completed in January 2021 and published on our website. The draft Management Plan will be released for public comment in November 2021. Planning and preparations for the evaluation of the first eight years of operation of the *South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Management Plan 2013–2023* commenced and will be completed in 2021–22. Christmas Island National Park is beginning preparations for the audit with the audit to be completed by the end of 2022.
- In 2020–21, final elements of the Fisheries Assistance and User Engagement Package were progressed or commenced. Six of the 12 projects funded through the first round of the Our Marine Parks Grants Program have been successfully completed. These projects, being delivered by eight fishing representative bodies, seek to improve the long-term sustainability of fishing in ways that support the objectives of Australian Marine Parks. Twenty-two projects worth \$6 million commenced in December 2020, as part of the second round of the Our Marine Parks Grants Program. This second round is supporting interested and capable organisations and community groups to engage in marine park management. A grants program to support the uptake of vessel monitoring systems, including e- monitoring, has been developed in consultation with states and the Northern Territory, and is expected to open in late 2021. This is the final component of the Fisheries Assistance and User Engagement Package.

BREAK OUT BOX 1

Kakadu Tourism Master Plan

In February 2021 the Kakadu Tourism Master Plan was released. This ten-year strategy to grow culturally appropriate tourism in the national park was developed in consultation with Kakadu's Traditional Owners, Board of Management and the tourism industry. The plan envisages new visitor services hubs at Mary River, South Alligator and East Alligator,

new accommodation for the park, greater access to Kakadu world-class rock art sites, improved connectivity for mobile and WiFi services, and an expanded major event calendar focused on cultural events. Work is already underway on new infrastructure and improved visitor access to key sites in the national park. Funding is already available for many projects and options for further funding will be considered in the coming years. Parks Australia will continue to work with Kakadu's Traditional Owners, and in consultation with key stakeholders, to ensure the successful delivery of the plan in a culturally and environmentally appropriate way.



Cover images of Kakadu Tourism Master Plan documents
(Image credit: Parks Australia)

BREAK OUT BOX 2

New viewing platform at Cahill's Crossing, Kakadu National Park

A viewing platform for Cahills Crossing in Kakadu National Park aims to revitalise one of the parks most popular attractions. The new platform will make it much safer for visitors to view and take photographs of crocodiles gathering at the crossing. Extensive consultations were undertaken with Traditional Owners before designs for two new viewing decks and a new forest walking trail were signed off by the Northern Land Council. As well as two new viewing platforms, the designs include a picnic area, safer travel paths between the carpark and the main visitor facilities, and replacement of signage for improved visitor information and safety.



Artist impression of new viewing platform at Cahill's Crossing, Kakadu National Park
(Image credit: Taylor Cullity Lethlean (TLC))

Performance Criterion 2: Opportunities and threats to natural and cultural values are effectively managed for all Australians – Results

Target 2.1	Maintain or improve the condition of priority natural values in Commonwealth parks and gardens
Rationale	This target is a measure of the condition of priority natural values across Commonwealth parks and gardens. 'Priority values' are defined as the ecological attributes that are most highly valued and require maintenance or enhancement or further protections. This target is a proxy measure of how healthy our ecosystems and natural values are; and is a key component of protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural values of Commonwealth parks and gardens.
Method	The method for evaluating and reporting condition of values was refined during 2020–21 as part of broader work on developing a framework for monitoring and evaluating management effectiveness in Parks Australia. Data on priority natural values (e.g. species, ecosystems) was collected through field surveys tailored in method and frequency to the natural value. Data from these surveys was then used to assess the condition of the natural value on a 4-point scale from 'poor' to 'good'. The thresholds for each scale were set for each individual value based on best available ecological knowledge and conservation goals. Baselines for each value will be determined either in advance or using the first year of data. This will enable changes to be reported over time. The condition assessment for each natural value was aggregated to provide an individual park/garden rating and aggregated again to provide a rating for all Commonwealth parks and gardens. During 2020–21 we have reported on priority natural values for terrestrial parks and gardens only. Marine parks values require prioritisation as per Target 2.3. The number of priority natural values to be assessed will increase in future years as baselines develop for all our places.
Measure	Record baseline
Baseline	The baseline condition assessment rating for priority natural values in terrestrial Commonwealth parks and gardens is set in 2020–21.

Result

New baseline. Priority natural values and appropriate indicators for those values were identified for all six mainland and island parks and the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Thresholds for evaluating the condition of the values were determined using a 4-point scale with the categories 'good', 'good with some concerns', 'significant concerns' and 'poor'. A baseline condition was established for each value using the most recently available data. Baselines were set for 19 natural values. Of these, two natural values were determined to be in 'good' condition (representing 11 per cent of the total), nine were in the 'good with some concerns' category (47 per cent of total), five were in the 'significant concerns' category (26 per cent of total), and three were in the 'poor' category (16 per cent of total).

Analysis

Priority natural values were selected to enable monitoring of the condition of major ecosystem types and their constituent species across the different parks, and the relative completeness of the living collection at Australian National Botanic Gardens. Relevant indicators and data collection methods were chosen taking into consideration feasibility and consistency of measurement, precision, and sensitivity to changes of interest. Data was collected through field surveys (including the use of remote sensing techniques) and species inventories. Thresholds for evaluating condition of values were determined through consultation with subject matter experts. Over half of the values were rated as being in the two higher condition categories, 'good with some concerns' or 'good'. These included, for example:

- The Norfolk Island green parrot (measured through the number of birds fledged from fortified nests, with a rating of 'good with some concerns'), reflecting continued success of the management program being delivered in Norfolk Island National Park.
- The eastern bristlebird (measured using linear density recorded in survey transects) and long-nosed bandicoot (measured using the minimum number known to be alive) at Booderee National Park were rated as 'good' and 'good with some concerns' respectively, highlighting the effectiveness of intensive control of feral foxes and of fire management in the park.
- The captive population of mala at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park was rated as 'good with some concerns'. This population represents a major part of the national recovery effort for the species and has important cultural importance for the Anangu people.

Analysis (cont)

- Likewise, another captive species, the Christmas Island blue-tailed skink was also categorised as ‘good with some concerns’ due to the successful introduction of the species to the Cocos Islands and effective ongoing management of the captive population.
- The Australian National Botanic Gardens’ collection of Commonwealth listed threatened plant species was rated as ‘good with some concerns’ reflecting a large number of threatened species already in the collection and aspirations to increase further increase the representation of these species in the living collection and seed bank.

Forty-two per cent of values were in the lower two condition categories. These included:

- The extent of long-unburnt vegetation and mammal assemblages in Kakadu National Park (‘poor’ and ‘significant concerns’ respectively).
- The mangata (desert quandong) at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (‘significant concerns’).

Improving the condition of these values will require long-term management and focused efforts are already underway. The baselines established in 2020–21 provide an important foundation for recording and evaluating effectiveness of future management. During 2020–21 we reported on priority natural values for terrestrial parks and the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Marine park values require prioritisation as per Target 2.3. The number of priority natural values to be assessed will increase in future years as work continues developing a framework for evaluating management effectiveness across the Commonwealth parks and gardens.

The 19 natural values represent a selection of some of the most important natural values across the Commonwealth parks and gardens. They are part of a set of values that, with associated indicators, were identified through the Performance Criteria Review in 2019 and refined further over the last year as work continued to develop a broader framework for monitoring and evaluating management effectiveness. The intention is to build on this set of initial values over time to ensure that monitoring and reporting on natural values is representative of the major ecosystems in each park and provides information on the ecological integrity of those ecosystems, along with the condition of other priority values such as particular threatened species and biological collections.

Target 2.2	Maintain or improve the condition of priority cultural values in Commonwealth parks
Rationale	This target is a measure of the condition of priority cultural values across Commonwealth parks. 'Priority values' are defined as the cultural and heritage attributes that are most highly valued and require maintenance or enhancement. This target is a proxy measure of how well we manage tangible and intangible cultural values; and is a key component of protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural values of Commonwealth parks.
Method	In 2020–21, Parks Australia intended to collect data on priority cultural values through consultation with Traditional Owners, field surveys and site inspections that were tailored in method and frequency to the cultural value. Data from these surveys was then to be used to assess the condition of the cultural value on a scale from 'poor' to 'good'. The thresholds for each scale were to be set for each individual value based on best available data, knowledge and conservation goals. It was intended that a baseline for each value would be determined either in advance or using the first year of data. This will enable changes to be reported over time. The condition assessment for each cultural value is intended to be aggregated to provide an individual park rating and aggregated again to provide a rating for all Commonwealth parks. During 2020–21 we intended to report on priority cultural values for our terrestrial parks (excluding the Australian National Botanic Gardens). Australian Marine Park values require prioritisation as per Target 2.3. The number of priority cultural values to be assessed will increase in future years as baselines develop for all of our Commonwealth parks.
Measure	Record baseline
Baseline	The baseline condition assessment rating for priority cultural values in Commonwealth parks will be set in 2020–21
Result	Partially achieved. Selecting indicators for any values is a complex task that needs to be approached thoughtfully and will require extensive consultation with park staff, Traditional Owners, community members, experts and wider stakeholders. This is particularly true for many of the Indigenous cultural values. Many cultural values have been prioritised across the parks (e.g. key rock art sites are well known and maintained) but further work is needed to explore the values in greater detail, starting with the jointly managed parks to identify indicators and appropriate thresholds for assessing condition of the values.

Result (cont)

Some of the natural values reported under 2.1 also have significant cultural value. For example, the mala at Uluru-Kata Tjuta is a species of significant cultural importance to the Anangu people and further consultation will be needed to define the associated key cultural values and indicators of the mala. The framework approach used to evaluate priority natural values will be instructive as a starting point to guide discussions on cultural values and will be applied through the development of a new Management Effectiveness Framework that sets standards for different categories of indicators across the parks. Focussed discussions are required to formulate what is appropriate to record and how to obtain meaningful measures of the condition of cultural values, using indicators that are relevant to the cultural context of each park. We will also refer to the framework developed for sea country (see 2.3 below). That framework has been developed to identify cultural values, including a cultural significance criterion for Key Natural Values.

Analysis

Notwithstanding that the framework approach and associated method was not completed in 2020–21, we continued to identify, monitor and protect cultural values in our parks including:

- Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park staff maintain a Cultural Site Management System that records the condition and management activities associated with over 100 recorded cultural sites. Parks Australia intends to develop an overarching Knowledge for Managing Country Strategy linked to the park management plan that includes cultural protocols for managing priority natural and cultural values and associated threats.
- At Kakadu National Park, the recently completed NESP Bininj/Munguuy Healthy Country Indicators research project has provided a foundation to build on indicators of healthy country that have been co-designed with Traditional Owners. Many of these comprise indicators of important cultural values of associated woodland, floodplain and stone country areas of Kakadu.
- At Booderee National Park in March, the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council (WBACC) held a two-day workshop on fire, with a strong focus on indigenous fire management. This workshop with Traditional Owners, community members, park staff and specialists was key to defining values and indicators underpinning important cultural practices, such as cultural burning, which can be used to inform monitoring going forward. The park also progressed development of a cultural heritage strategy and priority actions, a cultural heritage contract with WBACC and the appointment of three cultural heritage officers.

Analysis (cont)

- In 2020–21 we made progress in identifying and protecting priority cultural values in our island parks. On Christmas Island we undertook repairs to the Datok Kong Temple – a shrine erected by Chinese workers in the past for protection and to promote harmony. The shrine is to a Datok Kong deity. Datok Kong is a convergence between the Malay belief of a local guardianship spirit and a Confucian belief of ancestor worship. The temple was in disrepair and, under the guidance of the Temple Committee, Parks Australia have restored it this year. We have also developed an interpretive sign for the temple so tourists are able to appreciate the cultural values associated with it.
- At Pulu Keeling National Park we undertook oral history recordings with elders in the Cocos Island community to document ecological knowledge of the park and historical use of the park. We undertook maintenance repairs to the grave sites at Pulu Keeling National Park and replaced the sign at the Shipwreck of the *SS Emden*.
- At Norfolk Island National Park, we began community consultations about improving interpretation regarding the Norfolk Island language and important cultural sites within the park. In 2020–21 we also issued permits for archaeological assessments of possible Polynesian and European (both penal settlement and WW2) heritage sites within the park.
- Partnerships in science and cultural heritage activities have engaged Traditional Owners and Indigenous communities in sea country management, building capability, understanding and awareness of cultural and natural values in our Australian Marine Parks. For example, we undertook a preliminary cultural values project scoping for Wessel Marine Park, with Yirralka, Dhimurru and Marthakal ranger groups

Target 2.3

Review and define priority natural and cultural values for all Commonwealth parks and gardens, by 2023

Rationale

This target is a measure of the proportion of Commonwealth parks and gardens that have reviewed their natural and cultural values and defined their priority values. Understanding the priority natural and cultural values of Commonwealth parks and gardens is essential for condition reporting to ensure opportunities and threats are effectively managed.

Method

An initial set of priority values have been or will be identified for terrestrial parks and progress is reported on under targets 2.1 and 2.2. Work is under way to identify further natural and cultural values in terrestrial parks (reported above), and in the Australian Marine Parks. The remainder of

Method (cont)	this target focusses on the review, refinement and identification of priority values for our 58 Australian Marine Parks. Data will be collected primarily through field surveys, site inspections and consultation with Traditional Owners, which will be tailored in method and frequency to the value. The data will then be used to prioritise and define specific natural and cultural values to maximise management efficiency and cost effectiveness.
Measure	Natural: undertake work to allow definition of priority values in Australian Marine Parks Cultural: undertake work to allow definition of priority values in Australian Marine Parks
Baseline	The provisional baseline will be the percentage of Australian Marine Parks with defined priority cultural and natural values in 2021–22
Result	Partially achieved. Key Ecological Features (KEFs) and Biologically Important Areas (BIAs) were identified as part of the marine bioregional planning process and are indicators of the biodiversity, and hence values, that are within the Australian Marine Parks. Further refinement of priority natural values for the Australian Marine Parks is now underway through the identification of Key Natural Values (KNVs). Refinement of priority natural values for the South-east Marine Parks Network occurred in 2020–21 and will be undertaken for the remaining four marine park networks and the Coral Sea Marine Park in 2021–22. Priority values identification will also be informed through engagement with Traditional Owners. A framework for identifying cultural values, including a cultural significance criterion for priority natural values, has been developed. During 2021–22 engagement will commence with Indigenous organisations who care for sea country in Australian Marine Parks on sea country values (recognising that Traditional Owners do not typically separate Country values into natural, cultural and heritage value components). Management plans for 44 of the parks only came into effect in July 2018 and priority values will be reviewed as new knowledge becomes available.
Analysis	In 2020–21 a natural values common language was established for Australian Marine Parks and, using this common language, the distribution of ecosystems was modelled nationally. Common language has also been developed for cultural values, and social, cultural and economic benefits. Key natural values were identified through expert elicitation based on nationally and internationally recognised criteria. This work was done in collaboration with the National Environmental Science Program Marine Biodiversity Hub at https://www.nespmarine.edu.au/ . In 2020–21 work commenced to develop a sea country

Analysis (cont)

management framework for Australian Marine Parks. Once finalised this framework will establish how Parks Australia will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to understand, protect and celebrate Indigenous cultural heritage in Australian Marine Parks.

Performance Criterion 2: Opportunities and threats to natural and cultural values are effectively managed for all Australians – Analysis of performance

Protecting and conserving the natural and cultural heritage values of our parks and restoring their health and integrity where needed is a primary purpose for the Director and Parks Australia. In our terrestrial parks we strive to fulfil this obligation through monitoring programs, and recovery and control actions targeted at threatened or invasive species. In Australian Marine Parks we aim to meet this obligation by implementing our management plans to protect the natural and cultural values and undertaking collaborative parks management through our advisory committees.

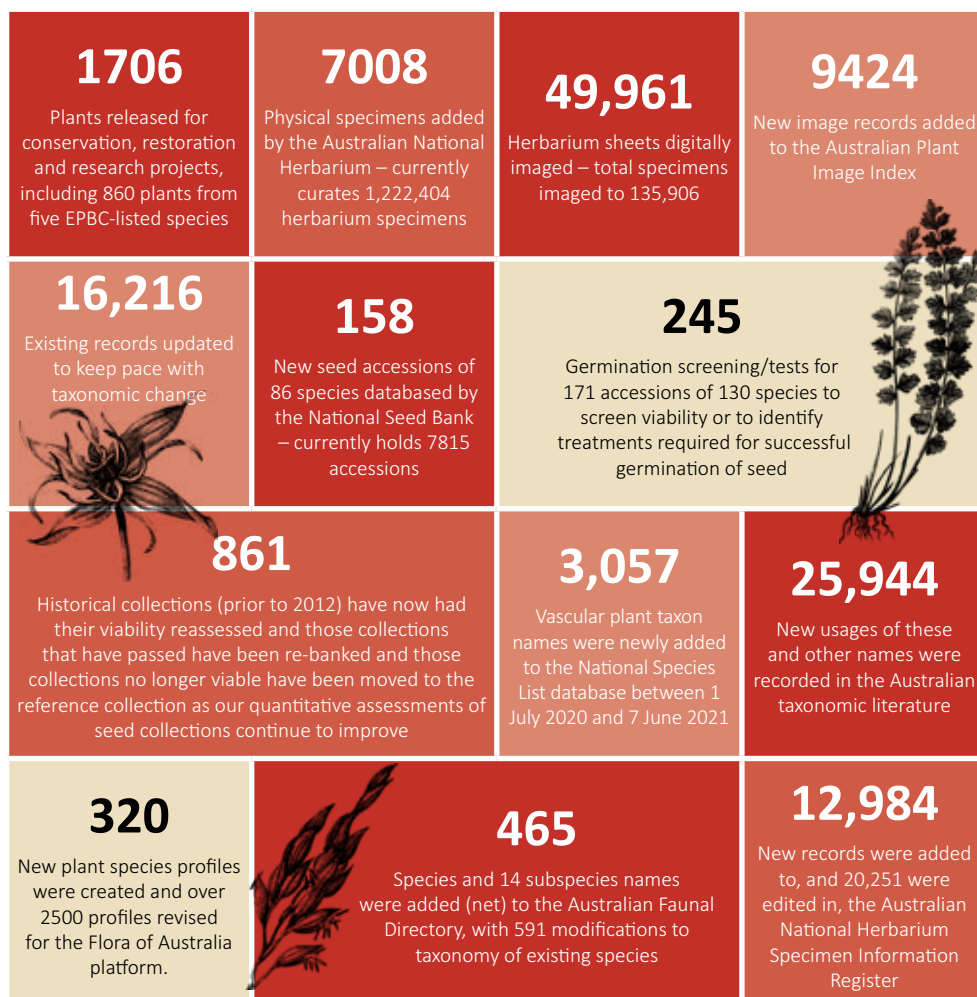
Our performance against this criterion is influenced by the complex operating environment across our parks and gardens. The COVID-19 pandemic that necessitated the temporary closure of some parks, conversely provided some opportunities to implement additional monitoring of threatened and invasive species. Resource constraints, primarily but not exclusively related to the pandemic, created challenges in our ability to deliver our programs during 2020–21. To increase our capacity, we looked for opportunities to collaborate with local organisations, state and territory governments and the department to undertake our activities (see Performance Criterion 3 on page 57 for more details).

Two case studies that showcase a portion of the good work undertaken across our parks in 2020–21 that support this performance criterion are improving understanding of the values across our Australian Marine Parks (Case Study 1 page 54), and technology use in parks to protect and deliver outcomes for natural and cultural values (Case study 2 page 55). We also had some encouraging news from Booderee National Park on results from relocation programs (Breakout box 3 on page 56).

Another example of work that continued throughout 2020–21 and that has delivered tangible outcomes to support this criterion, is the physical and digital natural history collections that were managed and curated according to international standards and best practice. Accessioning of new items together with seed banking and *ex-situ* conservation continue to be a focus of the National Seed Bank. Research using the *ex-situ* seed and living collections has supported on-ground conservation actions, for example surveys and *ex-situ* conservation of species impacted by the 2019–20 bushfires (see case study 4 on page 67). Our significant national biodiversity databases, collection management systems and digital collections were maintained and updated, and work to maintain, modernise and improve critical biodiversity data systems was progressed. For example, Biodiversity Informatics

continues to maintain the Living Collections database for the Australian National Botanic Gardens and has implemented improvements this year that aided us in managing the living plant assets, specifically supporting identification and management of priority collections, including *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC) listed taxa.

Figure 4 By the numbers – progress made across collections



Addressing the gap in the National Representative System of Marine Parks, we made good progress towards establishing marine parks in the Indian Ocean Territories (IOTs) around Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands. A key aspect of this work included three phases of community and stakeholder consultation to help co-design the marine parks with communities, ensuring protection and conservation is balanced with sustainable use considerations. Our ongoing engagement with relevant government agencies will ensure a whole of government approach.

In 2020–21 we supported research initiatives (with Museums Victoria) to study the deep-water habitats of the IOTs, as well as to fund a desktop study on the natural values to help inform the design of the future marine parks. We welcomed the allocation of \$5.4 million of new funding over four years to manage the future marine parks, following their establishment. Once established, IOT marine parks will increase Australia’s marine park coverage from 37 to up to 45 percent of Australia’s waters.

We made some good progress on developing and implementing priorities for cultural heritage management in our jointly managed parks, with guidance from the traditional custodians of the land we lease. The Booderee National Park Cultural Heritage Strategy was developed in partnership with Traditional Owners. Activities and projects under the strategy will continue in 2021–22. The Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Cultural Heritage Management program forms part of the annual operational plan endorsed by the Board and includes the inter-generational transfer of knowledge, on country trips, conducting/documenting cultural activities and rock art/cultural site management. See also target 2.2 on page 47 and dot point one below.

Other key projects that supported this performance criterion are presented below.

- We made significant progress in pursuit of a comprehensive Management Effectiveness Framework (see results against performance measures 2.1 and 2.3 on pages 44 and 49 respectively). There is more foundational work required, particularly for cultural values (see target 2.2 on page 47). This is an ongoing priority that we will progress in 2021–22, with specific resourcing allocated to building our capacity and capability to consider appropriate measures for priority cultural values across the estate. Fully realised, the framework will stand us in good stead for reporting in future years and enable us to effectively identify and prioritise issues early to action effective management responses.
- We continued work to understand and respond to the impacts of a changing climate that will be felt differently across our diverse parks (for example, see Breakout Box 4 on page 56 on climate change vulnerability assessments held in 2020–21).
- In 2020–21 we commissioned science through six research organisations, six government agencies and one citizen science organisation to establish environmental, social and economic baselines and build knowledge about Australian Marine Parks. Seven new science articles have been added to the Australian Marine Park Science Atlas in the last 12 months and an online survey is currently being developed to better understand the usage (audience) and utility of the Science Atlas as a communication tool.
- A draft policy and process was developed in consultation with areas across Parks Australia to deliver a consistent Environmental Impact Assessment process. We anticipate that the policy and process will be finalised in early 2021–22
- We continued to implement Australian Marine Parks management plans and associated management programs to protect and conserve natural, cultural and heritage values of the parks. See case study 2 on page 55 for details of how we improved our understanding of values across our Australian Marine Parks in 2020–21.

CASE STUDY 1

Improving understanding Australian Marine Parks values

Parks Australia continues to improve our understanding of values across Australian Marine Parks through collaborations with government and non-government research institutions.

Working with the National Environmental Science Program (NESP) Marine Biodiversity Hub, Parks Australia collaborated on a pilot project to identify monitoring priorities for natural values in the

South-east Marine Parks Network. This approach forms part of the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) system and will be applied across the entire Australian Marine Park network and the Coral Sea Marine Park, to help support evidence-based management. The report is available at:

<https://www.nespmarine.edu.au/document/designing-targeted-monitoring-program-support-evidence-based-management-australian-marine>.

Parks Australia also worked with NESP to develop national social and economic benchmarks for Australian Marine Parks. The surveys associated with this work highlighted the substantial value placed on, and generally positive attitudes towards the parks. Repeat surveys will provide a way of tracking progress and exploring opportunities to improve management of the AMPs, to generate ecologically sustainable social and economic benefits for the public, recreational fishers, non-extractive recreational users and tourism operators.

At Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs, and Lord Howe Marine Park, Parks Australia worked with government and university researchers to survey mesophotic ecosystems. During 2020–21 the analysis of survey data was completed, with the results revealing a complex seafloor structure with diverse benthic communities and fish populations, which will inform future management of these marine areas.

Parks Australia also collaborated with WA Fisheries and Kimberley Indigenous rangers to document fish, sharks and their habitats across Australian Marine Parks in the Kimberley region. This has improved our understanding of marine park values and culturally important species in the Kimberley, Roebuck and Eighty Mile Beach Marine Parks.



Key natural values workshop for the MERI component (Image: Parks Australia)

Technology use in parks to protect and deliver outcomes for natural and cultural values

Parks Australia continues to employ new technology and adapt existing technologies in innovative ways to conserve natural and cultural values across our national parks and gardens.

In Kakadu, technology and mapping systems are supporting management of the world's largest collection of rock art. The technology brings together traditional knowledge and digital applications to more effectively record key information helping conserve and monitor threats to rock art sites.

At Christmas Island National Park resourceful staff have adapted 15 Felixer feral cat grooming traps to protect the island's robber crabs. Wheelie bins and steel mesh have been integrated into the traps to stop the crabs from accessing the cartridge of toxic gel. The solar-powered traps are equipped with automated cat detection and toxin-dispensing devices and contain a camera and an array of imaging sensors which can distinguish cats from other animal species. This innovative and adaptive use of technology will complement the suite of control techniques being deployed against feral cats on Christmas Island.

Meanwhile, the Australian National Botanic Gardens has developed the 'Find a Plant' application. The application can be used by the public to explore the living collection on their mobile phones and to generate a map showing locations of a species of interest. 'Find a Plant' allows the Gardens staff to undertake critical curatorial functions using the spatial interface, including stocktaking, tree and collection assessment and locating clonal material.



KNP-CSIRO Research Scientist Justin Perry-left- with Park Ranger Kadeem May-right-Microsoft (Image: Parks Australia)



KNP-Kakadu Park Ranger Serena McCartney using the Healthy Country Dashboard-Microsoft (Image: Parks Australia)

BREAK OUT BOX 3

Relocation programs at Booderee National Park

Since 2014 three locally extinct native mammal species- long-nosed potoroo, southern brown bandicoot and eastern quoll – have been reintroduced to Booderee National Park. Of these three species, the southern brown bandicoot and long-nosed potoroo populations remain in the park. However, in early 2021 it appeared that the park had lost its population of eastern quolls. The eastern quolls were the only species relocated to the park that were bred in captivity and were not hardened to predatory threats. Despite this, the eastern quolls showed they could survive relocation, find food, put on weight, breed and raise young. An independent review of all three translocations will be undertaken to inform ongoing efforts to re-establish sustainable populations of these species in Booderee National Park. All three mammals were once abundant in Booderee prior to European settlement and the introduction of foxes and cats to the area. Two decades of intensive fox control at Booderee paved the way for the three reintroduction projects.



Relocation of Southern brown bandicoot *Isodon obesulus* at Booderee National Park (Image: Parks Australia)

BREAK OUT BOX 4

Climate change vulnerability assessments

Over the past year, Parks Australia has undertaken climate change vulnerability assessments for Uluru-Kata Tjuṯa and Kakadu National Parks. This is part of a broader departmental assessment of Australia's UNESCO World Heritage properties. Alongside an in-depth desk-based review, workshops were held in both parks to hear indigenous perspectives and compile best current knowledge to assess the vulnerabilities of both parks' Outstanding Universal Values under future climate change. Current climate change projections include increased average temperatures, increased heatwaves and intensity of extreme events, and specifically for Kakadu, sea level rise. This will potentially negatively affect flora and fauna species, communities and ecosystems, important cultural values, the provision of social and economic benefits, and the ability for Traditional Owners and community members to live on and look after country. The updated knowledge gained from the vulnerability assessments will provide the foundation for new climate change strategies for each park, and the application of this approach to Parks Australia's other protected areas.



Members of the Anangu community and Parks Australia staff participating in the climate change workshop in Uluru-Kata Tjuṯa National Park (Image: Parks Australia)

Performance Criterion 3: Partnerships with Traditional Owners and/or other stakeholders enhance the management of Commonwealth parks and gardens for all Australians – Results

Target 3.1	Maintain or improve key stakeholder and partner satisfaction
Rationale	This target is a measure of the overall satisfaction level of key stakeholders and partners with the Director's management of Commonwealth parks and gardens. Satisfaction is an indication of the strength and effectiveness of partnerships that enhance management.
Method	Surveys were intended to be conducted confidentially with the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Australian Marine Parks Advisory Committees, island park Committees, and the Boards of Management at jointly managed parks. Each partner will be asked <i>'On a scale of 1–10, how satisfied are you with Parks Australia's management of [park/garden]?' with 1–2 = 'Very unsatisfied', 3–4 = 'Unsatisfied', 5–6 = 'Somewhat satisfied', 7–8 = 'Satisfied', 9–10 = 'Very satisfied'</i> . The partner satisfaction rate for each group is reported as a percentage of respondents who identify as being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. The partner satisfaction rating for each group was then aggregated to obtain an overall partnership satisfaction rate for all partners in the financial year.
Measure	Record baseline
Baseline	The partner satisfaction rate baseline to be set in 2020–21
Result	Partially achieved. Satisfaction surveys were returned for Australian Marine Park Advisory Committees (AMPAC) using pre-existing surveys. All six AMPACs held two meetings in 2020–21. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel and physical distancing restrictions meetings were via teleconference or video conference. Ninety-eight per cent of responses (from 47 feedback surveys) received from Committee members after each meeting indicated they are satisfied or highly satisfied with how their committee is delivering against its role. The question asked of committee members was: <i>In relation to the Term of Reference of the advisory committee, are there any improvements that can be made to help you to fulfil your role?</i> Designing meaningful surveys that are instructive for management and stakeholders across our terrestrial parks and gardens will be progressed in 2021–22.

Analysis

AMPACs support the collaborative management of Australian Marine Parks. The role of AMPACs is advisory, not regulatory or decision-making. Each committee supports and collaborates with the Director to manage Australian Marine Parks by:

- Providing advice on the development and delivery of implementation plans, including assisting to prioritise management actions and develop performance measures.
- Providing information on Traditional Owner, stakeholder and park user views, knowledge and needs.
- Contributing to the periodic evaluation and review of implementation plans.

In 2020–21 Parks Australia undertook early discussions with Board Secretariats to explore avenues to survey satisfaction of the Joint Boards of Management. The Kakadu and Booderee Boards had significant changes in Traditional Owner membership in 2020–21. As these new Board members commence their tenures, we will work with them on survey design. Pursuing a 'one size fits all' survey method may not be fit for purpose. Options will be explored as different metrics by park may be more useful to ensure the different perspectives are accounted for. The final survey design will also need to land on what 'parks management' means in different park contexts.

The Australian National Botanic Gardens has a long-standing relationship with the Friends of the Gardens. This is an example of enduring trust with key partners that delivers results. The administering body is the Friends' Council, which consists of nine elected members and ex officio (non-voting) members that meet with the Garden's Executive monthly. While direct satisfaction surveys were not conducted in 2020–21, as a proxy the high satisfaction levels from the Friends can be measured by the number of projects they committed to fund in 2019–20 – 12 projects totalling \$315,229. In November 2020, the Australian National Botanic Gardens and Friends also updated their partnership agreement to include additional Friends activity groups that assist the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

In island parks, the Consultative Committees are only recently re-established, which provides a good opportunity to establish survey methods early on. Discussions on appropriate survey methods will be progressed in 2021–22.

Target 3.2	Resources delivered through partnerships meet or exceed target level
Rationale	This target is a measure of the financial resources delivered to Parks Australia through partnerships. It reflects how well our partnerships function, and if we are maximising opportunities to work with partners to enhance the management of Commonwealth parks and gardens.
Method	<p>For 2020–21, we measured the dollar value of delivered resources from partnerships as revenue and donations, aggregated for all Commonwealth parks and gardens. Dollar amounts were adjusted according to Consumer Price Index where relevant. For forward years, delivered resources from partnerships will also include in-kind contributions. Other avenues of resource delivery may also be identified for reporting in future years.</p> <p>Revenue: from commercial partnerships (including tourism, activity and business licenses), scientific and research partnerships.</p> <p>Donations: philanthropic donations through any organisation or trust.</p> <p>In-kind contributions: goods, services or resources offered at no-cost or a discounted rate.</p>
Measure	Record baseline (noting baseline is available in 2019–20)
Baseline	The amount delivered through partnerships across all Commonwealth parks and gardens will be set in 2020–21.
Result	Achieved. Resources delivered through partnerships in 2020–21 totalled \$2.4 million, compared to \$2.4 million in 2019–20.
Analysis	Timing in the delivery of projects under partnership across the parks resulted in no material change in partnership contributions. Some projects were completed (and ceased) and were replaced by new projects. Resources received free of charge from the department have been excluded (~\$4 million). These comprise corporate support services provided under the Memorandum of Understanding for free. These were not considered partnerships. Government funded programs have been excluded as these were not considered partnerships.

Target 3.3	Maintain or increase the number of people who identify as members of a local or Indigenous community who are employed directly or indirectly by the Parks Australia Division of the department.
Rationale	<p>This target is a measure of the number of people who identify as members of local or Indigenous communities that are employed directly or indirectly by the Parks Australia Division of the department. This target reflects the level of local community representation in the management activities of Commonwealth parks.</p>
Method	<p>In 2020–21 we measured the number of staff directly employed by the Parks Australia Division of the department who elected to self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Data was then aggregated to provide a total number of self-identified staff for Commonwealth parks. Staff are asked to identify whether they are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent only, and this is the data source that has been used for the benchmarking of staff. From a HR system-led point of view, there is currently no facility to gauge whether an Indigenous staff member who discloses their background is local to a particular area or belongs to a Traditional Owner clan group on the park. Indigenous numbers are collected and reported for all locations and areas of Parks Australia, including in areas outside of terrestrial parks (for example, Canberra and Tasmania).</p> <p>In 2020–21 we intended to develop a centralised reporting system that requires contracted business and operators to report if they indirectly employ staff who self-identify as a member of a local or Indigenous community.</p>
Measure	Direct: record baseline
Baseline	The baseline for self-identified staff to be set in 2020–21
Results	<p>New baseline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct employment: at 30 June 2021, the number of staff (headcount) employed by the Parks Australia Division of the department who identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent was 141, compared with the total headcount of 197 staff at 30 June 2020. • Indirect employment: Developing a centralised framework of data collection and storage has progressed and is close to finalisation but was not completed in 2020–21.

Analysis

Direct employment: The primary reason for the decrease in the headcount of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander employees of the Parks Australia Division of the department can be attributed to a personnel system audit exercise of Irregular and intermittent (casual) contracted staff which removed the profiles of staff in the personnel system who no longer had an active contract, or who otherwise were not available to perform casual work. As a result of the audit, around 50 non-current staff profiles were removed from the system in January 2021, primarily at Kakadu National Park, following consultation with staff and park management.

In many cases, the staff profiles removed were for workers who had not undertaken work for the Parks Australia Division of the department for periods between 6 months to 3 years. Additionally, some profiles were removed as staff members had been employed by the Parks Australia Division of the department on separate contracts (either in an ongoing or non-ongoing, fixed-term capacity) and a duplicate staff profile was created, meaning that the individuals were identified twice in staff headcount. In identifying and addressing anomalies in our baseline reporting and removing a handful of duplicate staff profiles which were inflating staff headcount figures, we have made progress in improving our ability to accurately quantify the staffing numbers of the Parks Australia Division of the department.

We have worked through these issues to establish a more accurate baseline for future reporting, and we are also considering other more illustrative indicators for future reports.

Indirect employment: The Parks Australia Division of the department has been looking at clauses in the Request for Tender and Contract templates which will enable us to collect the data to report on indirect employment. Once this work has been finalised, guidance will be released for procurement and contract managers and including the collation and storage of the data. It is anticipated that partial year data from the 2021–22 financial year will be sufficient to create a baseline and that baseline will be monitored and reported against using 2022–23 financial year data.

Performance Criterion 3: Partnerships with Traditional Owners and/or other stakeholders enhance the management of Commonwealth parks and gardens for all Australians – Analysis of performance

Given the breadth of functions we undertake and geographical locations we work in, there are a wide variety of partners, stakeholders and collaborators that make significant contributions to achieving our purpose, including:

- Joint management partnerships with Traditional Owners, trusted relationships with community members and close working relationships with Indigenous organisations are at the heart of planning and management activities in Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta national parks, and for sea country in our marine parks.
- Partners from all levels of government support us to undertake management activities and compliance activities, deliver services, monitor and share information and provide emergency responses.
- Research partnerships are vital to help us understand and conserve the values within Commonwealth parks and gardens, and they provide information needed to understand the places we manage and make appropriate investment and management decisions.
- Successful working relationships with industry partners such as tourism associations and local business operators are essential for attracting visitors to our parks and showcasing the spectacular places we protect. They also play an important role in developing employment and development opportunities within local communities.
- Multi-sector advisory committees contribute knowledge and experience to advise on the management of our parks and gardens, and to work with us to share knowledge on common themes.
- International partnerships are important for sharing knowledge and to collaborate on best practice management of our places.
- Community engagement including citizen science and volunteering opportunities enable residents of local communities and visitors to contribute their enthusiasm, expertise and capability to help us understand and look after our parks and gardens.

Supporting the aspirations of Traditional Owners and local communities in managing their land and sea country, as well as providing economic and cultural benefits is a priority. On 26 June 2021, following many years of work, the Director relinquished freehold title over the town of Jabiru and it was handed back to its Traditional Owners, the Mirrar. This action resolved one of the longest outstanding land claims in Australia and was a momentous occasion for all parties. It paves the way for remediation and development works to commence in Jabiru. As part of the \$216 million Growing Tourism in Kakadu the Director has committed \$35 million to remediation works in Jabiru which will commence in 2021.

The relationship between the Director, Parks Australia and the Traditional Owners of the land we lease for national parks has been tested in recent times.

In July 2020 the Kakadu Board of Management notified the Minister of its vote of no confidence in senior management of Kakadu National Park and the Director. A range of measures are underway to address these concerns. On 31 March 2021, the Minister announced an independent Senior Advisory Group had been established to advise on joint management arrangements for Kakadu and other jointly managed Commonwealth national parks. The Group will work closely with the Traditional Owners of each jointly managed national park, including Land Councils and Boards of Management, and provide advice to Minister Ley in the second half of 2021 for Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta.

In September 2020 the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) brought a criminal prosecution against the Director for constructing a walking track at Gunlom Falls without having obtained an Authority Certificate under the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989 (NTASS Act). At 30 June 2021 this matter was still before the courts and cannot be commented on further. In the meantime, the Director is working constructively with the Traditional Owners of the area and has an AAPA certificate that allows for the commencement of realignment of the Gunlom walking track. It is critical to ensure that this is done in a sensitive way that respects the site, its Traditional Owners and their culture and traditions. The Director is committed to building a better process to consult with Traditional Owners and we have made significant progress in this space, with new consultation guidelines being developed with the support of the Kakadu Board of Management and the Northern Land Council.

The Director is committed to rebuilding trust and restoring respectful and constructive relationships with the Boards of all joint managed parks.

The Director places the highest possible priority on improving pathways for Indigenous training and employment in our parks and gardens. We will continue to implement place-based actions to increase training and development, and employment opportunities for local Indigenous people that are within budget and agreed locally (for example, through Boards of Management). For example, at Uluru-Kata Tjuta, two talent management pilot programs were held during 2020–21 specifically for Indigenous APS 3/4 and APS5/6 staff, two funding agreements with the Mutitjulu Community Aboriginal Corporation provide for the engagement of Community Liaison Officers and community rangers, and the park employs a Coordinator to implement the Mutitjulu Community Ranger Program.

To illustrate a portion of the good work undertaken across our parks in 2020–21 that supports this performance criterion, please read about Tjakura monitoring program at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (Case study 3 page 66); bushfire recovery partnerships (Case study 4 page 67) and cultural burning workshops at Booderee National Park (Breakout box 5 page 68). Showcasing our close association with the independent National Parks Conservation Trust, we have included a breakout box that celebrates the successful seed bank design and equipment campaign (Breakout box 6 page 68).

Other key activities we progressed to support this performance criterion are presented below.

- In September 2020 the Director and the CSIRO signed a new Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research Partnership Agreement 2020–25 to extend the valued long-standing joint venture arrangements until June 2025 that continues to be recognised for delivering impactful and innovative science and research.
- Twenty-two projects worth \$6 million commenced in December 2020, as part of the second round of the Our Marine Parks Grants Program. This second round is supporting interested and capable organisations and community groups to engage in marine park management. More information can be found on our website at: parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/management/partnerships/our-marine-parks-grants/.
- Through our Indigenous engagement program, partnerships with Traditional Owners and Indigenous ranger groups are being developed to support the management of sea country in Australian Marine Parks and to deliver social, cultural and economic benefits to Traditional Owners. To date, three partnerships have been established with Aboriginal Corporations to support collaborative management of sea country in the Kimberley, Wessel and Eastern Recherche marine parks. In addition to these partnerships, a range of collaborative projects have been undertaken in conjunction with other agencies to improve understanding of sea country and facilitate Indigenous peoples' participation in marine science activities.
- Science projects in 2020–21 have been achieved through existing and new science partnerships including with: the NESP Marine Biodiversity Hub; the Australian Institute of Marine Science; CSIRO; James Cook University; the University of Tasmania; the University of Western Australia; the Sydney Institute of Marine Science; Museums



Victoria; Reef Life Survey; and state government organisations. The American philanthropically funded Schmidt Ocean Institute research vessel Falkor has also undertaken research voyages in the Coral Sea and Ashmore Reef marine parks.

- Partnerships in science and cultural heritage activities are building capability, understanding and awareness of cultural and natural values. For example, in 2020–21 Indigenous ranger groups participated in ecological baselines surveys and Green turtle tracking and population studies in the Kimberley, Roebuck and Eighty Mile Beach marine parks (with the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions).

The National Parks Conservation Trust and Parks Australia progressed four joint projects in 2020–21:

- The Christmas Island Crab Cadets and Junior Ranger Program that will encourage environmental stewardship and improve the potential for local employment in the park or the islands growing tourism industry.
- The *Seed the Future* campaign that raised funds to support the purchase of specialist equipment to secure more plant species.
- Working towards a 3-year collection, research and propagation project to secure threatened plant species in Namadgi National Park that were severely impacted by the bushfires.
- Working to commence a project in 2021–22 to create the first Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Management Plan communicated in language (in Pitjantjara/Yankunytjatjara), providing employment and learning about film making for Anangu people.

More information about this and other projects is available on the Trust's website at <https://parkstrust.org.au/unique-projects/>



CASE STUDY 3

Tjakura monitoring program at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park

When sharing her understanding of the Tjakura's underground burrow system, senior knowledge holder Imantura Richards says, 'There is a meeting place'.

Anangu and park staff have worked together in conservation land management since the handback of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park to Traditional Owners in 1985. Anangu Rangers, including Imantura Richards, have shared their intimate knowledge with scientists over many years to improve conservation outcomes in the dual-World Heritage Listed national park.

This year park and community rangers have worked with scientists to trial a new Tjakura (*Liopholis kintorei*, Great Desert Skink) survey method using 'two-way science' that will help integrate monitoring efforts in the park with those in the surrounding region. This method combines western science with Indigenous skills and ecological knowledge. Parks Australia has secured funding in partnership with CSIRO for a postdoctoral research fellow to apply environmental DNA techniques to study the Tjakura. This will combine genomic sequencing and analysis with traditional ecological knowledge to better understand the distribution, population structure and ecology of the species.

Meanwhile, drone use is being investigated to complement the new survey method while the National Parks Conservation Trust is developing opportunities for public investment in this project.

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park is a member of the newly established National Tjakura Recovery Team and work in the park contributes to conservation of the species overall.

Using 'two-way science' techniques to develop a consistent survey method will help protect the Tjakura for generations to come and continues to build on the collaboration between Anangu and Parks Australia since handback.



Park and Mutitjulu rangers survey Tjakura burrows (Image: Parks Australia)



Tjakura emerging from burrow (Image: CLC Tjakura Rangers)

Bushfire recovery partnerships

The National Seed Bank at the Australian National Botanic Gardens has been a key driver in recovery projects focused on seed banking, germination trials and rapid flora assessments for fire affected regions in NSW and the ACT.

During the 2020–21 summer the team worked in Namadgi National Park targeting fire affected species including *Westringia lucida* and *Celmisia* sp. *Pulchella*.

In total, the National Seed Bank collected 25 species, either new to seed banking or from new populations. This ensures those species are now conserved and available for research. Further analysis on the impact of fires on the plants and seeds collected will help secure the future of the species.

The National Seed Bank will continue its strategic partnership with the Australian Seed Bank Partnership over the next two years, showing leadership in bushfire recovery and conservation of Australia's native flora.

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership has secured grants to fund six bushfire recovery projects after the Black Summer Bushfires. These funds will partially support the National Seed Bank to focus on seed banking of priority species of south-eastern Australia.

Meanwhile, at Booderee National Park, the National Seed Bank team and Booderee staff made 13 collections of eight species for long-term seed banking and research. This included

timely collections of *Rhodamnia rubescens* (Brush/Scrub Turpentine) just before the Black Summer Bushfires that were then propagated in the park's nursery for transplanting back into the park. This species is heavily impacted by Myrtle rust and applying mitigating actions to prevent extinction has been critical.



Aminya Hepp collecting coastal heathland species at Booderee National Park (Image: Jarrod Ruch, ANBG)



National Seed Bank and Booderee staff came together to collect seed in the park (Image: Booderee National Park)

BREAK OUT BOX 5

Cultural burning workshops at Booderee National Park

Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council (WBACC) held a Cultural Burning Workshop in March 2021 with the support of Parks Australia, the Australian National University and the National Environmental Science Program through the Threatened Species Recovery Hub. This was a rare opportunity for three generations of community members to discuss fire management at Booderee. The workshop has led to the WBACC Caring for Country Rangers working to develop proposals for cultural burns. A draft workshop report was developed for the WBACC and this report will be used to develop a cultural burning program. The workshop ended with emotional testimonials from participants about what the workshop experience meant to them and was a positive step in the joint management relationship.



Indigenous fire management workshop at Booderee National Park (Image: Parks Australia)

BREAK OUT BOX 6

Seed bank design and equipment campaign

In May 2021, the Hon Sussan Ley, Minister for the Environment, unveiled designs for a \$7.2 million state-of-the-art new National Seed Bank at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra, ensuring the long-term protection of Australia's native plant species. The new National Seed Bank will provide long term storage for rare and threatened Australian

plant species, research on seed ecology and supply of seed for recovery of rare species and plant communities. The Seed Bank design features a large vault that will quadruple the existing seed storage capacity, with a new advanced laboratory to enhance the research and conservation programs at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Construction will commence in 2022 and be completed in 2023. The National Parks Conservation Trust partnered with the Australian National Botanic Gardens to launch the Seed the Future online auction to further increase the new National Seed Bank's capabilities through raising funds to support the purchase of specialist equipment.



National Seed Bank aerial view (Image: Guida Mosely Brown Architects)



Norfolk Island National Park – Fauna – Bird – Green parrot (Image: Parks Australia)





Management and accountability

5

Corporate Governance

The Director of National Parks

The Director of National Parks is a corporate Commonwealth entity under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA 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 current office holder is Jody Swirepik.

See Table 13 for full details of the entity's Accountable Authorities during the 2020–21 reporting period.

Table 13: Details of Accountable Authority during the reporting period (2020–21)

Name	Jody Swirepik
Qualifications of the Accountable Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bachelor Science (Hon 1st)• Masters of Science• GAICD
Experience of the Accountable Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previous appointment as the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (3 years to February 2018).• Three years with the Clean Energy Regulator covering carbon farming and emissions reduction (reverse auctions), National emissions reporting, and liability acquittal for Australia's Renewable Energy Target.• Over 25 years of experience in the water sector driving a range of initiatives at the state and federal level including state water reforms, The Living Murray and parts of the Basin Plan.• Early career included working for the NSW and ACT Environment Protection Authorities in regulatory and reform roles and for the ACT Government in planning and policy roles.
Position Title	Acting Director of National Parks
Date of commencement	1 March 2021

Dr James Findlay was the Director of National Parks until 25 August 2020. From 25 August 2020 to 1 March 2021 Mr James Larsen was the acting Director of National Parks.

The Director is accountable to the Minister with responsibility for administration of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). As at 30 June 2021, the responsible Minister was the Hon Sussan Ley MP. 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 2020–21 no ministerial directions were given to the Director and there were no directions continuing from previous years.

The Minister responsible for the PGPA Act could, under section 22 of the Act, make a Government Policy Order specifying a general policy of the Australian Government that applies to the Director. No Government Policy Orders were issued to the Director in 2020–21.

The Director is assisted by staff employed by Parks Australia, a division of the department.

Senior executive management team

The Parks Australia senior executive team comprises five Assistant Secretaries of Parks Australia: Dr Judy West, Mr Adam Carlon, Ms Kate Turner, Dr Barbara Musso, and Mr Karl Dyason, and an acting Branch Manager, Ms Helen Badger. Mr Jason Mundy also formed part of the senior executive management team. See Chapter 3 for biographic details.

Senior executive management team members are located close to the business of land and sea management, spread among offices at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra, Hobart and Darwin, and they conduct regular travel to our parks and gardens. The executive and their teams meet regularly to consider strategic matters, monitor performance against the corporate plan, and consider recommendations from audits and investigations related to work, health and safety matters.

As required under Paragraph 17BE(ta) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (Rule), remuneration information for key management staff and senior executive staff employed by the Parks Australia Division of the department can be found in Tables 14 and 15.

Senior management team

The Parks Australia senior management team comprises terrestrial and marine park managers and senior section leaders. Senior section leaders assist park managers in delivering priority management and operational plans. The senior Parks Australia management team meets regularly with the executive team to discuss priorities, monitor performance and facilitate communication. These meetings also provide an opportunity to discuss Australian Government and corporate priorities and initiatives. An annual Parks Australia Leadership Forum also involves all senior managers. A virtual Australian Leadership Forum was held in March 2021 due to COVID-19 safety measures.

Parks Australia faces administration challenges including widely distributed and remote workplaces with cross-cultural environments. Our park managers assist in keeping us connected to the interests and concerns of local communities and provide opportunities to share knowledge and insights. Coordination and cooperation between the senior executive and senior management teams is foundational to Parks Australia's endeavours.

Corporate boards

The Parks Executive Board provides strategic advice and guidance to the Director of National Parks on core business activities and is responsible for overall divisional administration. The Board has oversight of budget, risk management, human resources, work health and safety, strategic direction and policy development. Board members include the Director, and the First Assistant Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, the Chief Finance Officer of Parks Australia and this year also included a separate departmental representative.

The Parks Australia Project Board monitors and supports the costs and delivery of priority projects, major capital works and Australian Government commitments in line with the Project Management Framework. The Board comprises the Director, First Assistant Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, the acting Branch Manager and the Chief Finance Officer of Parks Australia.

The three Boards for jointly managed parks (Park Boards) are discussed later in the *Consultation mechanisms* section of this chapter.

In 2020-21, the Director was assisted by the key management personnel (outside the Minister) of the Parks Australia Executive Board (comprising the Director, the First Assistant Secretary, the Assistant Secretaries and acting Branch Manager of Parks Australia). In 2019–20 the Director had assessed the Director as the sole key management personnel. During the reporting period ending 30 June 2021, the Director was assisted by fifteen Parks Australia executives who meet the definition of key management personnel under the Rule. Their names and the length of term as key Parks Australia management personnel are summarised in Table 14.

Table 14: Length of term as Director and key Parks Australia management personnel

Name	Position	Term as Key Management Personnel
Jody Swirepik	Director of National Parks	Part-year – Appointed 1/03/2021
James Larsen	Director of National Parks	Part-year – Appointed 10/08/2020 and ceased 28/02/2021
James Findlay	Director of National Parks	Part-year – ceased 09/08 2020
Jason Mundy	First Assistant Secretary	Part-year – Appointed 22/11/2020
Karl Dyason	Assistant Secretary	Full year (acted as First Assistant Secretary from 26/08/20 to 24/11/2020)
Barbara Musso	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – Appointed 16/02/2021
Bianca Priest	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – Appointed 25/11/2020 and ceased 28/02/2021
Kim Farrant	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – ceased 31/10/2021
Kerrie Bennison	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – Appointed 31/08/2020 and ceased 24/11/2020
Adam Carlon	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – Appointed 04/01/2021
Carlyn Waters	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – took leave of absence from 03/01/2021
Kate Turner	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – Appointed 26/08/2020
Brant Smith	Assistant Secretary	Part-year – ceased 25/05/2020
Judith West	Assistant Secretary	Full year – Part time
Helen Badger	Acting Branch Manager	Full year

In the notes to the financial statements for the period ending 30 June 2021 (see Chapter 6), the Director disclosed key Parks Australia management personnel expenses as presented in Table 15. Table 16 presents the remuneration breakdown by key Parks Australia management personnel.

Table 15: Overview of Director and key Parks Australia management personnel expenses

	\$
Short-term employee benefits	1,429,829
Post-employment benefits	232,079
Other long-term benefits	21,484
Termination benefits	381,048
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses	2,064,440

The previous interim acting Director of National Parks James Larsen was seconded from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (department) for a period of 6 months and held dual key management personnel positions across both entities. The interim acting Director's remuneration for this period was funded by department and subsequently recorded in the department's financial statements.

Consultation mechanisms

Boards of Management

Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks are managed jointly by the Director and Traditional Owners in accordance with the EPBC Act. Each park has a Board of Management established under the EPBC Act, with a Traditional Owner chair, and majority of Indigenous members nominated by the local Traditional Owners. The Board memberships also include the Director, State and Territory Government representatives and members representing stakeholder groups or individuals with skills relevant to managing the park. Park managers report to the Board at each meeting, and Parks Australia employees provide secretariat support. See Chapter 3 for details of Board Members at 30 June 2021.

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

Under the EPBC Act and the lease arrangements, Parks Australia staff, who are employees of the department, undertake day-to-day management of the park and continuously liaise about decisions affecting the park with Traditional Owners and relevant Aboriginal people as advised by local land councils or associations.

Table 16: Remuneration by Director and by key Parks Australia management personnel¹

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Base salary	Bonuses	Other benefits and allowances		Long service leave	Other long-term benefits		
Jody Swirepik	Director of National Parks	116,316	-	-	20,557	2,369	-	-	139,242
James Larsen	Director of National Parks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
James Findlay	Director of National Parks	33,242	-	-	5,726	823	-	381,048	420,839
Jason Mundy	First Assistant Secretary	167,903	-	-	32,270	3,453	-	-	203,626
Karl Dyason	Assistant Secretary	216,303	-	-	36,965	4,889	-	-	258,157
Barbara Musso	Assistant Secretary	80,999	-	-	13,964	1,859	-	-	96,822
Bianca Priest	Assistant Secretary	38,498	-	-	5,245	845	-	-	44,588
Kim Farrant	Assistant Secretary	76,493	-	-	10,701	1,761	-	-	88,955
Kerrie Bennison	Assistant Secretary	45,919	-	-	4,729	762	-	-	51,410
Adam Carlon	Assistant Secretary	99,915	-	-	21,223	2,636	-	-	123,774
Carlyn Waters	Assistant Secretary	198,073	-	-	37,484	2,580	-	-	238,137
Kate Turner	Assistant Secretary	154,040	-	-	19,803	3,382	-	-	177,225
Brant Smith	Assistant Secretary	58,591	-	-	9,231	-9,090	-	-	58,732
Judith West	Assistant Secretary	143,537	-	-	14,181	5,215	-	-	162,933
Helen Badger	Acting Branch Manager	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		1,429,829	-	-	232,079	21,484	-	381,048	2,064,440

¹ Total remuneration is pro-rata for the period of appointment

Advisory committees

Norfolk Island, Christmas Island and Pulu Keeling National Parks have non-statutory advisory or consultative bodies that include community representatives, scientific experts and representatives of the Director.

Australian Marine Park Advisory Committees support the management of the five marine park networks and the Coral Sea Marine Park. The committees are expertise-based and advise on the implementation of management plans, including the development of programs, and knowledge and needs of Traditional Owners, stakeholders and parks users. The committees meet twice a year to engage with Parks Australia staff on marine park management matters.

Employees participated in consultative committees in both regional and Canberra-based workplaces to support internal management.

Other consultative mechanisms

The EPBC Act requires public consultation take place before the declaration of a Commonwealth park or garden and in the preparation of management plans.

For Commonwealth parks that are Aboriginal owned land, the EPBC Act mandates consultation with, and involvement of, representatives of the Aboriginal landowners about management of the park. The Chair of the relevant land council must be specifically invited to provide comment on the preparation of management plans for jointly managed parks. The Chair must also be consulted, and their views considered in relation to the Director's performance of their functions and exercise of power in relation to the park.

Additional consultation with Traditional Owners of Booderee, Kakadu and Uluṟu-Kata Tjuṯa National Parks occurs 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 exercise of powers in relation to Kakadu and Uluṟu-Kata Tjuṯa National Parks, and to be invited to comment on the preparation of management plans for those parks.

Tourism industry interests are considered through the tourism consultative committees of the Kakadu and Uluṟu-Kata Tjuṯa Boards of Management and through ad hoc working groups.

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. See Chapter 4 for further information.

Our employees

At 30 June 2021, there were 313.4 full time equivalent (FTE) staff in the Parks Australia division of the department, who assist the Director. This represents a decrease of 7 FTE on the previous year. Table 17 shows the FTE at 30 June 2021 for sections responsible for the management of both terrestrial and marine parks.

Most Parks Australia employees are located at Kakadu National Park, the Australian National Botanic Gardens and at the administrative office in Canberra. There are also substantial numbers of Parks Australia staff at Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks, with smaller offices in Darwin, on Norfolk Island, Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Parks Australia employees engaged in the management of Australian Marine Parks are based in Hobart, Canberra and Brisbane.

The position level and location profiles of full time and part time Parks Australia employees at 30 June 2021 (excluding employees mentioned above) are shown in Figure 5, and Table 18 to Table 19. Numbers represent individual Parks Australia Division employees and are not expressed as full-time equivalents.

In summary, Parks Australia had a headcount of 329 for both ongoing and non ongoing roles. The number of Parks Australia employees at the APS 1–6 classification was 244 (74 per cent); with 55 Executive Level 1 Officers (17 per cent); 21 Executive Level 2 Officers (6 per cent); a total of 4 technical, legal, public affairs and specialist scientist officers (1 per cent); and 5 Senior Executive Service Officers (1 per cent).

Gender distribution of Parks Australia employees was roughly equal with 53 per cent female, 47 per cent male and no employees chose to not disclose their gender. Please see Chapter 4 for details about Parks Australia's Indigenous employment in our jointly managed parks.

Parks Australia is committed to equipping its employees with the necessary skills to carry out their duties safely and effectively. Opportunities for staff training and education were somewhat limited by COVID-19, as social distancing and travel restrictions impacted the ability to attend training sessions. Where possible, Parks Australia staff were encouraged to take advantage of online training sessions, available through the department or other channels.

This year Parks Australia internal and external training was available on a range of subjects both corporate and operational. Corporate services training included compliance, work health and safety, governance, financial literacy, customer service and facilitation. Operational and cultural training was conducted on subjects such as conservation and land management, fire management, cultural value mapping and Indigenous skills and languages.

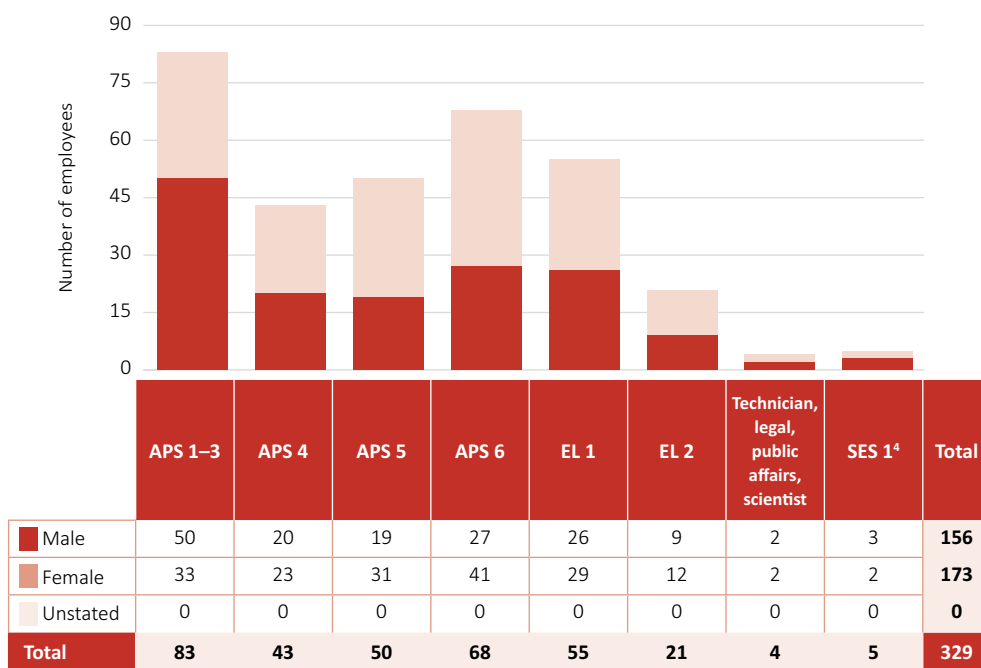
The department also offers a study support scheme for departmental employees to complete formal external training.

Table 17: Five-year overview of Parks Australia employee numbers (full time equivalent at 30 June)¹

	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Management of terrestrial reserves	288	277.2	276.1	272.3	263.9
Management of marine parks	49.9	47.9	66.3	47.7	49.5
Total	337.9	325.2	342.4	320.0	313.4

1 Twelve FTE departmental employees who undertake non-statutory roles delegated to the Director are covered in the department's employee data.

Figure 5: Parks Australia employees (full time and part time) position level profile as at 30 June 2021^{1,2,3}



1 The Director of National Parks is not an SES officer of the department and is not included in this figure.

2 Casual Parks Australia employees are not included in this figure.

3 Twelve FTE departmental employees who undertake non-statutory roles delegated to the Director are covered in the department's employee data.

4 Figures reflect Parks Australia staff at their substantive level.

Table 18: Ongoing Parks Australia employees (full time and part time) location profile in 2020–21^{1,2}

		Female			Male			Indeterminate			Totals
		Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
QLD	Brisbane	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
TAS	Hobart	12	15	27	7	3	10	0	0	0	37
ACT	ANBG	19	14	33	23	3	26	0	0	0	59
	Canberra	41	1	42	20	2	22	0	0	0	64
	Booderee	5	2	7	12	3	15	0	0	0	22
	ACT Total	65	17	82	55	8	63	0	0	0	145
NT	Uluru-Kata Tjuta	9	0	9	13	0	13	0	0	0	22
	Darwin	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Kakadu	13	0	13	31	0	31	0	0	0	44
	NT Total	25	0	25	44	0	44	0	0	0	69
External Territories	Christmas Island	4	2	6	9	0	9	0	0	0	15
	Norfolk Island	1	0	1	4	0	4	0	0	0	5
	Pulu Keeling	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
	ET Total	6	2	8	14	0	14	0	0	0	22
Totals		108	34	142	121	11	132	0	0	0	274

1 Twelve FTE departmental employees who undertake non-statutory roles delegated to the Director are covered in the department's employee data.

2 Casual employees are also not included in this table.

Table 19: Non-ongoing Parks Australia employee (full time and part time) location profile in 2020–21^{1,2}

		Female			Male			Indeterminate			Totals
		Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
QLD	Brisbane	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TAS	Hobart	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
ACT	ANBG	2	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	Canberra	1	0	1	4	1	5	0	0	0	6
	Booderee	4	0	4	3	1	4	0	0	0	8
	ACT Total	7	5	12	7	2	9	0	0	0	21
NT	Uluru-Kata Tjuta	9	1	10	3	0	3	0	0	0	13
	Darwin	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Kakadu	5	0	5	7	0	7	0	0	0	12
	NT Total	14	1	15	11	0	11	0	0	0	26
External Territories	Christmas Island	2	0	2	2	1	3	0	0	0	5
	Norfolk Island	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Pulu Keeling	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	ET Total	2	1	3	3	1	4	0	0	0	7
Totals		24	7	31	21	3	24	0	0	0	55

1 Twelve FTE departmental employees who undertake non-statutory roles delegated to the Director are covered in the department's employee data.

2 Casual employees are also not included in this table.

Table 20: Ongoing Parks Australia employees (full time and part time) location profile in 2019–20^{1,2}

		Female			Male			Indeterminate			Totals
		Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
QLD	Brisbane	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
TAS	Hobart	12	13	25	10	2	12	0	0	0	37
ACT	ANBG	17	14	31	23	4	27	0	0	0	58
	Canberra	36	7	44	19	2	21	0	0	0	64
	Booderee	3	3	6	14	2	16	0	0	0	22
	ACT Total	56	24	80	56	8	64	0	0	0	144
NT	Uluru-Kata Tjuta	7	2	9	8	0	8	0	0	0	17
	Darwin	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Kakadu	17	0	17	33	0	33	0	0	0	50
	NT Total	26	2	28	41	0	41	0	0	0	69
External Territories	Christmas Island	6	2	8	10	1	11	0	0	0	19
	Norfolk Island	1	0	1	5	0	5	0	0	0	6
	Pulu Keeling	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	ET Total	7	2	9	15	1	16	0	0	0	25
Totals		101	41	142	123	11	134	0	0	0	276

1 Twelve FTE departmental employees who undertake non-statutory roles delegated to the Director are covered in the department's employee data.

2 Casual employees are also not included in this table.

Table 21: Non-ongoing Parks Australia employee (full time and part time) location profile in 2019–20²

		Female			Male			Indeterminate			Totals
		Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
QLD	Brisbane	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TAS	Hobart	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
ACT	ANBG	3	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Canberra	4	0	4	2	1	3	0	0	0	7
	Booderee	3	0	3	4	0	4	0	0	0	7
	ACT Total	10	3	13	6	1	7	0	0	0	20
NT	Uluru-Kata Tjuta	4	5	9	4	0	4	0	0	0	13
	Darwin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Kakadu	5	0	5	3	0	3	0	0	0	8
	NT Total	9	5	14	7	0	7	0	0	0	21
External Territories	Christmas Island	1	0	1	2	1	3	0	0	0	4
	Norfolk Island	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Pulu Keeling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ET Total	1	1	2	2	1	3	0	0	0	5
Totals		21	9	30	16	2	18	0	0	0	48

1 Twelve FTE departmental employees who undertake non-statutory roles delegated to the Director are covered in the department's employee data.

2 Casual employees are also not included in this table.

Funding

The Director is the sole entity with statutory functions and powers for managing Commonwealth parks and gardens under the EPBC Act. The EPBC Act makes provision for funding the Director of National Parks. The department allocates funding from its appropriation for the performance of the Director's function to manage Commonwealth parks and gardens and the Director's other functions under the EPBC Act. This enables the Director to contribute to the department's Outcome 1:

Management of Commonwealth reserves as outstanding natural places that enhance Australia's well-being through the protection and conservation of their natural and cultural values, supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in managing their traditional land and sea country, and offering world class natural and cultural visitor experiences.

During 2020–2021 the department provided \$57.063 million to the Director of National Parks as per Portfolio Budget Statements. Director of National Parks received additional funding of \$7.370 million through the Support for Coronavirus-Affected Regions and Communities package. This arrangement was effective, providing resources to enable the Director to meet the targets set in the department Portfolio Budget Statements 2020–21.

The department also has an arrangement to provide corporate services to the Director.

Related entity transactions

The Director of National Parks is not an accountable authority of any other Commonwealth entity or company, nor a director of the board of any other Commonwealth entity or company. As such there were no payments made to any related entities in 2020–21.

Control arrangements

Director of National Parks Chief Executive Instructions

The Chief Executive Instructions direct the employees of Parks Australia to assist the Director to carry out his or her functions under the EPBC Act and ensure that the corporation and its officers meet their obligations under both the EPBC Act and PGPA Act. The instructions draw on relevant corporate governance rules, policies and guidelines of the Australian Government. They are supported by policies and procedures that are subject to regular review.

Audit

The Portfolio Audit Committee is established by the Accountable Authorities of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, the Director of National Parks, and the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust in compliance with section 45 of the *Public*

Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 and section 17 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

The Portfolio Audit Committee provides independent advice and assurance to the Director (as the Accountable Authority) that appropriate controls and systems are in place and working effectively. The Portfolio Audit Committee's charter is available at www.awe.gov.au

In accordance with recent amendments of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule), all members of the Portfolio Audit Committee should not be employees of the entity. This PGPA Rule amendment was to take effect by 1st July 2021, however the department moved to all external members in February 2021.

The members of the Portfolio Audit Committee as of 30 June 2021, includes:

- Mr Geoff Knuckey, independent member and Chair
- Mr Mick Roche, independent member
- Ms Jennifer Morison, independent member
- Mr David Bryant, independent member

For qualifications and remuneration of the Portfolio Audit Committee members, refer to the department's Annual Report for 2020–21.

Risk management

The Director's Risk Management Framework supports the Director's strategic goals and objectives, as well as the operational objectives of our parks and sections. The framework seeks to ensure that there is an effective process in place to identify and manage risks, and that the management of risks continues to improve over time. The framework is overseen by the Parks Australia Executive Board and the Portfolio Audit Committee.

The Director participated in the 2021 Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking Program (the Program), which is compulsory for Comcover fund members. The Program has been restructured for 2021 and is now conducted every two years. The Program is designed for fund members to assess their current and target level of risk management maturity against five identified areas of focus, using a risk maturity model.

The redesigned Program's five key areas of focus include:

1. Risk Governance
2. Risk Culture
3. Risk Capability
4. Risk Management Framework and Practices
5. Organisational Resilience and Agility.

The Program also introduces a new maturity model that replaces the six-level maturity scale with a five-level scale that better reflects the Commonwealth's current risk management capability. The five-level maturity scale includes: Simple, Established, Defined, Embedded, and Advanced.

The Director recorded an overall risk maturity of Defined. The average overall risk maturity of all participating entities is also Defined.

Indemnities and insurance

In 2020–21 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.

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

Fraud control

As a Corporate Commonwealth entity, the Director complies with the Fraud Rule (section 10 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014). This ensures that there are suitable mechanisms in place to prevent, detect and respond to fraud. The Director has a Fraud Control Plan that is underpinned by a fraud risk assessment. The Fraud Control Plan is reviewed biennially, and the fraud risk assessment has been reviewed on annual basis. The Director reports data on detected, recorded and reported incidents of fraud or suspected fraud to the Australian Institute of Criminology through the institute's annual '*Fraud against the Commonwealth*' questionnaire.

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.

Report by the Auditor-General under section 43 of the PGPA Act

The Auditor General issued an unqualified report for the 2020–21 financial statements of the Director of National Parks.

Reports by external bodies

Other than a report under section 43 of the PGPA Act that deals with the Auditor General's audit of the annual financial statements (see above), there were no Auditor General reports relating to the Director of National Parks in 2020–21.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) issued their final Transport Safety Report on 26 February 2021 in relation to the Helicopter incident in the Northern Territory which occurred in May 2019.

There were no reports on the entity during the reporting period by the Commonwealth Ombudsman or the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Other legislative reporting

Compliance and enforcement

The EPBC Act and Regulations prohibit a range of activities in Commonwealth parks and gardens unless authorised in accordance with the Act. Under the regulations, the Director 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 be imposed.

Wardens and rangers are appointed under the EPBC Act to exercise compliance and enforcement powers in relation to the EPBC Act and Regulations. Members of the Australian Federal Police and officers of the Australian Border Force are *ex officio* wardens by force of the EPBC 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 Australian Marine Parks, supported by aerial and vessel patrols, vessel monitoring systems and enforcement investigations. In addition to the role of Australian Federal Police and Australian Border Force, 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 Act in remote and rarely frequented Australian Marine Parks.

There were no relevant matters determined by courts during 2020–21.

The Director and Parks Australia takes its regulatory role seriously, continually looking for ways to ensure the approach to compliance and enforcement across the estate meets relevant best practice standards. Detail of compliance and enforcement in terrestrial and marine parks can be found in Table 22, Table 23 and Table 24.

Table 22: Compliance and enforcement actions in terrestrial parks and gardens during 2020–21

Compliance and enforcement actions	Visitors	Tour operators	Other commercial operators
Warning notices issued	4	0	6
Infringement notices issued ¹	14	0	0
Permit/Approval suspensions/cancellations	0	1	1
Court actions commenced	0	0	1
Court actions completed	0	0	0
Court actions ongoing at 30 June 2020	0	0	0

1 Multiple Infringement notices may be issued for each reported incident.

Table 23: Compliance and enforcement actions in marine parks during 2020–21

Compliance and enforcement actions	Number
Warnings notices issued	16
Infringement notices issued	4
Permit/Approval suspensions/cancellations	0
Court actions commenced (0 criminal; 0 civil)	0
Court actions completed (0 criminal; 0 civil)	0
Court actions ongoing at 30 June 2020 (0 criminal; 0 civil)	0

Table 24: Five-year overview of compliance and enforcement (terrestrial and marine parks and gardens)¹

Compliance and enforcement in all parks and gardens	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Warnings and cautions issued	19	20	33	40	26
Infringement notices issued	8	31	44	48	18
Cases taken to court	89 ¹	1	3	2	1
Court convictions*	118	3	2	29	0
Court cases pending at year end	1	0	1	0	0

1 Large number of Court actions in 2016–17 reflects the prosecution of the masters and crew of eight Vietnamese fishing vessels for offences against section 354A(5) of the EPBC Act.

* Number of proven contraventions.

Work health and safety

This section provides information required of the Director under Section 2, Part 4 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. The Director works in cooperation with the department to ensure responsibilities for the health and safety of Parks Australia workers are met by both parties. Detailed health and safety information related to departmental employees undertaking the work of the Director is also provided in the department's annual report for 2020–2021.

The Director regards all injuries as being preventable and maintains a commitment to the health, safety and welfare of workers and visitors to Commonwealth parks and gardens. The health, safety and welfare of workers (these being departmental employees, contractors and volunteers) and visitors to the national parks, for whom the Director has primary responsibility, is of paramount importance to the Director.

The Director is a member of the department's WHS Executive Committee. The Director is also represented on the department's National WHS Forum by a member of the Parks Australia Executive.

The Director's WHS Committee met on four occasions during the year. The Director's WHS Committee comprises Parks Australia Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), and representatives from each of the local health and safety forums operating in:

- The three mainland national parks of Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Booderee
- Christmas Island and Cocos (Pulu Keeling) Islands territories
- Norfolk Island National Park
- Australian National Botanic Gardens
- The Marine and Island Parks branch office in Hobart.

At each quarterly meeting the Director's WHS Committee reviews reports from the local forums, WHS incident and statistical reports, discusses WHS issues and control measures and considers draft WHS policies. WHS operational policies referred to the Committee for review during the year included Diving and Snorkelling, WHS Planning and Risk Management, and Hazardous Manual Handling.

Parks Australia workers can encounter a broad range of hazards when working in the field. These hazards include operating from aircraft, the use of firearms, interactions with wildlife, operating vehicles, vessels and other machinery, using chemicals, responding to and managing incidents involving visitors in need of rescue, and coping with life in remote and sometimes challenging locations.

The Director's firm commitment to both worker and visitor safety had been reflected in the number and focus on visitor incidents, with more visitor incidents being reported than Parks Australia staff incidents over the last five years, there was a reduction in the number of visitor incidents reported this year which may have been due to Park closures and other restrictions in place due to COVID-19 as well as the closure of the climb at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. The total number of WHS incidents reported in 2020–2021 was 109.

The total number of WHS incidents (109) comprised 38 Parks Australia worker-related incidents, 58 non-worker related incidents, and the detection and reporting of 13 hazards. Given the remote locations and physical nature of a large majority of park roles (such as ranger duties), the most frequently occurring Parks Australia staff injury was body stressing. The development and delivery of manual handling training will progress in 2021–22 to address this.

Comcare conducted a familiarisation visit to the Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Gardens in April 2021. These visits form part of Comcare's program to promote WHS and support client agencies within the WHS regulator's jurisdiction in meeting their obligations under the WHS Act.

Table 25: Consequence rating for injuries and near misses to Parks Australia employees and visitors from 2016–21

Incident Classification	Incident type	Total Incidents 2016–21	Percentage of total incidents
Minor	Self-treatment or by a first aid officer	302	49%
Moderate	Treatment by GP for non-life threatening injury or illness	272	45%
Major	Life threatening injury or illness	23	4%
Critical	Death	13	2%
Five-year total		610	

Table 26: Five-year overview of number and severity of safety incidents recorded

	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Incidents recorded (includes incidents affecting staff and visitors)					
Total Incidents	186 ¹	138 ²	119	137	109
Hazards recorded (includes hazards affecting staff and visitors)					
Total Hazards	34	12	12	8	13
Injuries, deaths and near misses recorded for staff (employees, contractors and volunteers)					
Minor	42	29	22	18	22
Moderate	32	14	8	19	15
Major	5	0	2	1	1
Death	0	0	0	0	0
Total	79	43	35	38	38
Injuries, deaths and near misses recorded for visitors					
Minor	28	48	30	35	23
Moderate	33	31	37	50	31
Major	6	1	2	3	2
Death	1	1 ³	3 ⁴	3 ⁵	2 ⁶
Total	68	81	72	91	58

1 Three (3) incidents involving local residents were recorded in 2016–17.

2 Two (2) incidents involving local residents were recorded in 2017–18.

3 The fatal incident reported in 2017–18 involved Parks Australia staff as first responders to a visitor incident inside the park boundary.

4 Three fatal incidents occurred inside the national parks during the year. One elderly visitor passed away due to a medical episode on Uluru, four local residents died in a car accident on the Kakadu highway inside Kakadu National Park and one visitor to Booderee drowned after being washed off rocks while fishing in the Booderee National Park.

5 Three fatal incidents occurred inside Kakadu National Park during the year. Five people from the local community died in a fatal car accident on the Arnhem Highway. Two drowning deaths occurred in rock pools in separate incidents.

6 Two fatal incidents occurred during the year for which Parks Australia staff were involved as first responders. One visitor fell from the top of Mount Brockman after entering Kakadu National Park via the Ranger Mine site, and one fisherman drowned after being washed off the rocks at Moes Rock inside Booderee National Park.

Initiatives and outcomes

See Table 27 for WHS initiatives and outcomes for the Director of National Parks during the financial year.

Table 27: Work health and safety initiatives and outcomes for 2020–21

Initiative	Outcome
Remedial actions relating to the May 2019 helicopter incident	<p>The Director has undertaken a range of actions to address safety issues relating to managing risks associated with aerial culling operations. In particular, the Director has undertaken a specialist aviation safety review into its aerial culling operation risk assessment and aviation activity services contracts, resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new requirement for Director of National Parks-level approval of any future aerial culling operations; and • establishment of a departmental Focus Group, being a group comprised of operational staff/business areas undertaking aviation activities (including aerial culling operations) and WHS/risk and business continuity specialists to take a collaborative approach to addressing WHS critical risks and controls across the portfolio. <p>At a local Kakadu National Park level, the Director has also upgraded handheld radios with higher wattage, providing improved communications channels through broader broadcast range for staff undertaking aviation activities. The use of these radios is prioritised for staff undertaking remote work.</p>
Enhancement of water safety signage and messaging in the Kakadu National Park	<p>An extensive review of onsite signage and other forms of messaging resulted in the strengthening of warnings related to the risks associated with swimming in the waterways and rock pools inside the Kakadu National Park. New signage was installed, and enhancements made to the park's webpages and printed material that warn visitors of the hazards while promoting safe alternative activities.</p>
Employee Assistance Program Site Visits	<p>The Director acknowledges the ongoing challenges presented to Parks Australia employees working in remote locations and the stresses presented by working and living in remote localities, and especially in responding to critical incidents within the jurisdiction of the parks. In recognition of this the Director arranged for professional face-to-face counselling services to be provided to Parks Australia staff on multiple occasions during the year including following incidents of Parks Australia staff acting as first responders to serious and fatal accidents.</p>
COVID-19 Response	<p>The Director continued to manage its COVID-19 Response Plans throughout the year, managing the threats in line with government restrictions, protecting staff and the local indigenous communities in the jointly managed parks. As a result, the parks and Australian National Botanic Gardens were able to remain open to visitors for most of the year. The Director's response to the pandemic was managed in close cooperation with the department's COVID-19 Response team.</p>

Incidents and investigations

Under Schedule 2, Part 3 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act), certain incidents must be notified to the regulator, Comcare, within specific time frames. Table 28 shows the Parks Australia staff and visitor incidents that were notified to Comcare over the 2020–21 year.

Table 28: Investigations, improvement notices and prosecutions made under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth), 2020–21

Category	Number
Deaths that required notice under section 38	1
Serious injury or illness that required notice under section 38	3
Dangerous incidents that required notification under section 38	1
Notices given to the department under section 191 (improvement notices)	1
Notices given to the department under section 195 (prohibition notices)	0
Notices given to the department under section 198 (non-disturbance)	0
Investigations conducted under part 10.	0

The Director received a provisional improvement notice in November 2020 following the drowning death of a visitor inside the Kakadu National Park. Action was completed in April 2021 to address and close out this notice and included the review and improvement of water safety messaging and on-site signage for the waterways and rock pools inside the Kakadu National Park.

Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance

Management of Commonwealth parks and gardens conserves and enhances natural and cultural values for current and future generations. Proposed development activities may only be permitted when proven consistent with these primary management objectives.

The provisions of the EPBC Act ensure that management plans for Commonwealth parks and gardens 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 EPBC Act relating to the organisation's contribution to ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance can be found in Appendix C.

Regulatory Performance Framework

The Director contributes to the department's reporting under the Regulatory Performance Framework for provisions relating to protected area management under the EPBC Act.

Advertising and marketing research

Under section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, amounts paid to market research, polling, direct mail or media advertising organisations must be reported.

In 2020–21 no market research, polling, direct mail or media advertising work was undertaken directly by the Director or Parks Australia (or through the department on behalf of Parks Australia) that exceeded the advertising and market research reporting threshold of \$14,000 (GST inclusive).

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.

A plan that describes how the Director 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 – must be published online. 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.

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

Phone: (02) 6274 2098

Email: foi@awe.gov.au

Formal freedom of information requests must:

- be in writing
- state that the request is an application for the purposes of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- 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
Environment Legal Branch
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601





Financial Statements

6

Independent Audit Report



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for the Environment

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Director of National Parks (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2021:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2021 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2021 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Director of National Parks (the Director) is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the rules made under the Act. The Director is also responsible for such internal control as the Director determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Director is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Director is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

GPO Box 707, Canberra ACT 2601
38 Sydney Avenue, Forrest ACT 2603
Phone (02) 6203 7300

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Scott Sharp
Executive Director
Delegate of the Auditor-General

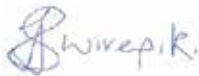
Canberra
17 September 2021

**DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2021 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

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

Signed



Jody Swirepik
A/g Director of National Parks

17 September 2021

Signed



Nic Swanepoel
A/g Chief Finance Officer

17 September 2021

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
for the period ended 30 June 2021

		2021	2020	Original Budget
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	2.1A	38,347	40,174	40,101
Suppliers	2.1B	45,236	43,302	45,021
Depreciation and amortisation	3.2A	15,958	14,867	14,686
Finance costs	2.1C	788	781	-
Impairment loss on financial instruments	2.1D	54	69	-
Write down and impairment of other assets	2.1E	435	1,001	-
Loss on sale of assets	2.1F	-	7	-
Other expenses		75	98	902
Total expenses		100,893	100,299	100,710
OWN-SOURCE INCOME				
Own-source revenue				
Sale of goods and rendering of services	2.2A	15,289	22,526	17,429
Interest	2.2B	314	1,079	1,234
Other revenue	2.2C	7,365	5,635	12,047
Total own-source revenue		22,968	29,240	30,710
Gains				
Other gains		31	-	-
Total gains		31	-	-
Total own-source income		22,999	29,240	30,710
Net cost of services		(77,894)	(71,059)	(70,000)
Revenue from Government	4.1	64,433	50,161	57,063
(Deficit) attributable to the Australian Government		(13,461)	(20,898)	(12,937)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation surplus	3.2A	-	10,556	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	10,556	-
Total comprehensive (loss) attributable to the Australian Government		(13,461)	(10,342)	(12,937)

Accounting Policy

Revenue from Government

The Director of National Parks received no direct appropriation from the Government for Departmental outputs. Funds are received from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (appropriated to the Department as a corporate Commonwealth entity payment item for payment to the Director of National Parks) and are recognised as Revenue from Government by the Director of National Parks unless the funding is in the nature of equity.

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

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 30 June 2021

		2021	2020	Original
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	Budget
				\$'000
ASSETS				
Financial Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	3.1A	11,141	18,000	18,001
Investments	3.1B	53,700	31,263	26,772
Trade and other receivables	3.1C	2,163	2,391	2,391
Accrued revenue	3.1D	1,080	26	26
Total financial assets		68,084	51,680	47,190
Non-Financial Assets				
Land and buildings ¹	3.2A	105,347	105,463	105,851
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.2A	151,586	147,997	165,880
Intangibles	3.2A	3,430	3,540	3,539
Assets held for sale		262	237	-
Other non-financial assets	3.2B	-	461	461
Total non-financial assets		260,625	257,698	275,731
Total Assets		328,709	309,378	322,921
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers	3.3A	4,344	4,722	4,720
Other payables	3.3B	17,983	10,366	9,895
Total payables		22,327	15,088	14,615
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases	3.4	39,243	39,247	39,441
Total interest bearing liabilities		39,243	39,247	39,441
Provisions				
Employee provisions	5.1	11,099	10,950	11,423
Total provisions		11,099	10,950	11,423
Total Liabilities		72,669	65,285	65,479
Net Assets		256,040	244,093	257,442
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		63,384	37,976	63,384
Reserves		195,534	195,534	196,412
Retained surplus		(2,878)	10,583	(2,354)
Total Equity		256,040	244,093	257,442

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

¹ Land and buildings include right-of-use assets

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
as at 30 June 2021

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		37,976	37,621	37,976
Adjusted opening balance		37,976	37,621	37,976
Transactions with owners				
Equity injection		25,408	355	25,408
Total transactions with owners		25,408	355	25,408
Closing balance as at 30 June 2021		63,384	37,976	63,384
RETAINED EARNINGS				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		10,583	24,512	10,583
Adjustment on initial application of AASB 15 / AASB 1058		-	6,969	-
Adjusted opening balance		10,583	31,481	10,583
Comprehensive income				
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period		(13,461)	(20,898)	(12,937)
Total comprehensive income		(13,461)	(20,898)	(12,937)
Closing balance as at 30 June 2021		(2,878)	10,583	(2,354)
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		195,534	184,978	196,412
Adjusted opening balance		195,534	184,978	196,412
Comprehensive income				
Other comprehensive income	3.2A	-	10,556	-
Total comprehensive income		-	10,556	-
Closing balance as at 30 June 2021		195,534	195,534	196,412
TOTAL EQUITY				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		244,093	247,111	244,971
Adjusted opening balance		244,093	247,111	244,971
Comprehensive income				
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period		(13,461)	(20,898)	(12,937)
Adjustment on initial application of AASB 15 / AASB 1058		-	6,969	-
Other comprehensive income		-	10,556	-
Total comprehensive income		(13,461)	(3,373)	(12,937)
Transactions with owners				
Equity injection	4.1	25,408	355	25,408
Total transactions with owners		25,408	355	25,408
Closing balance as at 30 June 2021		256,040	244,093	257,442

Accounting Policy

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

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

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
CASH FLOW STATEMENT
for the period ended 30 June 2021

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Sale of goods and rendering of services		21,742	27,682	17,429
Appropriations		64,433	50,161	64,433
Interest		-	5	1,234
GST Received from ATO		4,430	4,218	-
Other		1,575	1,143	322
Total cash received		92,180	83,209	83,418
Cash used				
Employees		38,046	38,243	40,101
Suppliers		44,867	42,054	40,666
Interest payments on lease liabilities		788	781	902
GST Paid to ATO		273	1,317	-
Other		-	214	-
Total cash used		83,974	82,609	81,669
Net cash from operating activities		8,206	600	1,749
INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Interest - Term Deposits		284	1,292	-
Investment in term deposits		-	15,950	4,491
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		244	66	-
Total cash received		528	17,308	4,491
Cash used				
Investment in term deposits		22,437	-	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		17,003	10,843	31,468
Purchase of intangibles		795	407	-
Total cash used		40,235	11,250	31,468
Net cash used by investing activities		(39,707)	6,058	(26,977)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Cash Received				
Capital injections		25,408	355	25,408
Total cash received		25,408	355	25,408
Cash Used				
Principal payments of lease liabilities ¹		766	300	180
Total cash used		766	300	180
Net cash used by financing activities		24,642	55	25,228
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held		(6,859)	6,713	-
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the reporting period		18,000	11,287	18,001
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		11,141	18,000	18,001

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

¹ Total cash outflow for leases for the year ended 30 June 2021 includes principal payments, interest payments and short term or low value lease payments.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
INDEX OF THE NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the period 30 June 2021

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Overview

Objectives of the entity

The Director of National Parks is a Corporate Commonwealth entity operating under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. It is a not-for-profit entity. The objective of the Director of National Parks is to manage Australia's protected areas. The Director of National Parks is structured to meet the following outcome:

Management of Commonwealth reserves as outstanding natural places that enhance Australia's well-being through the protection and conservation of their natural and cultural values, supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in managing their traditional land and sea country, and offering world class natural and cultural visitor experiences.

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

The Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- a) *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR); and
- b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – Reduced Disclosure Requirements 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 and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

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

New Accounting Standards

No accounting standard has been adopted earlier than the application date as stated in the standard.

No new or revised standards were issued after 30 June 2021 and prior to the signing of the Statement by the Director of National Parks and the Chief Finance Officer that were applicable to the current reporting period.

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.

**DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Effects of COVID-19 Major events impacting the Australian Government in 2020-21

In 2020-21, Australia has faced significant events that have led to unpredicted impacts on the financial statements of Australian Government entities. The events being the worldwide Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which began to transpire around quarter three of 2019-20 financial year and continued through the whole 2020-21 financial year. It is anticipated the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will continue beyond the 2020-21 financial and into future financial years. The above restrictions have impacted the operational activities and the subsequent revenue derived for the Director of National Parks.

Due to the severity of these events, the Australian Government announced several stimulus packages including financial assistance to businesses and families of those affected. The financial packages announced by the government that involved the Director of National Parks were in response to the extraordinary impact of the above events and amounted to over \$11.959 million, of which \$4.589 million was received in the 2019-20 financial year and \$7.370 million received in the 2020-21 financial year. The 2020-21 significant payments made by the department related to:

- Waiving of entry fees to Commonwealth operated national parks - \$6.984 million; and
- Tour operator licence and permit operator package - \$0.386 million.

Events after the Reporting Period

There were no subsequent events that had the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of the Director of National Parks.

Departmental Major Budget Variances

The following tables provide a comparison of the original budget as presented in the 2020-21 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) to the 2020-21 final outcome as presented in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards for the Director of National Parks.

The Budget is not audited and does not reflect additional budget estimates provided in the 2020-21 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES) or the revised budget provided as part of the 2020-21 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS). However, major changes in budget have been explained as part of the variance analysis where relevant. The actuals are prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.

Variances are considered to be 'major' based on the following criteria:

- The variance between budget and actual is greater than 10% of the relevant category (Income, Expenses and Equity totals); and
- The variance between budget and actual is greater than \$1 million of the relevant category.

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Explanations of major variances	Affected line items (and statement)
<p><u>Sale of goods and rendering of services</u></p> <p>Sale of goods and rendering of services was lower than budget due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and the subsequent park visitation numbers being lower than originally anticipated.</p>	<p><i>Sale of goods and rendering of services (Statement of Comprehensive Income)</i></p>
<p><u>Other revenue</u></p> <p>Other revenue is lower than budget due to allocation of COVID-19 Government Stimulus package. Refer to Revenue from Government for the offsetting impact. Furthermore, the impact was reduced by assets received by the entity during the financial year, free of charge.</p>	<p><i>Other revenue (Statement of Comprehensive Income)</i></p>

**DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

<p><u>Revenue from Government</u></p> <p>Revenue from Government is higher than budget due to allocation of COVID-19 Government Stimulus package funding to supplement revenue from visitors. Refer to other revenue for the offsetting impact.</p>	<p><i>Revenue from Government (Statement of Comprehensive Income)</i></p>
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Statement of Financial Position

Explanations of major variances	Affected line items (and statement)
<p><u>Cash and cash equivalents</u></p> <p>Cash and cash equivalents are lower than budget due to a higher investment in term deposits. Refer to investments for offsetting impact.</p>	<p><i>Cash and cash equivalents (Statement of Financial Position)</i></p>
<p><u>Investments</u></p> <p>Investments are higher than budget due to a higher investment in term deposits. Refer to cash and cash equivalents for offsetting impact. Furthermore, Investments are higher than budget due to the delay in undertaking capital projects during the current financial year.</p>	<p><i>Investments (Statement of Financial Position)</i></p> <p><i>Investment in term deposits (net) (Cash Flow Statement)</i></p>
<p><u>Accrued revenue</u></p> <p>Accrued revenue is higher than budget due to accounting for expenditure incurred that is yet to be cost recovered.</p>	<p><i>Accrued revenue (Statement of Financial Position)</i></p>
<p><u>Other payables</u></p> <p>Other payables were higher than budget due to funding received for the Growing Tourism in Kakadu program.</p>	<p><i>Other payables (Statement of Financial Position)</i></p>

Cash Flow Statement

Explanations of major variances	Affected line items (and statement)
<p><u>Sale of goods and rendering of services</u></p> <p>Sale of goods and rendering of services was higher than budget due to funding received during the financial year that under accounting standards, has been accounted for as income received in advance. This has been recognised as other payables in the financial statements. This was reduced by the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and the subsequent park visitation numbers being lower than originally anticipated.</p>	<p><i>Sale of goods and rendering of services (Cash Flow Statement)</i></p>
<p><u>Interest & Interest – Term Deposits</u></p> <p>Interest is lower than budget due to lower interest rates obtained during the financial year than originally anticipated.</p> <p>The budget for the Interest - Term Deposits was disclosed under operating activities.</p>	<p><i>Interest & Interest – Term Deposits (Cash Flow Statement)</i></p>

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

<p><u><i>GST Received from ATO</i></u></p> <p>The budget for GST received from ATO was consolidated into Suppliers budget.</p> <p><u><i>Other</i></u></p> <p>Other is higher than budget due to insurance claims received on unforeseen events.</p> <p><u><i>Suppliers</i></u></p> <p>The budget for GST received from ATO was consolidated into Suppliers budget and subsequently reduced the Suppliers budget.</p> <p><u><i>Purchase of property, plant and equipment</i></u></p> <p>Purchase of property, plant and equipment is lower than budget due to delays in capital projects.</p>	<p><i>GST Received from ATO</i> <i>(Cash Flow Statement)</i></p> <p><i>Other</i> <i>(Cash Flow Statement)</i></p> <p><i>Suppliers</i> <i>(Cash Flow Statement)</i></p> <p><i>Purchase of property, plant and equipment</i> <i>(Cash Flow Statement)</i></p>
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Financial Performance

This section analyses the financial performance of the Director of National Parks for the period ended 30 June 2021

Note 2.1: Expenses	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 2.1A - Employee Benefits</u>		
Wages and salaries	29,057	30,874
Superannuation		
Defined contribution plans	3,225	3,296
Defined benefit plans	2,015	2,072
Leave and other entitlements	3,669	3,930
Separation and redundancies	381	2
Total employee benefits	38,347	40,174

Accounting Policy

Accounting policies for employee related expenses are contained in the People and Relationship section.

Note 2.1B - Suppliers

Goods and services supplied or rendered

Professional services	15,921	15,757
Property expenses	2,526	2,600
Repairs and maintenance	7,219	4,236
Parks operation & maintenance	6,137	5,232
Employee related expenses	1,376	1,742
Information technology & communication	2,577	3,363
Service delivery charges	4,355	4,287
Other	1,433	1,951
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	41,544	39,168

Goods supplied	3,365	3,642
Services rendered	38,179	35,526
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	41,544	39,168

Other supplier

Property lease payments	225	153
Royalties	3,467	3,981
Total other supplier	3,692	4,134
Total suppliers	45,236	43,302

Note 2.1C - Finance costs

Interest on lease liabilities - jointly managed parks	788	781
Total finance costs	788	781

Note 2.1D - Impairment loss on financial instruments

Impairment on trade and other receivables	54	69
Total impairment loss on financial instruments	54	69

Note 2.1E - Write-down and impairment of other assets

Impairment of property, plant and equipment	435	455
Impairment on intangible assets	-	546
Total write-down and impairment of other assets	435	1,001

Note 2.1F - Losses on sale of assets

Infrastructure, plant & equipment		
Proceeds from sale	-	(66)
Carrying value of assets sold	-	73
Net loss (gain) from asset sales	-	7

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 2.2: Own-Source Revenue	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000

Note 2.2A - Sale of goods and rendering of services

Sale of goods	88	52
Rendering of services	15,201	22,474
Total sale of goods and rendering of services	15,289	22,526

Accounting Policy

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when control has been transferred to the buyer.

Each class of revenue has been assessed as to whether it falls under the scope of AASB 15, AASB 1004 or AASB 1058. The Director of National Parks will individually review each contract to ascertain if the contracts terms are sufficiently specific and subsequently if performance obligations are required by the contract. A contract falls under the scope of AASB 15 if the performance obligations are required by an enforceable contract and they are sufficiently specific to enable the Director of the National Parks to determine when they have been satisfied. In relation to AASB 1058, detail timing of recognition in regard to whether a transaction gives rise to a performance obligation, liability or contribution by owners.

The following is a description of principal activities from which the Director of National Parks generates its revenue:

Revenue stream	Timing of performance obligations	Assessment of when revenue is recognised
Entry & Camping Fees	Over the life of the ticket purchased.	Revenue is recognised over the life of the ticket (pro-rated).
Memorandum of Understandings and other revenue contracts	Timing depends on each contract and will be assessed individually to determine treatment under AASB 1058 or AASB 15.	Each agreement is individually assessed to determine appropriate accounting standard and the performance obligations within the contract.
Resources received free of charge	Over time in accordance with the agreement.	Revenue is recognised on a monthly basis.
Departmental contributions	Government appropriations are recognised under AASB 1004	Revenue is recognised on receipt of funds.

The transaction price is the total amount of consideration to which the Director of National Parks expects to be entitled in exchange for transferring promised goods or services to a customer. The consideration promised in a contract with a customer may include fixed amounts, variable amounts, or both.

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 end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

Note 2.2B - Interest

Deposits	314	1,079
Total Interest	314	1,079

Accounting Policy

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method.

Note 2.2C - Other revenue

Resources received free of charge	5,791	4,287
Sublease rental income	63	210
Other revenue	1,511	1,138
Total other revenue	7,365	5,635

Commitments receivable are as follows:

Within 1 year	200	2,007
Between 1 to 5 years	366	1,093
More than 5 years	26	6,544
Total commitments receivable	592	9,644

Accounting Policy

Resources received free of charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

Financial Position

This section analyses the Director of National Parks' assets used to conduct its operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result. Employee related information is disclosed in the People and Relationships section.

Note 3.1: Financial Assets

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 3.1A - Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash on deposit	11,129	17,995
Cash on hand	12	5
Total cash and cash equivalents	11,141	18,000

Accounting Policy

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

- a) cash on hand; and
- b) 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.

Note 3.1B - Investments

Term Deposits	53,700	31,263
Total investments	53,700	31,263

All investments are expected to be recovered within 12 months.

Accounting Policy

Investments are recognised at their nominal amounts and interest is credited to revenue as it accrues. Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate.

Note 3.1C - Trade and Other Receivables

Goods and services receivables		
Goods and services	683	1,094
Total goods and services receivables	683	1,094
Other Receivables		
Net GST receivable from ATO	644	909
Other	964	571
Total other receivables	1,608	1,480
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	2,291	2,574
Less: Impairment loss allowance		
Goods and services	(128)	(183)
Total impairment allowance account	(128)	(183)
Total trade and other receivables (net)	2,163	2,391

All receivables are expected to be received in less than 12 months.

Accounting Policy

Financial assets

Trade receivables, loans and other receivables that are held for the purpose of collecting the contractual cash flow where cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest, that are not provided at below-market interest rates, are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method adjusted for any loss allowance.

Note 3.1D - Accrued revenue

Accrued Revenue	1,080	26
Total accrued revenue	1,080	26

Accrued revenue is expected to be recovered within 12 months.

No indicators of impairment were found for accrued revenue.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 3.2: Non-Financial Assets

3.2a: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment and intangibles

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure Plant & Equipment	Computer Software	Water Entitlements	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 1 July 2020						
Gross book value	52,655	57,035	157,753	4,877	93	272,413
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(605)	(3,622)	(9,756)	(1,430)	-	(15,413)
Total as at 1 July 2020	52,050	53,413	147,997	3,447	93	257,000
Additions						
Purchase	-	925	16,077	796	-	17,798
Donation/Gift	-	1,435	-	-	-	1,435
Assets held for sale or in a disposal group held for sale	-	-	(25)	-	-	(25)
Depreciation and amortisation	-	(3,703)	(10,719)	(906)	-	(15,328)
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	(630)	-	-	-	-	(630)
Other movements						
Other movements of right-of-use assets	762	-	-	-	-	762
Transfers	-	1,130	(1,130)	-	-	-
Disposals	-	(35)	(614)	-	-	(649)
Total as at 30 June 2021	52,182	53,165	151,586	3,337	93	260,363
Total as at 30 June 2021 represented by:						
Gross book value	53,417	56,851	162,300	5,498	93	278,159
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(1,235)	(3,686)	(10,714)	(2,161)	-	(17,796)
Total as at 30 June 2021	52,182	53,165	151,586	3,337	93	260,363
Carrying amount of right-of-use assets	39,077	-	-	-	-	39,077

No additional material assets are expected sold or disposed of in the next 12 months, other than those already disclosed above.

Contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets

Within one year

Total contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
	5,769	1,591
	<u>5,769</u>	<u>1,591</u>

Accounting Policy

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

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income 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's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Asset Recognition Threshold

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

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.

Lease Right of Use (ROU) Assets

Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise of the initial lease liability amount, initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. These assets are accounted for by Commonwealth lessees as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright, but included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

On initial adoption of AASB 16 the Director of National Parks has adjusted the ROU assets at the date of initial application by the amount of any provision for onerous leases recognised immediately before the date of initial application. Following initial application, an impairment review is undertaken for any right of use lease asset that shows indicators of impairment and an impairment loss is recognised against any right of use lease asset that is impaired. Lease ROU assets continue to be measured at cost after initial recognition in Commonwealth agency, GGS and Whole of Government financial statements.

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, property, plant and equipment (excluding ROU assets) are carried at fair value (or an amount not materially different from fair value) less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets did not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets. A formal revaluation was conducted in the 2019-20 financial year.

- 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 reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reversed a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the 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.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
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Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

	2020-21	2019-20
Artworks	10 to 100 years	10 to 100 years
Buildings on freehold land	5 to 85 years	5 to 85 years
Infrastructure	7 years to Indefinite Life	7 years to Indefinite Life
Plant & equipment	2 to 60 years	2 to 60 years

The depreciation rates for ROU assets are based on the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the ROU asset or the end of the lease term.

Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2021. 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 of disposal 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 property, 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 Aboriginal archaeological sites, 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>.

Intangibles

The Director of National Parks' intangibles comprise purchased and internally developed software for internal use and water entitlements. These assets are 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 (2019-20: 4 to 5 years). All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2021.

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.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 3.2 Non Financial Assets (Cont)

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 3.2B: Other Non-Financial Assets		
Prepayments	-	461
Total other non-financial assets	-	461

All other non-financial assets are expected to be recovered in 12 months.

No indicators of impairment were found for other non-financial assets.

Note 3.3: Payables

Note 3.3A - Suppliers

Trade creditors and accruals	3,499	3,687
Royalties ¹	845	1,035
Total supplier payables	4,344	4,722

Settlement was usually made within 30 days.

¹Royalties relate to arrangements with traditional owners over Kakadu, Uluru Kata-Tjuta and Booderee National Parks.

Note 3.3B - Other Payables

Salaries and wages	534	430
Superannuation	95	84
Unearned revenue	16,323	9,379
Other payables	1,031	473
Total other payables	17,983	10,366

All other payables are expected to be settled within 12 months.

Note 3.4: Leases

Finance leases - jointly managed parks	39,243	39,247
Total interest bearing liabilities	39,243	39,247

Accounting Policy

For all new contracts entered into, the DNP considers whether the contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'.

Once it has been determined that a contract is, or contains a lease, the lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if that rate is readily determinable, or the department's incremental borrowing rate.

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification to the lease. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset or profit and loss depending on the nature of the reassessment or modification.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Funding

This section identifies the Director of National Parks' funding structure.

Note 4.1: Revenue from Government

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Corporate Commonwealth entity payment ¹	64,433	50,161
Total Revenue from Government	64,433	50,161

¹ The Director of National Parks received no direct appropriation from the Government for Departmental outputs. Funds are appropriated directly to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and transferred to the Director of National Parks. Funds transferred from the Department included a \$57.063m Corporate Commonwealth Entity payment (2019-20: \$45.572m) and \$7.37m (2019-20: \$4.589m) Government stimulus package under Assistance for *Severely Affected Regions (Special Appropriation) (Coronavirus Economic Response Package) Act 2020*. In addition, the Director of National Parks received an equity injection of \$25.408m (2019-20: \$0.355m).

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 4.2: Regulatory Charging Summary

Amounts applied

Departmental		
Own source revenue	4,501	3,898
Total amounts applied	4,501	3,898

Expenses

Departmental	4,501	3,898
Total expenses	4,501	3,898

External Revenue

Departmental	71	19
Total external revenue	71	19

People and Relationships

This section describes a range of employment and post employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people

Note 5.1: Employee Provisions

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Leave	11,099	10,950
Total employee provisions	11,099	10,950
Employee Provisions are expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months	3,874	3,948
More than 12 months	7,225	7,002
Total employee provisions	11,099	10,950

Accounting Policy

The legal entity of the Director of National Parks has only one employee, being the Director. However, under an arrangement with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, the Director of National Parks has a number of employees of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment 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' and termination benefits expected within twelve months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including the entity's employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

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.

Superannuation

The Director of National Parks' staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), or the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap), or other superannuation funds held outside the Australian Government.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered schedules and notes.

The Director of National Parks makes employer contributions to the employees' defined benefit superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. The entity 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.

Note 5.2: Key Management Personnel Remuneration

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly (whether executive or otherwise) of that entity. The Director of National Parks reviews its key management personnel on an annual basis. In 2020-21, the Director of National Parks has assessed its key management personnel to be the Parks Executive Board that comprises of the Director, the First Assistant Secretary and the Assistant Secretaries. In 2019-20 the Director of National Parks had assessed the Director as the sole key management personnel. Key management personnel remuneration is reported below:

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Key Management Personnel Remuneration Expenses		
Short-term employee benefits	1,430	326
Post-employment benefits	232	57
Other long-term employee benefits	21	18
Termination benefits	381	
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses¹	2,064	401

The total number of key management personnel that are included in the above table are 13 (2020: 1). Due to acting arrangements, the 13 individuals held a total of 8 KMP positions throughout 2020-21

¹ The above key management personnel remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the Portfolio Minister and the previous interim acting Director of National Parks. The Portfolio Minister's remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by the Director of National Parks. The previous interim acting Director of National Parks was seconded from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (department) for a period of 6 months and held dual key management personnel positions across both entities. The interim acting Director's remuneration for this period was funded by department and subsequently recorded in the department's financial statements.

Note 5.3: Related Party Disclosures

Related party relationships:

The Director of National Parks is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties to the Director of National Parks are the Key Management Personnel as disclosed in Note 5.2 including the Portfolio Minister and other Australian Government entities.

Transactions with related parties:

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of taxes, receipt of Medicare rebate or higher education loans. These transactions have not been separately disclosed in this note.

Giving consideration to relationships with related parties, and transactions entered into during the reporting period by the Director of National Parks, it has been determined that there are no related party transactions to be separately disclosed.

Managing uncertainties

This section analyses how the Director of National Parks manages financial risks within its operating environment.

Note 6.1: Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Unquantifiable Contingencies

As at 30 June 2021, the Director of National Parks had progressed insurance claims for numerous extreme weather conditions occurring throughout previous financial years. A large number of these existing claims still remain open and were yet to be finalised with the insurers. The Director of National Parks is in the process of finalising these claims with insurers.

As at 30 June 2021, the criminal prosecution which was commenced in September 2020 against the Director of National Parks by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (under the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989 (NT)) still remains on foot and the matter was yet to be finalised. It is not possible to estimate the amount of any eventual penalties in relation to this matter.

Quantifiable Contingencies

At 30 June 2020, the Director of National Parks held the reversionary interest under a lease for the town of Jabiru expiring at 30 June 2021. At that point in time, the future of the township, including make good and rehabilitation arrangements were in negotiation stage between the Director of National Parks, the lessee and other stakeholders. The extent of the Director's rights, and the condition of assets and surrounding land were yet to be extensively investigated. Initial estimates had highlighted that the remediation plan could cost up to the value of \$244m, which was to be shared across all parties to the arrangement. In June 2021, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, on behalf of the Commonwealth, has executed a remediation and indemnity deed and the reversionary interest under the lease was transferred from the Director of National Parks to the local Aboriginal land trust. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment were funded \$35m for its share of the remediation as per the Memorandum of Understanding. The Director of National Parks will deliver the remediation work in Jabiru on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

Accounting Policy

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position but are reported in the 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. Contingent assets are reported when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are recognised when settlement is greater than remote.

Note 6.2: Financial Instruments

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 6.2A - Categories of financial instruments			
Financial assets at amortised cost			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3.1A	11,141	18,000
Investments	3.1B	53,700	31,263
Trade receivables	3.1C	1,519	1,482
Accrued revenue	3.1D	1,080	26
Total financial assets at amortised cost		67,440	50,771
Total financial assets		67,440	50,771
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost			
At amortised cost			
Supplier payables	3.3A	3,499	3,687
Royalties	3.3A	845	1,035
Other payables	3.3B	1,031	473
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		5,375	5,195
Total Financial liabilities		5,375	5,195
Note 6.2B - Net gains or losses on financial assets			
Financial assets at amortised cost			
Interest revenue	2.2B	314	1,079
Write down - financial assets	2.1D	(54)	(69)
Net gains on financial assets at amortised cost		260	1,010
Net gains on financial assets		260	1,010

Accounting Policy

Financial assets

In accordance with AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*, the Director of National Parks classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;
- financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income; and
- financial assets measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on both the Director of National Parks' business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when the Director of National Parks becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial assets expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Comparatives have not been restated on initial application.

Financial Assets at Amortised Cost

Financial assets included in this category need to meet two criteria:

- the financial asset is held in order to collect the contractual cash flows; and
- the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest (SPPI) on the principal outstanding amount.

Amortised cost is determined using the effective interest method.

Effective Interest Method

Income is recognised on an effective interest rate basis for financial assets that are recognised at amortised cost.

Financial Assets at Fair Value Through Other Comprehensive Income (FVOCI)

Financial assets measured at fair value through other comprehensive income are held with the objective of both collecting contractual cash flows and selling the financial assets and the cash flows meet the SPPI test.

Any gains or losses as a result of fair value measurement or the recognition of an impairment loss allowance is recognised in other comprehensive income.

Financial Assets at Fair Value Through Profit or Loss (FVTPL)

Financial assets are classified as financial assets at fair value through profit or loss where the financial assets either do not meet the criteria of financial assets held at amortised cost or at FVOCI (i.e. mandatorily held at FVTPL) or may be designated.

Financial assets at FVTPL are stated at fair value, with any resultant gain or loss recognised in profit or loss. The net gain or loss recognised in profit or loss incorporates any interest earned on the financial asset.

Impairment of Financial Assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period based on Expected Credit Losses, using the general approach which measures the loss allowance based on an amount equal to *lifetime expected credit losses* where risk has significantly increased, or an amount equal to *12-month expected credit losses* if risk has not increased.

The simplified approach for trade, contract and lease receivables is used. This approach always measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses.

A write-off constitutes a derecognition event where the write-off directly reduces the gross carrying amount of the financial asset.

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.

Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost

Financial liabilities, including borrowings, are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective interest basis.

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).

Note 6.3: Fair Value Measurement

Accounting Policy

A revaluation is conducted in 2019-20 in accordance with the Asset Accounting and Management Policy stated at Note 3.2A. The Director of National Parks has a policy of having non-financial assets revalued every three years unless there are significant changes in economic and physical indicators.

The Director of National Parks deems transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy to have occurred when there has been a significant change in the volume or level of activity for the asset and where observable and unobservable inputs change due to the lack or presence of market- corroborated inputs. This is assessed once every 12 months with a formal revaluation undertaken once every three years.

Note 6.3A - Fair Value Measurement

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period	
	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Non-financial assets		
Land	52,182	52,050
Buildings	53,165	53,413
Infrastructure, plant & equipment	151,586	147,997
Total non-financial assets	256,933	253,460
Total fair value measurement of assets in the statement of financial position	256,933	253,460

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 7.1 Current/Non-Current Distinction for Assets and Liabilities

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
No more than 12 months		
<i>No more than 12 months</i>		
Cash and cash equivalents	11,141	18,000
Trade and other receivables	3,243	2,417
Other investments (term Deposits)	53,700	31,263
Assets held for sale	262	237
Other Intangibles	-	461
Total no more than 12 months	68,346	52,378
More than 12 months		
Land and buildings	105,347	105,463
Plant and equipment	151,586	147,997
Computer software	3,337	3,447
Other intangibles	93	93
Total more than 12 months	260,363	257,000
Total assets	328,709	309,378
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	22,327	15,088
Employee provisions	3,874	3,948
Total no more than 12 months	26,201	19,036
More than 12 months		
Employee provisions	7,225	7,002
Leases	39,243	39,247
Total more than 12 months	46,468	46,249
Total liabilities	72,669	65,285
Net Assets	256,040	244,093



Pulu Keeling National Park-Blue tailed skink (Image: Parks Australia)





Appendices 7

Appendix A: Overview of our parks and gardens

The seven terrestrial parks and gardens cover a combined area of 2,132,002 hectares.

The 59 marine parks cover a vast combined area of 283,367,665 hectares.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has established a protected area management categories system, composed of seven management categories. When a park is declared under the EPBC Act it must be assigned an IUCN category and may also be divided into zones, with each zone assigned an IUCN category. Statutory park management plans may assign the same or different IUCN categories to parks and park zones.

The area, year declared and IUCN category for the seven terrestrial parks and gardens are listed in Table A1. The area, year declared and IUCN category (or categories) for the 59 marine parks are listed in Table A2.

Table A1: Terrestrial parks and gardens

Park/Reserve name	Area (hectares)	Year declared	IUCN category
Booderee National Park	6,379	1992	II
Kakadu National Park	1,980,995	1979	II
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	132,566	1977	II
Australian National Botanic Gardens	85	1991	IV
Christmas Island National Park	8,719	1980	II
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	656	1986	II
Pulu Keeling National Park	2,602	1995	II

Table A2: Australian Marine Parks

Park name	Area (hectares)	Year first declared	IUCN category ¹
North Marine Parks Network			
Arafura Marine Park	2,292,410	2012	VI
Arnhem Marine Park	712,487	2012	VI
Gulf of Carpentaria Marine Park	2,377,093	2012	II, VI
Joseph Bonaparte Gulf Marine Park	859,706	2012	VI
Limmen Marine Park	139,920	2012	IV
Oceanic Shoals Marine Park	7,174,322	2012	II, IV, VI
Wessel Marine Park	590,807	2012	IV, VI
West Cape York Marine Park	1,601,217	2012	II, IV, VI

Table A2: Marine parks continued

Park name	Area (hectares)	Year first declared	IUCN category ¹
North-west Marine Parks Network			
Argo-Rowley Terrace Marine Park	14,600,295	2012	II, VI
Ashmore Reef Marine Park (formerly Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve)	58,319	1983	Ia, IV
Carnarvon Canyon Marine Park	617,669	2012	IV
Cartier Island Marine Park (formerly Cartier Island Marine Reserve)	17,237	2000	Ia
Dampier Marine Park	125,158	2012	II, IV, VI
Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park	1,078,522	2012	VI
Gascoyne Marine Park	8,176,611	2012	II, IV, VI
Kimberley Marine Park	7,446,855	2012	II, IV, VI
Mermaid Reef Marine Park (formerly Mermaid Reef Marine National Nature Reserve)	53,987	1991	II
Montebello Marine Park	341,280	2012	VI
Ningaloo Marine Park (formerly Ningaloo Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters))	243,520	1987	II, IV
Roebuck Marine Park	30,370	2012	VI
Shark Bay Marine Park	744,254	2012	VI
South-west Marine Parks Network			
Abrolhos Marine Park	8,806,027	2012	II, IV, VI
Bremer Marine Park	447,230	2012	II, VI
Eastern Recherche Marine Park	2,057,520	2012	II, VI
Geographe Marine Park	97,666	2012	II, IV, VI
Great Australian Bight Marine Park (includes former Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters))	4,582,211	2012	II, VI
Jurien Marine Park	185,090	2012	II, VI
Murat Marine Park	93,777	2012	II
Perth Canyon Marine Park	740,923	2012	II, IV, VI
Southern Kangaroo Island Marine Park	62,994	2012	VI
South-west Corner Marine Park	27,183,326	2012	II, IV, VI
Twilight Marine Park	464,131	2012	II, VI
Two Rocks Marine Park	88,225	2012	II, VI
Western Eyre Marine Park	5,794,433	2012	II, VI
Western Kangaroo Island Marine Park	233,533	2012	II, VI

Table A2: Marine parks continued

Park name	Area (hectares)	Year first declared	IUCN category ¹
South-east Marine Parks Network			
Apollo Marine Park	118,360	2007	VI
Beagle Marine Park	292,757	2007	VI
Boags Marine Park	53,748	2007	VI
East Gippsland Marine Park	413,663	2007	VI
Flinders Marine Park	2,704,584	2007	II, IV, VI
Franklin Marine Park	67,077	2007	VI
Freycinet Marine Park	5,794,074	2007	II, IV, VI
Huon Marine Park	999,079	2007	IV, VI
Macquarie Island Marine Park	16,189,588	1999	Ia, IV
Murray Marine Park	2,580,373	2007	II, VI
Nelson Marine Park	612,308	2007	VI
South Tasman Rise Marine Park	2,770,435	2007	VI
Tasman Fracture Marine Park	4,250,054	2007	II, VI
Zeehan Marine Park	1,989,696	2007	VI
Temperate East Marine Parks Network			
Central Eastern Marine Park	7,005,405	2012	II, IV, VI
Cod Grounds Marine Park (includes former Cod Grounds Commonwealth Marine Reserve)	407	2012	II
Gifford Marine Park	582,850	2012	IV
Hunter Marine Park	625,736	2012	IV, VI
Jervis Marine Park	247,342	2012	IV, VI
Lord Howe Marine Park (includes former Lord Howe Island Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) and Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Marine National Nature Reserve)	11,012,559	2012	II, IV, VI
Norfolk Marine Park	18,844,355	2012	II, IV, VI
Solitary Islands Marine Park (includes former Solitary Islands Marine Reserve (Commonwealth Waters))	15,232	2012	II, VI
Coral Sea Marine Park (includes former Coral Sea Conservation Zone, Coringa-Herald National Nature Reserve and Lihou Reef National Nature Reserve)	98,983,605	2012	II, IV, VI
Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve²	7,095,253	2002	Ia

¹ IUCN categories listed are those assigned under management plans that were in effect as at 30 June 2021.

² Managed by the Australian Antarctic Division under delegation from the Director.

Appendix B: 2020–21 Entity Resource Statement

The Entity Resource Statement details the total funding from all sources available to the Director of National Parks, to undertake operations and deliver programs and services during the reporting period.

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

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

Table B1: Entity Resource Statement

Source	Actual available appropriation \$'000	Payments made \$'000	Balance remaining \$'000
Opening balance/Reserves at bank	49,263	8,758	40,505
REVENUE FROM GOVERNMENT			
Ordinary annual services¹			
Outcome 1	-	-	-
Total ordinary annual services	-	-	-
Other services			
Equity injection – transferred by Portfolio Department	25,408	8,015	17,393
Total other services	25,408	8,015	17,393
Total annual appropriations	25,408	8,015	17,393
Payments from related entities²			
Amounts from the portfolio department	64,433	64,433	-
Total	64,433	64,433	-
Total funds from Government	89,841	72,448	-
FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES			
Interest	284	284	-
Sale of goods and services	21,469	14,526	6,943
Other	6,005	6,005	-
Total	27,758	20,815	6,943
Total net resourcing for DNP	166,862	102,021	64,841

1 Appropriation Bill (No.1)

2 Funding provided by a Government body that is not specified within the annual appropriation bills as a payment to the Commonwealth Corporate Entity under the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Appendix C: Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance

Section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) requires Australian Government organisations to include details of their contribution to ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance in their annual reports. Section 516A also promotes the 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 2020–21 in accordance with section 516A of the EPBC Act.

Ecologically sustainable development

1. How the activities of the organisation, and the administration of legislation by the organisation, accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development (section 516A(6)(a))

In accordance 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 and marine parks and gardens in accordance with management plans prepared under the EPBC Act, which explicitly recognises the principles of ecologically sustainable development.
- Managed the parks and gardens in consultation with Boards of Management and advisory committees.
- Undertook monitoring and assessment programs for plants and animals within the parks and gardens.
- Undertook compliance operations resulting in detection of illegal activities in the parks and gardens.
- Worked with Traditional Owners to implement cultural land management and use of resources.

The Director followed the principles of ecologically sustainable development, in particular the precautionary principle, in order to:

- Comply with the EPBC Act (sections 324 to 390A)
- Comply with the decision-making and environmental-impact assessment procedures for works and new developments in Commonwealth parks and gardens.

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:

- Digitally and physically 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 cultural knowledge about land management is incorporated into park management activities, and that opportunities are created for young Indigenous people to learn about and contribute to park management.

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 parks and gardens are managed in accordance with management plans established under the EPBC Act and with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) protected area categories that 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 parks and gardens to ensure the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.

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

- Tour-operator engagement and tour-guide accreditation aim to improve the quality and consistency of visitor experiences.
- Entry and park-use fees at heavily visited parks and gardens 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 2020–21 Environment and Energy Portfolio Budget Statements is:

Management of Commonwealth reserves as outstanding natural places that enhance Australia's well-being through the protection and conservation of their natural and cultural values, supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in managing their traditional land and sea country, and offering world class natural and cultural visitor experiences.

For a summary of activities undertaken in 2020–21 refer to 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 parks and gardens. Three of these parks are managed jointly with their Traditional Owners. Potential large-scale threats to the parks and gardens are mitigated by statutory protective mechanisms and decision-making and assessment processes set out in management plans. Through the EPBC Act and Regulations and in accordance with the management plan for each reserve, the Director manages commercial activities (such as tourism and camping) in terrestrial parks and gardens and regulates access and practices of a number of sectors that operate within multiple use Australian Marine Parks (such as commercial fishing and aquaculture).

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 by maximising efficient use of resources, reducing waste, and building environmental awareness among its employees and volunteers.

Each terrestrial reserve management plan identifies actions to reduce the ecological impact of the reserve's operations. Office paper, toner cartridges and organic waste are recycled in some parks and gardens, and office machines (photocopiers and printers) are automatically programmed to save power. Where possible, work is completed digitally and printers are programmed to produce duplex (double-sided) documents as a default to reduce paper use.

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 publicly on annual energy performance in both the department's annual report and in this report. Public reporting provides 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 Table C1 and Table C2, paper consumption in Table C3, and water consumption in Table C4

Environmental performance

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

- Kakadu National Park
- Uluru-Kata Tjuta 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 our carbon footprint. Some parks and gardens have specialised needs, for example the Australian National Botanic Gardens maintains climate controlled conditions in many of its glasshouses, while at Kakadu National Park, fire management and feral animal control activities require helicopter use. Additionally, the remote location of some parks limits opportunities to reduce their environmental impact, such as on our three Island parks. Reserve management activities such as fire management may also have implications for the carbon cycle, but careful management of these practices to conserve biodiversity help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy use

Environmental, economic and social objectives and considerations are either in place or being prepared for integration into management plans and climate-change strategies for all Parks Australia sites referred to above. These include:

- Maintaining greenhouse gas emissions from park operational activities to at or below 2017–18 levels.
- Developing the Director of National Parks Climate Change Statement, and individual park environmental 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.

In 2020–21, emissions from stationary energy consumption (office and building use) across our parks and gardens was 12.3 per cent lower than the three-year average. This is due to reduced visitation and internal use of buildings due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as solar generation on Christmas Island National Park. It is anticipated that emission rates will return to normal as visitation returns to previous year rates (Table C1).

Emissions from transport energy consumption (fuel from vehicles and aircraft) across our parks and gardens was 2.3 per cent lower than the three-year average due to delays in programs due to COVID-19 (Table C2).

Table C1: Greenhouse gas emissions from stationary energy use in our parks and gardens from 2017–2021

	2017–18 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e)	2018–19 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e)	2019–20 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e)	2020–21 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e)	Annual average 2017–20	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	917.21	1,045.96	1090.12	783.77	1017.76	-23.0
Booderee National Park	106.45	114.94	96.75	89.41	106.05	-15.7
Christmas Island National Park	59.58	53.33	31.34 ¹	23.10	48.08	-52.0
Kakadu National Park	848.97	843.59	905.84	585.74	866.13	-32.4
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	9.69	6.54	7.91	4.35	8.05	-45.9
Pulu Keeling National Park	11.17	10.52	8.03	7.92	9.91	-20.1
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	1,555.19	1,835.94	1785.78	1823.41	1725.64	5.7
Total	3,508.26	3,910.83	3,925.76	3317.7	3781.62	-12.3

1 Two 20KW solar systems were installed at Christmas Island office and at the Pink House research station in September 2019 that contributed to the reduction in electricity usage.

Table C2: Greenhouse gas emissions from transport energy use in our parks and gardens from 2017–2021

	2017–18 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e)	2018–19 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e)	2019–20 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e) ⁵	2020–21 (tonnes of CO ₂ -e) ⁵	Annual average 2017–20	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	13.58 ¹	13.71	11.42	12.69	12.90	-1.7
Booderee National Park	52.46	127.21 ²	94.69	141.41	91.45	54.6
Christmas Island National Park	81.01	97.99	90.31	73.90	89.77	-17.7
Kakadu National Park	581.39	628.13	512.38	500.37	573.97	-12.8
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	8.88	7.70 ³	9.74	10.34	8.77	17.9
Pulu Keeling National Park	2.67	0.83 ⁴	1.88	2.17	1.79	21.0
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	120.81	134.71	130.19	145.35	128.57	13.1
Total	860.79	1,010.27	850.61	886.23	907.22	-2.3

1 In 2017–18 there was a 37 per cent decrease in the amount of emissions from transport energy use at the Gardens due to a reduction in field trips.

2 The increase in fuel use at Booderee National Park in 2018–19 was due to a larger fleet of vehicles as a carry-over of new vehicles replacing older vehicles and, for a period, having both fleets in operation.

3&4 Norfolk Island and Pulu Keeling National Park have reduced their stationary energy use due to no longer using petrol fuel.

5 Reductions in transport energy use can be attributed to park closures from COVID-19 and summer bushfires in NSW and the ACT.

Waste

Obtaining accurate measurements of greenhouse emissions from waste remains challenging and exact estimates were not available in 2020–21 for all parks and gardens.

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

- Establishing guidelines to formalise waste-reduction strategies into standard park practises (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.

The amount of paper purchased increased by 33.3 per cent in 2020–21, when compared with the number of reams purchased over the previous three years (Table C3). This was mainly due to bulk stock purchased by a number of areas to mitigate supply risk. It is anticipated that there will be a reduction in printing due to staff working from home. We remain committed to providing web-based visitor and interpretative materials, which will further reduce printing and paper consumption in future years.

Excluding metropolitan office-based employees whose paper use is reported in the department’s annual report, this year the terrestrial parks and gardens operated with an average of around one and a half reams per person, well below the 10 reams per person target set for the Australian Public Service. Several parks and gardens also use 100 per cent post-consumer recycled paper for printing.

Access to regional recycling facilities is gradually improving for more remote locations. Basic recycling facilities are available on Norfolk Island and office paper is being sourced from renewable sources when available. Kakadu participates in a regional recycling and resource recovery program, and will continue its recycling programs for paper, glass and aluminium in and around offices. 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.

Table C3: Reams of paper consumed in our parks and gardens from 2017–21

	2017–18 Reams of paper	2018–19 Reams of paper	2019–20 Reams of paper	2020–21 Reams of paper	Annual average 2017–20	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	170	191	250	394 ¹	204	48.2
Booderee National Park	148	101	38	42	96	-128.6
Christmas Island National Park	25	25	25	25	25	0.0
Kakadu National Park	225	250	0 ²	250	159	36.4
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	25	10	15	40 ³	17	57.5
Pulu Keeling National Park	2	1	1	1	1	0.0
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	45	43	12	50 ⁴	33	34.0
Total	640	621	341	802	535	33.4

1 The Australian National Botanic Gardens purchased a stock of paper to ensure continuity of supply due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2 No paper was purchased at Kakadu in 2019–20 as the park had a store of previously purchased paper to use.

3 Bulk supply purchased due to limited freight importation to Norfolk Island.

4 Extra board meetings conducted and new on park classroom training sessions were held at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. Not all paper has been consumed.

Water

Protecting water quality is a high priority for Parks Australia. The quality of surface water, groundwater and water holes in our parks and gardens is monitored regularly, as activities in certain places must not interrupt the natural flow of water.

Management plans are also in place (or in preparation) for some sites to ensure that water use is minimised and water quality maintained. These plans include actions to:

- Audit water use in Commonwealth parks and gardens and implement actions to provide efficiencies and improvements.
- Implement water-saving initiatives such as rainwater harvesting, water recycling, the use of water-saving devices and upgrading water-reticulation infrastructure.
- Provide information to visitors on how to protect water quality.

In 2020–21, we recorded a decrease in water use of 23.6 per cent across the parks and gardens when compared to the average of the previous three years (Table C4). This reduction has occurred as less water was needed to maintain living collections at the Australian National Botanic Gardens due to the high rainfall in the Canberra region and the reduced number of plants needed for planting season at Christmas Island National Park. COVID-19 effecting visitation and camping as well as upgrades to buildings also resulted in less water usage.

Table C4: Kilotres of water consumed in our parks and gardens from 2017–21

	2017–18 (kL)	2018–19 (kL)	2019–20 (kL)	2020–21 (kL)	Average (kL) 2017–20	% change compared with average
Australian National Botanic Gardens	204,353	200,921	184,773	112,722	196,682	-74.5
Booderee National Park	12,000	10,740	4,389	3,561	9,043	-153.9
Christmas Island National Park	7,477	5,069	5,098	2,785	5,881	-111.2
Kakadu National Park	78,576	39,061 ¹	59,199	47,328	58,945	-24.5
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden ²	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pulu Keeling National Park ³	13	0 ³	12	48	8	82.6
Uluṟu-Kata Tjuṯa National Park	95,852	96,576	10,8795	133,642	100,408	24.9
Total	398,271	352,367	362,266	300,086	370,968	-23.6

1 Figure for 2018–19 based on annual water rate notice for Headquarters and Jabiru residences only.

2 Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden operates entirely on harvested rainwater.

3 A reticulated water system for the micro nursery at the Cocos headquarters was installed in January 2016 which initially used water from the Island water supply. The system now relies on captured rainwater.

Appendix D: Compliance index

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and Subdivision B of Division 3A of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Amendment (Corporate Commonwealth Entity Annual Reporting) Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule).

Table D1: Annual report requirements under the PGPA Rule and other legislation

PGPA Rule Reference	Page	PGPA Rule requirements
Contents of annual report		
17BB	i	The annual report for a corporate Commonwealth entity must: a) be approved by the accountable authority of the entity; b) be signed by the accountable authority, or a member of the accountable authority, of the entity; c) include details of how and when approval of the annual report was given; d) state that the accountable authority of the entity is responsible for preparing and giving the annual report to the entity's responsible Minister in accordance with section 46 of the PGPA Act
17BE(a)	6,72	Details of the legislation establishing the body.
17BE(b)(i)	6	A summary of the objects and functions of the entity as set out in legislation
17BE(b)(ii)	ii,29	The purposes of the entity as included in the entity's corporate plan for the reporting period.
17BE(c)	6,72	The names of the persons holding the position of responsible Minister or responsible Ministers during the reporting period, and the titles of those responsible Ministers.
17BE(d)	N/A (72)	Directions given to the entity by the Minister under an Act or instrument during the reporting period.
17BE(e)	N/A (72)	Any government policy order that applied in relation to the entity during the reporting period under section 22 of the PGPA Act.
17BE(f)	N/A	Particulars of non-compliance with: a) a direction given to the entity by the Minister under an Act or instrument during the reporting period; or b) a government policy order that applied in relation to the entity during the reporting period under section 22 of the PGPA Act.
17BE(g)	26	Annual performance statements in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the PGPA Rule.
17BE(h), 17BE(i)	N/A	A statement of significant issues reported to the Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the PGPA Act that relates to non-compliance with finance law and action taken to remedy non-compliance.
17BE(j)	72	Information on the accountable authority, or each member of the accountable authority, of the entity during the reporting period.
17BE(k)	15	Outline of the organisational structure of the entity (including any subsidiaries of the entity).
17BE(ka)	79–81	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis, including the following: a) statistics on fulltime employees; b) statistics on parttime employees; c) statistics on gender; d) statistics on staff location.
17BE(l)	iv, 78	Outline of the location (whether or not in Australia) of major activities or facilities of the entity.

PGPA Rule Reference	Page	PGPA Rule requirements
17BE(m)	72	Information relating to the main corporate governance practices used by the entity during the reporting period.
17BE(n), 17BE(o)	N/A	For transactions with a related Commonwealth entity or related company where the value of the transaction, or if there is more than one transaction, the aggregate of those transactions, is more than \$10,000 (inclusive of GST): a) the decision-making process undertaken by the accountable authority to approve the entity paying for a good or service from, or providing a grant to, the related Commonwealth entity or related company; and b) the value of the transaction, or if there is more than one transaction, the number of transactions and the aggregate of value of the transactions.
17BE(p)	28–29	Any significant activities and changes that affected the operation or structure of the entity during the reporting period.
17BE(q)	N/A (84)	Particulars of judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity.
17BE(r)	84–85	Particulars of any reports on the entity given by: a) the Auditor-General (other than a report under section 43 of the Act); or b) a Parliamentary Committee; or c) the Commonwealth Ombudsman; or d) the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.
17BE(s)	N/A	An explanation of information not obtained from a subsidiary of the entity and the effect of not having the information on the annual report.
17BE(t)	84	Details of any indemnity that applied during the reporting period to the accountable authority, any member of the accountable authority or officer of the entity against a liability (including premiums paid, or agreed to be paid, for insurance against the authority, member or officer's liability for legal costs).
17BE(ta)	74–75, 76	Information about executive remuneration.
17BE(taa)	82–83	The following information about the audit committee for the entity: a) a direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the audit committee; b) the name of each member of the audit committee; c) the qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the audit committee; d) information about each member's attendance at meetings of the audit committee; e) the remuneration of each member of the audit committee.
Disclosure requirements for government business enterprises		
17BF(1)(a)(i)	N/A	An assessment of significant changes in the entity's overall financial structure and financial conditions.
17BF(1)(a)(ii)	N/A	An assessment of any events or risks that could cause financial information that is reported not to be indicative of future operations or financial conditions.
17BF(1)(b)	N/A	Information on dividends paid or recommended.
17BF(1)(c)	N/A	Details of any community service obligations the government business enterprise has including: a) an outline of actions taken to fulfil those obligations; and b) an assessment of the cost of fulfilling those obligations.
17BF(2)	N/A	A statement regarding the exclusion of information on the grounds that the information is commercially sensitive and would be likely to result in unreasonable commercial prejudice to the government business enterprise.

Legislation reference	Page	Other legislative requirements
<i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> s. 311A	91	A statement setting out particulars of all amounts paid by, or on behalf of the Commonwealth Department during the financial year to advertising agencies, market research organisations, polling organisations, direct mail organisations and media advertising organisations.
<i>EPBC Act 1999</i> s. 516A	90, 128	Details of environmental performance and how the principles of ecologically sustainable development have been accorded and advanced.
<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> Schedule 2, Part 4	86–90	Information on Work Health and Safety initiatives, outcomes, incidents and investigations.

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Christmas Island Corals – Brendan Tiernan
Norfolk Island Pine – Jitze Couperas
Bottlenose Dolphin – Department of the Environment and Energy
Piti with Mangata (Desert Quandong) – Parks Australia

Page vii: Booderee National Park Eastern grey kangaroo – Parks Australia

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Page 71: Pulu Keeling National Park Pemphis – Parks Australia

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Page 122: Christmas Island National Park Giant land snail – Parks Australia

Page 123: Kakadu National Park Sunset – Parks Australia

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Maps

Environmental Resources Information Network

Map Data Sources

Department of the Environment (2014): Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database (CAPAD)

Department of the Environment (2014): Australia's network of Commonwealth Marine Reserves

Geoscience Australia (2006): Australian Maritime Boundaries (AMB) v2

parksaustralia.gov.au

The web address for this annual report is:
environment.gov.au/resource/annual-report-2020-21-director-national-parks